The “Ebola Sector Budget Support Fight Back Programme” at a glance

1. The Ebola Sector Budget Support Fight Back Programme (EFBP) is the third of a series of emergency operations worked out by the African Development Bank Group to fight back the Ebola epidemic. The African Development Bank was among the first partners to react, as early as April 2014 through a grant of USD 3 million from the African Development Fund (ADF, or the soft loan arm of the Group). This was followed by the approval of a USD 60 million grant in August 2014. Regarding the latter, the first tranche of Bank funding has been fully disbursed and is now used to procure logistical equipment and finance activities at country level.

2. This Budget Support Fight Back Programme (about USD 150 million), is complementary to AfDB’s previous Ebola interventions. As a budget support operation it will address the impact of the epidemic on government finances. The epidemic generates additional budget expenses, and it also impacts the economy at large. Economic growth is likely to be halved in Liberia and Guinea, and significantly reduced in Sierra Leone. Current estimates may be reduced if the epidemic further aggravates. This has a large impact on government revenues, especially fiscal. As for Côte d’Ivoire, no risk can be taken: The country has not registered any case of Ebola, but the good job done by Government results in unexpected expenses that also need to be supported to ensure the country remains Ebola-free and is preserved as the economic hub of the region.

3. Programme Objective: The Programme will support Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone’s efforts to overcome the effects of the Ebola epidemic and foster momentum toward inclusive growth and poverty reduction.

4. Project Outcomes: The programme will support the efforts of the four targeted countries in controlling the Ebola outbreak, mitigating its socio-economic effects and enhancing their preparedness. The programme picked policy dialogue areas which are critical in handling this crisis and future ones. These are (i) systems and human resources and (ii) nutrition, food security and social protection. The programme intends to leave something behind for the after-crisis era, in the form of strengthened capacity of beneficiary countries, individually and regionally, to handle similar events in the future and avoid they reach the current scale.

6. Financing: The USD 150 million programme will take the form of a loan of USD 120 million and a grant of USD 30 million to be disbursed to Côte d’Ivoire (USD 9 million), Guinea (USD 32 million), Liberia (USD 60 million) and Sierra Leone (USD 50 million).

9. The design of the programme is unique as it targets four countries and draws from the regional allocation. As such, this programme may pave the way for a new generation of operations founded in sub-regional policy dialogue and moving regional integration ahead.