2024

Annua Report



Office of Independent Evaluation Office of Independent Evaluation Annual Report 2024

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Introduction

A Transformative Year for the Office of Independent Evaluation

In the dynamic landscape of development, 2024 has been a defining year for the Office of Independent Evaluation (OIE) at the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). It has been a

year of transformation, strategic advancements, and renewed commitments to strengthening the Bank's evaluation function. This transformation is also reflected in the comprehensive revision and renewal of this Annual Report as part of OIE's strategic transition, marking a pivotal update in how we communicate our progress and insights. More than just a period of progress, this has been a year of laying the foundation for a more responsive, impactful, and knowledgedriven approach to independent evaluation—one that not only informs but actively shapes the future of development efforts across the region.

The year began with a momentous milestone: the Peer Review of CDB's evaluation function, an exercise pivotal in charting a new course for OIE. With a visit to the CDB headquarters in Barbados, this review brought together renowned evaluation experts from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Bank (WB). Their collective insights provided invaluable recommendations on how OIE could elevate its role within CDB, reinforce the Bank's accountability, and become a catalyst for learning. This exercise was more than just an external assessment; it was a moment of introspection, growth, peer exchange, and alignment with global best practices.

In parallel, OIE started the review of CDB's 2011 Evaluation Policy, a crucial step in ensuring that both self-evaluation and independent evaluation processes are positioned within a robust framework to better serve the evolving needs of CDB and its stakeholders. At the heart of this effort lies the commitment to fostering a culture of learning and evidence-based decision-making, reinforcing the role of evaluation as an enabler of positive change.

Strengthening Learning, Engagement, and Innovation

2024 has also been a year of continuity and accelerating

progress. Building on the 2023 OIE Perception Survey, which highlighted the need for stronger awareness and engagement with OIE's work among CDB staff and the Board of Directors (BoD), OIE has taken bold steps to increase its visibility. Evaluations are now conducted with greater rigor and disseminated in ways that maximize their impact and usability.

To foster a culture of evaluation, OIE has expanded its interactive workshops, co-creation sessions with evaluands, and enhanced dialogue with CDB's management and Board. By refining the evaluation process and deepening collaboration with stakeholders, OIE ensures that evaluations are not just reports on CDB's performance but tools that actively inform decision-making and future programming.

In 2024, OIE launched its first Synthesis Study after many years. This initiative marked a significant step forward in enhancing learning, knowledge management, and capitalizing on previous evaluations, ensuring that lessons from past interventions are effectively integrated into future programming and decision-making.

Innovation has been at the forefront of OIE's evolution. Recognizing the need for more accessible and user-friendly evaluation products, the Office has embraced new approaches and tools. The increased use of case study analysis, the development of infographics, twopage summaries, and improved report layouts are just some of the steps taken to make evaluation findings more digestible and actionable. Moreover, OIE has ventured into the realm of artificial intelligence, pioneering the first chatbot tool within CDB. This innovative solution, developed in collaboration with the Information Technology Department, enables staff, Senior management, and Board members to navigate evaluation products with ease, integrating lessons learned into future initiatives.

Expanding Partnerships and Global Knowledge Exchange

In 2024, OIE strengthened its global engagement. OIE

participated at the UNDP National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) Conference 2024 in China, where it delivered a presentation and cochaired a World Café discussion on strengthening national Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems. The event brought together representatives from international financial institutions (IFIs), national governments, and regional learning centers (CLEARs) to discuss the challenges and opportunities in building resilient, sustainable evaluation systems.

Additionally, OIE was a special guest at the 3rd Annual Meeting of ReDeCA in The Bahamas, organized by IDB's Office of Evaluation and Oversight (OVE), where discussions focused on M&E capacity-building for development finance institutions (DFIs) in the Caribbean and Latin America. OIE also actively participated in EVALAC in Guatemala, delivering a presentation to Caribbean participants on OIE's evaluation approach and moderating a high-level panel on strengthening M&E systems in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Office further expanded its engagement with IFAD's Independent Evaluation Office, where it was invited to deliver a Coffee Talk session in Rome, sharing lessons learned in institutionalizing evaluation within CDB.

To further strengthen evaluation capacity within Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs) and among CDB staff, OIE has initiated discussions with the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) and CLEAR-LAC. These engagements aim to identify common priorities, with a view to enhancing knowledge sharing, technical support, and capacitybuilding efforts across the region.

A Stronger Future for Independent Evaluation at CDB

In 2024, the Office secured approval to triple its financial and human resources for 2025, marking a significant turning point in its evolution.

These additional resources will not only enhance OIE's ability to deliver high-quality evaluations but will also position it as a more effective partner in supporting CDB's mission to drive sustainable development in the region.

Acknowledging the Team's Commitment

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication, expertise, and passion of the OIE team.

This transformation has been made possible through the relentless efforts of a small but highly committed group, whose contributions have been instrumental in elevating the role of evaluation within the Bank

A heartfelt thank you goes out to Denise Padmore, Thania de la Garza, Katherine Liakos, and our invaluable interns, Aquon Bovell and Kiara Leach, for their unwavering dedication. Special thanks also to the Development Effectiveness Committee (DEC), newly established in 2024, as well as CDB staff and Senior Management for their support, engagement, and commitment to strengthening evaluation at CDB. A special thank you to all the consultants who worked with us and have shared our vision and commitment to transforming OIE into a leading reference point for evaluation excellence, both globally and regionally.

As we look ahead, OIE remains steadfast in its mission to ensure that evaluation serves as a powerful tool for learning, accountability, and development effectiveness of CDB. The journey is just beginning, and with a strong foundation now in place, the future of independent evaluation at CDB is brighter than ever.

Serena Rossignoli, PhD Head (Ag.), Office of Independent Evaluation

Hear from the Team

I connect our Board of Directors, Management, and the Office of Evaluation to ensure evaluations are meaningful and impactful. My work focuses on developing strategies to enhance our evaluation processes and ensure their contribution to the organizational goals.

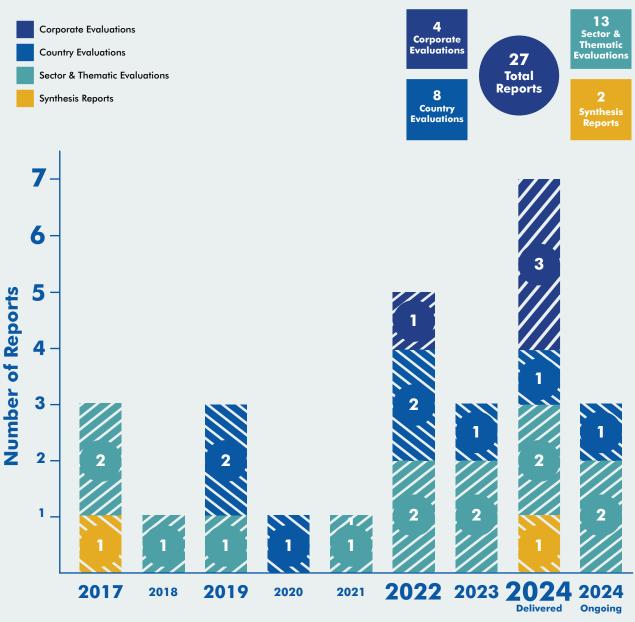
I manage a talented team, keeping everyone motivated and performing at their best. I also contribute to planning and implementing evaluations, ensuring our findings feed into the organization's learning loop.

