



# Formative Evaluation of the Youth Policy and Operational Strategy 2020 and Youth-Related Operations at the Caribbean Development Bank, 2020–2025

Evaluation Report: Volume I



December 2025

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<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank	<b>ERG</b>	Evaluation Reference Group
<b>AfDB</b>	African Development Bank	<b>FIRE</b>	Youth for Innovation and Resilience
<b>BMC</b>	Borrowing Member Countries	<b>FLN</b>	Future Leaders Network
<b>BNTF</b>	Basic Needs Trust Fund	<b>FPIC</b>	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
<b>BPO</b>	Business Processing Operations	<b>GEAP</b>	Gender Equality Action Plan
<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Community	<b>GEPOS</b>	Gender Equality Policy and Operational Strategy
<b>CDB</b>	Caribbean Development Bank	<b>HRAD</b>	Human Resources and Administration Department
<b>CES</b>	Country Engagement Strategies	<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>CIIF</b>	Creative Industries Innovation Fund	<b>IOA</b>	Institutional and Organizational Assessment
<b>COHSOD</b>	Council for Human and Social Development	<b>IPAG</b>	Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group
<b>COMYS</b>	Council of Ministers of Youth and Sports	<b>IsDB</b>	Islamic Development Bank
<b>CRYC</b>	Caribbean Regional Youth Council	<b>JPO</b>	Junior Professional Officers
<b>CSME</b>	CARICOM Single Market and Economy	<b>LCDS</b>	Low Carbon Development Strategy
<b>CYDAP</b>	Caribbean Youth Development Action Plan	<b>MDB</b>	Multilateral Development Banks
<b>DCCA</b>	Department of Communications and Corporate Affairs	<b>MRAP</b>	Management Response Action Plan
<b>ECLAC</b>	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	<b>MSME</b>	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
		<b>NEET</b>	Not in Employment, Education, or Training

<b>NYC</b>	National Youth Councils	<b>UWI</b>	University of the West Indies
<b>NYP</b>	National-Level Youth Policies	<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>OAS</b>	Organization of American States	<b>WPAY</b>	World Programme of Action for Youth
<b>OECS</b>	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States	<b>YDAP</b>	Youth Development Action Plan
<b>OIE</b>	Office of Independent Evaluation	<b>YDCoP</b>	Youth Development Community of Practice
<b>PAHO</b>	Pan American Health Organization	<b>YDS</b>	Youth Development Strategy
<b>RMF</b>	Results Monitoring Framework	<b>YEE</b>	Young and Emerging Evaluators
<b>SCDS</b>	Small Coastal Developing States	<b>YEETE</b>	Youth Economic Empowerment through Enterprise
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals	<b>Youth FIRE</b>	Youth for Innovation and Resilience
<b>SEM</b>	Socio-Ecological Model	<b>YPOS</b>	Youth Policy and Operational Strategy
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence	<b>YPP</b>	Young Professionals Programme
<b>SIDS</b>	Small Island Developing States		
<b>SDF</b>	Special Development Fund		
<b>SSD</b>	Social Sector Division		
<b>TGN</b>	Thematic Guidance Notes		
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of Reference		
<b>UN</b>	United Nations		
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund		
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar		

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This evaluation was strengthened and made more meaningful through the dedicated involvement of young people across the Caribbean, whose voices, insights, and lived experiences enriched the entire evaluation process through focus groups or surveys.

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**Roberto La Rovere,**  
Head of Evaluation  
Office of Independent Evaluation

## Evaluation background and purpose

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has invested over USD 1 billion in youth-related programmes throughout its 54-year history, recognising youth as central to sustainable development across its Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs). In 2020, CDB launched the Youth Policy and Operational Strategy (YPOS) to address persistent challenges facing Caribbean youth, including unemployment, limited civic engagement, crime and violence, and climate vulnerability.

This formative evaluation, conducted five years after YPOS implementation began, identifies lessons learned, enabling factors, and implementation challenges. The evaluation provides timely insights to inform CDB's 2026-2035 Strategic Plan which positions youth as a central priority, and to strengthen the Bank's capacity to deliver more impactful youth-focused development across the region.

## Methodology

The evaluation assessed the relevance, coherence, preparedness, and gender-responsiveness of YPOS, applying both intersectional and systems lenses. The evaluation covered YPOS design and initial implementation since 2020, featuring three thematic case studies on youth economic empowerment, crime and violence prevention, and environmental resilience.

