

The background features a vibrant green paper art illustration. At the top, a large, textured green tree stands on a small brown stem. Below it, several butterflies in various shades of green and brown are scattered across a teal-green background. In the lower right, a stylized white building with green windows is partially visible. In the foreground, two figures, a man in a white shirt and blue pants, and a woman in a pink dress, stand on a green, textured hillside. The overall composition is layered and three-dimensional, set against a light beige background.

Evaluating for People and the Planet

IEG Fiscal Year 2023
Annual Report



IEG
INDEPENDENT
EVALUATION GROUP

WORLD BANK GROUP
World Bank • IFC • MIGA

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1818 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20433
Telephone: 202-473-1000
Internet: www.worldbank.org

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EDITING AND PRODUCTION

Amanda O'Brien

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Luisa Ulhoa

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Annual Report

January 2024

Contents

Message from the Vice President and Director-General, Evaluation	1
Fiscal Year 2023 Overview	4
Evaluating around the Planet in Fiscal Year 2023	9
Learning through Evaluation	10
Corporate, Thematic, and Sectoral Evaluations	11
Addressing Gender Inequalities in Countries Affected by Fragility, Conflict, and Violence: An Evaluation of the World Bank Group's Support	18
Country Program Evaluations	23
Project Performance Assessment Reports	25
Validating for Accountability and Learning	27
World Bank Project Validations	27
Private Sector Validations	29
Short-Form Knowledge Sharing	31
Evaluation Insight Notes	31
#WhatWorks Blog	31
What Have We Learned? Podcast	31
Expanding Evaluation Capacity through Collaboration and Learning	33
The Global Evaluation Initiative and Partners	33
Knowledge Sharing with the Private Sector	35
The Core of Evaluation	36
Methods Advisory Function	36
Management Action Record	37
IEG Academy	39
On the Radar	41
About IEG	43

Message from the Vice President and Director-General, Evaluation

With the World Bank adapting to address new challenges and meet new needs, evidence on what is working, why, and for whom will be a vital guide for the way forward. As the new Director-General, Evaluation, I am acutely aware of the important task and confident that the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) is prepared to fulfill it. Looking back at fiscal year (FY)23, IEG clearly continued to innovate as needed to provide World Bank management with timely evidence and recommendations to inform decisions around pressing issues. Escalating crises—including COVID-19; fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV); and rapidly worsening effects from climate change—demand more and faster responses from international development organizations. IEG supported the World Bank as it established the instruments for rapid responses and launched the process of adapting to the new global context with a work program focused on addressing immediate and longer-term needs. This support included products ranging from two early-stage assessments of the COVID-19 response to a series of summary notes prepared to inform the World Bank’s Evolution Roadmap on convening around global issues, the country-based model, and outcome orientation.

With overlapping global challenges and an accelerating climate crisis shrinking timelines, the World Bank is expanding programs and offering more resources to developing countries. The finite supply of these resources means that IEG’s assessments of relevance, efficiency, and efficacy must be completed faster and in a more targeted manner. To this end, we use a variety of instruments with different timelines to meet the needs for accountability in self-evaluations, learn lessons from specific projects, and generate rigorous evaluative evidence about downstream operational impacts and outcomes. For example, our new product—Evaluation Insight Notes (EINs)—synthesizes findings from IEG’s extensive archive of past evaluative work to address knowledge gaps and inform key strategic and operational issues. FY23 EINs covered domestic revenue mobilization, food security, and support of Indigenous peoples.

A core part of IEG's mandate is to validate self-evaluation reports from the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). IEG also evaluates at the project level, and in FY23, we began work on cluster Project Performance Assessment Reports (PPARs) where findings from several PPARs on projects with commonalities are aggregated in a single report. The data from these validations and project-level evaluations feed into larger thematic evaluations and allow IEG to provide evidence-based recommendations and lessons.

For these larger evaluations, IEG remained focused on long-term development challenges with thematic and sector evaluations that provided insights on critical issues, such as climate change, debt, domestic revenue mobilization, and food security. Evaluations assessed and drew lessons from, among other topics, World Bank support for reducing disaster risks from natural hazards, sustainable farms and agribusiness firms, and the World Bank's contributions to and use of the Low-Income Country Debt Sustainability Framework. IEG also collaborated with World Bank staff on Learning Engagements, a structured series of activities aimed at absorbing and applying existing evaluative evidence and knowledge. These collaborations included reviewing evidence with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery to inform its Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning framework; working with the Global Infrastructure team at IFC on a deep dive analysis on climate change projects; and improving World Bank interventions in justice sectors.

It is clear that the achievements of FY23 are part of a longer-term trajectory. The latest external review of IEG, which concluded in October 2022, remarked on the progress in implementing recommendations from the 2015 review to increase the unit's value. The report noted IEG's adaptation of synthesis work to provide rapid lessons on emerging topics, emphasis on learning from evaluation, and increased focus on evaluation capacity development. In addition, the stakeholder engagement survey captured positive views of IEG's alignment with the World Bank's strategic priorities and the quality of its evaluative work. However, the external review identified areas for improvement, especially regarding the private sector. On the basis of the recommendations, we are striving to improve collaboration and mutual learning among IEG, IFC, and MIGA.

The support for monitoring and evaluation capacity development in client countries continued to expand in FY23. The Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) grew to have 14 donor partners and more than 20 associate partners working on implementing and delivering programs. GEI’s Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR) continued to work with governments to improve capacity at the country level. GEI’s network of partners provided their flagship training programs on the fundamentals of evaluation and a variety of professional development opportunities for nearly 3,000 program participants. Support for countries to build the capacities for evidence-informed policies and to monitor progress toward development goals has never been more important as governments navigate concurrent challenges.

In FY23, IEG expanded its dissemination of knowledge on evaluation methods through its Methods Advisory Function’s new series on evaluation methods and broadened its stakeholder reach through the growing GEI network. As the World Bank enters a new era with a new president and a commitment to evolving to meet the needs of developing countries besieged by multiple crises—many exacerbated by climate change—IEG will remain flexible and provide valuable, timely insights based on rigorous evaluations and synthesis of a wealth of existing knowledge.

We have many challenges ahead, but it is a privilege to join IEG as we continue the work of strengthening the relevance and usefulness of IEG for the World Bank and for the evaluation community more broadly.