> Serena Rossignoli Head of Evaluation (Ag.) and Senior Evaluator

Overview

2024 is a pivotal year with 7 evaluations delivered and 3 in the pipeline

1



Year

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Within the framework of the 2024 OIE Work Programme, most proposed activities remain in alignment with the original plan



A Transformative Year for the OIE at CDB

FEBRUARY

Delivered a **IFAD Coffee Talk Session in Rome** on lessons learned from institutionalizing evaluation within CDB

MARCH

- Presented Peer Review of CDB's Evaluation Function to the SAT
- Compiled lessons from five country CSPEs
- Presented Multi-Cycle Evaluation of the Special Development Fund (SDF) 8 and 9 to the full BoD

APRIL

- Started the Renewal of the 2011 Evaluation Policy
- First meeting with the **DEC**
- Presented the 2023 Annual Report
- Concluded Bahamas Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation (CSPE)
- Presented the Draft Annual Report to the Development Effectiveness Committee (DEC)

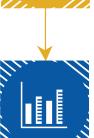
MAY

- Launched Evaluation of CDB's Water Sector Work (2017–2023)
- Launched Corporate Review of CDB's Resilience Approach
- Consultations initiated for the Renewal of the 2011 Evaluation Policy
- Discussions initiated for the Urban Sector Strategy and Policy Evaluation

JUNE

- Head of Evaluation (Ag.) attended Annual Board Meeting in Canada
- Presented Evaluation of CDB's Environmental and Social Review Procedures
- Presented the Peer Review to the DEC







DECEMBER

- Presented the 2024 Draft Annual Report to the DEC
- Presentation of the Peer Review to the Full Board
- Launched Trinidad and Tobago Country Strategy Evaluation
- Drafted 6 Project Completion Validation Reports
- Drafted Gender-Responsive Evaluation Guidelines for CDB's evaluation processes
- Secured approval to triple OIE's resources for 2025
- 2025 Annual Work Programme approved

• Participated in a strengthening M8

- Participated in a high-level panel on strengthening M&E systems at the OVE-IDB's EVALAC, Guatemala
- Developed the PCVR Lessons Learnt Database with IT

OCTOBER

• Co-chaired a World Café discussion on strengthening national M&E systems at UNDP NEC Conference, China

SEPTEMBER

- Presented the Status of the Implementation of Recommendations to DEC
- Attended **3rd ReDeCA Annual Meeting, The Bahamas**
- Presented PowerBI dashboard report to the Board

AUGUST

- Completed the Evaluation of the CDB's Water Sector Work (2017-2023)
- Presented a draft Evaluation Policy, self-evaluation and independent evaluation manuals to DEC

JULY

- Consultations started to develop the 2025 Work
 Programme
- Started an Artificial
 Intelligence Chatbot with IT
 to compile evaluation findings





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Completed Evaluations

Peer Review of CDB's Evaluation Function

The Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of CDB was completed

in February 2024. The report was presented to the Strategic Advisory Team in March 2024 and to Development Effectiveness Committee (DEC) in June 2024. Following the DEC's request, it was presented to the BoD in September 2024, along with management comments.

OIE has drafted a roadmap for the implementation of the Peer Review Recommendations. The roadmap will be finalized in 2025.

This review, included as a major change in the 2023 Work Programme, was essential due to the recent leadership transition within OIE. The Peer Review offers a retrospective evaluation of past efforts by both OIE and CDB in the evaluation sector, identifying areas needing enhancement. The Peer Review highlighted critical challenges and opportunities for improvement. Key findings revealed that constrained resources significantly limit both self-evaluations and independent evaluations. Only 40% of required Project Completion Reports (PCRs) were completed for recent projects, weakening learning and accountability. OIE's evaluation model has relied heavily on a fully commissioned approach, limiting the added value of in-house expertise. Additionally, gaps in dissemination and accessibility reduce the impact of evaluations on decision-making. The review also noted a weak learning culture within CDB. Furthermore, while the quality of OIE's work is broadly recognized, delayed responses from management and insufficient stakeholder engagement reduce its effectiveness.

Conducted by a Peer Review Panel comprising Heads of Evaluation from the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) members and evaluation experts, the review focuses on independent evaluation, self-evaluation, evaluation policy and institutional arrangements.

Check out the deep dive at page 16

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The Peer Review outlined five key recommendations. First, CDB must allocate adequate resources, ensuring sufficient staffing and financial support for self- and independent evaluations. Second, OIE should enhance the utility of its evaluations by broadening its product mix, improving engagement with stakeholders, and issuing timely evaluation reports. Third, the 2011 Evaluation Policy should be revised to clarify roles, streamline processes, and reinforce independence. Fourth, an evaluation advisory committee should be established to provide guidance and oversight. Finally, the newly created DEC should systematically review and refine its role to strengthen evaluation governance.





Peer Review of the Evaluation Function

The Peer Review of the Evaluation Function, aligned with Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) standards, is a key initiative to enhance accountability, learning, and evaluation excellence at the CDB.

A Global Panel of Experts

Led by renowned experts, this review provided vital insights to improve CDB's evaluation framework and learning culture, enhancing overall governance and operational effectiveness.

Jozef Vaessen, Methods Advisor of the Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank

Ivory Yong-Prötzel, Director of the Office of Evaluation and Oversight, Inter-American Development Bank

Indran A. Naidoo, Director of the Independent Office of Evaluation, IFAD

Per Øyvind Bastøe, Evaluation Advisor, Independent Consultant



Mr. Isaac Solomon, President (Ag.), CDB

Serena Rossignoli, Head of Evaluation (Ag.) and Senior Evaluator, OIE at CDB

Denise Padmore, Research and Knowledge Management Assistant, OIE at CDB

A Deep Dive into CDB's Evaluation Function

In January 2024, the Peer Review team visited Barbados, conducting extensive interviews with the Board of Directors, Senior Management, and CDB staff. The aim was to pinpoint improvements and ensure CDB's alignment with global evaluation standards. The review, covering OIE's work from 2017 to 2023, scrutinized self-evaluation processes, policy frameworks, and organizational learning culture.

The findings were presented to the DEC in June 2024 and to the full Board in September 2024, along with Management Comments. An implementation roadmap based on the recommendations is now underway.

Key Findings

Resource Constraints

Limited resources and staffing reduced evaluation effectiveness; only 40% of needed Project Completion Reports were filed.

What Needs to Change?

Learning Culture & Dissemination

Poor visibility and engagement impact the usage of evaluations; ineffective communication and infrequent Board discussions.

Evaluation Quality & Relevance

Over-reliance on external commissioning, with evaluations often too long and lacking clear insights; misaligned with CDB's strategic goals.

