

ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

PROVIDING EVIDENCE TO IMPROVE
THE QUALITY OF ISDB GROUP'S OPERATIONS
FOR OVER THREE DECADES



2023



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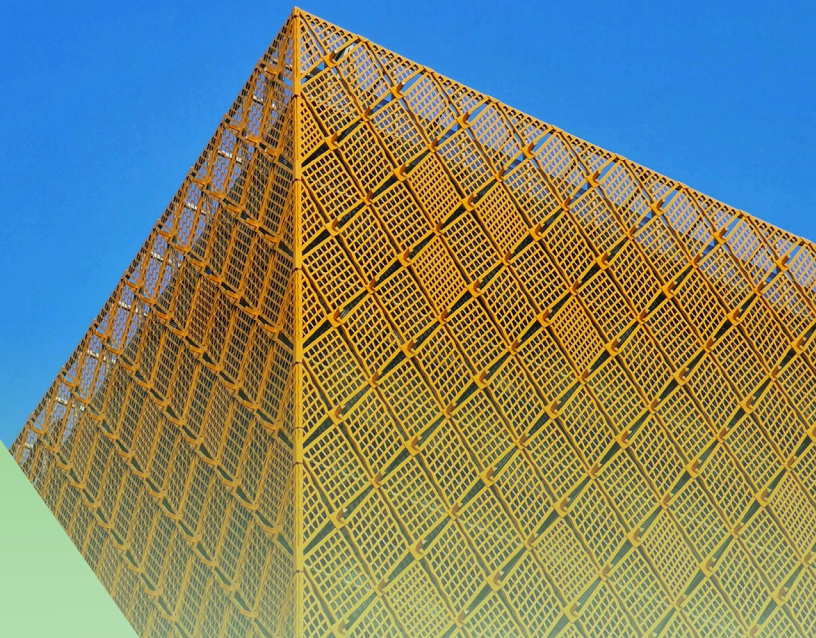
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

3Y-RWP	3-Year Rolling Work Plan
ACG	Arab Coordination Group
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
AI	Artificial Intelligence
APIF	AWQAF Properties Investment Fund
BADEA	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
BED	Board of Executive Directors
CAE	Country Assistance Evaluation
CAIIP	Community Agriculture Infrastructure Improvement Project
CCD	Cooperation & Capacity Development
CCTE	Corporate, Country & Thematic Evaluation
CF	Counterpart Funding
CLEAR	Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results
CPPE	Country Portfolio Performance Evaluation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EA	Executing Agency
ECD	Evaluation Capacity Development
ECG	Evaluation Coordination Group
EDN	Executive Dissemination Notes
ELO	Evaluation Learning and Outreach
EWA	Electricity and Water Authority
FEVR	Final Evaluation Report
FS	Food Security
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GOE	Government of Egypt
GOED	Group Operations Evaluation Department
GOI	Government of Indonesia
GPS	Good Practice Standards
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IEvD	Independent Evaluation Department
IPDET	International Program for Development Evaluation Training

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
IQAF	Integrated Quality Assurance Framework
KS-Relief	King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center
KV	Kilo Volt
LDMC	Least Developed Member Countries
MAP	Management Action Plan
MC	Member Country
MCPS	Member Country Partnership Strategy
MCPS-CR	Member Country Partnership Strategy Completion Review
MDB	Multilateral Development Banks
MENA	Middle East and Northern Africa
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OCR	Ordinary Capital Resources
ODEC	Operations and Development Effectiveness Committee
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OED	Operations Evaluation Department
OEO	Operations Evaluation Office
PCR	Project Completion Report
PCR-VN	Project Completion Report Validation Note
PIASR	Project Implementation Assessment and Support Report
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPE	Project & Program Evaluation
PPER	Post Project Evaluation Report
SA	Special Assistance
SFD	Saudi Fund for Development
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
STEER	Systematic Tracking of the Execution of Evaluation Recommendations
TA	Technical Assistance
UN	United Nations
VTC	Vocational Training Center
WB	World Bank

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



This Annual Evaluation Report 2023 of the Independent Evaluation Department (IEvD) is prepared by a core team, led by Abdourahamane Dit Baffa Keita, and composed of Ehtisham UL Hassan, Bashirullah Najimi, Nur Abdi, Md Golam Mortaza, and Reem Ahmed.

The report was internally peer-reviewed by Elmoiz Ismail, Raikhan Sabirova and Oguz Ceylan. Hassan Mahmoud Alrabayah, and Sidi Aziz Hilali provided valuable administrative and technical support. It has also benefitted from specific comments and feedback from various business units, including: Country Programs, Global Practices & Partnerships, Operations Quality and Monitoring, Project Procurement and Finance, and Strategy, Budget and Corporate Performance.

The report benefited from the overall guidance of Ahmed Ag Aboubacrine, Acting Director, IEvD & Manager, Corporate, Country &

Thematic Evaluation, and Amin Abdullahi, Manager Project & Program Evaluation. Special appreciation goes to all IEvD staff members who have conducted the evaluations in 2023 reported herein and/or provided valuable inputs. The report includes guidance and support of the ODEC Chair and members.

Furthermore, IEvD would like to acknowledge with much appreciation the crucial role played by the staff of all departments and units of the IsDB for their useful contributions and insights which were instrumental in the completion of the evaluations featured in this report.

FOREWORD BY ODEC CHAIR



I am delighted to share the 2023 Annual Evaluation Report of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB).

The past year presented developing countries, and notably the 57 member countries of IsDB, with a multitude of challenges including surging inflation, stagnating economic growth, increasing fragility, and the recurrent threats posed by the climate crisis. These conditions have tested IsDB's resilience and challenged the collective adaptability to fast changing landscape for a development financiers. As a result, there was a pronounced need to assess and improve the efficiency of IsDB's operational and corporate functions. This has underscored the important role of the independent evaluation function in identifying critical areas for improvement and enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of the Bank's operations. Such an approach is vital for navigating the emerging adversities and ensuring that IsDB interventions are impactful, inclusive, and sustainable.

During 2023, IsDB's Independent Evaluation Department (IEvD) adopted two complementary strategies to respond to stakeholders' increasing demand for impact evidence. The first strategy revolves around diversification of the scope of independent evaluation beyond operations, while the second is based on the adoption of advanced analytics and technology in evaluation cycle processes to improve efficiency, with emphasis on the measurability of the design quality and outcomes of the Bank interventions.

I am pleased to note that in 2023 IEvD made significant strides by piloting the use of virtual reality technology in project evaluation. Such advanced technology, coupled with cutting-edge artificial intelligence solutions, will surely help to respond effectively to the emerging needs of our times and ensure optimal use of our limited resources. Furthermore, a greater emphasis on high-quality design and supervision of projects can yield tangible, and quantifiable development results. Hence, it is also essential to continue investing in operation quality and monitoring, result measurement, and independent evaluations that enhance the accountability and effectiveness of IsDB development interventions.

As we look forward to 2024 and the celebration of IsDB's Golden Jubilee, it is an opportune moment to reflect on the contributions of our evaluation function in enhancing IsDB's development effectiveness since its inception. This year's report acknowledges these contributions by providing a comprehensive account of IEvD's contribution since the establishment of the IsDB evaluation function in 1991.

I wish to acknowledge the support IEvD found from the BED Operations and Development Effectiveness Committee (ODEC) members toward executing its mandate of ensuring IsDB's development effectiveness and promoting accountability and learning. It is with satisfaction that I observe IEvD's initiative this year to diversify its evaluation products in response to the varying needs of stakeholders.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to H.E. Dr. Muhammad Al Jasser, President of the IsDB, and IsDB Management members for their steadfast support and dedication to the independent evaluation cause. I also express my deepest gratitude to the IEvD team for their relentless commitment to advancing IsDB's development effectiveness through rigorous evaluation approaches and for facilitating a wider dissemination that enabled more institutional learning. The immense cooperation and support from all other departments and entities of the IsDB Group is also much appreciated.



Dr. Hamad Bin Suleiman Al Bazai

Chairman, Operations and Development Effectiveness Committee (ODEC) - 2023

MESSAGE OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR, IEvD



The efforts exerted by the Independent Evaluation Department (IEvD) in 2023 spanned across the project, macro, and learning and outreach dimensions. They reflect our commitment to enhancing accountability and learning outcomes within IsDB and in member countries. IEvD successfully conducted 11 evaluations at the project level, focusing on the agriculture, water, and rural development sectors.

A comprehensive cluster evaluation of India's special assistance operations was completed, covering 12 projects in the education and health sectors, as well as the scholarship program. Furthermore, as part of our innovation agenda, we worked with IsDB's Corporate Services Directorate to deploy virtual reality technology in data collection from project sites, improving the quality of evaluation evidence and decision-making processes. We plan to scale this initiative up in 2024. On the macro level, IEvD finalized nine evaluations from previous years and launched five new ones, including country engagement, sector, thematic, and corporate evaluations. These evaluations have been crucial for strategic insights, policy development, and decision making.

In 2023, IEvD also expanded its offering to meet the various needs of IsDB's stakeholders. For the first time since establishing the evaluation function in IsDB, midterm evaluation and validation of Project Implementation Assessment and Support Reports (PIASRs) have been introduced to improve the effectiveness of the Bank's ongoing operations. Additionally, IEvD broadened its coverage of corporate functions and funds (APIF, ISFD). This proactive approach helped meet the evolving demands of our stakeholders.

The year also witnessed our efforts to enhance IsDB's partnerships with regional and international development partners to advance evaluation capacity development and learning. For instance, we conducted one joint evaluation with BADEA in Sierra Leone. Additionally, in partnership with OECD-DAC, we made significant progress in finalizing the Arabic version of the glossary of key evaluation and results-based management terminology. This included engagement with various stakeholders from IsDB member countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The Arabic glossary will contribute to the localization of evaluation knowledge and promote capacity development and learning in IsDB Arabic-speaking member countries.

The evaluation learning and outreach efforts exerted during the year have fostered knowledge sharing and enhanced stakeholder engagement. The Department organized eight knowledge-sharing sessions and produced 34 knowledge products aimed at a wide range of stakeholders and clients. Among the knowledge sessions organized was the fifth IsDB Group Evaluation Symposium under the

theme "The Future of Development Evaluation: Adapting to a Changing Landscape" which aimed to explore how to better leverage innovations in development evaluation for enhanced development effectiveness at the institutional and country levels. The symposium provided a platform to share evaluation findings and exchange knowledge among 500 in-person and online participants from MDBs and within the IsDB Group.

As part of celebrating IsDB's Golden Jubilee, this 2023 Annual Evaluation Report (AER) report also reflects on the independent evaluation's contribution, since it was established three decades ago in 1991, to enhancing the IsDB's development effectiveness.

Finally, I want to thank the Operations and Development Effectiveness Committee (ODEC) members for their continued guidance and support for the independent evaluation function in 2023. Special thanks go to all the business units within IsDB Group that cooperated with IEvD by supplying the data requested and assisting in terms of logistics. I would like also to express my gratitude and appreciation to all the IEvD staff for their dedication, commitment, and hard work throughout 2023.

