



ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICE

FOR THE

REVIEW OF THE QUALITY AT ENTRY REVIEW OF NINE (9)
ISDB GROUP COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS (CEFs)

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 special 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 the developmental effectiveness, ensuring that evaluation recommendations are taken into account in the IsDB's policies, strategies and operations.

1.2. IEvD, as part of its approved annual work program for 2025, is launching an assessment of the Quality at Entry (QaE) of the Country Engagement Framework (CEF) prepared since 2023. This review will evaluate the design quality, strategic relevance, and evaluability of CEFs. The findings will inform future strategic programming, enhance institutional learning, and improve country-level engagement.

1.3. IEvD seeks an experienced consultant in evaluation, strategic planning, and development cooperation to conduct this evaluation under the supervision of an IEvD evaluation team. The present ToRs serve as a guiding document for the recruitment of the consultant.

2. RATIONALE OF THE EVALUATION

2.1. While the Member Country Partnership Strategy (MCPS) is the IsDB's principal instrument for medium-term strategic planning at the country level, the CEF is a shorter-term, more flexible tool that outlines a coherent support program. The Bank recently opted for the CEF as a new engagement tool. It is considered an alternative document when the conditions for preparing a full MCPS are not in place due to time constraints, transition periods, or specific country contexts. Like the MCPS, the CEF is based on an analytical country diagnostic.

2.2. The CEFs also constitute a strategic platform through which the Bank defines and operationalizes its country-level engagement, ensuring that its support is strategically relevant, technically sound, and institutionally coordinated across IsDB Group entities such as the IsDB, the IsDB Institute (IsDBI), the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD), the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), and the Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC).

2.3. The Country Strategy and Engagement Division (CSED) leads the preparation of CEFs in collaboration with Regional Hubs, sector departments, and group entities. The process includes developing a Country Diagnostic, stakeholder consultations, identification of constraints and opportunities, and internal quality reviews to ensure strategic and operational alignment. Nine (9) CEFs have been prepared to date for the following countries: Uganda, Azerbaijan, Guyana, Mauritania, Pakistan, Suriname, Tajikistan, The Gambia, and Türkiye.

2.4. As part of its work program for 2025, IEvD is carrying out a comprehensive review of the Quality at Entry (QaE) of Nine (9) CEFs prepared by the Bank. QaE refers to the extent to which a strategy is well-conceived at the point of approval, indicating that it is relevant, evidence-based, results-oriented, implementable, and aligned with institutional objectives. A strong design at entry increases the likelihood of achieving the desired outcomes and fosters accountability, risk management, and adaptive learning.

2.5. The review will align with the standards outlined for the preparation of CEFs, the IsDB Evaluation Guidelines, the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, and the principles of the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG). Additionally, it will incorporate insights and benchmarks from peer institutions. It will provide evidence-based conclusions, emphasize systemic design challenges, and offer actionable recommendations to improve future strategy formulation and enhance the overall effectiveness of the Bank's country engagement.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

3.1 The assignment aims to evaluate the quality of 9 CEFs prepared by the IsDB since 2023. It will determine how well these strategies met standards of strategic relevance, internal coherence, results orientation, evaluability, and institutional alignment.

3.2 The review will identify whether each CEF aligned with national development priorities and reflected the objectives of the IsDB's Group. It will assess whether they were based on sound diagnostics and had a realistic intervention logic. It will also evaluate their selectivity, prioritization, stakeholder input, and monitoring capabilities.

3.3 Specific objectives include:

- i. Assessing the strategic relevance and clarity of selected CEFs in relation to national plans, IsDB's corporate strategy, and global frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals.
- ii. Evaluating the technical robustness of each strategy's design, coherence of objectives, results chain, and underlying assumptions.
- iii. Determining operational readiness at approval with realistic timelines, resource estimates, risk assessments, and coordination mechanisms.
- iv. Assessing the incorporation of lessons learned from past engagements.
- v. Examining the adequacy of quality assurance processes.

3.4 The findings of this evaluation will inform and strengthen the Bank's strategic planning processes, particularly the design, review, and approval of future CEFs. They will offer practical insights for country teams, operational units, and management, contributing to more effective and coordinated country engagement.

4. SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

4.1 The scope of this assignment covers nine (9) selected CEFs. The consultant will examine the design quality of these frameworks using a simplified but aligned assessment approach, adapted to the more focused and time-bound nature of CEFs. Findings from the CEF review will complement the MCPS portfolio assessment and offer recommendations to guide the future use, structure, and quality assurance processes for CEFs across the Bank.

4.2 The assessment will be guided by a standardized quality-at-entry framework, developed from the IsDB Evaluation Guidelines (2021), the 2023 MCPS Guidelines, the 2014 MCPS Review Report, and evaluation criteria from the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC). Additional references will be drawn from quality assurance standards adopted by the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) and comparative practices used by peer institutions.

