



Eurasian
Development Bank



Capacity Building by Multilateral Development Banks:

Cases and Key Features of Training Initiatives



Report 26/3

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CAPACITY BUILDING BY MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS: CASES AND KEY FEATURES OF TRAINING INITIATIVES

KEY FINDINGS

ANALYTICAL REPORT '26/3

TRAINING INITIATIVES

are structures (academies, institutes, programs, etc.) established by the MDBs and IFIs to develop the competencies of civil servants, clients, partners, and a wider audience.



WORLD BANK GROUP

Economic Development Institute (1955) ->
World Bank Institute (2000) ->
Academy (2025)



African Development
Institute (1973)



Asian Development Bank
Institute (1997)



Eurasian
Development Bank

Eurasian Development Bank
Academy (2025)



CAREC Institute (2015)



Islamic Research
and Training Institute (1981)



Institute for Capacity Development (1964) ->
Regional Capacity Development Centres (1992)



European Investment Bank
Institute (2012)



Inter-American Institute for Economic
and Social Development (1994) ->
BIDAcademy (2021)

Goals of MDB and IFI training initiatives:

- Knowledge transfer and skills enhancement
- Dissemination of experience and applied expertise
- Ensuring broad access to knowledge
- Reducing project risks
- Strengthening regional relevance

Governance Models:

- Separate legal entity
- Vice-President Level
- Department level

Financing Models:

- Core Institutional Funding
- Donors' Contributions
- Own resources

LONG-TERM OUTLOOK

1. The active development of digital technologies makes training by MDBs initiatives scalable, open, and accessible.
2. Educational online platforms, AI and VR/AR are the key components of the evolution of MDB training initiatives.
3. Collaboration with educational institutions and EdTech platforms (Coursera, edX, etc.) enriches MDB training initiatives.
4. MDBs will improve the effectiveness of their courses through localization and cultural adaptation.
5. Customization will increase the interest of sponsors in specific courses and attract donors in the form of countries, companies, and foundations.
6. Collaboration of different MDBs represents a significant opportunity for development.
7. Profound integration with MDB projects and national programmes makes MDBs' educational courses a mandatory part of the credit and grant projects.
8. MDBs will seek to calculate the ROI of their programmes.
9. It is expected that the number of courses focusing on soft skills will increase.
10. Educational events can be used to disseminate and shape international norms and standards.
11. Training initiatives could become more effective through the accumulation of "academic capital".



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Full version
of the analytical
report



Vinokurov, E., Kuznetsov, A., Pavlova, M., Malakhov, A., Pereboev, V. Aldanazarov, M., Usanov, A. Kozyrev, D., (EDB); Samad, G., Abdulloev, I., Razzaq, A. (CAREC Institute) (2026) *Capacity Building by Multilateral Development Banks: Cases and Key Features of Training Initiatives*. Joint Report. Almaty, Urumqi. Eurasian Development Bank, CAREC Institute.

This report is a first-of-its-kind research that consolidates the comprehensive experience of multilateral development banks in creating their own Academies, Institutes, educational programmes. The research provides an overview of 14 IFIs such training initiatives, offering detailed descriptions of each. It features a systematic analysis of these initiatives, including their goals, enabling factors, governance and financing models, target audiences, thematic areas, online platforms and AI integration, partnerships, and measures of effectiveness. The report addresses the following questions: What are the primary driving forces behind these initiatives? What objectives do they aim to achieve? How might these knowledge-based engines evolve in the future?

Keywords: education, training, development, multilateral development banks, MDBs, IFIs, capacity building, technical assistance.

JEL: F15, F55, I25, J62, O15.

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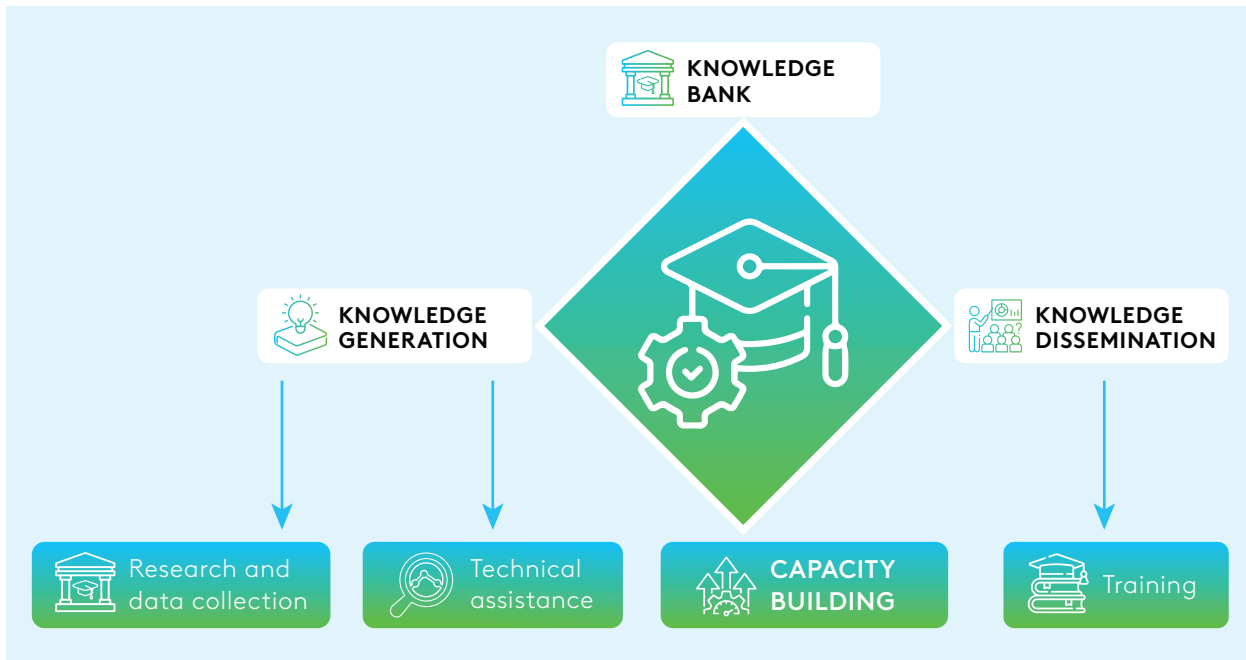
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Executive Summary

Many Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) aim to be a “**knowledge bank**”. For this purpose, they engage in knowledge-generating and knowledge-sharing activities, including data collection, research, technical assistance, and training. These activities are interconnected and synergetic, enhancing the development impact of MDBs.

↓ Figure A. MDB as a knowledge bank.



Source: EDB.

Education and training are key ways to increase human capital and MDBs have been actively involved in this area for many years. Good health and education, knowledge and skills, usually termed “human capital” in economics, are crucial for development because they make economies more productive.

Most importantly, MDBs provide **financing for the education sector**. This includes financing education infrastructure, supporting educational reforms and promoting access to education, typically in the form of **sovereign loans and grants**.

MDBs are also **direct providers of training**. MDBs see weak institutional capacity as one of the main barriers to development, and training as a key tool to address the problem. During their research and investment operations, MDBs accumulate unique knowledge that they want to share with their clients as well as with broader audiences. Training programmes of the MDBs also serve as mechanisms for **promoting standards and best practices at the regional and global level**.

The [first chapter](#) provides an overview of MDBs' training initiatives. It describes training initiatives of 14 development institutions ([Table A](#)).

↓ **Table A. Training Initiatives at MDBs and IFIs**

Nº	MDBs / IFIs	Training Initiatives	Start of activity	Region of operations
Multilateral Development Banks				
1	WBG	Economic Development Institute (1955) World Bank Institute (2000) Academy (2025)	1955	Global
2	AfDB	African Development Institute	1973	Africa
3	ADB	Asian Development Bank Institute	1997	Asia and the Pacific region
4	CAF	CAF Courses Platform	N/A	Latin America and the Caribbean region
5	CDB	e-Learning Platform	N/A	The Caribbean region
6	TDB	TDB Academy	N/A	Eastern and Southern Africa
7	EDB	Eurasian Development Bank Academy	2025	Eurasia with focus on Central Asia and South Caucasus
8	EBRD	E-Learning Platform, EBRD Impact Academy, EBRD Green Finance Academy	N/A	Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Southern and Eastern Mediterranean
9	EIB	European Investment Bank Institute	2012	Primarily EU and Global
10	IDB	Inter-American Institute for Economic and Social Development (1994) BIDAcademy (2021)	1994	Latin America and the Caribbean region
11	IsDB	Islamic Research and Training Institute (1981)	1981	Member countries across Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Latin America
12	NADB	Utility Management Institute	1999	North America
Other International Financial Institutions*				
13	IMF	Institute for Capacity Development (1964) Regional Capacity Development Centres (1992)	1964	Global
14	CAREC Programme	CAREC Institute	2015	Asia

Note: * The IMF and CAREC Institute are included in the analysis because they have extensive expertise in training initiatives.

Source: EDB.

The [second chapter](#) provides a **systematic analysis** of the MDBs’ training initiatives across several dimensions: their goals, enabling factors, governance and financing models, target audience, thematic areas, online platforms and AI, partnerships, and effectiveness (Figure B). The [third chapter](#) of the report presents the long-term outlook for developing MDB training initiatives.

↓ **Figure B. Key issues**



Source: EDB.

Goals. Strategy documents shows that the goals for MDBs’ training initiatives can be categorized into the following five groups.

1. **Knowledge transfer and capacity building.** Weak capacity remains one of the main barriers to development impact. MDBs provide financing and seek to enhance the institutional and professional capacity of borrowing countries so they can use these resources effectively.
2. **Reducing project risks.** Training project participants in modern methods of planning, procurement, monitoring and evaluation reduces the likelihood of errors and the inefficient use of funds.
3. **Spreading in-house international knowledge.** Training programmes facilitate the sharing of accumulated case studies and knowledge regarding successful projects and innovative approaches in various countries.
4. **Accessibility of knowledge to a wide audience.** Over the last decade, MDBs started to offer Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that do not target specifically its clients and partners but are designed for broader audiences. An online course is a cost-effective way to disseminate this knowledge.
5. **Promoting impact.** Training initiatives can also serve as a tool for MDBs to enhance their influence and build their brand in target regions. MDBs can build goodwill and strengthen relationships with partner countries. This should be also helpful for MDBs to generate new projects and clients.

Enabling factors. Setting up a training initiative requires a decision of the MDB's shareholders and management. These factors, in our view, have a strong influence on the possibility of creating training initiatives:

1. **Identification of training and capacity gaps in target regions.** The scale of training gaps differs significantly depending on an MDB's region of operation. In Africa training needs are substantial and the main MDB located in Africa, the AfDB, has a separate Capacity Development Strategy and a special unit, the African Development Institute, devoted to capacity building and training.
2. **Synergy with other knowledge activities.** If an MDB has strong research and technical assistance programmes, then addition of training to its knowledge activities is often a natural step.
3. **Availability of funding.** Training initiatives of MDBs are cost centres: they do not generate revenue anywhere close to covering their costs. Therefore, they need funding either from the MDB's administrative budget or from external donors. This is why we do not see much training provision from smaller MDBs.

Governance Models. Shareholders and management place varying degrees of importance on training activities within an MDB: greater importance means a more prominent position. If the training unit is going to rely predominantly on external donors, it is reasonable to expect that they would like to have a say in determining its priorities and governance. Existing examples can be classified into three broad groups:

1. **Separate Legal Entity.** The training unit can be created as an independent member of the group along with the MDB itself. For example, the ADBI is an independent member of the ADB Group. The budget of the Institute is independent from that of the ADB and the Bank is not responsible for the obligations of the ADBI.
2. **Vice-President Level.** A more typical governance model is when a training unit is one of the departments of an MDB and reports directly to one of vice-presidents of an MDB. For example, the African Development Institute reports to the Chief Economist — Vice President for Economic Governance and Knowledge Management of the African Development Bank.

3. **Department Level.** The training unit is part of a larger department and reports to the head of the department. At some MDBs, for example, the EBRD, training initiatives do not form a separate unit in the organizational structure, but rather a programme within it.

Financing Models. MDBs' training units are funded through a mix of resources that come from different sources. The WBG and the IMF use both the administrative budget and donors' contributions. The WBG estimated that in FY2010 the share of its training financed by trust funds—i.e., external donors—was approximately 60%, while the remaining 40% was financed by the bank.

1. **Core Institutional Funding.** Often training initiatives are financed primarily from the administrative budget of an MDB. This funding structure ensures stability but limits available resources.
2. **Donors' Contributions.** This source of funding can include grants from external donors and contributions from the MDB's member states. The ADBI seems rather unique in the MDB system, because it relies predominantly on donor contributions. Its roughly \$16 million 2024 budget was financed largely by the Government of Japan, with smaller contributions from South Korea and Malaysia.
3. **Own resources.** MDBs' training initiatives can also charge their users for services they provide. However, this rarely happens in practice and normally only when training is conducted for a high-income country. Most of an MDB's training is free for the users.