Independence of Evaluations

Budgeting practices and delayed Management Responses compromise OIE's independence.

Key Recommendations for a Stronger Evaluation System

Boost funding and staffing; enhance training for effective evaluations.	Increase OIE staff involvement; diversify evaluation types; enhance advisory support.
Update definitions and governance; enforce strict reporting timelines.	Separate OIE's budget from CDB's general funds; establish an external Evaluation Advisory Committee.
Implement a comprehensive dissemination strategy; ensure evaluations are discussed at Board meetings.	Evaluate DEC's performance after one year; finalize its Terms of Reference.

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Bahamas Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation

The Bahamas Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation (CSPE) aligned with the scheduled renewal of the 2018-2022 Bahamas Country Strategy Paper (CSP).

The Bahamas CSPE was conducted to assess the performance of CDB's programming from 2018 to 2022. The evaluation aimed to determine progress in achieving intended and sustainable results, the appropriateness of programme design, and the efficiency of implementation. The evaluation process began in August 2023, with a ten-week inception phase, followed by a one-week field mission to The Bahamas in late October 2023.

Key findings were shared with CDB staff in November 2023, and a co-creation workshop to develop recommendations was held in December 2023.

The evaluation applied a mixedmethods approach to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of CDB's interventions in the country. The methodology combined quantitative and qualitative data collection to provide a comprehensive evaluation of CDB's strategy and its alignment with The Bahamas' development priorities. A portfolio analysis was conducted to assess the scope, composition, and financial performance of CDB-funded projects. This was complemented by three in-depth case studies, which examined policy-based loans (PBLs), infrastructure development, and education initiatives to assess their long-term sustainability and effects. Stakeholder engagement was a central component of the evaluation, with over 35 key informant interviews and focus group discussions involving CDB staff, government officials, private sector representatives, and civil society organizations.

Additionally, a Theory of Change (ToC) was reconstructed to analyze how CDB's interventions contributed to national development objectives. The evaluation also benchmarked CDB's strategy against regional and international best practices in small island development and economic resilience. The combination of document reviews, financial analysis, stakeholder perspectives, and case studies provided a rigorous and evidence-based assessment, ensuring that findings and recommendations were grounded in data and contextual realities.

The evaluation found mixed results in achieving intended outcomes, with significant successes in fiscal management and disaster response frameworks but limited progress in education, climate-resilient infrastructure, and private sector development. The evaluation



highlighted that while policybased loans (PBLs) significantly contributed to fiscal stability, public sector reform, and disaster risk management, other projects faced delays in implementation, limited data availability, and capacity constraints in government institutions. Sustainability was stronger in infrastructure projects with clear maintenance responsibilities but weaker in technical assistance (TA) projects due to delayed uptake and weak institutional capacity. The slow implementation of education and private sector initiatives further reduced the impact of CDB's interventions.

The evaluation recommended strengthening project design to ensure greater alignment with government priorities and institutional capacity. To improve implementation, CDB should enhance flexibility in adapting interventions to evolving country needs, streamline administrative processes, and improve engagement with stakeholders to ensure better traction. The co-creation of recommendations with CDB staff during the evaluation was a positive step towards developing more actionable, context-specific strategies. Key recommendations included strengthening technical assistance, increasing CDB's presence and engagement in The Bahamas, and ensuring better integration of gender and climate considerations in future interventions. The findings will be used to inform the next Country Engagement Strategy (CES), ensuring that CDB's support is more effective, sustainable, and responsive to The Bahamas' development challenges.

Synthesis of Country Strategy and Programme Evaluations:

Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Suriname, and The Bahamas

The first Synthesis Report from the OIE in many years compiles key lessons from evaluations in five countries to improve the CDB's development impact. It identifies trends, successes, challenges, and offers recommendations for future strategies.

What this report does

- Connects evaluations across Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Suriname, and The Bahamas
- Assesses contributions to poverty reduction and regional development
- Highlights strengths and challenges in operations
- Identifies implementation barriers and success factors
- Recommends enhancements for future effectiveness

What worked well

Alignment with national/regional priorities

Where can we improve

Follow-through long-term

impact of strategies

Swift adaptability to

new challenges

Valuable insights from deep regional knowledge Adaptability in digital processes during COVID-19

Jamaica

The Bahamas

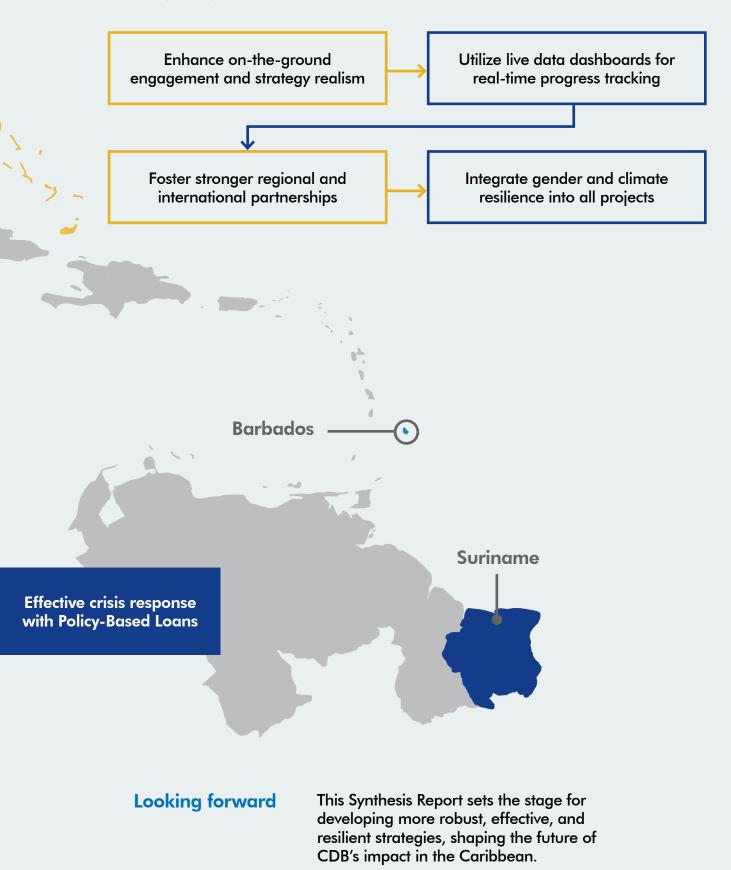
Belize

Regional cooperation for development opportunities

Enhanced monitoring tools to track results

Stronger focus on gender equality and disaster resilience strategies

Turning insights into action



Special Development Fund – 8 & 9 Cycles

The Multi-cycle Evaluation of the Special Development Fund (SDF) 8 and 9 (SDF 8: 2013-2016 and SDF 9: 2017-2020) was completed and presented to SDF Contributors in March 2024. The evaluation aimed to guide SDF 11 replenishment negotiations, drawing on evaluations of various SDF thematic priorities and country strategies, with a meta-synthesis of evidence from these evaluations.

