



BANQUE D'INVESTISSEMENT ET DE DEVELOPPEMENT DE LA CEDEAO
ECOWAS BANK FOR INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
BANCO DE INVESTIMENTO E DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DA CEDEAO

GRO STRATEGY

2026 - 2030

Growth through Resilience and Optimisation

The GRO Strategy

Growth | Resilience | Optimisation

Growth through Resilience and Optimisation

Growth (G)

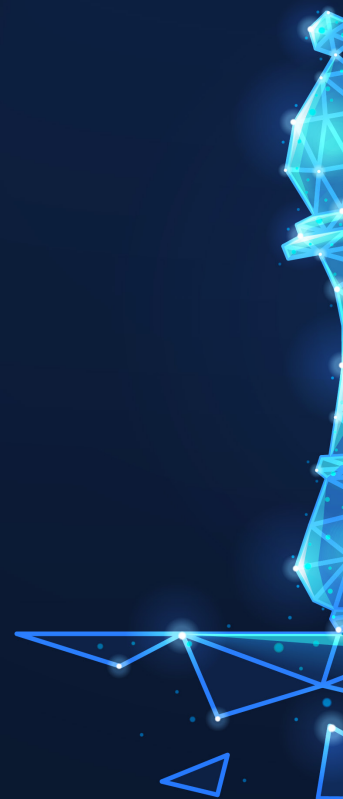
High-impact growth investments | Business growth | Enduring value creation

Resilience (R)

Environmental | Social | Governance

Optimisation (O)

Financial | Process | Operational





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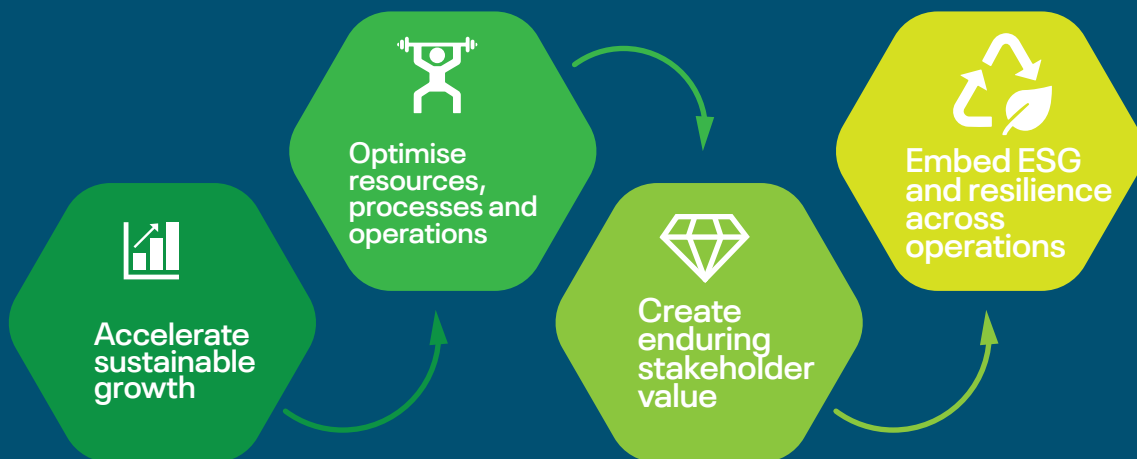
VISION

The vision of the “GRO” Strategy is to position the Bank as a leading, future-ready organisation that drives sustainable growth, champions resilience through Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles, and achieves operational excellence for long-term value creation.

MISSION

The mission of Strategy 2030 is to deliver inclusive and sustainable growth by embedding ESG-driven resilience into the Bank’s operations, optimising resources and processes, and fostering innovation to create enduring value for stakeholders.

OBJECTIVES



ACRONYMS

AES	Alliance of Sahel States
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
CSF	Community Strategic Framework
DFIs	Development Finance Institutions
EBID	ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development
ECA	Export Credit Agency
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIF	ECOWAS Investment Forum
EMDEs	Emerging Market and Developing Economies
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information, Communication, Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MEF	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
NRMs	Non-Regional Members
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TOC	Theory of Change
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UA	Unit of Accounts
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
WADO	West African Development Outlook
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WAICSA	West African Initiative for Climate-Smart Agriculture
WAMZ+	West African Monetary Zone plus Cabo Verde
WEO	World Economic Outlook

FOREWORD



The Bank has played a crucial role towards the realisation of an integrated ECOWAS over the past 50 years since its establishment. Investments in the telecommunications, energy, road and transport, agriculture, water, healthcare, education, railway, financial and industrial sectors have created the conditions necessary to facilitate the free movement of people and goods, while alleviating poverty. Over the past five years, the Bank has reinvented itself as a dependable development partner, whose interventions have created jobs, improved lives and livelihoods, and generated value for its stakeholders.

Having successfully implemented Strategy 2025, one of the most successful in its history, the Bank aims to cement its place as the project financier of choice in the West African sub-region over the next five years. This is because Member States, that are burdened with debt, despite significant infrastructure deficits, need partners with a better appreciation of their challenges to help address them.

The Strategic Plan of the Bank envisions a growing and resilient West African sub-region that is conscious of its commitments to applying Environmental, Social, and Governance principles while pursuing its socio-economic aspirations. The GRO Strategy enjoins the Bank to work with its partners to chart a path of growth and resilience that enables Member States to withstand known and unknown global, regional and country-specific shocks. This entails a myriad of innovations and interventions at the country and regional levels, including the application of lessons learnt from the vagaries of the past five years, which left in their wake enormous socio-economic hardships that can only be overcome in many years to come.

The GRO Strategy enjoins the Bank to work with its partners to chart a path of growth and resilience that enables Member States to be able to withstand known and unknown global, regional and country-specific shocks

As a development finance institution, it is the Bank's responsibility to draw attention to the need for an inclusive development strategy that does not disproportionately impact any member of society. Strategy 2030 is the social contract which underlies the Bank's commitment to pursuing and realising this objective over the next five years.

The Strategic Plan is anchored on three pillars:

- **G** – Growth: expand responsible financing outcomes while maintaining robust risk-adjusted returns;
- **R** – Resilience: integrate and improve ESG performance across all interventions; and
- **O** – Optimisation: enhance financial efficiency, process effectiveness, and operational resilience.

Anchored on the SDGs and the ECOWAS 2050 Vision, the GRO Strategy seeks to identify interventions that will unlock the sub-region's growth potential by targeting critical growth poles and financing the construction of growth-enabling infrastructure. Strategy 2030 also aims to inject a chunk of resources towards private sector development, providing financing for SMEs, women-led and youth-led businesses and industrialisation initiatives, which have the potential to spur growth in other sectors as well.

While doing so, the Bank will aim to sustainably grow its loan book and balance sheet, thereby creating lasting value for its stakeholders. The expansion of the Bank's operations will be accompanied by a review and alignment of the requisite risk management and compliance frameworks to ensure consistency with internal policies while serving as a risk mitigant.

By way of resilience, the Bank will ensure that ESG considerations are central to project identification missions, project selection and financing. This will ensure that it draws the sub-region along the path of sustainable and inclusive development, which is

very important for achieving the SDGs and ECOWAS Vision 2050 goals. Furthermore, the concept of resilience also emphasises the importance of building a character of flexibility, agility, tenacity, and adaptability to confront the challenges our Member States face today, including the unknowns of the future. In effect, the Bank will reinvent itself as a future-ready organisation which understands the needs and aspirations of its clients and proffers solutions to them.

...the concept of resilience also emphasises the importance of building a character of flexibility, agility, tenacity, and adaptability to confront the challenges our Member States face...

The Bank will optimise its financials, operations and processes in a way that makes it efficient across the board. Intervening at scale with speed is a virtue the Bank will aspire to attain. This is necessary to ensure that interventions are not made belatedly, giving clients the assurance that disbursements will be done on time when all loan conditions are fulfilled.

To this end, the Bank will mobilise general and thematic resources to assist Member States to fulfil their development aspirations, including tackling the climate change menace and creating jobs for the youth. All resources shall be devoted towards ensuring the emergence of a stronger Bank and a stronger Community at the end of the Plan period.

This is our pledge!

Dr George Agyekum Donkor

President and Chairman of the Board of Directors

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The sub-region stands at a critical crossroads and must urgently change course to prioritise sustainable and inclusive growth. This shift is essential to create jobs for the growing population of youth and women, thereby addressing the twin challenges of unemployment and poverty, which are key drivers of frustration and social unrest. These factors also erode trust in democratic institutions, often culminating in political instability.

This is the stark reality confronting West Africa, and it is precisely what the Bank, in collaboration with its partners, aims to tackle through the “GRO” Strategy. The Bank seeks to accelerate growth in the sub-region by investing in high-impact sectors while integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles across its operations to deliver lasting value for internal and external stakeholders.

To achieve this, the Bank will mobilise resources, including ESG-focused financing, to confront social challenges and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change on its Member States. These resources will be directed toward promoting social equity and implementing climate mitigation and adaptation programs and projects, giving citizens a real opportunity to thrive.

Strategy Vision, Mission and Objectives

Strategy 2030 envisions building a competitive, socially responsible, and environmentally sustainable Bank that shapes a future where innovation, inclusivity, and efficiency drive long-term prosperity for all stakeholders.

The mission is to create a future-ready organisation that thrives on sustainable growth, embraces resilience rooted in ESG principles, and achieves operational excellence. It aims to deliver enduring value to stakeholders while making a positive impact on society and the environment.

The objectives of Strategy 2030 are as follows:

- accelerate sustainable growth;
- embed ESG and resilience across operations;
- optimise resources, processes and operations; and
- create enduring stakeholder value.

Alignment and Strategic Orientation

Strategy 2030 is anchored on fifteen (15) of the seventeen (17) United Nations (UN) SDGs – Goals 1-13, 15, and 17 – building on the success story of Strategy 2025 in not only aligning with the same but also achieving these goals. This is necessary because the SDGs offer a universal framework that mirrors the Bank’s ambitions of promoting inclusive economic growth, reducing poverty, and fostering sustainable development, as encapsulated in its Mission Statement.

Furthermore, Strategy 2030 is aligned with the ECOWAS Vision 2050, which aspires to “A fully integrated Community of peoples, living in a peaceful and prosperous region, with strong institutions and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, striving for inclusive and sustainable development” (ECOWAS Commission, 2021a). Strategy 2030 is aligned with the following ECOWAS Vision 2050 Pillars:

- Pillar 3: Economic integration and interconnectivity;
- Pillar 4: Transformation, inclusive and sustainable development; and
- Pillar 5: Social inclusion.

A Pact for Transformation

Strategy 2030 is anchored on three (3) strategic pillars, which have been developed from the strategic orientations of the Plan, as follows:

- Growth (G);
- Resilience (R); and
- Optimisation (O).

The abbreviation “GRO” points to the Bank’s resolve to invest to engender growth in Member States, pursue resilience objectives and optimise its operations, processes and finance, as expatiated below.

Growth

Strategy 2030 will pursue a pro-growth agenda, targeting the growth poles of Member States’ economies. This new business phase will scale investments, deepen impact, and strengthen financial sustainability. It will focus on private sector engagement as a cornerstone of the Plan, without neglecting key infrastructure financing in the public space. Allocating a greater share of resources toward private sector development will catalyse jobs, innovation and productivity. To this end, approximately 22 per cent of new commitments has been dedicated to SME financing to unlock growth, inclusivity, and job creation potential.

The Bank will commit resources to high-impact sectors aligned with national and regional development priorities, particularly in agriculture and agri-business, green transition, industry and infrastructure.

Resilience

The foundation of resilience lies in robust risk management, and the shift to a private sector focus necessitates strengthening credit risk assessment frameworks and enhancing portfolio monitoring. To this end, the Bank will enhance its credit, market, and operational risk frameworks by leveraging digital tools and stress testing. Furthermore, it will diversify loan portfolios and maintain adequate financial buffers to ensure that it can absorb losses without compromising liquidity.

The Plan embeds ESG objectives to foster sustainable development, thereby enhancing the resilience of Member States. Direct commitments to ESG themes in education, rural electrification, water provision, healthcare, and renewable energy come to approximately 41 per cent of total commitments over the Plan period.

Optimisation

The Bank will maximise efficiency, resource allocation, and impact across its operations, investments, and service delivery over the next five (5) years. It will work to achieve its poverty reduction mandate while maintaining financial sustainability and operational excellence. In summary, the optimisation objectives over the Plan period are as follows:

- Streamlining internal processes to reduce costs and improve turnaround times;
- Leveraging technology for better decision-making and risk management;
- Optimising the deployment of capital to sectors and projects with the highest developmental impact and financial viability;
- Enhancing portfolio diversification to balance risk and returns;
- Implementing performance measurement frameworks to monitor productivity and outcomes;
- Aligning human resources and institutional capabilities with strategic priorities;
- Ensuring that every intervention delivers measurable socio-economic benefits; and
- Using the blended finance mechanism and partnerships to amplify developmental reach.

Financing the Vision

The West African sub-region is beset with a myriad challenges, exacerbated by unfavourable global conditions, climate change and internal predicaments. These are the challenges the Bank seeks to confront over the next five (5) years, working with partners and clients. The Bank will intervene at scale in the following sectors to address these challenges:

- Agriculture and agri-business
- Transport and infrastructure
- Conventional and renewable energy
- Industry: agro and other industry
- Finance
- SMEs
- Education
- Health
- Water
- Hospitality and real estate

The Bank will mobilise ESG-themed resources to finance projects in these sectors to create resilience across Member States.

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (TOC) begins with the assumption that deploying capital and advisory services to priority sectors, while embedding ESG principles and improving operational efficiency, will generate both financial and developmental returns. Inputs include financial resources, skilled staff, digital systems, and ESG policies. These enable activities such as pipeline development, credit and risk assessments, ESG due diligence, capacity-building programmes, and process automation. These activities produce outputs like approved projects, ESG action plans, streamlined workflows, and most importantly, improved lives and livelihoods.



INTRODUCTION

The global economic and financial architecture has, since 2020, been buffeted by repeated shocks occasioned by a pandemic and geopolitical factors. While the causative factors are varied, the impacts on global economies have been similar across the board. The COVID-19 pandemic was a health scare situation which led to the closure of borders, triggering massive supply chain disruptions on a scale which had never been witnessed in human history and leading to a massive economic downturn. Economies started recovering in 2021 when borders were reopened, albeit slowly, and a semblance of normal economic activity was restored in 2021 with good prospects in 2022.