Target Audience of MDBs' training is generally determined by their mandates and the goals of their training activities. As a result, the main audience for training is their existing and potential clients, and development partners. Development of online and virtual training makes it possible to significantly reduce training cost per participant and opens access to training to a much wider audience. Many MDBs place their online training products as MOOCs on their dedicated websites or on educational platforms.

Training Content Customization. One particular aspect of training where sub-regional MDBs might have a comparative advantage over larger institutions is customization of their training content to country-specific circumstances. Large MDBs, including the ADBI at the ADB, and the Open Learning Campus at the World Bank, which mostly provide general training on core topics, might adjust the content to region-specific circumstances, but only rarely customize it to specific country needs.

Sub-regional MDBs operating in a limited number of countries might be better equipped to provide country-tailored training due to their in-depth knowledge of a country's training needs, closer connections to decision-makers and potential partners, and proficiency in local languages.

Thematic Areas. MDBs' training programmes can be categorized into seven areas: 1. Project Management; 2. Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience; 3. Economic and Financial Management; 4. Digital Transformation and Innovation; 5. Social Inclusion and Gender Equality; 6. Public-Private Partnerships; 7. Leadership. The most popular areas turn out to be Economic and Financial Management, followed by Project Management and Leadership.

Climate change and sustainability are now a major focus of development. As technology reshapes development, MDBs also offer training in digital governance, smart cities, cybersecurity, and data-driven decision-making. Courses also address leveraging artificial intelligence and blockchain for public service delivery and efficient resource allocation.

Online Platforms and AI. These tools are used to expand access to knowledge, personalize learning experiences, and support capacity building. AI-enabled platforms can analyze a student's performance in real time and adjust their content by offering more support where needed or advancing more quickly through topics that the student masters easily. For example, the Islamic Development Bank Institute used advances in AI, especially the emergence of large language models such as ChatGPT, to develop the Islamic Finance Artificial Intelligence Assistant intended to democratize access to Islamic finance knowledge.

Partnerships. Partners might include national governments, educational institutions, think tanks, private sector actors, and other development agencies. The partnerships help to foster resource sharing and leverage specific strengths and knowledge, enhance the effectiveness of training programmes by aligning them with local needs while leveraging global best practices.

The most prominent example is the IMF global network of 17 regional capacity-development centres. Each centre was established in cooperation with various partners, which include regional member states, donor countries, and several MDBs, including the World Bank, ADB, CDB, CABEL, and EIB. Most RDCs are funded by a combination of member countries and external donors.

Effectiveness. Regular evaluation provides evidence of the value and effectiveness of training programmes to the bank's leadership, donor countries, and recipient countries. This helps MDBs to: (1) optimize programmes and resources; (2) ensure tangible development impact; (3) demonstrate accountability and justify investments.

Systematic evaluation of training programmes' effectiveness is conducted only by the IMF and some major MDBs. Normally they base their evaluations on the Kirkpatrick model (published in 1959).

Level 1: Reaction (participant satisfaction). This is measured with a questionnaire conducted at the end of the course, which also asks participants to provide suggestions on how to improve the course.

Level 2: Learning is measured using pre- and post-training exams.

Level 3: Behaviour. This assesses the training outcomes for individuals and institutions. Training outcomes normally refer to changes in participants' effectiveness at their workplace as a result of training. They are assessed by follow-up surveys several months after the conclusion of training events. Every three years, the IMF conducts a broader survey and provides information about future training needs.

Level 4: Results. This assesses impact in terms of improved performance of the participant's organization. The IMF does not conduct Level 4 evaluations, because they are too costly and difficult to implement. Other MDBs that provide training also do not conduct Level 4 evaluations.

Long-term outlook

MDBs are evolving in response to global and regional challenges. Under the influence of technological, social, and economic factors, MDBs' educational activities are likely **to intensify and be transformed**.

Within 10 years, MDB training initiatives are likely to be perceived not as a supporting tool, but as a **key non-investment activity**. MDBs can become a kind of "educational hub" for development issues.

We believe that the following **development vectors** will affect both former and newer training initiatives of all MDBs:

1. **The active development of digital technologies makes training initiatives by MDBs scalable, open, and accessible.** It is expected that MDBs will increasingly create open educational resources that are accessible from all over the world. New technologies will reduce production costs.
2. **Educational online platforms, AI technologies including AI-assistance and VR/AR are the key components of the evolution of MDB training initiatives.** MDBs will continue to use online educational platforms as central tools for scaling their training. The use of AI will enable the development of adaptive formats for personalizing the learning process.
3. **Collaboration with educational institutions and EdTech platforms (Coursera, edX, etc.) enriches MDB training initiatives.** Universities and EdTech platforms are channels for accessing regional and global audiences. This will likely lead to greater cooperation between MDBs and such organizations.
4. **MDBs will improve the effectiveness of their courses through localization and cultural adaptation.** This means that MDBs will be more active in two areas: content translation to national languages and adaptation of materials to the institutional characteristics of different regions.
5. **Customization will increase the interest of sponsors in specific courses and attract donors in the form of countries, companies, and foundations.**
6. **Collaboration of different MDBs represents a significant opportunity for development.** Joint capacity-building initiatives of MDBs could create more impact, reduce duplication, and strengthen the development ecosystem across countries.

7. **Profound integration with MDB projects and national programmes makes MDBs' educational courses a mandatory part of the credit and grant projects.** They can also be embedded in national programmes for the professional development of civil servants.
8. **MDBs will seek to calculate the ROI of their programmes.** New technologies will help MDBs to develop performance evaluation systems. It will make it possible to relocate resources using the combination of offline and online formats.
9. **It is expected that the number of courses focusing on soft skills will increase.** Soft skills are a necessary factor for the successful implementation of MDB projects.
10. **Educational events can be used to disseminate and shape international norms and standards.** Development projects require less MDB resources when clients adhere to uniform rules.
11. **Training initiatives could become more effective through the accumulation of "academic capital"** by supporting the communities of their graduates (alumni clubs and others).

Introduction

Good health and education, knowledge and skills, usually termed “human capital” in economics, are crucial for development because they make economies more productive. While the focus of multilateral development banks (MDBs) has been (and largely remains) on building physical capital including infrastructure, they also realized the importance of human capital for the success of their operations a long time ago. Education and training are key ways to increase human capital, and MDBs have been actively involved in this area for many years.

Most importantly, MDBs provide **financing for the education sector**. This includes financing education infrastructure, supporting educational reforms and promoting access to education, as well as other areas. This is typically done in the form of sovereign loans and grants.

The World Bank is the largest single source of international financing for education, with 162 projects totalling \$27.1 billion ([World Bank, 2024a](#)). Combined IBRD and IDA commitments to education averaged \$4.5 billion annually over the last five years, or 6.7% of their total commitments ([World Bank, 2025](#)).

In the Eurasian region, the EFSD Sovereign Financing Database ([EFSD, 2025](#)) lists projects worth \$3 billion in education, or 2% of total approved sovereign financing in the region between 2008 and 2024. Non-sovereign financing for education is significantly smaller; the EDB Non-sovereign Financing Database ([EDB, 2025](#)) contains just one such project, which was a secured loan by the ADB to a Mongolian school for campus expansion ([ADB, 2024](#)).

Besides financing education, MDBs are also **direct providers of training**. The basic rationale for this role comes from the fact that the success of their lending operations requires borrowers that are capable to design and implement corresponding programmes and projects. More broadly, MDBs see weak institutional capacity as one of the main barriers to development, and training as a key tool to address the problem.

Another part of the rationale for a MDB being a training provider is that during their research and investment operations, MDBs accumulate unique knowledge that they want to share with their clients as well as with broader audiences.

Training programmes of the MDBs also serve as mechanisms for promoting standards and best practices at the regional and global levels. MDBs as multilateral institutions are also well suited to facilitate knowledge sharing and dialogue between their clients and partners from different countries.

The EDB launched its own Academy in 2025 to foster regional economic cooperation and improve the investment climate across its member states, with a focus on Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

This report aims to provide a systematic overview of training activities by MDBs. The primary objective is to consolidate existing knowledge and present a structured analysis of the various approaches MDBs employ in their training operations. The report addresses several key questions: What are the main objectives of MDB training? What are their key features? What approaches do MDBs use to evaluate the effectiveness of their training initiatives?

In addition to the description of training activities of MDBs, this report also adds the IMF to the analysis, given its unique role in the global financial systems and the extent of its training activities. For conciseness, in this report the term “MDB” also applies to the IMF, unless specifically noted.

This report might be useful to governments, business and education communities, and multilateral development banks. MDBs will find this report particularly useful if they are:

- Planning to establish dedicated knowledge units;
- Seeking new ideas for in-house training initiatives;
- Exploring opportunities for MDBs’ cooperation on the education/training track.

This report contains three chapters. The [first chapter](#) provides a general overview of MDBs’ training initiatives. It describes training initiatives of 14 development institutions.

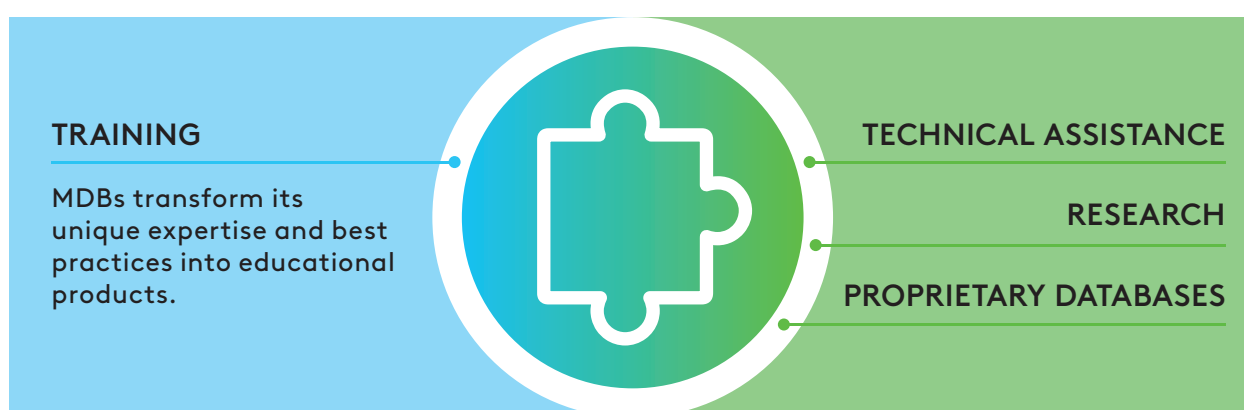
The [second chapter](#) provides a systematic analysis of the MDBs’ training initiatives across several dimensions: their goals, enabling factors, governance and financing models, target audience, thematic areas, online platforms and AI, partnerships, and effectiveness.

The [third chapter](#) of the report presents the long-term outlook for developing MDB training initiatives.

1. MDBs' Training Initiatives: An Overview

Multilateral development banks are, first of all, of course banks: they provide financing in the forms of loans, equity and bond investment, and guarantees for development programmes and projects. In addition, many of the MDBs aim to be “knowledge banks” as well (Figure 1). For this purpose, they engage in knowledge-generating and knowledge-sharing activities, which include data collection and dissemination, research, technical assistance, training.

↓ Figure 1. MDBs' non-investment instruments.



Source: EDB.

- **Proprietary databases.** MDBs can conduct long-term research projects. Databases maintained by the World Bank and IMF, which are freely accessible, serve as a one-stop shop for global macroeconomic, financial, and development data. They are key tools for economic policymakers, researchers, and journalists in their work. Smaller MDBs also collect datasets and databases that are typically regionally focused. For example, the EDB monitors mutual investments in its member countries, and maintains an observatory of the Eurasian Transport Network's projects, and a database on non-sovereign financing of IFIs in Eurasia.
- **Research.** MDBs engage actively in research activities that provide public goods. They have strong in-house analytical expertise in both regional and country contexts. Research by MDBs aims to produce new knowledge on critical issues for development, including macroeconomics, growth, finance, infrastructure, environment, trade, and governance. The outputs of these efforts include reports, articles, books, and analytical tools. Research helps to guide MDBs' corporate strategies, policy advice, lending operations, evaluations, and technical assistance (World Bank, 2012).
- **Technical assistance (TA)** can be divided into two main categories: (a) that directly related to specific projects or transactions, such as project-preparatory facilities,

and (b) a broader approach focused on enhancing institutional capacity, building expertise, and facilitating knowledge transfer. TA plays a crucial role in laying the foundation for a better and more effective impact of development initiatives.

- **Training** is another knowledge-sharing activity of the MDBs and is the topic of the current report.

