

**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION DEPARTMENT (IEVD)** 



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#### LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

3Y-RWP 3-Year Rolling Work PlanACG Arab Coordination GroupADB Asian Development BankAfDB African Development Bank

Al Artificial Intelligence

APIF AWQAF Property Investment Fund
ARD Agriculture and Rural Development

BED Board of Executive Directors

CAE Country Assistance Evaluation

CEE Country Engagement Evaluation

**CCD** Cooperation & Capacity Development

**CCTE** Corporate, Country & Thematic Evaluation

**CF** Counterpart Funding

CLEAR Center for Learning on Evaluation and ResultsCPPE Country Portfolio Performance Evaluation

**DAC** Development Assistance Committee

**EA** Executing Agency

ECD Evaluation Capacity Development
ECG Evaluation Coordination Group
EDN Executive Dissemination Note
ELO Evaluation Learning and Outreach
EWA Electricity and Water Authority

ISlamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector

ISlamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit

ICT Information and Communications Technology

**IEVD** Independent Evaluation Department

**IPDET** International Program for Development Evaluation Training

**IsDB** Islamic Development Bank

**ISFD** Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development

**ITFC** International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation

**KAAP** King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Program for Charity Works

**KS-RELIEF** King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center

**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 Bank

**M&E** Monitoring & Evaluation

MENA Middle East and North Africa

**ODEC** Operations and Development Effectiveness Committee

**OECD** Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

**PCR** Project Completion Report

**PCR-VN** Project Completion Report Validation Note

**PIASR** Project Implementation Assessment and Support Report

**PPE** Project and Program Evaluation

**PPER** Project Performance Evaluation Report

**SA** Special Assistance

**SME** Small and Medium Enterprise

**STEER** Systematic Tracking of the Execution of Evaluation Recommendations

**TA** Technical Assistance

**TVET** Technical Vocational Education and Training

**WB** World Bank



#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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#### **FOREWORD BY ODEC CHAIR**

It's my honor to present the 2024 Annual Evaluation Report (AER) of the Independent Evaluation Department (IEvD). This year's report encapsulates a year of notable progress for the IEvD marked by expansion of our evaluation scope to encompass increased number of thematic evaluations and self-evaluation validations in addition to project and macro evaluations, reaffirming the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group's commitment to fostering accountability and learning, in its development interventions.

The work of the IEvD is central to the IsDB Group's mission of driving sustainable and inclusive development. By providing rigorous, evidence-based evaluations and promoting knowledge sharing, the department enables us to reflect on past experiences and chart more effective courses for the future. The theme of this year's AER is focused on the health and education sectors, which are critical for the socio-economic development of our member countries.

Accountability remains central to our ethos. Since 2022, the IsDB has strengthened its tracking systems for implementation of evaluation recommendations, with the IEvD providing biannual progress updates to the Board Executive Directors (BED). For the first time, this AER

includes a comprehensive review of implementation efforts. By year end, significant strides have been made: 29 Management Action Plans (MAPs), comprising 263 actions across project and macro-level evaluations, show 78% completion rate. Notably, 13 project-level MAPs have recorded 99% implementation, while macro-level evaluations achieved 73% completion. These figures are not mere statistics, they reflect our institution's resolve to turn insights into action and uphold operational excellence.

Looking ahead, the IEvD's role will grow in importance as we navigate complex development challenges. From addressing implementation challenges to ensuring sustainability through enhanced ownership at all levels, independent evaluation will remain critical in shaping interventions that resonate with our member countries and communities that we serve.

On behalf of the Operations and Development Effectiveness Committee, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to H.E. Dr. Muhammad Al Jasser, President of the IsDB, and the members of the IsDB Management for their tireless support and dedication to the independent evaluation function. I also express my heartfelt appreciation to the IEvD team for their continued commitment to advancing the Bank's development effectiveness through robust evaluation methodologies and for promoting broader dissemination, which has enriched institutional learning. I would like to acknowledge the valuable cooperation and support provided by all departments and entities of the IsDB Group in advancing these efforts.

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**Hon. Parjiono Cipto Widarto** — Chairman, Operations and Development Effectiveness Committee (ODEC) 2024



### MESSAGE FROM THE IEVD DIRECTOR

During 2024 the Independent Evaluation Department (IEvD) intensified its activities, culminating into the completion of a comprehensive portfolio of projects, programs, and macro-level evaluations as well as knowledge dissemination on pertinent learnings. These activities generated insights that are being harnessed to support institutional decision-making to enhance effectiveness across the IsDB Group. In line with IsDB's strategic focus on Human Capital Development, our sector concentration this year focused on health and education which are fundamental to sustainable socio-economic advancement in our member countries (MCs). We also launched major thematic, country and corporate evaluations in 2024 to inform the Management and the Board decision-making.

IEvD completed eleven project evaluations, a cluster evaluation of Special Assistance Operations in Ethiopia, and a comprehensive program evaluation on King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Program for Charity Works (KAAP). Furthermore, five macro-Level evaluations were completed comprising sector evaluation of the Agricultural and Rural Development, thematic evaluation of the IsDB Regional Cooperation and Integration Policy, evaluation of IsDB Corporate Consultancy Procurement Process and two corporate evaluations on the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) and the Awqaf Properties and Investment Fund (APIF), the two main poverty alleviation funds of the IsDB Group.

As part of the evolving relevance of evaluation in international development, the IEvD is spearheading learning and knowledge dissemination to broaden understanding of the essence of evaluation in all aspects of IsDB Group functions so that all business units reflect on evaluation accountabilities in performing their functions. In this context, the IEvD organized a number of evaluation knowledge events including the 6th IsDB Group Evaluation Symposium which attracted more than 200 participants from the IsDB Group, other Multilateral Development Banks, academia, and the private sector. We further invested in building evaluation capacity through International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET), which developed IsDB professionals' evaluation capacity with enhanced skills to contribute to the Bank's learning ecosystem.

Our partnerships have grown stronger this year. Working with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), we launched the Glossary of Key Evaluation Terms in three languages (Arabic, English and French) at the IsDB Annual Meeting in April 2024 in Riyadh. We were pleased to support many developing countries to participate in regional and international evaluation learning events for capacity development.

I want to thank H.E. the President of IsDB, members of Management, and the Operations
Development Effectiveness Committee (ODEC)
for their support throughout the year, as well as all IsDB departments and business units for the excellent collaboration. I want also to thank especially our IEvD team for their hard work and commitment.

Thus

Ahmed Ag Aboubacrine,

Acting Director, Independent Evaluation Department (IEvD)

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The **2024 Annual Evaluation Report (AER)** provides an integrated overview of findings and lessons from the evaluation activities conducted by the Independent Evaluation Department (IEvD) during the year covering both project and program evaluations (PPE) and macro-level evaluations. In 2024, the IEvD focused its evaluation agenda on health and education sectors, reflecting the Bank's Realigned Strategy 2023-2025, the results of which revealed both achievements and systemic challenges. The health sector evaluation showed mixed results across multiple projects. Positive achievements are witnessed in projects such as the Jordan Emergency Health Project which effectively served over 5.5 million patients, surpassing its target. Moreover, the Mauritania's National Cardiology Center reduced overseas medical evacuations by 92%. However, several projects faced significant challenges. For example, the Dalal Jamm Hospital in Senegal experienced an 11-year delay and increased costs from USD 59.28 million to USD 94.33 million due to poor donor coordination, procurement issues, and contractor bankruptcy. Many facilities struggled with financial sustainability, with projects like Dalal Jamm receiving only 25% of operational costs from the government. Another example is the Mobile Medical Units Program across seven Asian countries. While the program provided 1.49 million medical consultations, it lacked clear transition plans for integration into national health systems, raising concerns about service continuity after donor funding ends. Projects that combined infrastructure development with staff training, such as Mulago National Referral Hospital in Uganda, showed better outcomes for healthcare delivery and

long-term sustainability.

Similar implementation challenges and sustainability concerns were evident in the education sector, though with relatively better rate of successes. The Basic Education Project in Togo successfully constructed 100 schools, increasing enrollment by 43,642 students (including 20,312 girls), while Diibouti's Basic Education Support Project improved retention rates through free textbooks and scholarships. The Support to Development of Islamic Higher Education Project in Indonesia transformed four institutions into fully-fledged universities but fell short of its target for PhD-trained lecturers, achieving only 35.7% against a planned 56.25%. Some projects faced implementation delays due to procurement issues and contractor financial failures, as seen in Uganda's National Education Support Project. While Indonesia's higher education project showed promising sustainability by generating 40% of operational costs through tuition fees and facility rentals, many schools in Djibouti and Uganda struggled with basic maintenance and utility costs. The evaluations emphasized that combining infrastructure development with curriculum improvements, teacher training, and student incentives produced the most effective outcomes. Beyond these sector-specific observations, the AER provides highlights of the macro-level evaluations, conducted as stand-alone assessments, focused on four key areas:

First, the specialized funds namely the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) and the Awqaf Property Investment Fund (APIF) showed solid achievements but also faced critical challenges. The APIF achieved capital growth and moderate returns but faced a 55% cancellation rate, slow implementation, and limited surplus for social programs—only six of its 16 case studies generated enough surplus after debt service. The ISFD mobilized only 26% of its target capital, struggled with governance inconsistencies, and experienced volatile

income; although it delivered significant outputs for poverty alleviation across sectors, while seven of evaluated projects experienced gaps in efficiency and sustainability. Both funds require governance, financial, and operational reforms to ensure sustainable poverty alleviation.

- Second, the regional cooperation and integration (RCI) evaluation revealed that although IsDB's 2019 RCI Policy and Strategy is broadly relevant to member countries (MCs), its implementation faces significant hurdles. Key gaps include misalignment with certain sector strategies, insufficient monitoring systems, and minimal investment in critical areas like cross-border trade, transboundary natural resource management, and Islamic financial market integration. While completed transport and energy projects demonstrated strong results—particularly in establishing infrastructure linkages—limited partnerships with other multilateral organizations and the private sector hindered the overall scale of impact. Furthermore, internal coordination challenges. such as inadequate staff expertise and under-resourced units responsible for driving RCI, reduced the Bank's ability to fully leverage its strategy for broad-based regional development.
- wation of agriculture and rural development (ARD) indicate that IsDB-financed interventions successfully bolstered food security, livelihoods, and climate resilience, particularly through initiatives promoting clean energy use and climate-smart agriculture. However, the evaluation noted systemic procurement delays, poor record-keeping, and insufficient risk assessment at the design stage, which led to cost overruns and inefficiencies. Although many ARD projects proved effective and aligned well with national priorities, their sustainability remained uncertain due to lack of community ownership, limited integration of exit strategies,

and weak coordination between governments, local stakeholders, and the Bank.