The evaluation employed a highly participatory approach, **engaging 214 stakeholders** (108 female, 105 male, 1 non-binary), **including 109 youth**. Data collection combined document review, field visits to Belize, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia, observation of youth engagement events, and comparative analysis of multilateral development banks.

## Key Findings

### YPOS Design

YPOS was well designed, expert-led, evidence-based, and aligned with global and regional frameworks. Its comprehensive scope, thematic breadth and extensive youth consultations positioned CDB as a potential leader among Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) in youth development. The strategy remains relevant to Caribbean youth priorities across its six pillars, through emerging contexts such as COVID-19 and digital transformation, as well as the range of push and pull factors shaping emigration, demand adaptability. It could be further strengthened by tailoring approaches, relevant integration of youth across operations, and ensuring meaningful inclusion, particularly of vulnerable groups.

Internally, YPOS is coherent with CDB's Strategic Plan (2020-2024), though the strategy is inconsistently applied across the Bank in practice. Externally, while the YPOS is aligned with most National Youth Policies, its implementation is hindered by outdated policy frameworks and limited institutional capacity in many BMCs. There remain opportunities to strengthen national-level engagement, particularly with youth ministries and national youth councils, which are often underutilised in CDB's country strategies.

## Operationalisation Of YPOS

YPOS elevated CDB's ambition to position youth as central partners in development, but its operationalisation has been constrained by the absence of institutional mechanisms, resources, and leadership. The absence of an approved Action Plan, dedicated Youth Fund, and senior champions supported by a specialised technical unit has left the strategy without authority, accountability, or enforcement mechanisms. Monitoring and reporting systems contain minimal youth-specific or age disaggregated indicators, generating fragmented data that constrain the ability to demonstrate portfolio-wide impact or link youth outcomes to YPOS objectives. Awareness of YPOS remains low both internally and externally due to staff turnover, limited training, weak institutional memory, and limited visibility, undermining ownership and investments.

Implementation of YPOS' dual-track approach has yielded mixed results:

- **Targeted youth investments:** Small-scale pilots show promise but remain isolated experimentation rather than a larger more strategic investment pipeline. Systemic constraints—including under-resourced youth ministries, limited integration of youth development in Country Engagement Strategies, and absence of tailored financing products—have prevented scaling successful approaches
- **Youth mainstreaming:** Efforts remain sporadic and opportunistic, lacking standardised tools and clear guidance for priority areas.

Youth engagement remains largely limited to event participation and ad hoc consultations rather than structured pathways that embed youth leadership into decision making. CDB has successfully infused youth engagement into internal workstreams through internships, the Young Professionals Programme (YPP), and Junior Professional Officer placements (JPO). These cost-effective programs have expanded youth representation and built regional capacity, though they would benefit from improved mentorship and clearer role definitions. Externally, the Future Leaders Network (FLN) stands as a significant achievement, though it has not yet been fully leveraged to achieve its full potential.

Youth consultations highlighted the need to move beyond tokenistic participation toward:

- Meaningful co-creation across the project cycle in design and implementation
- Timely responses and clear feedback loops
- Inclusive processes that reach beyond 'repeat champions' to engage marginalised youth
- Structured roles in governance and accountability mechanisms

## Factors Influencing Implementation

The implementation of YPOS has been shaped by both internal and external factors that collectively constrain its ability to deliver systemic youth outcomes:

Internal Factors	External Factors
Committed individual champions and a generally supportive organisational culture	Changes in government and varying political commitment affected continuity
Youth-focused programs (internships, YPP, JPOs) show promise but remain disconnected from YPOS implementation	Under-resourced youth ministries limited national implementation
Insufficient human and financial resources dedicated to youth programming	Digital transformation created both opportunities and challenges for youth engagement
Weak communications strategies	Limited recognition of CDB's role in youth development hampered partnership building.
Limited knowledge management systems	Environmental shocks, such as COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters, disrupted programming while highlighting youth vulnerabilities

