



# WORLD BANK GROUP EVALUATION PRINCIPLES

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WORLD BANK  
INTERNATIONAL FINANCE CORPORATION  
MULTILATERAL INVESTMENT GUARANTEE AGENCY

*In collaboration with*  
INDEPENDENT EVALUATION GROUP



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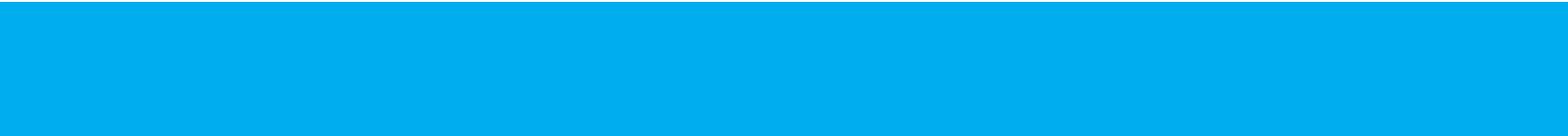
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World Bank Group  
Evaluation Principles



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# foreword

The World Bank Group is committed to enhancing development results in its client countries toward the twin goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity in a sustainable manner. Each of its institutions—the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency—seeks to maximize the development impact of the broad range of activities it carries out. Evaluation plays a key role in generating evidence about what works in development, in identifying lessons to improve impact, and in showing how investments are achieving their intended results. Recognizing the importance of the role that evaluation plays in enhancing development effectiveness, the three institutions together with the World Bank’s Independent Evaluation Group have come together, for the first time, to develop common principles for evaluation in the World Bank Group.

This document, *World Bank Group Evaluation Principles*, sets out core principles for evaluation as well as underlying principles for selecting, conducting, and using evaluations, as relevant to the World Bank Group’s mission, and each institution’s mandate, system of governance, and operating environment. It is informed by international evaluation principles and good practice standards and builds on knowledge of current practices and processes around evaluation in the World Bank Group. In agreeing to this common set of principles, we aim to enhance development results by strengthening accountability and learning through evaluation.

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# World Bank Group Evaluation Principles

## Introduction

The World Bank Group is committed to its twin goals: to eradicate extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity in a sustainable manner. The World Bank Group's *Forward Look – A Vision for the World Bank Group in 2030* outlines how the World Bank Group strives to achieve these goals in close partnership with our shareholders: first, by working to accelerate inclusive and sustainable economic growth; second, by helping countries to invest more effectively in people; and third, by fostering resilience to global shocks and threats.

Implementing the *Forward Look* and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals require the World Bank Group to continually adapt to rapidly changing situations based on evidence of what works and what does not. Timely and appropriate adaptive management requires building a culture of continuous improvement and problem-solving, based on evidence. Evaluation plays a key role in generating the evidence about what works in different contexts, and in identifying lessons for World Bank Group stakeholders.

The 2015 *External Review of the Independent Evaluation Group* (IEG) recommended that the World Bank Group develop an “institution-wide, principles-based living evaluation policy” that outlines the principles, criteria, and accountabilities for evaluation across the organization (World Bank 2015). In response, World Bank Group Management<sup>1</sup> and IEG have jointly developed common principles for evaluation in the World Bank Group, which form the foundation of this document. The External Review of IEG also recommended that the World Bank Group:

“...establish for the first time a World Bank Group-wide basis for evaluation and lend clarity to how the institution balances evaluation between learning and accountability to maximally contribute to the delivery of results.”

“...translate international evaluation principles and [multilateral development bank] good practice standards into a framework relevant to the World Bank Group's mandate, system of governance, operating environment and new organizational arrangement.”<sup>2</sup>

The principles for evaluation described in this document apply to all parts of the World Bank Group, namely the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA),<sup>3</sup> the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and IEG.<sup>4</sup> This is the first time that common principles for evaluation have been articulated for the whole World Bank Group. These are aligned with international evaluation best practices and policies and draw on international norms and standards developed by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

***This is the first time that common principles for evaluation have been articulated for the whole World Bank Group.***



(OECD-DAC), the Evaluation Cooperation Group, the United Nations Evaluation Group, and the American Evaluation Association, as well as evaluation policies developed by other international organizations.

The common principles include core principles for evaluation, and principles for selecting, conducting, and using evaluations. These aim to strengthen accountability and learning for evidence-based decision making and program improvement to enhance development results. They are designed to: (a) align the World Bank Group's evaluative efforts with global challenges and the World Bank Group's strategic focus; (b) clarify the roles and responsibilities of key actors and encourage synergy among them throughout the evaluation process; and (c) ensure that all World Bank Group evaluations are robust, of high quality, and credible.

This document rests on three considerations.

- First, it is aspirational in nature—particularly on enhancing the use of evaluations. It sets out common definitions and principles that evaluation practices across the World Bank Group should adhere to, and it aims to enhance the quality of World Bank Group evaluations and guide the enhanced use of their findings.
- Second, it takes a holistic approach to strengthening the use of evaluation: for each phase in the evaluation process, it defines specific principles to enhance the utility of evaluations.
- Third, it provides a basis for using evaluation to encourage adaptive results management, or the use of evaluative evidence to inform course corrections in strategy and in project management and implementation.

Building on this common foundation, each World Bank Group institution will continue to set specific evaluation arrangements that best meet its particular mandate, business needs, and client environments. This approach makes it possible for each institution to update its steering documents, protocols, guidelines, and evaluation processes as they evolve.

