



CONCEPT NOTE

Overcoming the gap for sustainable development

A Joint Learning Seminar by the Brazilian Monitoring and Evaluation Network, BRICS Policy Center PRIME Hub, with support from the Independent Evaluation Office of the New Development Bank

RIO DE JANEIRO, OCTOBER 23, 2025



Seminar on evaluation of infrastructure interventions: **Overcoming the gap for sustainable development**

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INTRODUCTION

The Brazilian Monitoring and Evaluation Network

1. The [Brazilian Monitoring and Evaluation Network](#) – RBMA in Portuguese – was founded in November 2008. In 2014 it became a non-profit association, governed by a collegiate board of directors and fiscal advisors.
2. RBMA's vision is that in the future, Brazilian society will use “evaluation and monitoring as a value and strategy for learning and decision-making to qualify institutions, programs and policies, strengthening democratic processes” and its mission is “to promote dialogues between the various players in the field of monitoring and evaluation, stimulating the dissemination of theories and practices that are increasingly relevant to Brazilian society”. To this end, one of RBMA’s initiatives has been to hold nationwide seminars with the aim of promoting the exchange of experiences, training and dialogue to foster evaluation culture and practice in the country.

BRICS Policy Center and PRIME Hub

3. The [BRICS Policy Center \(BPC\)](#) is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank connected to the Institute of International Relations of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (IRI/PUC-Rio). BPC is dedicated to analysing global transformations and contributing to the debate and creation of policies aimed at promoting a human rights-based agenda and reducing poverty and inequality, with emphasis on the BRICS+ countries. BPC grounds its reflections in a critical and multidimensional understanding of persistent asymmetries in the international system, competing development models, the reproduction of inequalities, the worsening environmental crisis, global governance structures, and the role that southern countries have, and can and should play in this evolving context.
4. With the goal of developing and promoting participatory, intersectional and gender- and race-sensitive approaches in monitoring and evaluation, the BPC, through the Participatory and Intersectional Monitoring and Evaluation Hub (PRIME Hub), seeks to integrate race, gender and class perspectives to enhance inclusion and the transformative potential of evaluation practices, contributing to more just and sustainable development pathways.

The New Development Bank and the Independent Evaluation Office

5. The [New Development Bank \(NDB\)](#) is a multilateral bank created in 2014 by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) and has been operating since 2015, mobilising resources for infrastructure and sustainable development interventions in emerging markets and developing countries (EMDCs). In line with its members' development objectives and commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement, the NDB prioritizes high-impact operations that are climate smart, disaster resilient, technologically integrated and socially inclusive. NDB's [Independent Evaluation Office \(IEO\)](#) is



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responsible for independently evaluating the Bank's policies, strategies, processes, initiatives and operations. The IEO also contributes to and oversees the improvement of the effectiveness of the Bank's quality assurance and self-assessment activities. In its Evaluation Manual, NDB/IEO aims to tailor the internationally recognized evaluation practices of the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) of the Multilateral Development Banks and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), with the local knowledge and specificities of countries in the Global South.

CONTEXT

6. In the 1990s, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) highlighted the importance of considering the impacts of development on people's lives. Since then, there has been increased advocacy for active societal participation in decision-making on policy interventions, especially those with environmental impacts.
7. At the same time, evaluation has consolidated itself as a systematic and objective process for analysing the effectiveness, impact, relevance, sustainability, and coherence of interventions—whether planned, ongoing or completed—in the development field, with the aim of drawing lessons about their design, implementation and results (OECD, 2022).
8. In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the need to embed evaluation throughout the entire life cycle of interventions, and to include participation of diverse social actors in evaluations. Such participation expands development practitioners' and stakeholders' capacity to understand the positive and negative legacies of investments and to improve interventions based on solid “on the ground” experience and evidence.
9. Recent experiences in Brazil, such as the construction of large hydroelectric dams, highlight the complexity of the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of such interventions. Although studies on investments in urban mobility, sanitation and energy solutions exist, these efforts remain isolated, lacking greater systematization, methodological depth, and integration with public management practices.
10. Moreover, they rarely incorporate inclusive, participatory and intersectional perspectives, which are essential for understanding how impacts are distributed differently across social groups. Even when this does happen, these approaches will only be truly effective if such principles are embedded throughout the entire intervention cycle—from planning, to implementation, to summative evaluation. This challenge becomes even greater in sectors that traditionally invest little in evaluation and lack accumulated experience.
11. Given this scenario, it is urgent to create spaces for critical reflection and experience-sharing that link public policy evaluation to the specific challenges of infrastructure interventions. This seminar aims to contribute to developing more comprehensive evaluation approaches that integrate territorial, social, economic and environmental dimensions, that will strengthen long-term sustainability and social justice.