## Conclusions

- 1. Strong Foundation:** YPOS established a relevant and thoughtful framework for youth development in the Caribbean. Its holistic approach and consultative design process positioned CDB as a credible actor in youth policy, though some concepts remained insufficiently defined for operational application.
- 2. Youth Voice and Engagement:** Youth consistently affirmed CDB's potential as a regional leader while calling for increased targeted financing, deeper engagement opportunities, and more inclusive mechanisms that move beyond consultation to co-creation. The Future Leaders Network demonstrated CDB's commitment but revealed the need for improved institutional readiness to engage youth consistently and meaningfully.
- 3. Implementation Gaps:** CDB failed to establish the necessary conditions for full YPOS implementation. The absence of an Action Plan, Youth Fund, dedicated staffing, and systematic capacity building left efforts fragmented, overly reliant on individual champions, and limited in visibility and learning.
- 4. Strategic Opportunity:** CDB stands at a critical juncture with youth identified as a priority in the new Strategic Plan and rising internal and external demand for youth engagement. To capitalise on this momentum, the Bank must clarify its value proposition, strengthen partnerships, and adopt robust communications strategies that leverage collaboration with regional actors to achieve systemic impact.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the evaluation makes six forward-looking recommendations.

**Recommendation 1:** CDB should appoint a senior management YPOS Champion and Alternate to lead policy implementation across the Bank, supported by clear terms of reference, orientation, and training to ensure effective uptake of the role.

**Recommendation 2:** CDB should develop and fund a comprehensive Action Plan for 2026–2029, setting clear priorities for the dual-track approach—including targeted youth investments and integrating youth dimensions across priority areas, defining accountability and budget frameworks, and engaging staff through sensitisation and capacity building.

**Recommendation 3:** CDB should strengthen its internal capacity by financing specialised youth expertise, embedding HR initiatives into YPOS, enhancing staff training and communications, issuing guidance on good practices, and institutionalising knowledge management through a Community of Practice.

**Recommendation 4:** CDB should reinforce the Future Leaders Network (FLN) to play a substantive role in strategic planning and country processes, supported by dedicated resources, structured engagement strategies, and coordination with regional youth organisations to broaden inclusion and impact.

**Recommendation 5:** CDB should expand partnerships and external communications to build an enabling environment for youth development, including youth friendly outreach and strategic collaborations such as co-developing indicators and strengthening data systems with regional partners.

**Recommendation 6:** CDB should establish a dedicated Youth Fund with concessional financing to incentivise large scale youth initiatives, including thematic windows and capacity building support, backed by a resource mobilisation strategy and monitoring framework.



The primary purpose of this formative evaluation is to provide insights to enhance the ongoing development and implementation of the Caribbean Development Bank's Youth Policy and Operational Strategy (YPOS), five years after its launch. The evaluation also presents an opportunity to inform the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) 2026–2035 Strategic Plan, which includes youth as one of the Bank's main axes. The evaluation seeks to provide evidence on the main lessons learned, the enabling factors, and the challenges faced by CDB and Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs) for implementing youth operations, initiatives, and activities related to and guided by the YPOS.

The evaluation was commissioned by CDB OIE and conducted by an external evaluation consultancy firm from June 2025 to December 2025. As part of OIE's enhanced quality assurance and governance, OIE convened an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) to provide advice and guidance on the evaluation. The ERG consisted of three youth leaders from the Caribbean who are external to the CDB and were selected by OIE (see *Stakeholders Consulted List in Volume II, Appendix 3*), as well as several key staff members who have been involved in YPOS and youth-related operations at the Bank. The ERG was consulted during the inception phase to validate the inception report, approach, and methodology, and during the reporting phase to validate the preliminary findings and areas of recommendation and the draft report.

The evaluation exercise had a strong participatory and inclusive approach and included consultations with a wide range of stakeholders (including through field visits in Belize, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia). At the same time, it faced several limitations including a compressed timeline, the unavailability of key stakeholders, limited knowledge or familiarity with YPOS among stakeholders, and challenges related to identifying youth projects, accessing project documents, and identifying project stakeholders and youth beneficiaries (esp. vulnerable youth). The team mitigated the limitations where possible (see *mitigation strategies in Volume II, Appendix 1*) and considered the nature of the evaluation evidence in writing the findings. Thus, the overall impact of these data-collection constraints on the credibility of findings was likely modest.

The report is presented in 6 sections: **Section 1:** Introduction; **Section 2:** Background Information; **Section 3:** Methodology; **Section 4:** Evaluation Findings; **Section 5:** Conclusions and Lessons Learned; **Section 6:** Recommendations.

Appendices are presented in *Volume II*, including detailed methodology, evaluation matrix, list of stakeholders consulted, list of documents consulted, additional supporting analysis, and overview of CDB youth-focused projects. *Volume II* also includes three thematic case studies on youth economic empowerment, the prevention of youth crime and violence, and youth inclusion in environmental resilience and climate action.