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## Definition and Coverage

**Definition.** The World Bank Group uses a definition of evaluation adapted from the OECD-DAC: A systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed World Bank Group process, project, program, theme, strategy, or policy, and of its design, implementation, and results, in relation to specified evaluation criteria (OECD-DAC 2002).<sup>5</sup>

**Purposes of evaluation in the World Bank Group.** Evaluation in the World Bank Group serves two primary purposes:



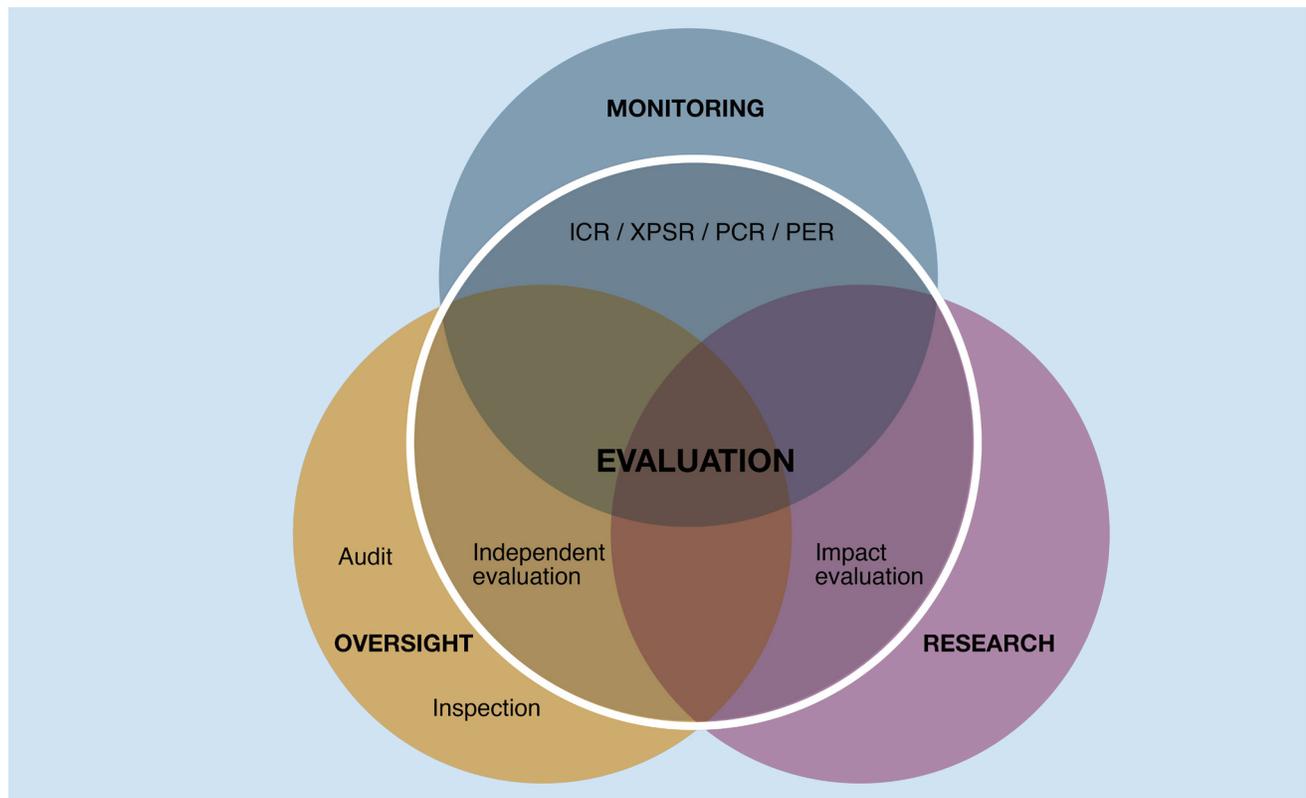
- Promoting **accountability** for delivering on each institution’s mandate through the assessment of performance and results. Results are evaluated for their contribution to achieving the World Bank Group’s goals.
- Promoting **learning**, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons, to inform decision making on policies, strategies, programs, and projects, and to improve performance and results.

*Faster and easier access to relevant knowledge from evaluations can help staff work more efficiently and effectively.*

**Evaluation and knowledge management.** Knowledge management is critical for the systematic use of evaluation findings across the World Bank Group and in the context of adaptive results management. Knowledge management systems should ensure that knowledge from evaluations becomes a key part of the World Bank Group’s operational workflow. Faster and easier access to relevant knowledge from evaluations can help staff work more efficiently and effectively. Establishing simple and systematic processes for knowledge management to leverage the vast body of knowledge from evaluations—and effectively capture, curate, share, and apply such knowledge—is critical to improving results on the ground.

**Evaluation in the World Bank Group can be situated at the nexus of oversight, research, and monitoring** (see figure 1). To different degrees, all

FIGURE 1 | Evaluation at the Nexus of Oversight, Research, and Monitoring



*Without careful monitoring, important data cannot be collected. The availability of good monitoring data is necessary for good evaluation.*

*Evaluations in the World Bank Group should adhere to three core principles: utility, credibility, and independence.*

types of evaluations relate to oversight, research, and monitoring. In addition to evaluative knowledge, multiple forms and types of knowledge generated through oversight, monitoring, and research are also elements in the World Bank Group's overall approach to encouraging evidence-based learning and decision making.