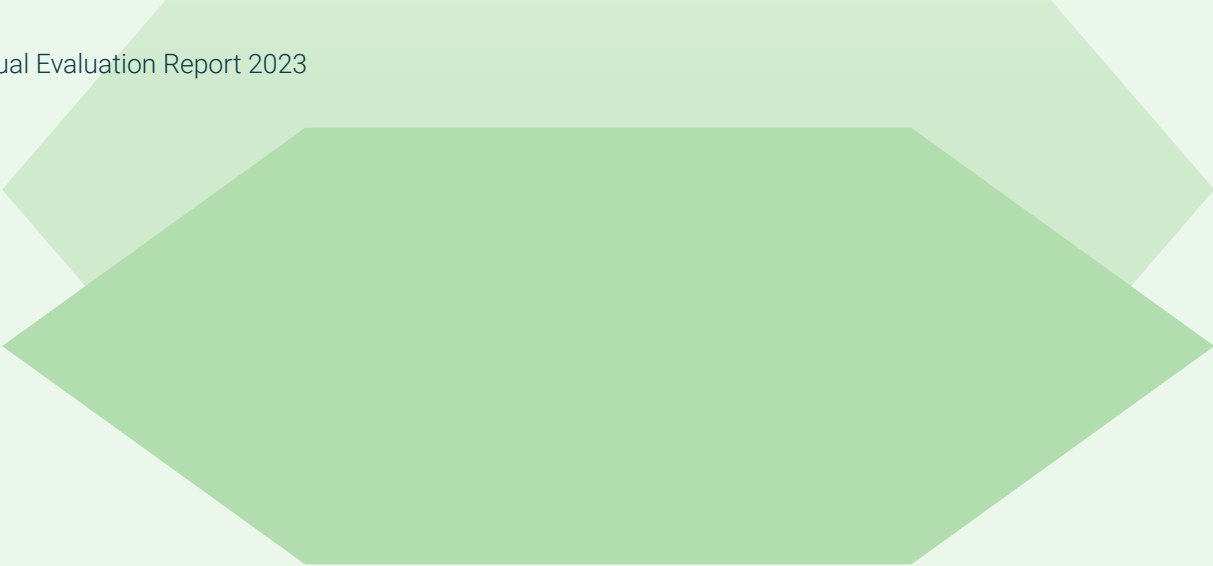
Sincerely,



Ahmed Ag Aboubacrine

Acting Director, Independent Evaluation
Department (IEvD)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Annual Evaluation Report 2023 presents an overview of evaluations of the Islamic Development Bank's (IsDB) projects, program, country engagement, process, sector and thematic evaluations based on criteria and ratings. It also notes IEvD initiatives in developing evaluation capacity of the IsDB and its member countries (MCs). The report delves into key findings, draws valuable lessons learned, and presents recommendations aimed at enhancing the Bank's impact and development effectiveness in the MCs and beyond. The synthesis of the lessons learned and recommendations from the last ten years (2015 – 2023) evaluations can be downloaded at this [link](#).

Adding value to the IsDB Group's Strategic

Priorities: The IEvD has provided crucial evidence, and lessons that have informed the IsDB's long-term vision and strategies. Through evidence-based recommendations, the IEvD has generated evaluative knowledge to inform decision making on critical strategic issues like resources mobilization, partnerships, line of financing, food security, operational efficiency, and country programming to respond the development needs across IsDB MCs and Muslim Communities in Non-MCs.

Informing the IsDB Group's Long-term Vision:

The Independent Evaluation function of IsDB has played a major role in safeguarding the Bank's long-term performance and financial stability. The retrospective 40-Year Assessment of IsDB Group

in 2013 and 2014 informed the foundation for the Bank's 10-Year Strategy, acknowledging its contributions in Islamic finance and support to the Muslim communities. The evaluation of the Bank's synergy practices noted missed opportunities, with the synergy being by chance rather than by design, and to have potential benefits of brand preservation and cost reduction. The evaluation observed minimal progress in decentralization, efficiency, and synergy of the IsDB Group. More recently, in 2021 and 2022, IEvD led a critical independent review of the Bank's 5-Year Performance, that informed the new IsDB realigned strategy (2023-2025). Moreover, IEvD have adopted its 3-Year RWP (2023-2025) to generate sector, thematic and corporate evaluations supporting the Bank's realigned strategic objectives 2023-2025.

Supporting the Response to Regional and Global

Challenges: During the COVID-19 pandemic, the IsDB Group's swift response included the Strategic Preparedness and Response Program (SPRP), worth USD 2.3 billion to aid MCs. A real Time Evaluation (RTE) by the IEvD found the SPRP design aligned with the Bank's Disaster Risk Management and Resilience Policy and recommended improved consultation and realistic target-setting. Similarly, IEvD evaluated IsDB's 2008 Jeddah Declaration Program aimed at food crises in least developed MCs. The evaluation showed that the program experienced slow implementation despite having positive impact in agriculture and rural development. Over the last decade, IEvD produced valuable series of Synthesis of Lessons Learned across sectors and themes. The one on Emergency and Relief interventions highlighted learning relating to stakeholders' consultation, flexible procurement, and adequate resource allocation as key to succeed in such programs, cautioning against a one-size-fits-all approach.

Catering Evidence to Strengthen the IsDB's

Performance: In 2023, IEvD assessed rigorously the performance of projects in the Agriculture, Water and Rural Development (AWRD) sector. Overall, it was found that 78% of the AWRD projects are "Highly Successful" or "Successful" and the remaining "Partly Successful". In terms of criteria, the performance of the AWRD sector was found as "Highly Relevant or relevant" (100%), "Highly Effective or Effective" (78%), "efficient" (33%), and "Most Likely or Likely Sustainable" (67%). On the other hand, the 2023 Cluster Evaluation on IsDB's Special Assistance (SA) in India showed significant contributions to education and youth employment. Overall, the performance of the SA in India was rated as "Successful" with 99% "Highly

Successful" or "Successful". A similar evaluation in Rwanda highlighted the effectiveness of program interventions to education, health, and water, but efficiency and sustainability were hampered by limited counterpart funding and revenue generation capacities.

In terms of the overall performance of the Bank based on the PCRs validated in 2023, it was estimated that 94% of the projects are "Successful" while the remaining "Highly Successful".

Enhancing Country Engagement: In 2023 IEvD completed the assessment of IsDB Group's operations in Cote d'Ivoire and launched the Country Engagement Evaluation for Egypt. The Country Assistance Evaluation (CAE) of Cote d'Ivoire highlighted high relevance and alignment with national priorities, but also noted an aging portfolio and significant implementation delays. The evaluations identified inclusive design approaches to benefit youth and women and called for better visibility IsDB's of operations to leverage more co-financing opportunities.

Summary of the Consolidated Findings and Lessons

of MCPS Reviews: IEvD completed the validation of MCPS Completion Reviews of Bangladesh and Kuwait. The implementation of Bangladesh's MCPS faced delays in the education and agriculture sectors, albeit with generally satisfactory timeframes. The implementation of Kuwait's MCPS struggled with only 4 out of 11 programs implemented with the "Less Efficient" rating. The validations underscore the importance of streamlined procurement procedures, the positive value-addition of IsDB Group's Regional Hub (RH), and the need for MCPS to be realistically formulated to align with MCs' needs and expectations.



Strengthening Results-Based Management: IEvD advocated constantly for a more robust Integrated Quality Assurance Framework (IQAF) to improve portfolio quality and reduce delays. In 2023, IEvD conducted a Corporate Evaluation of the Operational Efficiency of IsDB Projects at Entry of 34 projects in the transport, energy, agriculture, social, and water and sanitation sectors in Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone, Türkiye, and Uganda. Although there has been noticeable progress, the IQAF's implementation lacked consistency, and harmonization of processes, mainly due to ineffective project preparation facilities, and staff overload.

Featured Topic: Partnerships and Off-Balance Sheet Resource Mobilization: The IEvD evaluated 134 Partnership Agreements (PAs) and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and their impact. Overall, 14 PAs have defined financing targets, 76 lack financial commitments, and 44 focus on non-financial activities. IsDB staff and partners rate the relevance of partnerships as satisfactory. IsDB staff are dissatisfied with partnership effectiveness, while partners view partnerships effective.

The analysis of the co-financing portfolio also shows that the IsDB has not been able to achieve the co-financing targets set under the 10-YIS and P5P. The co-financing ratio of 1:0.83 achieved during 2015-2022 was significantly lower compared to the targets set under 10YIS of 1:3 and 1:2, respectively. Partners urge for improved communication on co-financing projects. Coherence of partnerships is rated satisfactory by IsDB staff, yet the inadequate processes and PA database affect internal management of partnerships.

Knowledge Sharing to Enhance Learning: IEvD promoted evaluation knowledge sharing through various channels in 2023. The IEvD 5th Evaluation Symposium explored innovations in development evaluation and dissemination of best practices. IEvD organized 8 knowledge-sharing sessions and distributed 34 knowledge products, including 12 K-Series, 8 Executive Dissemination Notes, 7 Videos, 3 Articles, and 4 Newsletters for better utilization of evaluation learning. IEvD also managed the STEER, a system that tracks and reports on the implementation of evaluation recommendations, aiming to foster a culture of learning and accountability within the IsDB.

"THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION FUNCTION OF ISDB HAS BEEN CRUCIAL IN SAFEGUARDING THE BANK'S LONG-TERM PERFORMANCE, INFORMING ITS 10-YEAR STRATEGY, AND SHAPING THE NEW REALIGNED STRATEGY (2023-2025) THROUGH CRITICAL REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS."

Partnerships for Evaluation Capacity Development.

In 2023 IEvD organized a knowledge-sharing session for participants from the Arab Coordination Group on the Institutionalization of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning functions as way to boost development effectiveness. IEvD also organized an in-house International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET) to train 28 staff from IsDB and partners. IEvD collaborated with EvalNet, the OECD-DAC Network for Development Evaluation on finalizing the Arabic version of the Glossary of Key Evaluation and Result-Based Management Terms.

Forward Outlook. IEvD's 3-year Rolling Work Plan (3Y-RWP) for 2024-2026 includes project evaluations, macro-level evaluations, and evaluation learning and outreach. In 2024 project evaluations will cover the health and education sectors. Macro-level evaluations will include Country Engagement Evaluation, Corporate, Sector and Thematic evaluations aligned with the three pillars and two strategic objectives of the Realigned Strategy 2023-2025. Going forward, IEvD will also invest in innovative evaluation techniques and learning, as well as in tailor-made outreach to enhance the utilization of its findings. It will also further its evaluation capacity development initiatives within the IsDB Group and for MCs.



2023 EVALUATIONS AT A GLANCE



Country Assistance Evaluation of Cote d'Ivoire



In 2023, IEvD evaluated 11 projects across 11 Member Countries (MCs), with a primary focus on the Agriculture, Water and Rural Development (AWRD) sector. Overall, 78% of the AWRD projects are “Highly Successful” or “Successful” and the remaining “Partly Successful”. The Department also conducted Cluster Evaluation on IsDB Special Assistance Operations in India covering 11 operations and the Scholarship Program. The IEvD reviewed and validated 16 Project Completion Reports (PCRs) of which 94% (15) of the projects completed were “Successful” while the remaining were “Highly Successful”.

At the macro-evaluations, the IEvD during the year concluded seven macro evaluations: (i) the Corporate Evaluation of Operational Efficiency at Entry, (ii) the Thematic Evaluation of IsDB Line of Finance Operations, (iii) the Corporate Evaluation of IsDB Off-Balance Sheet Resource Mobilization Initiatives, Programs and Activities, (iv) the Country Assistance

Evaluation in Cote d'Ivoire, (v) Thematic Evaluation of IsDB Partnerships, (vi) Evaluation of the IsDB Group's Food Security Program and , (vii) the Review of Counterpart Funding in the Operations of the IsDB. The department had also reviewed and validated Member Country Partnership Strategy (MCPS) Completion Reviews for Kuwait and Bangladesh.

7

Seven Corporate, Country, and Thematic Evaluations conducted

11

Eleven projects in eleven Member Countries, focusing mainly on the Agriculture, Water, and Industry Sector evaluated by IEvD

16

Sixteen Project Completion Reports validated (100% coverage)

Throughout the year, the IEvD successfully launched and disseminated a comprehensive array of evaluation products across various media platforms, including video presentations, digital and printed publications, and interactive seminars. In addition, the IEvD organized its fifth Symposium in Jeddah, bringing together an extensive network of stakeholders and partners. Under the theme “The Future of Development Evaluation: Adapting to a

Changing Landscape,” this seminal event offered a platform for cross-learning and exchanging knowledge and insights. It was attended by practitioners from IsDB Group entities, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) and Arab Coordination Group members including the KS Relief and the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD).

22

Knowledge Products

5

Guidelines and Templates

1

new Improvement Initiative: a series of Brown Bag Sessions

4

e-Newsletters

2

Insight Papers were produced

18

Evaluation Events - seminars and a Symposium

1

Evaluation Capacity Development initiative in Morocco

28

participants trained and certified in evaluation through IPDET

6

Platforms and Systems developed or upgraded



Central Asia-South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project

"IN 2023, IEvD EVALUATED 11 PROJECTS IN THE AGRICULTURE, WATER, AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT SECTOR ACROSS 11 MEMBER COUNTRIES, WITH 78% RATED AS 'HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL' OR 'SUCCESSFUL'. ADDITIONALLY, 94% OF THE REVIEWED PROJECT COMPLETION REPORTS WERE DEEMED 'SUCCESSFUL' OR 'HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL'."