For the first time, the AER is providing updates on progress of implementation of the recommendations from previous evaluation reports, through the Systematic Tracking of the Execution of Evaluation Recommendations (STEER), that was introduced in 2020 to enhance transparency and reinforce accountability in implementing evaluation findings. Since its launch, STEER has processed a total of 497 recommendations, leading to 687 specific actions from 92 evaluations. The implementation results indicate significant success, with project and program evaluations reaching 99% completion across 44 actions, while macro-level evaluations achieved 73% completion across 219 actions. In 2024, STEER processed 211 recommendations including 263 actions.

In addition to its core evaluation work, IEvD prioritized knowledge dissemination and capacity building throughout 2024. The flagship event was the 6th IsDB Group Evaluation Symposium held on October 8-9, 2024, which brought together stakeholders from MDBs, academia, the private sector, and IsDB Group staff to reinforce evaluation as a powerful tool for strategic decision-making, learning, and accountability. IEvD also produced 44 knowledge products, while organizing 10 learning events comprising webinars, capacity building workshops and in-country dissemination events. Details are provided in Appendix 5.



## 2024

### IN NUMBERS



13

#### **Project and Program Evaluations**

(sectors: health, education)



#### **11 Project Evaluations**

in 10 member countries: Bangladesh, Djibouti, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo, Turkiye, Uganda



### 1 Program Evaluation

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Program for Charity Works (KAAP) in seven Asian Countries



#### **1** Cluster Evaluation

Special Assistance Operations in Ethiopia



11

#### **Macro Evaluations**

#### 5 Completed in 2024

Thematic Evaluation of Regional Cooperation and Integration (RCI) Policy and Strategy

Sector Evaluation of Agriculture, Water, and Rural Development

Corporate Evaluation of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD)

Corporate Evaluation of the Awqaf Properties Investment Fund (APIF)

Evaluation of IsDB Corporate Consultancy Procurement Process

#### **6** Launched in 2024

Thematic Evaluation of Women Empowerment and Youth Development

On-Demand Evaluation of THIQAH

Country Engagement Evaluation (CEE) for Egypt

Corporate Evaluation of Operational Efficiency at Implementation and Exit

Country Engagement Evaluation of Nigeria

Corporate Evaluation of IsDB Group Decentralization Experience.



#### **PCR Validation Notes**









**Social Services** 



**Transportation** 



Water/ Sanitation/ Urhan



#### **Knowledge Products**



**20** Knowledge Digests



**Evaluation Articles** 



**Videos including Evaluation Visual Reports** 



Newsletters



**Annual Evaluation Report** 



#### **Learning Events**



**Webinars and seminars** for knowledge sharing and dissemination



**Evaluation Capacity-Building Workshops** 



**In-Country Dissemination Workshops** 



**IsDB Group Evaluation Symposium** 



1 / During 2024, evaluations were conducted on 11 major development projects in the health and education sectors, which provided comprehensive insights of their achievements, challenges, and long-term sustainability. The key findings, challenges and lessons are highlighted as follows:



## HEALTH SECTOR: STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS AND EXPANDING ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES

2 / The projects evaluated include the Dalal Jamm Hospital in Senegal, the National Cardiology Center in Mauritania, the Jordan Emergency Health Project, and mobile Medical Units (MMUs) Program implemented under KAAP. These projects are highly relevant to national and international health priorities, and align with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 (Good Health and Well-being). They successfully expanded access to essential healthcare services, contributing to reducing mortality rates and improving other health indicators. The Jordan Emergency Health Project, for instance, provided healthcare services to over 5.5 million patients in two years, surpassing its target of 2.67 million, while the National Cardiology Center significantly reduced medical evacuations abroad by 92%, demonstrating the impact of localizing specialized services.

**3** / Despite their successes, these projects also experienced challenges. Implementation delays and cost overruns were recurrent issues,

especially in the Dalal Jamm Hospital, where weak coordination between multiple donors and a lack of early risk assessments led to a 11-year implementation delay. Similarly, financial sustainability remains a key concern. While governments played a role in funding the operations, many hospitals and health centers continued to struggle with maintaining financial independence, as demonstrated in Mauritania and Senegal. The reliance on donor funding without clear transition plans, as in the case of Mobile Medical Units Program, raises concerns about service continuity after the completion of external financing.

4 / Another key finding is the role of technical capacity in ensuring project success. Projects that integrated staff training alongside infrastructure development, such as the Mulago National Referral Hospital in Uganda, manifested improved healthcare delivery and long-term sustainability compared to others that did not. However, in some cases, training gaps and a lack of maintenance plans for medical equipment hindered full operationalization. The experience of the IVF unit at Mulago National Referral Hospital in Uganda, which faced delays due to inadequate early design considerations, reinforces the need for detailed project planning and robust procurement processes.

We particularly appreciate the availability of specialized services such as cardiology, the quality of medical staff, and the staff's positive and supportive attitude.

— A patient at the Dalal Jamm Hospital, Senegal.





5 / Efficient financial management emerged as a key challenge in many of the evaluated health projects as manifested in cost overruns and as well as in inefficiencies in procurement and disbursement. For instance, the Dalal Jamm Hospital Project in Senegal, initially budgeted at USD 59.28 million, ultimately costed USD 94.33 million, reflecting a 59% cost increase due to unanticipated expenses related to construction modifications and delayed equipment procurement. Similarly, the National Cardiology Center in Mauritania recorded a 43-month delay, partly due to the change of the project site and a lengthy procurement process for advanced medical equipment. However, some projects demonstrated strong financial efficiency despite their complexities. The Jordan Emergency Health Project, implemented in response to the Syrian refugee crisis, managed to remain within a 2% cost variation, even while significantly expanding healthcare services. This was largely due to its results-based financing mechanism, which linked disbursements directly to verified healthcare services delivered, ensuring that resources were used effectively. This experience underscores the importance of performance-based financing models whenever feasible to improve cost efficiency and ensure accountability in project implementation.

My colleagues and I completed an advanced cardiology training program. We have since performed numerous complex procedures, including openheart surgeries, independently. Our enhanced skills have not only benefited patients but also inspired other local doctors to pursue specialized training.

 A healthcare professional at the National Cardiology Center, Mauritania. **6** / Evidently, some of the projects are facing sustainability challenges, especially regarding long-term financial and institutional viability. The Dalal Jamm Hospital in Senegal, for instance, currently receives only 25% of its operational costs from the government, leaving the hospital struggling to cover maintenance and equipment replacement expenses. This financial gap threatens the long-term sustainability of the hospital's services, particularly specialized care services such as oncology and cardiology.

7 / Similarly, the MMUs Program in Seven Asian Countries faced serious sustainability concerns. While it successfully provided

1.49 million medical consultations across remote areas, its reliance on external donor funding raised concerns about its continuity. No clear transition plan was in place for integrating the MMUs into national health systems, leading to the risk of discontinuation of the services once donor funding ends. This experience highlights the importance of embedding financial sustainability strategies—such as government co-financing or local revenue-generation models—into project design from the outset.





# EDUCATION SECTOR: EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES AND ENHANCING QUALITY OF EDUCATION

8 / Among the education sector projects that were evaluated, the Basic Education Support Project in Diibouti, the Access and Quality Improvement of Basic Education Project in Togo, and the Support to Development of Islamic Higher Education Project in Indonesia made significant strides in improving access to education and infrastructure development. These projects directly contributed to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by expanding educational facilities, increasing student enrollment, and teacher training. For example, the Basic Education Project in Togo constructed 100 schools, increasing student enrollment by over 43,000 while reducing gender disparities.

**9** / However, implementation and efficiency challenges were evident. Many projects suffered from delays due to procurement bottlenecks, lack of financial capacity among contractors,

and weak coordination among stakeholders. For instance, the Support to Development of Islamic Higher Education Project in Indonesia, while successful in transforming four Islamic Institutes into full-fledged universities, faced delays due to logistical complexity of managing a project across four different universities, each with its own unique set of circumstances and existing infrastructure. The Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Project, another project IEvD evaluated, in Uganda highlighted the need for stronger industry linkages to ensure that training aligns with labor market demands, thereby improving graduate employability.

10 / The National Education Support Project in Uganda suffered from contractor's financial failures, which led to incomplete construction of schools. The Access and Quality Improvement of Basic Education Project in Togo was delayed by 24 months, partly due to the executing agency's limited understanding of IsDB's procurement processes. These experiences highlight the importance of selecting financially stable contractors and ensuring that the executing agencies receive adequate training in procurement and financial management.

Prior to the project, there were no intermediary schools in the area, and students had to walk five to seven kilometers to reach the nearest one after primary school. Previously, we as parents spent approximately USD 2 per day per student on transportation. The school has been a blessing, especially for the poor students, providing quality education by well-trained teachers.

 A father of a 7th grade student at the College de Sans Fil, Djibouti.

PROJECT AND PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

11 / One of the key takeaways from the education sector evaluations is that, though infrastructure investment is crucial, it is not enough to guarantee improved learning outcomes. Projects that combined physical investments with curriculum improvements, teacher training, and student incentives achieved significant impacts compared with those that did not. In Djibouti, the provision of free textbooks and scholarships encouraged school attendance, particularly among girls. In some cases, the lack of complementary investments—such as teacher training on new laboratory equipment limited the full utilization of project outputs. Though the Support to Development of Islamic Higher Education Project achieved infrastructure outputs that allowed the universities to offer diverse academic programs, the project fell short of its target for PhD-trained lecturers, with only 35.7% of teaching staff holding PhDs instead of the planned 56.25%. The experience underscores that infrastructure development, while essential, is not sufficient on its own to enhance education quality—complementary investments in faculty training and curriculum development are equally vital.

12 / Sustainability challenges were evident in some projects mainly due to lack of proper long-term planning, particularly in terms of allocating necessary financial resources for operation & maintenance (O&M). For instance, the education projects in Togo and Uganda faced issues with maintenance funding, as many community-based school management committees lacked the financial capacity to keep facilities in good condition.

13 / In contrast, the Support to Development of Islamic Higher Education Project in Indonesia showed promising signs of sustainability. The universities established under the project generated 40% of their operational costs through tuition fees and facility rentals,

demonstrating a viable financial model that could reduce dependence on government funding. This highlights the potential for higher education institutions to adopt diversified revenue streams to ensure long-term financial sustainability.