- **Evaluation and oversight.** Evaluation is one distinct element of the World Bank Group's independent oversight system, which includes the Internal Audit Department, the Integrity Vice Presidency, the Inspection Panel, and the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman. Independent evaluation (discussed below) is the evaluation modality that is most closely related to (and part of) the oversight function.
- **Evaluation and research.** Evaluation is distinct from research in the World Bank Group. Research serves a variety of purposes and is often policy-oriented in nature. The two intersect in the field of impact evaluation, which can be undertaken for evaluation but also for research purposes.
- **Evaluation and monitoring.** World Bank Group monitoring systems and processes are part of World Bank Group operations and are closely related to, but distinct from, the evaluation system. Supervision and monitoring reports inform evaluations such as the World Bank's Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR), the IFC's Expanded Project Supervision Report (XPSR) and Project Completion Report (PCR), MIGA's Project Evaluation Report (PER), and the country-based Completion and Learning Review (CLR) (see section on the World Bank Group Evaluation System). Monitoring<sup>6</sup> and evaluation enhance and feed into each other but serve different purposes. Without careful monitoring, important data cannot be collected; and the availability of good monitoring data is necessary for good evaluation. Evaluations can, in turn, provide lessons for improving the design and implementation of monitoring systems and processes. The principles described below link to and cover monitoring to the extent that it relates to evaluation.

## Core Evaluation Principles

In line with international practices in evaluation, evaluations in the World Bank Group system should adhere to three core principles that can help ensure the quality and effectiveness of evaluation.

- **Utility.** Evaluation utility refers to the relevance and timeliness of evaluation processes and findings to organizational learning, decision making, and accountability for results. Utility can be enhanced throughout the evaluation process<sup>7</sup> by reflecting on what to evaluate, when, how, with whom, and for what purposes. Credibility is a prerequisite for utility.



- **Credibility.** Evaluation credibility is grounded in expertise, objectivity, transparency, and rigorous methodology. Ensuring credibility requires that evaluations be conducted ethically and be managed by evaluators who exhibit professional and technical competence in working toward agreed dimensions of quality. Independence is a prerequisite for credibility.
- **Independence.** Evaluation independence is in place when the evaluation process is free from undue political influence and organizational pressure. Independence can be achieved through various mechanisms. Structural independence is ensured when the evaluation function has its own budget, staffing, and work plan that are not subject to approval by World Bank Group Management but directly under the supervision of the Board of Executive Directors for each institution (hereafter referred to as the “Boards”). Functional independence refers to the ability of the unit managing the evaluation to decide on what to evaluate and how to go about the evaluation. Finally, behavioral independence implies professional integrity and absence of bias in the attitude and behavioral conduct of the evaluator. Depending on the type of evaluation carried out, the level of independence varies (see next section).

## The World Bank Group Evaluation System

### Types of evaluations

Evaluations are used to assess the World Bank Group’s performance and results and to provide feedback at different levels: (a) to inform the World Bank Group’s strategies and corporate and managerial processes; (b) to inform the design and implementation of a range of sectoral, thematic, and country partnership strategies and programs; and (c) to improve the design and implementation of specific lending, investment, and advisory and knowledge services at the project and operational levels.

The World Bank Group evaluation system refers to the different types of evaluations, processes, activities, actors, and roles and responsibilities regarding evaluation within and between the World Bank Group institutions. Evaluation structures within the World Bank Group institutions have evolved over time in line with each institution’s requirements, business models, and clients. The World Bank Group distinguishes among three main evaluation modalities: independent evaluation, mandatory self-evaluation, and demand-driven self-evaluation.

**Independent evaluation.** A fully independent evaluation is carried out by entities that are structurally, functionally, and behaviorally independent from those responsible for the design and implementation of the intervention. In the World Bank Group, fully independent evaluations are conducted by IEG, which reports directly to the Boards. The emphasis is primarily on accountability and learning

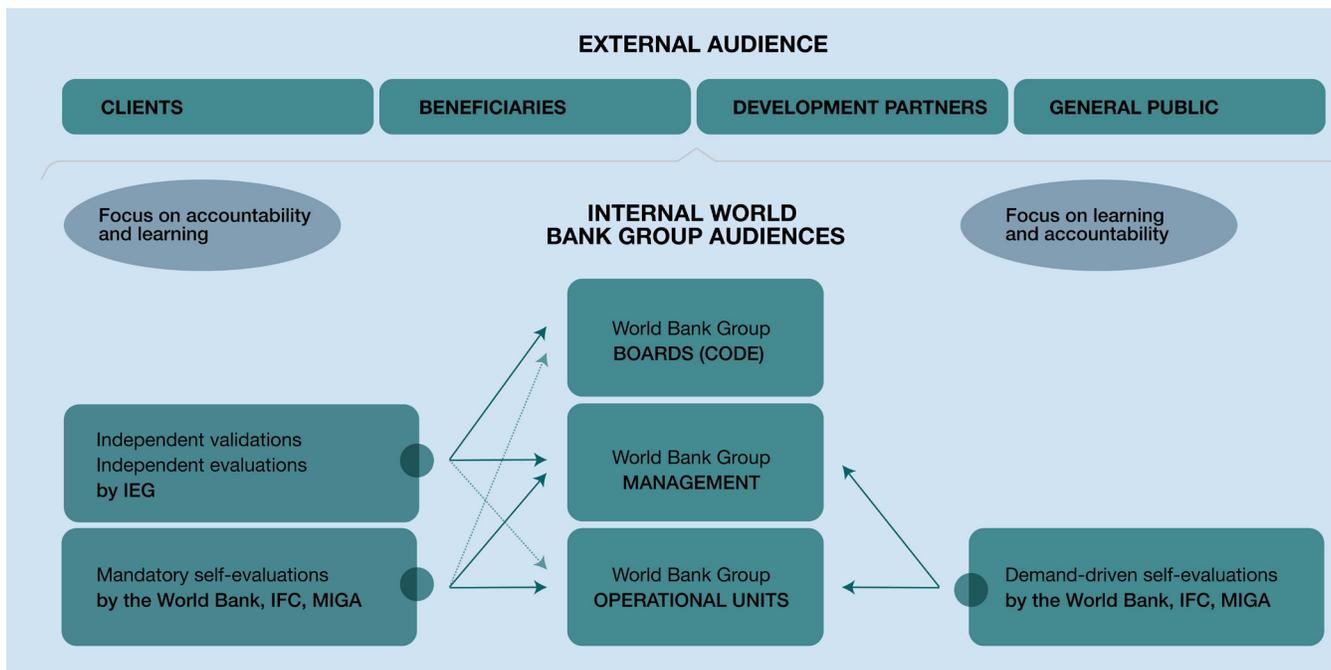
*The World Bank Group distinguishes among three main evaluation modalities: independent evaluation, mandatory self-evaluation, and demand-driven self-evaluation.*