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RATIONALE

12. Evaluation plays an essential role in improving the planning, design and implementation of public policies, capturing results and generating valuable lessons from past experiences to guide future decisions. Beyond qualifying investments, it strengthens governance, promotes greater transparency, social participation, continuous learning and more responsive financing mechanisms.
13. The integration of public policy evaluation in infrastructure investments is fundamental to understanding the real impacts of these interventions over time, going beyond ex-ante analyses of feasibility and risk. Real-time, mid-term, and ex-post evaluations, in particular, can reveal process challenges and medium- and long-term effects—including unintended consequences—offering a more complete picture of the results achieved and their contributions to sustainable development.
14. By adopting evaluation practices with participatory and intersectional approaches, it becomes possible to more deeply understand how infrastructure interventions differently affect women, black and indigenous populations, low-income groups, and other social segments, making interventions more inclusive, responsible, and responsive to diverse realities.
15. In summary, integrating evaluation into infrastructure policy is indispensable for ensuring its effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and positive impact. Addressing the gap in ex-ante and ex-post evaluations and building a solid knowledge base in the field are fundamental steps to ensure that infrastructure investments truly promote comprehensive development and improve people's quality of life.

MAIN GOAL

16. To foster discussion and the development of methodologies and practices for conducting comprehensive evaluations of infrastructure interventions, guided by an intersectional approach and principles of participation and inclusion.

SPECIFIC GOALS

17. The specific Goals of the joint seminar are as follows:
 - (i) Analyse and discuss the current state of infrastructure interventions' evaluation practices in Brazil and the Global South more broadly, identifying the opportunities and challenges between ex-ante, real-time and ex-post evaluations.
 - (ii) Debate appropriate methodologies for different types of evaluation of infrastructure interventions, considering their economic, social, environmental and territorial impacts through an intersectional lens.
 - (iii) Explore the challenges of conducting real-time and ex-post evaluations, including data availability, stakeholder engagement, defining long-term impact indicators, and attributing causality.



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- (iv) Share case studies, lessons learned, and good practices in infrastructure interventions implementation and evaluations, contributing to the accumulation of knowledge in the sector from the Global South more broadly.
- (v) Discuss the role of government institutions, development banks, academia, and civil society organizations in promoting, participating, and conducting implementation and evaluations.
- (vi) Identify mechanisms to integrate evaluation results into the planning and management cycle of new infrastructure interventions and public policy formulation.

VENUE AND DATE

- 18. The seminar will be a one-day event on Thursday, October 23, 2025, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, in the Rio Data Center of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro.

AUDIENCE

- 19. Approximately 150 people are expected to take part in the seminar, including: high-level representatives of Brazilian government bodies (federal, state and municipal), and from other countries, NDB Board members and/or their advisors and staff, representatives from multilateral organizations, the private sector, academic and research institutions, civil society organizations, national and state development banks in Brazil, and representatives from embassies of all BRICS, BRICS partner, and NDB member countries in Brazil. The provisional list of participants may be seen in annex 1.

FORMAT/SPEAKERS

- 20. The format of the seminar will include keynote statements and presentations on key themes, as well as interactive panel sessions.

The provisional agenda may be seen on pages 6 to 8.

- 21. Ample space will be provided for engagement with participants during the seminar, including coffee breaks and lunch, as well as a dedicated professional networking session at the start of the seminar.

DOCUMENTATION

- 22. Background documentation will be made available electronically to the participants ahead of the seminar. Moreover, specific session briefs will be prepared and circulated on concerned topics, with a short synopsis of the theme under consideration and key questions that will be addressed during the discussions.