Fiscal Year 2023 Overview

Deliverables



PROJECT EVALUATIONS AND VALIDATIONS



5 PROJECT PERFORMANCE
ASSESSMENT REPORTS



473 TOTAL
VALIDATIONS



274 IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION
AND RESULTS REPORTS



26 COMPLETION AND LEARNING
REVIEW VALIDATIONS^{a, b}



75 PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT
EVALUATIVE NOTES (IFC)



90 EXPANDED PROJECT
SUPERVISION REPORT
EVALUATIVE NOTES (IFC)



8 PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT
VALIDATION NOTES (MIGA)

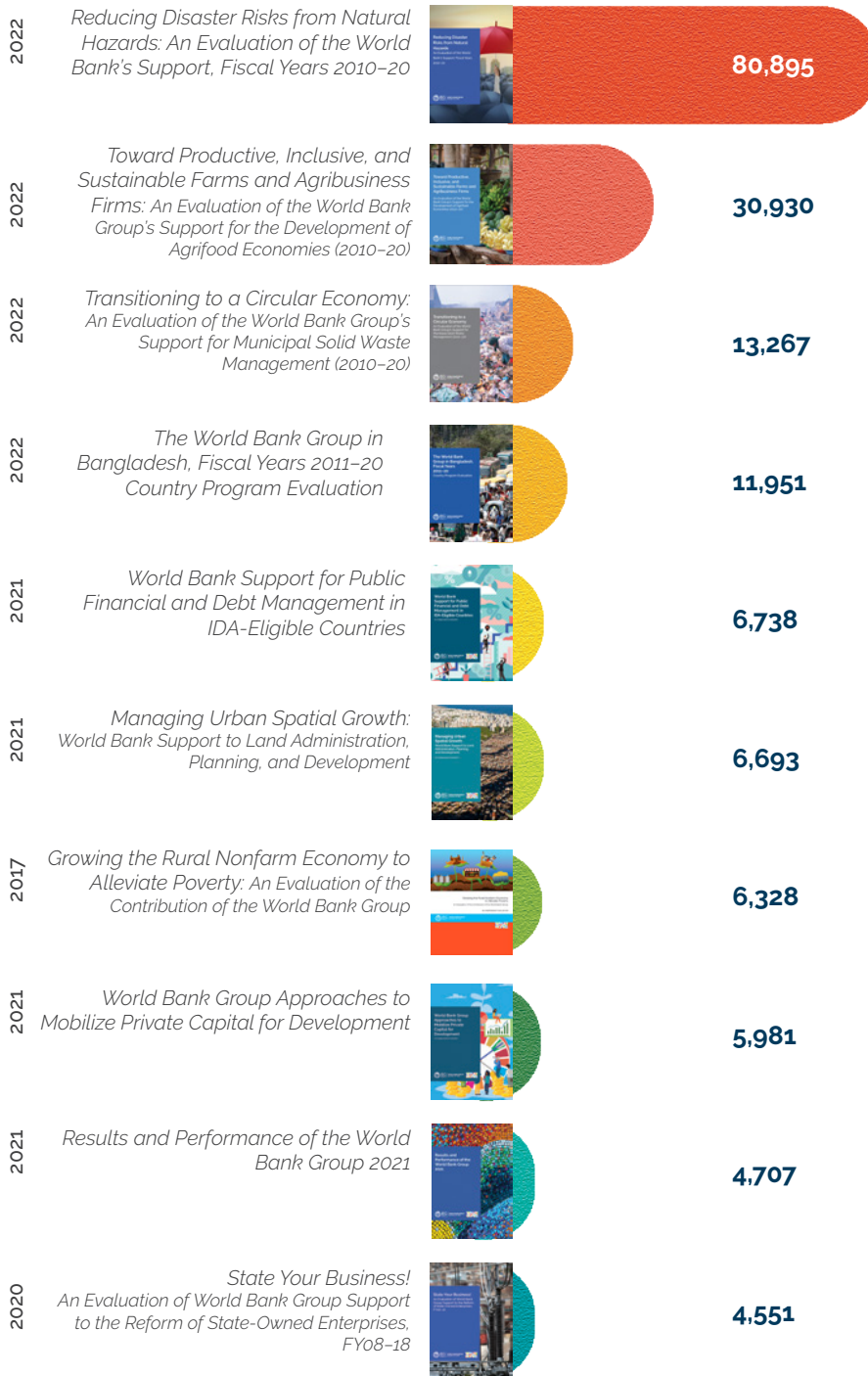
Note: IFC = International Finance Corporation; MIGA = Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency.
a. The name of this product has been changed from Completion and Learning Review Review to Completion and Learning Review Validation (CLR/V) to remove the redundancy in the name. No changes have been made to the substance, format, or process of the report.
b. The Country Engagement Guidance of July 1 2021, moved production of CLR/V to earlier in the Country Partnership Framework preparation cycle, so that the CLR/V may inform the preparation of the Country Partnership Framework. The final CLR/V is delivered to the Region once it is completed and is delivered to the Board of Executive Directors in time for its consideration of the new Country Partnership Framework. Thus, the Independent Evaluation Group reports on both the number of CLR/Vs delivered to the Board and the number of CLR/Vs delivered to the Regions.

Fiscal Year 2023 Learning Engagements

TITLE	WORLD BANK GROUP PARTNER DEPARTMENTS	OUTPUT
Developing a MEL Framework at GFDRR, Part 2	GFDRR	Workshops
How to Improve Bank Group Interventions in Justice and Security Sectors	Governance Global Practice	Report
IFC Infrastructure Sector Highlights (with a deep dive analysis on climate change projects)	IFC Infrastructure industry group	Report

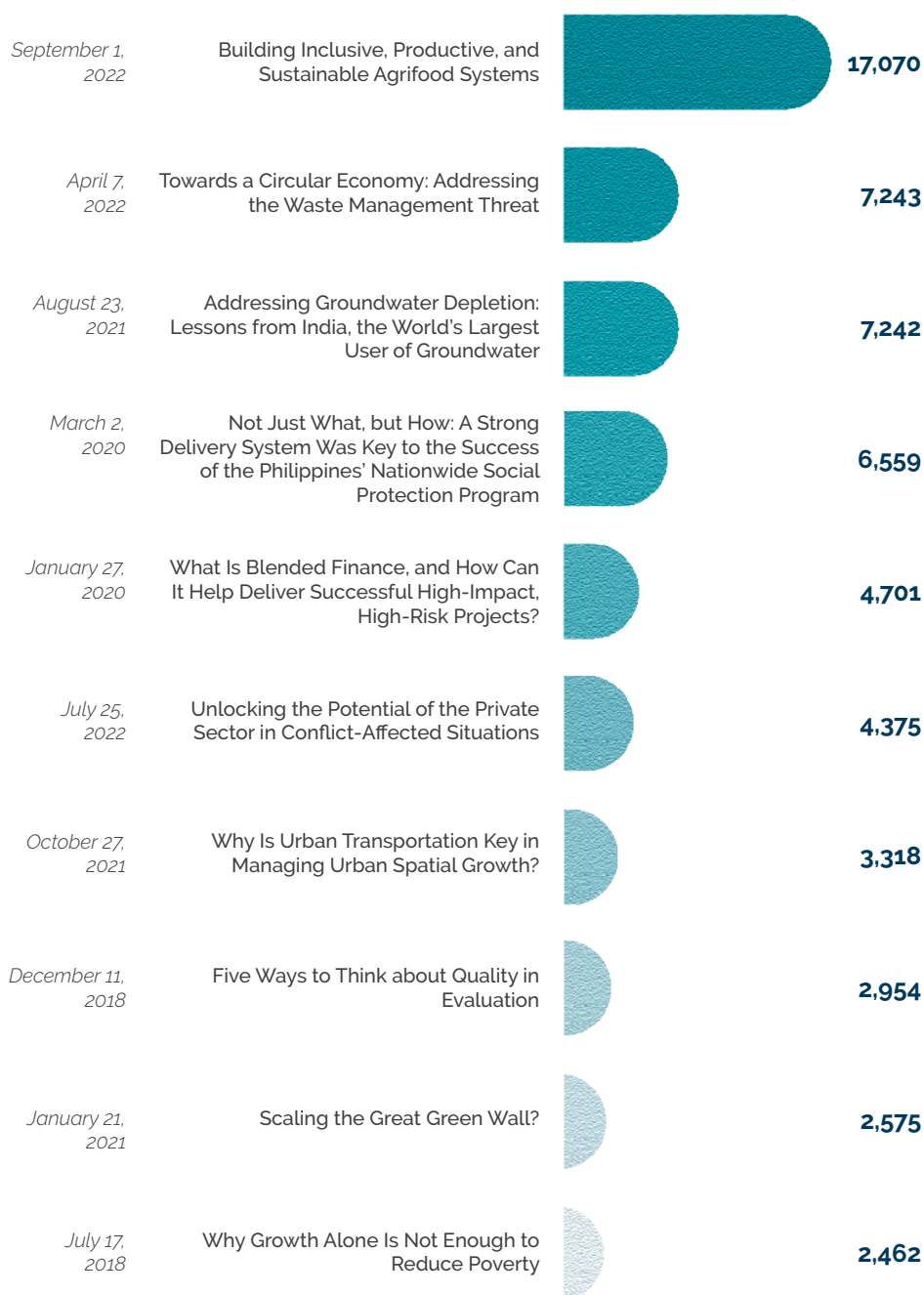
Note: GFDRR = Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery; IFC = International Finance Corporation; MEL = Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning.