## 2.1 Youth in the Caribbean

Youth in the Caribbean represent a significant and dynamic demographic group, which is crucial for the region's future development.<sup>1</sup> According to the latest data available from the United Nations Population Division (2022), approximately 20% of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states are youth aged 15–29.<sup>2</sup> Older sources, such as the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), cite that young people aged 10–24 years comprise about 30% of the Caribbean population.<sup>3</sup> Other reporting suggests that the region is also experiencing a demographic transition, with the United Nations (UN) Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) noting that the proportion of young people in the broader Latin America and Caribbean region has reached its highest levels to-date.<sup>4</sup> This demographic reality presents a critical opportunity, warranting dedicated strategic investment in youth. Conversely, the cost of not investing in youth in the Caribbean—especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic—is increasingly stark, with recent data and research painting a troubling picture across employment, migration, and social stability.<sup>5</sup>

In 2024, youth unemployment across the Caribbean (excluding Haiti<sup>6</sup>) stood at 17.6%, compared to just 4.7% for adults, and reached a peak at the height of the pandemic in 2020 at 23.5%; Moreover, 24% of Caribbean youth aged 15 to 24 years are classified as not in employment, education or training (NEET).<sup>7</sup> Most Caribbean countries are also net migrant-sending countries (with emigration outflows surpassing immigration inflows), with the United States, Canada, and the

United Kingdom being key destinations for job seekers.<sup>8</sup> CARICOM has established numerous agreements since 2001 covering certain skilled nationals in select countries to encourage and enable more intra-regional movement.<sup>9</sup> The new CARICOM Free Movement Agreement, launched in October 2025 by Barbados, Belize, Dominica, and Saint Vincent, hopes to further stem the flow of skilled professionals leaving the region for North America and Europe, by providing more opportunities for work and education in the region.<sup>10</sup>

Research indicates that failing to invest in youth triggers substantial economic and social costs, including lost productivity, increased crime, and heightened social tensions. In the Latin America and Caribbean region, negative youth behaviours have been found to reduce economic growth by up to 2% annually, not accounting for unquantifiable losses such as psychological distress and poorer health outcomes.<sup>11</sup> According to the 2025 Child and Youth Mental Health Research Study Report conducted by CARICOM and UNICEF, 58% of respondents expressed a lack of optimism about the future, 56% reported experiencing persistent worry; and 54% indicated feelings of sadness, depression, and hopelessness.<sup>12</sup> The region also faces high rates of crime and violence, recording some of the world's highest homicide rates, with violence exerting disproportionate pressure on young people and urban communities.

The Caribbean, made up of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Small Coastal Developing States (SCDS), is also particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Rising sea levels, intensified hurricanes, and shifting rainfall patterns have disrupted education systems, damaged infrastructure, and threatened livelihoods.

Access to climate and environmental education for youth remains uneven<sup>13</sup>, but there is opportunity for younger populations to both learn more about climate change and their environment, and to contribute to environmentally resilient economies in the region.

Like CDB, the UN and the World Bank (WB) have recognised that engaging youth is central to achieving sustainable development, as they bring essential perspectives and skills to tackle the world's biggest challenges.<sup>14</sup> At the time of the launch of CDB's YPOS in 2020, 15 of 19 of CDB's BMCs had national-level youth policies (NYPs) to guide their respective national youth agenda. Based on a mapping done by the evaluation team using publicly available data (see *Volume II, Appendix 6*), 16 of 19 BMCs currently have some form of NYP, although many are dated or in draft form.<sup>15</sup> These global organisations and nations across the region recognise very similar priority areas related to youth in their research and policies, including economic empowerment, education, health, gender, safety and security, and youth participation.

## 2.2 CDB's Youth-Related Operations and Initiatives

The CDB has provided over 1 billion United States Dollars (USD) for youth development programmes and projects over its 54 years of operation.<sup>16</sup> Across the decades, CDB has recognised the importance of integrating youth in development and poverty-reduction efforts, integrating youth in various facets of its work. This has included several youth-focused and youth-related projects in BMCs, particularly through the Special Development Fund (SDF), and more specifically the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF).<sup>17</sup>

At an organisation-wide level, in 2002, CDB launched Vybzing, a flagship youth programme which facilitated communication among youth and the Bank on social and economic issues that impact their lives. In 2019, Vybzing was restructured following consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries from CDB's 19 BMCs and officially rebranded in 2023 to Youth for Innovation and Resilience (Youth FIRE). This rebranding built on the 2019 approach and introduced a greater focus on the inclusion of diverse and marginalised youth (such as youth with disabilities, youth from underserved communities, migrant youth and Indigenous youth). In 2023, CDB formally introduced the Future Leaders Network (FLN), a network composed of young people from across the region designed to advise the Bank on youth-related programming and projects. In 2023 CDB introduced its first formal summer internship programme as well as the year-round Young Professionals Programme (YPP), both of which have continued into 2025. In 2025, CDB also introduced its first cohort of the Junior Professional Officers (JPOs)—another mechanism through which young people can gain valuable work experience at the Bank, and the Bank can benefit from the support and perspectives of young people.