at the level of the Boards or their Committee on Development Effectiveness (CODE). In addition, independent evaluations support learning at the levels of Management and operations. The target audiences for independent evaluations are, therefore, the Boards, World Bank Group Management and staff, clients, and development partners, as appropriate. In addition, to different degrees independent evaluations also inform other actors such as (representatives of) beneficiaries and the general public (figure 2).

**Self-evaluation.** Self-evaluations are conducted by operational staff or specific units within the management structures of the World Bank, IFC, and MIGA and are therefore not fully independent of World Bank Group Management. They are usually closely linked to decision making and organizational learning processes within each institution. Self-evaluations are also conducted for purposes of accountability to World Bank Group Management and/or development partners/investors. The target audiences for self-evaluations are primarily operational units, Management, clients, and development partners. In addition, to different degrees self-evaluations also inform other actors such as (representatives of) beneficiaries and the general public (see figure 2). There are two broad types of self-evaluation in the World Bank Group.

FIGURE 2 | World Bank Group Evaluation System—Stakeholders and Evaluation Information Flows



Note 1: Continuous lines represent the main lines of communication, while dotted lines refer to secondary lines of communication.

Note 2: World Bank mandatory self-evaluations are sent to its Board. IFC and MIGA mandatory self-evaluations are reported to their Boards on an aggregate level.



- **Mandatory self-evaluation.** At the core of the evaluation system across the World Bank Group are mandatory self-evaluations of specific lending operations, investments, guarantees, country programs, and advisory services. These evaluations are prepared by the responsible operational units and are embedded in the project and program cycles. They are neither structurally nor functionally independent, but the principle of behavioral independence applies. Behavioral independence is further strengthened by IEG’s review and validation (sometimes on a sample basis). Mandatory self-evaluations complement the implementation and monitoring arrangements that are embedded in each institution’s project and portfolio management processes. Self-evaluation adheres to methods and guidance that are jointly accepted by World Bank Group Management and IEG, with predetermined concepts, formats, and scope that are closely linked to the premises applied at the time of intervention approval and during reporting cycles. Aggregate analyses of (validated) self-evaluation reports enable cross-sectoral and cross-regional comparisons of performance as well as reporting at the corporate levels and to the Boards.
- **Demand-driven self-evaluation.** A variety of evaluation activities are undertaken in response to specific donor, client, or internal demands, or as an element of operational or research work—for example, retrospective studies of various products and instruments, trust fund evaluations,<sup>8</sup> and impact evaluations to assess the impact of activities and interventions. Demand-driven self-evaluations are structurally embedded in managerial processes. However, they are often either conducted, managed, or commissioned from external consultants by functionally independent units within the institution. In addition, the principle of behavioral independence applies.

Figure 2 illustrates the key stakeholders, evaluation types, and the primary and secondary information flows, foci, and target audiences. Box 1 summarizes the World Bank Group institutions’ arrangements for evaluation.

*On behalf of the Boards, CODE oversees the work of IEG as well as the adequacy, efficiency, and robustness of the World Bank Group’s monitoring and evaluation systems.*

## Roles and responsibilities

**Boards and Committee on Development Effectiveness.** CODE supports the World Bank Group’s Boards in assessing the development effectiveness of the World Bank Group, monitoring the quality and results of World Bank Group–funded operations, and overseeing or liaising on the work of the entities that are part of the World Bank Group’s accountability framework. On behalf of the Boards, CODE also oversees the work of IEG as well as the adequacy, efficiency, and robustness of the World Bank Group’s monitoring and evaluation systems. CODE draws on the self-evaluations of the World Bank Group, independent evaluations, and other reporting to identify, consider, and make recommendations to the Boards on high-priority issues related to the development effectiveness of the World Bank Group and the results achieved through its operations.<sup>9</sup>



## Box 1 | Summary of Institutional Arrangements for Evaluation across the World Bank Group

### World Bank Group

Directive: Evaluation

Directive: Procedure and Guidance on Country Engagement (OPS5.01)

World Bank Group Policy: Independent Evaluation Group Mandate

### IEG

*Governance and mandate:* World Bank Group Policy: Independent Evaluation Group Mandate.