Most-Viewed Reports Fiscal Year 2023



Note: FY = fiscal year; IDA = International Development Association.

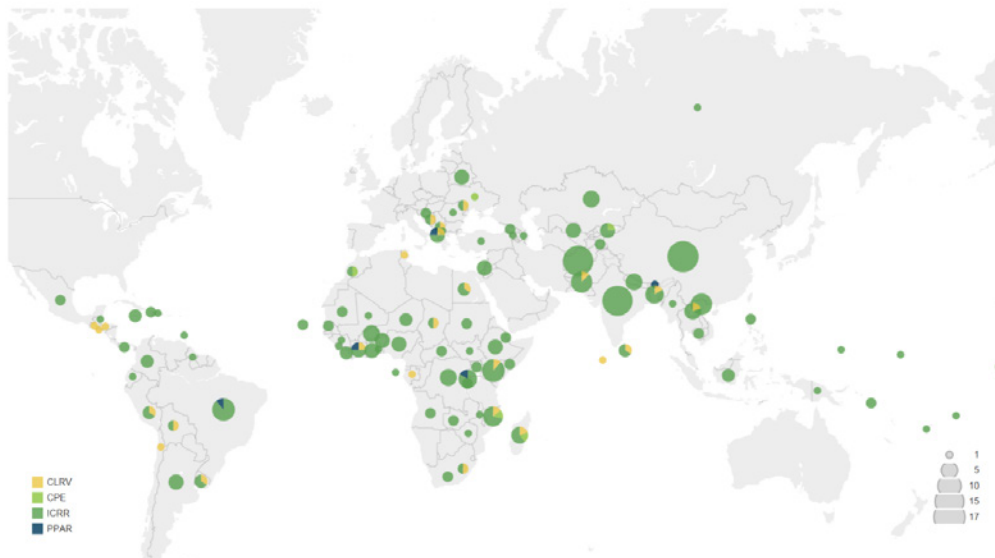
Most-Viewed Blogs Fiscal Year 2023



Evaluating around the Planet in Fiscal Year 2023

The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) validates the self-evaluations of every completed World Bank country program and project, and a sample of completed projects from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). We also evaluate individual projects to find specific lessons that can be applied more broadly. This resulted in hundreds of Completion and Learning Review Validations, Implementation Completion and Results Report Reviews, and Project Performance Assessment Reports in fiscal year 2023. These fundamentally important microproducts become the building blocks of IEG’s macroevaluations. We also took a closer look at how well Country Partnership Frameworks performed in five countries through Country Program Evaluations.

Explore these reports by country, type, or World Bank Region in this interactive map.



Note: CLRV = Completion and Learning Review Validation; CPE = Country Program Evaluation; ICRR = Implementation Completion and Results Report Review; PPAR = Project Performance Assessment Report.

Learning through Evaluation

In fiscal year (FY)23, the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) submitted eight corporate, thematic, or sectoral evaluations; five Country Program Evaluations (CPEs); the 2022 Management Action Record validation; and the Results and Performance of the World Bank Group 2022 to the Committee on Development Effectiveness of the Board of Executive Directors.



Corporate, Thematic, and Sectoral Evaluations

Every year, IEG completes several long-term evaluations to assess the performance of the World Bank Group's institutions and identify lessons for improving operations related to a particular theme, sector, or corporate process. These reports

- » Rely on robust mixed methods designs that usually combine synthetic analyses at the overall portfolio level with in-depth analyses at the country, project, or other levels;
- » Use a range of methodological approaches, such as portfolio analyses, structured literature reviews, surveys, and case study analyses; and
- » Draw on internal and external data sets, internal and external documentation, and interviews with different groups of stakeholders.

Evaluation design, including issues of scope, delimitation, sampling, and other data collection, and analysis issues are discussed in peer-reviewed Approach Papers.

The eight evaluations submitted in FY23 cover a range of themes critical to development. Read about the findings and recommendations and refer to the reports for full details.

The World Bank's Early Support to Addressing COVID-19: Health and Social Response—An Early-Stage Evaluation



Credit: Shutterstock / nelic.

The World Bank delivered a response of unprecedented scale and speed in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. In *The World Bank's Early Support to Addressing COVID-19: Health and Social Response—An Early-Stage Evaluation*, IEG assesses how well the World Bank responded to the immediate health threat and how well it focused on protecting vulnerable groups against human capital losses. The evaluation recommends that, to ensure stronger future crisis preparedness, the World Bank use crisis recovery efforts to strengthen the resilience of essential health and education services to protect human capital, apply a gender equality lens to health and social response actions across sectors, help countries strengthen regional cooperation and response capacities for public health preparedness, and build on the COVID-19 experience to strengthen the World Bank's internal preparedness to respond in future emergencies. Because the response is ongoing, the evaluation does not assess effectiveness but considers early results and pathways that are expected to lead to outcomes.

To learn more, check out the blog, "[What the COVID-19 Response Reveals about the Future of Public Health Surveillance Systems: The Good, the Not Yet Known and the Absent](#)"; listen to the podcast, "[Lessons for Future Crises from the World Bank Group's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)"; and read the [report](#).

Learning from the World Bank Group's Response to the Economic Implications of COVID-19

In January 2023, the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) published an early-stage evaluation of the Bank Group's support to addressing the economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic—*The World Bank Group's Early Support to Addressing the COVID-19 Economic Response: April 2020–June 2021*. The relevant recommendations included in the report focused on strengthening the role of the World Bank as a crisis responder. This led to a joint dissemination and learning event in June 2023 with the World Bank's Macroeconomics, Trade, and Investment Global Practice and with the Independent Evaluation Office of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to discuss lessons learned, synergies, and a collaborative way forward.

This event highlighted the similarities between the findings and recommendations of both IMF and IEG evaluations, including the need to prepare for future crises, for example, through a crisis response tool kit or playbook. The IMF team acknowledged the influence of the IEG evaluation recommendations as they drafted their own.

This evaluation and the subsequent learning event showed that collaboration between the Bank Group and IMF will be essential for effective mitigation of the impact of future crises, particularly on vulnerable people.