## 2.3 CDB's Youth Policy and Operational Strategy

CDB's Youth Policy and Operational Strategy 2020-2025 (YPOS) was developed in 2020 as a cornerstone initiative to guide the Bank's strategic engagement in youth development across the BMCs. YPOS was designed to address persistent socio-economic challenges facing Caribbean youth, including high unemployment rates, significant Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET) populations, gender barriers, limited civic engagement, and vulnerabilities related to violence and climate impacts. The strategy envisions a dual-track approach in which the Bank mainstreams youth considerations across all CDB operations while also implementing targeted youth-focused interventions.

Five years after its launch, CDB's OIE commissioned this evaluation with a formative focus rather than a summative one because, as the TOR for this evaluation notes, **"no current**

**operations within CDB have been identified as directly developed under YPOS 2020"**, making outcome evaluation premature.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, the formative approach is strategically chosen to provide timely insights into implementation challenges to strengthen operationalisation of YPOS, including **"difficulties in achieving effective inter-sectoral coordination, uneven mainstreaming of youth considerations in broader sectoral programs, limited sustained engagement of youth in decision-making processes, and constraints related to financial, human, and technical resources."**<sup>19</sup>

As CDB is developing a new Strategic Plan, the evaluation presents an opportunity to strengthen the Bank's youth responsiveness—not only by informing the YPOS, which serves as a Bank-wide policy and strategy, but also by influencing other key strategic instruments.<sup>20</sup> Ultimately, the evaluation aims to generate critical learning to strengthen YPOS implementation, guide strategic adjustments, and enhance CDB's capacity to deliver impactful youth-targeted and youth-mainstreamed interventions across the Caribbean.



## 3.1 Purpose and Scope

The primary purpose of this formative evaluation is to provide timely insights to enhance the ongoing development and implementation of the YPOS and inform the CDB's new Strategic Plan, which prioritises youth as one of the Bank's main axes. The evaluation seeks to provide evidence on the main lessons learned, the enabling factors, and the challenges faced by CDB and the BMC for implementing youth operations, initiatives, and activities guided by or related to the YPOS.

The scope of this evaluation includes the conceptual design, strategic framework, and initial activities undertaken by the Bank under YPOS. Due to the absence of active youth projects within the YPOS portfolio, the evaluation does not assess effectiveness or outcomes. Instead, it focuses on the criteria of relevance, coherence, preparedness, and gender-responsiveness with an intersectional lens (see Section 3.2). The evaluation covers the period from the launch of YPOS in 2020—including the preceding design phase—up to the present. Thematically, it addresses all **six pillars of YPOS**, with emphasis on three priority areas identified during the evaluation's inception phase: youth economic empowerment, youth crime and violence prevention, and youth engagement in environmental resilience. Geographically, the evaluation applies to all CDB BMCs. Field visits were conducted in three countries (Belize, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia), selected based on sampling criteria, to ensure diverse and relevant visits.

**This section of the report provides an overview of the evaluation methodology and tools, and further details are provided in Volume II, Appendix 1.**

## 3.2 Evaluation Questions

Table 3.1 below outlines the evaluation's criteria, questions and sub-questions, with the full evaluation matrix provided in *Volume II, Appendix 2*.

The full evaluation matrix identifies the associated methods, data sources, indicators, and data collection techniques for each evaluation question. The overall content, nature and purpose of the main evaluation methods are described in **Section 3.3** below.