*Evaluation modalities:* Independent evaluation of the World Bank, IFC, and MIGA (corporate, thematic and sectoral major evaluations; Country Program Evaluations; meso evaluations; Project Performance Assessment Reports; Project Evaluation Summaries; and validation of CLRs, ICRs, XPSRs, PCRs, and PERs).

*Levels:* Corporate, sector, thematic, country, and operational.

### World Bank

*Governance and mandate:* Monitoring and Evaluation (OP13.60); Policies, Directives, and Procedures for Investment Project Financing (OPS 5.03), Development Policy Financing (OPS5.02), Program-for-Results (OPS5.04); and Trust Funds (BP 14.40).

*Evaluation modalities:* Mandatory self-evaluation (ICRs, CLRs) and demand-driven self-evaluation (impact evaluations, trust fund program evaluations, and project and program evaluations).

*Levels:* Sector, thematic, country, and operational.

### IFC

*Governance and mandate:* Procedures: Investment Operations—Portfolio and Supervision Processes (Catalogue IO402); Advisory Services Project Governance (Catalogue AS432); and IFC Evaluations (Catalogue ID401).

*Evaluation modalities:* Mandatory self-evaluation (XPSRs, PCRs, CLRs) and demand-driven self-evaluation (impact evaluations, program(s) performance evaluations, economic impact assessments, rapid assessments, and systematic portfolio reviews).

*Levels:* Sector, thematic, country, and operational.

### MIGA

*Governance and mandate:* Evaluation function established by the Board. Operations Evaluations Unit created in FY01 to undertake independent evaluation of MIGA activities.

*Evaluation modalities:* Mandatory self-evaluation (PERs, CLRs) and demand-driven self-evaluation (trust fund evaluations).

*Levels:* Operational.



**World Bank Group Management.** World Bank Group Management is responsible for fostering a culture of accountability and learning, and for providing appropriate incentives (and minimizing disincentives) for staff at all levels. Management plays an essential role in highlighting the importance of data, evidence, and evaluation, and in incentivizing staff to create, apply, and share evaluation knowledge, and to deliver evidence-based results. Management is also responsible for ensuring the availability of adequate resources for self-evaluation, learning, and knowledge management, and for formal review and follow-up on recommendations, including those agreed from independent evaluations carried out by IEG.

**World Bank Group operational units.** Operational managers and staff are responsible for managing and conducting mandatory and demand-driven self-evaluations. Findings and recommendations from supervision processes, which are used in managerial monitoring of portfolio performance, ultimately feed into project and country program completion reporting (that is, mandatory self-evaluations). They are reported and discussed within and between the World Bank Group's managerial and operational teams, and with clients and implementation authorities, throughout the life cycle of a project or country program implementation period. IEG validation of self-evaluation reports is a primary source of feedback on, and accountability for, the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the World Bank Group's operational work program, as well as on the completeness, quality, and candor of self-evaluations.

**Independent Evaluation Group.** IEG conducts independent evaluations of specific projects and programs, country programs, and a range of sectoral, thematic, and corporate issues. In addition, it reviews and validates individual project and country program completion reports from the World Bank, IFC, and MIGA. IEG's annual report on the *Results and Performance of the World Bank Group* summarizes lessons and recommendations that emerge from syntheses of portfolio-wide reviews of individual projects and country program performance. Meta-evaluative and synthetic<sup>10</sup> analyses of self-evaluations (for example, on the quality of monitoring and evaluation and of reporting), lessons learned from validations, and findings and recommendations from different evaluations are discussed with Management and operational units across the World Bank Group. IEG shares its evaluation findings and recommendations through a variety of publications and dissemination events. In addition, IEG and World Bank Group Management use the Management Action Record, a formal process of discussing actions to be implemented as a result of key recommendations from each major evaluation; progress on these actions is followed for a set number of years and reported to CODE. Finally, to promote learning from evaluations, IEG and World Bank Group operational units and Management promote learning from evaluations through different types of learning activities.

**Development partners.** The World Bank Group's evaluation system works in partnership with multiple multilateral and bilateral partners in the public,

*World Bank Group  
operational units and  
IEG promote learning  
from evaluations through  
different types of learning  
activities.*



private, and nongovernmental sectors. Donor partners support various forms and types of evaluation through trust funds, and in many instances they are active participants in the evaluation process as well as active consumers of World Bank Group evaluation products and their findings. Other development partners, such as implementing partners, may also participate in the evaluation process and actively use World Bank Group evaluation products.

**Clients.** Public and private sector clients fulfill multiple roles. They are implementers of World Bank Group projects and programs, and producers of monitoring and evaluative information. They are often active participants in evaluation processes and may also finance evaluations. Clients can also be key consumers and users of evaluation products and their findings.

**Citizens, beneficiaries and the general public.** Citizen and beneficiary feedback on interventions feeds into accountability and learning processes through a variety of mechanisms, including the various evaluation modalities. The World Bank Group and its Boards are responsible to the public for seeking continued improvement in the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the World Bank Group's interventions. Beneficiaries, citizens, and the general public are also key consumers and users of evaluation products, and their findings and can play an important accountability role.