The evaluation aimed to assess the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the SDF's interventions across the Caribbean region. The evaluation included five case studies, four field visits, and over 40 semi-structured interviews with CDB staff, BMCs, and other stakeholders. Field missions were conducted in January 2024 in Belize, Jamaica, Grenada, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, while data from Haiti was collected through local consultants due to security concerns.

The evaluation utilized a comprehensive, multi-level analysis to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and long-term impact of CDB's concessional financing in the Caribbean. Given the complexity of SDF's operations across multiple sectors, the evaluation applied a portfolio review, case studies, and key informant consultations to assess how resources were allocated and whether interventions achieved their intended outcomes.

A detailed portfolio analysis examined the financial flows, sectoral distribution, and implementation performance of SDF-supported projects, identifying trends in funding priorities and execution efficiency. To provide deeper insights into project effectiveness, four country-specific case studies were conducted in Jamaica, Haiti, Belize, and a regional trade/logistics initiative, representing diverse sectors and implementation contexts. Each case study incorporated document reviews, interviews with government agencies and beneficiaries, and site visits where feasible, ensuring a grounded assessment of project impact.

The evaluation also employed a results measurement framework, mapping SDF's contributions to poverty reduction, climate resilience, education, and private sector development. Stakeholder engagement was a key component, with over 40 interviews conducted across CDB, government ministries, private sector actors, and community organizations. Additionally, the evaluation compared CDB's SDF financing model with other regional concessional funds, providing strategic recommendations to improve resource allocation, M&E systems, and sustainability mechanisms for future SDF cycles.





The evaluation found that SDF interventions were critical for addressing development challenges in BMCs, particularly in climate resilience, poverty reduction, education, and private sector development. While policy-based loans (PBLs) and infrastructure projects demonstrated strong impact, the evaluation identified persistent delays in implementation, weak M&E frameworks, and limited institutional capacity in some BMCs. The sustainability of certain initiatives, particularly those in technical assistance and education, was hampered by weak follow-up mechanisms. The evaluation highlighted the need for better alignment with country priorities, more proactive engagement with stakeholders, and stronger impact measurement tools. Key recommendations included refining the allocation of SDF resources for greater efficiency, strengthening M&E systems, improving project implementation mechanisms, and increasing investments in technical capacity-building to enhance project sustainability.

The case studies further deepened insights into SDF's performance. In Jamaica, BNTF 9-supported projects improved access to clean water, school infrastructure, and child protection services, benefiting thousands, but delays in approvals and tendering slowed impact realization. In Haiti, the CBARD agricultural programme increased land irrigation, farmer training, and food production, but sustainability was challenged by inadequate technical capacity in local organizations. In Belize, SDF projects helped farmers recover from climate-related disasters, demonstrating effective crisis response mechanisms. The regional case study on trade and logistics found that projects aimed at enhancing export readiness and interregional trade lacked systematic tracking of long-term impact, emphasizing the need for stronger data collection and follow-up strategies. Across all cases, stakeholder engagement and co-creation of solutions emerged as key factors for success, reinforcing the need for more participatory project design and implementation strategies in future SDF cycles.

Driving Development in the Caribbean:

Insights from the Multi-Cycle Evaluation of the Special Development Fund (8 & 9 Cycles)

For over four decades, the Special Development Fund (SDF) has been a cornerstone of the CDB's efforts to reduce poverty and support sustainable growth. This multi-level evaluation of the 8th and 9th cycles provides critical insights for enhancing future strategies.

Four field missions:

Belize, Jamaica, Grenada, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Key findings:

Relevance: SDF is crucial for tackling regional challenges in education, climate resilience, and infrastructure.

Transforming the future: Key

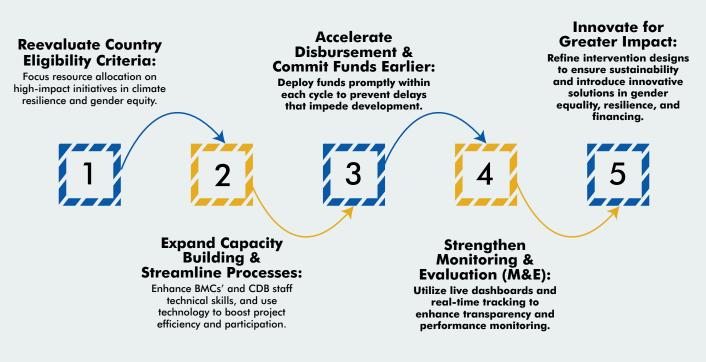
recommendations

Coherence: SDF collaboration is strong but must scale up to match other financial institutions.

Efficiency: Noted for operational strength but needs faster project execution and better disbursement rates.

Effectiveness: Significant improvements seen in poverty reduction and human development but needs better project management and gender integration.

Sustainability: Continuous improvements needed in resource allocation and climate vulnerability.



Innovative approaches to dissemination

Recognizing the importance of knowledge-sharing and fostering learning, OIE maximised usability of findings through:



Haiti: A special focus Insights from local research partners in Haiti emphasize the importance of context-specific programming for future SDF cycles.

Looking ahead: Shaping SDF

11 With its critical role in the region, SDF is set to become more agile, impactful, and responsive to the needs of its Borrowing Member Countries.

Stakeholder stories of change

Through the BNTF project, our school now has better facilities, allowing more children in our community to access quality education. Before, we struggled with outdated classrooms and limited resources. Now, our children have a real opportunity to thrive.

Belize

For years, we lacked proper infrastructure to withstand hurricanes. With SDF funding, we now have climate-resilient roads that keep our communities connected, even during storms.

Jamaica

The skills training we received through SDF's youth employment initiatives helped us secure jobs in the tourism industry. It's changing lives and giving young people a future.

Grenada

Before, I had no choice but to cut trees to make charcoal for survival. But thanks to improved access to water, I now grow peppers and okra alongside my plantains. My farm is thriving, and I can make a living without harming the environment.

Haiti

Water Sector Evaluation

The Water Sector Evaluation was conducted to assess the CDB's work in the water sector over the period from 2017 to 2023.

The evaluation aimed to review the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability of CDB's interventions in the water and sanitation sector. The process included a comprehensive desk review, the reconstruction of a Theory of Change (ToC), and data collection through 53 semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and unstructured interviews during field visits to Jamaica, Dominica, Guyana, and Saint Lucia. The evaluation team also conducted workshops to validate the ToC and gather feedback from stakeholders, ensuring the evaluation was aligned with the needs of the BMCs.

The Evaluation employed a comprehensive, multi-method approach to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of CDB's interventions in water supply, sanitation, and water resource management.

The evaluation applied a portfolio analysis to review the financial and operational performance of CDBfunded water projects, assessing their alignment with Borrowing Member Countries' (BMCs) national water strategies. Additionally, four case studies were conducted in Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia, selected based on geographical diversity, project type, and scale. These case studies included site visits, interviews with government officials and utility providers, and technical assessments to evaluate project outcomes and challenges.

