



# Evaluation Summary

## Global Affairs Canada's Engagements in Complex Environments in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2018-2023



### ABOUT THE EVALUATION

Global Affairs Canada's (GAC) Evaluation Division conducted an evaluation of GAC's Engagements in Complex Environments in Sub-Saharan Africa for the period of 2018 to 2023. The evaluation focused on the Department's programming and activities in international assistance, diplomacy, and trade in four countries: Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Somalia. The objectives were to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, and results of GAC's efforts and to provide recommendations for improving Canada's future engagements in these contexts.



### KEY FINDINGS

- GAC's engagements were responsive to local needs and added value through contextual analyses and field support services projects (FSSPs).
- The lack of clear strategic direction for Canada's engagement limited the effectiveness and coherence of activities, despite alignment of these with departmental priorities.
- Security and resource constraints, along with inflexible project approval and funding processes, created gaps between ambitions and realities, leading to delays and negative impacts on projects.
- Mission staff felt insufficiently equipped to operate effectively in complex environments due to a lack of specific training, tailored guidance, and travel restrictions.
- Significant outcomes were achieved in the health, governance, peace, and security sectors, with notable progress in gender equality. The findings highlighted the need for long-term commitments to ensure durability and the importance of strong analytical capacity to assess economic forecasts and trade opportunities.



### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Explore and pilot a new approach to support integrated strategic country planning to provide an overall engagement and communication strategy for Canada to operate effectively in complex environments (i.e., countries classified as hardship 4 or 5). Resultant plans should align the objectives, activities and programs of the mission, headquarters and other government departments.
2. Support projects in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) to remain relevant by streamlining project approval processes and building flexibility in funding agreements to respond to unexpected crises.
3. Strengthen personnel selection, pre-posting preparation, and support CBS and LES at post for hardships 4 and 5 assignments to improve staff capacity and resilience.