## Principles for Enhancing Evaluation Use

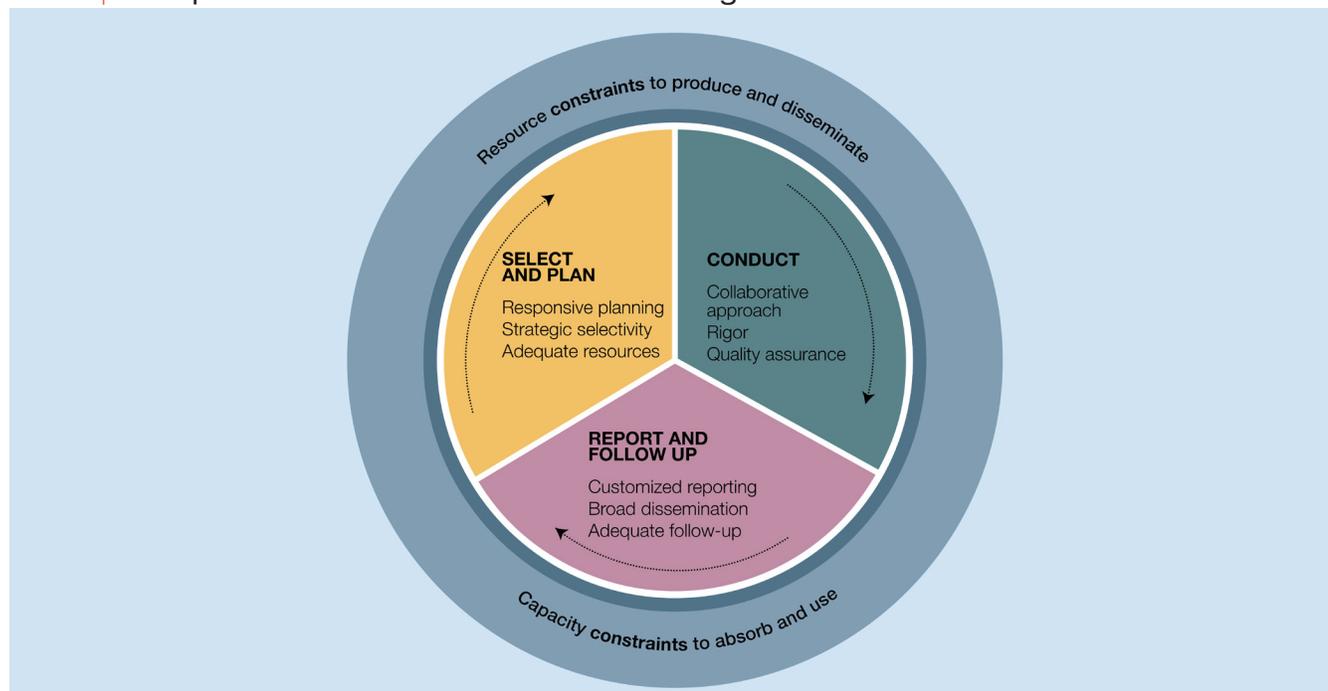
Because evaluation is intended to strengthen accountability and learning processes, the primary challenge is to ensure that key stakeholders are engaged in all stages of the evaluation process. Stakeholders include a range of actors: the Boards, the managers and staff engaged in the development and implementation of financial and advisory interventions, clients and implementing partners, and the beneficiaries of World Bank Group-financed interventions. To be useful, each evaluation must be designed and conducted to meet specific stakeholders' information and decision-making needs related to that evaluation.

In line with international practice, the World Bank Group optimizes the value of evaluations by adopting an evaluation use perspective throughout the entire evaluation process. To maximize the utility of all independent and self-evaluations, this document describes principles to guide the processes of selecting and planning, conducting, and reporting and following up on evaluations in the World Bank Group (figure 3). The application of these principles differs according to the type of evaluation and the needs and contexts of specific institutional operating and client environments.

**Enabling the evaluation process.** Evaluations do not occur in a vacuum. Enabling conditions need to be in place to foster the supply of and demand for evaluations. Resources for producing evaluations and disseminating



FIGURE 3 | Principles to Enhance Evaluation Use throughout the Evaluation Process



their findings are inevitably constrained, and evaluation competes with other operational and managerial demands. In addition, the capacity to absorb evaluation findings and use them effectively in accountability and learning processes varies across different evaluation audiences. In this context, it should be noted that building an evaluation culture is not only about strengthening the supply side (that is, the quality and focus of evaluations) but also about strengthening the demand side—for example, by building a common understanding of the role of evaluative evidence in learning and accountability. However, even though evaluations constitute a key channel of evidence and reporting, several other channels are also relevant to decision makers, as figure 1 shows. Consequently, it is important that stakeholders optimize the value of evaluation by reflecting on an evaluation’s potential use and on the allocation of resources and time to the evaluation process. The principles for enhancing evaluation use are discussed below.<sup>11</sup>

### Selecting and planning evaluations

When planning the evaluation of a project, program, process, theme, or policy, it is important to consider its evaluability.<sup>12</sup> An evaluability assessment can be conducted as part of an evaluation process or as an exercise that is entirely separate from an evaluation.

When selecting and planning an evaluation, a key point of entry is to engage stakeholders in reflecting on what to evaluate and which questions to focus on.