IEvD: THREE DECADES OF ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH FOSTERING ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING

IEvD: THREE DECADES OF ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH FOSTERING ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING

Over the past three decades, IEvD has significantly expanded its role, conducting more than 900 evaluation activities. This encompasses a wide array of evaluations, including project evaluations or validations, corporate, process, sector, and thematic evaluations, country assistance evaluations, Member Country Partnership Strategy (MCPS) implementation reviews, as well as evaluations of special assistance operations or Technical Assistance (TA) grants across various sectors. These evaluations have proven instrumental in offering profound insights into the operations of the IsDB Group in its member countries (MCs). They provide evidence-based policy and project-level recommendations to enhance

operations and resource allocation efficiency. Learning from these evaluations and implementing their recommendations represents a critical aspect of a reflective approach aimed at boosting the effectiveness of IsDB operations.

The total number of Project Performance Evaluation Reports (PPERs) in the IEvD database is about 700 including 228 post-evaluations conducted by IEvD covering various sectors to promote sustainable development and improve people’s lives in member countries and beyond. The overall assessment of the projects reveals a positive trend, with a significant number deemed successful or partly successful.

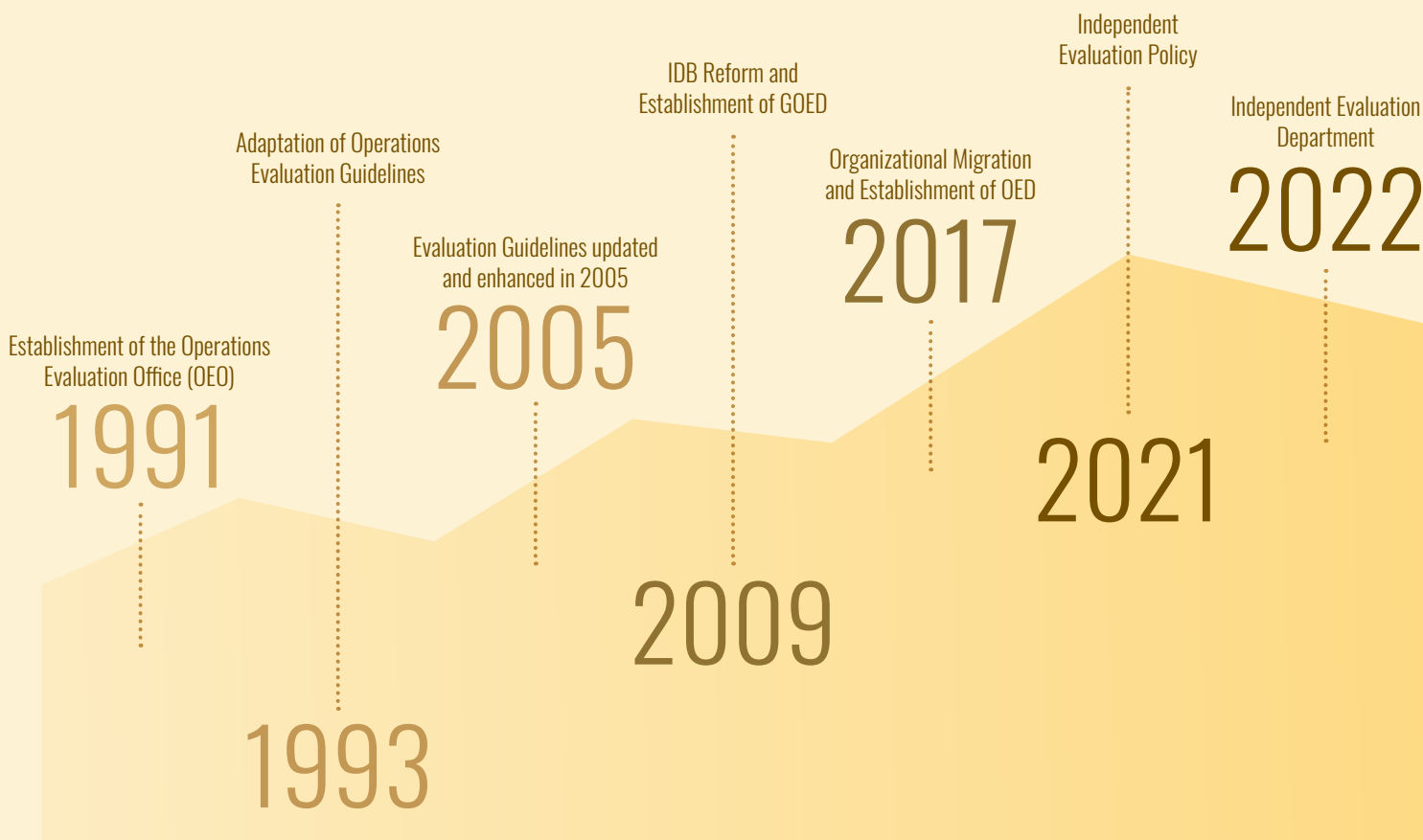


Figure 1: Evaluation function’s evolution.

This outcome demonstrates the effectiveness of the projects in achieving their intended objectives and making a tangible difference in the lives of the communities served.

Furthermore, the evaluations assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the projects individually.

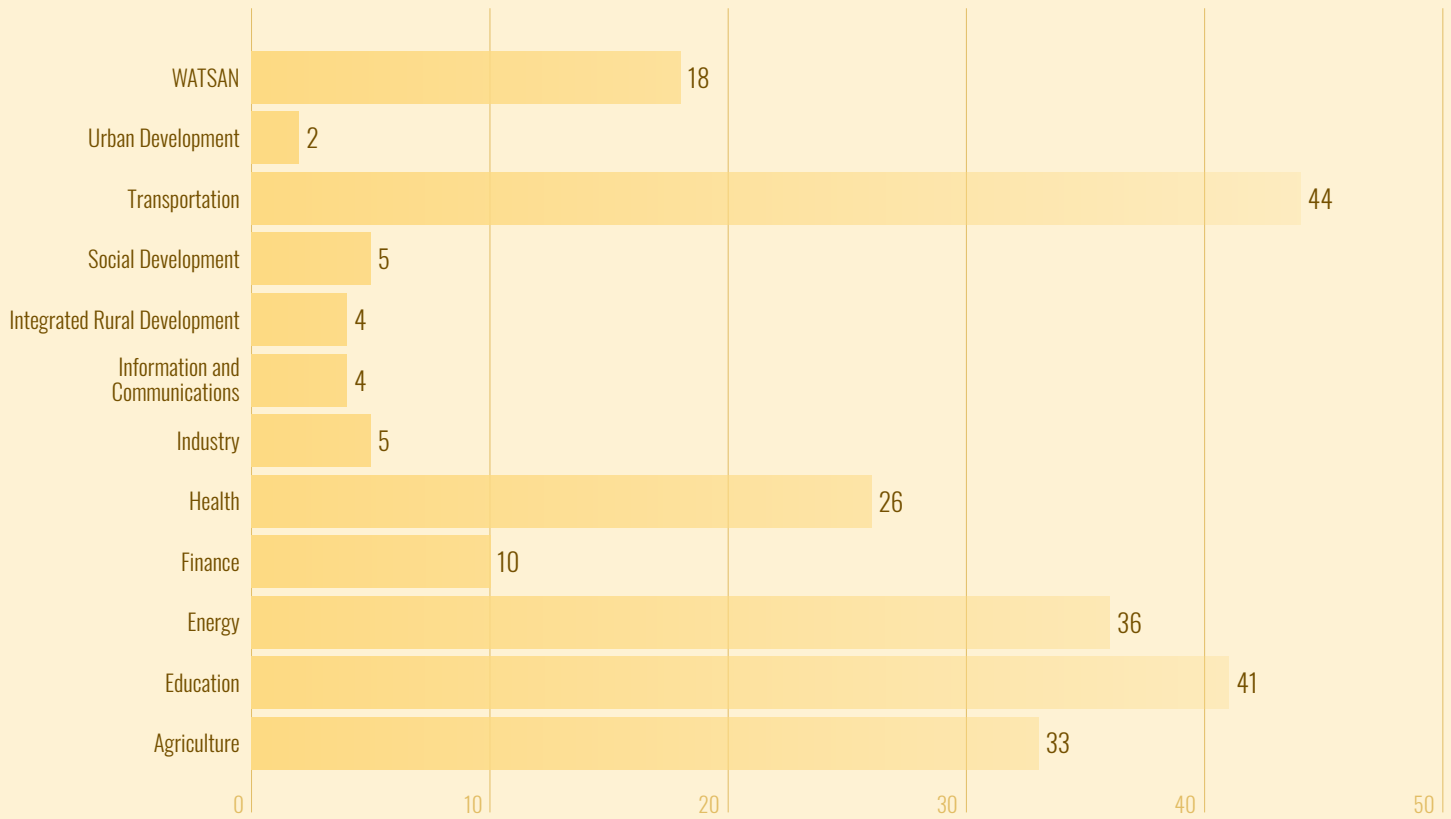


Figure 2: Evaluations by Sector (1991-2023)

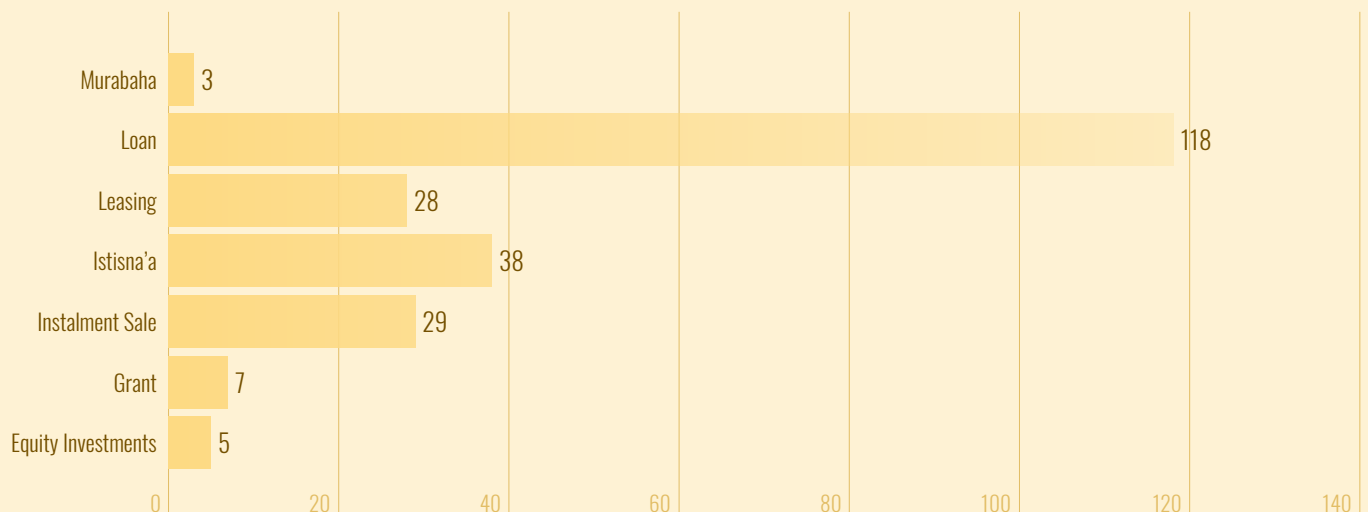
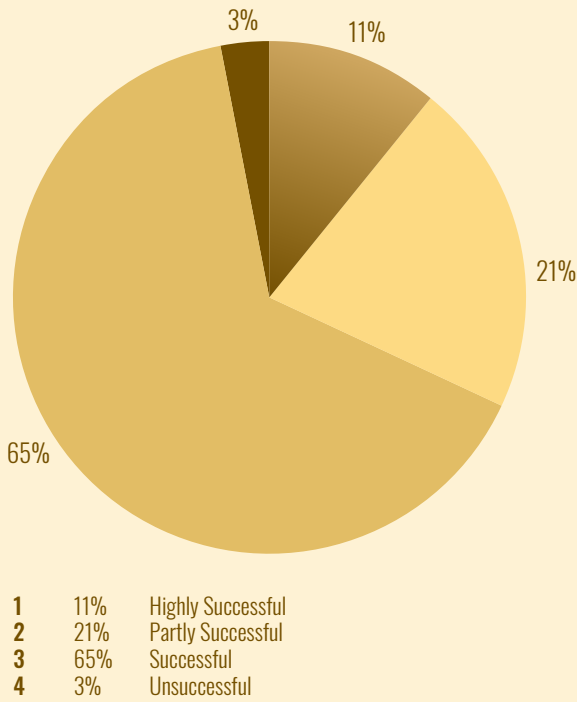
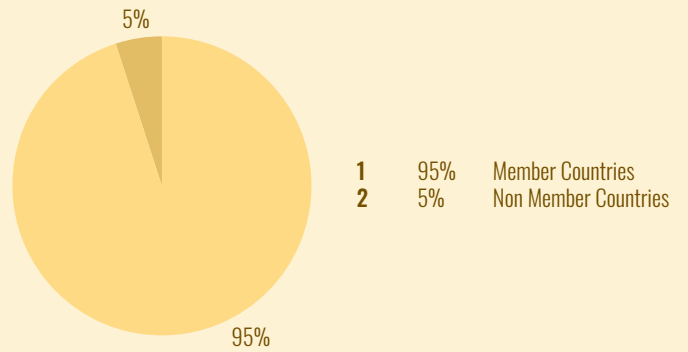