**Table 3.1:** Evaluation Criteria, Questions, and Sub-Questions

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question And Sub-Questions
<b>EQ 1: How sound is the YPOS design?</b>	
<p>Relevance, coherence, and gender-responsiveness with an intersectional lens</p>	<p>To what extent is the YPOS conceptual design and strategic framework informed by robust evidence and aligned with global and regional youth development frameworks and diagnosis? *<sup>21</sup></p> <p>How well does the YPOS align with the diverse needs, aspirations, and priorities of Caribbean youth, including those at risk of emigration? *<sup>22</sup></p> <p>How well has YPOS aligned the CDB's work with youth priorities, needs or aspirations in three priority areas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ youth economic empowerment</li> <li>→ youth crime and violence</li> <li>→ youth engagement in environmental resilience</li> </ul> <p>How coherent are the YPOS strategic pillars and anticipated outcomes with the CDB's strategy and results?</p> <p>To what extent is the YPOS coherent with national frameworks, including youth policies, education, employment, and security strategies that address youth vulnerability and talent retention in BMCs? *<sup>23</sup></p> <p>To what extent does the YPOS design incorporate gender-responsive strategies, address gender disparities, and promote gender equality (with an intersectional lens)?</p>
<b>EQ 2: What early implementation steps have been taken?</b>	
<p>Preparedness and gender-responsiveness with an intersectional lens</p>	<p>To what extent have institutional mechanisms, resources, and capacities been established within CDB and BMCs to operationalise the YPOS? *<sup>24</sup></p> <p>To what extent are youth engaged meaningfully in informing the strategy of the CDB and in planning, monitoring, and implementation of YPOS and related initiatives?</p>
<b>EQ 3: What factors have influenced early implementation?</b>	
<p>Coordination, preparedness, and gender responsiveness with an intersectional lens</p>	<p>How effectively does the YPOS coordinate and align with the efforts of regional and international partners and stakeholders involved in youth development?</p> <p>How effectively does the YPOS coordinate and align with the efforts of regional and international partners and stakeholders involved in youth development?</p> <p>How have other internal factors affected YPOS implementation to date? (e.g., organisational motivation and culture, capacity)</p>

### 3.3 Methodology and Tools

The evaluation methodology is aligned with CDB's 2011 Evaluation Policy and ethical guidelines, CDB's Gender Responsive Evaluation Guidelines, ECG Good Practice Standards and Code of Conduct, UNEG Norms and Standards, and OECD-DAC. The evaluation takes a formative approach, focusing on providing actionable insights and lessons to strengthen YPOS implementation going forward. It used mixed methods, with an emphasis on qualitative methods and triangulation of multiple sources, as well as an approach that is utilisation-focused, participatory and inclusive, and gender-responsive (with an intersectional lens). The evaluation also applied a systems lens, drawing on two key frameworks to guide its analysis. The Institutional and Organizational Assessment (IOA) Framework<sup>25</sup> was used to assess the institutional ecosystem supporting YPOS implementation, and the Socio-Ecological Model (SEM)—as defined in the YPOS (see p. 36)—was used to situate the evaluation's analysis of YPOS and youth development within broader social and environmental contexts.

The evaluation used various complementary data collection methods including document review (see *list of documents consulted in Volume II, Appendix 4*); field visits in Belize, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia; observation of youth engagement in relevant events (such as the online Youth Townhall at the 2nd Wider Caribbean Regional Risk Conference 2025); and stakeholder consultations. It included a document-based comparative review of the approach to youth in a sample of five multilateral development banks.

Stakeholder consultations captured diverse perspectives through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders, including CDB operations staff and management, sector specialists, representatives of youth-led organisations, government partners in BMCs, implementation agencies, and diverse young beneficiaries. These consultations carefully accounted for gender balance and inclusion of marginalised<sup>26</sup> youth voices and paid particular attention to creating safe spaces and using youth-friendly methods for youth to share their experiences and perspectives on CDB's youth-responsive programming. *Table 3.2* presents a summary of stakeholders consulted as part of the evaluation.

Data analysis drew on descriptive and content analysis, quantitative and qualitative approaches, and comparative and gender and social inclusion analyses.

**Table 3.2:** Number of Stakeholders Consulted

Stakeholder Category	Number of Stakeholders Consulted
Regional (virtual)	41 (23 youth, 18 other); (20F; 20M; 1 non-binary)
Saint Lucia (virtual and in-person)	47 (20 youth; 27 other); (23F, 24M)
Belize (virtual and in-person)	61 (31 youth; 30 other); (25F, 36M)
Jamaica (virtual and in-person)	65 (35 youth, 30 other); (40F, 25M)
<b>Total</b>	<b>109 youth; 105 others</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>214 (108F; 105M, 1 non-binary)</b>