*Building an evaluation culture is not only about strengthening the supply side but also about strengthening the demand side—for example, by building a common understanding of the role of evaluative evidence in learning and accountability.*



*Stakeholder engagement in the detailed planning of an evaluation can constitute a platform for capacity building and a source of additional data.*

It is also important to assess the similarities and differences among stakeholder views regarding the relevance and potential uses of an evaluation. The absence of stakeholder engagement in the definition of the “evaluation problem” risks reducing the utility of an evaluation or even creating resistance to evaluation findings. Stakeholder engagement in the detailed planning of an evaluation can constitute a platform for capacity building and a source of additional data. It can also enhance stakeholders’ interest in the evaluation findings and can contribute to the methodological rigor of the evaluation. Principles for selecting and planning evaluations are as follows.

- Strategic selectivity
  - Independent evaluations and demand-driven self-evaluations should be prioritized according to the strategic and operational needs and the capacity of the World Bank Group and external stakeholders to support and absorb the evaluations.
  - Independent evaluations and demand-driven self-evaluations should be prioritized by key accountability demands (such as periodicity, volume of funding, or donor and other stakeholder requests).
  - Independent evaluations and demand-driven self-evaluations should be prioritized by learning needs as determined by (among others) the innovative nature of the intervention, existing knowledge gaps, and the potential for replication or scaling up.
- Responsive planning
  - Evaluations should be planned to provide timely information to key stakeholders—for example, to allow for adaptive management, such as midcourse corrections.
  - Evaluation plans should be developed in consultation with key stakeholders.
  - To the extent possible, data requirements for evaluation should be built into the intervention design.
- Adequate resources
  - Independent evaluations should be adequately resourced through a separate budget allocation to ensure full structural and functional independence.
  - Provisions for resources for mandatory self-evaluations should be included in the budgets of the World Bank Group institutions.
  - Resources for demand-driven self-evaluations are derived from multiple sources. When external sources of funding are used, they should, as relevant, be supplemented by adequate internal funding.

## Conducting evaluations

Establishing and nurturing relationships that optimize collaboration among and between evaluators and key stakeholders (within the bounds of independence and impartiality) contributes to the ownership and validity of evaluation findings, and creates opportunities for using resources efficiently.



Rigor of evaluation design and of the corresponding data collection and analysis enhances the confidence with which conclusions can be drawn. Rigor is a prerequisite for the credibility of evaluation findings and, in turn, for evaluation use. Quality assurance processes also contribute to credibility and use.

- Collaborative approach
  - Synergies and cooperation among the World Bank Group institutions should be pursued throughout the evaluation.
  - To the extent possible, stakeholders should be invited to participate in the evaluation to increase ownership and enhance the validity of findings.
  - To the extent possible, evaluations should include local expertise to enhance the validity of findings and build local capacities.
- Rigor
  - Evaluations should meet internationally agreed norms and standards for evaluation.
  - Evaluations should be based on the best possible methodological design, given the real-world constraints of data, time, and resources.
  - Evaluations should be conducted by the best possible combination of internal (World Bank Group) and external experts.
- Quality assurance
  - Evaluations should have a clear and efficient quality assurance process.
  - Evaluations should be subject to peer review at different stages of the process.
  - Evaluation designs and methods should be carefully documented.

## Reporting and following up on evaluations

Principles for the post-assessment stage aim to ensure that findings and lessons are communicated, absorbed, and effectively followed up. For optimal reach, receptivity, and learning, it is important to be strategic about when and how to share findings and recommendations. The choice of channels and formats for reporting influences the potential impact of an evaluation. Innovations in the processes and platforms for discussing evaluation findings and addressing recommendations should be continuously explored.

- Customized reporting
  - Evaluation findings should be adequately reported in formats that are consistent with the needs of the target audiences.
  - The reporting of evaluation findings should adhere to standards for effective communication and data presentation.
- Broad dissemination
  - Evaluations should have a dissemination plan.
  - Evaluation findings should be publicly disclosed for independent evaluations and demand-driven self-evaluations, respecting institutional policies.

*Rigor of evaluation design and of the corresponding data collection and analysis enhances the confidence with which conclusions can be drawn.*

*Innovations in the processes and platforms for discussing evaluation findings and addressing recommendations should be continuously explored.*



Reporting of mandatory self-evaluations is subject to the disclosure policy of each institution.

- Findings and lessons learned should be made accessible to relevant internal and external target audiences, respecting institutional policies.
- Adequate follow-up
  - Independent evaluations should be subject to responses from World Bank Group Management, and where applicable, follow-up plans should be developed, monitored, and discussed with stakeholders.
  - As relevant, demand-driven self-evaluations should have follow-up plans that should be monitored and discussed with stakeholders.
  - Evaluation findings and lessons learned should feed into planning cycles, the design of new operations, policy formulation, and institutional learning processes.

## Evaluation and Feedback Loops

For the World Bank Group and its stakeholders to optimize the use of the evaluation process and of evaluative findings and recommendations for accountability and learning purposes,<sup>13</sup> the following feedback loops need to occur internally:

- World Bank Group Management and staff should ensure that evaluative evidence (and validations) are used to inform the design and implementation of future operations.
- World Bank Group Management and staff should ensure that, where possible, evaluative evidence (and validations) are used to inform course corrections—for example, to restructure projects.
- World Bank Group Management, including Senior Management, should use evaluations to take stock of performance and results achievement to inform strategic directions, organizational decisions (for example, on staffing and resources), operational processes, and programmatic decisions.