85% of our graduates are employed, engaged in entrepreneurship, or enrolled in higher education within six months of graduation.

 Management of Semarang University, one of the four universities supported by the Support to Development of Islamic Higher Education Project, Indonesia.





## CROSS-CUTTING LEARNINGS

14 / Sustainability, adaptability, and governance are crucial for achieving significant development impacts from implemented projects. A recurring theme across both health and education projects is the need for sustainability planning from the outset. Financial sustainability remains a significant challenge, with many projects still reliant on external funding. Governments need to allocate resources for O&M after completion of projects to ensure sustainability. The experience of the MMUs Program highlights the risks of short-term interventions that do not have a clear transition strategy to local ownership.

15 / Flexibility in project design and implementation also proved crucial. Projects that adapted to emerging challenges—such as revising procurement plans, adjusting financing mechanisms, or modifying infrastructure design—achieved better outcomes. The National Cardiology Center in Mauritania, for example, successfully expanded its original design based on evolving needs, demonstrating the benefits of adaptive project management.

16 / Governance and stakeholder coordination play a decisive role in project success. Projects with strong government ownership and effective multi-stakeholder collaboration were more likely to achieve their objectives efficiently. In contrast, projects with fragmented oversight, such as the Dalal Jamm Hospital in Senegal, faced significant implementation challenges. Strengthening governance structures, ensuring clear accountability, and fostering local engagement are key to improving future project outcomes.

17 / The 2024 evaluations reinforce the importance of proper planning, financial sustainability, and capacity building in development projects. While many projects successfully expanded healthcare and education access, challenges in efficiency, procurement, and long-term funding remain key areas for improvement. By embedding flexibility, local ownership, and sustainability strategies into future projects, IsDB and its partners can ensure that development investments continue to drive meaningful, long-term changes in the communities they serve. The following section provides the detailed key lessons learned out of those health and education projects evaluated.





#### **KEY LESSONS**

18 / Capturing lessons from the evaluation of projects, programs, policies, strategies, or other interventions of the Bank provides a valuable learning opportunity to reflect on past experiences and identify areas for improvement. It allows the Bank to gain a better understanding of what worked well and what could be improved in the future.

19 / Hence, the issues and challenges that were identified in the process of evaluating projects and programs in 2024 have been formulated into key lessons. The lessons learned emphasize the importance of comprehensive design and risk assessment as critical for ensuring quality at entry, cohesive implementation strategy that involves key stakeholders and enhance their capability to support implementation of the projects and programs, effective coordination, innovative and tailored sustainability strategies, including proper O&M system, as critical elements for a reflective approach that could enhance the effectiveness of IsDB operations. The key lessons are outlined as follows:

a / Comprehensive design and risk assessments significantly reduce implementation challenges: A key lesson from the evaluations conducted in 2024 is the importance of incorporating comprehensive design reviews and robust risk assessments early in the project lifecycle. Projects like the Mulago National Referral Hospital in Uganda and the Dalal Jamm Hospital in Senegal revealed that design oversights—such as inadequate consideration of environmental factors or failure to anticipate technical requirements—led to significant delays, rework, and resource inefficiencies. For instance, the absence of a negative pressure room in the design of

the Mulago National Referral Hospital in Uganda IVF unit necessitated costly rework, while salinity issues in Dalal Jamm Hospital in Senegal highlighted the consequences of insufficient environmental risk assessment. Addressing design flaws at the outset and integrating detailed risk management plans can significantly improve project efficiency and mitigate unforeseen challenges. On the other hand, the Reconstruction and Upgrading of Okmeydani Training Hospital in Türkiye, one of the projects IEvD evaluated in 2024, was designed to withstand earthquakes, ensuring that essential services remain unaffected.

#### **b** / Stakeholder coordination is crucial for timely and effective implementation:

The evaluations underscored that robust stakeholder coordination mechanisms are critical to the timely and successful implementation of projects. In cases like the Dalal Jamm Hospital, inadequate communication and lack of coordination among project stakeholders disrupted project timelines and





the benefits of well-aligned partnerships. Establishing clear communication protocols and defined roles for stakeholders ensures smoother project execution.

c / Financial sustainability requires diversification and local ownership: Dependency on external funding remains a critical risk for project sustainability, as evidenced in the Jordan Emergency Health Project and MMUs Program. These projects highlighted the dangers of relying exclusively on donor financing without integrating plans for transitioning operations to local ownership. For instance, the MMUs lacked mechanisms to embed their operations into national health systems, leading to sustainability challenges once donor funding ceased. By contrast, the Mauritania NCC Project's diversified funding streams, combining internal revenue generation and

strategic maintenance contracts, illustrates a more resilient financial model. Future projects must prioritize strategies that involve local resource mobilization and government contributions to ensure long-term sustainability.

d / Capacity building and timely training enhance project readiness: Continuous capacity building and parallel training efforts emerged as vital components of effective project implementation. The National Cardiology Center in Mauritania and TVET programs in Uganda demonstrated the benefits of training personnel alongside infrastructure development. In Mauritania, medical staff were trained simultaneously with the construction and procurement phases, ensuring operational readiness upon project completion. This approach empowered local healthcare providers to perform advanced procedures, such as

coronary angioplasty, autonomously. Similarly, in National Education Support Project (Phase II) in Uganda, involving students and staff in equipment maintenance enhanced both practical learning and cost efficiency. Integrating training initiatives with project implementation fosters self-reliance and sustainability while improving service quality.

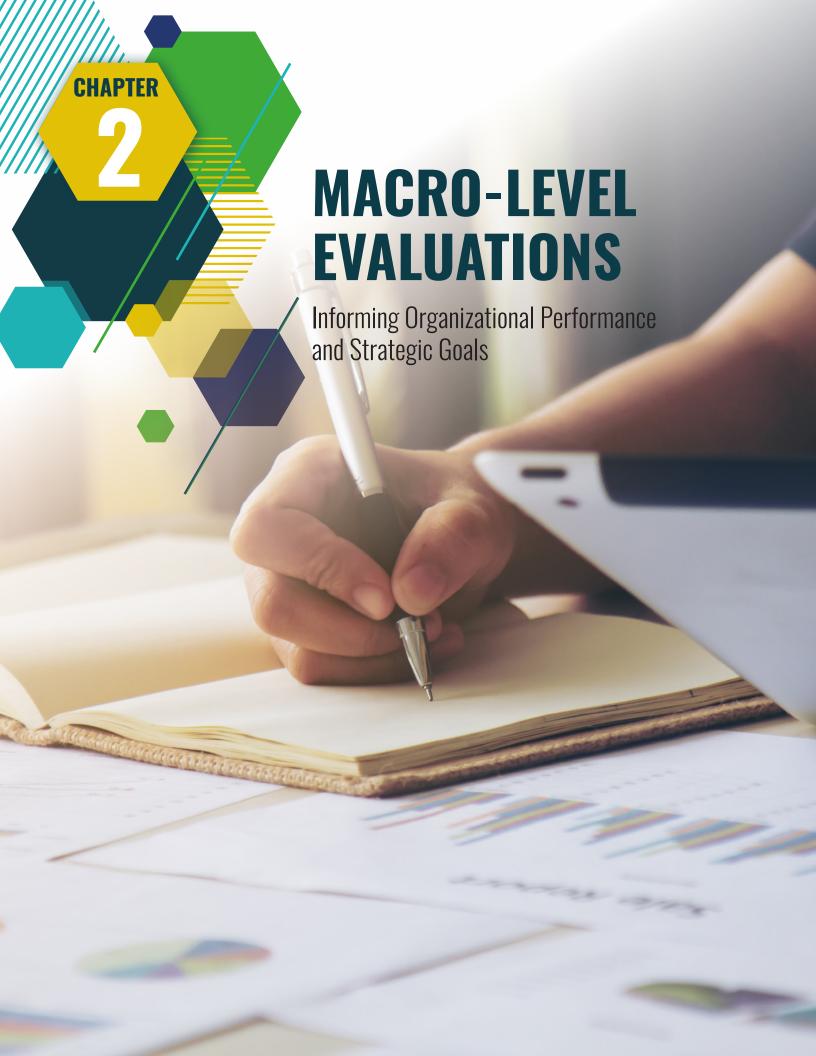
e / Social inclusion and equity strengthen project impact and acceptance: Projects that prioritized gender sensitivity and social inclusion demonstrated greater impact and community acceptance. The Jordan Emergency Health Project and education projects in Togo and Djibouti highlighted the importance of addressing barriers faced by marginalized groups, including women and rural populations. For example, targeted efforts in Togo, such as scholarships and campaigns to promote girls' education, resulted in increased enrollment and attendance. Similarly, Djibouti's Basic Education Support Project included sports facilities that not only supported holistic student development but also fostered stronger community relationships. Ensuring inclusiveness in project design enhances equity and leads to interventions that resonate with the needs of diverse beneficiaries.

f / Monitoring and evaluation (m&e) systems are essential for accountability and adaptation: Establishing robust M&E frameworks was identified as a critical enabler for achieving project goals and ensuring accountability. The Jordan Emergency Health Project faced challenges with inconsistent data and inadequate baseline measurements, which hampered effective performance monitoring. Similarly, the Mauritania National Cardiology Center project's results framework blurred the distinction between outputs and outcomes. These gaps emphasize the necessity of clear

and comprehensive M&E systems, including real-time data collection and well-articulated indicators. Strong M&E frameworks facilitate adaptive management and ensure that the projects remain aligned with their intended objectives.

g / Localization of services reduces dependency and enhances ownership and sustainability: The evaluations highlighted the value of localizing services and empowering local stakeholders to reduce dependency on external support. The National Cardiology Center in Mauritania significantly decreased the need for medical evacuations by establishing local capacity for specialized healthcare. Similarly, the engagement of local contractors in Djibouti's Basic Education Support Project not only improved project efficiency but also fostered skill development and community ownership. By building local infrastructure, expertise, and partnerships, projects can better meet the needs of their beneficiaries while ensuring long-term sustainability and self-reliance.



