



ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK

## TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICE

FOR THE  
BCC2025-018  
EVALUATION OF EDUCATION SECTOR INTERVENTIONS BY THE ISLAMIC  
DEVELOPMENT BANK

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION DEPARTMENT

MAY 2025

## 1. BACKGROUND OF THE ASSIGNMENT

1.1 The Independent Evaluation Department (IEvD) undertakes both independent macro-level evaluation work (e.g., corporate, country, sector, thematic strategies, and process evaluations) and project-level evaluations covering both Member Countries and operations funded by the Bank in Non-Member Countries (MCs). It undertakes thorough reviews and analyses to assess the developmental effectiveness of interventions by the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and its alignment to the Bank's strategy. The Department draws lessons from evaluation studies and participates in the dissemination of knowledge within IsDB and in the MCs to contribute to the improvement of developmental effectiveness, ensuring that evaluation recommendations are taken into account in the IsDB's policies, strategies, and operations.

1.2 As part of its 2025 work plan, the IEvD has planned to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the IsDB education sector interventions over the period 2014-2024, with the view of analyzing the robustness of the IsDB Education Sector Policy, the extent of the compliance of education projects and programs with the policy, the effectiveness and efficiency of their implementation, delivery quality as well as their outcome against the initial targets and sustainability of the results achieved.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN ISDB MEMBER COUNTRIES

2.1 Education is vital to human capital development and key to attracting investment that drives productivity and sustainable economic growth. It is foundational to economic and technological progress, especially in developing countries, where it helps reduce poverty and inequality. Expanding access to education enables individuals to improve their economic status, thereby enhancing national productivity and prosperity while narrowing inequality. However, recent research highlights that access alone is insufficient; quality education must equip learners with practical skills and cognitive competencies that match labor market demands. To compete globally, countries should develop talents aligned with their economic strengths.

2.2 A crucial education indicator is the government's spending on education. Recent data<sup>1</sup> shows that while high-income countries spend an average of 4.8% and low- and middle-income countries (LICs/MICs) average 3.6%, IsDB MCs spend an average of 2.6% of GDP on education, which is lower than the global average of 3.8%. Among MCs, Sierra Leone and the Kyrgyz Republic have the highest government expenditure as a percentage of GDP, at 6.8%, followed by Tunisia at 6.7%, Morocco at 6%, Tajikistan at 5.8%, and Algeria at 5.6%. The lowest among MCs are Indonesia at 1.3%, followed by Bangladesh at 1.8%, Pakistan at 1.9%, Uganda and Mauritania at 2.6%, and The Gambia at 2.7%.

2.3 The current world average of adult literacy<sup>2</sup> is 87.4%, with low-income countries at 63% and low- and middle-income countries at 85.2%. Some MCs have no data available, but Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan have 100% adult literacy among those with known data. Also, other MCs with very high adult literacy (85-99%) include Albania, Bahrain, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Gabon, and

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<sup>1</sup> The World Development Indicators (16 December 2024)

<sup>2</sup> Adult literacy rate is a measure of the percentage of people at the age of 15 and above that are literate in terms of the ability to both read and write, in addition to understanding and expressing self in short, simple statement about everyday life.

Tunisia. IsDB MCs with the lowest adult literacy rates are Chad at 27.3%, Burkina Faso at 34.5%, Niger at 38.1%, Benin at 47.1%, and Sierra Leone at 48.6%.

**2.4** Regarding access to education<sup>3</sup>, which is often represented in gross enrollment ratio (GER), the IsDB MCs do not have a significant education challenge at the primary school level. The world average is 101.8, while the IsDB MCs average is 98.9, the LIC average is 101.3, and the LMIC average is 102.0. The highest score is Sierra Leone at 153.1, followed by Togo and Mozambique at 120.2 and 120, respectively. On the other hand, the least GER score is Somalia at 21.2, followed by Suriname at 66.0 at Niger at 68.5.

**2.5** Regarding secondary school GER, the IsDB MCs average score of 72.3 is slightly below the world average score of 77.1, and significantly above the LICs average of 40.3, but at par with the LMICs average of 73.6. For tertiary education GER, the IsDB MCs' average score of 40.4 closely corresponds with the world average of 43.3 percent. It is above the LICs' average score of 38, the LMICs' average of 27.2, and far below the HICs' average of 79.3.