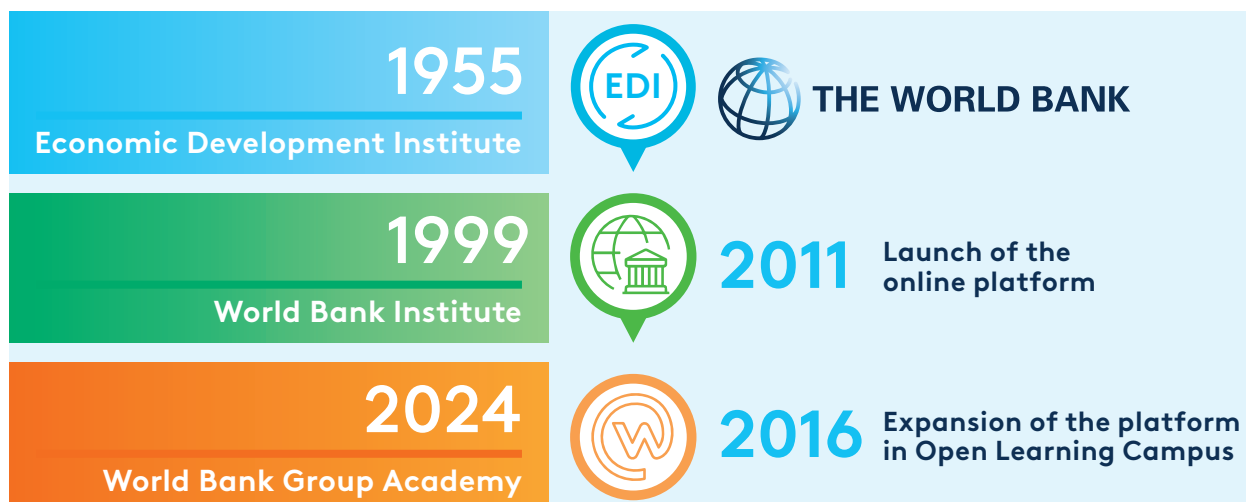
These activities are closely interconnected and synergetic. The research and TA provided by MDBs will be explored in upcoming reports by the EDB. This report focuses on MDBs’ training activities, beginning with an overview of training initiatives by all MDBs for which information was available.

1.1. World Bank Group (WBG)

Alongside the IMF, the World Bank Group (WBG) is the largest provider of training among MDBs and other international financial institutions (IFIs).

The core unit of the WBG providing training is the **World Bank Group Academy**. Its origins trace back to 1955 (Figure 2), when the World Bank established the Economic Development Institute (EDI) with initial funding from the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation. The EDI aimed “to spread the knowledge gained by the World Bank in its operations and personnel to officials in developing countries to foster economic and social development and to provide a forum for dialogue between all the parties” (World Bank, 2003). Its first course, offered exclusively at WBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., focused on economic development policy formulation and management for mid- and high-level officials. Over time, the EDI expanded its offerings to include courses on project preparation and sector planning, delivered both in the United States and abroad.

↓ Figure 2. Development of training activities at the World Bank.



Source: EDB.

In 1999, the EDI merged with the World Bank's Centre for Personnel Training and Leadership to form the **World Bank Institute** (WBI). Building on the EDI's work, the WBI enhanced support for banking operations by developing courses, programmes, and training materials focused on cross-sectoral and thematic approaches to development projects, which are used in lending operations. The WBI shifted its focus to address individual country needs, prioritizing long-term institutional capacity development. It also expanded its audience to include parliamentarians, journalists, teachers, civil society leaders, and World Bank staff, and began using the Internet to broaden programme reach.

In 2011, the WBI launched the e-Institute, a virtual learning platform offering online classes, podcasts, webinars, toolkits, and other resources to global users. Building on this success, the WBG introduced the **Open Learning Campus (OLC)** in 2016 as a unified platform for staff and client learning ([World Bank, 2016](#)). The OLC provides learning modules in diverse formats, including e-courses, MOOCs, webinars, podcasts, TED-style talks, and bite-sized learning.

In 2024, the WBI's resources were reorganized into the **World Bank Group Academy**, launched in 2025 as part of the WBG's initiative "The Knowledge Compact for Action: Transforming Ideas into Development Impact" ([World Bank, 2024b](#)). The Academy aims to enhance the WBG's approaches to products, training, partnerships, and systems, empowering government officials and private sector leaders to deliver transformative development solutions. It fosters a talent pool of leaders and practitioners in client countries through courses, training programmes, and certifications in areas such as economic development, public sector management, and social inclusion. The Academy also provides access to a vast library of knowledge and resources on global development, including technical knowledge exchanges, best practices, and proven solutions, leveraging the WBG network of country offices and centres.

The Academy offers a wide range of professional development programmes for partners engaged in global development, advanced analytics, and lessons learned from development strategies and programmes. These programmes address global challenges and country priorities, promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth, strengthening social protection, creating jobs, and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Educational offerings include face-to-face, online, peer-to-peer, and hands-on learning, as well as access to communities of practice and knowledge resources. Face-to-face events are held at WBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., regional hubs, and country offices.

The Academy collaborates with external partners, including academia, think tanks, and the private sector, as a global platform for development. It supports WBG clients—such as policymakers, ministry staff, central banks, regulators, other public sector institutions, and private sector representatives—through tailored training and resources.

While the Academy is the primary training unit, other WBG units, such as WBG Treasury, also provide training. The Treasury offers resources to a global network of public asset managers, including central banks, IFIs, pension funds and sovereign wealth funds. It hosts over 30 week-long technical workshops annually, develops customized workshops for specific institutions, and provides webinars and a comprehensive catalogue of online training modules ([World Bank, no date](#)).

Recent data on WBG training expenditures are unavailable, but a 2011 review of WBG knowledge activities reported that external client training expenditures totalled approximately \$55 million in FY2010, down from \$72 m in FY2005. The WBI accounted for about 81% of this training, with the remainder provided by other departments ([World Bank, 2011](#)). Training represented 2.1% of the WBG's gross administrative budget in FY2010.

1.2. African Development Bank (AfDB)

The AfDB identifies individual, organizational, and institutional capacity as critical constraints to development in Africa. To address this, the AfDB prioritizes capacity development as outlined in its Capacity Development Strategy, 2021–2025 ([AfDB, 2021](#)). The primary unit responsible for capacity development, including training, is the **African Development Institute (ADI)**, established in 1973. The ADI focuses primarily on organizational and institutional capacity building rather than individual training, which limits the scope of its training activities. According to the Capacity Development Strategy, the AfDB Group's training efforts have largely centred on seminars and workshops.

One key initiative is the Institutional Capacity and Fiduciary Clinics, which aims to enhance the execution of AfDB-funded projects by training government officials in programme and project management. In 2024, the AfDB conducted 10 such clinics, benefiting 632 government officials ([AfDB, 2025, p.56](#)).

Another initiative, Training of Trainers (ToT), promotes the sustainability of the training efforts in member countries. The programme identifies and trains core staff from relevant ministries to serve as mentors in their home countries, fostering long-term capacity development.

The AfDB also offers an 18-month executive training programme through its Public Finance Management Academy, focusing on domestic resource mobilization and fiscal policy. The first cohort of 51 public officials from 26 countries graduated in 2023 ([AfDB, 2023](#)). By 2024, participation had grown to 400 officials ([AfDB, 2025a](#)).

In 2020, the AfDB launched the Virtual Capacity Development Academy, a collaborative online platform hosting repositories of certified experts, institutions, and knowledge resources on specialized thematic subjects. The platform facilitates policy dialogue, training, and technical assistance, and includes an interactive virtual marketplace with an “ask the experts” function ([AfDB, no date](#)).

1.3. Asian Development Bank (ADB)

The ADB established the **Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI)** in 1997 as a dedicated knowledge and training unit. Based in Tokyo, Japan – unlike the ADB’s headquarters in Manila, Philippines – the ADBI operates with its own balance sheet and funding sources.

The ADBI specializes in developing effective strategies for the Asia-Pacific region and supporting ADB member countries in addressing development challenges. It has created comprehensive virtual platforms to enhance capacity building and provide training resources across the region. A key initiative is the ADBI E-Learning platform, offering tuition-free training courses designed to equip individuals and organizations with essential skills aligned with regional developmental needs ([ADBI, no date](#)).

The ADBI is committed to fostering training and knowledge-sharing opportunities to strengthen stakeholder capabilities in the Asia-Pacific. By promoting tuition-free learning and a collaborative knowledge base, the ADBI plays a vital role in addressing development challenges and fostering regional cooperation.

Additionally, the ADBI hosts the *“ThinkAsia” Knowledge Platform*, a repository of research on economic and social development issues in the region. ThinkAsia facilitates dialogue and shares knowledge among policymakers, researchers, and practitioners, promoting informed decision-making and sustainable development ([ThinkAsia, no date](#)).

In 2024, the ADBI had 89 staff members and an annual expenditure of \$16.2 million, representing approximately 1.8% of the ADB’s administrative budget ([ADB, 2025a](#)). Training and capacity development account for roughly of 40% of the ADBI’s programme expenses, with the remainder allocated to research ([ADB, 2023](#)).

1.4. Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF)

The CAF offers various online courses through its CAF Courses platform to strengthen institutional capacity and leadership in the region. These courses, along with on-demand training initiatives, address development-related issues, including economic, social, and environmental aspects. Topics include climate change and biodiversity, environmental management, energy efficiency in buildings, and impact evaluation for public management. The CAF also provides two professional diploma programmes: Governance and Public Innovation (in partnership with universities in Latin America and the Caribbean) and Public–Private Partnerships ([CAF, 2025](#)).

1.5. Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

The CDB offers online courses through its **e-Learning Platform**, focusing on the procurement issues related to its lending projects. These courses cover topics such as online procurement, managing environmental, social, health, and safety aspects of infrastructure projects, and financial instruments used in procurement (CDB, 2025).

1.6. Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (TDB)

The TDB operates the **TDB Academy**, its capacity-building arm, which provides training, seminars, conferences, study tours, and other interventions for personal and institutional capacity development (TDB, 2025). While the TDB discloses limited information about its activities, its 2023 Sustainability and Development Impact Report highlights training focused on risk management for commercial banks and negotiating energy infrastructure projects for public sector lawyers to help governments address the energy gap (TDB, 2024, p.23).

1.7. Eurasian Development Bank (EDB)

The EDB launched its **EDB Academy** in 2025 to foster regional economic cooperation and improve the investment climate across its member states. The Academy aims to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of businesses and government institutions through structured knowledge sharing, training, and the dissemination of best practices based on EDB experience and global standards.

As the EDB Academy evolves, it functions as a comprehensive training ecosystem, offering professional development programmes, digital tools, and thematic learning pathways. It employs to employ various formats, including workshops, webinars, masterclasses, and an interactive online platform called the **Digital Academy**. This platform contains e-courses: databases of practical cases, AI-personalized learning journeys, and communication tools such as forums and chatbots, designed to provide accessible and adaptive learning opportunities.

The Academy will collaborate with leading universities and international development institutions and engage EDB employees as instructors to leverage internal expertise. Core topics will include:

1. Investment Project Management with a focus on Project Finance.

Developing expertise in structuring, appraising, and executing complex investment projects using financing mechanisms and tools provided by IFIs.

2. Implementation of strategic infrastructural projects in Central Asia.

Addressing sector-specific challenges and best practices in energy, the water-energy nexus, transport infrastructure, and other priority areas in Central Asia.

3. The Multilateral Development Bank System.

Examining governance frameworks, operational principles, and financial instruments (e.g., loans, guarantees, blended finance) used by global and regional MDBs.

1.8. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

The EBRD does not have a dedicated training unit and is less active in training than other MDBs. Its **E-Learning Platform**, as of June 2025, offers eight online courses closely tied to EBRD's investment operations, primarily targeting stakeholders and potential clients (EBRD, 2025a). Examples include:

- Community Engagement for EBRD Stakeholders
- Environmental and Social Contractor Management
- Labour and Working Conditions
- Road Safety Engineering.

The EBRD also provides free online sectoral programmes, including:

- **EBRD Impact Academy.** Initially an internal training platform, now available to a broader audience, it offers curricula on developing policy frameworks and assessing the social impact of investments (EBRD, 2025b).
- **EBRD Green Finance Academy.** An online platform providing training on green finance, renewable energy, and environmental sustainability to help financial institutions scale up green financing businesses (EBRD, 2025c).

1.9. European Investment Bank (EIB)

The EIB, the largest MDB, has limited training activities relative to its size and compared to other major MDBs, likely due to the strong institutional capacity and abundance of alternative training providers within the European Union. In 2012, the EIB established the **EIB Institute** "to promote and support academic, cultural and social initiatives with European stakeholders and the public at large" (EIB Institute, 2023). The Institute supports these goals through events, grants, lectures, and courses. Its knowledge-sharing activities include lectures, workshops, and conferences delivered by EIB Group staff on the Bank's mission, operations, and policy priorities.

The EIB's Open Learning platform offers short online courses, podcasts, and publications in three areas aligned with its priorities (EIB, no date): Environment, Financial Development & Financial Inclusion, and Regional & Urban development. These courses disseminate knowledge and best practices to practitioners, scholars, and the general public.

Another part of EIB's training activities is the EIB Summer School, a 10-day annual programme in Luxembourg for Master's Degree students. The programme introduces participants to the EIB's mission and activities, including sustainable project financing, risk management, and the EU Green Deal, through lectures, workshops and group assignments led by EIB and European Investment Fund (EIF) staff. It aims to foster lasting relationships and build a network of individuals interested in the future of Europe and beyond.