Figure 3: Evaluations By Mode of Finance (1991-2023)

OVERALL ASSESSMENT



BY MC/NMC



BY REGION

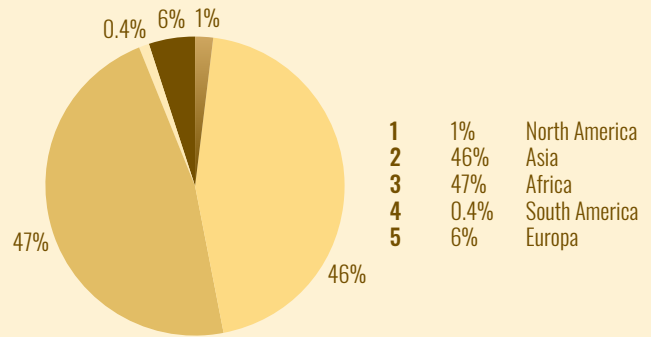
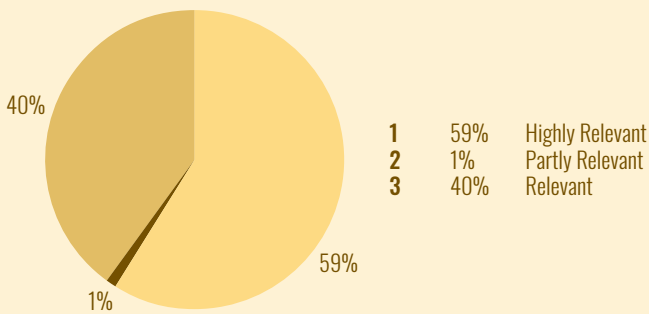
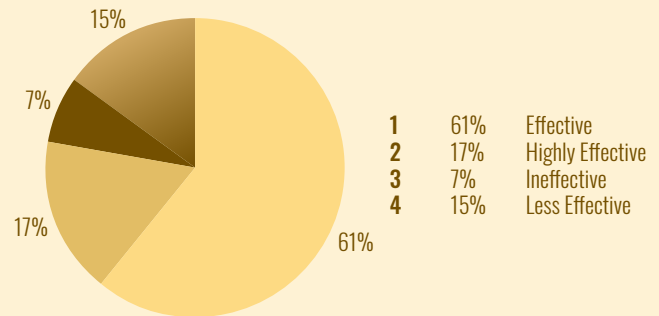


Figure 4: Overall Assessment and By Region & MC & NMCs

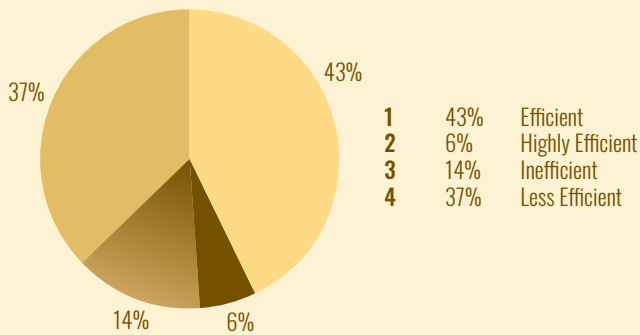
RELEVANCE



EFFECTIVENESS



EFFICIENCY



SUSTAINABILITY

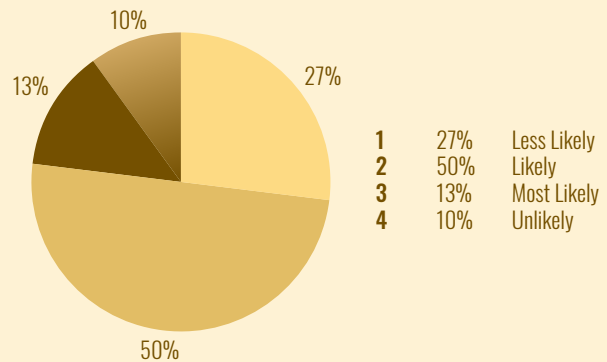
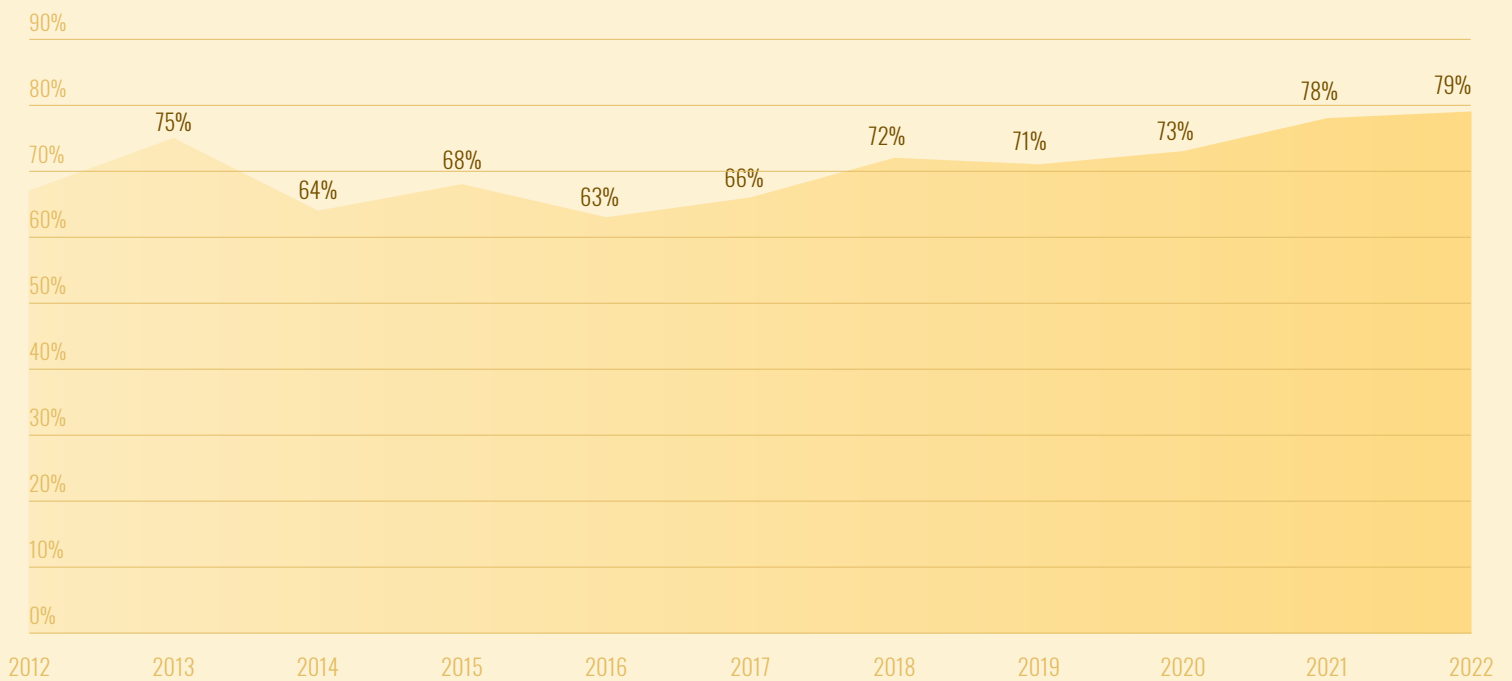


Figure 5: Evaluation Assessment by OECD DAC criteria



The last ten years demonstrated an improvement in the performance of the projects, mainly due to the adoption of the findings, lessons learned, and recommendations from previous evaluations.

Figure 6: Trends in Yearly Average Score of Randomly Selected Evaluated Projects (2012-2022)





Dr. Djelloul Saci
Former Director OEO

“The extent of progress made by the IsDB in the field of Development Evaluation is impressive. Its scope has significantly expanded since 1994 when the First Operations Evaluation Guidelines were prepared to assess the performance of the projects it had financed. In 1993 (1423H), the Operations Evaluation Office (OEO) expanded the scope of its work in line with the decision taken by the Management and BED Audit Committee. Its activities were henceforth diversified to address higher-level performance assessments, mainly including Country evaluation and sector evaluation. The subsequent enhancements achieved in terms of organization, governance (independent function directly reporting to the Board), Budget, staffing and staff skill-mix allowed the IsDB to join the high-level Evaluation Cooperation Group since 2008 (ECG) and obtain international recognition.”

LESSONS AND INSIGHTS FROM ISDB EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

To optimize the impact and efficiency of emergency projects based on lessons from operations implemented between 2006-2021:

- 1 Resource Allocation and Engagement:** ensure allocating adequate resources, fostering beneficiary ownership, and implementing thorough monitoring.
- 2 Tailored Approaches:** avoid generic solutions by conducting comprehensive feasibility studies and assessments to design interventions that meet the specific needs of each emergency context.
- 3 Knowledge Sharing:** document and disseminate best practices and lessons learned throughout different stages of implementation to facilitate effective knowledge transfer and learning.
- 4 Streamline Implementation:** simplify implementation structures to eliminate delays and enhance efficiency.
- 5 Contextual Development Strategies:** apply development approaches appropriate for emergency situations, including improved stakeholder consultation, to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
- 6 Flexible Procurement:** use flexible procurement methods for post-disaster management to mitigate delays, reduce costs, and achieve timely project results, ensuring a balance between speed and accountability.



Mohameden Sidiya
Former Director of GOED

“Evaluation in IsDB has evolved during the past 3 decades from a small office, focusing on the follow up of few problematic equity investments, to a full-fledged independent function, contributing to the enhancement of the Bank’s operations and self-management, through the promotion of accountability and learning. The evaluation played a key role in drawing management and the board’s attention to critical issues. For example, in 2014, the ‘evaluation of IsDB@40’ showed that the Bank’s approval growth is not sustainable and entails major financial risks. Based on the evaluation findings, the management took strong corrective measures to avoid potential risks. This type of evaluation should be carried out periodically, preferably once every decade.”

A. Institutionalizing evaluation capacity

development: Developing evaluation knowledge management systems, evaluation capacity development (ECD), and partnerships are at the core of IEvD’s objective of promoting an evaluation culture within the IsDB Group and in MCs. Through strengthening its own capacities, IEvD uses necessary methodologies and tools to enhance the evaluation process, reporting, knowledge dissemination, outreach, and stakeholder engagement. In addition, IEvD continued to actively support the promotion of ECD in IsDB Group MCs by working with key partners such as the Arab Coordination Group (ACG). IEvD, in partnership with the International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET), provides evaluation capacity development for IsDB and MC staff.

B. Promoting knowledge dissemination to enhance evaluation practice and learning:

In 2020, IEvD launched the Systematic Tracking of Execution of Evaluation Recommendations (STEER) platform with the goal of improving the Bank’s performance. This initiative aims to enhance the utilization of evaluation findings, thereby strengthening learning and accountability, and ultimately enhancing development effectiveness.

STEER offers an efficient mechanism for systematically tracking and reporting on the implementation of evaluation recommendations, as well as increasing management buy-in to evaluation findings.

The platform was developed by IEvD in collaboration with the Economic Research and Institutional Learning (ERIL) Department of the IsDB Institute (IsDBI).



“Since its establishment in 1991, the evaluation function has been a potent catalyst for fostering innovation, efficiency, and effectiveness. It serves as a guiding compass for the Bank's development actions, nurturing a culture of continuous learning, adaptation, and operational excellence”.