The following specific measures would support these feedback loops:

- Engaging key stakeholders' active participation in and ownership of evaluations, including their selection and methodology, and discussions around their findings;
- Broad dissemination of evaluation reports to relevant (internal) target audiences;
- Knowledge management systems that make evaluation findings accessible at the right time and in appropriate formats; and
- Mechanisms to ensure that evaluative evidence has been considered in the design of operations.



It is important to ensure that resources, processes, expertise, and incentives are in place for feedback loops to work optimally and to contribute to the overall performance and effectiveness of the organization. If Management and operational staff are to report unbiased information on performance and outcome achievement (for example, in self-evaluations), incentives for informed risk-taking behavior, adaptive management, and learning from failure should also be in place.

As the World Bank Group makes evaluative evidence broadly available, its stakeholders (the Boards, development partners, clients, beneficiaries, and the general public) can develop informed judgment about the performance and results of the World Bank Group's work, triggering a range of feedback mechanisms:

- CODE and the Boards can learn from and use evaluative evidence to inform strategic decisions;
- Funding partners can use evaluations to take stock of performance and achievement of results, which in turn can influence their commitment to, and support for, the World Bank Group;
- World Bank Group clients, partners, civil society, and the public can use evaluative evidence to calibrate their willingness to engage with the World Bank Group on ongoing and future initiatives; and
- World Bank Group clients can learn from and use evaluations to inform their own decisions and introduce changes to their own operational processes and interventions.

## Evaluation Capacity Development

Ensuring that evaluations are useful to their intended audiences, are credible, and are carried out in an impartial manner requires skilled professionals and leadership, both within the World Bank Group and among its implementing partners and clients. Strong systems for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in government agencies and private firms and organizations are of paramount importance to monitor and evaluate operations, policy interventions, and their outcomes. The development of evaluation capacity is therefore a major strategic focus of the World Bank Group internally, at the client level, and in international forums on evaluation.

Within the World Bank Group, capacity-building efforts include ongoing activities through the Results Measurement and Evidence Stream, the World Bank's community of professionals and practitioners working in M&E functions. The vision of the Results Measurement and Evidence Stream is to (a) be recognized as a network of professionals leading and advising on results management; and (b) support operational teams and their clients with world-

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class M&E expertise to achieve development results by making decisions based on solid evidence.

The World Bank Group promotes evaluation capacity development at the client level using three primary mechanisms: supporting and undertaking specific initiatives to train client institutions and their staff (as well as M&E practitioners from countries' broader M&E communities) in evaluation methods and processes; working with clients to conduct evaluations and build and implement M&E systems for specific interventions and as a core element of effective governance; and involving representatives from clients and partners as well as professional members of M&E communities in countries in World Bank Group evaluation processes.

The World Bank Group plays an active role in developing evaluation practices and systems in the field of international development. By participating in a range of global and other evaluation partnerships, platforms, and debates, staff across the World Bank Group continue to engage in developing, applying, and validating (new) evaluation methods and approaches for the full range and scope of development interventions.



## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> World Bank Group Management means the management of the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, jointly or separately, depending on the context.
- <sup>2</sup> *External Review of the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank Group*, 2015, p 26.
- <sup>3</sup> IBRD and IDA are referred to in this document as World Bank.
- <sup>4</sup> It does not cover the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), which is also part of the World Bank Group but does not have any relevant evaluation activities.
- <sup>5</sup> The specific criteria used in an evaluation depend on the evaluation objectives, among other things, and are not limited to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability, although one or more of these criteria may apply.
- <sup>6</sup> The OECD-DAC *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management* (2002) defines monitoring as “A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.”
- <sup>7</sup> See the section on Principles for Enhancing Evaluation Use.
- <sup>8</sup> Some trust fund program evaluations are mandatory in the World Bank; see Bank Procedures: Trust Funds (BP 14.40).
- <sup>9</sup> Committee on Development Effectiveness: Terms of Reference, July 15, 2009.
- <sup>10</sup> *Meta-evaluation* concerns an analysis of the quality of evaluations. *Synthetic* refers to the aggregate analysis of content from individual evaluations.
- <sup>11</sup> Depending on the purpose of an evaluation, the relative importance of these principles may differ.
- <sup>12</sup> Evaluability concerns the extent to which an activity or a program can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion (OECD-DAC, 2010). It may include an assessment of the potential use of an evaluation, availability of data, and the programmatic coherence of the evaluand (the program or project, for example), among other things.
- <sup>13</sup> Evaluations serve both accountability and learning purposes, and the feedback loops regarding learning and accountability functions are closely linked in practice.

## REFERENCES

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- OECD-DAC (Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development). 2002. *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management* (Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development).
- World Bank. 2015. *External Review of the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank Group: Report to the Committee on Development Effectiveness from the Independent Panel* (Washington, DC: World Bank).
- . 2016. *Forward Look—A Vision for the World Bank Group in 2030* (Washington, DC: World Bank, Development Committee).

# abbreviations and acronyms

ASA	Advisory Services and Analytics
BP	Bank Procedures
CLR	Completion and Learning Review (for Country Partnership Frameworks)
CODE	Committee on Development Effectiveness
CPE	Country Program Evaluation
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results Report
IDA	International Development Association
IE	Impact evaluation
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
IFC	International Finance Corporation
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCR	Project Completion Report
PER	Project Evaluation Report
PES	Project Evaluation Summary
PLR	Performance and Learning Review (for Country Partnership Frameworks)
PPAR	Project Performance Assessment Report
TTL	Task team leader
XPSR	Expanded Project Supervision Report







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