The EIB also cooperates with universities in organizing specialized training programmes. In 2017, in collaboration with the University of Luxembourg, the EIB Institute launched a two-week training programme, the Certificate in Law and Regulation of Inclusive Finance. Another example of such collaboration is the e-learning Master Class on Environmental & Social Sustainability Management with the Frankfurt School of Finance & Management (Frankfurt School of Finance & Management, no date).

1.10. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

The IDB Group's knowledge and learning platform, the **IDB Academy** or **BIDAcademy**, operates under **the Inter-American Institute for Economic and Social Development (INDES)**, established in 1994. Launched in 2021, the BIDAcademy integrates and disseminates practical, actionable knowledge generated by the IDB Group (Barrio et al., 2022).

The BIDAcademy offers over 14,000 publications, research materials, tools and online courses for professionals, practitioners, and students. Its learning programmes cover critical development topics, including project management, public-private partnerships, management of social and environmental risk, and evidence-based regulations (IDB, no date, a). Courses are delivered through instructor-led, self-paced, and hybrid (in-person and online) formats.

The BIDAcademy's training programmes consist of thematically interrelated and often interdependent online courses, which can be taken individually (IDB, no date, b). These programmes are offered through four modalities:

- Online courses with instructors. By invitation only, for up to 40 participants per course at national and regional levels.
- Face-to-face courses. For up to 40 participants, held in Latin American and Caribbean cities for a maximum of three days.

- MOOCs. Offered through the edX platform in collaboration with Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, including videos, readings, and weekly evaluations.
- Communities of Practice. For professionals who have earned a programme course certificate, enabling ongoing engagement, knowledge sharing, and collaboration with IDB facilitators.

The BIDAcademy supports professionals involved in IDB-financed projects by offering targeted training and certification in areas such as fostering sustainable and effective project outcomes.

1.11. Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

The IsDB, an independent member of the IsDB Group, which develops knowledge-based solutions according to Islamic economics principles to support sustainable socio-economic development in IsDB member countries and Muslim communities worldwide ([IsDBI, 2025a](#)). Established in 1981 as the Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI), it was rebranded in 2021 as the IsDB Institute to align with the IsDB's strategic priorities.

Led by a Director General and guided by a Board of Trustees chaired by the IsDB Group Chairman, the IsDBI has delivered over 800 training programmes on topics such as innovation and digitalization, climate action, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), financial inclusion, and development solutions for member countries. In 2024, it organized 16 in-person training programmes on Shari'ah governance, microfinance, and sustainability, with over 500 participants, and offered four MOOCs with more than 930 attendees from over 130 countries ([IsDBI, 2025b](#)). To enhance access to its knowledge resources, the IsDBI piloted two digital solutions: the Islamic Finance Artificial Intelligence Assistant, providing insights into IsDB Group and other publicly available publications and data, and the IsDB Group Islamic Finance Knowledge Pavilion Platform, a marketplace for advisers, consultants, and fintech experts in Islamic finance and economic development.

1.12. North American Development Bank (NADB)

The NADB, a small bank focused on environmentally responsible infrastructure projects along the U.S.-Mexico border, recognized the need to build institutional capacity in water utilities. In 1999, it established the **Utility Management Institute (UMI)** to deliver in-person training for water utility managers in the region. In 2023, the UMI overhauled its programme and began offering it remotely and free-of-charge via online communication platforms. The Public Management Leadership Programme focuses on managerial skills for public service, covering topics such as planning in public entities, identifying and prioritizing environmental issues, financial management and administration, rate models for water utilities, innovation, and creating public value in government actions ([NADB, 2025](#)).

1.13. International Monetary Fund (IMF)

The IMF considers capacity development, encompassing training and technical assistance (TA), as one of the three core areas of its work, alongside lending to member countries facing economic challenges and economic surveillance (monitoring the international monetary system and members' economic and financial policies). The distinction between training and TA is not always clear, as TA often includes on-the-job training. The IMF's new Capacity Development Strategy emphasizes closer integration of training with TA (IMF, 2024).

The primary unit responsible for training within the IMF is the **Institute for Capacity Development (ICD)**, one of the nine functional and special services departments. Established in 1964 as the IMF Institute, it provided training in economic management to officials of member countries. In 2012, the IMF Institute merged with the Office of Technical Assistance Management to form the ICD. While the ICD delivers most IMF training, other departments — such as Statistics, Fiscal Affairs, Monetary and Capital Markets, and Legal — also provide training, typically linked to technical assistance. ICD courses are generally broader, multi-country programmes, whereas other departments focus on specialized, technical assistance-related training.

The distinctive feature of the IMF is its global network of 17 Regional Capacity Development Centres (RCDCs), each established with local partners to coordinate and implement training activities in a designated region. Since the first RCDC was created in 1992, their expansion has decentralized IMF training delivery (see Section 2.9, Partnerships, for details).

IMF training aligns with its core competences, covering topics in public financial management, fiscal policy, macroeconomic statistics, financial supervision and regulation, macroeconomic frameworks, central bank operations, and financial integrity. The IMF employs various training modalities:

- **In-person training.** Includes classroom training and workshops, divided into two types: (a) multi-country training on broad topics, held at IMF headquarters in Washington D.C., or at RCDCs, and (b) targeted, country-specific training linked to technical assistance, primarily delivered in the respective country. In 2019, the share of training at IMF headquarters dropped to 5.2%.
- **Virtual training.** Synchronous web-based training allowing real-time interaction between trainers and participants. During the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual training surged in 2020 and 2021, replacing in-person courses at IMF Headquarters and RCDCs.
- **Online training.** Asynchronous web-based training that participants complete independently. Launched in 2013 through a partnership with edX (founded by Harvard

University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), the IMF's online learning programme aims to make courses accessible to both officials and the general public, with the latter now forming the majority of users. Developing a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) is quite costly: it takes six to ten months to develop an online course and the cost has ranged between US\$500,000 and US\$900,000 depending on the length and complexity of the course, but they can benefit a large number of learners (De Lannoy, 2022). The IMF also disseminates knowledge via websites, blogs, apps, educational videos, podcasts, and social media, including a YouTube learning channel.

- **Peer-to-peer learning.** Facilitates knowledge exchange among officials from different countries under IMF staff guidance, typically through workshops involving participants from member countries, staff, and external experts.

Until 2020, most IMF training was in person, with online training growing rapidly since 2013. The COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of in-person training, which was replaced by virtual training. Even before the pandemic, the share of training at IMF headquarters had declined to 5.2% in 2019.

The IMF emphasizes quality in its capacity-development services, including training, through expert supervision and regular evaluations. IMF policy prohibits delegating training delivery to external contractors or funding other training providers (IMF, 2019). However, the IMF hires long-term and short-term experts to conduct training, enabling flexibility in training volume and cost reduction (Jensen and Kell, 2022).

In fiscal year (FY) 2020, IMF spending on training was approximately \$63 million, down from 5.3% of total spending in FY2012 to 4.7% in FY2020.¹ Training is funded through the IMF's administrative budget and donor contributions. The IMF does not charge participants for training, except for programmes targeting high-income countries.

1.14. The CAREC Institute (CI)

The Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Institute is an **intergovernmental organization** dedicated to promoting economic cooperation through knowledge generation, capacity building, and knowledge sharing in the CAREC region. The CAREC Institute is jointly shared, owned, and governed by **11 member countries** (Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). China and the ADB are the main donors to the CAREC Institute, which is headquartered in Urumqi, China.

The Capacity Building Division of the CAREC Institute provides workshops and seminars to officials and stakeholders across the CAREC region based on the CAREC programme's operational clusters.

¹ The IMF's financial year (FY) runs from May 1st to April 30th of the corresponding calendar years.

The key objectives of the capacity building are to deepen awareness and understanding of CAREC priority areas; facilitate the exchange of country experiences; identify emerging challenges and needs for future research and capacity building; deliver targeted leadership programmes to advance evidence-based policymaking through close cooperation with key development partners such as the ADB, AIIB/MCDF, ADBI, RKSI, and national institutions of CAREC member countries.

The Institute provides a comprehensive range of capacity-building programmes through **virtual, physical, and online modalities**, designed to strengthen expertise in regional cooperation among member countries. Key features include:

- Training of Trainers and communities of practice to enhance sustainability and peer learning
- Face-to-face workshops and blended learning programmes combining virtual and in-person sessions
- An E-Learning platform (<https://elearning.carecinstitute.org>) offering self-instruction opportunities, recorded lectures, and virtual follow-ups
- Policy dialogues featuring research-based policy recommendations in areas like climate change, water management, and digital CAREC, trade facilitation, and other thematic areas
- CAREC Chai Series: Open discussions among experts, think tanks, and government representatives on connectivity and cooperation.

Three-Phased Cascading Approach:

- Phase I: Virtual engagements with participants and stakeholders, generating digital learning materials (DLMs) and organizing experiential learning tours
- Phase II: Creation of research-based DLMs (e.g., expert presentations) customized for the E-Learning platform
- Phase III: Blended workshops delivered in a hybrid format, followed by assessments for ToT and follow-up actions.

Over **4,500 participants** have engaged in capacity-building activities (2019–2025). During the 2021–2025 strategy period, the CI has strengthened the E-Learning platform to deliver sustainable, full-cycle capacity building training. **E-Learning platform visitors: 21 million**; learning videos: 197,059. A total of **118 distinct events** were organized, reflecting a strategic commitment to strengthening institutional and human capacity across the CAREC region. These activities spanned various formats, including workshops, courses, policy dialogues, forums, webinars, and specialized sessions like the “Chai” talks, demonstrating a flexible approach to meet diverse learning and engagement needs.

The activities were strategically categorized around key thematic areas crucial for **regional development and cooperation** within the CAREC programme: (1) Road Safety; (2) Road Asset Management; (3) Digital Economy and E-commerce; (4) Agriculture/Water/Energy; (5) Climate/Green Transition; (6) Financial Stability; (7) Infrastructure; (8) Other Regional Integration Topics; (9) Chai Talks; (10) Policy Dialogues on Different CI Policy Research Topics.

To strengthen the operational and strategic capabilities of member countries, the Capacity Building Division will continue to deliver the following **core initiatives**:

Area I: Regional Connectivity and Trade. Assisting CAREC national policymaker decision-making on road transport corridor efficiency by integrating the CAREC Institute's capacity-building programmes with empirical insights from the Corridor Performance Monitoring and Measurement mechanism.

Area II: Regional Environmental Sustainability. Promoting resilient and sustainable agricultural productivity by integrating smart agriculture, climate-resilient crops, water management, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) initiatives, and work principles to ensure inclusive rural development.

Area III: Regional Digital Transformation. Enhancing national capacities in AI governance and e-commerce education to foster inclusive digital transformation and economic growth across the CAREC region.

Area IV: Financial Stability. Enhancing the capacity of national policymakers to promote integrity and effective risk management in financial and digital systems.

2. Training Initiatives: Key Features

2.1. Goals

Our analysis of MDBs' strategy documents shows that the goals for their training initiatives can be categorized into the following five groups (Figure 3).

↓ Figure 3. The goals of creating training initiatives



Source: EDB.

1. **Knowledge transfer and capacity building.** Weak capacity remains one of the main barriers to development impact (World Bank, 2024b, p.15). MDBs provide financing and seek to enhance the institutional and professional capacity of borrowing countries so they can use these resources effectively. The courses help government officials, professionals and business to implement best practice. MDBs consider their training activities along with technical assistance as two sides of capacity-development efforts, where TA focuses on institutional capacity and training on individual skills and capacity. Some, IFIs, such as the IMF and AfDB, have capacity-development strategies, where this goal is clearly articulated. They also tend to closely integrate their training and TA delivery.
2. **Reducing project risks.** Training project participants in modern methods of planning, procurement, monitoring and evaluation reduces the likelihood of errors and the inefficient use of funds. Strengthening clients' capacity helps MDBs to improve the quality of their portfolios. By providing training in such subjects as project preparation and management, procurement practices, project risk management and so on, MDBs improve managerial and technical capacity for efficient project implementation.
3. **Spreading in-house international knowledge.** Training programmes facilitate the sharing of accumulated case studies and knowledge regarding successful projects and innovative approaches in various countries. During their operations, MDBs gain extensive knowledge of the region where they operate, its needs and challenges, and potential solutions. This knowledge is often difficult to find elsewhere.

4. **Accessibility of knowledge by a wide audience.** Over the last decade, MDBs have started to offer MOOCs that do not target specifically their clients and partners, but are designed for broader audiences. An online course is a cost-effective way to disseminate this knowledge. While MOOCs are relatively recent phenomena, this goal was clearly articulated when the World Bank organized the first training initiative, the Economic Development Institute, in 1955 in order “to spread the knowledge gained by the World Bank in its operations and personnel” (World Bank, 2003). Online courses and educational platforms enable government employees, students, researchers, and private sector representatives to get involved, creating a broader base of expertise.
5. **Promoting impact.** Training initiatives can also serve as a tool for MDBs to enhance their influence and build their brand in target regions. By providing quality training for government officials, development professionals, and private sector managers, these institutions can build goodwill and strengthen relationships with partner countries. This should be also helpful for MDBs to generate new projects and clients.