Zaher Rebai

Director, HRMD and former
Acting Director of IEvD

C. Forging partnerships to promote evaluation culture:

In 2010, IEvD became a full member of the Evaluation Cooperation Group of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) (ECG), marking recognition of the Department's contributions to the IsDB development effectiveness efforts and to advancing evaluation practice within IsDB and its member countries. Over the past five years, IEvD has institutionalized the IsDB Group Annual Evaluation Symposium, establishing it as a flagship platform for promoting evaluation practices and fostering learning within the IsDB Group and among member countries. In collaboration with the EvalNet of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network for Evaluation Development, IEvD has led a global alliance to translate the Glossary of Key Evaluation and Results-Based Management Terms into Arabic. This Glossary will be launched during the IsDB Annual Meeting in April 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

D. Adding Value to the IsDB Group's Strategic Priorities:

Over the years, IEvD supported IsDB Group's long-term vision and high-level strategies, including the recent IsDB Strategic Realignment 2023-2025, with evidence, lessons learned, and tools to support the evolving development landscape and needs in member countries (MCs). Moreover, IEvD's policy- and strategic-level recommendations, supported by evidence, have enhanced analytical thinking that shaped the discourse on the core organizational and operational aspects of the IsDB Group. It also generated evaluative knowledge on strategic and contemporary issues important to IsDB and its MCs, including responses to crises such as food security (Jeddah Declaration Initiative in 2008) and the COVID-19 pandemic (Strategic Preparedness and Response Program (SPRP) in 2021).

In preparing IsDB Group's Strategic Realignment 2023-2025, IEvD proposed the theory of change of the focused areas under the strategic alignment and developed a relevant results framework. These have ensured the scope for conducting an evaluability assessment of the Strategic Realignment in the future.



Idrissa Dia
Director, Economic & Social
Infrastructure

“The Bank Evaluation function’s contributions to improving the quality of the Bank’s operations through its thorough reviews of completed IsDB-supported projects in all forms has been instrumental in sharpening our staff and member countries’ deep understanding of project implementation challenges and key success factors. The function rooted in solid good practices has also contributed to establishing a strong repository of both formal institutional learning and individual staff tacit knowledge capture, all helping to build better and more impactful operations for the future”.
Idrissa Dia, Director, Economic & Social Infrastructure”

IEvD, SPRP REAL-TIME EVALUATION REPORT 2021

“The SPRP design was found sound and generally relevant as it considered the perspective of the crisis and the broad scope of the expected impacts. Moreover, the SPRP was consistent with the guiding principles of the Bank’s Disaster Risk Management and Resilience Policy. The concept of the coordinated intervention of IsDB Group entities, the fast-track procedures, and the use of reallocated funds make the SPRP a flexible and responsive program. The evaluation found room for improvement in enhanced consultation, setting realistic targets, and institutionalizing emergency response guidelines and processes”.

E. Informing the IsDB Group’s long-term vision: In 2014, IEvD led a retrospective assessment of **IsDB Group’s 40-year performance** and achievements, considering internal and external issues and challenges the Bank faced.

IsDB Group achievements have been embraced by the widespread recognition of its role, especially as a reliable development partner –including in Islamic Finance, contributed to strengthening ties and support of Muslim communities in non-MCs.

In 2019, IEvD has undertaken the **Corporate Evaluation of IsDB Group Synergy** taking stock of synergy practices and identified ways and means – recommendation - to enhance external and internal synergy. **In December 2021**, IEvD commissioned the **Corporate Evaluation of IsDB’s Decentralization Experience** to review the implementation progress and performance of the Decentralized Business Delivery Model along its four pillars of (i) empowerment, (ii) efficiency, (iii) effectiveness, and (iv) synergy. The insights and findings of these two assessments continue to guide the decision-making processes at the senior management.



Anasse Aissami
DG CP, Former IEvD Director

“IsDB’s independent evaluation function serves as a critical compass for the Country Programs Directorate by providing independent insights and assessments at country-level to enhance the effectiveness of our Member Country Partnership Strategies, at the portfolio level to boost our operational efficiency and at project-level to ensure our projects are evaluable and meet the OECD-DAC criteria. Every year the recommendations from these independent assessments guide our strategic decisions and planning on all dimensions of the project lifecycle. They also act as a safeguard against complacency in the operations family by fostering a ‘virtuous cycle’ of ‘looking back and moving forward’ through monitoring, evaluation, and learning. The institutionalization of this best practice in operations has allowed us to make significant strides in improving the evaluability of our projects. Therefore, I am a firm believer that embracing the independent evaluation function is not just a matter of control; it’s a commitment to excellence and a catalyst for continuous learning and improvement in operations.”





“Harvesting insights from diverse evaluations of the Special Assistance Operations for Muslim Communities is essential for fostering meaningful progress and enhancing the effectiveness of the community outreach program. Engaging in critical assessments, such as the Cluster Evaluations in Rwanda and India, has been a privileged opportunity to contribute to the continuous improvement of Special Assistance operations.”

Abdelhakim Youssouf
Manager Special Assistance,
CCD Department

LESSONS FROM MCPS IMPLEMENTATION REVIEWS DURING 2016-2018:

- 1** Full developmental potential of IsDB Group operations would require adopting an integrated value chain approach and greater synergy for all IsDB Group Members.
- 2** Paying due attention to active portfolio and better field decentralization will ensure development results in the short term.
- 3** Establishing a results framework with SMART indicators and enacting the recommendation of portfolio reviews ensures better balance on new approvals with implementation; and
- 4** Greater synergy between IsDBG members would reduce financing cost, increase awareness of alternative IsDBG services, and ultimately enhance the developmental reach of IsDBG’s interventions.

Consolidated lessons from MCPS review undertaken in seven countries (Kazakhstan, Niger, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, Türkiye, and Uganda) by IEvD.



"OVER THE PAST THREE DECADES, IEvD HAS CONDUCTED OVER 900 EVALUATIONS, PROVIDING EVIDENCE-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE IsDB OPERATIONS. THESE EVALUATIONS, INCLUDING 700 PROJECT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORTS, HAVE PROVEN INSTRUMENTAL IN PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVING LIVES IN MEMBER COUNTRIES."

FEATURED TOPIC:

**EVALUATIONS
OF IsDB PARTNERSHIPS
AND OFF-BALANCE
SHEET RESOURCE
MOBILIZATION**



Since its establishment in 1974, the IsDB has emphasized the importance of partnerships. Article 2 of the IsDB Articles of Agreement underscores the Bank's commitment to cooperate with entities sharing similar purposes in the realm of international economic cooperation. This strategic focus involves engaging with development partners to mobilize resources, foster knowledge exchange, and address common development goals.

As the MCs face significant developmental challenges and their resource needs increase, the Bank's ordinary capital resources (OCR) alone can no longer meet these growing demands. Therefore, mobilizing all possible sources of financing to support inclusive growth and sustainable development in MCs has become one of the Bank's primary objectives. This goal has been pursued through various mechanisms, tools, and platforms including partnerships for co-financing, syndications for non-sovereign public-private partnership (PPP) transactions, and other structured platforms or initiatives such as crowdfunding. IEVD completed an evaluation of the Bank's Off-Balance Sheet Resource Mobilization efforts and assessed the effectiveness of partnerships established during 2015-2022 for resource mobilization.

Objective and Scope: The Thematic Evaluation of IsDB Partnerships aimed to assess outcomes from IsDB's Partnership Agreements (PAs), analyzed existing policies, and evaluated their contribution to the Bank's performance in resource mobilization and development effectiveness. The Corporate Evaluation of the IsDB Off-Balance Sheet Resource Mobilization assessed the outcomes of the off-balance sheet resource mobilization initiatives, programs, and activities. These evaluations assessed IsDB policies, achievement of results, staff feedback, collecting partner perspectives, and deriving insights and recommendations for learning.

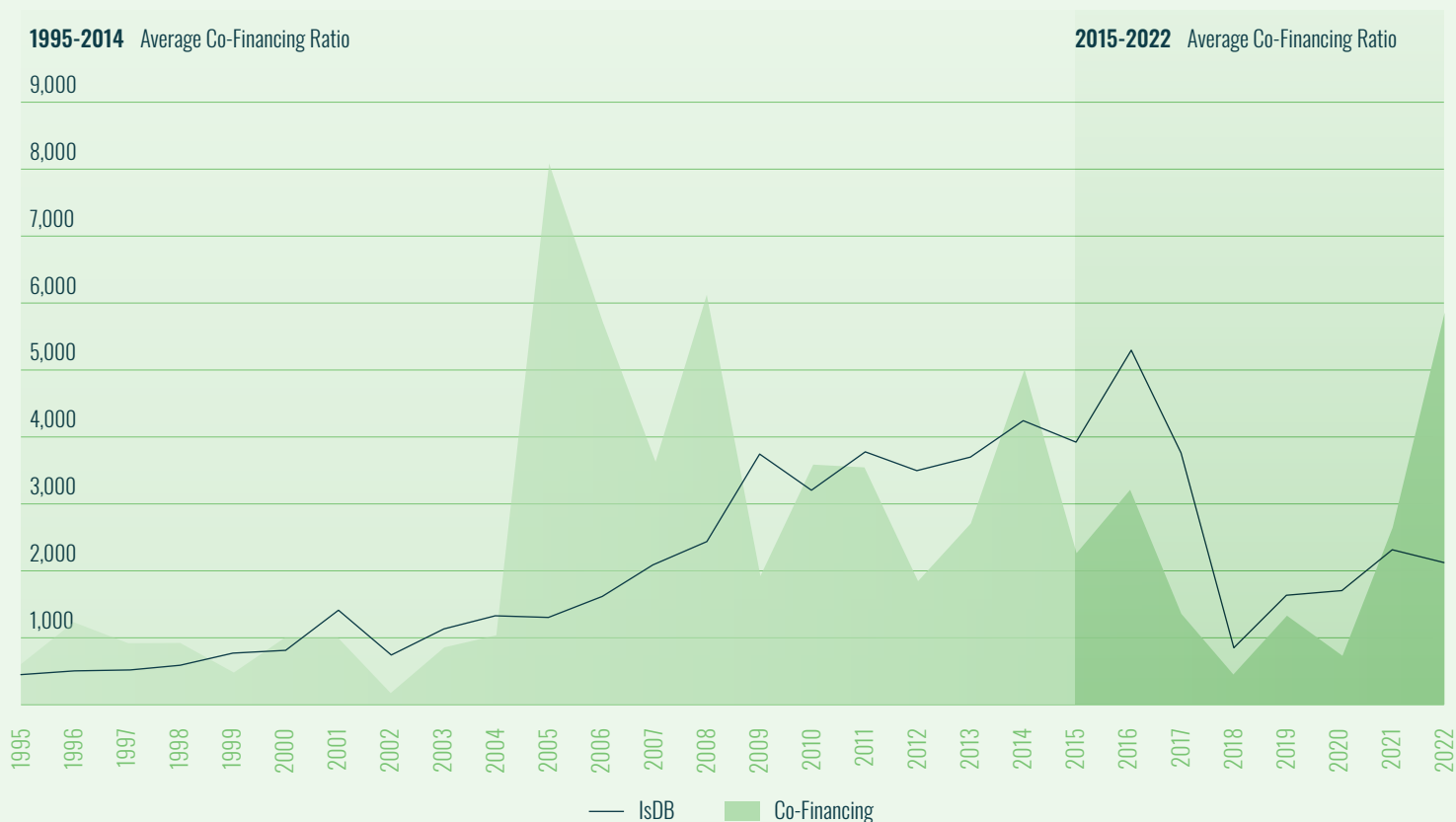
MAIN FINDINGS

Relevance: The relevance of the IsDB partnerships is rated satisfactory by both IsDB staff (39% agree compared to 28% disagree) and by representatives of partners (72%). They agreed that signed PAs are, to a great extent, relevant to the IsDB strategic needs and priorities and objectives of partners. The IsDB has great potential to strengthen its partnerships with partner institutions, being the only South-South development bank. To achieve the desired objectives, the PAs signed by the IsDB need quality improvement in purposes and areas of cooperation, and regular follow-up with the partners. Partners should also look at the strengths of both parties to support joint strategies, mandates, programs, and projects through frequent dialogue and discussions, which can lead to more resourceful co-financing activities.