To assess sustainability and efficiency, the evaluation incorporated an analysis on tariff structures, financial viability of utilities, and long-term maintenance plans. A comparative benchmarking exercise was also conducted to measure CDB's interventions against global water sector best practices. Stakeholder consultations, involving CDB staff, regional water agencies, and community representatives, provided critical insights into policy coherence, capacity-building efforts, and the role of climate resilience in water infrastructure investments. The combination of financial analysis, technical assessments, and stakeholder feedback ensured a holistic evaluation, generating actionable recommendations for strengthening CDB's future work in the sector.

| Jamaica The evaluation found that CDB's investments were highly relevant to the needs of BMCs, particularly in expanding access to clean water, improving climate resilience, and strengthening institutional capacity. However, sanitation and wastewater management remain under-prioritized, with only a few projects focusing on these areas. The evaluation highlighted delays in project implementation, driven by slow decision-making, procurement challenges, and limited technical capacity in BMCs, which often led to cost overruns and reduced project scope. Sustainability was a major concern, particularly for rural water supply projects, as many utilities operate on negative cash flows, raising concerns about their ability to maintain infrastructure in the long term. The evaluation also noted a lack of reliable data and performance monitoring, hindering effective planning and impact assessment.

Dominica

Guyana

Saint Lucia

The evaluation recommended increasing investments in sanitation and wastewater management, strengthening data collection and performance benchmarking, and streamlining CDB's approval and procurement processes to improve implementation timelines. Additionally, enhancing sustainability measures—such as tariff adjustments, utility capacity-building, and regional partnerships for knowledge exchange—was identified as crucial for ensuring long-term success.

Case studies conducted in Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia provided practical insights into project successes and challenges. For example, in Jamaica, delays in rural water projects led to increased costs and reduced impact, while in Guyana, the BNTF-funded water supply system was effective but faced challenges in completion due to procurement bottlenecks. Across all cases, stronger engagement with local stakeholders, better project preparation, and increased regional collaboration were identified as key drivers of success in future water sector projects.

Corporate Review of CDB's Resilience Approach

The Corporate Review of CDB's Resilience Approach analyses the resilience programming framework, its influence on loan and grant selection, and its relevance and effectiveness.

The evaluation was initiated in April 2024 and focused on assessing the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of CDB's implementation of the resilience approach within its Strategic Plan (SP) for 2020-2024 and the Strategic Plan Update (SPU) for 2022-2024.

The evaluation applied a *mixedmethods approach,* combining document reviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies to assess how resilience was integrated into CDB's strategy and operations. Specifically, the evaluation conducted **two** case studies focused on the implementation of two key pillars of the SPU 2022-2024: productive resilience (MSMEs) and social resilience (the Basic Needs Trust Fund). These case studies examined the effectiveness of resilience integration in policy-based loans, infrastructure projects, and

technical assistance programmes.

The methodology also included stakeholder consultations with over 40 key informants, including CDB staff, government officials, regional organizations, and development partners, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of implementation challenges and successes. Additionally, benchmarking against global resilience frameworks provided insights into CDB's positioning relative to best practices in resilience financing.

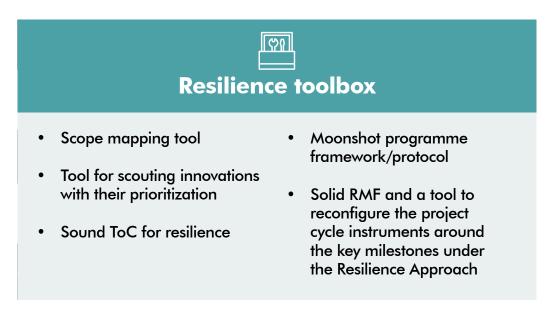
The evaluation found that while the Resilience Approach was a timely and necessary strategy, its implementation remained uneven across projects and sectors, with resilience being more embedded at the strategic level than at the operational level. Although resiliencethinking contributed to **stronger** fiscal and institutional responses to external shocks, it was not yet fully integrated into project design, monitoring, and evaluation processes. Key challenges included limited regional partnerships, the absence of a comprehensive Theory of Change (ToC), and a results measurement framework

that did not fully capture resilience outcomes. Additionally, while the approach aligned well with global resilience frameworks, CDB did not fully leverage its leadership position within the regional institutional architecture.

The evaluation recommended deepening the integration of resilience across all phases of the project cycle by ensuring that resilience indicators and monitoring tools are embedded in project design, implementation, and evaluation. It also highlighted the need for a revised ToC and Results Monitoring Framework (RMF) to systematically track resilience outcomes. Other key recommendations included enhancing partnerships with regional institutions such as

Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), adopting a mission-oriented approach rather than a sectoral one, and streamlining CDB's internal processes to better reflect resilience priorities. By embedding resilience more fully into operations, refining its measurement tools, and strengthening collaboration at the regional and international levels. CDB can enhance the impact of its resilience strategy and solidify its role as a leader in resilience-focused development in the Caribbean.

The evaluation has been submitted for management response at the beginning of February 2025.



Hear from the Team

I am dedicated to ensuring that every voice is heard and every perspective is considered in our evaluations. I'm passionate about ensuring evaluations are conducted with utmost efficiency and lessons learnt are shared among stakeholders with the aim of improving the effectiveness and sustainability of the Bank's interventions.

Denise Padmore

Evaluation Research and Knowledge Management Assistant

Ongoing Evaluations and Activities

Ongoing Evaluations and Activities

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Trinidad Country Engagement Strategy Evaluation

The Dominica 2020-24 Country Engagement Strategy Evaluation has been replaced by the evaluation of Trinidad and Tobago's Country Strategy Evaluation. This evaluation was launched in 2024 and will be the first implemented by OIE with a Hybrid Approach.

The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of CDB's interventions in the country from 2017 to 2024. This evaluation is particularly important as Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (ROTT) prepares for the development of its new Country Strategy Paper (CSP). By analyzing the results and impact of past projects, the CSPE will generate valuable insights to inform the design of a more responsive and effective strategy for CDB's future engagement in ROTT.

The evaluation is focusing on **CDB's strategic priorities in ROTT,** including **education**, infrastructure, **governance**, and economic **diversification**, as well as crosscutting issues such as climate resilience, gender equality, and social protection. The CSPE is applying a **mixed-methods approach**, including a **portfolio review**, stakeholder **consultations**, and a reconstructed **Theory of Change (ToC)** to assess how well CDB's interventions addressed the country's development challenges.

A country visit is planned for March 2025, where the evaluation team will conduct interviews, focus groups, and site visits to assess project outcomes and sustainability. The evaluation will also examine how CDB has coordinated with other development partners and engaged with national institutions to maximize impact.

The final CSPE report will be completed in 2025, offering actionable recommendations to strengthen CDB's future programming in ROTT. By ensuring that lessons learned from this evaluation directly inform the new CSP, OIE aims to enhance the strategic alignment, efficiency, and long-term sustainability of CDB's work in the country.