2.2. Enabling Factors

Not all MDBs provide training. Setting up a training initiative requires a decision of the MDB’s shareholders and management. What factors explain why some MDBs create training programmes while others do not? Below we list factors that, in our view, have a strong influence on a possibility of creating training initiative:

1. **Identified training and capacity gaps in target regions.** The scale of training gaps differs significantly depending on the MDB’s region of operation. For example, the training gap in the EU is relatively small and MDBs working predominantly in the EU either do not provide training (CEB, NDB) or do it on a relatively small scale (EIB). In Africa, training needs are substantial and the main MDB located in Africa, AfDB, has a separate Capacity-Development Strategy and a special unit, the African Development Institute, devoted to capacity building and training.
2. **Synergy with other knowledge activities.** If an MDB has strong research and technical assistance programmes, then adding training to its knowledge activities is often a natural step. Research and technical assistance generate new knowledge and share it with clients and partners. It is far easier to build a training initiative on this foundation than to start it from scratch.
3. **Availability of funding.** Training initiatives of MDBs are cost centres: they do not generate revenue anywhere close to covering their costs. Therefore, they need funding either from MDB’s administrative budget or from external donors (or some mix of these sources). To fund a training unit from its own resources,

an MDB needs a sufficient scale of lending operations to generate a surplus income that can be used for financing training. This is why we do not see much training offered by smaller MDBs. The alternative is to rely fully or partially on external donors. This, however, has its own risk for the sustainability of the training initiative.

These factors are suggestive rather than determining. An interesting example that seems to go against these factors is the North American Development Bank with its Utility Management Institute. It is a small MDB located in a developed country. However, its programme is highly focused, funded largely by grants from other donors and the Bank itself has been active in providing technical assistance in this field.

2.3. Governance Models

Governance of MDBs’ training units (academies, institutes and e-learning platforms) is primarily determined by their place in the organizational structure of the group. This place in turn depends on several factors. One of them is the importance that shareholders and management place on training activities: greater importance means a more prominent position. Another factor seems to be connected with the sources of funding: if the training unit is going to rely predominantly on external donors, it is reasonable to expect that they would like to have a say in determining its priorities and governance. This would argue for a more independent governance arrangement. Existing examples can be classified into three broad groups, depending on the level in an organizational hierarchy to which they report (Figure 4).

↓ Figure 4. Governance Models of training initiatives.



Source: EDB.

1. Separate Legal Entity

The training unit can be created as a separate legal entity, which becomes an independent member of the group along with an MDB itself and probably some other organizations. We identified three examples of such an organizational set-up:

The **Asian Development Bank Institute** is an independent member of the ADB Group. The budget of the Institute is independent from that of the ADB, and the Bank is not responsible for the obligations of the ADBI. The Institute is based in Tokyo, Japan, while ADB headquarters is in the Philippines. As an independent entity, it has its own Advisory Council, which advises on strategic directions. The day-to-day management of the Institute is carried out by its Dean. The members of the Advisory Council and the Dean are appointed by the President of the ADB ([ADBI, 2018](#)). The ADB Board of Governors performs the same oversight functions for the Institute as for the rest of the ADB's structural units, including approving its work programme and budget.

The **Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Institute** is headed by the Director General and operates under the direction of the Board of Trustees, which is an advisory organ mandated to provide guidance and direction on the Institute's strategy, medium-term work programme, and budget. The Chairman of the IsDB Group is also the Chairman of the Board of Trustees ([IsDBI, 2021](#)).

The **TDB Academy** is the capacity-building arm of the TDB Group along with several other entities. It offers training, seminars, conferences, study tours, and other human and institutional capacity-development activities, especially in the financial and investment sectors ([TDB, 2025](#)).

2. Vice-President Level

More typical governance model is when a training unit is one of the departments of an MDB and reports directly to one of the vice-presidents of an MDB. Some examples are listed below:

The **World Bank Group Academy** is co-managed by the External and Corporate Relations and Human Resources Vice Presidents of the Bank. This dual oversight ensures that the Academy's initiatives align with broader institutional learning and external engagement strategies. Content development, training, and service delivery are led by technical experts from the World Bank, IFC, and MIGA, specializing in global practice and regions.

The **African Development Institute** reports to the Chief Economist — Vice President for Economic Governance and Knowledge Management of the African Development Bank ([AfDB, 2025b](#)).

The **IDB's BIDAcademy** is not represented directly in the IDB organizational structure, but its activities are coordinated by the Vice President for Sectors and Knowledge (VPS). The Knowledge Division of the VPS coordinates learning activities and provides courses for external audiences (IDB, no date, c).

The **IMF** organizational structure does not have vice-presidents, only the managing director and her deputies. The IMF's department responsible for training and technical assistance, the **Institute for Capacity Development**, is one of 18 departments and is headed by a director, whose functions are similar to that of the vice-president at other MDBs (IMF, 2025). Regional Capacity Development Centres through which the IMF carries out most of its training activities have a separate governance model. They are usually managed by a committee, which includes representatives of member states, donors, and the IMF.

A similar governance model characterizes the **Eurasian Development Bank's Academy**, which reports to the Vice-Chairman – Chief Economist of the EDB.

3. Department Level

The third model corresponds to the organizational structure where a training unit is part of a larger department and reports to the head of the department. At some MDBs, for example the EBRD, training initiatives do not form a separate unit in the organizational structure, but rather a programme.

The **EIB Institute** governance model can be considered as a **hybrid** involving elements of all three models considered above. The EIB Institute is a specialized entity within the European Investment Bank Group. It has its own Supervisory Board (EIB, 2012), but in the EIB Group organizational structure it is placed under one of the departments (General Secretariat) and the Institute's director reports to the deputy head of the Secretariat (EIB, 2025). Its work is also supervised by one of the vice-presidents of the EIB.

2.4. Financing Models

MDBs' training units are funded through a mix of resources that come from different sources. The main funding sources include:

1. **Core Institutional Funding.** Often training initiatives are financed primarily from the administrative budget of an MDB. This funding structure ensures stability but limits available resources.
2. **Donors' Contributions.** This source of funding can include grants from external donors and contributions from the MDB's member states. The reliance on donors makes it possible to expand training activities, but brings risks to financial sustainability of training initiatives because donors' priorities can change rather quickly and MDBs might not have much influence over them.

3. **Own resources.** MDBs' training initiatives can charge their users for services they provide. However, this rarely happens in practice and normally only when training is conducted for a high-income country. Most of an MDB's training is free for users. Other sources of the MDB itself may include income from investment portfolios and rental income, but these require either initial endowment or allocating income from a particular asset.

Most MDBs do not provide data on financing of their training initiatives. Available data suggests that they rely on a mix of funding sources, but their proportions vary substantially for different MDBs. The two largest providers of training among the MDBs – the World Bank Group and the IMF – use both their administrative budget and donor contributions in comparable proportions to finance their training activities. The World Bank Group estimated that in FY2010 the share of its training financed by trust funds – i.e., external donors – was approximately 60%, while the remaining 40% was financed by the bank ([World Bank, 2011, Box 5](#)). The IMF does not disclose financing specifically for training, but in FY2023 the share of external donors in financing capacity-development activities was 67% for direct spending, and 41% if IMF's overhead is included ([IMF, 2024](#)).

The ADBI seems rather unique in the MDB system, because it relies predominantly on donor contributions. Its roughly \$16 million 2024 budget was financed largely by the Government of Japan, with smaller contributions from Korea and Malaysia. Its other revenue sources include from income from investment portfolios, sublease rental income, publication royalties, and grants from private donors and other government agencies, but they were significantly smaller ([ADB, 2025b](#)).

Other MDBs, including the EDB, fund their training units and activities largely from the administrative budget, but still use partnerships to expand their training activities.

2.5. Target Audience

The target audience of MDBs' training is generally determined by their mandates and the goals of their training activities. As a result, the main audiences for training are **civil servants, existing and potential clients, and development partners of the MDBs**. Since MDBs finance a broad range of projects, this group includes country officials at various ministries and agencies, managers of state-owned and private companies, as well as nonprofit organizations. This core audience is the key target for in-person training, where the cost per participants is large.

Development of online and virtual training makes it possible to significantly reduce training cost per participants and opens access to training to a much **wider audience, including the academic sphere**. Many MDBs place their online training products as MOOCs on their dedicated websites or on educational platforms such as EdX, where everyone can use them.

2.6. Customizing of Training Content

One particular aspect of training where sub-regional MDBs might have comparative advantage over larger institutions is **customization of their training content to country-specific circumstances**. An IMF paper notes that some large MDBs, including the ADBI at the ADB, and the OLC at the World Bank, mostly provide general training on core topics. They might adjust the content to region-specific circumstances, but only rarely customize it to specific country needs. Some other institutions offer training tailored to country-specific circumstances on a more regular basis, but not as a general rule. Such examples include the ADI at the AfDB, INDES at the IDB, and the IMF (De Lannoy, 2022).

One advantage of the **IMF** in this context that it operates a **broad regional network** of training centres, which helps it to provide more customized training. Nevertheless, sub-regional MDBs operating in a limited number of countries might be better equipped to provide **country-tailored training** due to their in-depth knowledge of a country's training needs, closer connections to decision-makers and potential partners, proficiency in local languages, and lower costs including travel cost.

Another way that smaller MDBs might use to stand out in their training is by focusing it on specific topics not covered by other MDBs. One prominent example of this is the Islamic Development Bank Institute's expertise and knowledge leadership in Islamic finance. Another example is the **Utility Management Institute** of the NADB, which provides training for managers of water utilities and other public service organizations. It is clear that new educational initiatives created within multilateral development banks will inevitably have to seek their own **unique thematic niche**.

Thanks to advanced **digital technologies and AI**, MDBs can now offer customized training content at a lower cost. Such tools help to make it far more precise, efficient, and at scale (see [Chapter 2.8](#) for more details).

2.7. Thematic Areas

MDBs' training initiatives focus on equipping professionals, policymakers, and stakeholders with the knowledge and skills needed to address global development challenges. We have categorized topics of MDB's training programmes into seven areas, as follows:

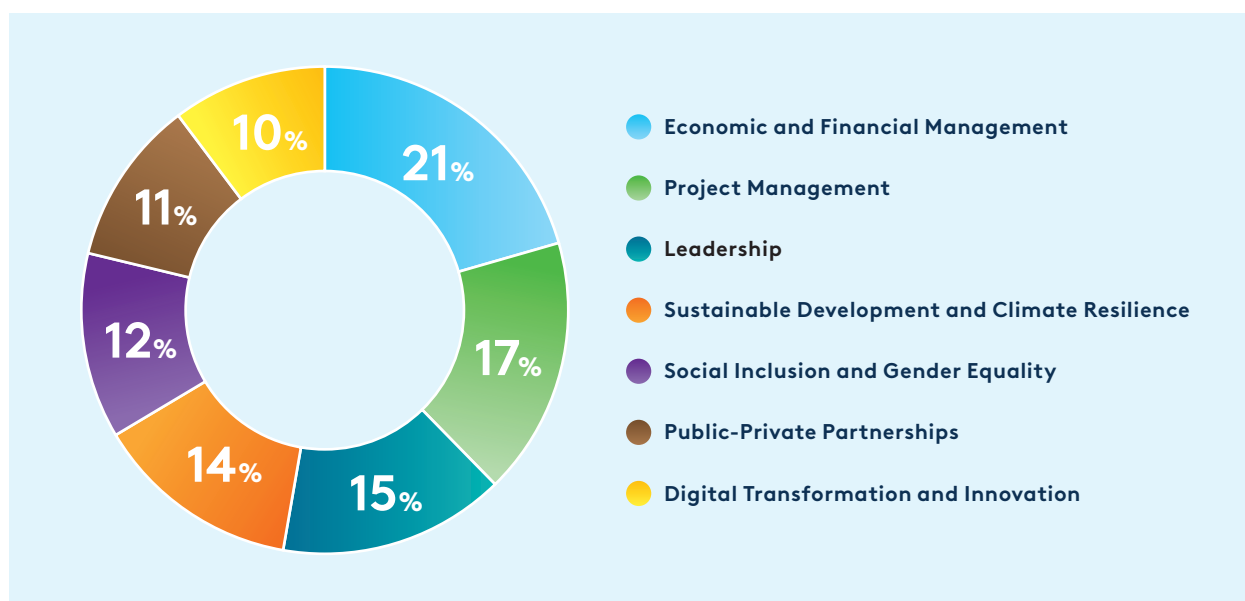
1. Project Management
2. Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience
3. Economic and Financial Management
4. Digital Transformation and Innovation
5. Social Inclusion and Gender Equality

6. Public–Private Partnerships

7. Leadership.

To estimate the frequency of these areas in the training programmes, we use information on the training courses offered by MDBs on their official websites (Figure 5). The most popular areas turn out to be Economic and Financial Management, followed by Project Management and Leadership.

↓ Figure 5. Distribution of MDBs' Programmes by Thematic Area



Source: EDB estimates.