Effectiveness: In terms of effectiveness, 31% of IsDB staff were dissatisfied (compared to 25% satisfied) with the effectiveness of the Bank's partnerships. On the other hand, 52% of the representatives of partners have rated their partnership with IsDB as satisfactory in achieving the agreed outputs and outcomes by their institutions. Although the Bank has been effective in mobilizing additional resources and delivering better results from the operations funded through its partnerships, the resources mobilized were, to some extent, below the targets set under 10-YS and P5P. The Bank needs to improve the effectiveness of its partnerships during the implementation period of its recently developed Strategic Realignment (2023-2025).

The following graph presents a summary of the IsDB and Co-financing ratio.

Figure 7: Co-Financing by IsDB and Co-Financier, 1995-2022



Efficiency: About 32% of IsDB respondents were dissatisfied (compared to only 18% satisfied) in terms of achieving planned objectives of partnerships in an economical and timely manner. Conversely, 42% of the partners' representatives assessed their institution's partnership with IsDB as efficient, and IsDB is also considered more efficient compared to other MDBs.

Partners' Performance: The IsDB staff perceived that partners' performance satisfactory (23% of respondents agree and 54% partially agree compared to 23% disagreed) in terms of their proactive engagement during all the stages of PA's initiation and implementation and timeliness in the fulfilment of financial and non-financial commitments by the partners. On the other hand, 68% of the partners' representatives also believe that IsDB is a partner of choice by their institutions.

Coherence: The coherence of partnerships by IsDB staff is rated satisfactory as 35% agreed (compared to 20% disagreed) that IsDB partnerships' purposes and areas of cooperation are coherent with other strategic objectives of the Bank.

Internal Management of Partnership: Internal management of partnerships is rated dissatisfactory as 49% of IsDB staff are dissatisfied (compared to only 13% satisfied) in terms of development, management, coordination, and monitoring of partnerships-related activities. They perceive that IsDB is not managing its partnerships well due to insufficient business processes and a weak database of PAs. Partnerships' purpose and results have not been systematically monitored and reported to the IsDB Senior Management regularly.

Overall Performance Assessment of Partnerships: About 59% of representatives of partners' institutions consider their partnership with IsDB satisfactory.

Partner institutions are satisfied with the IsDB partnerships mainly due to their robust partnership strategies, implementable associated with PAs, availability of a reliable database of partnerships, showcasing success stories, and availability of sufficient financing for co-financed projects.

The **lessons learned** from the IsDB experience underscore the importance of a strategic and comprehensive approach to partnerships, emphasizing the need for clear guidelines, action plans, and coordination at all levels of the organization. Key takeaways include the effectiveness of partnership agreements underpinned by strong internal cooperation, laying the foundation for successful external collaborations. The necessity of allocating adequate resources to the Partnership Team and setting realistic performance indicators is highlighted as essential for achieving desired outcomes in partnership agreement design and implementation.

Furthermore, the chance of successful partnership agreement integration and execution increases significantly with the establishment of a clear results framework and action plans coupled with solid commitments from partner institutions. Lastly, developing an accurate and user-friendly online database for managing partnerships is a critical tool for enhancing PAs' effectiveness by improving data accuracy on co-financing and facilitating better planning and execution.



"THE ISDB EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIPS, CLEAR GUIDELINES, ACTION PLANS, AND COORDINATION AT ALL LEVELS. STRONG INTERNAL COOPERATION AND ADEQUATE RESOURCES FOR THE PARTNERSHIP TEAM ARE ESSENTIAL. ESTABLISHING A RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND DEVELOPING A USER-FRIENDLY ONLINE DATABASE CAN SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS."

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EVALUATIONS OF IsDB PARTNERSHIPS AND OFF-BALANCE SHEET RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

1

Develop a Comprehensive Partnership Strategy for Financing and Non-Financing

Activities: The Partnership Strategy must ensure relevance and prioritization of PAs with clear strategic objectives and adequate financial and human resources. In this regard, continuous consultation and guidance from Senior Management are critical to improve the efficiency of future partnerships.

2

Strengthen Internal Coordination: The Bank needs to develop strong “Internal Partnerships” among various relevant business units and staff involved in designing, implementing, and managing partnerships at the Bank level.

3

Regular Monitoring and Dissemination of Progress and Results: The Bank needs to introduce the Annual Partnership Progress Report (PPR) as a separate exercise to identify lessons learned from partnerships and areas for improvement to guide future cooperation and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its partnerships.

4

Empower Regional Hubs to support Partnership Activities: RHs need to be fully involved in designing and implementing PAs. They should also play an important role in resource mobilization, coordination, partnership management, and advisory roles in their respective regions.

5

Systematically Engage with Strategic Partners: The IsDB needs to prepare an Annual Partners Engagement Plan to mobilize additional resources for its financing and non-financing partnerships. In particular, the relevant IsDB team needs to regularly share the Annual Work Program (AWP) and project pipeline with existing and potential new partners. Regarding non-sovereign financing, the IsDB needs to develop innovative instruments to attract private sector and commercial financiers and enhance partnerships.

6

Partnership for Staff Capacity Building and Secondments: The Bank needs to develop a secondment plan for its staff with partners for mutual benefit. This plan will help in capacity building, the exchange of knowledge and expertise, and best practices among partner institutions.

7

Develop an accurate and easily accessible online database of partnerships. This can have a cross-cutting impact on partnerships among internal and external stakeholders. Developing the right databases of partnerships can also positively impact the effective planning and implementation of future PAs.

LEARNINGS FROM 2023 EVALUATIONS



The following section outlines the lessons learned from IEvD evaluations conducted in 2023, spanning projects and corporate, country, and thematic assessments.

These lessons are grouped under the following three areas:

1) quality at entry, 2) implementation capacity and coordination at the country level, and 3) sustainability of development impact. The synthesis of the lessons learned and recommendations from the last ten years (2015 – 2023) evaluations can be also downloaded at this [link](#).

1. QUALITY AT ENTRY, AND PARTICIPATION OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS IMPROVE PROJECT QUALITY.

1.1 Improving Quality at Entry through better design backed up by relevant policies and monitoring frameworks.

Clear implementation guidelines, effective monitoring frameworks, and the development of relevant policies are crucial for the success of the projects. **Refining the Bank's policies and developing appropriate implementation instruments for managing various funds and initiatives are critical for managing the Bank's projects.** This includes standardizing approval processes and enhancing engagement with partners for joint action plans. A well-designed Line of Finance (LoF) can be a good medium to bridge funding gaps in financial institutions and provide long-term financing in hard currency for lending to end-beneficiaries in local markets. **The logical**

framework needs to accentuate developmental impact via well-chosen objectives to be monitored by SMART indicators and to ensure the development impact is channeled to targeted end beneficiaries.

1.2 Meaningful beneficiary participation and robust financial and technical feasibility studies are instrumental for high-quality project designs.

Detailed needs assessment and meaningful engagement of end-beneficiaries at the onset of the project cycle increase the likelihood of project sustainability. The Groundnut Value Chain Development Project in The Gambia neglected the needs of the farmers, including the supply of improved seeds and fertilizers and access to finance, which negatively affected the achievement of the objectives of increasing productivity and improving the livelihood of the farmers. In contrast, the Millennium Village Project Phase II (MVP II) in Uganda involved end-beneficiaries, mobilized and consulted them on their priority needs. This has increased the chances of sustainability and relevance of investments.

A thorough project feasibility study with cost-effective solutions is paramount for efficient project implementation and sustainability.

It is critical to conduct a feasibility study addressing contextual challenges before estimating the program cost, rather than waiting until its approval. Because of an inadequate feasibility study for the National Water Supply & Sanitation Program in Azerbaijan, the electricity cost to run the water pumping station and

wastewater treatment plants was not estimated well, thus affecting financial sustainability. In another case, at the design of the National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project in Mozambique, the project team used the findings of a feasibility study of a similar program conducted by another partner instead of undertaking a precise assessment of project sites. This resulted in many unsuccessful attempts in water well drilling.



2. NEED FOR EARLY ASSESSMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS' CAPACITY BUILDING AND EFFECTIVE COORDINATION.

2.1 Strong Collaboration, Coordination, and Flexibility Enable Effective Projects and Programs Implementation

Strong collaboration, adaptability and coordination across the EA, line ministries, beneficiaries, and contractors increased the success of project implementation. There is a need to engage with the MC governments to address implementation bottlenecks, such as inadequate project planning and implementation processes, dual procurement procedures, long implementation periods, pre-conditions for project effectiveness, first disbursements, the duration of issuing no objection letters, use country-systems where applicable and appropriate, since this would also enhance implementation efficiency and a change in an implementing agency. The Construction of Modern Rural Housing Project (Phase II) in Uzbekistan was part of the government's flagship housing programs, which were strongly aligned with the larger government policy and initiatives. The government allocated counterpart funds on time and provided required additional funding, demonstrating its strong ownership and commitment.

On the other hand, in Serra Leone, during the road construction work under the Kabala Water Supply Project, the water distribution pipelines were damaged, highlighting a lack of coordination between Sierra Leone Water Company (SALWACO), the Road Authority, and other government entities. The long delay in the project implementation could have been avoided by ensuring proper coordination

among different actors involved in community development. **Also, under the Dangara Valley Irrigation Network Project in Tajikistan** a lacked coordination during the design stage resulted in the procurement of machinery which were not relevant at the field level to support the operations and maintenance of the infrastructure built.

The flexibility of key stakeholders and the financing approach are instrumental for successful project implementation. One of the lessons learned from Phase 1 of the Construction of Modern Rural Housing Project in Uzbekistan was that IsDB could not hand over the houses to end-beneficiaries without finalizing the Sale Price due to pending construction works. As a result, Phase 2 was introduced to finance the project through 3 tranches of Istisna'a each year, whereby the savings made by the earlier tranche can be transferred as an additional amount in the following tranche. Adopting this multi-tranche financing approach not only helped to utilize project savings efficiently but also allowed the EA to hand over houses and the related infrastructure to end-beneficiaries upon completion.

Decentralizing the project management and implementation functions by the line ministry to district local governments leads to fast implementation and ownership of the projects by the respective districts dep. The Ministry of Local Government, as the primary EA for the MVP II Project, delegated the authority to manage and implement the project to the Millennium Promise Alliance and Isingiro District Local Government. Thus, the MVP II avoided bureaucratic tendencies in project management and by the line ministries. For instance, procurement for MVP II had an average turnaround time of 2 months compared to an average turnaround time of 6 months for procurement by the line ministry. These turnaround times heavily affected the project implementation timelines.

2.2 Better engagement with the Member Countries and Partners for results

Formulating and implementing a MCPS for high-income and non-borrowing MCs is a special arrangement. A weak formulation of contents and inadequate mutual understanding may lead to difficulties during MCPS implementation, failure in the expectations by MCs and several traditional and fragmented interventions without significant alignment with overall MCPS objectives. **IsDBG needs to be selective while formulating MCPS and any other country engagement strategy with a high-income and non-borrowing MC.**

A robust and all-encompassing Partnership Strategy with clear action plans and a coordinated approach within the Bank, accompanied by detailed guidelines, significantly enhances the design and successful implementation, and effectiveness of the IsDB signed PAs. Establishing a robust internal partnership is crucial for fostering enduring partnerships with other institutions.

A holistic Partnership Strategy with financing and non-financing activities is key to having strong partnerships. This strategy should meticulously prioritize and ensure the relevance of PAs, incorporating clear strategic objectives and sufficient financial and human resources.



3. ENHANCING SUSTAINABILITY OF DEVELOPMENT IMPACT.

3.1 Packaging an IsDB Group Program could enhance sustainability of development impact.

Packaging an IsDB Group Program covering short-term and long-term tenors, medium-term working capital solutions from ITFC supported by ICIEC coverage, and TA in the form of training and South-South cooperation programs such as a reverse linkage could enhance its offer and sustain the development impact in the MC. The complementarities offered by the IsDB Group can reinforce the additionality of Islamic Finance in learning, short-term and long-term financing, and extending the development impact to the MCs. IsDB LoFs met the basic, yet important, financing needs expressed by Financial Intermediaries (FIs) to increase lending to SMEs and other beneficiaries.

3.2 Stakeholders' ownership and hand-over plans boost the sustainability of projects and programs.

Developing a practical sustainability plan for the IsDB projects at design ensures successful implementation. A proper risk assessment and factoring in the related mitigation costs at project design are crucial for ensuring project sustainability. At midterm, the sustainability of the Groundnut Value Chain Development Project is mixed as it lacks an appropriate exit strategy. The sustainability of the Kabala Water Project was affected by inadequate risks assessment leading to the selection of a costly 750 KV power generator for the Water Treatment Plant. Hence, it is essential to set a sustainability plan at the project design.