Then came the Russia-Ukraine war in February 2022, which heightened the COVID-era supply chain disruptions, with food and energy prices particularly taking a hit, leading to an inflationary spiral globally. Western countries and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), which are known for low inflation, breached inflation policy targets as a result, with monetary authorities scrambling to restore order. The monetary policy rate was hiked to contain inflationary pressures, leading to high borrowing costs, with less developed countries bearing the brunt of this policy on the international capital markets. Domestically, high interest rates meant that investors were attracted to government instruments, leading to a crowding out of the private sector.

Even though it did not have the same impact as the two (2) aforementioned events, the war in the Middle East did have episodic tolls on crude oil prices, with the associated insecurity affecting public policies and investment decisions.

In the West African Sub-Region, in addition to these global shocks, internal political upheavals, insecurity, climate change, and a debt crisis have pushed many countries to the brink, further ravaging economies and exacerbating the already deplorable living standards of people in many places.

The Sub-Region is at a precipice, and it is imperative that it changes course to focus on sustainable and

inclusive growth, with a view to creating jobs for the teeming youth and women to alleviate the twin canker of joblessness and poverty, which are ingredients for anger and social discontentment. These are also the elements that feed into a lack of trust in democracy, leading to political upheavals.

It is in moments like this that the Bank's mandate becomes all the more relevant. Using its convening powers to highlight the challenges that confront Member States, providing advice on mitigation measures and financing projects, the Bank will pursue pro-growth, pro-jobs, pro-environment, and pro-inclusive actions which will inure to the greater benefit of the West African population.

This is the reality that confronts the West African sub-region and which the Bank, working with its partners, seeks to address over the period of the implementation of Strategy 2030, also known as the "GRO" Strategy. The Bank seeks to accelerate growth in the sub-region by investing in high-impact growth sectors, while embedding environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles across its operations with the view to creating enduring value for stakeholders.

It is in moments like this that the Bank's mandate becomes all the more relevant. Using its convening powers to highlight the challenges that confront Member States, providing advice on mitigation measures and financing projects, the Bank will pursue pro-growth, pro-jobs, pro-environment, and pro-inclusive actions which will inure to the greater benefit of the West African population.

To this end, the Bank, through the implementation of Strategy 2030, will mobilise resources, including ESG-themed resources, to help address the social challenges and climate impacts that have adversely affected its Member States. These resources will be channelled into social equity as well as climate mitigation and adaptation programmes and projects to enable citizens to have a fighting chance.

01

PART I
**SOCIO-ECONOMIC
ENVIRONMENT**

1.1. GLOBAL CONTEXT

1.1.1. Divergent Growth Patterns Across Economies

The global economy continued to expand in 2024, albeit with persistent divergence across major regions. Growth reached 3.3 per cent in 2024, supported by easing supply-chain pressures, moderating inflation, and resilient services activity. However, the global outlook remains subdued, with growth expected to edge down to 3.2 per cent in 2025 and 3.1 per cent in 2026 as the effects of tight monetary conditions, geopolitical tensions, and soft global trade weigh on economic performance (Table 1).

The stability of headline global growth masks widening differences between major economic blocs. Advanced economies face structurally weaker momentum due to ageing populations, high real interest rates, and sluggish productivity growth, while Emerging Market and Developing Economies (EMDEs) remain the main contributors to global output expansion despite increasingly heterogeneous performance within the group. Global growth remains below historical averages, reflecting the cumulative impact of repeated shocks since 2020 and limited policy space in many economies.

Table 1: Global Real GDP Growth (per cent)

Region / Country Group	2024	2025 (proj.)	2026 (proj.)
Global Economy	3.3	3.2	3.1
Advanced Economies	1.8	1.6	1.6
United States	2.8	2.0	2.1
Euro Area	0.9	1.2	1.1
EMDEs	4.3	4.2	4.0

Source: Actual 2024; Projections 2025–2026 — IMF WEO October 2025

1.1.2. Advanced Economies: Slowing Momentum Amid Persistent Constraints

Advanced economies recorded 1.8 per cent growth in 2024, buoyed by easing inflation and gradual normalisation in energy and goods markets. However, multiple structural and cyclical factors continue to constrain the growth outlook. Monetary policy remains restrictive as inflation, though declining, still exceeds targets in several large economies. High borrowing costs continue to suppress investment and interest-sensitive consumption, while demographic ageing and sluggish productivity trends limit medium-term prospects.

Growth is expected to weaken to 1.6 per cent in both 2025 and 2026, reflecting subdued domestic demand and muted external conditions. A key feature of the current cycle is the widening divergence between North America and Europe: the United States continues to expand at a faster pace due to robust labour markets and stronger household balance sheets, whereas Europe's recovery remains vulnerable to energy price volatility, weak industrial activity, and policy fragmentation.

1.1.3. United States: Moderation After a Strong 2024

The United States grew by 2.8 per cent in 2024, significantly stronger than most advanced economies. Solid job creation, strong consumer spending, and investment in technology-intensive sectors, supported activity. However, the environment is shifting toward moderation. Growth is projected to ease to 2.0 per cent in 2025 before edging up slightly to 2.1 per cent in 2026 as financial conditions gradually loosen.

Inflation remains above the Federal Reserve's 2.0 per cent target, limiting the scope for aggressive monetary easing. Elevated real interest rates are restraining residential investment and slowing the pace of consumption growth. Fiscal consolidation pressures are also building, which may temper government-supported demand. While the U.S. maintains a clear growth advantage over other

major advanced economies, the cycle ahead is characterised by a gradual cooling from the unusually strong post-pandemic momentum.

1.1.4. Euro Area: A Weak Recovery with Limited Momentum

The Euro Area expanded by 0.9 per cent in 2024, reflecting modest improvements in consumer spending and services activity but continued weakness in industrial production. Elevated energy costs, tight financing conditions, and reduced household purchasing power significantly hindered growth.

Projections point to a moderate recovery, with growth expected at 1.2 per cent in 2025 before softening slightly to 1.1 per cent in 2026. The improvement in 2025 reflects disinflation, a gradual easing of monetary policy, and a rebound in external demand. However, structural challenges persist: ageing populations, low productivity growth, wide differences in fiscal space across member states, and lingering energy vulnerabilities continue to limit the region's medium-term growth potential. The Euro Area remains particularly sensitive to geopolitical shocks that may disrupt energy markets or trade flows.

1.1.5. Emerging Market and Developing Economies: Still the Main Engine of Global Growth

EMDEs grew by 4.3 per cent in 2024 and are projected to expand by 4.2 per cent in 2025 and 4.0 per cent in 2026, continuing to contribute the bulk of global growth. The region's performance is characterised by stronger demographics, improving supply conditions, and easing inflation in several large economies.

Key factors shaping the EMDE outlook include:

1. Broad-based disinflation improving real incomes: Lower food and energy prices have supported consumption in many economies, while tighter policies earlier in the cycle helped contain inflation expectations.

2. Investment recovery in resource-rich economies: Commodity exporters are benefiting from improved production capacity and easing supply bottlenecks, though price volatility remains a key risk.

3. Strong momentum in large Asian and some African economies: Rapid population growth, urbanisation, and expanding digital and services sectors continue to underpin growth in these regions. However, the aggregate figures mask considerable variation. Several EMDEs face severe external financing pressures, high debt burdens, political instability, and climate-related shocks. For these economies, tighter global financial conditions and limited access to affordable external financing pose major constraints on growth prospects.

1.2. SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA CONTEXT

1.2.1. Performance of Major Economies

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) continues to demonstrate resilience despite a complex global environment marked by tighter financial conditions, trade fragmentation, and elevated geopolitical risks. The October 2025 World Economic Outlook (WEO) projects real GDP growth of 4.1 per cent in 2025, rising modestly to 4.4 per cent in 2026 (Table 2), supported by the easing of inflation, gradual recovery in private consumption, improved agricultural output, and ongoing reforms in several large economies. This outlook represents a 0.5-percentage-point upward revision relative to the April 2025 forecast, largely driven by stronger-than-expected performance in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Kenya.

Nigeria has seen one of the most significant upward revisions. Growth is now projected at 3.9 per cent in 2025 and 4.2 per cent in 2026, compared with earlier projections of 3.0 per cent. The improved outlook reflects increased crude processing capacity following the ramp-up of the Dangote Refinery, ongoing improvements in foreign-exchange liquidity, stabilisation of the Naira, and recovery of consumption

as inflation gradually moderates. Nevertheless, Nigeria continues to experience very high inflation, projected at 23.0 per cent in 2025 and 22.0 per cent in 2026, which sharply erodes real incomes and weighs on consumer demand despite nominal GDP improvements.

South Africa is projected to grow by 1.1 per cent in 2025 and 1.2 per cent in 2026, continuing a long-standing pattern of low growth driven by persistent structural bottlenecks, including energy and logistic constraints, elevated sovereign-risk premiums, and weak private-sector confidence. Even with slight upward revisions relative to mid-year projections, South Africa's growth remains far below the level required to materially reduce unemployment or poverty.

Other major economies in the Region present mixed dynamics. Ethiopia and Kenya are expected to accelerate moderately as inflation recedes and the effects of past policy tightening fade, while Angola's recovery remains constrained by oil-sector underperformance and weak investment.

Table 2: Sub-Saharan Africa: Real GDP Growth Projections (per cent)

Country/Region	2024	2025 (proj.)	2026 (proj.)
Sub-Saharan Africa	3.8	4.1	4.4
Nigeria	2.9	3.9	4.2
South Africa	0.8	1.1	1.2
Angola	-2.1	1.7	2.5
Kenya	5.0	5.2	5.6
Ethiopia	7.0	6.5	6.8

Source: IMF WEO October 2025

1.2.2. Overlapping Vulnerabilities Threaten Stability

Despite headline growth resilience, SSA's macroeconomic outlook remains clouded by overlapping monetary, financial, external, and fiscal vulnerabilities.

1.2.3. Monetary and Financial Pressures

Inflation has eased from 2022–2023 peaks but remains elevated in several economies, keeping real interest rates low or negative and limiting policymakers' ability to ease monetary policy. Currency volatility persists, particularly in countries with shallow foreign exchange markets or elevated external imbalances. Risks in the banking sector have increased due to rising non-performing loans and limited credit growth to the private sector.

1.2.4. External Vulnerabilities

The external environment remains challenging. Global trade growth is subdued, commodity markets remain volatile, and concessional financing is insufficient to meet the Region's needs. Oil prices are projected to decline by 3.7 per cent in 2026, weighing on oil-exporting economies such as Nigeria and Angola, while providing some relief to oil-importing countries.

1.2.5. Fiscal Stress and Rising Debt Burdens

Fiscal deficits remain elevated across the Region. The average SSA fiscal deficit is projected at 4.6 per cent of GDP in 2025, driven by weak revenue mobilisation, extensive subsidy needs, and mounting security expenditures. Public debt in SSA is expected to stabilise around 65 per cent of GDP, although debt distress risks remain high or moderate-to-high in over half the Region.

1.2.6. Aid Decline Disproportionately Affects Low-Income Countries

Official Development Assistance (ODA) fell by 9.0 per cent in 2024, with a similar decline projected for 2025. For low-income countries, many experiencing limited market access and elevated risk premiums,

these reductions exacerbate already-tight financing conditions. Growth in the poorest SSA countries is expected to remain two percentage points below the regional average as a result of the contraction in aid and conflict-related disruptions.

Fragile and conflict-affected states continue to diverge sharply from the rest of the Region, with widening gaps in income, social outcomes, and institutional capacity.

1.2.7. Labour Market Weakness and Persistent Productivity Challenges

Demographic pressures continue to outpace job creation. Unemployment remains high, especially among youth, and employment growth remains concentrated in low-productivity informal sectors. Labour productivity growth remains negative or near zero across many economies due to structural impediments, chronically low investment in physical and human capital, and limited technological diffusion. This weak productivity performance remains one of the Region’s most significant structural obstacles to sustained poverty reduction.

1.3. ECOWAS CONTEXT

1.3.1. Regional Growth Dynamics and Projections

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Region grew by 5.1 per cent in 2024, accelerating from 3.9 per cent in 2023, driven by strong growth in Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, and Benin, as well as moderate improvements in Nigeria (Table 3). Growth is projected to moderate slightly to 5.0 per cent in 2025 before increasing to 5.4 per cent in 2026 (EBID, 2025). These projections reflect a combination of easing inflation, improved agricultural performance, and the gradual materialisation of reform dividends in key economies, alongside downside risks from global uncertainty and regional security pressures.

Table 3: ECOWAS: Real GDP Growth Projections (per cent)

Region/ Economy	2024	2025 (proj.)	2026 (proj.)
ECOWAS (overall)	5.1	5.0	5.4
WAEMU	6.1	6.2	5.6
WAMZ+	3.9	3.4	3.7
AES (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger)	6.1	5.0	5.1
Nigeria	3.4	3.0	3.2
Côte d’Ivoire	6.0	6.3	6.3
Senegal	6.7	8.1	4.3
Benin	6.5	6.4	6.3
Ghana	5.7	4.3	4.8

Source: West African Development Outlook, 2025

Note: WAMZ+ is the West African Monetary Zone (i.e. The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) plus Cabo Verde

Growth in the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) Zone strengthened to 6.1 per cent in 2024, with robust contributions from Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, and Benin. The monetary union framework, including a fixed exchange rate to the Euro, has contributed to macroeconomic stability. Growth is projected at 6.2 per cent in 2025, before moderating slightly in 2026.

Growth in the West African Monetary Zone plus Cabo Verde (WAMZ+) improved to 3.9 per cent in 2024, supported by a relatively strong growth in Nigeria. Persistent inflation and exchange rate pressures, however, continue to constrain the medium-term outlook for GDP growth, which is projected to slow to 3.4 per cent in 2025, before rebounding to 3.7 per cent in 2026.

The Alliance of Sahel States (AES), comprising Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, recorded a 6.1 per cent growth in 2024. However, projections indicate a moderation to 5.0 per cent in 2025 and 5.1 per cent in 2026, amid ongoing security challenges and political uncertainty.