### 3.4 Limitations

The evaluation faced several practical constraints that affected scope and depth of data collection. A compressed timeline<sup>27</sup> required accelerated data collection and analysis, which resulted in some limitations—particularly in the mobilisation of youth or follow-up with respondents for documents or other key pieces of evidence mentioned during consultations. The evaluation team also faced additional situational barriers to reaching vulnerable cohorts (for example, security concerns and the time needed to plan safe, inclusive consultations), which demand more nuanced, tailored approaches. Additionally, key stakeholders and project documents were not always available, and some longstanding institutional knowledge of YPOS proved limited, reducing the ability to trace youth-focused projects and verify implementation details. Engagement was further constrained by low participation (including virtual participation) from certain countries (notably Jamaica, which was further compounded by difficulties faced in the wake of Hurricane Melissa<sup>28</sup>).

As a result of these constraints, the evaluation was not always able to triangulate across multiple sources, at times relying more heavily on the wealth of consultations with a diverse range of stakeholders. The team mitigated the limitations where possible (see *mitigation strategies in Volume II, Appendix 1*) and considered the nature of the evaluation evidence in writing the findings. Thus, the overall impact of these data-collection constraints on the credibility of findings was likely modest.

## 4.1 How sound is the YPOS Design?

### 4.1.1 Alignment with Global Standards and Evidence<sup>29</sup>

#### Finding 1:

YPOS 2020 was grounded in strong evidence and aligned with global and regional development frameworks. YPOS introduced an innovative strategic approach, positioning CDB on a trajectory toward becoming a recognised MDB leader in youth development.

The YPOS represents a significant milestone for the CDB in advancing its positioning and strategy regarding youth. Specifically, its design was **a)** expert-led and evidence-based, **b)** had global and regional alignment, and **c)** demonstrated comparative innovation.

#### Expert-Led and Evidence-Based

The YPOS design process was guided by the late Dr. Henry Charles, a leading expert on Caribbean youth development and champion for meaningful youth participation. His leadership ensured that the strategy was grounded in regional realities, drawing on decades of research and policy experience. He was also supported by two young researchers—Teocah Dove and Tiffany Daniels-Bailey, who brought expertise in social development. The design process was participatory, drawing on the knowledge and experience of other stakeholders through the ‘YPOS Working Group’ and ‘YPOS Reference Group.’

The ‘YPOS Working Group’ consisted of CDB staff, including those who had already engaged in youth-related work at the CDB or who had relevant experience working in other areas of social inclusion at the Bank, such as gender equality.<sup>30</sup> The ‘YPOS Reference Group’ consisted of youth leaders/champions in the region, other relevant stakeholders from Caribbean Regional Youth Council (CRYC), United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO), Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Organization of American States (OAS) and University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus, as well as BMC representatives involved in youth affairs.<sup>31</sup> Country visits to four BMCs facilitated feedback from other external stakeholders. Over 500 young persons were consulted through face-to-face and online consultations. A comprehensive document review and analysis of demographic and socio-economic data informed the policy’s problem analysis, which underpins its guiding principles and strategic pillars.<sup>32</sup> This combination of expert leadership and robust evidence positioned YPOS as a credible policy and strategy for youth development in the Caribbean.

#### Global and Regional Alignment

YPOS was informed by major frameworks, including the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY), Baku Commitment, Caribbean Youth Development Action Plan (CYDAP), Global Youth Development Index, SAMOA Pathway, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Key learnings from these frameworks include the recognition that **“youth development responses must be integrated, mainstreamed and targeted for building youth resilience and achieving positive development outcomes.”**<sup>33</sup>

These frameworks also emphasise partnerships, coordinated action, and youth engagement as essential for development. Through research and consultations with regional stakeholders, YPOS drew not only from these frameworks but also from practical lessons and good practices in their implementation.<sup>34</sup> This ensured the strategy was both technically sound and contextually relevant.

### YPOS in the MDB Landscape

Among a sample of five MDBs<sup>35</sup> for which the evaluation conducted a comparative document review (see *Volume II, Appendix 5*), YPOS stands out for its Bank-wide scope, thematic breadth, and strong consultation with youth. The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) is the only other MDB in the sample with a comparable initiative, reflected in its 2020–2025 Youth Development Strategy (YDS). The African Development Bank (AfDB) has a Bank-wide strategy specifically focused on Jobs for Youth. It is also rolling out a ‘*Youth, Jobs, and Skills Marker System*’ with the ILO (modelled after its successful Gender Marker System and online dashboard). This may be an interesting example for CDB to draw on in defining future approaches for mainstreaming youth across the Bank. Although the Asian Development Bank (ADB) does not have a policy or strategy dedicated to youth, it also has an initiative for mainstreaming youth called ‘*ADB Youth for Asia*’.