Urban Sector Strategy and Policy Evaluation

An evaluation of the current CDB Urban Sector Strategy and Policy will be launched at the beginning of 2025. This evaluation is part of the policy development process aimed at renewing the Urban Sector Strategy Policy and Operational Guidelines.

The evaluation of CDB's work in the urban sector covers a critical area of development as Caribbean cities facing increasing pressures from urbanization, climate change, and infrastructure gaps. This evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of CDB's urban revitalization efforts, examining how well its interventions align with BMCs needs and global urban development priorities. The findings will provide key insights to inform the upcoming Urban Sector Policy, Strategy, and Operational Guidelines (USPSOG), ensuring that CDB's support is better targeted to create sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban areas.

The evaluation will focus on urban infrastructure, housing, governance, and service delivery, assessing how CDB's investments in roads, drainage, public spaces, and community services have contributed to economic arowth and improved quality of life. A mixed-methods approach will be used, including a portfolio analysis, geospatial mapping, and case studies from three BMCs to provide an in-depth assessment of selected projects. This will be complemented by stakeholder consultations with CDB staff, government officials, and urban planning experts to identify key successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. The evaluation is expected to conclude in 2025, with recommendations guiding CDB's future urban development strategy to better support livable, well-planned, and climate-resilient cities across the Caribbean.

Evaluation Policy

In 2024, OIE advanced the development of a new Evaluation Policy, alongside two key operational manuals: the Independent Evaluation Manual and the Self-Evaluation Manual. These documents aim to strengthen CDB's evaluation function, ensuring greater consistency, accountability, and learning across the Bank's operations. While still in draft form and pending approval, these documents represent a significant step toward enhancing evaluation governance and improving the quality and utility of evaluation products. The policy is expected to be finalized in 2025, with further stakeholder consultations ongoing.

The draft Evaluation Policy provides a modernized framework for both self and independent evaluations, aligning CDB's evaluation function with international best practices and responding to key recommendations from the Peer Review of CDB's Evaluation Function. The policy redefines roles and responsibilities across the evaluation ecosystem, introduces new quality assurance mechanisms, and emphasizes the usefulness and uptake of evaluations in decision-making.

A working group involving the Economics, Projects, and Strategy and Accountability Office (SAO) Departments has been involved to refining the self-evaluation aspects, while an Advisory Group of international experts has provided external guidance to align with global evaluation trends.

The Independent Evaluation Manual serves as a practical guide for conducting independent evaluations, detailing evaluation phases, methodologies, reporting procedures, and quality assurance standards. It outlines CDB's evaluation governance structure, including the roles of the DEC, Strategic Advisory Team (SAT), and the Working Group in supporting the evaluation process. It proposes clear protocols for data collection, stakeholder engagement, and the dissemination of evaluation findings, ensuring that evaluations remain objective, transparent, and actionable.

The Self-Evaluation Manual aims to provide comprehensive guidelines for conducting Project Completion Reports (PCRs) and self-assessments at the project and strategy level. It proposes a structured rating methodology covering relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, along with criteria for assessing CDB and Borrower performance. The manual aims to enhance learning from completed operations, improve project design and execution, and strengthen institutional accountability.

Together, these documents aim to provide a coherent and structured evaluation framework, ensuring that CDB's evaluation system is more responsive, evidence-driven, and impactful. They aim to mark a new era for independent evaluation at CDB, strengthening the Bank's ability to learn, adapt, and improve development outcomes across the Caribbean. Office of Independent Evaluation Annual Report 2024

Project Completion Validation Reports

OIE will continue to deliver its validation programme of self-evaluation products, with six reports submitted for management response early 2025:

Natural Disaster Management – Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Hurricane Tomas- Saint Lucia	Emergency Support Loan – Liat (1974) Limited - Regional
Energy Sector Policy- Based Loan Suriname	Geothermal Drilling Project – St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Building Resilience of the Electricity Sector Infrastructure to Geophysical and Climate-Related Hazards – Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Energy Efficiency Line of Credit - Pilot Project – Dominica

Hear from the Team

I'm a monitoring, evaluation and learning specialist with a focus on qualitative research methods. I am experienced in evaluation design and management, always striving to deliver use-oriented, relevant findings and recommendations to strengthen continuous learning and project improvement. I have led capacity building workshops for implementing organizations and worked on topics such as energy, gender, conflict and security, climate change and sustainability in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. I love that no two evaluations are ever the same! Highlights in the evaluation process for me are collaborative workshops with evaluation stakeholders and speaking with project beneficiaries during field missions.

> Katherine Liakos Evaluation Officer

Outreach and Communication Activities

In 2024, the OIE prioritized enhancing the visibility, accessibility, and usability of its evaluation products. Recognizing that evaluation findings must be effectively communicated to drive learning and decision-making, OIE implemented several strategic outreach and communication initiatives aimed at Board members, CDB staff, and management.

To improve dissemination and engagement, OIE collaborated with an external consultant to develop new communication tools and materials. This included creating a video explaining OIE's objectives and role within CDB, designing and implementing tailored communication strategies for two key evaluation activities—the OIE Annual Report and the Synthesis Study of Country Strategy Evaluations. These communication strategies included structured messaging, targeted dissemination plans, and enhanced report design, ensuring that evaluation insights were communicated effectively to different audiences. After assessing the success of these products, OIE will verify the possibility of replicating these communication strategies for future evaluations, further strengthening outreach and knowledge-sharing practices within the evaluation function.

Additionally, OIE strengthened its internal capacity for data visualization and knowledge sharing by conducting a specialized training with a data visualization expert. As an outcome of this training, OIE staff developed a new Project Completion Validation Report (PCVR) template, improving the clarity and effectiveness of self-evaluation results.

Gender Guidelines

OIE drafted the Gender-Responsive Evaluation Guidelines to strengthen the integration of gender perspectives into evaluation processes at

CDB. These guidelines align with international best practices, including those established by UN Women and the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), ensuring that CDB evaluations systematically assess the impact of interventions on gender equality and social inclusion.

The guidelines provide a structured approach to incorporating gender considerations throughout the evaluation cycle, from planning and data collection to analysis, reporting, and dissemination. A key emphasis is placed on ensuring that evaluations not only assess gender outcomes but also challenge existing inequalities by adopting gender-sensitive, genderresponsive, and gender-transformative approaches. The document offers practical tools and methodologies, including a gender rating system, checklists for integrating gender in evaluation criteria, and guidance on designing gender-sensitive evaluation questions and data collection methods.

By implementing these guidelines, OIE aims to enhance accountability, improve learning on gender equality outcomes, and strengthen CDB's role in advancing gender equity in the region. The guidelines will serve as a critical resource for evaluators, CDB staff, and external partners, ensuring that gender-responsive evaluation becomes a standard practice across all of the Bank's development initiatives.

Artificial Intelligence Chatbot

OIE, in collaboration with the Information and Technology Department, initiated the development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Chatbot designed to compile findings and recommendations from Independent Evaluations. The chatbot aims to capitalize on lessons learned from past evaluations to support the design and decisionmaking processes for new policies, projects, and strategies at CDB. By providing quick and easy access to evaluation insights, the tool is expected to enhance learning, accountability, and operational effectiveness for both CDB staff and the Board.