### 3. ISDB INTERVENTIONS IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

**3.1** The disparities among MCs result in unequal opportunities for economic transformation. To fully leverage education as a catalyst for sustainable growth, the IsDB must play a crucial role in addressing these gaps by funding equitable access, ensuring quality learning, and facilitating reforms that align skills development with labor market demands. The IsDB Education Sector Policy establishes a clear and actionable framework to guide the Bank's efforts in bridging these gaps. It aims to enhance education systems as a cornerstone for human development and sustainable economic growth, emphasizing quality, equity, and relevance to job market needs.

**3.2** This policy applies to all educational investments made by IsDB and its entities, defining the Bank's educational approach as "learning for human development," based on Islamic principles. The policy is organized around three main pillars:

- (i) **Enhance Basic Education** that focuses on early childhood, primary, and non-formal education, prioritizing out-of-school children, integrating Islamic and formal education, improving teacher quality, and fostering values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.
- (ii) **Provide post-basic education** by supporting vocational training, secondary, and tertiary education, aiming to create more opportunities for youth through public-private partnerships, fostering Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and innovation, and ensuring sustainability through mechanisms like waqf-based financing.
- (iii) **Support Advocacy and Advisory Services** by encouraging reforms that enhance equity, boost private sector involvement, empower youth, ensure gender balance, and advocate for sustainable financing for skills development and lifelong learning.

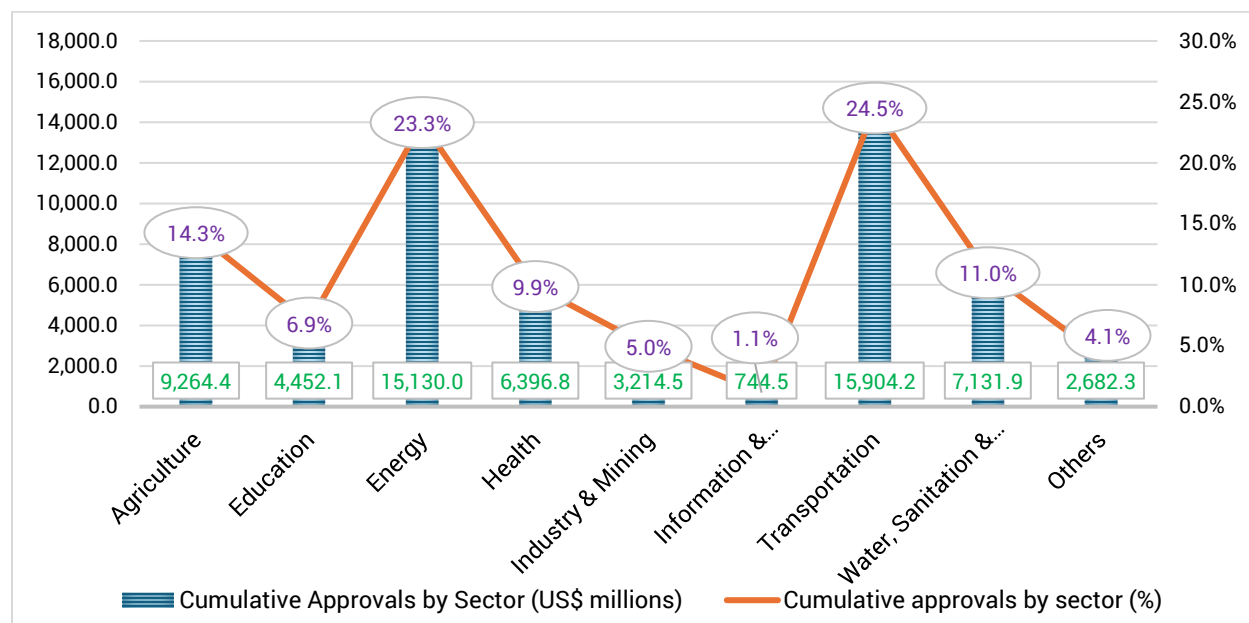
**3.3** Since its inception, the IsDB's cumulative approvals for financing education-related interventions in MCs reached USD 4.5 billion out of total approvals of USD 64.9 billion (see Figure 1). The cumulative approvals for education sector interventions constituted about 6.9 percent of

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<sup>3</sup> Access is the number of pupils and students studying at various educational institutions, is often represented in terms of gross enrollment ratio (GER). It is the total enrollment, regardless of age, of the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education shown

total cumulative approvals and the sixth largest after transportation with USD 15.9 billion (24.5%), energy with USD 15.1 billion (23.3%), Agriculture with USD 9.3 billion (14.3%), followed by water, sanitation and urban services with USD 7.1 billion (11%), health with USD 6.4 billion (9.9%).