Carmen Nonay

Director
Finance, Private Sector,
Infrastructure, and Sustainable
Development Department



Marialisa Motta

Manager
Financial, Private Sector,
Infrastructure, and Sustainable
Development Evaluations Unit

World Bank Group Support to Demand-Side Energy Efficiency

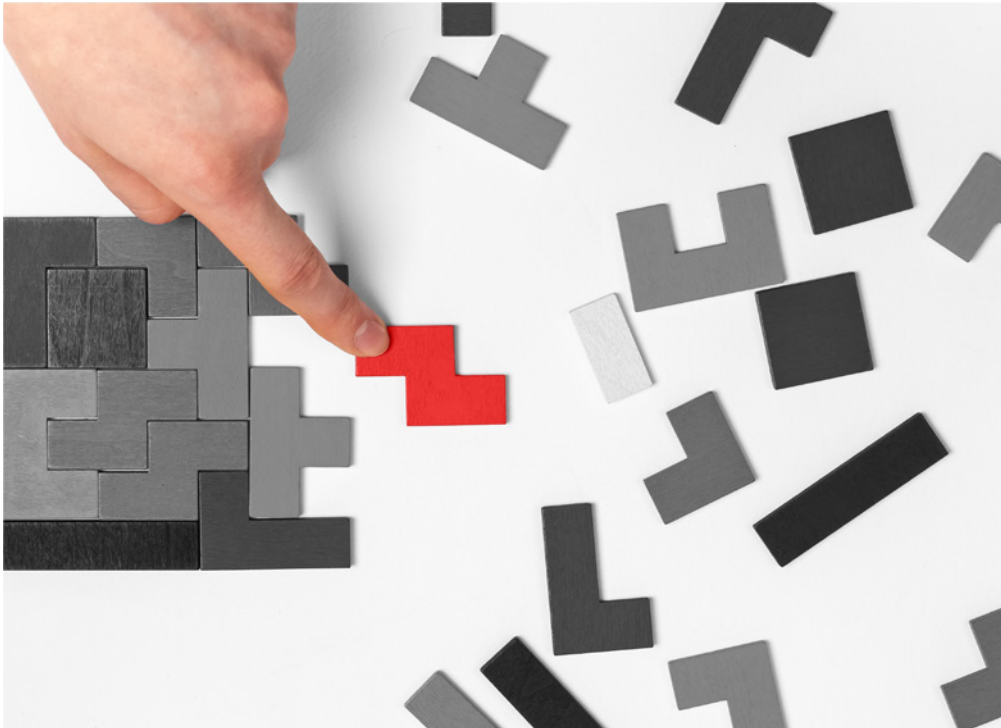


Credit: Shutterstock / alphspirit.it.

The World Bank’s Climate Change Action Plan recognizes energy efficiency as one of the most cost-effective ways to combat climate change and to support countries’ aims of achieving net-zero carbon dioxide emissions through decarbonization. The *World Bank Group Support to Demand-Side Energy Efficiency* evaluation assesses the effectiveness and coherence of the World Bank’s support to clients on demand-side energy efficiency projects and the opportunities to scale them up. The evaluation recommends intensifying decarbonization support to middle-income countries, developing sector-specific approaches in lower-middle-income countries, incorporating reduction of indirect emissions in project design, and helping clients develop innovative approaches that adopt and adapt digital and financial solutions from developed countries.

To learn more, check out the blog, [“Untapped Potential for Decarbonization: Scaling Up Energy Efficiency”](#); listen to the podcast, [“Boosting Energy Efficiency to Power a Green Future”](#); and read the [report](#).

International Finance Corporation Additionality in Middle-Income Countries



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Additionality is the unique contribution of a multilateral bank to a private investment project that is not offered by commercial sources of finance. The goal is for the multilateral development bank to add value without crowding out private sector activity. This is particularly important in middle-income countries because their financial markets are more developed and private investment far exceeds official development assistance. The *International Finance Corporation Additionality in Middle-Income Countries* evaluation focuses on additionality of International Finance Corporation (IFC) interventions at the project level but also considers whether additionality can occur beyond this, at the country and sector levels. IFC is generally successful at realizing financial additionality (such as through features of the financing structure) but is less successful at delivering nonfinancial additionality (such as deployment of knowledge and standards). The evaluation recommends that IFC address gaps in internal systems related to monitoring, supervision, and reporting of additionality; bring its strategy for additionality and its

pattern of activity in middle-income countries into closer alignment; and incorporate its additionality approach into its country strategies and sector deep dives.

To learn more, check out the blog, [“Exploring How and Why the International Finance Corporation Investment Projects Make a Unique Contribution in Middle-Income Countries”](#); listen to the podcast, [“Additionality in the Private Sector and the Experience of the International Finance Corporation”](#); and read the [report](#).

The World Bank’s Role in and Use of the Low-Income Country Debt Sustainability Framework



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The joint World Bank–International Monetary Fund Low-Income Country Debt Sustainability Framework (LIC-DSF), introduced in 2005 and most recently updated in 2017, has been a cornerstone of debt sustainability analysis in countries eligible for International Development Association lending. *The World Bank’s Role in and Use of the Low-Income Country Debt Sustainability Framework* evaluation assesses the World Bank’s inputs into the LIC-DSF and how the World Bank uses LIC-DSF outputs to inform various corporate and country-level decisions. The evaluation recommends clarifying expectations of the World Bank in taking the lead on long-term growth

framework for granting new tax exemptions, and provision of clearer guidance on choosing results indicators to measure the impact of support for domestic revenue mobilization.

To learn more, check out the blog, “[Why Is It So Hard to Raise Taxes in Developing Economies? Lessons from World Bank Experience with Domestic Revenue Mobilization](#)”; access the “[Evaluation Insight Note: Domestic Revenue Mobilization](#)”; listen to the two-part podcast series, “Taxes, the Social Contract, and Financing Development” ([Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)); and read the [report](#).

Addressing Gender Inequalities in Countries Affected by Fragility, Conflict, and Violence: An Evaluation of the World Bank Group’s Support



Credit: Adapted from Shutterstock / FerroRubini.

Conflict and fragility increase the exposure of women and girls to gender-based violence and make it more difficult for them to access social services, including sexual and reproductive health services. Fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) also exacerbate their vulnerability to poverty. *Addressing Gender Inequalities in Countries Affected by Fragility, Conflict, and Violence: An Evaluation of the World Bank Group’s Support* analyzes the factors that enable and constrain meaningful and lasting results in addressing gender inequalities in FCV contexts. The evaluation recommends

that the Bank Group transition from a project-centric approach to a country engagement approach in FCV countries, which can enable the systemic changes that are needed to address gender inequalities; support long-term, integrated, and multisectoral interventions; and simultaneously meet immediate humanitarian needs and longer-term development needs. This would require the Bank Group to strengthen its strategic focus on gender inequalities and mobilize resources at a level commensurate with the Bank Group's stated commitments to the gender agenda in FCV contexts.

Financing Disaster Risk Reduction at Scale to Support Climate Action

Disasters caused by natural hazards increasingly threaten the lives and livelihoods of the world's poor and disaster-vulnerable populations. Climate change is augmenting the risks of disasters and exacerbating their impacts by contributing to more destructive droughts, floods, and storms. *Reducing Disaster Risks from Natural Hazards: An Evaluation of the World Bank's Support, Fiscal Years 2010–20* is the latest report in a series of evaluations by the Independent Evaluation Group designed to share knowledge on what works to help reduce risk to shocks and stresses and to adapt to the negative effects of climate. Discussed at the 2023 Annual Meetings and at the Innovate4Climate 2023 conference in Bilbao, the Independent Evaluation Group's evaluation demonstrated how the World Bank's support for synergistic pillars of engagement, including hazard identification, resilient infrastructure, early-warning and preparedness activities, and financial protection can reduce hazard and exposure risks while emphasizing the need for enhanced metrics. Since the report's launch, the World Bank has begun to address some identified country coverage gaps, and with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, it has generated and shared lessons on best practices for operating in disaster risk reduction–fragility, conflict, and violence nexus situations and for promoting more inclusive disaster risk reduction approaches.