1.3.2. Inflation Dynamics: Progress but Persistent Divergence

Inflation across ECOWAS declined from 20.8 per cent in 2023 to 13.7 per cent in 2024, reflecting easing food and fuel prices, tighter monetary policies, and improved supply conditions. Further declines are expected, with inflation projected to fall to 11.8 per cent in 2025 and 9.6 per cent in 2026.

However, divergence between zones remains significant:

- WAEMU and Cabo Verde: Inflation averaged 2.8 per cent in 2024 and is projected to remain under 3 per cent through to 2026.
- WAMZ: Inflation remained elevated, with Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone posting rates above 20 per cent in 2024. However, softening food and energy prices as well as easing exchange rate pressures have turned the tide in favour of these economies, with inflation declining drastically in 2025. Ghana and Sierra Leone attained single-digit inflation at different points in 2025, while Nigeria's inflation declined remarkably from more than 24 per cent in January to 16.05 per cent in October.

The inflation divergence between the two blocs complicates convergence efforts within the Community and poses challenges for the long-term goal of monetary integration.

1.3.3. Fiscal Developments and Rising Debt Pressures

The regional fiscal deficit widened from 4.6 per cent of GDP in 2023 to 4.8 per cent in 2024, driven by higher social and security-related expenditures and weak revenue mobilisation in several Member

States. Gradual consolidation is expected, with the deficit projected to narrow to 3.9 per cent in 2025 and 3.6 per cent in 2026 (EBID, 2025).

The regional debt-to-GDP ratio rose from 56.5 per cent in 2023 to 60.7 per cent in 2024. Although still below the ECOWAS convergence ceiling of 70 per cent, several Member States – Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, and Togo – exceeded this threshold. Debt service burdens have increased sharply as a result, narrowing the fiscal space for investment.

1.3.4. External Sector Developments

The ECOWAS current account deficit narrowed to 0.3 per cent of GDP in 2024 from 2.8 per cent in 2023. It is projected to deteriorate marginally to 0.4 per cent of GDP in 2025 before improving to 0.0 per cent of GDP in 2026. The decline in 2025 reflects lower oil export receipts and import demand pressures, even though gold and cocoa (which are major export commodities) prices have remained elevated.

Intra-regional trade remains structurally low. In 2024, it accounted for 8.3 per cent of total ECOWAS trade, averaging 8.6 per cent between 2022 and 2024. This is marginally below pre-COVID levels, reflecting ongoing non-tariff barriers, infrastructure gaps, and limited production complementarities.

1.3.5. Regional Fragmentation Risks: The AES Withdrawal

The departure of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger from ECOWAS introduces uncertainty regarding trade integration, labour mobility, and infrastructure coordination. The potential implications include:

- Trade disruptions and higher transaction costs;
- Reduced labour mobility;
- Fragmentation of regional infrastructure projects; and
- Weakened security cooperation across the Sahel corridor.

These risks compound existing economic vulnerabilities and could erode the momentum of regional integration.

1.3.6. Labour Markets and Productivity

Unemployment in ECOWAS rose from 5.2 per cent in 2023 to 5.6 per cent in 2024, with projections of 5.8 per cent in 2025 and 6.0 per cent in 2026. Youth unemployment remains significantly higher than the regional average.

Labour productivity remained negative in 2023 (-0.73 per cent) and only marginally improved in 2024 (-0.09 per cent). A modest recovery is projected – 0.15 per cent in 2025 and 0.28 per cent in 2026 – but these gains remain insufficient to meaningfully boost incomes without deeper structural reforms.



PART II

02 **DEVELOPMENT
CHALLENGES WITHIN
THE WEST AFRICAN
REGION**

2.1. INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIT: PERSISTENT AND GROWING

West Africa needs substantial infrastructure investment, especially in transport and digital networks, to support productive transformation. By 2040, the Region would have to invest about USD 20 billion per year – roughly 3.6 per cent of its 2024 GDP, well below the continental benchmark of 5.6 per cent – to catch up with more advanced peer regions, with such investment estimated to raise annual GDP growth by 5.4 percentage points (AfDB, 2023; OECD, 2024). Although West African countries have slightly higher transport infrastructure density (2.6 kilometres per km²) and water access (73.1 per cent of the population) than the African average, they lag in energy infrastructure and digital access. Cabo Verde is comparatively well endowed in transport and energy due to its island status and historically high public spending on transport (for example, 13 per cent of GDP in 2011), while Burkina Faso, Niger and Sierra Leone record the lowest water and digital access, and Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Niger the weakest transport and energy stock (ICA, 2023).

2.1.1. Transport Infrastructure

Road Infrastructure

The ECOWAS transport infrastructure deficit remains severe and continues to constrain regional integration and economic development. As at 2024, more than 70 per cent of roads in ECOWAS were unpaved, limiting all-weather accessibility and imposing significant transaction costs on intra-regional trade (World Bank, 2024; OECD, 2025). Road quality indicators show minimal improvement, with most Member States (excluding The Gambia, Ghana, and Cabo Verde) continuing to record quality scores below four on a 7-point scale (World Economic Forum, 2020; Ferdi, 2016).

Road transport is the backbone of mobility in ECOWAS, carrying the overwhelming majority

of people and freight and thus underpinning the sector's role in regional growth and integration. While development outcomes depend on a mix of transport modes, estimates suggest that roughly 80 per cent (ECOWAS Commission, 2022) of passenger and cargo movements use the road network, making its performance central to economic activity. The extent and condition of roads, together with the quality of related services, directly shape logistics costs, the ease of doing business, and how competitive ECOWAS firms are in both intra-regional and international markets.



Railway

The ECOWAS rail network spans 10,745 km, but less than half (5,198 km) is operational, split between metric, cape, and standard gauges with relatively low axle-load capacities (AfDB, 2023; ECOWAS Commission, 2022). Rail systems are absent or barely functional in several countries, and in others they are largely limited to mining-related freight, leaving rail's share of regional trade transport at only about 1-2.4 per cent (ICA, 2023; World Bank, 2024).

Recent years have seen renewed interest in rail, aligned with the African Union's goal of cutting transport costs and supporting growth. The New

domestic rail links are in good condition but remain weakly connected to regional road corridors, limiting their integration impact (AUDA–NEPAD, 2023; AfDB, 2023). The ECOWAS Infrastructure Master Plan promotes rehabilitation and service upgrades, including bi-national lines such as Dakar-Bamako and Abidjan-Ouagadougou-Kaya, which are expected to significantly expand freight volumes by around 2045 (ECOWAS Commission, 2022; AUDA–NEPAD, 2023).



Maritime Transport

Maritime transport in the ECOWAS Region plays a critical role in trade and connectivity but still faces significant structural challenges, including persistent port congestion and operational inefficiencies that keep average container dwell times in many West African ports in the low- to mid-teens of days, well above international benchmarks of around 3–5 days and thus raising costs for importers and exporters (Refas & Cantens, 2011; World Bank, 2012). Although the Region's liner shipping connectivity index remains below the world average, it has improved over the past decade, with countries such as Ghana and, especially, Togo showing strong connectivity performance despite Togo operating only a single major commercial port in Lomé (UNCTAD, 2022; SvedbergOpen, 2024; TogoFirst, 2023).

The Port of Lomé has emerged as one of the most efficient and best connected hubs in West Africa, benefitting from targeted infrastructure investments and operational reforms, while other large ports including Tema, Abidjan, Dakar, Lagos and Conakry continue to struggle with congestion, long dwell times and high transaction costs (Refas & Cantens, 2011; Nwokedi, 2022; World Bank, 2011b). At the same time, maritime transport is a growing source of carbon dioxide emissions linked to regional trade flows, prompting ECOWAS states to work with international partners to mobilise finance, technology transfer and capacity building to improve security, efficiency and environmental sustainability in the maritime domain (UNCTAD, 2022; ECOWAS Commission, 2022).

2.1.2. Energy Infrastructure



Electricity access in ECOWAS remains severely constrained, with only about two-fifth of the population connected in 2023, and wide disparities between relatively high access coastal economies (such as Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, both above 80 per cent) and structurally lagging states like Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau, where access hovers around or below one-third of the population (Table 4). This uneven progress reflects differences

in long-term infrastructure investment, utility performance, governance quality, and population geography, with better-resourced, denser coastal countries more able to extend and operate grid systems than smaller, capital-constrained and more dispersed economies. Limited and slow improvements in access – equating to less than one percentage point gain per year at the regional level – undermine poverty reduction, productive employment, and the delivery of health, education, and digital services, and they weaken the foundations

for regional economic integration by raising costs and risks for cross-border trade, manufacturing, and ICT-driven activities. Addressing these gaps will require prioritising power infrastructure in national and regional planning, scaling up finance (including concessional resources) for generation and networks in low-access states, improving utility efficiency and cost recovery, and accelerating deployment of renewables and cross-border interconnections to close the infrastructure inequality that currently fragments the ECOWAS Region.

Table 4: Access to Electricity in Selected ECOWAS Member States (%), 2020-2023

ECOWAS Member State	2020	2021	2022	2023	4-Year Change
Côte d'Ivoire	88.0	92.0	95.0	97.0	+9.0pp
The Gambia	62.2	63.7	65.4	65.4	+3.2pp
Ghana	85.3	87.0	88.8	88.9	+3.6pp
Guinea-Bissau	35.7	35.7	35.7	35.7	0.0pp
Liberia	27.6	29.9	31.8	31.8	+4.2pp
Nigeria	55.4	59.5	60.5	61.3	+5.9pp
Sierra Leone	26.2	27.5	29.4	30.5	+4.3pp
ECOWAS Regional Average	54.8	57.9	58.1	58.6	+3.8pp

2.1.3. ICT Infrastructure

Internet penetration in ECOWAS has increased but remains insufficient for deep digital transformation, with usage reaching about 39 per cent in 2024 and strong country disparities; Ghana, Nigeria, and Cabo Verde exceed 50 per cent penetration, while countries such as Niger, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, and Liberia remain far below this threshold (PASAS-MINKA, 2024). Internet services are also relatively expensive: 1GB of mobile data averages USD3.20, representing roughly 5–7 per cent of daily income for low-income users, and monthly broadband packages can exceed USD50 in some Member States, including Togo, thereby excluding

a large share of households from regular access (African Telecommunications Union, 2024; African Futures, 2024).

The COVID-19 pandemic hastened the uptake of digital tools for education, commerce, and public services. This makes gaps in ICT infrastructure and affordability a binding constraint and increases the risk that countries with weak and costly connectivity will fall further behind in the digital economy (African Futures, 2024). At the same time, ECOWAS has recorded notable gains in ICT infrastructure, with the Telecommunication Infrastructure Index rising by about 125 per cent between 2018 and 2024 and

contributing to an estimated 28 per cent improvement in the E-Government Development Index, supported by wider broadband coverage, denser mobile networks, and the spread of digital payment and interoperability platforms (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2024). Despite this progress and the presence of enabling legal and regulatory frameworks, the Region still trails North Africa and SADC in telecom infrastructure performance, underscoring the need for continued investment and reform (World Bank, 2011a; African Futures, 2024).

2.2. INDUSTRIALISATION: LIMITED PROGRESS ON STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION

The structural transformation of ECOWAS economies continues to disappoint, with the industrial sector remaining underdeveloped relative to the Region's potential and development needs. The manufacturing sector contributed only 9.8 per cent of regional GDP in 2024, down from 10.2 per cent in 2019, indicating ongoing deindustrialisation. Employment in industry averaged just 13 per cent of total employment across ECOWAS in 2024, while the sector's contribution to GDP averaged only 19 per cent.

This pattern reflects several persistent constraints:

- **High Production Costs:** Expensive and unreliable electricity, poor transport infrastructure, and limited access to affordable financing impose prohibitive costs on manufacturing activities, rendering ECOWAS producers uncompetitive relative to imports.
- **Limited Value Addition:** ECOWAS continues to export primarily raw commodities rather than processed goods. Cocoa beans are exported for processing elsewhere despite the presence of cocoa-producing countries; gold ore is exported for refining abroad; cotton is shipped out for textile production in Asia. This pattern locks the Sub-Region into low-value segments of global value chains.

- **Weak Linkages:** Limited backward and forward linkages between agriculture and industry constrain the development of agro-processing activities that could generate employment and add value to primary production.
- **Skills Gaps:** Shortages of technical and managerial skills constrain industrial development. The limited emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education results in an inadequate supply of the skilled workforce necessary for modern manufacturing.

The low level of industrialisation perpetuates ECOWAS economies' vulnerability to commodity price fluctuations and external shocks, undermines job creation for rapidly growing working-age populations, and constrains productivity growth and income convergence.

2.3. INTRA-REGIONAL TRADE: PERSISTENT UNDERPERFORMANCE

Despite decades of regional integration efforts, intra-regional trade within ECOWAS has been disappointing, averaging 8.6 per cent over the last three years. However, if the three AES countries are excluded, this intra-regional trade reduces to an average of 5.2 per cent, indicating a shortfall of 3.4 percentage points (EBID, 2025). This compares unfavourably with other regional economic communities: the Southern African Development Community (SADC) recorded intra-regional trade of 21 per cent, the East African Community (EAC) 15 per cent, and even the Arab Maghreb Union 12 per cent as of 2023.

Multiple factors explain this persistent underperformance:

- **Non-Tariff Barriers:** Despite the elimination of formal tariffs under the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme, numerous non-tariff barriers persist, including roadblocks, unofficial payments, cumbersome customs procedures, and inconsistent application of rules of origin.

- **Poor Transport Connectivity:** Inadequate transport infrastructure raises the costs and time required to move goods within the Region. It is often cheaper and faster to ship goods from Europe or Asia to West African ports than to transport them overland between neighbouring ECOWAS countries.
- **Production Structure Similarities:** Many Member States produce similar commodities for export to external markets rather than complementary goods that would facilitate intra-regional trade. Limited industrialisation means there is insufficient demand within the Region for each other's products.
- **Payment Systems Constraints:** Despite progress on payment system integration, cross-border transactions remain cumbersome and costly. The absence of efficient regional payment platforms and foreign exchange management challenges discourages intra-regional trade.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) offers opportunities to enhance intra-regional trade through expanded market access, but implementation has been slower than anticipated. As at 2025, only a fraction of potential AfCFTA trade has materialised, constrained by the same infrastructure, regulatory, and production structure challenges that have historically limited intra-ECOWAS trade.