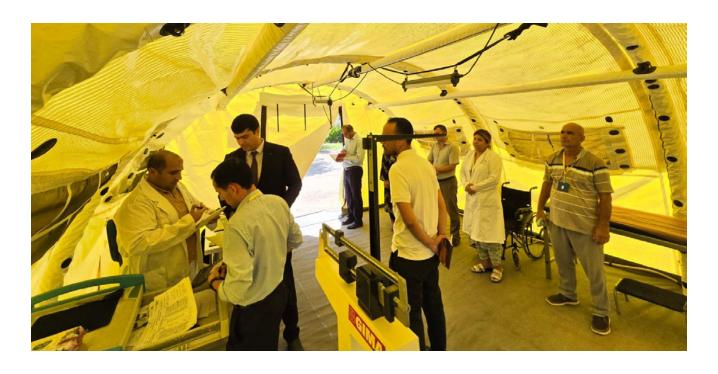


**20** / A total of eleven macro-evaluations were conducted in 2024, five of which began in 2023 and were completed in 2024. These include the Thematic Evaluation of Regional Cooperation and Integration (RCI) Policy and Strategy, the Sector Evaluation of Agriculture, Water, and Rural Development, , the Corporate Evaluation of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD), the Corporate Evaluation of the Awqaf Properties Investment Fund (APIF) and Evaluation of IsDB Corporate Consultancy Procurement Process. Additionally, six new evaluations initiated in 2024 are expected to be completed in 2025, which are the Thematic Evaluation of Women Empowerment and Youth Development, the On-Demand Evaluation of THIQAH, the Country Engagement Evaluation (CEE) for Egypt the Corporate Evaluation of Operational Efficiency at Implementation and Exit, the Country Engagement Evaluation of Nigeria, and the Corporate Evaluation of IsDB Group Decentralization Experience.

**21** / These evaluations provide comprehensive assessments of IsDB's strategic initiatives, sectoral interventions, and corporate functions, and

their alignment with MCs development priorities and IsDBG vision, mission, and strategies. This chapter presents key findings and lessons from these macro evaluations. The RCI evaluation examined the implementation of IsDB's 2019-2023 RCI Policy and Strategy, assessing its alignment with MC priorities and the Bank's mission of promoting south-south cooperation. The sector evaluation of Agriculture, Water, and Rural Development assessed the impact of IsDB agricultural investments on MCs progress towards food security, climate resilience, and rural livelihoods. The corporate evaluations of ISFD and APIF focused on their financial sustainability, operational efficiency, and contributions to poverty reduction.

22 / The findings of these evaluations will inform future policy decisions, resource allocation, and institutional reforms, to strengthen the Bank's development impact across its member countries.





## THEMATIC EVALUATION OF REGIONAL COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION POLICY AND STRATEGY

23 / Since its inception, the Islamic
Development Bank (IsDB) has recognized the
potential of regional cooperation and integration
(RCI) through its corporate strategies and
project interventions. Facilitating economic
cooperation among MCs is a core mandate
in the Bank's articles of agreement, with IsDB
Group entities (ICIEC, ICD, and ITFC) also supporting regional trade and investment. The IsDB
Group's 10-Year Strategy 2016-2025 prioritized
RCI, positioning the Bank as a 'connector' and
'catalyst' for economic integration, developing
sub-regional programs, and committing USD
2.5 billion to support RCI. While the IsDB
adopted its RCI Policy and Strategy in 2019 and



implemented various projects and programs, The Strategic Realignment 2023-2025 didn't exclusively focus on RCI. However, the 2024 "In Riyadh at 50 Declaration" strengthened this commitment by identifying RCI as one of five key enablers of the Bank's mission, positioning the IsDB Group within South-South cooperation through promoting regional integration, developing regulatory environments, building capacities, and mobilizing partnerships.

24 / The evaluation of the IsDB Group's RCI policy and strategy examined its relevance to the development strategies of MCs and assessed the extent to which the IsDB Group has institutionalized RCI within its operations and analyzed the coordination mechanism formulated to implement the RCI policy and strategy. Based on the findings, lessons and recommendations are formulated to enhance the effectiveness of future RCI initiatives, strategic orientation, and operational approach. The evaluation used evidence gathered through project missions, portfolio analyses, document reviews, and consultations with IsDB Group operations staff, assessing performance against three criteria—relevance, responsiveness, and results—covering the period 2019-2023.

considered highly relevant to the needs of member countries, as their design aligns well with established good practices. Also, the RCI agenda is highly relevant to member countries, particularly in areas such as transport, energy, agriculture, and trade integration, which are well aligned with development priorities of member countries. However, member countries' understanding of the strategy remains limited, largely due to insufficient communication. They expect the IsDB to strengthen coordination with other multilateral development banks and regional organizations. Demand for regional integration varies by context— for example,

Central Asian countries prioritize transport and energy connectivity, while West African nations focus more on transport and regional agricultural integration. The RCI strategy comprises four pillars and four roles. While these pillars cover "hard" and "soft" components necessary for regional integration, they omit key areas like regional agricultural integration, transboundary water management, and regional tourism infrastructure. The Results Framework lacks proper alignment with the pillars and clear responsibility distribution. Institutionally, the Regional Integration Section under the cooperation and capacity development (CCD) has insufficient resources to drive the Group's RCI agenda. While IsDB follows a similar path to other MDBs in emphasizing RCI, it focuses more on small-scale grant projects for studies and capacity development rather than large-scale public finance projects. This approach, though different, has raised awareness about digitalization, health, and trade facilitation. According to the IsDB Integration Index, MCs perform best in Production Network and Trade dimensions but lag in Financial Markets, Connectivity, and Institutional Integration.

## **26** / Responsiveness assessment based on RCI results framework indicates that IsDB has been responsive to RCI policy and strategy.

However, there are two major shortcomings, which are a) misalignment with RCI Strategy pillars and b) lack of proper monitoring. The findings indicate that alignment of RCI policy and strategy with IsDB sector Policies and Strategies is mixed. For instance, the RCI Policy aligns with IsDB's Transport, Energy, and ICT Policies and Strategies, but not with its Agriculture, Climate Change, and Fragility and Resilience Strategies. There is no evidence that an RCI pipeline was prepared under the regional RCI action plan. Additionally, IsDB Member Country Partnership Strategies (MCPSs) and Country Engagement Frameworks (CEFs) are

partly responsive to the RCI agenda. The RCI section lacks sufficient sectoral expertise and aligned therefore to leverage these resources from relevant departments within IsDB Group to effectively promote regional integration, drive the RCI agenda, and coordinate implementation across business units including the Group entities.

27 / In terms of results, IsDB's RCI activities are rated as moderate based on RCI-related project approvals during 2019-2023. There was narrow sectoral diversification in the approvals with most projects concentrated in the transport sector and a few in energy. The approved RCI public finance related projects were highly relevant, focusing on transport and energy sectors. Loan-financed projects under Pillar-1, particularly transport and energy linkages, with four completed projects were rated highly effective in achieving outputs and outcomes. Grant project approvals decreased during 2019-2023 compared to 2014-2018, with most grants focusing on studies, training, workshops, and conferences. There was no notable investment to promote transboundary natural resource management, cross-border trade, economic corridors and Islamic financial markets integration - key RCI areas of priority.

**28** / Evaluating the impact of IsDB Group's RCI operations is challenging due to lack of data and measurable indicators. There is no formal monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the RCI Strategy across different business units within the IsDB Group which limits the ownership of RCI strategy by Group entities. There is a clear communication gap between the Operations Complex and the RCI section in delivering RCI strategy and project programming. Additionally, the assessment also noted limited collaboration with multilateral organizations, hindering the ability to leverage additional financial resources.





## AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT SECTOR EVALUATION

**29** / The Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) sector plays a crucial role in the economies of IsDB MCs. The IsDB supports this sector through several strategic frameworks including the ARD Policy and Strategy (2020-2025), guided by the IsDBG 10-Year Strategy and the SDGs. The evaluation assessed IsDB's ARD interventions for the period 2014-2022, focusing on determining whether the Bank successfully supported sustainable agriculture and rural development in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of operations. The evaluation covered policies, strategies, projects, and grants (technical assistance), including 12 ARD projects across nine countries with eight completed and four ongoing. Two in-depth country case studies were conducted on Indonesia and Senegal, selected based on geographic distribution (Asia and Africa), size of ARD portfolio, and diversity of ARD subsectors.

30 / A key finding of the evaluation is that ARD operations are aligned with member countries priorities, IsDB's 10Yrs Strategy and ARD Sector Strategy (2020-2025) as well as the Bank's other thematic (RCI, climate Change, women empowerment) and sector (water)

policies. Of the 12 projects assessed, four are **Highly Relevant** while the remaining eight are **Relevant**. Collectively, these projects helped reduce poverty and strengthen sustainable livelihoods by increasing rural household incomes, improving food security, expanding access to affordable housing, and building resilience.

31 / Overall, the ARD operations are assessed as effective. Out of the eight completed projects of the 12 projects assessed six are Effective and only two are found to be **Ineffective**. The number of ARD operations financed by the Bank decreased from 46 projects worth USD 720 million in 2017 to 31 projects worth USD 653 million in 2019. However, in response to global food crisis caused by COVID-19 pandemic, the IsDB approved USD 10.54 billion for the comprehensive Food Security Response Program (FSRP) in 2021. Overall, as noted earlier ARD projects contributed to building resilience to food insecurity, improving livelihoods, and developing capacity to adapt to climate change. The Bank has also made notable progress in supporting SMEs and job creation. The strong partnerships and cooperation between the IsDB Regional Hubs and MCs have contributed to the success of ARD operations. However, significant challenges undermined effectiveness, including weak technical design, limited community participation, procurement delays (especially in West Africa), insufficient counterpart funding, and capacity of contractors in several countries, affecting implementation timelines and project outcomes. Beyond these implementation challenges, the evaluation team faced methodological difficulties in accurately assessing results, including the unavailability of measurable KPI data, unreliable statistics, and weak operational record-keeping at the country level, which significantly limited the ability to quantify the actual impact of ARD operations.

Before the project improved access to drinking water, we and our children spent most of our time looking for water. Now we can spend that time on other income-generating activities and the children can go to school.

 A beneficiary of the WAEMU Regional Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project.

32 / The ARD operations demonstrate weak efficiency, particularly in non-grant large projects, with only two out of 12 assessed projects rated efficient, 9 less efficient, and 1 inefficient. Many projects faced delays and cost overruns. While the average time from approval to signature is reasonable at 5.04 months, delays emerge in later stages - averaging 6.74 months from signature to effectiveness and 8.34 months from effectiveness to first disbursement. The main factors hampering efficiency include procurement delays, slow IsDB approvals, institutional changes in member countries (such as ministry and executing agency restructuring), insufficient counterpart funds, and poor contractor performance. The

Covid-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2022 further exacerbated these delays.

**33** / The ARD operations show moderate sustainability, with five out of 12 assessed projects likely to be sustainable, three less likely to be sustainable, and the remaining four projects were not assessed as they are still under implementation. Capacity building initiatives, provided through these projects, have successfully equipped communities with skills in water management, youth entrepreneurship, and climate-smart agriculture. However, long-term sustainability requires better exit strategies and increased local community and government involvement.