Lauren Kelly

Lead Evaluation Officer
Finance, Private Sector, Infrastructure,
and Sustainable Development
Evaluations Unit



Stephen Hutton

Senior Evaluation Officer
Infrastructure and Sustainable
Development Project Evaluations Unit

Financial Inclusion: Lessons from World Bank Group Experience, Fiscal Years 2014–22

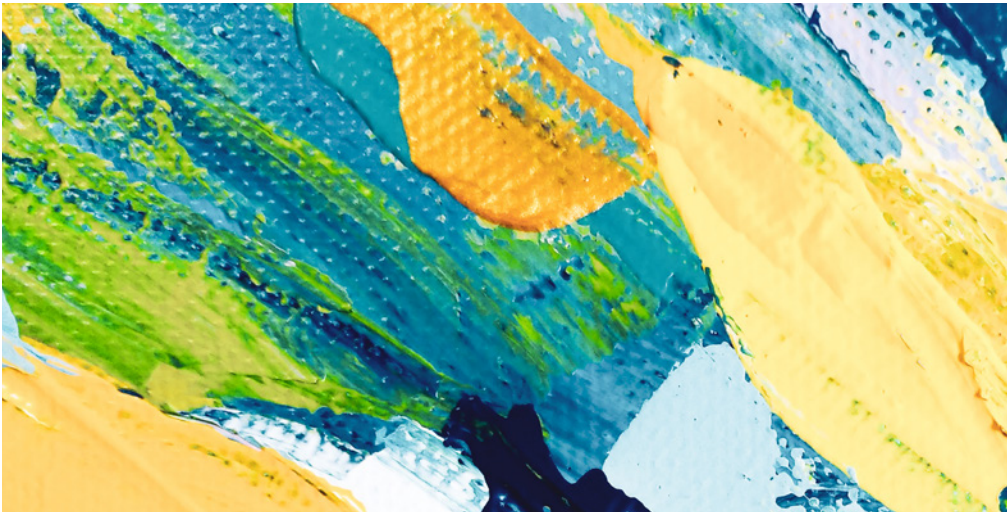


Credit: Shutterstock / PhotoBankIndia.

Financial inclusion encompasses financial access—owning an account—and the use of financial services by individuals and firms. Globally, both of these remain major challenges for microenterprises, poor households, women, and other excluded groups. The Financial Inclusion: Lessons from World Bank Group Experience, Fiscal Years 2014–22 evaluation includes a retrospective look at the drive for universal financial access and examines progress on and challenges for Bank Group support for women’s access to financial services, digital financial services, and COVID-19 response. The evaluation recommends that the World Bank and IFC further encourage account use by underserved groups, design and implement more comprehensive approaches that address constraints in the enabling environment for digital financial services to reach underserved and excluded groups, and collect outcome data across a variety of such groups.

To learn more, check out the blog, “Can the World Bank Shed More Light on the Outcomes of Its Support for Financial Inclusion?” and read the report.

Results and Performance of the World Bank Group



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Results and Performance of the World Bank Group 2022 (also known as *RAP 2022*)—IEG’s annual review of the Bank Group’s performance—analyzed the achievement of project and program objectives in FY22 through validated ratings. Analysis of effectiveness at the country program level found an overall favorable trend. However, that trend was tempered by the following findings: (i) the Country Partnership Frameworks (CPFs) and their results frameworks relied overwhelmingly on the World Bank lending portfolio, and they insufficiently integrated and leveraged advisory services and analytics and the support provided by IFC and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency; (ii) the CPFs did not always adapt sufficiently and quickly enough to changes in context, such as when government commitment or Bank Group priorities changed, implementation capacity was weaker than expected, or planned lending failed to materialize; and (iii) a historical lack of advisory services and analytics monitoring raises questions about the Bank Group’s ambitions to be a “Knowledge Bank” and its ability to use advisory services and analytics strategically to improve country-level impact. *RAP 2022* offers suggestions for continued growth, including enhancing the effectiveness of Bank Group support at the country program level, strengthening risk identification and mitigation, and monitoring the use and influence of advisory services and analytics.

To learn more, check out the blog, “[World Bank—a ‘Knowledge Bank’ or a ‘Report Bank’?](#)” and read the [report](#).

Country Program Evaluations

Country Program Evaluations (CPEs) are long-term evaluations that look at how well the Bank Group achieved its objectives in a specific country over a period of up to 10 years. CPEs use similar methods as IEG’s thematic, sector, and corporate evaluations. CPEs

- » Assess Bank Group performance primarily on the basis of contributory actions directly controlled by the Bank Group;
- » Evaluate the relevance of each main objective, the relevance of the Bank Group’s strategy toward meeting the objective (including the balance between lending and nonlending instruments), the efficacy with which the strategy was implemented, and the results achieved; and
- » Determine the degree of country ownership of international development priorities, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, and Bank Group corporate advocacy priorities, such as safeguards.

In FY23, IEG submitted CPEs for the Kyrgyz Republic, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, and Ukraine.



Credits: Adobe Stock / pikoso.kz (background); Adapted from shutterstock / Photoestetica (top left) ; Adobe Stock / maksym (top right); shutterstock/sunsinger (bottom left); shutterstock / Yury Birukov (bottom right).

Mission to Mozambique

In July 2023, the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) disseminated *The World Bank Group in Mozambique, Fiscal Years 2008–21: Country Program Evaluation*. This was IEG's first in-person Country Program Evaluation (CPE) dissemination since the lifting of COVID-19 travel restrictions.

This effort included a public event cohosted by the International Growth Centre in Maputo. About 100 people attended in person, and 75 more connected virtually. The event garnered substantial media attention, especially because of the participation of the vice minister of finance. Coinciding with this, local media reported on the extradition of the former minister of finance from South Africa to the United States over the 2016 "hidden debt" scandal, a matter addressed in the CPE's review of World Bank support for public financial and debt management.

The CPE revealed that the World Bank support for public financial and debt management primarily focused on technical and institutional capacity, neglecting the underlying political economy and associated risks. After the hidden debt scandal, the World Bank adopted a stronger governance approach, emphasizing robust ex ante controls and borrowing limits for debt issuance. This led to a crucial lesson: "In contexts characterized by corruption and state institutions being run for the benefit of high-status groups, technical solutions to public financial and debt management are unlikely to achieve desired results unless governance constraints are also confronted" (*The World Bank Group in Mozambique, Fiscal Years 2008–21*; 86). This lesson remains relevant for future World Bank engagements in Mozambique and countries facing similar development challenges.

The dissemination also included presentations of the CPE findings and lessons to the Eduardo Mondlane University students and faculty, a session with development partners at the World Bank's country office, and a session with World Bank country office staff.



Eduardo Maldonado

Evaluation Officer
Corporate and Human
Development Unit



Giuseppe Iarossi

Senior Economist
Economic Management and
Country Programs Unit

Project Performance Assessment Reports

At the project level, IEG conducts Project Performance Assessment Reports (PPARs) for approximately 20 percent of the World Bank’s project portfolio based on the review of self-evaluation reports—Implementation Completion and Results Reports (ICRs)—prepared by World Bank staff. PPARs

- » Are an independent field-based project evaluation and may be conducted at any point after a self-evaluation (ICR) has been completed;
- » Rely on a mixed methods approach, including literature reviews, portfolio analyses, and a country mission involving site visits and semistructured interviews with different stakeholders; and
- » Assess projects to identify lessons from experience, ensure the integrity of the World Bank’s self-evaluation process, and verify that the World Bank’s work is producing the expected results.

In FY23, IEG submitted PPARs on projects in Albania, Bhutan, Brazil, Côte d’Ivoire, and Rwanda.

The Albania Competitiveness Development Policy Loan (P155605) was designed to increase Albania’s competitiveness by improving the investment policy framework, which would facilitate business practices and trade. IEG gleaned many lessons from its evaluation, including that prior actions must address the key binding constraints to achieving the development policy loan’s objective, that IFC must determine at implementation of reforms that the client is fully committed, and that responsibility for particular data needs to be clear from the beginning.