2.4. PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT: CONTINUED CONSTRAINTS

Private sector development in ECOWAS remains constrained by multiple binding factors. Private investment averaged only 19.6 per cent of GDP across ECOWAS in 2024, up from 14.5 per cent in 2022 but well below the 25-30 per cent levels observed in rapidly developing economies in Asia.

Access to Finance: Domestic credit to the private sector averaged 18.7 per cent of GDP in 2024, with

substantial variation: while countries like Cabo Verde (53.5 per cent) and Senegal (29.7 per cent) have relatively developed credit markets, Sierra Leone (3.7 per cent), The Gambia (8.7 per cent), and Guinea (9.1 per cent) have severely constrained private sector credit. High interest rates – averaging 18-22 per cent in several Member States – and stringent collateral requirements place financing beyond the reach of most Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs; IMF, 2024).

Tax burden: Corporate income taxes averaged 27.2 per cent in 2024 in ECOWAS, with six Member States reaching 30 per cent (World Bank, 2024a; PwC, 2025). With six Member States at 30 per cent, it signals a relatively high statutory burden by emerging market standards and is close to or above the global effective average of roughly 20-21 per cent (OECD, 2024). In a region where informality is large and profit margins are often thin, this level of taxation can weigh heavily on formal private firms (OECD, 2024; AfDB, 2024).

The average private sector entity contributes approximately 45 per cent of profit as total tax and mandatory contributions across ECOWAS, representing one of the highest tax burdens globally for businesses. While governments face legitimate revenue mobilisation imperatives, the current tax burden discourages formalisation and investment.

Regulatory Environment: Doing business remains challenging across most of the ECOWAS Member States. The average time to start a business exceeded 30 days in 2024, obtaining construction permits required an average of 180 days, and enforcing contracts took an average of 600 days. These regulatory frictions impose high costs on business operations and discourage investment, particularly foreign direct investment.

Credit Information: The level of credit information in ECOWAS remains shallow, and the quality of credit information is generally low to moderate, although there has been some institutional progress since

2020. This weak credit information environment continues to constrain banks' ability to assess risk and expand lending, especially to SMEs. The World Bank "depth of credit information index" (0-8) shows that ECOWAS countries have historically averaged around two (2), indicating limited coverage, scope and accessibility of credit data from registries and bureaus.

Low depth and quality of credit information increase information asymmetries, leading banks to tighten lending standards, rely heavily on collateral and concentrate credit on larger, well-known clients, which restricts access to finance for smaller firms.

For ECOWAS private sector development, this means higher borrowing costs, more stringent collateral requirements and slower expansion of credit to productive sectors, limiting investment, firm growth and job creation despite broader financial sector reforms underway.

2.5. EDUCATION-EMPLOYMENT MISMATCH: WORSENING SKILLS GAP

Education levels in West Africa remain modest: on average, adults have completed only around 5.5 years of schooling, compared with roughly 6.7 years for Africa as a whole and substantially higher levels in other developing regions. When test scores are used to adjust for learning, students in some Sahelian countries effectively gain fewer than three years of quality schooling, which means that many pupils finish primary school without being able to read fluently or perform basic arithmetic, setting up a later disconnect between their qualifications and the competencies employers need (African Union Commission & OECD, 2024).

Only about 23 per cent of young West Africans have finished secondary or tertiary education, and roughly 9 per cent of secondary students are enrolled in Technical and Vocational Education and Training

(TVET) programmes, which severely constrain the pool of workers with recognised technical qualifications. At the same time, just under one-fifth of workers hold "skilled" jobs, while nearly four-fifths are undereducated relative to the skill levels their occupations ideally require, with rural residents and women particularly concentrated in low-productivity and vulnerable employment. Recent work on African labour markets underscores that growing aspirations for high-skilled work among the youth are not matched by the structure of employment, leaving many graduates underemployed or working outside their field of study (African Union Commission & OECD, 2024).

2.6. POVERTY, INEQUALITY, AND NON-INCLUSIVE GROWTH: LIMITED PROGRESS

West Africa continues to host a very large number of poor people, with several Sahelian countries recording poverty rates above 40 per cent in the early 2020s and little progress towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 by 2023. Experimental small area estimates show high and spatially concentrated poverty in countries such as Guinea, Mali and Niger, confirming that large pockets of the population remain structurally excluded from growth (Edochie et al., 2025).

Economic growth in West Africa has recovered to around 4.5 per cent annually since 2023, but per capita growth remains well below the 7 per cent SDG benchmark and has not generated sufficient quality jobs or significant poverty reduction, especially in coastal and Sahel economies. In several countries, growth has been driven by extractives, services and a narrow set of urban activities, while agriculture – where most poor people work – remains low productivity and underfinanced, reinforcing dualism between dynamic enclaves and a large vulnerable workforce.

UNECA's West Africa Sustainable Development Report notes that income inequality is persistently

high in major economies such as Nigeria and Ghana, with a small elite capturing a disproportionate share of income and wealth, and the poorest 20 per cent holding only a modest income share (UNECA, 2023). A 2024 Tax Justice Network Africa assessment for ECOWAS links rising inequalities to weak tax systems, illicit financial flows and limited redistributive spending, arguing that these dynamics erode the inclusiveness of growth (UNECA, 2023).

2.7. DEBT SUSTAINABILITY: HEIGHTENED CONCERNS

ECOWAS public debt has risen sharply from about 50.3 per cent of GDP in 2022 to roughly 56.5 per cent in 2023 and around 60.7 per cent in 2024, with WAEMU at about 65.1 per cent of GDP and WAMZ+ at 55.4 per cent (EBID, 2025). These ratios are projected to decline in 2025 for ECOWAS (58.2% of GDP), WAEMU (63.6% of GDP) and WAMZ+ (54.3% of GDP).

Despite these marginal improvements in debt and fiscal deficits, debt service has become a binding macro-fiscal constraint in ECOWAS, with many countries now spending more than a quarter of government revenue on servicing public debt, up from much lower levels before the pandemic; because borrowing has increasingly shifted towards more expensive domestic and commercial instruments in a high interest rate environment, interest bills have grown faster than economies or revenues, turning debt service into a key driver of fiscal stress (IMF, 2024; UN DESA, 2024; UNCTAD, 2024).

In this context, high and poorly managed external debt is associated with lower growth through higher borrowing costs and investment crowding out, raising the risk of a self-reinforcing cycle of weak growth, rising debt service and renewed borrowing. Recent regional and global assessments show that heavy debt service and heightened vulnerability to shocks in growth, global interest rates, exchange rates and security conditions persist, especially in low-income and fragile states in West Africa.

Without stronger domestic revenue mobilisation, higher-quality, growth-enhancing borrowing, and more resilience, inclusive growth, debt sustainability for West Africa will remain in doubt (IMF, 2024; UN DESA, 2024; UNCTAD, 2024).

2.8. CLIMATE CHANGE: INTENSIFYING VULNERABILITY

Climate change is making ECOWAS one of the world's most climate-vulnerable regions, with faster-than-historical warming, rising heat, and more frequent floods and droughts that already threaten agriculture, food security, and growth (Doherty et al., 2022; ECOWAS Commission, 2022). Nine West African countries are among the 30 most climate vulnerable globally, and climate impacts could cut regional GDP by up to 11.7 per cent by 2050, mainly through agriculture, even though West Africa emits only a small share of global greenhouse gases (ECOWAS Commission, 2022).

These risks are visible in more frequent flooding, deteriorating water security, coastal erosion around major cities, and ecosystem degradation, all of which undermine livelihoods and fiscal stability. ECOWAS has adopted a Regional Climate Strategy, Action Plan, and a 2024–2050 Regional Resilience Strategy to coordinate adaptation, early warning systems, and climate resilient agriculture and energy, but climate resilient spending and external climate finance remain far below estimated needs, leaving a large adaptation and resilience financing gap (ECOWAS Commission, 2022; AfDB, 2024).

2.9. SECURITY CHALLENGES: EXPANDING THREAT

Security conditions in West Africa have deteriorated since 2020, with terrorism and armed violence in the central Sahel increasingly spreading into Northern Benin, Togo, and Côte d'Ivoire, undermining economic activity and governance in affected areas (UN News, 2020; Security Council Report, 2025a). Conflict has

displaced several million people across the Sahel and ECOWAS Region, straining host communities, disrupting livelihoods, and reducing productive capacity (OCHA, 2025; Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2025; UNHCR, 2025). Insecurity also forces business closures, reduces agricultural production, and leaves large areas of arable land uncultivated, while repeated attacks on roads, bridges, telecommunication, and energy infrastructure raise reconstruction costs and disrupt markets and basic services (IOM & Partners, 2025; Security Council Report, 2025a).

Rising insecurity has driven sharp increases in military and security spending in Sahel countries, narrowing fiscal space for social and economic investment (Military Africa, 2025). Heightened violence and uncertainty deter domestic and foreign investors, raising risk premiums, while displacement and trade disruptions transmit economic costs and development setbacks across the wider ECOWAS Region (Security Council Report, 2025b; Yabi, 2024).



03

PART III

BLUEPRINT FOR CONSOLIDATION AND SCALING UP

Strategy 2030 builds on the successes of the preceding plan. It seeks to consolidate the gains in 2020–2025, while streamlining the Bank’s operations to drive phenomenal growth and sustainable development that positively impacts the lives of the West African population. The next five years will witness improvements in every facet of the Bank’s operations, which will translate into an enhanced customer experience for clients. The Bank will also build resilience to known and unknown shocks, drawing lessons from the 2020–2025 period, which was marked by numerous and persistent shocks.

3.1. STRATEGY VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The vision of Strategy 2030 is to build a competitive, socially responsible, and environmentally sustainable Bank which aims to shape a future where innovation, inclusivity, and efficiency drive long-term prosperity for all stakeholders.

The mission is to create a future ready organisation that thrives through sustainable growth, embraces resilience grounded in ESG principles, and achieves operational optimisation. It aims to deliver long term value for stakeholders while contributing positively to society and the environment.

To achieve the vision and mission of the Plan, the Bank will:

Growth: seek to intervene meaningfully in scale and speed in Member States to foster economic growth and prosperity for all, leading to a growth in the Bank’s loan book and balance sheet in the process. This will require investment in talent and technology while pursuing partnerships and opportunities to unlock new prospects.

Resilience: incorporate ESG principles into operations and decision-making processes by reducing the environmental footprint. This will be achieved through responsible resource management, fostering inclusivity, equity, and ethical leadership, and building

adaptive systems that withstand economic, social, and climate challenges.

Optimisation: streamline processes to enhance efficiency and agility, continuous improvement in cost management and resource allocation, and strengthen governance and accountability for sustainable performance.

The objectives of Strategy 2030 are as follows:

- accelerate sustainable growth;
- embed ESG and resilience across operations;
- optimise resources, processes and operations; and
- create enduring stakeholder value.

The strategic plan phase will:

- improve governance by strengthening oversight, accountability, and decision-making structures to support scale;
- ensure predictable and resilient funding mechanisms for the new policy thrust;
- invest in digital systems, logistics, and human capital to support larger operations;
- leverage partnerships by expanding networks with funders, governments, and private sector actors to co-finance and co-deliver;
- streamline workflows by eliminating redundancies and automating where possible to reduce costs and improve speed;
- build leadership depth and recruit talent for scale; and
- identify and mitigate scaling risks to safeguard sustainability.

3.2. ALIGNMENT AND STRATEGIC ORIENTATION

Strategy 2030 is anchored on fifteen (15) of the seventeen (17) United Nations (UN) SDGs – Goals 1-13, 15, and 17 – building on the success story of Strategy 2025 in not only aligning with the same but also achieving these goals. This is necessary because the SDGs offer a universal framework that mirrors the Bank’s ambitions of promoting inclusive economic growth, reducing poverty, and fostering sustainable development, as encapsulated in its Mission Statement.

As if by design, the SDGs, as we know them, terminate in 2030 – the very year Strategy 2030 is set to end. It is therefore imperative that the Bank strives to achieve the aligned Goals to improve the lives and livelihoods of the West African population. The SDGs offer a structured lens through which the Bank can stay in lockstep with or even stay ahead of global trends such as climate resilience, digital inclusion, youth empowerment, and gender equity. This is all in a bid to ensure that the strategy remains adaptive, resilient, and forward-looking, making it globally relevant and locally impactful.

As if by design, the SDGs, as we know them, were originally designed to terminate in 2030, the very year Strategy 2030 is set to end. It is, therefore, imperative that the Bank strives to achieve the aligned Goals to improve the lives and livelihoods of the West African population

SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

According to the 2025 edition of the West African Development Outlook, West Africa accounted for a staggering 13.0 per cent of the global working poor (EBID, 2025). The Bank will work with its partners to actualise its mission of poverty alleviation by intervening in the vulnerable sectors of Member States’ economies and helping to create decent

jobs. Decent jobs, for example, will help reduce the Sub-Region’s share of global working poverty, which stands at 13 per cent of the global working poverty (EBID, 2025). Furthermore, the Bank will help to develop education infrastructure to promote access for all, creating opportunities for persons living in extreme poverty to improve their chances of social mobility and exit the poverty bracket.

SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Strategy 2030 will seek to allocate at least 12 per cent of committed operations over the plan period to agriculture and agro-industries with the goal of promoting sustainable agriculture and achieving food security. Apart from promoting food production and preservation, the Bank will also seek to commit resources to minimise food waste in the food chain, which ranges between 77 kg/per capita/year in Senegal and 113 kg/per capita/year in Nigeria (EBID, 2025), to improve food security in the Sub-Region. It is imperative to turn some attention towards reducing food waste, given that it detracts from the modest improvements in food production over recent years.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

The Bank will continue to support healthcare initiatives, which contribute to an improved general well-being of the population. This includes financing infrastructure development, the provision of medical equipment and drugs, and facilitating the training of healthcare professionals, among others, with the view to advancing maternal health, reversing under-5 mortality and improving public health. The Bank will dedicate no less than 7 per cent of its commitments target towards improving access to healthcare facilities and providing the requisite equipment and drugs towards improving quality healthcare delivery.

SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

West African adults are estimated to have completed an average of just 5.5 years of education, which is one of the lowest globally. Modern education

prepares graduates for the job market, increasing their chances of employability. Again, contemporary education teaches students to be innovative, a trait that not only equips them with entrepreneurship skills but also creates jobs to absorb some of the teeming unemployed youth in society.

The Bank will dedicate a minimum of 7 per cent of its commitments over the next five years to the provision of education infrastructure to improve both access and the quality of education delivery and educational outcomes. This is aimed at helping to create an equitable and knowledgeable society that fosters social mobility.

SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

During the period, the Bank will work towards progressing on internal and external gender equality benchmarks and empowering women and girls in a bid to narrow gender gaps. Internally, the Bank will refresh and implement its gender policy, which, among

others, will strengthen the mainstreaming of gender considerations during recruitment, promotions and project financing. Externally, the Bank will consider women-led businesses favourably while investing in businesses that impact women significantly in a bid to raise their standards of living.

The Bank will strategically focus on gender-responsive education financing gender and green economy, regional leadership, and mentorship programmes through partnerships with private sector actors, DFIs, and international organisations to further strengthen educational outcomes, support gender equality across the sub-region, and enhance its institutional reputation as a leader in innovation in these fields. These initiatives align with the Bank's overall goals, contributing to sustainable development and inclusive growth while ensuring that marginalised voices are included in shaping a resilient, future-ready generation that advances regional integration.

SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Water is a basic necessity. Water is life. However, access to potable water in the Sub-Region faces a complex web of challenges, many of which are deeply intertwined with environmental, infrastructural, and socio-political factors. Many communities lack basic infrastructure, such as reservoirs, treatment plants, and distribution networks, while existing systems often suffer from neglect, resulting in breakdowns and inefficiencies. Access to safely managed drinking water in West Africa ranges between 18 per cent and 48 per cent, with wide rural-urban disparities. The Bank has financed the development of basic water infrastructure across the Sub-Region, and Strategy 2030, in line with its social contract, will continue on this path, with no less than 6 per cent of committed projects being reserved for water provision.

SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Access to electricity in West Africa is a major challenge, with 58 per cent and 25 per cent of urban and rural dwellers, respectively, having access, while Ghana and Cabo Verde are the only countries with equitable urban-rural electricity access (Agoundedemba, Kim, & Kim, 2023). This has constrained economic growth and development, and, with deteriorating infrastructure and an exploding population, it is important to improve access to electricity to reach growth potentials. The Sub-Region has an abundance of sunshine, wind and water resources, which it can leverage for its green energy push. The Bank will continue to support sustainable energy security initiatives across the electricity value chain in the Sub-Region. The Bank will allocate no less than 15 per cent of new commitments for sustainable energy projects alone, while working with partners to build reliable generation, transmission and distribution of infrastructure to serve the population.

SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Member States were plagued by the adverse effects of COVID-19 during the development of Strategy 2025. Even though the worst phase of the pandemic is over, Member States have had to contend with recurring shocks since then, repressing the growth momentum envisaged for the recovery period. Strategy 2030 will prioritise the development of growth-enabling infrastructure, dedicating a minimum of 14 per cent of committed projects to transport infrastructure, for example.

Furthermore, the Bank will work with local financial institutions to support SMEs to expand and create decent jobs in Member States, with a minimum of 22 per cent of new commitments reserved for such interventions.

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

The Sub-Region lags behind many regions when it comes to industrialisation, with manufacturing contributing only 9.8 per cent of GDP in 2024. Major commodities like crude oil, cocoa, bauxite, gold, and diamonds, among others, leave the shores of the Sub-Region in their raw state due to a lack of the requisite infrastructure to support an active industrial hub. As a result, Member States do not earn as much as they should from the sale of these commodities. The Bank will support the industry sector, from SMEs to large-scale industries, to transform raw materials into finished and semi-finished products for both the local and international markets. The Bank will work to build linkages between the agriculture and industry sectors as a way of boosting shelf life and reducing food waste. In this regard, a minimum of 11 per cent of resources will be dedicated to agro-industry and other industrial interventions between 2026 and 2030, in addition to SME interventions, which favour industrial development.

SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Creating economic opportunities for women and the youth, which speak to inclusion, is a time-tested model for reducing inequalities. The Bank will continue to prioritise financing for women-led businesses and projects that benefit a good number of women and the youth, to continue to aspire for greatness. The Bank will also commit appreciable resources towards supporting countries which are struggling economically.

SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

The Sub-Region is beset with a gaping infrastructure deficit. Urban poverty is on the rise because of sprawling slums in city centres with appalling living conditions. The Bank will work with its partners to develop sustainable transport infrastructure and

public transport for the citizenry. New commitments in the area of transport infrastructure are pegged at about 14 per cent of the total amount in the next five years.

SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

The Bank will work with its partners and clients to reduce waste across the production-to-consumption cycle, while advancing responsible and sustainable consumption practices. Clients will be required to internalise these objectives in their projects at the design phase and will serve as one of the key considerations during the appraisal stage. The Bank will work towards promoting responsible paper, water and electricity use as its contribution towards the achievement of global sustainability benchmarks.

SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

The Bank will mobilise climate-themed financing for climate adaptation, resilience and mitigation projects to reduce environmental risks and promote sustainable development. It will accelerate funding for infrastructure and innovation that directly combats climate change and strengthens adaptive capacity, counteracting climate threats and fostering long-term resilience. The Bank will aggressively pursue renewable energy development, with a minimum of 15 per cent of commitments over the Plan period being dedicated to this cause.

SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

The Bank will mobilise resources that will enable it to intervene meaningfully in sustainability projects. It will prioritise projects that have zero to minimal adverse ecological impact through targeted interventions and financial instruments. For projects with the

slightest adverse environmental impact, they will be required to have a restoration plan to pristine conditions, with minimal adverse ecological impact.

SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

The Bank will focus on building effective partnerships, mobilising financial resources, and coordinating with stakeholders to develop enabling policies and workable financing frameworks that support sustainable development in the Sub-Region without overly burdening its clients. It will work to finance SDG-aligned projects through competitive models, including the use of blended finance to de-risk projects and attract key financiers, thereby catalysing critical development outcomes. Additionally, it will examine the use of innovative financing mechanisms, such as public-private partnerships, as a means of alleviating the debt burden of Member States.

As an ECOWAS institution, the Bank’s mandate enjoins it to pursue the growth and development of the s-Sub-r-Region while promoting integration. Vision 2050 is anchored on five (5) strategic pillars, as follows:

- Pillar 1: Peace, security and stability;
- Pillar 2: Governance and rule of law;
- Pillar 3: Economic integration and interconnectivity;
- Pillar 4: Transformation, inclusive and sustainable development; and
- Pillar 5: Social inclusion.

As a development finance institution, the Bank’s mandate directly links it to Pillars 3 to 5 and indirectly to Pillars 1 and 2.

Pillars 3 to 5 as well as the select SDGs are consistent with the growth and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) aspirations of the Bank, as enshrined in the theme of Strategy 2030, helping to:

- Embed sustainability into the Bank’s operations;
- Promote risk mitigation; and
- Enhance long-term value creation.



Pillar 3: Economic integration and interconnectivity

Integration is at the core of the Bank’s operations. Through financing infrastructure development, direct and indirect trade facilitation, and policy support, the Bank has worked hand-in-hand with Member States to lay the building blocks towards economic and monetary integration. During this Plan period, the Bank will intensify its interventions in the realm of infrastructure development – transport, electricity, education, health, water, among others – to facilitate productivity and human development. Moreover, it will support trade initiatives, such as the AfCFTA, and work with partners to facilitate the inter-state transit of goods.

Pillar 4: Transformation, inclusive and sustainable development

Under this pillar, the Bank will advance the pursuit of its poverty reduction mandate by supporting programmes and projects that foster inclusiveness, improve income levels, enhance living conditions and ensure environmental justice in West Africa. The Bank

will also seek to provide equal opportunities for all by investing in the education and health sectors, while helping to build resilience to adverse environmental impacts and global shocks.

Pillar 5: Social inclusion

The Bank will support initiatives that have women, the youth, and the vulnerable at their centre. Women and youth-led businesses will be given priority consideration in the Bank’s project approval process.

3.3. A PACT FOR TRANSFORMATION

The Bank is committed to fostering growth and development across the Sub-Region by providing loans, making equity investments, and offering advisory services to its clients. Over the next five (5) years, it will deepen its dedication to advancing the collective interests of the Sub-Region’s population through targeted interventions in Member States, guided by the framework of Strategy 2030. Strategy 2030 is anchored on three (3) strategic pillars, which have been developed from the strategic orientations of the Plan, as follows:

The abbreviation “GRO” points to the Bank’s resolve to grow in every area of endeavour over the next five (5) years. It also speaks to developing resilience internally and assisting Member States in building resilience to the never-ending cycle of shocks and climate events, among other things. Finally, the abbreviation stands for scaling up and accelerating towards new milestones based on the successes chalked up over the past five (5) years.



3.3.1. Growth

Over the life of Strategy 2025, the Bank more than doubled its loan book and nearly doubled its balance sheet. This aggressive growth is also reflected in its increased footprint in Member States, with some Member States witnessing an astronomical increase in both the volume and value of projects either wholly financed or co-financed by the Bank.

Strategy 2030 will pursue a pro-growth agenda, targeting the growth poles of Member States’

economies. This new business phase will scale investments, deepen impact, and strengthen financial sustainability. It will consolidate the gains made over the past five (5) years with a particular focus on private sector engagement as a cornerstone of the Plan, without neglecting key infrastructure financing in the public space. Allocating a greater share of resources towards private sector development will catalyse jobs, innovation and productivity. To this end, approximately 22 per cent of new commitments have been dedicated to SME financing to unlock growth, inclusivity, and job creation potential.

Even though governments in the Sub-Region are the largest single employers, a growing private sector creates jobs more quickly, helping to build a vibrant middle class and expanding the tax base in the process for revenue generation. Furthermore, an agile private sector accelerates the pace of economic diversification, enabling countries to move beyond dependence on a few sectors. This is achieved through innovation and the creation of competitive industries.

The Bank will commit resources to high-impact sectors aligned with national and regional development priorities, particularly in agriculture and agri-business, green transition, industry and infrastructure.

3.3.2. Resilience

The shocks experienced between 2020 and 2025 were a test of the Bank's resilience. It also heightened social inequality and governance challenges, with climate change continuing to ravage communities in the Sub-Region. Having gone through this phase, it is imperative to establish guardrails against both anticipated and unanticipated future shocks to ensure internal stability.

The foundation of resilience lies in robust risk management, and the shift to a private sector focus necessitates strengthening credit risk assessment frameworks and enhancing portfolio monitoring. To this end, the Bank will enhance its credit, market, and operational risk frameworks by leveraging

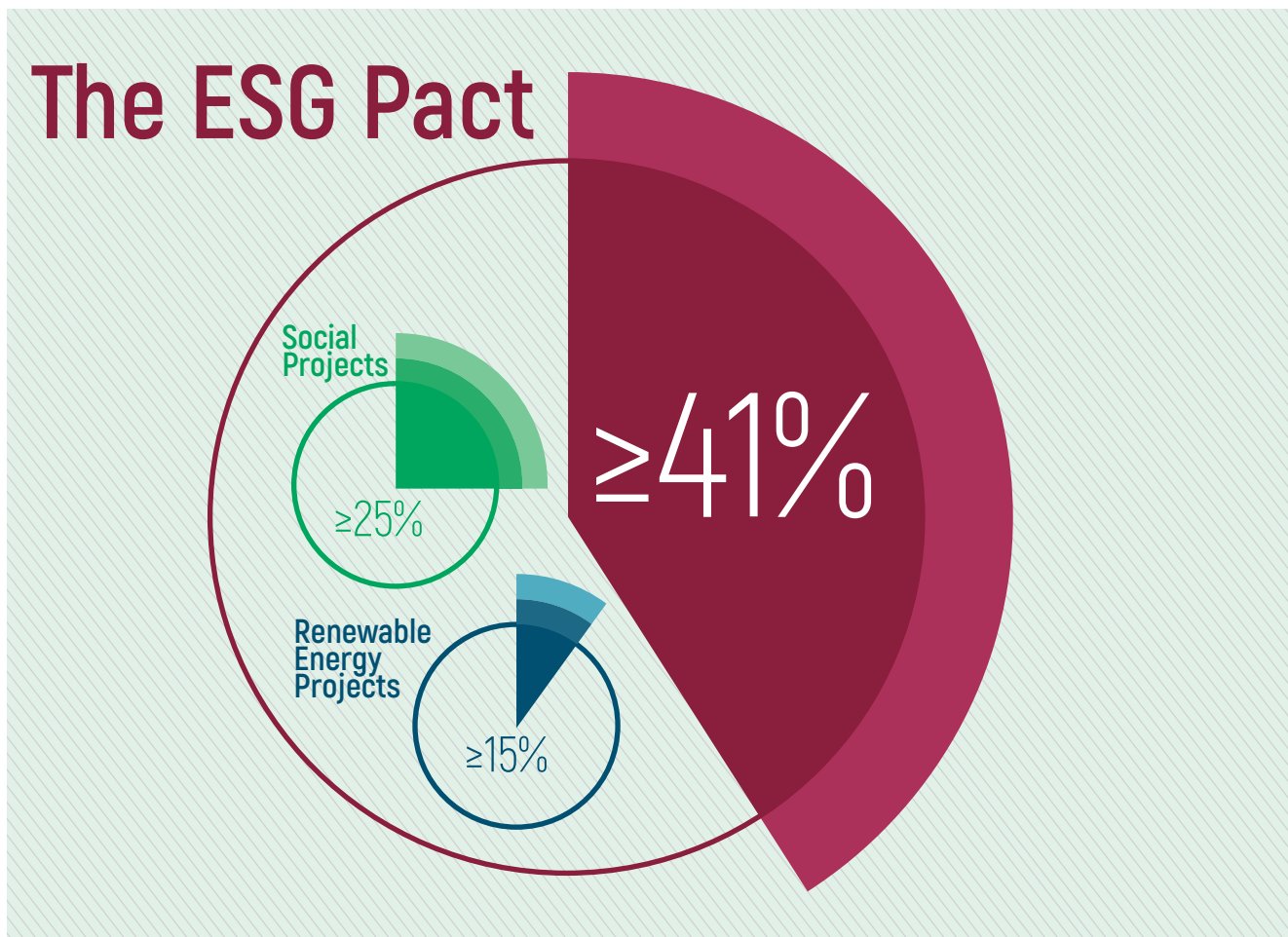
digital tools and stress testing. Furthermore, it will diversify loan portfolios and maintain adequate financial buffers to ensure that it can absorb losses without compromising liquidity.