Programmes in the field of economic and financial management focus on macroeconomic stability, fiscal policy, public debt management, and financial sector regulation. Specialized modules cover anti-money-laundering, financial inclusion, and digital payment systems, empowering policymakers to strengthen economic resilience and inclusive growth.

Project management training programmes prioritize enhancing technical and managerial skills for designing, implementing, and monitoring development projects. Topics might include project cycle management, risk assessment, and results-based financing. Participants learn to align projects with national development goals, while ensuring transparency and accountability. For example, the World Bank Group Academy workshop trained officials from Kenya on using the Logical Framework Approach to design a rural electrification project. Participants simulated budgeting, stakeholder mapping, and risk mitigation strategies for off-grid solar installations in remote villages.

Leadership programmes provide training in anti-corruption strategies, adaptive leadership in complex environments, policy communication, crisis management, multi-stakeholder collaboration for institutional reforms and other topics.

Other thematic areas are also well represented in MDBs’ training offerings. Climate change and sustainability are now a major focus of development. Accordingly, MDBs’ training units offer courses on climate change mitigation, renewable energy systems, green infrastructure, and circular economy principles. Trainees explore strategies for integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria into policies and investments. As technology reshapes development, MDBs also offer training in digital governance, smart cities, cybersecurity, and data-driven decision-making. Courses also address leveraging artificial intelligence and blockchain for public service delivery and efficient resource allocation.

MDBs’ training programmes bridge theory and practice, and aim to equip participants with skills necessary to tackle global challenges and drive inclusive, long-term progress in participating countries.

2.8. Online Platforms and AI

MDBs increasingly utilize online platforms and artificial intelligence (AI) tools to deliver and enhance training initiatives. These tools are used to expand access to knowledge, personalize learning experiences, and support capacity building among policymakers, civil servants, and development professionals worldwide.

↓ **Table 1. Digital Educational Platforms of MDBs**

Organization	Digital Educational Platform
ADB I	elearning-adbi.org
AfDB Institute	vcda.afdb.org
CAF	caf.com/en/courses
CAREC Institute*	elearning.carecinstitute.org
CDB	caribank.org
EBRD Academy	ebrdelearning.com
EDB Academy	academy.eabr.org
EIB Institute	institute.eib.org
IDB Academy	indesvirtual.iadb.org
IMF*	imf.org
IsDB Institute	edX – IsDB Institute
NADB-UMI	nadb.org
TDB Academy	tdbgroup.org
WBG Academy	academy.worldbank.org

Note: * The IMF and the CAREC Institute are included in the analysis because they have extensive expertise in training initiatives.

Sources: WBG Academy, EBRD, EIB Institute, IsDBI, ADBI, IDB, CABEL, CAF, AfDB, TDB, NADB, CDB, IMF RTACs, CAREC Institute, EDB.

One of the main advantages of using AI in the training context is the opportunity to tailor learning experiences to individual student needs. AI-enabled platforms can analyze a student's performance in real time and adjust their content by offering more support where needed or advancing more quickly through topics that the student masters easily.

AI tools can also handle routine administrative tasks such as grading, attendance tracking, and basic feedback, thereby freeing up educators to focus on more meaningful interactions with students. Furthermore, AI enables more consistent and objective assessment by minimizing human bias.

AI platforms also foster continuous learning outside the traditional classroom setting. Through chatbots, virtual tutors, and intelligent course recommendations, students can get support and access resources at any time. However, this constant connectivity also raises concerns about data privacy, equity of access, and the potential overreliance on technology in place of human interaction.

AI in education often depends on large datasets to function effectively, which can lead to ethical considerations regarding student data collection and usage. The integration of these technologies also necessitates a shift in the roles of educators, requiring them to develop new digital competencies and pedagogical approaches suited to AI-enhanced learning environments.

One of the most prominent examples is the World Bank, which has been exploring AI applications to automate and optimize knowledge delivery. AI-driven systems are being tested to recommend educational content based on user profiles, prior learning behaviour, and expressed interests. These tools enhance learner engagement and efficiency by reducing the time required to locate relevant resources.

Box 1. AI at the IsDBI. The Islamic Development Bank Institute (IsDBI) used advances in AI, especially large language models such as ChatGPT, to develop an **Islamic Finance Artificial Intelligence Assistant (IFAA)** intended to democratize access to Islamic finance knowledge. The IFAA provides comprehensive insights into the IsDB Group's and other publicly available publications and data, making complex Islamic financial concepts accessible to a broader audience. The IFAA allows users to query and summarize reports quickly to get to the main points. It also offers insights into the intricacies of Islamic financial principles in a conversational and accessible manner. Its capabilities in report summarization and explanation of Islamic financial principles have been found very useful. The IsDBI is planning to expand the IFAA's functionalities for other applications, including development of AI-based assistants for legal and regulatory frameworks, the grants programme, progress reporting, and Islamic finance training.

Source: IsDBI Annual Report 2023: <https://isdbinstitute.org/product/annual-report-2023/>

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) also employs digital platforms and AI to strengthen skills in Latin America and the Caribbean. Through its IDBx platform (hosted on edX), the bank offers Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on topics such as gender inclusion, smart cities, and climate change. The integration of AI allows for dynamic quizzes, automated feedback, and predictive analytics to monitor and improve learner outcomes ([Cabañas, 2023](#)).

MDBs use AI and online platform in educational contexts to support multilingual access and inclusivity. For example, AI-powered translation tools enable content delivery in multiple languages, enhancing accessibility for diverse audiences. These systems are particularly useful in regions with multiple official languages, such as Central Asia or Sub-Saharan Africa ([Aretec, 2025](#)).

2.9. Partnerships

MDBs often enter into collaborative agreements with other partners to advance their training activities. These partners might include national governments, educational institutions, think tanks, private sector actors, and other development agencies. The partnerships help to foster resource sharing and leverage specific strengths and knowledge of each partner to support capacity building and training for their target audiences. They also align training programmes with local needs, while leveraging global best practices.

Probably the most prominent example of such training partnerships among the IFIs is the global network of 17 Regional Capacity-Development Centres created by the IMF, which was mentioned in [Chapter 1](#) and listed in [Table 1](#) ([IMF, 2022](#)). The first such centre, the Joint Vienna Institute, was launched in 1992 in Vienna, Austria, to train officials from transition economies. Each centre was established in cooperation with various partners, which include regional member states, donor countries, and several MDBs, including the World Bank, ADB, CDB, CABI, and EIB. Most RCDCs are funded by a combination of member countries and external donors. However, each RCDC is to some extent unique in terms of governance and funding model. For example, RCDCs in Kuwait and China are fully funded by their host countries. At the Joint Vienna Institute, IMF organizes only 60% of training courses, while the rest organized by other training partners ([De Lannoy, 2022](#)).

Before 2016, such centres focused either on training or technical assistance. However, the IMF aims to integrate training and technical assistance delivery at the centres and started to use the term RCDC since 2017. Even so, Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia RCDC (CCAMTAC) created in Kazakhstan in 2021 is used largely for technical assistance while classroom-type training for officials from the countries of the region is still provided by Joint Vienna Institute. This is done because of donors' preferences. The expansion of the number of RCDCs led to decentralization of IMF's training delivery and most IMF's in-person training is delivered via RCDCs ([De Lannoy, 2022](#)).

↓ Table 2. IMF Regional Capacity Development Centres

Centre	Region Covered	Country Host	Year of Establishment
AFRITAC West (AFW)	West Africa	Côte d'Ivoire	2003
AFRITAC West 2 (AFW2)	West Africa (Anglophone)	Ghana	2013
AFRITAC East (AFE)	East Africa	Tanzania	2002
AFRITAC Central (AFC)	Central Africa	Republic of Congo	2007
AFRITAC South (AFS)	Southern Africa	Mauritius	2011
Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC)	Caribbean	Barbados	2001
Central America, Panama, and Dominican Republic Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CAPTAC-DR)	Central America	Guatemala	2009
Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Centre (METAC)	Middle East and North Africa	Lebanon	2004
Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre (PFTAC)	Pacific Island Countries	Fiji	1993
South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Centre (SARTTAC)	South Asia	India	2017
Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia Regional Capacity Development Centre (CCAMTAC)	Central Asia	Kazakhstan	2021
China-IMF Capacity Development Centre (CICDC)	China-focused	China	2017
Joint Vienna Institute (JVI)	Europe	Austria	1992
Middle East Centre for Economics and Finance (CEF)	Middle East	Kuwait	2011
Capacity Development Office in Thailand (CDOT)	Southeast Asia and the Pacific	Thailand	2012
Singapore Regional Training Institute (STI)	Asia and the Pacific	Singapore	1998
Africa Training Institute (ATI)	Africa and Asia	Mauritius	2013

Source: IMF, no date

Another interesting case of cooperation and partnership is the **CAREC Institute**. The Institute is a knowledge arm of the CAREC Programme, which is a sub-regional development initiative led by the ADB and supported by a number of other MDBs. Besides conducting research, the Institute provides training for member countries' officials and experts on various aspects of regional challenges and cooperation. It organizes workshops, roundtables, and conferences for peer-to-peer learning, has its

own e-Learning platform hosting digital learning modules and implementing hybrid learning programmes, which combine in-person and virtual training. The CAREC Institute closely cooperates with such MDBs as the ADB, EDB, and IsDB ([CAREC Institute, 2024](#)). The ADB, ADBI, and IsDB also provide financial support to the Institute.

Obvious partners for MDBs' training programmes are various educational and training institutions. There are many possible paths for such cooperation, from joint workshops and seminars to joint course delivery and training-of-trainers programmes. One notable case is an agreement between the NADB and the Monterrey Technological Institute (ITESM) in Mexico to turn the Utility Management Institute training programme into a diploma-level course. This 100-hour course was launched in the Mexican city of Hermosillo in 2017 and taught by the ITESM ([NADB, 2017](#)). Another example of such cooperation is the partnership between the IsDBI and Prince Mohammed bin Salman College of Business & Entrepreneurship (MBSC) in King Abdullah Economic City, Saudi Arabia. This collaboration aims to launch two innovative programmes: the Entrepreneurial Mindset Development Programme and the Strategic Business Leadership Programme. These programmes are designed to equip their participants with the skills, knowledge, networks, and values to succeed in business, and integrate Islamic finance values and instruments ([AfricaNews, 2025](#)).

Finally, when MDBs provide online training they most often decide to cooperate with MOOC providers such as edX. Examples of such cooperation are numerous and have become routine.

Another form of collaboration characteristic of educational initiatives is direct partnership among the MDBs themselves. Such cooperation enables the unification of approaches and standards in the implementation of development projects, as well as the harmonization of project-finance requirements across countries. Moreover, through cost sharing, MDBs can reduce the expenses associated with developing their training products.

2.10. Effectiveness

Effectiveness is normally understood as the extent to which the intervention achieves, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results ([OECD, 2019](#)). Regular evaluations of training programmes effectiveness help MDBs to:

1. Optimize Programmes and Resources:

Identifying strengths and weaknesses enables targeted improvements in content, methodology, and logistics, ensuring maximum return on limited budgets in the context of working with developing countries.

2. Ensure Tangible Development Impact:

Evaluations often identify whether acquired knowledge and skills translate into changes in operational practices, strengthened institutional capacity, and ultimately, concrete

socio-economic results in partner countries (e.g., enhanced public governance efficiency, improved investment climate, successful implementation of development projects).

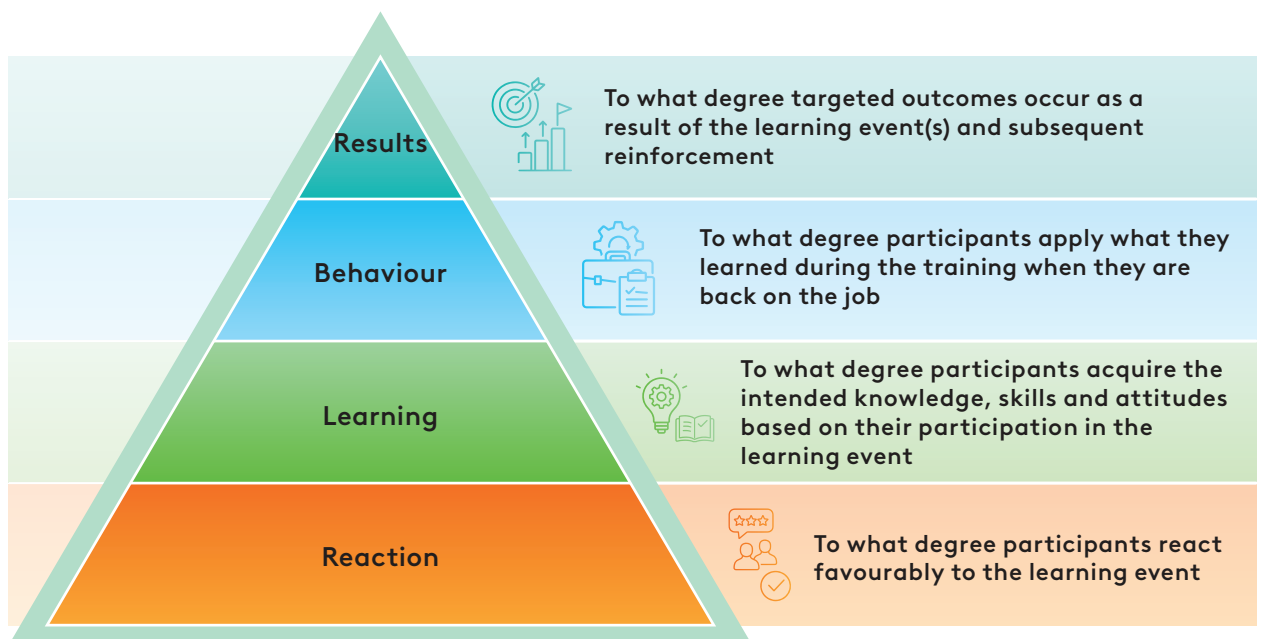
3. Demonstrate Accountability and Justify Investments:

Evaluation provides evidence of the value and effectiveness of training programmes to the bank's leadership, donor countries, and recipient countries. This justifies continued investment in human capital as a key development tool and reinforces trust in the MDB's operations.