34 / The effective implementation of the Bank's operational policies along with its environmental and social safeguards policy contributed to the improvements of development outcomes due to integration of environmental and social considerations into project identification, preparation, and implementation. This contributed to the adoption of Good Agricultural Practices, and the promotion of clean energy initiatives.





#### **EVALUATION OF THE AWQAF FUNDS FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION**

35 / The Awgaf Properties Investment Fund (APIF) plays a crucial role in revitalizing Awgaf institutions across IsDB member and non-member countries. IsDB established APIF in 1997 as its most significant initiative to develop Awgaf properties, which historically provided sustainable financing for education, health, and social services in Muslim communities. A corporate evaluation of the APIF was conducted in 2024, examining the Fund's overall performance and socioeconomic impact from 2014 to 2023. The evaluation covered 16 projects in 10 countries. representing over 50% of APIF's 29 completed projects, through field visits, online discussions, and document reviews.

36 / Despite moderate returns, the APIF achieved growth in capital and assets from 2018 onward, maintaining stable financial indicators. Over the past decade the fund's paid-up capital increased significantly by 51%



(from USD76 million to USD115 million), while net assets grew by 59% (from USD83 million to USD132.85 million). Investment performance remained moderate, with average returns of 2.93% on equity and 2.61% on net assets. The fund maintained profitability, averaging USD2.70 million in annual net income, reaching a peak of USD3.35 million in 2021 before slightly declining to USD3.17 million in 2023. Dividend payments to shareholders averaged 2.14% of paid-up capital, with the net value per certificate remaining stable at an average of USD 11,382 over the period.

37 / APIF's operations show a mixed record with high cancellation rates and implementation delays, amid broad geographical coverage and sector diversification. Since inception, APIF has approved financing of USD 918 million for 106 projects. APIF portfolio faced significant implementation challenges, resulting in a high cancellation rate of 55% (58 projects worth USD 536 million). 29 projects (USD 205 million) were completed and 15 projects (USD 155 million) are still active. Annual approvals averaged USD 45 million but began to decline in 2018, with current portfolio in 15 countries including 4 non-member countries, with concentration in high-income countries. The main instruments of financing are leasing (52%) and Istisna'a (31%), focusing on health, education and social sectors. A major concern is that 11 out of 15 active projects face substantial delays, with some exceeding 8-10 years from approval.

38 / While projects successfully delivered physical outputs, their social impact was limited during repayment periods, with only a few projects generating sufficient surplus for social programs. Based on the evaluation of 16 case studies, APIF projects demonstrated strong alignment with SDGs, particularly in education, health and social development sectors. While most completed projects successfully

delivered their planned physical outputs with high occupancy rates (70-100%), their immediate social impact was constrained during the repayment period as revenues were primarily directed toward debt servicing. Only 6 out of 16 projects generated sufficient surplus after debt service to significantly fund social programs. Nevertheless, successful projects showed notable social outcomes, including annual support for 19,000 students through scholarships, medical services for 23,000 patients, and creation of permanent jobs through project operations.

39 / In conclusion, while APIF has demonstrated financial growth and delivered important physical outputs, the evaluation identified critical systemic issues that must be addressed. The exceptionally high cancellation rate compared to IsDB average indicates fundamental weaknesses in project selection and preparation. The Fund's development

effectiveness is hampered by significant implementation delays, with most active projects experiencing prolonged timelines. Limited headroom restricts new financing opportunities, while weak implementation capacity, insufficient asset insurance, and mortgage registration delays complicate project execution. Despite successful physical delivery and strong SDG alignment in completed projects, the challenging balance between debt service and generating surplus for social impact remains a core issue, with only about one-third of evaluated projects generating sufficient resources for social programs. Concentration in higher-income countries and difficulties in revenue generation in least developed member countries further limit APIF's inclusive development impact. Addressing these structural challenges is essential for APIF to fulfill its mission of revitalizing Awqaf institutions and maximizing their contribution to sustainable development.







#### **EVALUATION OF THE ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT**

**40** / The Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) was established in 2007 as a special Fund within the IsDB to fight poverty, promote pro-poor growth, and enhance productive capacity in member countries through concessional financing. The corporate evaluation of ISFD was conducted to examine the Fund's overall performance and development effectiveness from 2013 to 2022. The evaluation assessed ISFD's governance structures, resource mobilization, operational performance, and financial sustainability, covering a representative sample of completed projects across four member countries and multiple sectors.

41 / The governance structure of the ISFD has evolved since inception but continues to face challenges of institutional coherence, management cohesion, strategic orientation and organizational identity. The Fund began as a unit, and later became a department, and now operates under a Director General, reflecting governance inconsistency. In 2023, IsDB approved a revised structure aligned with core functions, but the evaluation revealed that 75% of surveyed staff believe ISFD is not effectively

functioning as an impact fund for poverty alleviation. The ISFD Transformation Strategy 2030 has also faced implementation delays - out of 10 initiatives under Phase I "Fix the Basics", only 2 were implemented timely, 2 were partially implemented, while 6 initiatives weren't implemented during 2020-2021. Critical policies on loans, grants, risk management and resource mobilization were only approved in March 2024, highlighting persistent delays in establishing core operational frameworks.

42 / Since inception, the ISFD has mobilized only 26% of its target capital, while persistent volatility in income from returns on investment impact operational sustainability. By the end of 2022, capital commitments reached just USD 2.6 billion of the USD 10 billion target. The paid-up capital of USD 2.53 billion came from member countries (USD 1.53 billion) and IsDB (USD 1.0 billion). As income from investing the ISFD principal amount has not been growing steadily, the ISFD continues to face challenges of approval capacity and financial sustainability.

43 / While ISFD financed projects achieved significant development outputs across sectors, its operational performance showed mixed results with better efficiency metrics than IsDB but with issues of project delays and implementation challenges. ISFD-funded interventions delivered substantial development outputs - built 769 schools benefiting 178,032

students, trained 7,652 teachers, trained 132,958 health personnel, enabled 73.6 million patients to access primary health care services, and provided 67,744 households access to potable water. Case studies of flagship programs demonstrated meaningful results - the Vocational Literacy Programs in Tajikistan and Chad benefited over 19,000 rural residents with over 50% women participants, while health initiatives like the Alliance to Fight Avoidable Blindness performed about 1,000 cataract surgeries in Chad. The Fund portfolio outperformed IsDB in efficiency metrics including start-up time and implementation periods. However, the evaluation of seven completed projects across four member countries revealed mixed results - while all projects were highly relevant and mostly effective in achieving outputs, their overall efficiency and sustainability were not satisfactory. The Fund initiated a portfolio quality improvement exercise in 2023 to address these issues.

44 / The ISFD maintained focus on Least **Developed Member Countries (LDMCs),** but fell short in target allocations, with its operations spread across multiple sectors and regions, potentially diluting development impact. During 2013-2022, ISFD allocated 72% of financing to LDMCs against 80% target. Geographically, 62% went to Africa, 22% to Asia, and 15% to MENA. The sectoral distribution was health (21.2%), agriculture (21.4%), education (17.7%), and energy (15.5%) among others. Under the new strategy, ISFD aims to progressively deliver operations through flagship programs rather than standalone projects. During 2013-2022, the Fund had 24 flagship programs with 264 projects co-financed with other donors. However, these programs were spread across multiple sectors, potentially compromising focus and effectiveness.

45 / In conclusion, ISFD faces fundamental financial sustainability challenges requiring strategic transformation of its business model and innovative approaches to resource **mobilization.** Financial modeling conducted in 2020 revealed that ISFD would barely maintain sustainability between 2021-2030, subject to two critical conditions: projected outstanding loan volume not exceeding projected retained earnings, and strict observation of caps on cumulative undisbursed commitments (CUC) growth. Stress tests showed that under even mild scenarios, financial sustainability would be at significant risk. The evaluation proposes a four-tiered resource mobilization approach combining existing capital, parallel Waqf structures, crowd funding, and country-level funds. While executing agencies expressed satisfaction with ISFD-funded projects' contributions to knowledge exchange and capacity building, staff surveys indicated dissatisfaction with the Fund's knowledge sharing initiatives and visibility of achievements. Addressing structural challenges is essential for ISFD to fulfill its mandate of poverty



## EVALUATION OF ISDB CORPORATE CONSULTANCY PROCUREMENT PROCESS

46 / The IsDB approved a Corporate Procurement Policy (CPP) in 2015, and implementation was effective the following year to replace previous guidelines. This was subsequently outlined in the Bank's Delegation of Authority. In 2021, a revised policy was approved that among other things, explicitly recognize consultancy services as specialized advisory support delivered by qualified individuals or consulting firms, prioritizes vendors from member countries, emphasizes greater technology integration, and underscores economic, social, and environmental considerations. This updated policy also broadens the selection methods to include Framework Agreements and Emergency Procurement Procedures, thereby aiming for cost-effectiveness and swift crisis response. However, the revised policy remains unpublished and unimplemented, compelling the Bank to continue operations under the 2015 framework. The evaluation sought to examine the Bank's approach to selecting corporate

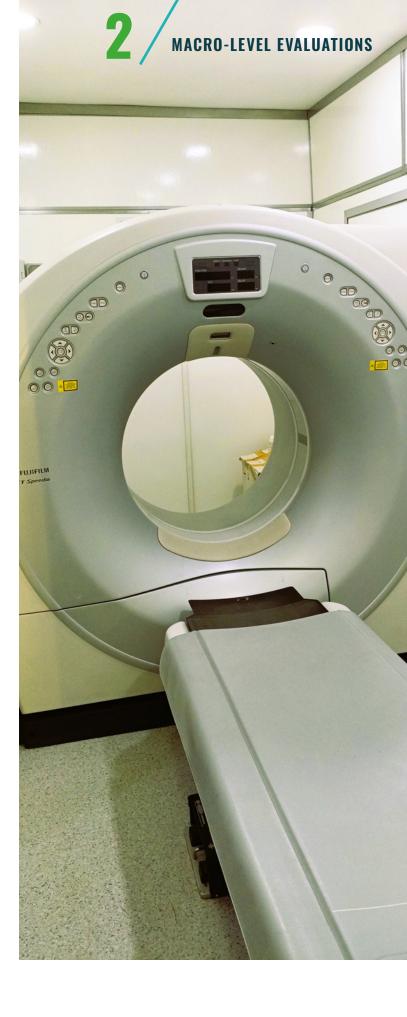
consultants from 2015 to 2022, focusing on time, cost, and human resources. It reviewed key policy documents and procedures across the full consultant selection cycle, incorporating interviews, surveys, and benchmarking with other multilateral development banks (MDBs).