The AI project is now nearing completion, with OIE and the IT Department working closely with the technical partner to resolve outstanding issues identified during the testing phase. Once these refinements are completed, the chatbot will be launched. A presentation to CDB's management and Board is expected to occur in March 2025 to gather their feedback before moving into the scaling-up phase. This initiative represents a significant step forward in leveraging AI for knowledge management, ensuring that evaluation findings are more accessible and actionable across the organization.

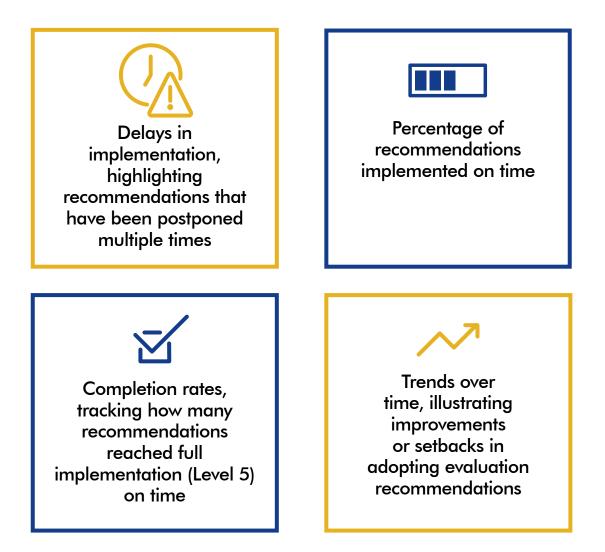
GPT-4o						
		What are the main findings on the DIMSOG evaluation?				
	0	The main findings from the DIMSOG evaluation include:				
		 Integration Challenges: There is a noted lack of integration between Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Resilience Strategy (CRS), which could hinder the effective use of limited resources for building resilience to climate-related disasters [doc1]. 				
		 Implementation and Effectiveness: The evaluation highlights the need for better results management and acknowledges that while some progress has been made in relating DRM to Climate Resilience, implementation delays and challenges remain significant [doc4]. 				
		 Capacity and Coordination Issues: The evaluation identifies capacity limitations in Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs) and the need for improved donor harmonization and coordination [doc4]. 				
		 Mainstreaming Efforts: There is limited evidence of effective mainstreaming of DRM and climate change adaptation within CDB's planned programmes and strategies, indicating a need for further integration into Country Strategies [doc4][doc5]. 				
		 Evaluation Methodology: The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative data, and focused on the consistency and analysis of data from different sources [doc3]. 				
	These findings suggest areas for improvement in strategic integration, capacity building, and coordi to enhance the effectiveness of the DiMSOG framework.					
		DIMSOG Final Report Dec.4.pdf				
		Al Guardian: 😔				
		Message to Chat Bot				

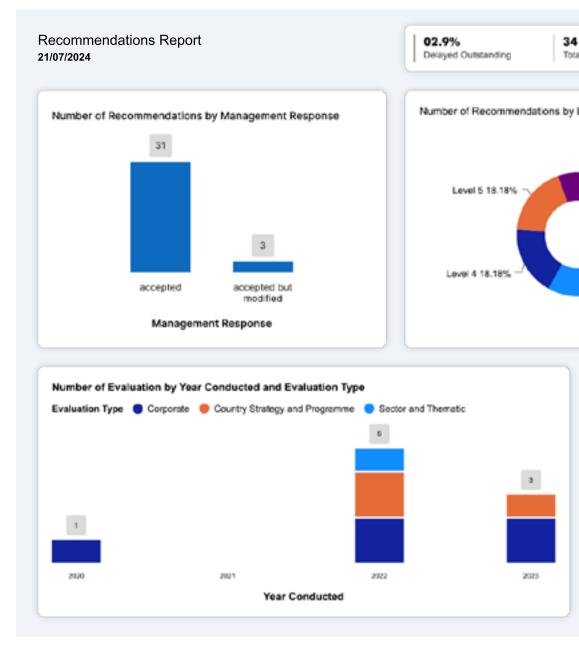
Status of Recommendation Dashboard

In 2024, OIE continued its efforts to strengthen the monitoring and reporting of the implementation of evaluation recommendations, ensuring greater transparency and accountability in CDB's decision-making. As part of this effort, OIE developed an Evaluation Recommendations Tracker, a PowerBIbased dashboard that provides a visual representation of the implementation status of recommendations across the Bank. This tool replaces the previous system, which relied on static Word documents, allowing for greater data accessibility, disaggregation, and trend analysis

The data-driven insights from the tracker allow CDB's management and the Board to monitor progress more effectively, ensuring that lessons learned from evaluations are applied in a timely manner. The tool provides a repository of evaluation recommendations, management responses, and lessons learned, supporting the continuous improvement of CDB's policies, programmes, and operations. By leveraging this new system, OIE is enhancing the impact and usability of evaluations, reinforcing its role in fostering a culture of learning and evidence-based decision-making across the Bank.

The tracker captures critical data on the implementation status of recommendations, including:





The 2024 report tracked the implementation of 34 recommendations from nine key evaluations conducted between 2020 and 2023, including the Barbados and Belize Country Strategy and Programme Evaluations (CSPEs), the Evaluation of Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), and the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Evaluation. Of these, 31 recommendations were fully accepted, while three were accepted with modifications. Regarding implementation progress, 15% of the recommendations have been fully completed, while 3% have experienced delays. The remaining recommendations are currently in progress and on track for implementation. In total, around 36% of the recommendations have reached the advanced implementation stages (Levels 4 and 5), demonstrating significant progress. However, approximately 30% of recommendations remain at the early stages of implementation (Levels 1 and 2).



Among the evaluations assessed, the Belize CSPE (2022) recorded the highest percentage of fully implemented recommendations (93%), followed by the Community Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (CDRRF) evaluation (2022), with 88% of recommendations successfully implemented. In contrast, the Suriname (2021) and Barbados (2022) CSPEs reported lower implementation rates, with only 40% of recommendations completed. The dashboard was presented to the DEC in September, and the committee requested the Bank Secretariat to explore the possibility of uploading it to the Board Portal.

PCVR Lesson Learned Database

In 2024, OIE, in collaboration with the IT Department, developed the PCVR Lessons Learnt Database, a centralized repository designed to track evaluation scoring and lessons derived from Project Completion Validation Reports (PCVRs). The database, which contains PCVRs from 2017 onwards, was created using Microsoft Lists and is, currently, accessible through OIE SharePoint. This initiative provides a structured, user-friendly platform for storing and analyzing evaluation data, making it easier to access, compare, and utilize lessons learned across CDB's portfolio. The PCVR database enhances institutional learning by allowing users to search, filter, and compare data efficiently, rather than manually reviewing multiple documents. It enables CDB staff to identify trends, assess project performance, and highlight areas for improvement. The system offers various filtering options—by sector, year, project ID, country, budget, and scoring criteria—to refine searches and retrieve relevant evaluation insights. Additionally, document links and PDFs are embedded for quick reference, and color-coded evaluation scoring ensures easy identification of project performance.