4.3 Each CEFs will be evaluated on nine essential dimensions: (1) alignment with national priorities and the IsDB strategic framework; (2) focus on results and quality of the theory of change;

(3) stakeholder ownership and government alignment; (4) collaboration with development partners; (5) selectivity and focus of interventions; (6) synergy across IsDB entities; (7) addressing cross-cutting issues like Islamic finance and capacity building; (8) consideration of risks and sustainability; and (9) integration of lessons from past experiences. The consultant will assess each dimension using a four-point scale (Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Partly Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory), justifying each score with documentary evidence and validated findings.

4.4 The consultant must review all available CEF documents and supporting materials, including diagnostics, internal review comments, stakeholder consultation records, and strategy validation tools. In addition to document review, the consultant may interview IsDB staff involved in CEF preparation and, where feasible, brief consultations with country teams to validate findings.

4.5 The consultant will work under the supervision of IEvD staff and in close coordination with the IEvD focal point responsible for this evaluation. All work must adhere to the Bank's independence standards, methodological rigor, and ethical conduct. The consultant will not evaluate any strategy in which s/he have previously been involved.

5. DELIVERABLES OF THE CONSULTANT

5.1 The Consultant will be accountable for delivering the following outputs for the CEF review reports:

- (a) **Desk Review Summary Note:** A 4–5 page synthesis of early observations, common features, and emerging issues across the reviewed CEFs.
- (b) **Draft Evaluation Report (Version 0.1):** A complete report synthesizing findings, ratings, and recommendations, submitted four weeks after the completion of the desk assessments. IEvD will review the report and send its comments and feedback to the consultant. The consultant should submit an updated draft report (V0.2) based on the IEvD review and comments within seven (7) working days.
- (c) **Revised Draft Report (Version 0.2):** An updated version incorporating IEvD's comments, submitted within seven working days of receiving feedback. IEvD will share the Revised Draft Report (Version 0.2) with the IsDB department(s) concerned for feedback and comments. The IEvD will send the comments it receives from the department(s) concerned within 21 working days of receiving the updated draft report (V0.2).
- (d) **Final Report:** A report that includes a recommendation and follow-up matrix and addresses all the comments should be submitted within three weeks of receiving consolidated comments. The main body should not exceed 30 pages, excluding annexes.
- (e) **Executive Dissemination Note (EDN):** A maximum four-page summary of key findings, lessons, and strategic recommendations.
- (f) **PowerPoint Presentation:** A concise 15-slide deck summarizing the scope, methodology, key findings, and recommendations for use in internal briefings and knowledge-sharing sessions.

5.2 The following tentative timeline is planned for the evaluation.

Deliverables	Remarks	Due Date
Document review	Comprehensive desk review of all related documents.	By 30 July 2025
Desk review synthesis note	Summary of initial observations and early portfolio-level insights	By 31 August 2025
Draft Evaluation Report (Version 0.1)	Full draft including assessments, findings, and recommendations	By 15 October 2025
Revised Draft Report (Version 0.2)	Updated after IEvD comments; shared with internal stakeholders	By 30 November 2025
Final Report with recommendation matrix	Incorporates all feedback; final formatted version	By 15 December 2025
Executive Dissemination Note (EDN)	Maximum four pages, suitable for internal briefings	By 15 December 2025
PowerPoint presentation	Concise 15-slide summary of findings and conclusions	By 15 November 2025

5.3 All outputs must be submitted in professional English and editable formats (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). Compliance with IEvD standards for clarity, evidence, and structure is mandatory. The consultants will remain available through the final submission to address the department's clarification requests.

6. DURATION OF AND PAYMENT FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

6.1 The assignment is scheduled to tentatively last six (6) months, from July 2025 until December 2025. The consultant will work remotely and be technically guided by a Team Lead from IEvD.

6.2 The Consultant is expected to commence the assignment tentatively by July 1st, 2025. The distribution of the working days during the period will be flexible. The consultant will be paid a lump sum amount of USD 27,000. This amount has been established based on the understanding that it includes all the consultant's allowances and remuneration, communication expenses, software or tool subscriptions, if applicable, and any incidental costs associated with the preparation of deliverables. No travel or fieldwork is expected under this assignment.

6.3 Breakdown of payments: Payment will be made in three tranches, based on the satisfactory submission and approval of the following deliverables:

- 30% upon submission and acceptance by IEvD of deliverable (a) of section 5.1.
- 40% upon submission and acceptance by IEvD of deliverables (b) and (c) of section 5.1.
- 30% upon submission and acceptance by IEvD of deliverables (d), (e), and (f) of section 5.1.

