

# African Development Bank Civil Society Working Group

Date: 01/09/2025

**To the attention of:**

Mr. Sidi Ould Tah  
President-elect of the African Development Bank (AfDB)  
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

**Cc : AfDB Group Board Members | African Development Bank Group**

**Subject: Congratulations and commitment to renewed CSO-AfDB dialogue**

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the [Civil Society Organizations \(CSO\) Working Group](#) engaging with the African Development Bank (AfDB), we would like to warmly congratulate you on your election as President of the AfDB. We wish you a great success in this new role in the service of a sustainable, equitable, and inclusive development for our continent.

Our working group brings together over 70 organizations from across Africa and the world. We closely monitor AfDB-financed projects and policies, while promoting constructive dialogue on issues such as transparency, accountability, human rights, gender, climate resilience, disability inclusion and a just energy transition.

CSOs play a critical role in highlighting citizens' voices, especially those of communities impacted by development projects. We bring field-based expertise, document impacts, and offer concrete proposals to improve the quality and sustainability of development efforts. Our recent discussions during the Annual Meetings and CSO Forum reaffirmed the need to strengthen engagement spaces with the Bank throughout the project cycle.

We acknowledge the Bank's commitments to gender equality, environmental and social safeguards, energy access, energy transition, and inclusion. Yet challenges remain regarding access to information, mitigation of negative impacts, gender and disability inclusion, effective remedy mechanisms, and the protection of human rights defenders.

At the start of your presidency, we would like to express the following expectations:

- The institutionalization of regular, transparent, and structured dialogue between the AfDB and CSOs, including those from impacted local communities;
- Stronger consideration of CSO contributions in the design, implementation, and evaluation of projects;
- Inclusive and accessible consultation processes on sectoral policies, country strategies, and internal reforms;

- Enhanced support for CSO participation in regional and continental initiatives led by the Bank (energy, climate, gender, digitalization, infrastructure, etc.);
- Effective protection against reprisals for communities and civil society actors who speak out about project-related impacts.
- Prioritization of resources and staff capacity for effective implementation of the AfDB's environmental and social standards and requirements.
- Maintaining and strengthening strong, independent accountability mechanisms that deliver remedy for communities who have been harmed by development projects.

We hope that your tenure will mark a turning point towards a more open African Development Bank—one that is closer to the realities of African populations and more engaged in co-constructing sustainable solutions alongside civil society.

Sincerely,

**AfDB CSO Working Group**

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