47 / The 2021 revised CPP contain significant improvements on structure, with template framework agreements, enhanced vendor selection methods and better digital integration mechanism. However, the non-publishing has caused weak implementation and therefore the improvements have not been of any significant impact on efficiency and effectiveness in procurement activities that rely on the 2015 CPP. Additionally, IsDB has adopted multiple digital procurement platforms (SAP, JIRA, ARIBA, MS Teams) to enhance transparency and efficiency. However, these platforms are not fully integrated, making the procurement processes cumbersome. The ARIBA registration process, while designed to improve vendor engagement, is overly complex, discouraging participation from consultants. Only 16% of staff find ARIBA user-friendly, while 44% struggle with its complexity. Additionally, real-time procurement data is not easily accessible, reducing efficiency and limiting data-driven decision-making.

48 / The governance framework of the IsDB's CPP aligns with best practices but lacks efficiency in execution. The procurement policies incorporate strong integrity measures, including conflict of interest policies, fraud prevention mechanisms, and compliance checks. However, limited enforcement capacity leads to weak implementation, thereby reducing effectiveness. Additionally, IsDB lacks a dedicated procurement webpage, which restricts accessibility and transparency by failing to systematically disseminate policies, advertise opportunities, or provide training materials.

**49** / In contrast, other MDBs such as AfDB, ADB, and the World Bank have adopted more efficient execution mechanisms. They have higher Delegation of Authority (DoA) approval thresholds, integrated procurement systems, and decentralized decision-making, allowing for faster consultant selection cycles. Furthermore, they provide structured training programs and vendor databases, ensuring greater accessibility and a more user-friendly procurement process.

50 / The Corporate Procurement Division (CPD) of the IsDB is responsible for process oversight, but it is understaffed, with limited capacity-building efforts. The CPD is expected to play a crucial role in managing procurement processes and ensuring compliance, but staffing limitations hinder efficiency. Only one procurement specialist is dedicated to consultant selection, which is insufficient given the volume of procurement activities. Unlike other MDBs that have dedicated teams for consultant procurement, IsDB relies on a generalist approach, which slows down procurement cycles and limits process oversight. Additionally, while IsDB has conducted some training sessions for staff on ARIBA and procurement systems, capacity-building efforts remain limited and unstructured. There are no institutionalized training programs for staff or external consultants, making it difficult for stakeholders to fully understand and efficiently navigate procurement processes.





## KEY LESSONS AND TAKE AWAYS FROM THE MACRO-LEVEL EVALUATIONS

A / The Evaluation of IsDB Group Regional Cooperation and Integration Policy and Strategy

51 / The IsDB Group RCI strategy design lacked integration between its strategic pillars and the results framework, creating a structural disconnect in implementation and monitoring. The RCI results framework organized indicators by IsDB Group entities instead of by the strategy's four pillars. This misalignment meant that performance metrics didn't directly correspond to the strategic pillars they were meant to measure. A more effective approach would be organizing the framework by pillars, with each pillar having specific objectives, outcomes, monitoring indicators with clear baselines and targets, and defined activities. Additionally, the evaluation found no systems in place for regular monitoring of how the RCI Strategy was being implemented, nor was there evidence of tracking progress against the established Results Framework.

**52** / Operational activities under the RCI agenda of the IsDB Group are not fully institutionalized to mainstream RCI in the Group operations. The Regional Integration Section is established and currently acts as the focal point, but it is working under human and financial resource constraints. There is no formal coordination mechanism established to drive and monitor RCI operations of the IsDB Group. Also, no formal responsibility is shared to implement the RCI strategy according to its pillars. Several

rounds of recent organizational restructuring have adversely affected the RCI operations and activities despite the formulation of RCI policy and strategy in 2019.

53 / IsDB Member Countries' awareness of the IsDB Group RCI agenda is limited. The evaluation case studies suggested that MC governments had little or no knowledge of the IsDB Group's RCI policy and strategy, even as they recognized the importance of RCI for deepening economic cooperation and regional integration. There is also a weak buy-in of RCI Policy and Strategy within the IsDB Group itself. Neither IsDB Group Operations Complex including Regional Hubs, and Group entities consider the RCI agenda as a priority, nor is there any operational responsibility provided to them by the RCI strategy itself. Regional Hubs have only a modest level of knowledge of their roles in implementing the RCI strategy and how to collaborate with the Regional Integration Section.

**54** / Expanding partnerships beyond grant projects into RCI public finance projects is critical for maximizing reginal development impact. IsDB successfully cooperates with development partners on RCI grant projects, while similar partnerships for RCI public finance projects remain limited. RCI operations achieved greater effectiveness when supported by co-financing arrangements. The future effectiveness of IsDB Group's RCI operations depends critically on securing adequate co-financing. To optimize resources, the IsDB Group must strategically engage with emerging global and regional initiatives, building meaningful partnerships while ensuring complementarity rather than duplications. Additionally, expanding partnerships with member countries, other Multilateral Development Banks, and the private sector stakeholders will be essential to amplify the impact of RCI initiatives.

## **B** / IsDB Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) Sector Evaluation

55 / Incorporating proper risk assessment, operating costs analysis, and disaster resilience features at the design stage significantly contribute to project sustainability. The Kabala Water Supply Project in Sierra Leone demonstrates how insufficient planning led to major challenges. The installation of a 750 KV power generator resulted in exorbitant operating costs, undermining financial sustainability. Furthermore, the absence of a robust disaster resilience plan led to the destruction of the river intake structure by a flood just three months after completion, rendering the entire system non-functional. Cost-effective solutions like high-lift pumping stations and hybrid energy sources, alongside comprehensive disaster resilience strategies, can mitigate these risks and enhance long-term project sustainability.

**56** / Engaging end-beneficiaries during the project design phase ensures that projects address specific needs and align with the unique requirements of the project location.

In the National Slum Upgrading Project in Indonesia, lack of proper consultation led to the construction of one-room houses instead of the preferred two-room houses. Similarly, in the Kabala Water Supply Project in Sierra Leone, inadequate community consultation resulted in the relocation of the water treatment plant site after implementation had already started, causing delays and additional costs.

7 Project sustainability requires a well-defined exit strategy and strong coordination among stakeholders, including beneficiaries, local governments, and key partners. The National Slum Upgrading Project and the Integrated Farming Project in Indonesia serve as positive examples where effective collaboration and stakeholder involvement contributed to seamless project handovers and long-term sustainability.



58 / A lack of understanding of the Bank's procurement and disbursement rules can lead to significant implementation delays, postponing the realization of project benefits. Projects that did not conduct start-up workshops or training for Executing Agency and Project Implementation Unit staff on IsDB guidelines faced challenges due to weak familiarity with these procedures.

59 / Project-specific feasibility study at the design stage significantly reduces implementation challenges and improve investment efficiency, even when sector/program studies exist. In the National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project in Mozambique, reliance on a general country-wide feasibility study by other development partners, without conducting project-specific assessment led to implementation challenges, such as unsuccessful drilling attempts and inefficient investment analysis between water supply options. This was compounded by weak coordination between government agencies, causing delays and inefficiencies.

**60** / Partnerships with other multilateral development banks and specialized organizations improve resource utilization, expertise sharing, and overall project outcomes. This was demonstrated in Indonesia, where IsDB successfully co-implemented two large projects with the World Bank and IFAD, achieving significant results and impacts.

# **C** / The Corporate Evaluation of the Awqaf Properties Investment Fund (APIF)

61 / For large scale projects of charitable societies, outsourcing operations to specialized operators (e.g. real estate, hospitality, and health service operators) can ensure better project efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. This approach should be implemented before construction is completed to guarantee immediate operationalization. Proper management by specialists with relevant industry expertise significantly improves the performance of APIF-funded properties and ensures they generate the expected returns for beneficiary institutions.

62 / Blending APIF financing with philanthropic grants in funding plans for social projects can ensure repayment of financing obligations while preserving sufficient net revenue for beneficiary organizations to cover their charitable work. This may require the establishment of a minimum "grant element" tailored to each project's specifics. A higher percentage contribution by the beneficiary may also be considered. Among possible solutions, a longer financing period may be considered which may necessitate an amendment of the APIF Investment Policy.

63 / Conducting a "best use of the land" study before embarking on real estate projects, particularly for developing greenfield land, can ensure that projects are designed with optimal use in mind. Selection of consultants with local context knowledge and experience with similar projects can prevent unrealistic cost and revenue estimation. It is crucial to plan in advance to ensure all necessary licenses and permits are obtained beforehand to avoid delays or design changes.

# **64** / Projects in some countries, particularly LDCs, generate limited revenues and are exposed to exchange rate fluctuation risks.

APIF may explore the possibility of financing Waqf projects for LDCs in a different country, where revenues can be higher, more stable, with limited exchange rate risk and potential capital gain of the property. When assessing the success of the APIF, a holistic view that considers its impact on both reviving Waqf practices and achieving socio-economic development is crucial, recognizing the potential for long-term impact beyond immediate social benefits.

# **D** / The Corporate Evaluation of Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD)

**65** / Sustainable and sufficient availability of financial resources is critical for the ISFD to fulfill the demands of Member Countries to support their poverty alleviation efforts.

Resource mobilization remains the most compelling challenge for the ISFD since its operationalization in 2008, having reached only 25% of its target capital by 2022. The volatile net income reflects that capital resources are not generating stable income flows, which limits ISFD's ability to maintain financial sustainability and fulfill its mission effectively.

- 66 / Frequent management changes and an unclear organizational structure have impacted ISFD's performance, leading to delayed strategy development and implementation challenges. Without robust governance oversight and accountability management ownership, and institutional coherence, the ISFD cannot achieve its strategic objectives or fully implement its transformation initiatives.
- 67 / Strong supervision, quality assurance, and continuous follow-up of ISFD projects and programs are critical for success. Successful implementation greatly depends on the institutional capacity of ISFD including available financial resources, commitment, timely disbursement, and qualified and experienced staff. Project preparation facilities are essential for developing quality bankable projects and programs for poverty alleviation, reducing the risk of cancellations at later stages. Both showcasing success stories of poverty alleviation projects and establishing effective monitoring systems can build trust with donors and improve operational performance.
- **68** / Improving ISFD's execution capacity is essential. The fund's limited financial resources are spread across nine sectors, exceeding its mandate of focusing on a maximum of five sectors, and includes 24 flagship programs. By focusing resources on fewer strategic priorities and ensuring proper segregation of duties between ISFD and IsDB business units, the fund could enhance its impact. Accurate, reliable, and readily available portfolio data is also extremely important to properly assess corporate performance and inform strategic decisions.