The Sustainable Production in Areas Previously Converted to Agricultural Use (P143184) project in Brazil focused on the Cerrado biome, a savanna-forest mosaic located in central Brazil. The project sought to shed light on the best way to provide private landholders on midsize farms with the knowledge and skills needed to adopt low-carbon technologies. IEG’s evaluation offers five lessons, including that agencies delivering training and technical assistance need to have a strong decentralized presence and well-established outreach to producers, that farmers persuaded of the

profitability of adopting improved farming practices are more likely to pay for technical assistance, and that technology transfer depends on effective collaboration between research and extension agencies.

The First and Second Development Policy Credits for Fiscal Sustainability and Investment Climate (P147806 and P157469) in Bhutan aimed to promote fiscal discipline, improve access to finance for enterprises, and improve the climate for business entry and investment. IEG's assessment determined three lessons: development policy credits should be more selective and focus on fewer and better-sequenced reforms, development policy credits in Bhutan need to assess technical capacity and implementation risks more thoroughly, and coordination among ministries and agencies needs to be encouraged.

The Agriculture Sector Support Project (P119308) in Côte d'Ivoire aimed to support government reforms to achieve a more competitive, sustainable, and private sector-led cash crop sector and to ensure sustained increases in producers' incomes. Lessons from IEG's assessment include that project relevance and efficacy are enhanced by aligning projects with national strategies, that projects with short timelines need to have realistic goals, and that an array of productivity enhancement interventions can overcome many challenges.

The Transformation of Agriculture Sector Program Phase 3 Program-for-Results (PforR; P148927) in Rwanda supported the government in implementing the agricultural transformation program. The third phase aimed to enhance food security and nutrition to help reduce poverty and increase inclusive economic growth. IEG's evaluation of the PforR offered three lessons: PforR projects should start with mature and implementation-ready activities, stakeholders should internalize the added value of PforRs for incentivizing institutional reforms, and gaps in capacity and eligibility to request and execute budgets need to be addressed at the beginning.

Validating for Accountability and Learning

The majority of microproducts produced by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) are validations of self-evaluations performed by specific types of teams throughout the Bank Group. These documents critically assess the evidence provided in the self-evaluations, its quality, and the attribution of results to the activities or actions supported by the project under review. They provide a systematic way for IEG to contribute to learning and accountability.

World Bank Project Validations

IEG validates the self-evaluations of every completed World Bank country program and project. Check out the interactive map in chapter 3 for a visual of where we've covered projects and links to validations for each country.

Completion and Learning Review Validations

At the completion of each Country Partnership Framework, the Bank Group team prepares a Completion and Learning Review (CLR), which is a critical input in the design and implementation of the next Country Partnership Framework. IEG independently validates and rates 100 percent of CLRs, with each Completion and Learning Review Validation (CLRv) completed in 45 days. In fiscal year (FY)23, IEG completed 26 CLRvs. CLRvs

- » Are an independent, desk-based review of the CLR;
- » Use a shared methodology with the Bank Group to assess what was achieved in terms of the stated objectives, how well the Bank Group designed and implemented the program, and how well the program is aligned with the Bank Group corporate strategy; and
- » Provide an independent rating on the Country Partnership Framework's development outcomes and the Bank Group's performance.

Building Relationships between IEG and Country Teams through Upstream Reviews

Since early 2020, the Completion and Learning Review Validation (CLR) team has focused on developing a relationship with World Bank country teams completing Completion and Learning Review (CLRs) to improve both the quality of the CLRs that the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) receives for validation and the quality of the overall engagement between country teams and IEG during the CLR process. The approach involves three aspects: (i) IEG's participation in CLR training sessions offered through Operations Policy and Country Services; (ii) consultations with the country team to fill gaps in data (if any) or seek clarification from the country team once a CLR is submitted to IEG; and (iii) upstream reviews.

An upstream review identifies gaps and weaknesses that can be addressed to improve the quality of the CLR, including information gaps that affect IEG's assessment of the extent to which Country Partnership Framework objectives have been achieved (which determine the CLR's development outcome rating) and IEG's assessment of World Bank Group performance (which the CLR also rates). For example, the results framework indicators might not be sufficient to measure whether the objective was achieved, or the discussion in the CLR might not fully explain the results chain of how Bank Group support led to the identified outcomes. Upstream reviews improve the quality of the CLR and thus the basis for identifying lessons for the next Country Partnership Framework. In fiscal year 2023, the Economic Management and Country Programs Unit submitted 26 CLRVs to the Board of Executive Directors and completed 13 upstream reviews.



Melissa Metz

Senior Economist
Economic Management and
Country Programs Unit

Implementation Completion and Results Report Reviews

For each World Bank project, the Region completes an Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR), which provides a complete and systematic account of operation performance and results at the project level. IEG validates 100 percent of these self-evaluations using the Implementation Completion and Results Report Reviews (ICRRs). In FY23, IEG completed 274 ICRRs. ICRRs

- » Are independent, desk-based, critical validations of the evidence, content, narrative, and ratings included in the ICR;
- » Use evidence from the ICR and an interview with the last task team leader to rate the project using the same evaluation criteria as the World Bank project teams; and
- » Assess the quality of the ICR's self-evaluation using the quality of evidence, quality of analysis, extent to which lessons are based on evidence and analysis, the ICR's results orientation, internal consistency, consistency with ICR guidelines, and conciseness.

Private Sector Validations

IEG performs validations of International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) self-evaluations. Because they contain proprietary information, they are not publicly disclosed.

Expanded Project Supervision Report Evaluation Notes

For IFC investment projects, IFC completes Expanded Project Supervision Reports (XPSRs) for about 40 percent of active projects that were approved by the Board of Executive Directors five years earlier. IEG independently validates these using XPSR Evaluative Notes. In FY23, IEG completed 90 XPSR Evaluative Notes. XPSR Evaluative Notes

- » Follow XPSR guidelines, which provide the evaluation framework and performance rating criteria;

- » Use an objective-based and benchmark-based evaluation system and performance ratings; and
- » Assess development outcome, IFC additionality, IFC investment outcome, and IFC's work quality, as well as the sustainability of development and IFC investment outcomes in the longer run.

Project Completion Report Evaluative Notes

For IFC advisory projects, IFC completes a Project Completion Report (PCR). IEG independently validates about 50 percent of these through PCR Evaluative Notes. In FY23, IEG completed 75 PCR Evaluative Notes. PCR Evaluative Notes

- » Follow PCR guidelines, which provide evaluation frameworks and performance rating criteria;
- » Use an objective-based methodology that establishes minimum thresholds for rating and assessing project effectiveness; and
- » Assess development effectiveness, IFC's role and contribution, and IFC's work quality, as well as the sustainability of results in the longer run.

Project Evaluation Report Validation Notes

For all MIGA guarantee projects that have reached early operating maturity, MIGA prepares a Project Evaluation Report (PER) that IEG independently validates through a PER Validation Note. In FY23, IEG completed eight PER Validation Notes. PER Validation Notes

- » Follow PER guidelines, which provide the evaluation framework and performance rating criteria;
- » Use an objective-based and benchmark-based evaluation system and performance ratings; and
- » Assess development outcome, MIGA's role and contribution, and MIGA's work quality.

Short-Form Knowledge Sharing

Evaluation Insight Notes

Evaluation Insight Notes (EINs) are syntheses that generate new insights from existing evidence to address knowledge gaps and contribute to enhanced operational learning. In fiscal year (FY)23, the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) published four EINs.

EINs systematically organize evidence from disparate IEG evaluations, validations, and other work and can be supplemented by additional existing studies and background papers.

#WhatWorks Blog

IEG's [#WhatWorks](#) blogs provide a space for evaluators and economists to dive more deeply into the issues that our evaluations cover. IEG published 28 blogs in FY23, with several translated into languages such as Spanish, French, and Ukrainian. Topics included agrifood systems, unlocking the potential of private sector investments, and COVID-19 health and economic responses. The two most-read FY23 blogs are "[Building Inclusive, Productive, and Sustainable Agrifood Systems](#)" and "[Towards a Circular Economy: Addressing the Waste Management Threat](#)."