In terms of technology, the Bank will prioritise investments in Digitisation, IT Security, Cloud infrastructure, and Artificial Intelligence to improve operational efficiency and customer experience. It will adopt advanced fraud detection systems and secure digital platforms to mitigate cyber risks. To stay ahead of the curve, the Bank will seek to automate its processes and procedures to enhance efficiency and speed.

Regarding its interventions, as part of its resilience strategy, the Plan embeds ESG objectives to foster sustainable development, thereby enhancing the resilience of economies, communities, and ecosystems. Direct commitments to ESG themes in education, rural electrification, water provision, healthcare, and renewable energy come to approximately 41 per cent of total commitments over the Plan period.

Environmental Stewardship

The Bank will finance clean energy projects such as solar, wind, and hydroelectric power, reducing dependency on fossil fuels and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. These investments not only contribute to global climate goals but also build energy security and resilience in vulnerable regions. It will require clients to provide robust environmental impact assessments and climate risk disclosures as part of its due diligence, ensuring that funded projects are environmentally sound and future-proof. The Bank will also make a direct intervention in the renewable energy space with up to 15 per cent of the resources dedicated to the sector.



Social Equity

Social resilience is strengthened when development is inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the needs of marginalised populations. The Bank will promote social objectives by prioritising investments that create jobs and improve access to essential services. To this end, the Bank will promote financial inclusion, working with local banks to reach SMEs, particularly those led by women, youth, and minority groups, in a bid to ensure economic empowerment and reduce poverty. Furthermore, the Bank will invest in healthcare infrastructure, education, water, rural electrification, and social protection systems to contribute to human capital development and social resilience. In all, more than 25 per cent of commitments will be dedicated towards social justice.

Governance

The Bank will promote governance objectives by fostering transparency, accountability, and ethical business practices in the projects it funds. It will

develop, pass and implement a gender policy to guide its gender mainstreaming pivot. Furthermore, the Bank will work with Member States to implement regulatory reforms and strengthen the governance frameworks, to enhance their ability to manage shocks and crises.

3.3.3. Optimisation

The Bank will maximise efficiency, resource allocation, and impact across its operations, investments, and service delivery over the next five (5) years. It will work to achieve its poverty reduction mandate while maintaining financial sustainability and operational excellence. In summary, the optimisation objectives over the Plan period are as follows:

- Streamlining internal processes to reduce costs and improve turnaround times;
- Leveraging technology for better decision-making and risk management;
- Optimising the deployment of capital to sectors

and projects with the highest developmental impact and financial viability;

- Enhancing portfolio diversification to balance risk and return;
- Implementing performance measurement frameworks to monitor productivity and outcomes;
- Aligning human resources and institutional capabilities with strategic priorities;
- Ensuring that every intervention delivers measurable socio-economic benefits; and
- Using blended finance and partnerships to amplify developmental reach.

Financial Optimisation

In the evolving global economic landscape, Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) face the dual challenge of fulfilling their developmental mandate while ensuring financial sustainability. Financial optimisation is not merely about cost-cutting; it is a strategic imperative that aligns resource allocation, operational efficiency, and revenue generation with long-term impact goals. The Bank will strengthen financial sustainability and enhance resource efficiency in order to maintain robust financial health.

The strategic pillars for financial optimisation for the Plan period are as follows:

- Onboard Non-Regional Members: The Bank will onboard at least two (2) triple-rated Non-Regional Members (NRMs) to boost its capital and improve its credit rating to engender lower borrowing costs.
- Diversification of Funding Sources: The Bank will diversify its funding sources by venturing into the International Capital Markets and reaching out to new partners, while strengthening its relationship with existing partners.
- Leverage Ratios: Maintain optimal debt-to-equity ratios to enhance creditworthiness while avoiding over-leverage that could compromise developmental objectives.
- Risk-Based Pricing: Implement pricing models that reflect project risk profiles, ensuring sustainability without undermining affordability for target sectors.
- Liquidity Management: Establish robust frameworks for short-term liquidity forecasting to prevent funding gaps and reduce idle cash.
- Currency Risk Mitigation: Use hedging instruments and local currency financing to minimise exposure to foreign exchange volatility.
- Portfolio Rebalancing: Regularly assess sectoral and geographic concentration risks, shifting towards high-impact, financially viable projects.
- Digital Transformation: Automate credit appraisal, monitoring, and reporting processes to reduce turnaround time and operational costs.
- Performance-Based Budgeting: Link resource allocation to measurable developmental and financial outcomes.
- Fee-Based Services: Expand advisory and technical assistance offerings to generate non-interest income.
- Innovative Products: Develop tailored financial instruments for climate finance and infrastructure projects to capture emerging markets.
- Integrated Risk Framework: Adopt enterprise-wide risk management systems to monitor credit, market, and operational risks in real time.
- Governance Reforms: Strengthen internal controls, transparency, and accountability to build investor confidence and attract private capital.
- Stress Testing: Conduct periodic stress tests to assess resilience under adverse macroeconomic scenarios.

Strategy 2030 focuses on capital efficiency, operational excellence, and innovative revenue streams, which will position the Bank as a resilient, impactful, and financially sound partner in development.

Process Optimisation

The Bank plays a pivotal role in catalysing economic growth, fostering private sector development, and addressing market failures. As its operations evolve to meet the demands of a changing region, process optimisation becomes a critical enabler of efficiency, transparency, and impact. The Bank will position itself as an agile, efficient, and impact-driven entity in its quest to improve lives and livelihoods in the Sub-Region. It will enhance operational efficiency, improve service delivery, and strengthen its ability to achieve its developmental mandate. It will prioritise the end-to-end digitalisation of core processes, from project origination to disbursement and monitoring, with integrated platforms for credit appraisal, risk assessment, and approval processes. This will reduce turnaround time and minimise human error.

Operational Optimisation

Operational optimisation is a strategic imperative for remaining relevant and impactful in the midst of uncertainties. It is a call to embed efficiency, technology, and customer-centeredness into the Bank's operations, with the ultimate goal of streamlining operations, reducing turnaround times, and enhancing service delivery. The Bank will implement robust performance management systems which are aligned with strategic goals while simplifying organisational structures to reduce bureaucracy and enhance agility.

As part of efforts to improve impact and relevance, the Bank will seek to finance big-ticket projects in key sectors to optimise time and increase returns, thereby counterbalancing the time spent on relatively small-ticket transactions. To this end, the Bank will strengthen its risk management, compliance and monitoring frameworks to make them robust enough to minimise credit risk. Furthermore, the Bank will update its resource mobilisation policies in line with this strategic orientation to keep up with projected disbursements.





PART IV

04

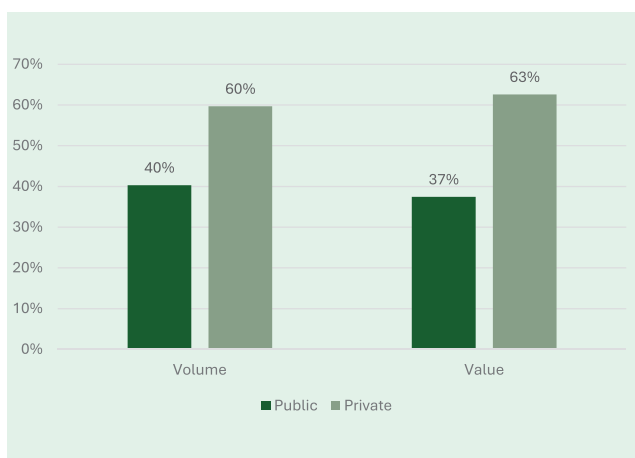
**CONFRONTING
CHALLENGES WITH
TESTED SOLUTIONS**

4.1. FINANCING THE VISION

The West African Sub-Region is beset by a myriad of challenges, exacerbated by unfavourable global conditions, climate change and internal predicaments. These are the challenges the Bank seeks to confront over the next five (5) years, working with partners and clients.

The ambitious nature of Strategy 2030 requires a quick turnaround time for project appraisal, approval, commitment and disbursement, accompanied by a bold resource mobilisation plan. The Bank, during the Plan period, will ensure that it enhances the project cycle to facilitate expeditious financing. As already indicated, a minimum of 63 per cent of commitments will be dedicated to private sector financing, in a bid to create decent work and promote inclusion (Figure 1, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

Figure 1: Share of Commitments per Sector, 2026-2030



4.1.1. Resource Mobilisation

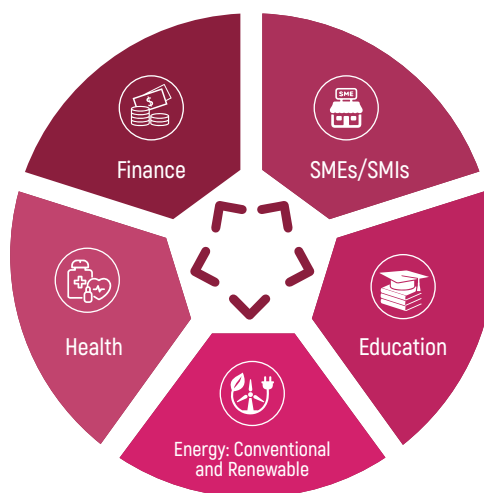
A tremendous success was achieved in the area of resource mobilisation during the implementation of Strategy 2025. Apart from the significant bilateral and multilateral resource mobilisation, shareholders of the Bank made good progress in honouring their capital obligations to the Bank. This was capped by an endorsement of a proposed increase in the authorised capital and a third tranche capital call, which was not envisaged in the Plan. More than 60

per cent of the called-up capital has been paid, with renewed efforts underway to ensure full settlement of arrears.

Strategy 2030, given its expansionary nature, will require further capital injection to ensure that the Bank maintains prudent capital ratios to match its ambitions for a significant credit ratings upgrade. In addition to the capital arrears from Regional Members, the Bank will mobilise capital resources from Non-Regional Members to boost its capital ratios, thereby giving it the capacity to invest meaningfully in Member States.

Over the Plan period, the Bank will mobilise ESG-themed resources to support Member States to address their unique climate change needs (Appendix 1). These resources will help Member States to build resilience to unfavourable weather patterns which affect the livelihoods of their citizens. Having issued the first Green, Social and Sustainable (GSS) Bond on the WAEMU market by a DFI in July 2024, the Bank is poised to mobilise a lot more of such resources for climate mitigation and adaptation programmes within the Sub-Region. This resolve is further strengthened by the Bank securing a Green Climate Fund (GCF) accreditation in early 2025, which grants it direct access to GCF resources to support climate resilience projects.

The Bank will intervene at scale in the following sectors to address these challenges:





Agriculture and Agribusiness

Agriculture in the Sub-Region is still threatened by climate vulnerability, poor infrastructure, limited access to credit, and market challenges. With a low yield per acre, partly due to the practice of rain-fed agriculture, low chemical application, and excessive land use, farmers struggle to make adequate returns from the labour. Moreover, small farm sizes, erratic rainfall patterns and limited credit access make it even harder for farmers to produce at scale to make it worth their while. In years of bountiful harvests, the lack of adequate cold chains and warehouses for storage causes prices to crash, leading to significant losses and deterring production the following year.

The Bank will commit a minimum of 12 per cent of resources directly to the agriculture value chain over the Plan period. This will cover input supply, production, post-harvest handling, processing, and distribution and marketing. Furthermore, the Bank will initiate and join partnerships to foster agricultural growth. For example, as the fund manager of the ECOWAS Commission-initiated Regional Fund for Agriculture and Food (RFAF), the Bank will work with the Commission to provide additional financial support to SMEs in the agriculture value chain.

Furthermore, the Bank, through the West African Initiative for Climate-Smart Agriculture (WAICSA), will promote climate-smart agriculture to enable smallholder farmers to adapt to the effects of

climate change, thereby safeguarding their incomes. Through WAICSA, the Bank will provide financial and technical support to these farmers to enable them to adopt climate-smart agriculture.

Transport Infrastructure

The Sub-Region has a huge infrastructure deficit, which keeps growing because of the increasing population and lagging infrastructure development. It relies heavily on road transport to carry people and goods. However, most roads are unpaved, and many of the roads which have been paved are not in very good condition. Due to the lack of adequate rail infrastructure, these roads are at the mercy of heavy-duty trucks, which tend to carry large volumes of load and constantly put the roads in states of disrepair.

ECOWAS (2021b) projects that road traffic in regional corridors will increase by between seven and ten times between 2014 and 2045, while port capacity shortfalls are expected to rise, with significant consequences for transit traffic demand. Furthermore, by 2023, many international airports in the Sub-Region will need to expand to accommodate passenger traffic of no less than two million per annum. These attest to some of the infrastructure gaps that the Sub-Region is confronted with.

As part of its strategy, the Bank will invest in road, rail, water and air transport infrastructure to facilitate the efficient transportation of people and goods to link production centres to markets. Over the next five (5) years, the Bank will work with stakeholders to tackle various infrastructure gaps in order to place the Sub-Region on a pedestal for growth. It will allocate a minimum of 15 per cent of its new commitments to this sector.



Agriculture and Industry
Agriculture & agro-industry: UA 330M
Industry: UA 230M



Energy and SMEs
Energy: UA 858M
SMEs: 724M



Social
Education: UA 192M
Healthcare: UA 198M

Energy

As earlier indicated, Agoundedemba, Kim, & Kim (2023) have established that approximately 58 per cent of urban and 25 per cent of rural dwellers have access to electricity in West Africa. This reflects the severity of the problem, but it also presents an opportunity for the Bank to step in and make a difference. Over the next five years, the Bank will invest in sustainable and conventional energy infrastructure projects to the tune of over UA 858 million. This is equivalent to approximately 28 per cent of the total commitments, with a little over 15 per cent dedicated to renewable energy alone and over 5 per cent allocated to rural electrification. The Bank will also invest in transmission and distribution infrastructure to ensure that power is wheeled to end users with minimum transmission and distribution losses.