**Figure 1: Cumulative IsDB Approvals by Sector since Inception (1975-2024)**



Source: IsDB 2024 Annual Report Annex 7B

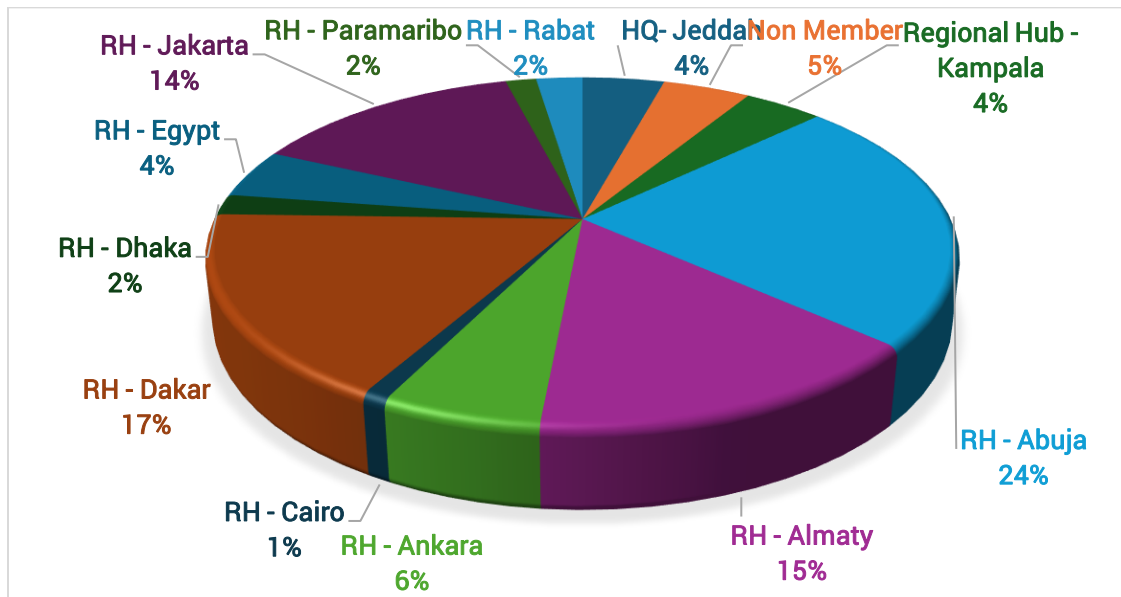
**Table 1: IsDB Education Sector Approvals 2014-2024**

Sub-Sector	Active	Cancelled	Completed	Terminated	Total	Amount (US\$ Millions)
General Education	48	18	130	4	200	1,421.42
Non-Formal Education	3		9		12	2.66
Pre-Primary	1		5		6	40.61
Primary Education	18	1	20	1	40	192.2
Relief Education			10		10	11.02
Secondary Education	11	2	35	2	50	247.67
Tertiary Education	9	2	21		32	716.33
Vocational Training	29	7	38		74	308.31
Grand Total	119	30	268	7	424	2,940.22

Source: Source: IsDB Operation Management System

**3.4** In terms of the regional distribution of the 2014-2024 education sector portfolio, the Abuja regional hub (RH) accounted for the highest share of IsDB approvals at 24%. The RH of Dakar follows it at 17%, Almaty at 15%, and Jakarta at 14%. The other regional hubs lag significantly, receiving less than 10% of the total education sector's approvals. Specifically, Ankara secured 6%, non-MCs 5%, and HQ-Jeddah, Kampala, and Dhaka each received 4%. The remaining hubs garnered 2% or less.

Figure 2: IsDB Approvals of Education Sector Interventions by Regional Hubs



Source: Source: IsDB Operation Management System

#### 4. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

4.1 The primary aim of this assignment is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of IsDB's interventions in the education sector, over the period 2014-2024, which encompasses policies, strategies, programs, projects, and operations, and assess their implementation and results. This evaluation seeks to address whether the IsDB has effectively and efficiently supported the development of quality education in its MCs.