# **E** / The Evaluation of IsDB's Corporate Consultancy Procurement

- **69** / Low approval thresholds and multilayered processes create bottlenecks in consultant selection. Directors can approve only transactions up to USD 30,000, with all others requiring Vice-President or President approval, resulting in three-month average timelines for individual consultant selection.
- 10 / Insufficient capacity-building support limits staff understanding of procurement processes. Staff assigned corporate procurement tasks learn primarily on the job and receive few specific corporate procurement training opportunities. As a result, their understanding of consultancy procurement processes may not be clear, impacting their ability to comprehend and support procurement needs efficiently.
- 71 / The corporate procurement process, including the selection of consultants, is not fully digitized. Although the Bank uses various systems like SAP, ARIBA, Jira, and MS Teams, these platforms remain poorly integrated, with tedious registration processes and limited data availability impacting both internal workflows and external user experience.
- 72 / Lack of a dedicated procurement website restricts access to opportunities for potential consultants. Unlike comparator MDBs with dedicated procurement websites, IsDB relies on third-party platforms, limiting accessibility to policies, procedures, and business opportunities for both staff and service providers.



#### IMPLEMENTING THE EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

73 / Since 2020, in response to the need for improved implementation of evaluation recommendations, the IsDB President issued Business Directive No. 16. This directive prompted the IEvD to launch **STEER** (Systematic Tracking of the Execution of Evaluation Recommendations), a system designed to address accountability gaps while aligning with the IsDB Independent Evaluation Policy.

74 / STEER Provides the BED with valuable insights in management's implementation of evaluation recommendations through

Management Action Plans (MAPs). This system reinforces IsDB's commitment to accountability while ensuring that evaluation findings effectively inform the organization's decision-making

**75** / From 2022 onward, the system has documented a total of 92 evaluations accompanied by 92 MAPs. These evaluations resulted in 497 recommendations, which were subsequently translated into 687 actions.



# RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION

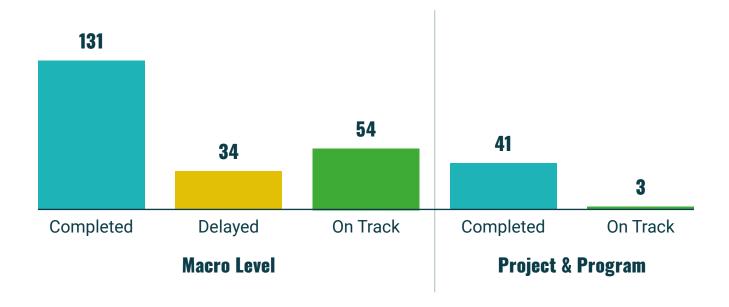
76 / The latest Biannual Status Report on the Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations covered 29 evaluation reports with corresponding MAPs. The distribution of these MAPs across the IsDB Group includes 27 within the Bank (IsDB) (comprising 14 macro level, 13 Project and Program level), 1 from the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD), and 1 from the ISFD.

77 / Out of the 29 MAPs, 16 were completely implemented and 13 still under implementation. Below is the average implementation progress on action level:

| Evaluation Type   | MAPs | Recommendations | Actions | Average of<br>Implementation<br>Progress |
|-------------------|------|-----------------|---------|--|
| Macro Level       | 16   | 167             | 219     | 73%                                      |
| Project & Program | 13   | 44              | 44      | 99%                                      |
| TOTAL             | 29   | 211             | 263     | 78%                                      |

**78** / Regarding the progress of implementing the actions, the macro-level evaluations included 16 MAPs, which comprised 167 recommendations and resulted in 219 actions, reflecting an average implementation progress of 73%. In contrast, the project and program evaluations involved 13 MAPs, which also included 44 recommendations and led to only 44 actions, achieving a remarkable average implementation progress of 99%.

**79** / In terms of action progress status, out of a total of 263 actions, 172 have been completed, 57 are on track for completion, and 34 have exceeded their planned completion dates. The delayed actions primarily related to macro-level evaluations since the MAP is more complex. It requires multiple business units to coordinate their efforts under the leadership of the lead implementing department.





#### **INFLUENCING CHANGE**

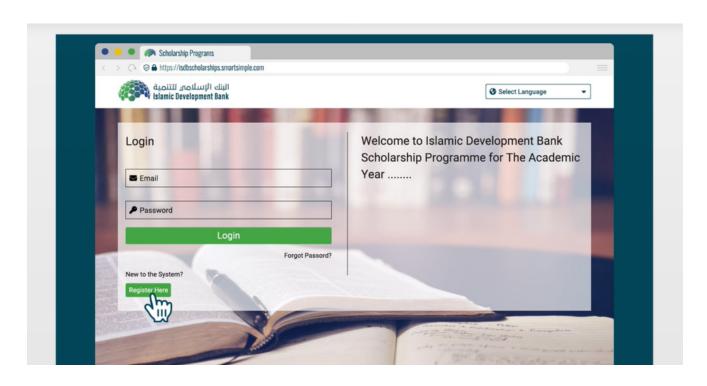
**80** / The Bank has implemented notable reforms throughout 2024, responding to multiple independent evaluation recommendations that called for enhanced operational efficiency and project sustainability.

81 / For example, after the Bank's synthesis report on Project Completion Report (PCR) Validations identified gaps in project assessment methods, the Bank introduced a peer review system and launched training programs to enhance staff expertise in evaluation practices. Additionally, a follow-up mechanism was established to ensure the implementation of PCR recommendations by integrating them into project designs across sectors and countries. To reinforce this, a dedicated section has been added to the Project Appraisal Document template to capture lessons learned and track the implementation of PCR recommendations.

**82** / The Bank's food security initiatives also underwent substantial changes following a

program evaluation. The Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Division is now mandated to ensure alignment between new projects and sector policies, while implementing robust monitoring frameworks to track progress and address challenges in real-time.

83 / IsDB overhauled its scholarship program after a multi-perspective review of its Science, Technology, and Innovation cluster. The bank launched a customized application portal, designed to better match educational opportunities with development needs in member countries and Muslim communities of non-member countries. Furthermore, a structured framework for governance, implementation, and monitoring has been adopted to enhance the program's effectiveness and accountability following a recommendation to develop a Logical Framework and Monitoring Mechanism for the Scholarship Program. An appropriate resource mobilization strategy has also been adopted to fill in the budget gap with view to increasing the programs' effectiveness.



#### IMPLEMENTING THE EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

**84** / Evaluation of Special Assistance Program in India led to inclusion of clauses in project agreements to ensure that a certain percentage of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds receive free or discounted education, promoting inclusivity. The scholarship program has also increased support for civil services coaching centers, ensuring that more students from disadvantaged backgrounds can access quality coaching and improve their chances of success in civil services exams.

**85** / Additionally, following recommendations from the Country Assistance Evaluation for Côte d'Ivoire, active participation in donor coordination fora has improved collaboration

with development partners. This approach has streamlined procurement, reducing delays and enhancing project execution. Following another recommendation, the country operations managers for Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea have engaged with Executing Agencies to develop a communication strategy to improve the visibility and branding of the IsDB Group, particularly during projects design and implementation.

**86** / These examples demonstrate how evaluation recommendations have directly influenced changes in program design, implementation, and monitoring, leading to improved effectiveness, sustainability, and inclusivity of the initiatives.





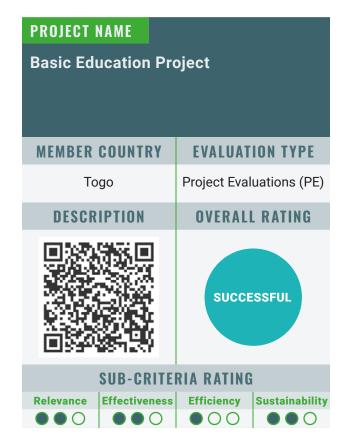


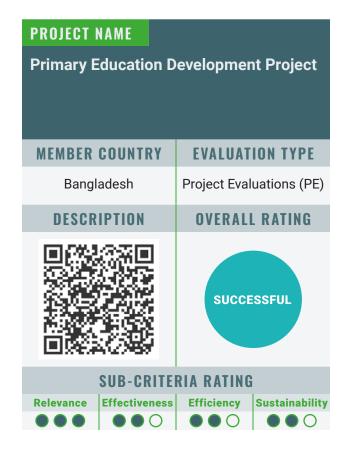
### **APPENDIX 1:** LIST OF PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