What Have We Learned? Podcast

Each episode of [What Have We Learned?](#) brings together evaluators, thought leaders, and practitioners to discuss development effectiveness issues. In its second season, episodes discussed tackling plastic waste, shifting paradigms in disaster risk reduction, and boosting energy efficiency, among other topics.

Synthesizing Information to Produce New Insights

In fiscal year 2023, the Independent Evaluation Group published four Evaluation Insight Notes (EINs) that draw evidence from existing evaluations and validations through evaluation synthesis approaches. An EIN generates new insights from existing evidence to address knowledge gaps and contribute to enhanced operational learning. In an EIN, the team moves beyond summarizing to synthesizing, piecing together evidence in new ways to identify new insights.

In the first published EIN on transport decarbonization, we found that the World Bank can do more to exploit opportunities for decarbonization because its approach has, until recently, been timid against the needed contribution to the World Bank Group Climate Change Action Plan. In our EIN on domestic revenue mobilization, we found that promoting and sustaining reforms has been challenging. Across the six cases synthesized, project objectives were relevant to country needs, yet reforms were often not sustained past project closing. In the EIN on support to Indigenous peoples, we found that interventions were enhanced through ethnographic studies, employing members of Indigenous communities to help deliver services, adapting the approach to supply services in remote settings, and the provision of targeted financing assistance. The EIN on integrating resilience into food security operations found that emergency operations designed to address acute crises can, and increasingly do, include resilience features and that closed projects with resilience features achieved higher outcome ratings.



Stephen Porter

Senior Evaluation Officer
Corporate and Human
Development Unit

Expanding Evaluation Capacity through Collaboration and Learning

The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) is a leader in the evaluation ecosystem. Much of this leadership comes through efforts to strengthen the practice of evaluation and improve education opportunities for evaluators.

The Global Evaluation Initiative and Partners

The Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) continued its successful engagement in 23 countries in fiscal year (FY)23, providing support for the strengthening of 26 national and subnational monitoring and evaluation systems. This support included advisory and technical services, training and professional development, and knowledge exchange delivered in collaboration with GEI implementing partners, CLEAR (the Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results), ENAP (École nationale d'administration publique), and IPDET (the International Program for Development Evaluation Training).

Country engagement activities included support for monitoring and evaluation systems analysis diagnostics (which inform a strategy to strengthen national monitoring and evaluation systems) in Brazil, Colombia, and the Solomon Islands; a pilot country-led rapid evaluation presented to stakeholders in Mozambique; road maps prepared to strengthen the national evaluation systems in Madagascar and Jamaica; and an impact evaluation guide launched in Cabo Verde.

In addition, GEI established a new CLEAR for Pakistan and Central Asia in FY23 and will launch a new CLEAR for Latin America and the Caribbean in FY24.

The overlapping crises of recent years have diminished gains related to gender and inclusion, increased environmental pressures on marginalized populations, and pushed more people into instability. In response, GEI deepened its commitment to mainstreaming gender, inclusion, and climate change considerations across all its activities. For example, the GEI Global Team began a new collaboration with the Climate Investment Funds and partnered with Global Affairs Canada to launch the two-year Feminist

Innovation in Monitoring and Evaluation project. In addition, United Nations Women and EvalGender+ have joined as associate partners, bringing relevant technical skills and important perspectives to the GEI network.

In October 2022, GEI cohosted the National Evaluation Capacities Conference (NEC) with the United Nations Development Programme's Independent Evaluation Office, attracting 300 participants from 100 countries. The conference produced the Turin Agenda—a collective agreement for action on how to strengthen national evaluation systems. Six months later, GEI hosted a follow-up event, NEC+6, which focused on what gender- and climate-responsive evaluation systems look like as emphasized by the Turin Agenda.

The GEI network once again successfully delivered its three flagship training programs. The École nationale d'administration publique delivered the TAQYEEM (online) course in Arabic and PIFED (International Training Program in Development Evaluation) in French. The International Program for Development Evaluation Training delivered its signature training course in English both on-site and online, awarding 56 scholarships. In addition to the flagship training programs, the CLEAR global network delivered a variety of professional development and training activities. In total, over 3,000 people deepened their knowledge and gained more skills in monitoring and evaluation in FY23.

gLOCAL Evaluation Week 2023, a unique knowledge-sharing event connecting a global community of people across sectors and regions, saw an estimated 20,000 participants, with more than 300 events hosted in 53 countries around the globe. The 2023 theme—The Future of M&E: Culture, Context, and Collaboration—resonated with many and helped inspire and energize the global monitoring and evaluation community.

Finally, the GEI Global Team launched the first-of-its-kind Global Directory of Academic Programs in Evaluation, hosted on GEI's BetterEvaluation knowledge platform. The directory has received over 20,000 views since its launch in April 2023.

Knowledge Sharing with the Private Sector

IEG is working to strengthen its collaboration with private sector counterparts; in FY23, there was enhanced participation in joint engagements, both in terms of the depth and the format, including thematic evaluations, trainings, and learning events. For example, the first joint International Finance Corporation (IFC)–Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency learning event was organized for the health sector in Türkiye. The learning event featured evaluations about the hospitals in the Turkish Health Public-Private Partnership Program, which was jointly supported by IFC and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency. Teams from both organizations reflected on their experiences at the program and project level. New technology was also used to provide more insights to IFC about the effects of climate change on infrastructure in the Infrastructure Sector Highlights.

As another example, an IFC Strategy Network Learning Event was jointly organized in May 2023 to discuss the IEG thematic evaluation of IFC’s approach to additionality in middle-income countries. The dialogue with the IEG evaluation team and IFC management shared insights and lessons from the IEG evaluation and discussed their operational application using IFC business examples.

The Core of Evaluation

Several programs operate in the background but serve as the backbone of evaluation practice at the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG). IEG invests in the development of cutting-edge evaluation methods through its Methods Advisory Function, in ensuring robust Bank Group accountability through the Management Action Record, and in staff learning through the IEG Academy.

Methods Advisory Function

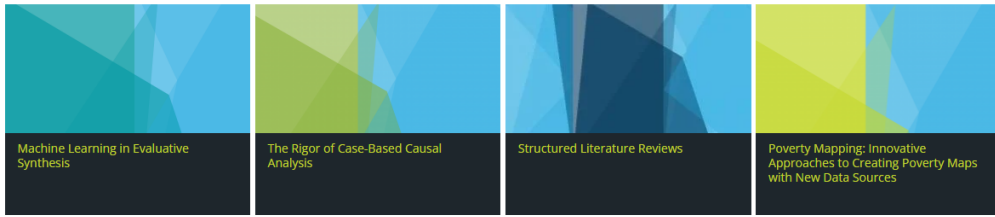
In fiscal year (FY)23, after several years leading experiments with methodologies and data science applications, the IEG methods team consolidated the knowledge gained. Using a two-pronged approach, the team began promoting a fit-for-purpose process to methodological innovation.

First, innovations that have been tested, replicated, and refined for fitness and efficiency are being mainstreamed across IEG's evaluations. To support uptake by evaluation teams, IEG expanded its user-centered data platforms and developed job aids, clinics, formal trainings, and customized methods workshops. IEG also formalized the Data Science Community of Practice, which is led by the methods team and includes task team leaders and analysts from across IEG units.

Second, IEG continues to experiment with cutting-edge methods and data science applications. For example, in FY23, IEG experimented with various applications of natural language processes for a range of “text as data” and rigorous theory-based impact evaluation techniques, such as process tracing, to evaluate the World Bank's knowledge work.

