

Evaluation of EBRD's civil society engagement



From Risk Mitigation to Impact Generation
May 2026

Civil society is a key partner and building block underlying the EBRD's mandate of supporting transition towards well-functioning market economies in countries committed to and applying the principles of multiparty democracy and pluralism. This is a summary of the approach to IEvD's upcoming corporate evaluation: Evaluation of the EBRD's engagement with civil society.

Purpose and rationale

As set out in the IEvD Work Programme 2026-2028, IEvD will evaluate the extent to which the EBRD's broader engagement with civil society organisations reflects the Bank's founding principles, strengthens stakeholder confidence, and contributes to inclusive, effective operations.

The request from EBRD Board for an evaluation of engagement with civil society comes after similar evaluations were conducted at partner institutions and are currently underway.

Civil society is a key partner and building block underlying the EBRD's mandate of supporting transition towards well-functioning market economies in countries committed to and applying the principles of multiparty democracy and pluralism.

Civil society plays an essential role in economic development and national cohesion, occupying the space between the private citizen and the state, as providers of services, information, advocacy, monitoring and holding governments to account. In conflict affected situations they hold a particularly important role in providing continuity of services.

Objective and Scope

The overarching objective of this evaluation is to provide evidence-based insights and lessons to the Board, Management and wider public about the extent to which the EBRD's engagement with civil society is relevant to the intentions set out in strategies and policies. It is framed by the strategic direction set out in the engagement approach and looks at the extent to which recent engagement is leading to increased impact towards transition on the ground.

The evaluation also examines how the engagement reflects the Bank's founding principles set out in the Bank's mandate, how it strengthens stakeholder confidence and reduces risk of harm, as set out in the Bank's risk policies, and contributes to more inclusive, effective operations.

The scope of the evaluation will cover the most recent operating period of 2020 up until the present. It covers all EBRD engagement with civil society across different levels, at the project level through investment operations to the strategy and corporate level.

This evaluation will not cover IEvD's own engagement with civil society, which is part of the self-assessment and independent evaluation of IEvD.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will address one overarching question:

To what extent did EBRD's civil society engagement contribute to strengthening transition impact while maintaining EBRD's accountability and transparency to shareholders and the public through established governance mechanisms?

To respond to the overarching question, which aligns with the Bank's purpose, this evaluation poses a set of three sub-questions largely based on internationally established OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria.

1. To what extent is EBRD's engagement with civil society relevant to its strategic objectives, and policy commitments; and how coherent is it with the efforts of other MDBs/IFIs? (Relevance & Coherence)
2. What outcomes and impacts have EBRD's engagement had and how sustainable are the results? (Effectiveness & Sustainability)
3. How well has EBRD deployed existing resources to engage with civil society towards increased impact and

accountability, and how transparent and efficient is the EBRD as perceived by civil society organisations? (Efficiency)

Methodology

IEvD will take a systems-based approach to address the complexity of engagement by understanding the relationships and interdependencies between different components of the eco- system for civil society engagement, and how they work together to achieve the overall goal of moving from risk mitigation to impact generation.

The evaluation uses a mixed-methods approach to gather qualitative and quantitative evidence on civil society engagement from the local level, country level and at the broader institutional level. To analyse and evaluate engagement at the local level, the evaluation will include case studies from across the main regions.

Evaluation of engagement will include eight country case study reviews for Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Croatia, Ukraine, Egypt, Jordan, Armenia, and Türkiye.

Timing

The evaluation will be conducted over the course of 2026, with a view to finalisation in Q4 2026, and publication in early 2027.

Contacts

Gabriele Fattorelli
Director, Corporate & Thematic Division,
Deputy Chief Evaluator
Email: fattorellig@ebrd.com

Karin Becker
Principal Evaluation Manager
Corporate & Thematic Division
Email: beckerk@ebrd.com

Beatriz Perez Timmermans
Associate Director
Corporate & Thematic Division
Email: perezb@ebrd.com