Systematic evaluation of training programmes' effectiveness is conducted only by the IMF and some major MDBs. Normally they base their evaluations on the Kirkpatrick model (Figure 6), which was first published by Donald Kirkpatrick in 1959 and has been widely used for training evaluation (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006). This model uses four sequential stages or levels in evaluation of training (Tamkin, Yarnall & Kerrin 2002):

- **Level 1: Reaction** – what the participants thought of the training programme, usually measured by questionnaires.
- **Level 2: Learning** – the changes in knowledge, skills, or attitude typically assessed by performance tests.
- **Level 3: Behaviour** – changes in job behaviour resulting from the programme. Assessment methods include observation and productivity data.
- **Level 4: Results** – the financial/business contribution of the training programme. Methods include measuring costs, quality, and return on investment (ROI).

↓ Figure 6. Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model



Source: Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 2015

This model has been criticized on various grounds. For example, evaluation using hard outcome measures of Level 4 (Results) is very difficult because it is based on various assumptions, involves significant time delays and uncertain intervening factors. Although many extensions and alternative models have been proposed ([Tamkin et al., 2002](#)), the Kirkpatrick model remains the most widely used, judging by the number of related publications on the Internet and its use at major IFIs. Below we consider how the IMF and several MDBs evaluate their training programmes.

International Monetary Fund

In the evaluation of its training programmes the IMF follows the Kirkpatrick model ([IMF, 2017](#); [Edison et al., 2018](#); [Lamdany, 2022](#)).

Level 1 measures participant satisfaction using a questionnaire at the end of the course, which also ask participants to provide suggestions on how to improve the course.

Level 2 assesses participant learning, measured using pre- and post-training exams.

Level 3 assesses the training outcomes for individuals and institutions. Training outcomes normally refer to changes in participants' effectiveness at their workplace as a result of training. They are assessed by surveys several months after the conclusion of the training events. Participants and their supervisors are asked about the relevance of training to their current work, whether it had an impact on work performance and on job responsibilities. Every three years, the IMF conducts a broader survey to gather sponsoring agencies' views of the effectiveness of the training programme and information about future training needs.

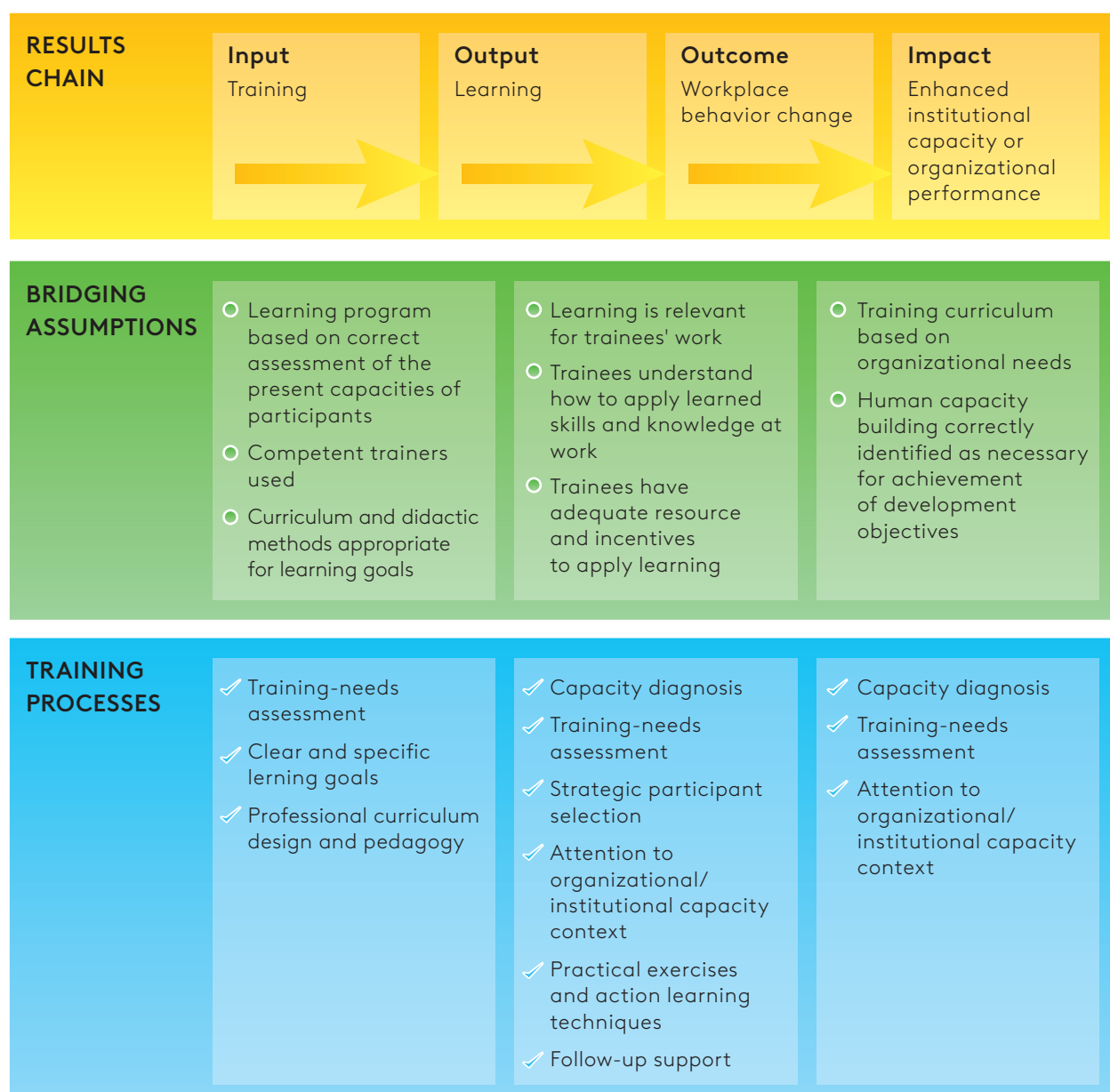
Level 4 assesses impact in terms of improved performance of the participant's organization. The IMF does not conduct Level 4 evaluations, because they are too costly and difficult to implement. In the past the IMF conducted so-called tracer studies to assess the impact of training, by tracing participants years later, but such studies were very costly and the impact was difficult to link to training programmes. [Lamdany \(2022\)](#) notices that other IFIs that provide training also do not conduct Level-4 evaluations.

Another IMF paper ([Jensen and Kell, 2022](#)) applies measures of cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness to IMF training programmes, which is rarely if ever done by other IFIs. The cost-efficiency metrics measure cost per unit of training output, while cost-effectiveness metrics relate cost to training outcome, when outcomes can be quantified. This was done at a donor's request for a specific project, and seems to be an exception even for the IMF.

World Bank Group

The WBG carries out numerous evaluations of its extensive training activities. For example, Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank (2008) prepared a comprehensive evaluation of the WB's training activities focusing on their efficacy for capacity building (Figure 7). The evaluation follows the results chain shown in Figure 3, which starts at a training activity (input) and leads to learning (output), to changes in workplace behaviours (outcome), and finally to enhanced institutional capacity or improved organizational performance (impact). This chain closely corresponds to the levels of the Kirkpatrick model.

↓ Figure 7. Results Chain for Training



Source: World Bank, 2008, p.7.

The report noted that only level 1 (according the Kirkpatrick model) evaluation is conducted for all training activities. It is done using participant satisfaction questionnaires. The WB rarely gathers data on the training output and outcomes of project-based training programmes.

Other publications demonstrate that the WB paid significant attention to the use of science-based tools in its evaluation of training activities, such as quasi-experimental techniques for creating control groups and multivariate regression techniques for estimating programme effectiveness (Tobin, 2005).

Asian Development Bank

The ADB Institute in its 2012 results framework used the following indicators for assessing its training and capacity-building activities (ADBI, 2012):

- 1) % of participants strongly agreeing or agreeing that they have obtained new knowledge and skills as a result of event;
- 2) (a) Number of capacity-building events; (b) Number of participants; (c) Number of person-days of training.

These indicators correspond to Levels 1 and 2 of the Kirkpatrick model. The last annual review of the ADB Institute provide data only on the number of e-learning courses, training, and capacity-building events and their participants (ADBI, 2025).

Evaluation of ADBI performance, including its capacity-building and training activities, by the ADB Independent Evaluation Department noted that its courses were rated highly by the participants (at level 1 of the Kirkpatrick model), but were only moderately useful in the application of the skills and knowledge acquired from the ADBI courses (level 3) (ADB, 2011).

Inter-American Development Bank

Researchers at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) developed a methodology called the “knowledge influence score” to measure the contribution of IDB knowledge products to its business outcomes (Sarmiento et al., 2023). It is based on the IDB’s knowledge measurement framework and adds a fifth level (influence) to the existing four levels in the end-to-end process of assessing knowledge dissemination efforts (Figure 8).

↓ **Figure 8. Knowledge Measurement Framework with Five Levels**

REACH

- Number of people reached
- Subscriber profiles
- Audience demographics

ENGAGEMENT

- Social media: shares, comments, clicks
- E-mail: opens, forwards, responses
- Events: registrations, participation
- Courses: registrations

CONSUMPTION

- Downloads
- Time spent, pages read, % completion
- Knowledge Journey: number of new products consumed from one experience
- Return consumption of knowledge products
- Courses: attendance level 2 surveys
- Level 3 surveys courses

PERCEPTION

- Net Promoter Score for Knowledge
- Utility of / Satisfaction with flagship publications
- Level 1 Surveys (satisfaction with events, courses and Regional Policy Dialogues)

INFLUENCE

- Google Scholar citations
- Mentions in Digital Media
- Citations in IDB Operational Documents

Source: Sarmiento et al., 2023

The initial version of the score measures influence along the three dimensions using quantitative metrics for each (they are indicated in parentheses):

- Reputation: How much has IDB's knowledge positively influenced its reputation as a provider of development solutions? (Number of IDB knowledge products mentions in digital media.)
- Policy: How much has IDB's knowledge influenced development policy in its region of operations? (Number of IDB knowledge products citations in Google Scholar.)
- Operational: How much has IDB's knowledge contributed to informing operational business or to generating new business? (Number of IDB knowledge products citations in its operational documents.)

For the future development of the score, the researchers identified several additional metrics that might enhance its relevance and representativeness (Sarmiento et al., 2023), including:

- For the reputation dimension: net promoter score (NPS) for the IDB as a knowledge provider;
- For the operational dimension: new operational opportunities (leads) — if IDB's knowledge is influential, it will motivate clients to seek business opportunities with the IDB.

The IDB 2024–2030 Impact Framework that translates its Institutional Strategy into indicators and targets uses the Net Promoter Score (IDB Group as a provider of relevant knowledge) as the main indicator for its knowledge-related activities, with a target value of at least 50 by 2030 (IDB, 2024, p.9).

We were not able to find an evaluation of IDB training or specific performance indicators for training activities. However, the website of BIDAcademy, the IDB Group’s knowledge and learning platform, lists the number of students that have taken its courses (2.2 million) and the number of digital badges issued (235,000), which suggest a focus on training inputs (IDB, no date, a).

3. Long-Term Outlook

MDBs are evolving in response to global and regional challenges. Our analysis allows us to draw some conclusions about how MDBs' activities in creating and distributing educational courses will develop over the next decade. Under the influence of technological, social, and economic factors, educational activities are likely **to intensify and be transformed**.

A key factor is the rapid development of digital technologies, which will increase productivity by expanding courses, customizing them, and reducing production costs. Within 10 years, MDB training initiatives are likely to be perceived not as a supporting tool, but as **a key non-investment activity**. MDBs can become a kind of "educational hub" for development issues.

In fact, training activities are **part of MDB mandates** to promote sustainable development and institutional capacity building in borrowing countries. MDBs create and distribute training programmes for many reasons, including knowledge transfer and capacity building; reducing project risks; spreading in-house international knowledge; making knowledge accessible to a wide audience; promoting influence (see [Chapter 2.1](#) for more details).