Development of operations and maintenance manuals for project services and facilities enhances the sustainability of project benefits. One of the major successes registered with the MVP II project was the development of “how to” series manuals that were provided to the various cooperatives, institutions, and the district local government who took over the operations and management of the project facilities and services. The project developed manuals and guidelines for the operations and management of; water schemes for the water cooperatives, microfinance operations for the established Organization for Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs), and radio stations for the Ruhira radio. These manuals and guidelines have been used by the community institutions to run and manage the facilities and services.

Developing community-level institutions to provide a range of services facilitates local systems building and the growth of local businesses for more sustainability. The MVP II in Uganda heavily invested time and finances in establishing community institutions like farmer cooperatives, utility cooperatives, and SACCOs. These institutions managed various services and facilities provided by the project, evolving into local business ventures such as water schemes, radio stations, and microfinance institutions. Post-project implementation, these institutions support each other with microfinance institutions as the heartbeat for sustaining the established facilities by providing credit to finance expansion, maintenance, and recapitalization of the investments left by the project. This interdependence led to the growth of local businesses providing both employment and income to the beneficiaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2023 EVALUATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Ensuring improvement in project design, clear Theory of Change, Effective Engagement of Beneficiaries are the critical factors to increase development effectiveness of the bank's operations.

- During project design, include systematically a dialogue component convening all the stakeholders, i.e., a public-private-community dialogue, to better anticipate challenges. Also, at this stage, ensure the availability of gender and social inclusion dimensions in projects' logical frameworks and M&E system.
- Develop a comprehensive program theory of change to provide a clear road map that outlines how the project/program will support member countries for greater long-term impact.
- Ensure that there is an up-to-date and accurate feasibility study and reduce the time between the feasibility and the commencement of works to avoid deviations in scope and re-scheduling during implementation.
- Conduct high-quality appraisals that include: i) a careful assessment of beneficiaries' needs and their involvement in the project design and implementation; ii) comprehensive and sound feasibility studies with the active consultation of stakeholders to incorporate the local context and needs during the project design stage; iii) an analysis of the project's economic benefits; and iv) a review of their financial sustainability. That will help to foster quality at entry and developmental impact.
- Ensure close field monitoring of the implementation of project activities to avoid reaching stages of delayed project closure without having completed critically important project components.

2 Project and Program Implementation: Give utmost priority and allocate sufficient resources to the capacity development of both internal and external stakeholders. In particular, the Bank should build the capacity of executing/implementing agencies in the IsDB business process and procedures for procurement, project design, implementation, and M&E.

- Ensure that the Regional Hubs and concerned departments organize an orientation session on the program for the key staff of executing/implementing agencies in each recipient member country who should remain engaged during the entire implementation period.
- Ascertain the availability of Government counterpart funds before signing the financing agreement to avoid any impending implementation delay.
- Ensure proper synchronization of the procurement procedures of member countries with those of IsDB.
- Develop a comprehensive communication strategy to improve the visibility and branding of the IsDB Group. In this regard, ensure that launchings of IsDB projects are sufficiently reported in the media and that project facilities are marked with IsDB's name and logo.



3 Project and Program Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:

IsDB should set up an appropriate M&E mechanism during the project formulation stage to facilitate meaningful project performance assessment. In this regard, IsDB should support, advise, and build the capacity of member countries on M&E and learning.



Organize periodic portfolio reviews (semi-annual) for each sector with key stakeholders (IsDB, Government, other partners, etc.) to review the progress of projects, address issues related to cross-cutting challenges, and identify synergy and complementary between projects and between partners.



Undertake Mid-Term Reviews for projects to ensure timely adjustment of the design and its responsiveness to agile Market conditions and external factors.



Consider a systematic, efficient, and overarching monitoring and evaluation system for the program. The implementation of the program should be monitored continuously to resolve bottlenecks and take corrective measures during the program implementation.



Establish a programmatic approach at the country level as well as a learning platform for exchange with other bank interventions within the country to create more synergy & complementarity between bank interventions and generate more impact and sustainability of bank results at the country level.

4 There is a need to prepare a clear exit strategy since the project design stage to ensure the sustainability of the Bank intervention and get a greater impact.



Ensure the availability of an adequate O&M budget for project-supported facilities as a pre-condition for financing effectiveness.



Have clear safeguard policies to facilitate addressing environmental and social issues in project design, implementation, and operation and provide a framework for consultation with communities and public disclosure. The provision of a dedicated safeguard staff in the core project team is critical to avoiding weaknesses in complying with policy issues.

The synthesis of the lessons learned and recommendations from the last ten years (2015 – 2023) evaluations can be also downloaded at this [link](#).

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The Independent Evaluation Function is instrumental in enhancing the efficiency of the Bank's corporate functions and its development effectiveness. It has gained increased prominence in recent years as the MCs grapple with multiple socio-economic crises. In the dynamic landscape of development financing and the need to demonstrate impact and value for money, the role of the IEvD has become increasingly important as a catalyst for enhancing the Bank's development effectiveness and operational efficiency as the MCs navigate the complexities of socio-economic upheavals.

This reinforced the IEvD's mission on facilitating evidence-based decision-making to ensure optimized impact and value delivery to the MCs the Bank aims to serve. Measuring corporate and operations performance and the generation of evidence-based learning have always been crucial for improving the efficiency of resource allocation and maximizing value and impact. IEvD has played an instrumental role in this, as the Bank embarked on the first year of its Realigned Strategy 2023 – 2025.

Established in 1991 as a function, the IEvD was upgraded to a department in 2009 with direct reporting to the Board of Executive Directors (BED). Today, the mission of the IEvD is to support the IsDB in becoming a knowledge-based organization that measures its results, continuously improves its operations, and draws lessons from evaluations to enhance development effectiveness. Since 1991, the IEvD has conducted 740 evaluations. These evaluations have served as valuable sources of insights, informing management and BED policy decisions, and enhancing resource allocation to support the socio-economic development aspirations of the MCs and Muslim communities worldwide.

In 2023, a pivotal year, the IEvD significantly expanded its range of evaluation products to include a significant number of strategy, corporate, and thematic evaluations, real-time assessments of ongoing projects, and, for the first time, deployed AI in evaluations. This expansion has been focusing not just on increasing the number of evaluations but on enhancing their relevance, timeliness, and impact. The IEvD has become instrumental in providing management with actionable insights, which support informed decision-making closely aligned with the Bank's immediate needs and long-term strategic objectives, marking a significant leap forward in how the IEvD contributes to the Bank's mission.

The Three-Year Rolling Work Plan (3Y-RWP) for 2024-2026, approved by the BED in December 2023, articulated a comprehensive strategy structured around three major components: project evaluations, macro-level evaluations, and evaluation learning and outreach, as described in the section below.

A. Project and program evaluation:

The IEvD plans to conduct 24 project evaluations over the three years, eight per year. In 2024, the IEvD's evaluations will feature the health and education sectors. These two sectors are chosen due to (i) alignment with Pillar 2, "Inclusive Human Capital Development" of the Realigned Strategy 2023-2025, and (ii) considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education and health sectors. The IEvD will conduct two mid-term evaluations of ongoing projects, a cluster evaluation featuring three special assistance projects in non-MCs and prepare evaluation notes of self-evaluation reports related to project implementation assessments and project completion reports of ongoing and completed operations. During the three-year period, the IEvD plans to carry out three joint project evaluations annually, with partners such as ACG members, ECG members, and other MDBs focusing on jointly financed projects to promote partnerships, co-financing, and evaluation learning with other peer institutions.

B. Macro-level evaluations - corporate, country, and thematic evaluations:

The IEvD will conduct 13 macro-level evaluations during the three-year period, including Country Engagement Evaluations (CEE), Corporate Evaluations (Organizational/Process), Sector Strategy/Policy Evaluations, Thematic Strategy/Policy Evaluations, and validation of MCPS Completion Reviews. The IEvD will ensure future

CEEs are more focused, striving for depth over breadth by focusing on specific questions, evidence gaps, and any priority issues for the country and the Bank. On sector policy evaluation, the IEvD will select a sector per year based on organizational priority and strategy alignment. The Agriculture and Rural Development sector evaluation, which started in 2023, will be completed in 2024.

C. Evaluation learning and outreach:

The IEvD will continue strengthening its systematic approach to using evidence to improve quality and decision-making. It will continue investing in harnessing the potential of a knowledge management system, product quality, dissemination of findings, lessons learned, and recommendations to various stakeholders for their attention, use, and to inform decision making. This endeavor is poised to bolster the efficacy and application of evaluations, strengthening the IEvD's role in enhancing the Bank's learning and developmental effectiveness. To achieve this objective, the IEvD will implement a series of activities between 2024 and 2026, covering the following three components: a) development and dissemination of evaluation products; b) enhancing and promoting evaluation knowledge and learning systems and platforms; and c) building evaluation capacity within the IsDB Group and in MCs through partnerships.

Looking forward, IEvD will continue to focus on eight strategic outcomes to design and implement the work plan.

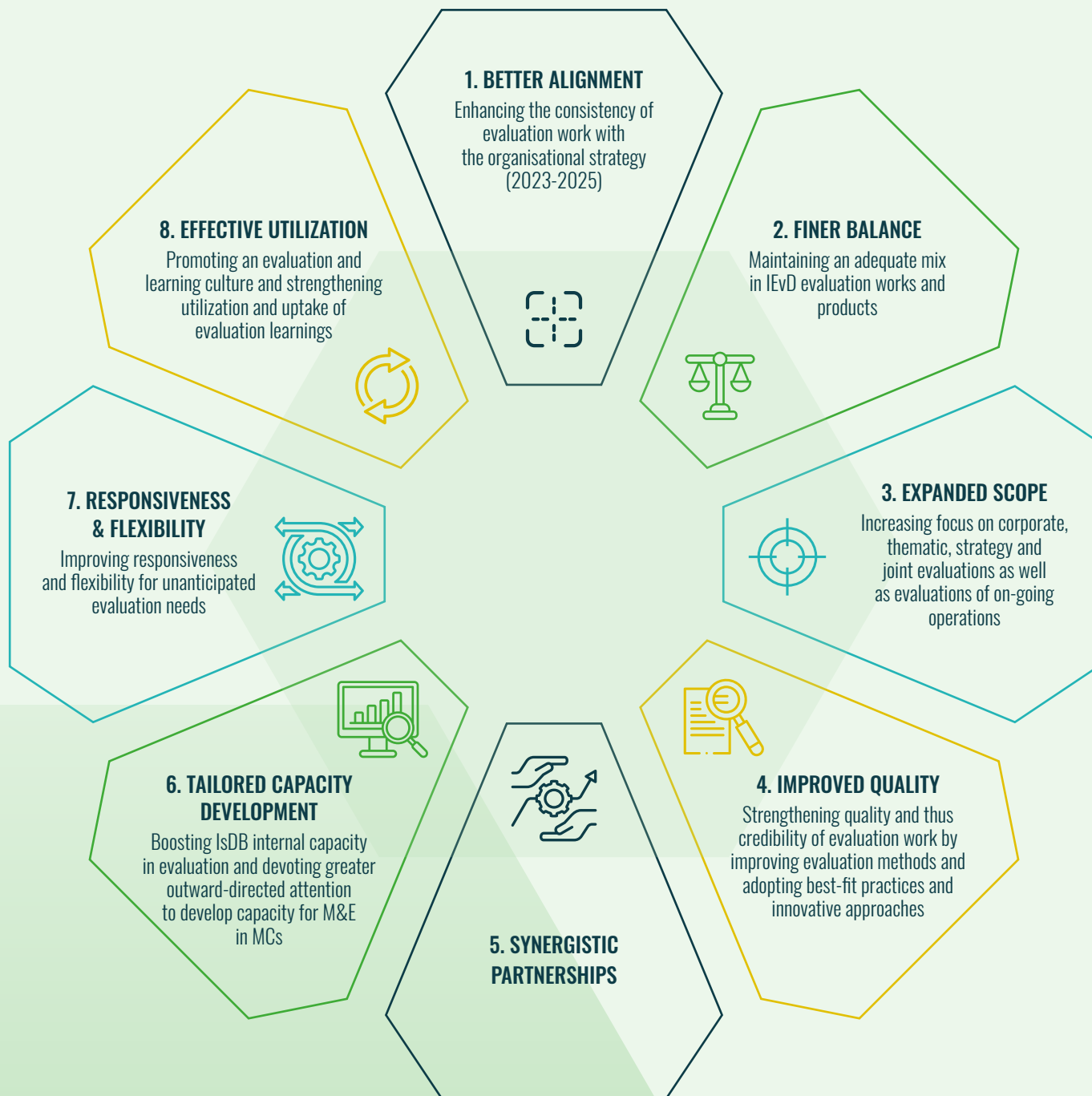



Figure 8: Critical Outcomes of the IEvD Business Model

ANNEX-1: SNAPSHOT OF EVALUATED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS


Following list of projects performance evaluations conducted during 2023:

Project Name: Enhancing Value-Addition in the Groundnut Sector (On-going Project)				
Member Country	Gambia			
Evaluation Type	Mid-Term Evaluation			
Description:	 <p>The project aimed at modernizing, expanding, and improving the efficiency of The Gambia Groundnut Corporation operations in the Gambia so that it can maintain its market share, position itself in the high end of the groundnut value chain to enhance its profitability, and preserve and increase the income of 70 percent of the rural population engaged in groundnut production. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more.</p>			
Overall Rating	No Score (Ongoing Project)			
Sub-Criteria Rating ¹	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	NA	NA	NA	NA
Project Name: Support to the National Water Supply and Sanitation Program				
Member Country	Azerbaijan			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation			
Description:	 <p>The project was part of the second phase of the National Water Supply and Sanitation Program in Azerbaijan, which aimed at providing a clean and continuous supply of potable water and basic sanitation services to 320,000 people in six regions: Astara, Dashkasen, Gadabey, Gazakh, Samukh, and Terter. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more.</p>			
Overall Rating	Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Relevant	Effective	Less Efficient	Likely
Project Name: Millennium Village Project Phase II in Uganda				
Member Country	Uganda			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation			
Description:	 <p>The Millennium Villages Project Phase II project was designed to help accelerate the achievement of MDGs through an integrated set of interventions, benefiting over 485,000 people or 100,000 households. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...</p>			
Overall Rating	Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Relevant	Effective	Efficient	Likely


Project Name: IDB-WAEMU Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project in Burkina Faso

Member Country	Burkina Faso			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation			
Description:	 <p>The project aims to improve access to water and sanitation through the provision of economically viable and sustainable public water supply and sanitation services. In addition, the project promotes the emergence of socio-economic growth centers around the built infrastructure, which will be used as much as possible to provide electricity to the population, generate additional income for households and ensure their food security. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...</p>			
Overall Rating	Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Relevant	Effective	Less Efficient	Less Likely Sustainable


Project Name: National Agricultural Subsurface Drainage (Phase III) Project

Member Country	Egypt			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation			
Description:	 <p>The Project was designed to increase crop production for sustainable agricultural development and increase the income of the farmers. The specific project objectives were to: (i) increase the agricultural productivity of about 90,000 Feddans of irrigated land; and (ii) avoid yield and production losses in this land area, which would happen if waterlogging and soil salinity problems were to persist. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...</p>			
Overall Rating	Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Highly Relevant	Effective	Efficient	Likely Sustainable


Project Name: Kabala Water Supply Project

Member Country	Sierra Leone			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation - Joint Evaluation with Development in Africa (BADEA),			
Description:	 <p>The Project's objective was to provide safe and sustainable potable water for the population in Kabala City and its environs through the construction of a new Water Treatment Plant (WTP), transmission pipelines, reservoirs, supply of necessary equipment, and construction of a water distribution network and other ancillary facilities. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...</p>			
Overall Rating	Partly Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Relevant	Ineffective	Less Efficient	Less Likely Sustainable


Project Name: Dangara Valley Irrigation Network (Phase III) Project

Member Country	Tajikistan			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation			
Description:	 <p>The overall goal of the project was to contribute to food security and poverty alleviation in Tajikistan. The development objective/outcome of the project was to increase agricultural productivity and water use efficiency in the project area, thereby contributing to food security and poverty alleviation in Tajikistan by developing, equipping, and bringing into production 1,750ha of new irrigated land that would be held by large and small holders. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more.</p>			
Overall Rating	Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Highly Relevant	Effective	Less Efficient	Likely Sustainable


Project Name: National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project for Provinces of Cabo Delgado and Gaza

Member Country	Mozambique			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation			
Description:	 <p>The goal of the National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project in the Provinces of Cabo Delgado and Gaza was to improve rural water supply and sanitation services in two provinces by building 550 boreholes, 4 SPSs, 3,000 latrines, educating 15,000 people on basic health and hygiene, and setting up 5,500 water committees. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...</p>			
Overall Rating	Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Relevant	Effective	Efficient	Most Likely


Project Name: Construction of Modern Rural Housing Project (Phase 2)

Member Country	Uzbekistan			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation			
Description:	 <p>The project aimed to achieve three main objectives: (i) to enhance the availability of affordable housing for 6,404 rural families; (ii) to improve infrastructure networks, including 110.5 km of internal roads, 197.8 km of water supply, 135.4 km of power supply, and 150.0 km of gas networks; and (iii) to establish 58 units of social and market facilities for housing beneficiaries across six regions of Uzbekistan. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...</p>			
Overall Rating	Highly Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Highly Relevant	Highly Effective	Highly Efficient	Most Likely Sustainable


Project Name: Rice Value Chain Development Project in the Plaine of Chari-Logone

Member Country	Chad			
Evaluation Type	Ex-Post Project Evaluation			
Description:	Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...			
				
Overall Rating	Partly Successful			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	Relevant	Ineffective	Inefficient	Less Likely

Project Name: Enhancing National Food Security through Increased Rice Production Project (On-going Project)

Member Country	Uganda			
Evaluation Type	Mid-Term Evaluation			
Description:	Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...			
				
Overall Rating	No Rating Ongoing Project			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	NA	NA	NA	NA

Project Name: Special Assistance Operations in India

Member Country	India			
Evaluation Type	Cluster Evaluation			
Description:	<p>IsDB Supports the Muslim communities in India through the Special Assistance Program (SAP) and the Scholarship Program (SP). The SAP is run under a Waqf Fund, created in 1998 and managed by the World Waqf Foundation, which the IsDB initiated to manage the Fund’s resources. The SP was launched in 1983 to enable meritorious Muslim students from Muslim communities in non-member countries to obtain higher studies in medicine, engineering, and the like. Click or scan the QR on the left to read more...</p>			
				
Overall Rating	Highly Successful (5 projects); Successful (6 projects); Partly Successful (1 project)			
Sub-Criteria Rating	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly Relevant (10 projects) • Relevant (2 projects) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly Effective (8 projects) • Effective (3 projects) - Less Effective (1 project) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly Efficient (5 projects) • Efficient (4 projects) • Less Efficient (3 projects) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Likely Sustainable (8 Projects)”, • Likely Sustainable (3 projects) • Less Likely Sustainable (1 project)

List of 2023 PCR Validation Assessment Scores

Following list of validated PCRs during 2023:

Project Name	Country	Relevance
Building Resilience to Recurring Food Insecurity Program	Burkina Faso	Highly Relevant
Mornaguia Gas Turbine Power Plant Project	Tunisia	Highly Relevant
Reconstruction and Upgrading of Okmeydanı Training and Research Hospital under the Istanbul Seismic Risk Mitigation and Preparedness Project (ISMEP)	Turkiye	Highly Relevant
Health System Development Support Project	Benin	Highly Relevant
Dry Land Development Project	Somalia	Highly Relevant
Dry land Integrated Development Project	Uganda	Highly Relevant
Basic Education Support Project	Djibouti	Highly Relevant
Diamniadio - AIBD Regional Express Train Project	Senegal	Relevant
Hadath El Jubba - Bqerqasha Road Project	Lebanon	Relevant
Integrated Dry Land Development Project	Djibouti	Highly Relevant
Reconstruction of Harbours Project (Phase II)	Maldives	Highly Relevant
Palgaz Natural Gas Distribution Grid Expansion Project	Turkiye	Highly Relevant
Response to Sidr Cyclone - Construction of School-cum-Cyclone Shelters in Bangladesh	Bangladesh	Relevant
Ebola Control in West Africa – Fael Khair Program	Sierra Leone	Highly Relevant
Ebola Control in West Africa – Fael Khair Program	Mali	Highly Relevant
Tripoli Infrastructure Project	Lebanon	Relevant

Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Overall Assessment	Sector
Effective	Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Agriculture
Highly Effective	Efficient	Likely	Successful	Energy
Effective	Less Efficient	Highly Sustainable	Successful	Health And Other Social
Less Effective	Less Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Health
Highly Effective	Highly Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Agriculture
Highly Effective	Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Agriculture
Effective	Less Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Education
Highly Effective	Less Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Transportation
Effective	Efficient	Sustainable	Successful	Transportation
Effective	Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Agriculture
Highly Effective	Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Transportation
Highly Effective	Highly Efficient	Most Likely Sustainable	Highly Successful	Energy
Highly Effective	Inefficient	Less Likely Sustainable	Successful	Relief/ Education
Highly Successful	Less Efficient	Most Likely sustainable	Successful	Health And Other Social
Effective	Less Efficient	Likely Sustainable	Successful	Health And Other Social
Highly Successful	Less Efficient	Less Likely Sustainable	Successful	Water, Sanit. & Urban






ANNEX-2: SNAPSHOT OF CORPORATE, COUNTRY & THEMATIC EVALUATIONS

Following list of Macro-Level Evaluations conducted during 2023:

Project Name	QR (Click or Scan to Read More)
Evaluation of the Regional Integration Policy and Strategy	
Country Engagement Evaluation (CEE) - Egypt	
Corporate Evaluation of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD)	
Agriculture & Rural Development Sector Evaluation (Policy, Strategy & Operations)	
Special On Demand Evaluation "Impact of Organizational Restructures on Business Stability"	
Process Evaluation of Corporate Consultancy Procurement	
Country Assistance Evaluation - Cote d' Ivoire	

Project Name	QR (Click or Scan to Read More)
Thematic Evaluation of Partnerships & MoUs	
APIF	
IsDB Food Security Program	
IsDB Off-Balance Sheet Resource Mobilization efforts of the Bank (Co-financing)	
Evaluation of Projects Financed through Line of Finance	
Evaluation of Operational Efficiency - Quality at Entry, Programming and due diligence of IsDB Operations	
Special Review of Counterpart Funding in operations, that is being initiated in last month of Q2.	

ANNEX-3: EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT, KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND LEARNING

Title	Type	Description	QR
IsDB Group Evaluation Symposium: Harnessing Innovation, Learning Culture, and Global Collaboration for Effective Development	Internal Event	The 5th IsDB Group Symposium, held on the 2nd and 3rd of October 2023 at the Tent Hall in IsDBG Headquarters, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, proved to be a pivotal event in development evaluation for the region. Under the theme, "The Future of Development Evaluation: Adapting to a Changing Landscape," the symposium explored innovative practices, lessons learned, and future strategies in the face of evolving global challenges.	
Evaluation Training for the Regional Courts of Accounts in the Kingdom of Morocco	Capacity Development	The IEvD, in close coordination with the IsDB Regional Hub of Rabat, organized an Evaluation Capacity Development training for the Kingdom of Morocco Court of Accounts magistrates.	
Technical Session with Arab Coordination Group	External Event	The IEvD organized a technical session with the heads and representatives of the Arab Coordination Group member institutions at the IsDB Annual Meeting 2023, where the speakers stressed the need for institutionalization of evaluation in the MENA Region.	
Vital Discussion on Developing Arabic Content in Evaluation	External Event	The IEVD led two sessions in the Development Forum titled "Online International Exchanges Sessions in Arabic - Canadian Evaluation Society Conference 2023" held virtually on June 22, 2023. The event was co-organized by the Canadian Evaluation Society, the IsDB, and the Canadian National School for Public Administration.	
Knowledge Sharing Event at IsDB HQ to Strengthen Evaluation Initiatives among ACG Members	Internal Event	The IEvD hosted a Knowledge Sharing Event at its headquarters in Jeddah on November 28, 2023. The event brought together a diverse group of participants, including attendees from the Arab Coordination Group members such as KS Relief, and Saudi Fund for Development, in addition to internal participants representing various departments within IsDB.	





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