Industry

Sub-Regional trade lags behind many African Regional Economic Communities due to the predominant export of primary commodities instead of manufactured

goods, whose prices are not stable. Furthermore, the incidence of post-harvest losses is very high due to a lack of ready markets to absorb everything that is produced and the limited transformation of such produce. There is a need for an integrated approach to addressing this challenge.

The Bank's strategy, in addition to enhancing the supply of electricity and financing road construction as well as other interventions that aid commerce, will commit to financing industrial (including agro-industry) projects to the tune of UA 392 million over the Plan period. This, among others, will seek to extend the shelf life of agricultural produce to minimise the persistent revenue losses that confront farmers.

Finance and SMEs

The Bank will embark on initiatives that strengthen the financial sector and promote financial inclusion, working to inject resources directly into the operations of banks, mostly for the benefit of SMEs. SMEs account for more than 90 per cent of all businesses in the Sub-Region and are at the heart of innovation and job creation. That notwithstanding, SMEs face obstacles such as a lack of finance, regulatory constraints and virtually non-existent supporting infrastructure. While addressing infrastructure gaps, the Bank, through its indirect financing mechanism, which is necessary to ensure that it does not compete with local financial institutions and also serves as a risk mitigation mechanism, will make financing accessible to SMEs. This would make finance available to SME projects which would otherwise not have received such opportunities. Approximately 22 per cent of planned commitments will be reserved for SME financing over the Plan period.

Education

The Human Development Index (HDI) for many countries in the Sub-Region is rather low, with no country achieving a score of 0.65. Education is one of the three dimensions used to determine the HDI, an indicator of its role in development. It is central to sustainable development and social equity. It

must also be recalled that SDG 4 is dedicated solely to education. The Bank will partner with clients to channel at least seven per cent of commitments over the Plan period to the education sector. This will go to finance education infrastructure and EdTech infrastructure with the view to improving human capital to unlock the Sub-Region's development through economic transformation.

Health

The health sector is underdeveloped due to years of underinvestment and a generally poor maintenance culture, which leads to the rapid deterioration of new healthcare infrastructure. Given its position as a foundational pillar of human development, it is imperative to pay particular attention to healthcare through deliberate investments. Many regional capitals lack first-class health infrastructure, including referral hospitals, making it difficult to treat complex cases domestically. In effect, the few good hospitals are inundated with cases, overstressing both personnel and facilities. Sadly, some patients are turned away from hospitals because of the lack of adequate infrastructure. To help address this predicament, the Bank aims to invest a minimum of seven per cent of new commitments in the health sector.

Water

Water insecurity remains a challenge in the West African Sub-Region, with the populations in a significant number of countries exposed to unsafe drinking water. The percentage of the population without access to potable water ranges between 28 and 35 per cent, depending on the country, which is also an indicator of the risk of waterborne diseases. The Bank will commit not less than 6 per cent of resources over the Plan period towards improving potable water access in the Sub-Region.

Hospitality and Real Estate

The Bank will continue to support the services sector, particularly in hospitality and real estate, to foster growth in the services sector, provide

accommodation for the population, and secure jobs. The Bank will devote not less than seven per cent of new commitments towards supporting hospitality and real estate projects in the Sub-Region. The Bank will support affordable and mixed-income housing projects through direct loans and public-private partnership (PPP) models to narrow the housing deficit.

4.2. CREATING IMPACT THROUGH DYNAMIC KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

Beyond project financing, the Bank has reinvented itself as a knowledge institution with flagship publications that provide insights into the socio-economic situation within the Sub-Region. It has also published critical research papers to guide public policy and investment decisions and provided knowledge-sharing platforms that have unearthed key ideas and birthed initiatives across the sub-region.

The Bank published the maiden edition of the West African Development Outlook (WADO) in June 2021 and has published the same annually since then. WADO is a socio-economic report which reports on the socio-economic performance of Member States, gives forecasts on key macroeconomic indicators, highlights the risks and opportunities that exist in the sub-region, and makes recommendations on how key challenges can be overcome in the short, medium and long term.

Furthermore, the Bank held its maiden ECOWAS Investment Forum (EIF) in April 2024 under the theme, "Transforming ECOWAS Communities in a Challenging Environment". EIF brings together development partners, project promoters, financiers, and policymakers, with the aim of highlighting the investment opportunities that exist in the Sub-Region and providing a platform for investor-promoter matchmaking. The maiden edition, which was held in Lomé in the Togolese Republic, was a resounding success, with over 400 persons in attendance from across the Sub-Region and more than USD430

million in memoranda of understanding signed for project financing.

The last five years also witnessed the launch of the EBID Webinar series, which exposes the Bank to its client base in the Sub-Region. Among the topics discussed were “A Practical Guide for Private Economic Operators”, which provided essential information for the preparation and submission of loan applications to the Bank, and “Financing Infrastructure for Sustainable Development – A Private Sector Solution”, which focused on resource mobilisation for sustainable infrastructure development.

Moreover, the Bank also commenced the EBID President’s Roundtable Series in 2023, with the maiden edition focusing on the topic, “Turning West Africa Green: How do we become ESG compliant?”, with the second edition being on “Roadmapping Infrastructure Development in ECOWAS” in 2024. One of the topics discussed in 2025 was “From Farm to Port - Financing Value Chains for West Africa’s

Cash Crops”, which highlighted how the Sub-Region can generate a sizeable value in the cash crops value chain. The Roundtable takes place in a fully equipped television studio, designed for a televised event, and is broadcast live on TV and various digital platforms, including YouTube and Facebook. The dialogue takes the form of discussions between experts drawn from the development finance, public and private sectors.

The Bank will continue to deepen its knowledge products, while introducing new ones to complement its drive towards visibility and impact. The GRO Strategy will promote products that enable the Bank to advance its advocacy role within the Sub-Region, providing thought leadership, and building capacity and partnerships for impact.



05

PART V:

MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

5.1. BACKGROUND

Purpose

Beyond plan development, one of the key elements of every successful strategic plan is the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF). The MEF enables systematic tracking, learning, and accountability for the GRO Strategy. It embeds early warning systems, which allow for gap detection for timely corrective actions to be taken to ensure that implementation stays on course. As a guide for management decision-making, the MEF is designed to delineate the actions required to implement the Plan successfully and the indicators to be used to measure the successful implementation of these actions. It facilitates the tracking of the Plan implementation in a periodic manner, while also serving as a check for accountability.

The MEF comes with a logframe which outlines the activities required to produce specific outputs, which in turn will produce outcomes and impacts. The logframe also comes with indicators, a means of verification and underlying assumptions (Appendix 4).

Scope

The MEF has been designed to help measure success stories across the internal operations of the Bank and its interventions. It entails indicators at the Bank, client, and cross-cutting levels, which elaborate on the three-pronged pillars of growth, resilience, and optimisation (Table 5).

Table 5: Summary of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

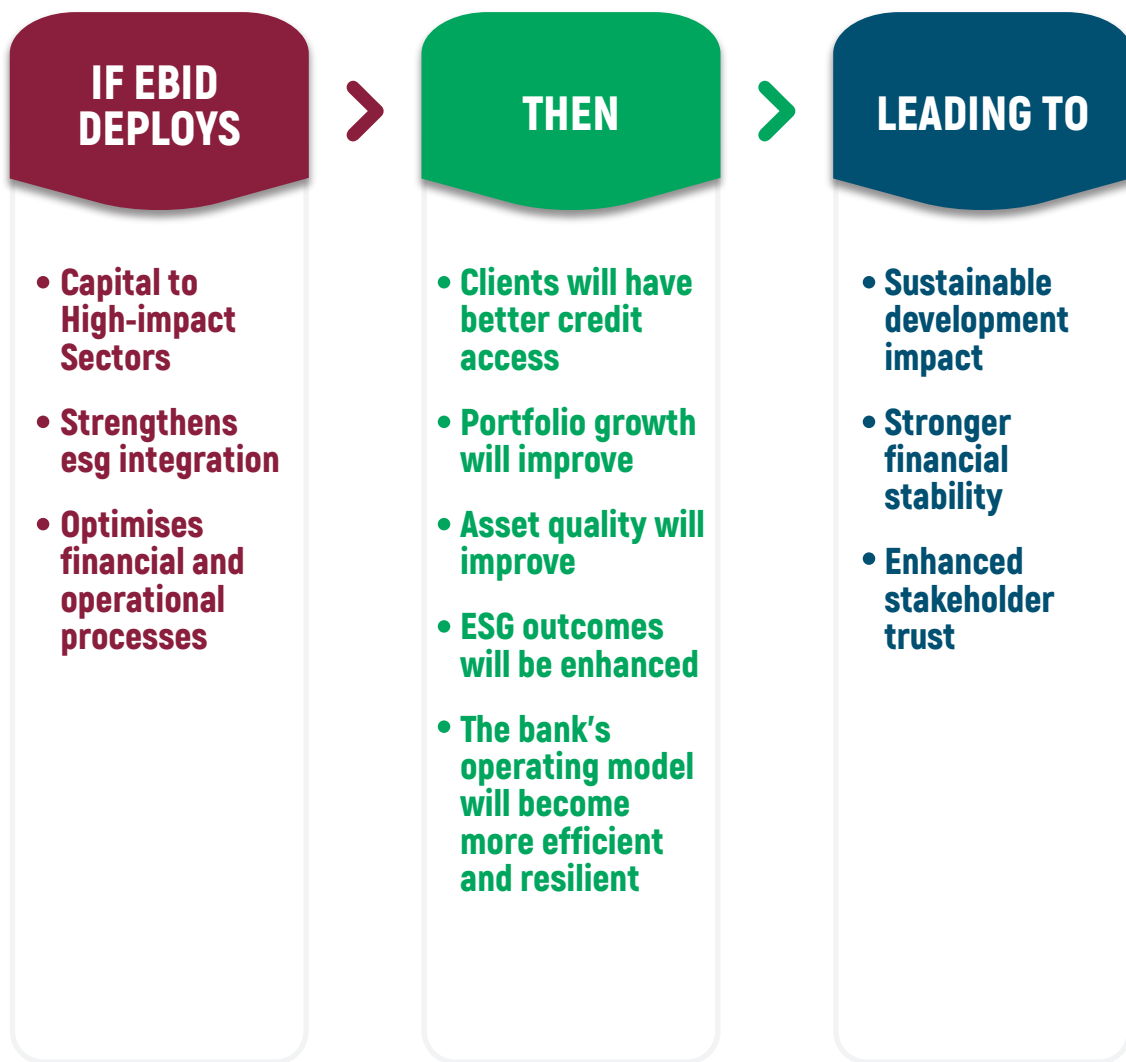
Area	Indicator
ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development	Capital adequacy, loan book growth, balance sheet growth, asset quality, profitability, ESG integration maturity, operational efficiency, and risk management
Clients	Access to finance, ESG compliance and impact improvements, sectoral development outcomes
Cross-cutting	Gender equality, climate resilience, inclusion, governance, digitalisation

Source: Theory of Change

Strategy 2030 is built to catalyse sustainable economic transformation by combining growth, resilience (ESG integration), and optimisation. The Theory of Change (TOC) begins with the assumption that deploying capital and advisory services to priority sectors, while embedding ESG principles and improving operational efficiency, will generate both financial and developmental returns. Inputs include financial resources, skilled staff, digital systems, and ESG policies. These enable activities such as pipeline development, credit and risk assessments, ESG due diligence, capacity-building programmes,

and process automation. These activities produce outputs like approved projects, ESG action plans, and streamlined workflows.

As these outputs accumulate, they lead to outcomes which enable clients to gain greater access to finance and improve ESG compliance. For the Bank, it achieves portfolio growth and diversification, stronger risk-adjusted returns, and enhanced operational efficiency. Over time, these outcomes contribute to impacts such as inclusive and sustainable economic growth, climate resilience, gender equity, and institutional stability (Appendix 5).



5.2. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The results framework tracks key performance indicators across the three strategic pillars – growth, resilience, and optimisation – with clear roles and responsibilities, baselines, and targets. It uses end-2025 audited financials as the baseline, making room for ESG tracking. It also outlines a reporting cadence and learning loop that drives decisions, with quarterly and annual reports, quarterly dashboards, annual strategy session reports, as well as mid-term and end-term evaluation reports, among others, being the means of verification.