Harmonization of standards and approaches will likely be added to this list, since the economic influence of MDBs in the regions where they operate will increase. Training initiatives could become a strategic tool for MDBs to disseminate and shape global and regional standards and practices in areas such as project management, sustainable development, public-private partnerships, climate resilience, and other relevant practices.

What is our outlook for the next 10 years?

In this report, we have outlined the main trends in MDBs' training initiatives today. Some IFIs have a long history of creating and evolving their initiatives. For example, the World Bank and the IMF began these activities in the middle of the last century. Other training initiatives, such as those by the CAF, TDB, CDB, and EDB, have emerged relatively recently. Thus, they have had the opportunity to use best practices and technological capabilities, focus on specific niches (regions, industries, audiences), and are rapidly developing their training initiatives.

We believe that the following development vectors will affect both former and newer training initiatives of all MDBs:

1. **The active development of digital technologies makes training initiatives by MDBs scalable, open, and accessible.** Online platforms and mobile applications help to reach the widest possible audience. It is expected that MDBs will increasingly create open educational resources that are accessible worldwide. Previously, developing a Massive Open Online Course was quite costly. New technologies will reduce production costs.
2. **Educational online platforms, AI and VR/AR are the key components of the evolution of MDB training initiatives.**
 - MDBs will continue to use online educational platforms as central tools for scaling their training, strengthening country capacities, and disseminating standardized knowledge.
 - The use of AI will enable the development of adaptive formats for personalizing the learning process.
 - The introduction of VR/AR elements would make it possible to teach practical modelling skills, for example, in the field of infrastructure project management.
3. **Collaboration with educational institutions and EdTech platforms (Coursera, edX, etc.) enriches MDB training initiatives.** They serve as centres of expertise for developing educational courses and give access to regional and global audience. This will likely lead to greater cooperation between MDBs and such organizations. There is also high demand for internationally recognized certification programmes (e.g., in the areas of public procurement and PPPs). It is expected that MDBs will gradually meet this need in collaboration with professional institutions.
4. **MDBs will improve the effectiveness of their courses through localization and cultural adaptation.** Such customization means that MDBs will be more active in two areas:
 - Content translation to national languages;
 - Adaptation of materials to the institutional characteristics of different regions.

The involvement of local experts and teachers will increase the relevance of the content, while the modular principle will allow courses to be adapted to different countries and the knowledge of participants.

5. **Customization will increase the interest of sponsors in specific courses and attract donors in the form of countries, companies, and foundations.** MDB resources remain limited for expanding investment in training initiatives. A mixed financing model is likely to become a more common format, using both MDBs' own resources and external sources of financing.

6. **Collaboration of different MDBs represents a significant opportunity for development.** Joint capacity-building initiatives could create more impact, reduce duplication, and strengthen the development ecosystem across countries. Such cooperation enables the unification of approaches and standards in the implementation of development projects, as well as the harmonization of project finance requirements across countries.
7. **Profound integration with MDB projects and national programmes makes MDBs' educational courses a mandatory part of the credit and grant projects.** MDBs are centres of expertise in their niches, with a focus on practice and case studies. Their training initiatives can be embedded in national programmes for the professional development of civil servants.
8. **MDBs will seek to calculate the ROI of their programmes.** Currently, an area of potential progress of the training initiatives is performance evaluation. The following actions are to be taken in this area:
 - New technologies will help MDBs to develop performance evaluation systems.
 - It may be possible to reallocate resources, such as to offline courses for educational initiatives that directly influence the development of banks' investment activities and the achievement of shareholders' goals, and online courses for other purposes.
9. **It is expected that the number of courses focusing on soft skills will increase.** Soft skills are a necessary factor for the successful implementation of MDB projects. MDBs will broaden the list of their educational topics, covering areas such as leadership, strategic management, communication and negotiation, and digital transformation. This is of particular significance for senior civil servants, as it will contribute to the transformation of the public sector. Developing countries also have great potential to develop the soft skills of borrowers.
10. **Educational events can be used to disseminate and shape international norms and standards.** Development projects require less MDB resources when clients adhere to uniform rules. This will also enable MDBs to play a more active role in the institutional development of countries.
11. **Training initiatives could become more effective through the accumulation of "academic capital".**
 - MDBs are expected to support the communities of their graduates (alumni clubs and others). This will allow them to improve their programmes through feedback and attract graduates to teach new students.
 - There is also significant potential for training initiatives to become a focal point for the professional community—including academia, industry experts, and MDBs' own specialists. Bringing these groups together can enhance educational impact and make training programmes more effective.

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADB I	Asian Development Bank Institute
ADI	African Development Institute
AI	artificial intelligence
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
AR	augmented reality
CAF	Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
CAREC	Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation
CCAMTAC	IMF Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia Regional Capacity Development Centre
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank
CI	CAREC Institute
DLMs	digital learning materials
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EDB	Eurasian Development Bank
EDI	Economic Development Institute
EIB	European Investment Bank
ESG	environmental, social, and governance
EU	European Union
EUI	European University Institute
FY	financial year
ICD	Institute for Capacity Development
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFAA	Islamic Finance Artificial Intelligence Assistant
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFFE	International Finance Facility for Education
IFI	international financial institution
IMEC	International Mainline Economic Corridor
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
IsDBI	Islamic Development Bank Institute
MCDF	Multilateral Cooperation Centre for Development Finance
MDB	multilateral development bank
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NAD	North American Development Bank
NADB	North American Development Bank
NDB	New Development Bank
NGO	non-profit organization
RE	renewable energy
RMC	regional member country
RCDC	IMF Regional Capacity Development Centres
RKSI	Regional Knowledge Sharing Initiative
ROI	return on investment
RTAC	IMF Regional Technical Assistance Centres
SDG	sustainable development goal
STEM	science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
TA	technical assistance
TDB	Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank
ToT	training of trainers
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USA	United States of America
VR	virtual reality
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group
WBI	World Bank Institute
%	percent
\$	US dollar
m	million



Research at the EDB website



Macroeconomic Outlook (RU/EN)

Macroeconomic Outlook 2026–2028

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) has presented its Macroeconomic Outlook for the seven member countries. The analysis reviews economic developments in 2025 and outlines key macroeconomic forecasts for 2026–2028.



Report 26/2 (RU/EN)

The Eurasian Region and Partner Countries in Asia: Analysis of Investment Flows based on EDB Monitoring of Mutual Investments

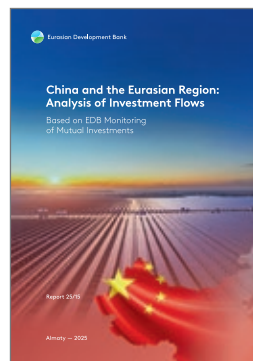
The report provides detailed information on the scale, dynamics, geographical and sectoral structure of mutual direct foreign investment stock between Asian countries and countries in the Eurasian region for the period from 2016 to the first half of 2025.



Report 26/1 (RU/EN)

Cooperation of Multilateral Development Banks in Emerging Markets and Developing Countries: Untapped Opportunities

The report examines seven promising areas for MDB cooperation: 1) mobilizing capital, 2) capital markets, 3) local currencies, 4) project expertise, 5) pooling knowledge, 6) technical assistance, 7) cross-border projects.



Report 25/15 (RU/EN)

China and the Eurasian Region: Analysis of Investment flows based on EDB Monitoring of Mutual Investments

The report provides detailed information on the scale, dynamics, geographical and sectoral structure of mutual direct foreign investment stock between China and countries in the Eurasian region for the period from 2016 to the first half of 2025.



Report 25/14 (RU/EN)

Investment Cooperation in the Eurasian Region based on EDB Monitoring of Mutual Investments

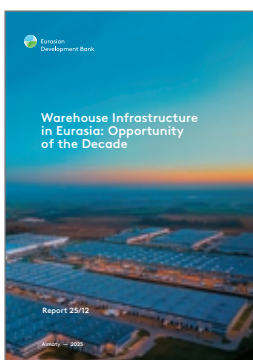
The report provides comprehensive insights into the scale, dynamics, geographical and sectoral structure of mutual direct foreign investments in the Eurasian region from 2016 to the first half of 2025, as well as key trends in investment cooperation.



Working Paper 25/13 (RU)

Arab Gulf: Macroeconomic and Financial Monitoring

The EDB's monitoring provides an analysis of the economies of six Gulf countries and assesses medium-term trends, including GDP growth, inflation, debt sustainability, and fiscal and monetary policies.



Report 25/12 (RU/EN)

Warehouse Infrastructure in Eurasia: Opportunity of the Decade

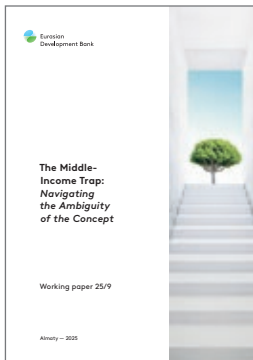
The report presents an analysis of the current state of the warehouse logistics and storage sector in the Eurasian region, examines the main factors influencing its development, and provides a detailed forecast of demand for warehouse infrastructure in the region up to 2040.



Report 25/11 (RU/EN)

Advanced Manufacturing Potential in Eurasia: Sectoral Niches for Growth

The transition to high value-added production could become a powerful driver of economic growth in the region. The study identifies priority industries and niche markets for each country, and provides estimates of export potential and import substitution potential.



Working Paper 25/9
(RU/EN)

**The Middle-Income Trap:
Navigating the Ambiguity of the Concept**

The study shows that diversity of interpretations of the "middle-income trap" makes it difficult to understand whether an economy is in it. The paper also identifies the factors of transition to a higher income: stable macroeconomics, ability to innovate, strong institutions and demographics.



Report 25/8
(RU/EN)

Investing in the future: projects of international financial organizations in Eurasia

The report analyzes 10 fundamental trends in non-sovereign financing by international financial institutions in the Eurasian region and formulates a number of proposals for more active and diversified IFI investments in development projects.



Report
(RU/EN)

Exploring Trade and Investment Relations between India and Central Asia: Unlocking Economic Benefits

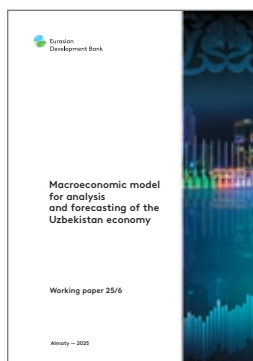
This joint report focuses on a comprehensive analysis of the current state and potential for improving bilateral trade and investment relations between India and Central Asia, and provides policy recommendations for closer cooperation.



Report
(RU/EN)

The Future of Islamic Finance in Central Asia

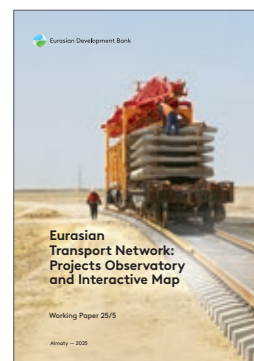
Joint report of the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB), the Islamic Development Bank Institute (IDBI) and the London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG).



Working Paper 25/6
(RU/EN)

Macroeconomic model for analysis and forecasting of the Uzbekistan economy

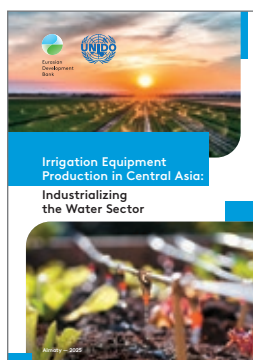
The working paper presents the developed model of macroeconomic analysis and forecasting of the Uzbekistan economy. The integration of the new model into the EDB's model complex makes it possible to more accurately and comprehensively forecast the economic development of the Bank's region of operations, while taking into account close cross-country relationships.



Working Paper 25/5
(RU/EN)

Eurasian Transport Network: Projects Observatory and Interactive Map

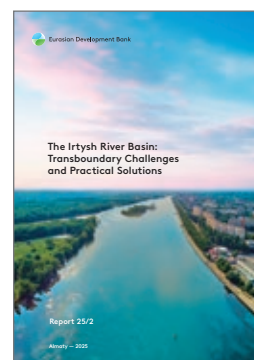
This working paper aims to facilitate the monitoring and coordination of infrastructure development along the corridors and routes of the Eurasian Transport Network



Report
(RU/EN)

Irrigation Equipment Production in Central Asia: Industrializing the Water Sector

Irrigation equipment production in Central Asia is becoming a strategic area for ensuring food security and efficient water resource management. A new report by EDB and UNIDO provides a detailed analysis of the current state of the market, a forecast of its development and recommendations for creating conditions for local production.



Report 25/2
(RU/EN)

The Irtys River Basin: Transboundary Challenges and Practical Solutions

A recent study by the Eurasian Development Bank, titled "The Irtys River Basin: Transboundary Challenges and Practical Solutions", presents the findings of a diagnostic analysis and a forecasting model of the basin's water resources. The study identifies the positions of the three countries involved and puts forward a series of practical solutions, including investment recommendations.

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