Four methods papers on innovative methodological applications in evaluation were published in FY23. Learn more about the series and read the papers on the [Evaluation Methods Resources](#) page.

Independent Evaluation Group Methods Papers Series



One of the goals of IEG’s Methods Advisory Function is to share its methodological research and other resources that promote evaluation knowledge. The IEG Methods and Evaluation Capacity Development Working Paper Series provides evaluation professionals with guidance on specific methodological practices and lessons learned from the application of novel or innovative evaluation methods. Four series papers were published in FY23, covering poverty mapping, structured literature reviews, case-based causal analysis, and machine learning.

Management Action Record

The purpose of the Management Action Record assessment system is to support accountability, learning, and adaptation for the Bank Group’s implementation of recommendations from IEG evaluations. In FY21, the Management Action Record underwent a reform to strengthen its outcome orientation, and in FY23, IEG and Bank Group management continued to optimize the platform. This year, management provided useful evidence for each evaluation that describes progress along a results chain for each of the 59 recommendations. With this change and through dialogue, IEG and management were generally better aligned on assessments of progress. IEG and management agreed on the level of progress in four out of five recommendations. Independent Evaluation Group Validation of the Management Action Record 2023 found that, overall, the Bank Group made steady progress in implementing IEG recommendations through delivering internal products and adapting

Disseminating a New Framework for Budget Support Evaluation

Development finance is increasingly being delivered as budget support, but this fast-disbursing, non earmarked support is difficult to evaluate. The time needed to achieve the objectives often extends beyond the period of the operation, and the conditions (prior actions) that need to be met for disbursement represent only a part of reform implementation supported by the operation.

To answer these challenges, in 2020, the Independent Evaluation Group adopted a new framework for evaluating budget support operations (that is, development policy operations). The framework focuses on providing concrete feedback on what “good” looks like. It captures the credibility and relevance of prior actions and systematically scrutinizes the relevance of indicators used to measure progress.

In fiscal year 2023, the Independent Evaluation Group began disseminating the framework through a series of blogs (“Evaluating Budget Support” and “Improving How We Evaluate Budget Support”) and public events. Other multilateral development banks, including the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, are drawing on the Independent Evaluation Group’s framework as they reform their approach to evaluating budget support operations.



Jeff Chelsky

Manager

Economic Management and
Country Programs Unit

IEG Academy

The IEG Academy focuses on building and reinforcing the staff skills needed to carry out IEG’s mandate successfully. The FY23 Learning Days delivered 17 live, interactive learning sessions; 5 virtual reality sessions for an immersive learning experience on diversity, equity, and inclusion topics; and 7 networking events. All were delivered over four dedicated days providing opportunities to 109 IEG staff and consultants to participate in virtual and in-person formats. Addressing select learning needs of staff in all roles, the program focused on three tracks:

1. Your Work—Sharpening Your Technical Edge, with courses on evaluation design and productivity skills.
2. Your Influence—Communicating for Impact, with courses on presentation and writing skills.
3. Yourself and Others—Growing Together, with courses on inclusive environments.

In addition to the synchronous Learning Days, the IEG Academy delivered learning through the following offerings and modalities in FY23:

- » In-person and virtual synchronous courses, clinics, and brown-bag lunches (38)
- » Library of resources, including on-the-job tools, self-paced eLearning courses, and other recommended resources organized by role
- » Launch of learning bundles in FY23 (which include a curation of existing learning courses and resources per area of development and skills) with Operations Learning for Evaluators (Version 1); to be followed in FY24 with Writing for IEG Staff; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for IEG Staff; Operations Learning for Evaluators (version 2), among others
- » Peer mentoring program supporting two new learning circles on how to improve our responsible evaluation practices: ecological systems thinking and participatory approaches
- » Onboarding guidance, resources, and training to orient new hires.

Independent Evaluation Group Learning Circles on Responsible Evaluation Practices

The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) supports staff learning through the IEG Academy. An ongoing objective of the IEG Academy, based on staff demand, is to create opportunities for more peer-to-peer learning in addition to what is already happening organically. To support that effort, the IEG Academy piloted learning circles to create a space for candid conversations among evaluation task team leaders to reflect on broader, cross-cutting challenges. A cross-IEG team piloted two learning circles focused on responsible evaluation practices. The intended outcome was to offer a space for meaningful and honest conversations about evaluation practices in IEG; learn together to work through entanglements in an evaluation process; practice reflective, critical, and systemic thinking; and imagine how to apply responsible evaluation values.

In the learning circles, participants shared evaluation experiences and tools related to climate change and gender; experiences on participatory practices; and fieldwork in places such as Mongolia and Niger. They also outlined elements of a business case for fieldwork and refined elements of a framework for responsible evaluation. The discussions in the learning circles also fed into the innovative immersive experience designed for the IEG@50 expo and event in September 2023.

The IEG Academy is committed to creating relevant learning experiences and ongoing opportunities for IEG staff to learn from and connect with each other.



Dulce Govea Aguilar

Knowledge and Learning Officer
Knowledge and Communications
Department

On the Radar

The profound changes to our world caused by COVID-19, political uncertainties, and accelerating climate change call for a new, more nimble approach to development. The World Bank's Evolution Roadmap, which included inputs from the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), lays the foundation for a new way of operating. In fiscal year (FY)24, IEG will seek innovative ways to provide timely recommendations and lessons learned so that the World Bank can respond quickly to changing crisis situations while supporting the long-term development agenda.

Evaluations will aim to deepen understanding of where the Bank Group can improve to provide the biggest impact for development outcomes. The FY24 evaluations will build on earlier evaluations to identify questions on development effectiveness while complementing each other to distill larger lessons across multiple works.

Although evaluations fall into six work streams and three cross-cutting themes, IEG's evaluations in FY24 will focus on and expand attention to the Bank Group's climate work. Climate change is one of the most universal, urgent, and powerful development challenges. The theme of water and the multiple related development challenges will be central, with evaluations on the protection and development of ocean resources and the management of fresh water. Another omnipresent development challenge is gender, and we will continue the two-pronged approach of delivering gender-focused evaluations and including an exploration of gender effects in other topics that demand it.

The FY24 work program will remain flexible, in keeping with the need for faster, more timely lessons as the Bank Group and international development space rapidly evolve. In line with the Bank Group's outcome orientation agenda, IEG will focus on country outcomes and lessons of high relevance to Bank Group teams and clients.

We will continue to refine our methods of data analysis and knowledge dissemination. In FY24, we will explore IEG's comparative advantages to find

more ways of swiftly gathering evidence and sharing important lessons as we remain strongly aligned with the strategic priorities of the Bank Group.

Learn more about our FY24 plans and goals in the [FY24 Work Program & Budget and FY25–26 Indicative Plan](#).

About IEG

The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) is an independent unit within the World Bank Group. It reports directly to the Boards of Executive Directors, which oversee IEG’s work through the Committee on Development Effectiveness. IEG is charged with evaluating the activities of the World Bank (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and with developing international evaluation capacity.

The goal of IEG’s evaluation work is to improve the Bank Group’s ability to achieve development outcomes by providing impartial, evidence-based assessments and lessons on drivers of success and failure. IEG uses rigorous methods that triangulate findings from a cross-section of sources to provide credible evaluations with new insights. Sharing these findings, strengthening client evaluation practice, and engaging stakeholders ensures that insights are understood and necessary improvements are made.

The goals of IEG’s evaluation capacity development work are to foster international evaluation harmonization, to develop evaluation capacity in member countries, and to encourage best practices in international development evaluation.

All evaluations discussed in this report are available on IEG’s website at <http://ieg.worldbank.org>.



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The World Bank
1818 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20433