Table 6: Growth Targets

ACTION	BASELINE	TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	TARGET DATE
Develop Country Strategies for all Member States	15 country strategies exist for Strategy 2025	Develop and refresh 15 country strategies for Strategy 2030	Country strategies developed	2030
Continue to tilt new interventions in favour of the private sector in 2026-2030	Portfolio make-up: Public (53%); Private (47%) as at end-December 2025	≥63% of new commitments	Annual Reports, Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030
Grow the loan book in a sustainable manner	UA 2.88 billion (2021-2025)	Approve projects to the tune of ≥UA 3.37 billion	Annual Reports, Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports, Quarterly Dashboards	2030
	UA 2.29 billion (2021-2025)	Work towards new projects commitment of ≥UA 2.69 billion	Annual Reports, Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports, Quarterly Dashboards	2030
	UA 1.65 billion (2021-2025)	Disburse ≥UA 1.89 billion to projects	Annual Reports, Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports, Quarterly Dashboards	2030
	UA 1.48 billion at end-2025	≥72% loan book growth relative to end-2025	Annual Reports, Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030
Grow the balance sheet	UA 1.78 billion at end-2025	≥64% balance sheet growth relative to end-2025	Annual Reports, Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030
Increase footprint in Member States	Abidjan Regional Office was commissioned on December 1, 2025. Operationalisation will occur in 2026	Operationalise two (2) Regional Offices in Abidjan and Abuja	Headquarters agreements between EBID and host countries, EBID's Regional Office buildings, number of staff on roll in Regional Offices	2027

Table 7: Resilience Targets

ACTION	BASELINE	TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	TARGET DATE
Dedicate a significant size of new commitments to ESG themes	15.83% of the Bank's portfolio size as at September 2025	ESG will be $\geq 41\%$ of total commitments	Annual Reports, Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030
Devote a significant share of new commitments for renewable energy	2.54% of the Bank's portfolio size as at September 2025	Renewable energy commitments will be $\geq 15\%$	Annual Reports, Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030
Pursue gender equity in EBID as part of ESG objectives	A gender policy exists	Refresh the gender policy and implement same	Board approved refreshed Gender Policy	2026
Promote women-led businesses	Negligible	Support not less than 5 women-led initiatives	Project preparation and implementation documents	2030
Promote youth-led businesses	Negligible	Support not less than 10 initiatives by business owners below 40 years	Project preparation and implementation documents	2030
Risk frameworks	Risk policies exist	Refresh existing frameworks in line with the planned business expansion	Board approved risk policies and their implementation	2027
Improve asset quality	NPL ratio = 5.81% (2025)	Reduce NPL ratio to $\leq 3\%$	Annual Report, Mid-Term and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030
Fully embed climate change issues into the Bank's operations	Various policies address climate change issues	Develop a policy to guide the Bank's climate change engagements	Approved climate change policy	2030

Table 8: Optimisation Targets

ACTION	BASELINE	TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	TARGET DATE
Onboard triple-A rated Non-Regional Members	No Non-Regional Member has been onboarded	At least one triple-A rated institution	Shareholder Agreement between EBID and the said institution	2027
Attain investment-grade credit rating	B (Fitch) and B2 (Moody's)	Attain BBB- (Fitch) and Baa3 (Moody's) rating	Published ratings assessment reports by Fitch and Moody's	2030
Build adequate capital buffers	207% at end-2024	Maintain a leverage ratio of $\leq 300\%$	ALM reports, partner assessment reports	2030
Diversify the Bank's sources of funding	No Eurobond fundraising	Launch at least, one Eurobond transaction	SWIFT receipt of Eurobond proceeds, Annual Reports and Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030
Establish robust frameworks for short-term liquidity forecasting to prevent funding gaps and reduce idle cash	Basel III liquidity coverage ratio is $\geq 200\%$	Maintain a liquidity coverage ratio of $\geq 120\%$ annually	ALM reports, partner reports	2030
Expand advisory and technical assistance offerings to generate non-interest income	Minimal	Grow non-interest income by an average of 15% per annum	Annual Reports and Mid- and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030
Rationalise the cost of operation	Borrowing costs	Reduce the cost of funds by 100bps	Average cost of borrowing	2030
	Cost-to-income ratio was at 67% at end-2025	Reduce cost-to-income ratio to $\leq 60\%$	Cost-to-income ratio in annual audited accounts	2030
Improve loan approval timelines	Public sector - 6 months Private sector - 4 months	Reduce loan approval time to: Public sector (5 months), Private sector (3 months)	Average time taken from request to loan approvals	2030

Automate processes to improve efficiency	Mostly semi-automated	Automate $\geq 30\%$ of loan processes relative to 2025	Process audit report	2030
Maintain a healthy capital adequacy ratio	36.1% in 2025	Maintain a CAR of $\geq 25\%$ per the Basel Accords	Annual Report, Mid-Term and End-Term Evaluation Reports	2030

06

PART VI

IMPLEMENTATION RISKS

6.1. THE BANK

Credit Rating Downgrade

The Bank has maintained a fairly steady credit rating over the past five years. While it has done a lot of things right over the period, a difficult operating environment and a lack of an investment-grade-rated shareholder, among other factors, have constrained its chances of a rating upgrade. While the GRO Strategy aims to move the Bank to an investment grade rating, through the onboarding of at least one triple-A-rated Non-Regional Shareholder and massively improving asset quality, among others, if any of the measures outlined should fail and the environment should deteriorate further, the Bank could be faced with the possibility of a downgrade rather. This would increase borrowing costs for the Bank, which would then be passed on to clients in the Sub-Region, who are already burdened with excessively high borrowing costs.

Failure to Mobilise Resources

The success of the Plan rests primarily on the success of the resource mobilisation strategy. From paid-in capital to borrowing options, the interventions over the next five years will rest on the ability of the Bank to mobilise adequate resources at competitive rates to intervene meaningfully in Member States. Planned interventions will not materialise unless commensurate resources are mobilised.

Asset Quality Deterioration

A deterioration in asset quality, resulting from a failure in the credit approval process, inadequate project supervision, or heightened insecurity, will lead to a decline in the loan book and a possible credit rating downgrade. The rating agencies point to a deterioration in solvency owing to significant credit growth without matching capital injection and a decline in liquidity as key ratings risks the Bank should guard against.

6.2. THE ENVIRONMENT

Political Instability and Insecurity

The Sub-Region has come under heightened political instability and insecurity over the past five years, stemming from military takeovers and insurrections from jihadist groups, including kidnappings. There have been six successful military takeovers in Mali (May 2021), Guinea (September 2021), Burkina Faso (January and September 2022), Niger (July 2023), and Guinea-Bissau (November 2025), marking one of the most turbulent periods in the history of ECOWAS in recent times. In addition, there were three unsuccessful attempts to topple governments in Niger (March 2021), Guinea-Bissau (February 2022) and Benin (December 2025). These events raise questions about governance, security, and the socio-economic prospects of the Sub-Region. It also raises questions about whether democracy is functional in West Africa.

Insecurity risks are turning some of the Bank's existing prized assets into stranded assets. It also limits the geography of intervention, increasing the risk of concentration in the few countries with a stable political climate.

High Interest Rates

The Bank has had to contend with high interest rates due to its credit rating and the generally high-interest-rate environment following the COVID-19 pandemic. Interest rates have trended downward over the past two years, giving an indication that the days of high borrowing costs may be over. However, given the volatile nature of the global economy and geopolitics, it would not be prudent to rule out the possibility of high interest rates. This, however, would make it difficult for the Bank to achieve the objectives of intervening at competitive rates as envisaged.

Delay in Capital Payments

The Bank's strategy to intervene at scale and speed requires that capital comes in to complement borrowing in order to maintain healthy capital ratios. Capital payment delays could lead to delays in disbursements and high leverage ratios, potentially triggering a rating downgrade.

Exchange Rate Pressures

The past couple of years have unleashed some of the most aggressive exchange rate pressures, particularly in the WAMZ countries.

6.3. RISK MITIGATION

The identified risks have been matched with impacts and mitigation measures, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Risks, Impacts and Mitigation

LEVEL	RISK	IMPACT	MITIGATION
BANK	Credit Rating Downgrade	Higher funding costs and reduced market access Investor confidence erosion	Early engagement with rating agencies; transparent disclosure Strengthen capital buffers Tighten risk appetite; improve asset quality metrics
	Failure to Mobilise Resources	Project delays and missed growth targets Reputational risk stemming from project delays Liquidity strains	Stage-gate approvals with readiness checks Strengthen investor relations
	Asset Quality Deterioration	Higher NPLs, provisions, and loss of capital Lower profitability Risk of credit rating downgrade Reduced lending capacity	Tighten the credit approval process Strengthen project supervision and install early warning systems Explore more sturdy collateral options Implement credit risk transfer (guarantees, insurance, securitisation)

ENVIRONMENT	Political Instability and Insecurity	Operational disruptions and logistics risk Elevated credit risk in exposed sectors and payment delays	Business continuity plans and geographic diversification Strengthen security protocols and remote servicing capability
	High Interest Rates	Margin volatility Higher borrower stress and defaults Increased refinancing risk for clients	Active ALM and hedging Reprice assets and fees Expenditure rationalisation
	Delay in Capital Payments	Project delays and possible cost overruns Reputational risks	Increased engagement with shareholders
	Exchange Rate Pressures	Higher cost of servicing FX liabilities by clients, leading to possible credit risk	Natural hedging (currency match assets/liabilities)

A key risk for the Bank is technology. To mitigate technology risks, including cybersecurity threats, operational interruptions, and IT project failures, the Bank will implement a robust and resilient framework focused on proactive system security and enhanced infrastructure monitoring. This strategy will prioritise business continuity and operational stability through comprehensive staff awareness, formal change management programmes, and a risk-optimised approach to all future innovation projects. By aligning technical safeguards with strategic project management, the Bank aims to eliminate operational inefficiencies and secure long-term digital viability.

CONCLUSION

Strategy 2030, otherwise known as the GRO Strategy, is the Bank's answer to the myriad challenges that confront our Sub-Region. It recognises the need to intervene at scale and speed, while adapting to the financing needs of Member States.

The Plan is built on three strategic pillars: growth, resilience, and optimisation. It seeks to solidify the Bank's position as a financier of choice in the Sub-Region by making it competitive, agile and dynamic, thus enabling it to intervene meaningfully in Member States.

The Bank will invest in the growth poles of Member States, while expanding its portfolio and balance sheet in the process to create lasting value for stakeholders. Furthermore, Strategy 2030, as part of its resilience strategy, will strengthen its risk management frameworks to complement its private sector policy thrust. Moreover, it will make ESG considerations a central part of project selection and financing, while mobilising thematic resources to finance ESG projects in Member States.

The Plan seeks to streamline the Bank's operations with a view to eliminating inefficiencies and maximising resource utilisation in a bid to improve productivity. It will improve the turnaround time for project financing by cutting through bureaucratic tendencies to enhance service delivery and customer-centredness.

In effect, the GRO Strategy has been designed to respond to the needs of Member States, positioning the Bank as a reliable and responsive partner in the fight against poverty, consistent with its mandate. The Bank will work with its partners to address the development challenges of the times, so that the Sub-Region emerges as a prosperous, knowledgeable, and healthy one, which is alert to its responsibilities to its people and the environment.

The Bank will work with its partners to address the development challenges of the times, so that the sub-region emerges as a prosperous, knowledgeable, and healthy one, which is alert to its responsibilities to its people and the environment

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Resource Mobilisation

Item	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
Thousand UA						
Debenture/ Securitisation from UEMOA	27,343.07	57,270.36	39,335.85	35,420.84	55,656.49	215,026.60
Bilateral Loans	164,069.61	63,677.45	184,425.99	3,921.90	198,302.31	614,397.26
ESG Financing	-	75,915.69	-	128,883.40	-	204,799.09
ECA Financing	25,629.72	53,681.73	36,871.02	33,201.32	52,168.99	201,552.78
India	92,326.11	-	22,136.79	99,667.79	31,321.45	245,452.14
Capital Recovery	42,071.47	44,059.58	30,262.10	27,250.17	42,817.98	186,461.30
Capital Call	30,841.70	12,845.40	42,366.93	127,290.92	117,506.18	330,851.13
Total	382,281.67	307,450.19	355,398.68	455,636.34	497,773.39	1,998,540.28

Appendix 2: Public Sector Interventions

Sector	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Amount	Total Projects
Thousand UA							
Agriculture	39,381.45	33,349.04	32,874.06	34,397.51	36,719.27	176,721.33	8
Transport infrastructure	39,381.45	38,907.21	37,570.35	38,697.20	45,899.09	200,455.30	10
Rural electrification	32,817.87	33,349.04	28,177.77	25,798.13	32,129.36	152,272.17	8
Renewable energy	39,381.45	38,907.21	37,570.35	34,397.51	41,309.18	191,565.71	10

Water	32,817.87	33,349.04	32,874.06	30,097.82	36,719.27	165,858.07	8
Education	39,381.45	38,907.21	37,570.35	34,397.51	41,309.18	191,565.71	9
Health	45,945.02	38,907.21	37,570.35	34,397.51	41,309.18	198,129.28	9
Total Approvals (a)	269,106.57	255,675.98	244,207.30	232,183.21	275,394.51	1,276,567.57	62
Commitments (b)	215,285.25	204,540.79	195,365.84	185,746.57	220,315.61	1,021,254.06	50

Appendix 3: Private Sector Interventions

Sector	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Amount	Total Projects
Thousand UA							
Transport infrastructure	39,381.45	33,349.04	28,177.77	51,596.27	55,078.90	207,583.43	7
Renewable energy	65,635.75	55,581.74	70,444.41	64,495.34	68,848.63	325,005.86	13
Other energy	39,381.45	33,349.04	28,177.77	42,996.89	45,899.09	189,804.23	12
Agro-industry	26,254.30	22,232.69	18,785.18	34,397.51	59,668.81	161,338.49	8
Other industry	39,381.45	55,581.74	46,962.94	42,996.89	45,899.09	230,822.10	14
Finance (support for SMEs)	131,271.50	144,512.51	154,977.71	141,889.74	151,466.98	724,118.44	27
Services (real estate, hospitality)	52,508.60	44,465.39	37,570.35	34,397.51	82,618.35	251,560.21	12
Total Approvals (a)	393,814.49	389,072.15	385,096.13	412,770.15	509,479.84	2,090,232.76	93
Commitments (b)	315,051.59	311,257.72	308,076.90	330,216.12	407,583.88	1,672,186.21	74

Appendix 4: Logframe

Level	Statement	Indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Impact	Sustainable, inclusive growth	Jobs created and emissions reduced	Impact studies and ESG reports	Stable political and macroeconomic environment
Outcomes	Loan book growth and asset quality, ESG performance, and efficiency gains	NPL, ESG coverage, and loan cycle time	Quarterly reports, Dashboards, Annual Reports, Mid-Term and End-Term Evaluation Reports	No new NPLs and myriad ESG project availability
Outputs	Approved projects (incl. approved ESG projects) and process redesign	Number and value of project approvals (% of ESG projects)	Operational Reports, Quarterly and Annual Reports, Mid-Term and End-Term Evaluation Reports	Adequate resources and timely execution
Activities	Project appraisal and due diligence	Milestone completion	Project documents, Credit Committee documents and minutes	Staff capacity; vendor performance

Appendix 5: The Theory of Change Table

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Capital	Onboarding pipeline	Project approvals	Loan book growth	Sustainable, inclusive economic growth
Staff	Credit and risk processes	ESG action plans	Improved asset quality	Resilient institutions and infrastructure
Systems	ESG due diligence	Process cycle-time reductions	Better ESG performance	Lower environmental footprint
Policies	Digital upgrades	Analytics dashboards	Cost-to-income efficiency	
Partnerships			Stronger risk-adjusted returns	

GRO STRATEGY 2026-2030



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