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				Grenada			CDB Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
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	1579	The Validation of Project Completion Report on th		Belize	2018	Water Supply	Relevance	Highly Satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory
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				Belav			Efficiency	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
				Belge			Sustainability	Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Moving forward, OIE aims to further enhance the database by incorporating statistical analyses and key visuals to track discrepancies between selfevaluations (PCRs) and independent validations (PCVRs), strengthening project efficiency, decision-making, and learning across the Bank. The PCVR Lessons Learned Database was presented to SAT and DEC in November 2024.

Hear from the Team

Enhancing the outcomes of CDB projects is the ultimate goal of independent evaluation. Creating incentives for its use and fostering interest and engagement among key stakeholders—both within the bank and in the Borrower Member Countries are essential activities of the OIE.

> Thania de la Garza Evaluation Specialist

Peer Exchanges and Strategic Partnership

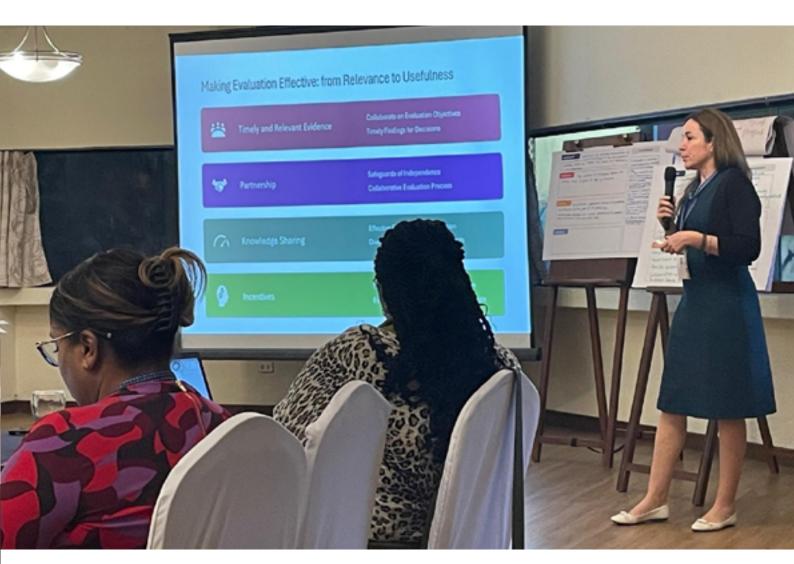
In 2024, OIE actively engaged in peer learning and international collaboration, strengthening its role as a key player in the global evaluation community. These exchanges have allowed OIE to align its practices with international standards, foster regional and cross-regional knowledgesharing, and build stronger M&E capacities within the Caribbean.

OIE participated in the UNDP National Evaluation Capacities (NEC) Conference 2024 in China, where it delivered a keynote intervention and co-chaired a World Café discussion on strengthening national M&E systems. The session brought together representatives from international financial institutions (IFIs), national governments, international organizations, and evaluation practitioners to exchange insights on the challenges, opportunities, and best practices for building resilient and sustainable evaluation systems at national level. OIE highlighted the unique challenges faced by the Caribbean, including economic fragility, limited human and financial resources, and weak statistical capacity, while also sharing strategies for fostering a stronger evaluation culture and promoting resilience-focused evaluations. The event reinforced the importance of regional integration, tailored solutions, and the role of IFIs in supporting national M&E efforts.

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Further strengthening its regional engagement, OIE was a special guest at the 3rd Annual Meeting of ReDeCA (Red de Oficinas de Evaluación de los Bancos y Agencias de Desarrollo de ALC) in The Bahamas, organized by IDB's Office of Evaluation and Oversight (OVE), where it participated in discussions on M&E capacitybuilding across development finance institutions (DFIs) in the Caribbean. Additionally, OIE played an active role in the EVALAC Conference in Guatemala, where it delivered a presentation to Caribbean participants on OIE's evaluation approach and moderated a high-level panel on strengthening M&E systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. These engagements provided an opportunity to showcase OIE's leadership in evaluation, exchange experiences with counterparts from other regions, and advocate for tailored evaluation frameworks for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).





In addition, OIE has also engaged with IFAD's Independent Evaluation Office, where it was invited to deliver a Coffee Talk session in Rome on OIE's experiences and lessons learned in enhancing the evaluation function within CDB.

OIE has also deepened its collaboration with sister organizations, including a collaboration with IDB on the evaluation of the Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility, ensuring greater coordination and shared learning among regional development banks. OIE has initiated dialogue with the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) and CLEAR-LAC to identify common areas of interest. These discussions aim to enhance evaluation capacity in Borrowing Member Countries and among CDB staff through knowledge exchange, technical assistance, and capacity-building efforts. This evolving collaboration reflects OIE's commitment to strengthening monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems across the region. Office of Independent Evaluation Annual Report 2024

These peer exchanges and strategic partnerships continue to enhance OIE's ability to conduct impactful evaluations, build evaluation capacity in the region, and advance the use of evidence-based decision-making in development policy.

10.0

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Staffing and Resourcing

At present, OIE is staffed by three human resources and a long-term consultant.

A new Evaluation officer, Ms. Katherine Liakos, joined the team in May 2023.

Since April 2023, Dr. Serena Rossignoli has been appointed as the Acting Head of Evaluation, bringing invaluable expertise to our team. Thania de la Garza has been contributing significantly as a longterm consultant, providing essential support to our evaluation function. Furthermore, we welcomed Katherine Liakos as the Evaluation Officer in May 2024, further strengthening our team's capabilities. Looking ahead, we anticipate the arrival of a new Head of Evaluation by 2025.

Following the findings and recommendations from the Peer Review of CDB's Evaluation Function, OIE has secured an increase in both financial and human resources, approved in 2024 for implementation in 2025. As part of this expansion, OIE's fulltime staff will triple from 3 to 7 team members, significantly strengthening its capacity to deliver high-quality evaluations, enhance stakeholder engagement, and institutionalize evaluation practices within CDB. This investment responds directly to the growing demand for evidence-based decision-making, accountability, and learning across the Bank.

In addition to human resources, OIE's financial resources have also been tripled, ensuring the Office has the means to expand its evaluation portfolio, refine methodologies, and integrate new tools and innovations. These additional resources will enable OIE to undertake more ambitious evaluations, strengthen partnerships with BMCs, and ensure that evaluation findings effectively inform CDB's policies, projects, and strategic decisions. The approval of this expansion reflects CDB's commitment to reinforcing independent evaluation as a central pillar of learning and development effectiveness in the region.

Hear from the Team

As an intern, I'm dedicated to supporting the team with desk research, data management and reporting. I'm passionate about creating innovative and practical implementations based on quantitative and qualitative research findings. I'm an enthusiastic individual with a newly found interest in the world of evaluation.

Kiara Leach



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Office of Independent Evaluation | Caribbean Development Bank \longrightarrow