6.4 All payments will be processed upon written confirmation by IEvD that the deliverables meet the required standards in terms of quality, completeness, and relevance. Failure to deliver acceptable outputs by the agreed deadlines may result in delayed or reduced payments, subject to IEvD's discretion.

7. QUALIFICATION

7.1 The consultant should possess at least a master's degree in economics, development studies, public policy, strategic planning, or a related discipline, with a preference for a history of published work in evaluation, results-based management, or strategic design. A minimum of ten (10) years of progressively responsible experience is necessary, emphasizing the evaluation of country strategies, program design, strategic planning, or institutional performance in MDBs or similar organizations. Experience in assessing strategic documents and developmental frameworks is crucial.

7.2 The consultant must demonstrate hands-on experience with international evaluation standards, including OECD-DAC criteria and ECG principles. Prior work in quality-at-entry reviews, theory of change assessments, country program evaluations, or strategy formulation for institutions like the IsDB or other multilateral development organizations is required.

7.3 Analytical and synthesis skills are essential for assessing strategic documents and formulating actionable recommendations. The consultant must possess a proven track record of delivering high-quality evaluation reports punctually and with minimal supervision. Exceptional proficiency in English writing and communication is imperative, alongside the ability to produce concise documents that effectively convey complex analyses. Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint is required.

8. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

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

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

8.2 Interested candidates are requested to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) through the IsDB Procurement System using the email provided in the consultancy announcement. Template and instructions for submitting the EOI will be provided in the invitation for Expression of Interest (EOI).

Interested candidates are requested to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) through IsDB Procurement System through email message to: **EOI Submission - BCC2025-019 REVIEW OF THE QUALITY AT ENTRY REVIEW OF NINE _9_ ISDB GROUP COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS _CEFS_** 5d27a731.isdb.org@emea.teams.ms

For Clarification or Queries email: **CSP - BCC2025-019 REVIEW OF THE QUALITY AT ENTRY REVIEW OF NINE _9_ ISDB GROUP COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS _CEFS_** 07da9890.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 **11th June 2025**.

9. EVALUATION PROCESS

9.1 After receiving the Expressions of Interest (EOIs), Curriculum Vitae (CVs), and supporting documents, a Consultant Selection Panel (CSP) appointed by the IsDB will evaluate all submissions. The panel will assess candidates based on their educational qualifications, relevant work experience, research orientation, exposure to IsDB and/or peer developmental institutions, and language proficiency. A shortlist of qualified candidates will be created following IsDB procurement procedures. The following table will be used as a guide for the evaluation of the submitted Expression of Interest.

Table 1: Criteria for the Technical Evaluation of EOIs

Criteria	Total Points (Out of 100)
Consultant Qualification: Education Degrees (Relevant Bachelor 5; Relevant Master 10; Relevant PhD 15)	15
Relevant Specific Experience (5 points for each year of relevant experience): At least 10 years of experience in strategic planning and evaluation standards, methods, and terminology	50
Having a research orientation (demonstrated concretely by relevant publications) to work more effectively on the assignment.	10
Exposure to IsDB and/or peer developmental institutions.	10
Language (English): Excellent English => 15 Pts	15
Total	100

9.2 Shortlisted consultants may be invited for a virtual interview to evaluate their suitability for the role. The interview will concentrate on the consultant's methodological approach, understanding strategy design and evaluation frameworks, and ability to produce high-quality outputs within the required timeframe. Only those who fulfill all eligibility and technical criteria will be considered for final selection.

10. ABSENCE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

10.1 To ensure the evaluation's independence and credibility, the selected consultant must not have been involved in the preparation, review, coordination, or implementation of any of the CEFs under assessment. In line with the IsDB's ethical and procurement guidelines, a signed declaration confirming the absence of any conflict of interest will be required as a condition of final selection.

10.2 Failure to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest may result in disqualification or termination of the contract.

ANNEX-1: REPORT OUTLINE

Acknowledgments

List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

Executive Summary

Chapter 1: Background

Chapter 2: Evaluation Approach and Methodology

2.1. Evaluation Purpose and Scope

2.2. Evaluation Methodology

2.3. Limitations

Chapter 3: Findings

3.1 Criteria-Based Analysis

3.2 Comparative Benchmarking with Other MDBs

3.3 Overall Assessment and Trends

Chapter 4: Conclusions, Lessons, and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

4.2 Lessons Learned

4.3 Recommendations

Annexes

Annex 1: List of CEFs Reviewed

Annex 2: Evaluation Criteria and Sub-Criteria Matrix

Annex 3: Quality at Entry Scoring Grid (Summary)

Annex 4: Country Snapshots (Key findings per CEF reviewed)

Annex 5: Interview Guides / Questionnaires

Annex 6: List of Stakeholders Consulted

Annex 7: Comparative Table of QA Practices (IsDB vs. MDBs)

Annex 8: Bibliography and Reference Sources