4.2 The evaluation aims to generate evidence on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and strategic direction of IsDB's education investments, while identifying lessons and opportunities to enhance future support in the sector. The specific objectives of this evaluation include the following:

- i. Evaluating the alignment of the IsDB education policy and strategy and IsDB's operations and initiatives in the education sector with the educational needs of MCs and the consistency of IsDB interventions in the sector with IsDB vision, mission and strategies.
- ii. Examining the effectiveness and implementation of the Bank's interventions in the sector.
- iii. Reviewing the efficiency and value for money of the Bank's interventions,
- iv. Assessing the sustainability of the Bank's interventions, and
- v. Drawing lessons and recommendations to enhance the future IsDB Group's interventions in the sector.

#### 5. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

5.1 The evaluation will cover all IsDB's relevant policies, strategies, projects, operations, grants/technical assistance (TA), and programs approved and/or implemented during 2014–2024

in the education sector. It will cover the full portfolio of 424 operations, amounting to USD 2.94 billion, and assess the scope and strategic alignment of interventions during this period.

**5.2** The evaluation will specifically assess the changes before and after the approval of the IsDB Education Policy and the IsDB five-year implementation strategy (2020-2025) that was subsequently formulated. A limited number of country case studies will provide deeper analysis, including a review of education components within the Member Country Partnership Strategies (MCPS).

**5.3** The main evaluation activities will include the following:

- i. Document review of policies, strategies, project files, and past independent and self-evaluation reports.
- ii. Analysis of internal data (e.g., OMS, statistical reports).
- iii. Stakeholder consultations within IsDB (policy, strategy, operations teams).
- iv. Fieldwork and interviews with national education authorities, executing agencies, beneficiaries, and contractors in selected case study countries.

**5.4** The assessment of IsDB's education sector interventions from 2014 to 2024 will follow a thematic evaluation approach, guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. It will draw on the IsDB Evaluation Guidelines and incorporate quality assurance standards from the MDB's Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG). The assessment will follow the Public Sector Evaluation Guidelines of the IEvD and the related templates and rating matrix.

## **6. MAIN TASKS OF THE CONSULTANT**

**6.1** The Consultant's responsibility is to support the IsDB evaluation team in collecting the necessary data and information and conducting analyses to prepare a comprehensive evaluation report on the IsDB's education sector interventions.

**6.2** The main tasks expected from the consultants include:

- i. Review relevant documentation related to IsDB's education sector interventions in selected case study countries.
- ii. Support the preparation and implementation of data collection tools, including questionnaires, interview guides, and surveys.
- iii. Conduct interviews with key stakeholders, collect and analyze data, including information on the socio-economic outcomes and impact of IsDB-supported education projects within the case study countries.
- iv. Collaborate with national counterparts, including ministries and executing agencies, to ensure the timely submission of responses to pre-mission questionnaires.
- v. Participate in three field missions (7–10 working days each) with the IEvD evaluation team to selected Member Countries. These missions will include visits to selected project sites to observe implementation progress and gather qualitative evidence.

- vi. Contribute to the synthesis of findings from field missions, provide input to case study reports and overall evaluation analysis, and provide additional data, clarifications, or analysis as needed to support the finalization of the evaluation report.
- vii. Carry out any additional tasks deemed necessary by the IEvD evaluation team.

## 7. DELIVERABLES OF THE CONSULTANT

7.1 The Consultant will work with the IEvD designated evaluation team to deliver the evaluation. The consultancy's deliverables will be in English, except for the questionnaire, which could be in the working language of the selected countries for the case study.

The Consultant will be responsible for producing the following deliverables:

- a) **An approach paper** submitted to the IEvD for endorsement detailing: (i) evaluation approach and methodology, including data collection and analysis methods and evaluation questions; (ii) Theory of Change for IsDB education interventions and Evaluation Framework; (iii) desk review of related documents; (iv) proposed evaluation activities schedule/work plan; (v) meeting and field visit schedules for country case studies; (vi) data collection tools; and (vii) stakeholder questionnaires and other tools.
- b) **Comprehensive Back-To-Office Reports (BTOR)**, each prepared **within one week after each** field mission, reflecting the key findings, lessons learned, and recommendations. IEvD BTOR template will be provided.
- c) **Draft Country Case Study Reports (V0.1)** submitted to the IEvD four (4) weeks after each field mission for review. The IEvD will provide feedback to the Consultant after reviewing the drafts. Based on this feedback, the Consultant must submit updated draft reports (V0.2) within seven (7) working days. The report template will be discussed during the preparation stage for the approach paper.
- d) **A draft Evaluation Report (V0.1)** is to be submitted to the IEvD six (7) weeks after the feedback on the countries' case study reports are received for their review and comments. After examining the draft report, the IEvD will provide feedback to the Consultant. The Consultant must submit an updated draft report (V0.2) within fifteen (15) working days, incorporating the IEvD's feedback. Subsequently, the IEvD will share the revised draft report and the updated country case study reports with the relevant IsDB departments for their comments. The report template will be reviewed during the preparation of the approach paper.
- e) **A final report**, including a recommendation and follow-up matrix, will be handed over to the IEvD within three weeks of receiving comments on the draft report (V0.2). The final report should be approximately 25-30 pages, excluding annexes.
- f) **A Synthesis Note** on the Evaluation Report for dissemination, focusing on main findings, results, lessons learned, and recommendations (sample will be provided by IEvD).
- g) **A concise PowerPoint presentation** reflecting the main content of the Evaluation Report.

## 8. DURATION OF AND PAYMENT FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

8.1 The assignment is scheduled to tentatively last seven (7) months, from June 2025 until December 2025. The distribution of the working days during the period will be flexible.

8.2 The Consultant will be paid a lump sum amount of USD60,000. This amount has been established based on the understanding that it includes all the Consultant's fees, allowances, benefits, health insurance and any tax obligations, and any related cost items that may be imposed on the Consultant and include also fees, accommodation and transportation costs for three field missions. Apart from the field missions, the Consultant will have the flexibility of working from home.

8.3 Breakdown of payments:

- 30% upon submission and acceptance by IEvD of deliverable (a)
- 40% upon submission and acceptance by IEvD of deliverables (b), (c), and (d).
- 30% upon submission and acceptance by IEvD of deliverables (e), (f), and (g).

## 9. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

9.1 IEvD invites eligible consultants to express their interest in providing the services above. Interested consultants must provide the following:

- i. Information on availability for providing the requested services.
- ii. Curriculum Vitae, including relevant publications and assignments; and
- iii. Sample of similar works, certificates of assignments, and related references.

Interested candidates are requested to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) through IsDB Procurement System through email message to: **EOI Submissions - BCC2025-018 EVALUATION OF EDUCATION SECTOR INTERVENTIONS BY THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK** [0d05bdfc.isdb.org@emea.teams.ms](mailto:0d05bdfc.isdb.org@emea.teams.ms)

For Clarification or Queries email: **CSP - BCC2025-018 EVALUATION OF EDUCATION SECTOR INTERVENTIONS BY THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK** [36a820e3.isdb.org@emea.teams.ms](mailto:36a820e3.isdb.org@emea.teams.ms)

Template and instructions for submitting the EOI will be provided in the invitation for Expression of Interest (IEOI). The submission of Expression of interest deadline will no longer than **11<sup>th</sup> June 2025**.

## 10. QUALIFICATION

10.1 The Consultant must hold (i) a relevant master's degree in education, development economics, or related fields; (ii) a minimum of ten years of multi-disciplinary experience in designing and managing projects or programs across various sectors; (iii) comprehensive knowledge and demonstrated experience in evaluation standards, methods, and terminology; (iv)



exceptional oral and written communication skills in English; (v) proficiency in computer applications for word processing, data analysis, and presentations.

#### **11. ABSENCE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

According to IsDB rules, the Consultant must not have been involved in the design, implementation, supervision, and coordination of, or have benefited from, the program or project (or theme) under evaluation. The Consultant will be asked to sign a declaration confirming that the Consultant has not been involved in any of the relevant activities in any capacity.

## References

1. Gethin, Amory (2025), **The Power of Education Policy**, *Finance and Development*, March 2025, International Monetary Fund
2. The World Bank (2024), **World Development Indicators** (December 16th, 2024), *sourced from IsDB Group GCE Data Resources*
3. IsDB Annual Report 2024
4. IsDB (2018), Education Sector Policy, *Social Infrastructure Division, Economic and Social Infrastructure Department, December 2018*
5. IsDB Operation Management System
6. IsDB Strategic Alignment: 2023-2025: Promoting Comprehensive Human Development and Sustainable Infrastructure