



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP
GROUPE DE LA BANQUE AFRICAINE
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

High-level Swiss delegation visits the Bank and Gourou Basin project in Abidjan



A 14-member Swiss delegation comprised of members of the Swiss Advisory Committee on International Cooperation along with representatives from both the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research visited the African Development Bank and Côte d'Ivoire on November 2 to strengthen relations with the Bank Group.

The mission, led by Advisory Committee President Felix Gutzwiller, met with the Bank's Senior Vice-President, Charles Boamah, and Senior Management Bank and visited an African Development Fund water and sanitation project in Abidjan. The visit provided an opportunity for the Bank and Switzerland to strengthen relations in line with Switzerland's international cooperation priorities, which include, among others, a strong and coordinated multilateral cooperation focusing on results and impact to achieve poverty reduction, inclusive and sustainable growth through job creation and private sector development, addressing global

challenges such as climate change, migration and fragility, and promoting good governance and gender equality.

The Executive Director for Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg and Portugal, Catherine Cudré-Mauroux, greeted the delegation and presided over the meetings as the most senior Bank representative for Switzerland.

Senior Vice-President Charles Boamah welcomed the delegation and presented some of the challenges and opportunities facing Africa's development. He thanked Switzerland for its long-standing partnership with the Bank and its unwavering support as one of the Bank's top ADF contributors relative to its population.

"I want to thank you, the people and the Government of Switzerland, for your strong support for the Bank Group," said Boamah. "The relationship between Switzerland and the Group goes back 45 years. It's a long-standing relationship that has grown over the years.

“We appreciate Switzerland’s dedication and its contributions during our Board discussions, even when we are challenged, because it allows us to do better.”

In his presentation, Désiré Vencatachellum, Director of the Resource Mobilization and External Finance Department, outlined the focus of African Development Fund and thanked the Swiss for championing the Bank’s work in fragile situations.

Following a morning of meetings and fruitful exchanges, the delegation met during the lunch with several Executive Directors from the Board of the Bank and in the afternoon visited the **Gourou Basin Integrated Management Project**, an African Development Fund project, and heard from beneficiaries and project partners. The delegation came away from the field visit with a positive impression of the Bank’s work and a better understanding of the challenges of urbanization on the ground.

In closing the President of the Advisory Committee thanked SVP Boamah and those present on behalf of the delegation for what he described as “an excellent discussion” and “an extremely intensive morning.”

“We’re all very much impressed by the capability and professionalism of your staff here,” Gutzwiller told Boamah. “All our questions were

answered. We had a very steep learning curve and I’m sure we will have follow-up discussions.”

The Advisory Committee on International Cooperation advises the Swiss Federal Council as well as the various departments of the Federal Administration on matters related to international development and cooperation. Composed of representatives from the Parliament, NGOs, academia and private enterprises, the Advisory Committee is the most important sounding board for Swiss development cooperation and enjoys a very high visibility and influence in the country’s development policy discussions.

Switzerland, the 19th biggest shareholder among all the Bank’s member countries and 9th shareholder among non-regional member countries, became a member of the **African Development Fund** and the African Development Bank in 1973 and in 1982, respectively. As part of its development agenda, Switzerland has pledged to focus strongly on fragile states and conflict contexts, reducing poverty through inclusive and sustainable growth, promoting human development, supporting rural development, and good governance.

Watch the film: Côte d'Ivoire – Gourou Basin Integrated Management Project

Photo gallery: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmqDXUjh>



Local primary school principal Antoine Kouamé Bosson and his students in Adjamé Paillet. Thanks to a bridge connecting two adjacent neighbourhoods formerly separated by a steep ravine, students can now get to class much more easily.