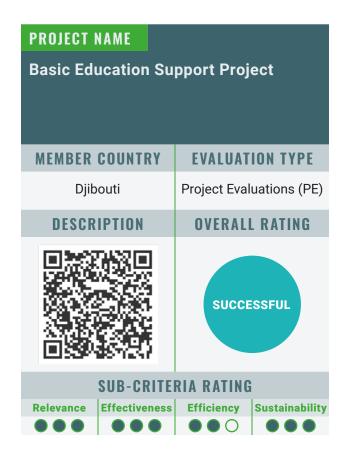


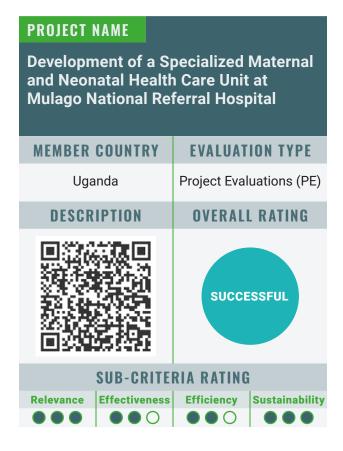


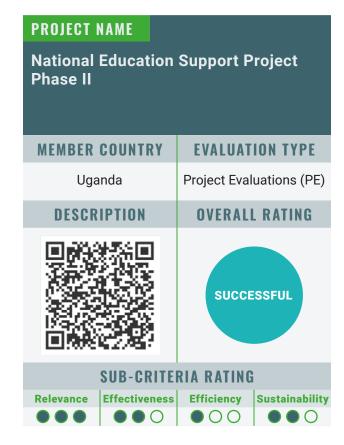


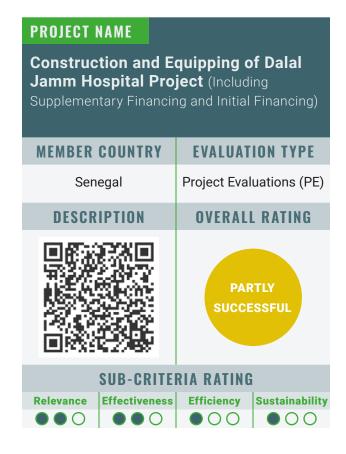


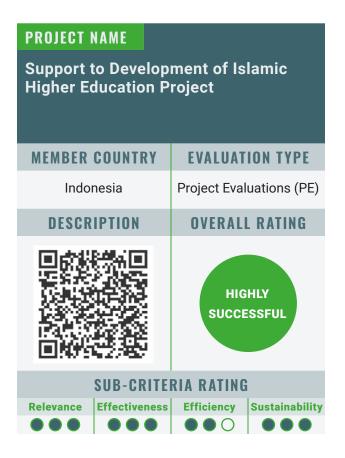




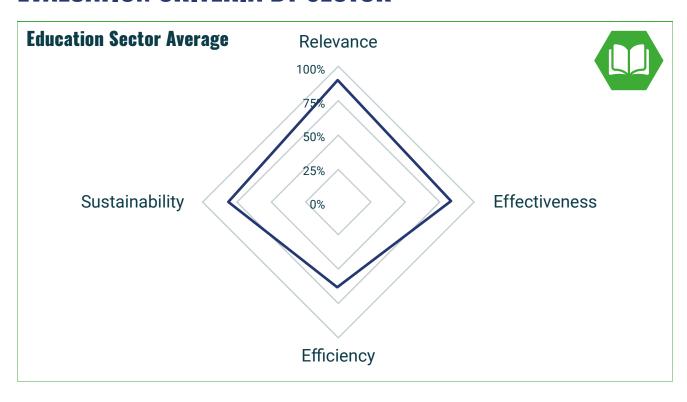


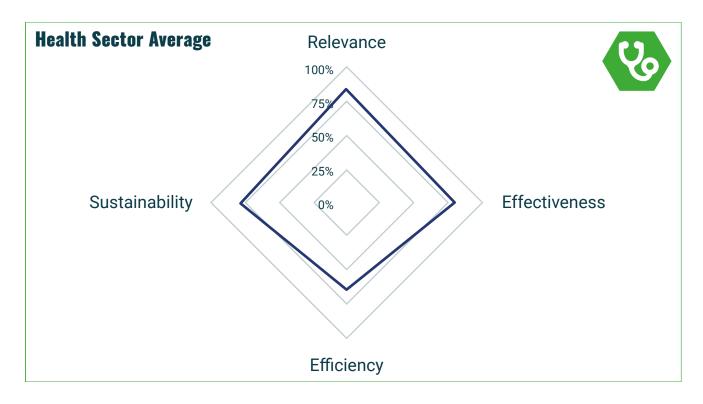


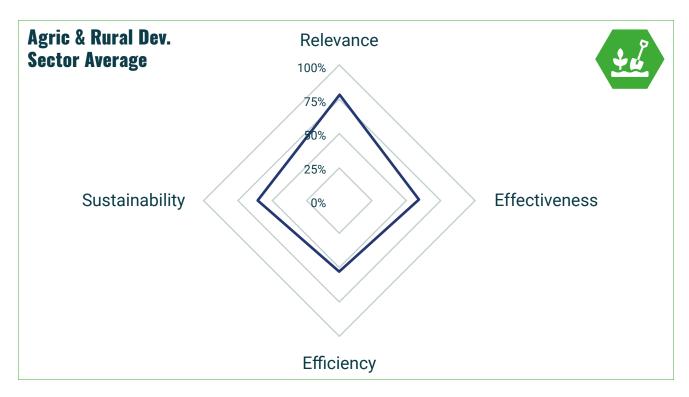




# **APPENDIX 2:** PERFORMANCE ACROSS THE FOUR EVALUATION CRITERIA BY SECTOR







Note: The charts display average performance scores (0-100%) across four criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability) for each sector. The analysis is based on evaluated 17 projects distributed across Education (5 projects) Health (6 projects) and Agriculture & Rural Development (7 projects). These ratings are limited to the small sample of projects evaluated and should not be interpreted as representing the overall performance of IsDB's portfolio.

Source: Islamic Development Bank and Independent Evaluation Department

## **APPENDIX 3:** LIST OF 2024 PCR VALIDATION

**ASSESSMENT SCORES** (Following list of validated PCRs during 2024)

| PROJECT NAME  | COUNTRY       | SECTOR                                 | RELEVANCE          | EFFECTIVENESS       | EFFICIENCY          | SUSTAINABILITY | OVERALL<br>ASSESSMENT |
|---|---------------|--|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Asagi Kalekoy Hydro Electric Power<br>Plant Project - Clean Energy and<br>Energy Infrastructure Program                           | Turkey        | Energy                                 | Highly<br>Relevant | Highly<br>Effective | Highly<br>Efficient | Likely         | Highly<br>Successful  |
| Vocational Literacy Program for<br>Poverty Reduction "VOLIP"  | Tajikistan    | Education                              | Highly<br>Relevant | Effective           | Efficient           | Likely         | Successful            |
| Sustainable Villages Project  | Kyrgyzstan    | Agriculture                            | Partly<br>Relevant | Less<br>Effective   | Efficient           | Likely         | Successful            |
| Development of Four Higher<br>Education Institutions Project  | Indonesia     | Education                              | Highly<br>Relevant | Highly<br>Effective | Efficient           | Likely         | Successful            |
| West Cairo Power Project  | Egypt         | Energy                                 | Relevant           | Highly<br>Effective | Efficient           | Likely         | Successful            |
| Assiut (El-Walidia) Thermal Power<br>Plant Project  | Egypt         | Energy                                 | Relevant           | Effective           | Efficient           | Most Likely    | Successful            |
| Water Supply Project for the Eastern<br>Region  | Côte d'Ivoire | Water                                  | Highly<br>Relevant | Highly<br>Effective | Less<br>Efficient   | Likely         | Successful            |
| Hope Field Hospital for Rohingiya<br>Refugees in Cox Bazar  | Bangladesh    | Health and<br>Other Social<br>Services | Highly<br>Relevant | Highly<br>Effective | Highly<br>Efficient | Likely         | Highly<br>Successful  |
| Upgrading of Millosheve-Mitrovica<br>M2 Main Road (26.7KM) Project  | Kosovo        | Transportation                         | Relevant           | Highly<br>Effective | Efficient           | Likely         | Successful            |
| Kulyab - Kalaikhumb Road Project<br>(Sections A & F)  | Tajikistan    | Transportation                         | Highly<br>Relevant | Effective           | Efficient           | Likely         | Highly<br>Successful  |
| Rural Water Supply & Sanitation<br>Improvement Project  | Kyrgyz        | Water, Sanit.<br>& Urban               | Highly<br>Relevant | Effective           | Efficient           | Likely         | Successful            |
| Support the Development of the<br>Oncology Services Project in the<br>Republic of Uzbekistan                                      | Uzbekistan    | Health and<br>Other Social             | Highly<br>Relevant | Highly<br>Effective | Efficient           | NA             | Highly<br>Successful  |
| Integrated Agricultural Development<br>Project in the Governorates of Kef<br>and Kasserine  | Tunisia       | Agriculture                            | Relevant           | Effective           | Less<br>Efficient   | Likely         | Successful            |
| Rural Water Supply and Sanitation<br>Program in the WAEMU Region, Mali  | Mali          | Water, Sanit.<br>& Urban               | Relevant           | Effective           | Less<br>Efficient   | Less Likely    | Partly<br>Successful  |
| The Program of Controlling the<br>Ebola Epidemic in Guinea, Liberia,<br>Mali, and Sierra Leone, Project in<br>Guinea (KAAP)       | Guinea        | Health And<br>Other Social             | NA                 | NA                  | NA                  | NA             | Successful            |
| The Program of Controlling the<br>Ebola Epidemic in Guinea, Liberia,<br>Mali, and Sierra Leone, Project in<br>Guinea (KAAP)       | Liberia       | Health and<br>Other Social             | NA                 | NA                  | NA                  | NA             | Successful            |
| Early learning, Non-Formal<br>Education, and Vocational<br>Training for Rohingya Children and<br>Adolescents in Bangladesh (KAAP) | Bangladesh    | Education                              | NA                 | NA                  | NA                  | NA             | Highly<br>Successful  |
| Grass-field Participatory Integrated<br>Rural Development Project (GP<br>IRDP)  | Cameroon      | Agriculture                            | NA                 | NA                  | NA                  | NA             | Highly<br>Successful  |
| Bir El Hith – Qartaba Road Project  | Lebanon       | Transportation                         | Highly<br>Relevant | Effective           | Efficient           | Likely         | Successful            |



## **APPENDIX 4: LIST OF MACRO EVALUATIONS**

| NAME  | (CLICK OR SCAN<br>TO READ MORE) |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Evaluation of the Regional Integration Policy and Strategy                        |                                 |
| Corporate Evaluation of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD)        |                                 |
| Corporate Evaluation of Awqaf Property Investment Fund (APIF)                     |                                 |
| Agriculture & Rural Development Sector Evaluation (Policy, Strategy & Operations) |                                 |
| Process Evaluation of Corporate Consultancy Procurement                           |                                 |

## **APPENDIX 5:** LIST OF SELECTED OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

| TITLE   | DOCUMENT LINK     | SCAN QR |
|---|-------------------|---------|
| IsDB's Independent Evaluations Department Participates in 31st EvalNet Meeting                        | <u>click here</u> |         |
| IEvD Leads Engaging Session on Evaluation for<br>Institutional Delivery at Asian Evaluation Week 2024 | <u>click here</u> |         |
| IEvD Highlights the Transformative Impact of Localized Evaluation at Webinar                          | click here        |         |
| Dissemination Workshop: Sharing Evaluation Outcomes and Learning with Stakeholders                    | <u>click here</u> |         |
| IEvD Discusses Learning from Country Assistance<br>Evaluations at ECG Webinar                         | <u>click here</u> |         |
| News Article - IEvD Participates in 2024 ECG Spring<br>Meetings                                       | <u>click here</u> |         |
| 6th IsDB Group Evaluation Symposium 2024 & IEvD Evaluation Learning Week                              | <u>click here</u> |         |
| IsDB Speakers Joined Partners to Shape<br>Country-led Evaluation of the SDGs                          | <u>click here</u> |         |
| IEvD Launches Evaluation of IsDB Group's Women's<br>Empowerment Policy & Youth Development Strategy   | <u>click here</u> |         |







#### **ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT 2024**

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION DEPARTMENT (IEvD)

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