CDB is the only MDB in the sample that labels its youth strategy as a ‘policy’ as well—suggesting a higher level of institutional commitment. The policy and strategy are unique in its holistic approach to youth development, considering youth not only through specific foci such as employment or education, but encompassing interconnected factors such as health, social inclusion, civic engagement, climate change/the environment,

and others. The YPOS draws on comprehensive frameworks including the life cycle approach, positive youth development, and the social ecological model, recognising both the multiple systems and influences. YPOS also proposes a distinctive dual-track approach, explicitly integrating both targeted youth programming and mainstreaming youth considerations across all Bank operations.

This integrated approach is innovative for an MDB strategy, ensuring that youth development is not treated in isolation but embedded within broader development efforts. YPOS was based on extensive youth consultations (over 500 young persons). The IsDB also applied an innovative methodology in this regard, with the first draft of the YDS having been prepared by a Youth Development Committee composed of young IsDB professionals and staff. The AfDB Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy also included a Young Professional and Intern on the policy’s task team, alongside youth engagement workshops in five different countries. Similar approaches could be considered by CDB to further strengthen youth and CDB ownership and relevance.

*Table 12 in Volume II, Appendix 5* presents an overview of the youth policies and strategies of other select MDBs.

## Finding 2:

While the YPOS 2020 had a strong design, there are also opportunities to further refine and strengthen the policy framework.

Areas for potential refinement of the YPOS include **a)** youth-led design, **b)** tailoring approaches across the life cycle and different thematic areas, **c)** integrating both an inward- and outward-facing orientation, **d)** assigning responsibilities and creating a clear plan of action.

### Youth-Led Design

As discussed in **Finding 1**, YPOS was informed by extensive youth consultations, and while this is a strong foundation, other MDBs also demonstrate interesting approaches that could be adopted or tailored to the context of CDB. The YPOS provides limited information about who the young people consulted were and how exactly they were engaged. This information was also not fully available through wider document review nor key informant interviews. However, key informants, including youth who themselves were consulted in the YPOS design process, suggested that the youth who were involved in the design (or at least those most heavily involved and consulted on more than one occasion) were recognised leaders in their communities who are well-connected and actively engaged. These engaged youth leaders bring important perspectives, essential for a policy focused on youth empowerment. However, participation from more vulnerable youth segments (e.g., youth from rural communities, living with disabilities, or facing economic hardship), whose perspectives are also very important for inclusive design, may have been limited. This reflects common challenges in regional consultation

processes, where logistical, social, and resource constraints can make it more challenging to reach youth in more vulnerable circumstances. Several youths consulted as part of the evaluation also stated that the YPOS was difficult for them to understand due to its length and use of complex jargon. Although the YPOS is succinct and includes helpful visuals and definitions, this indicates that the next iteration of the policy and strategy could be even more clear and accessible to ensure that the majority of youth, regardless of experience or educational background, can engage meaningfully with the strategy and see themselves reflected in its priorities. Alternatively, two versions of the YPOS could be developed, including a 'full' version and a 'popular' version<sup>36</sup>, and/or other forms of communication (such as videos or social media posts) could be used to disseminate clear information about the policy for a youth audience

### Tailored Approaches Across the Life-Cycle and Different Thematic Areas

The YPOS states that **"CDB will adopt a life cycle approach that responds to the differential needs of persons between ages of 10 and 35"**.<sup>37</sup> Specifically, it states that **"For the purposes of programming, the youth demographic will be classified as follows, in recognition of their common and specific needs: 10–14 as adolescents, 15–18 post-adolescent, 19–29 youth and 30–35 youth in transition"**.<sup>38</sup>

However, the Policy does not further explain how programming should be tailored for each youth demographic. Similarly, while the YPOS presents numerous thematic areas across its pillars of action, tailored approaches are needed, but were not expanded on, for each (e.g., for youth participation in the economy vs. youth action on climate change).

Several CDB staff consulted shared that they did not know how to apply the YPOS because they were unclear about its definition of youth/its approach to different stages of youth development and its strategic approach to different thematic areas relevant to youth.<sup>39</sup>

### Inward and Outward-Facing Orientation

YPOS 2020 has an outward-facing orientation, primarily focused on supporting BMCs with youth development. However, many of the stakeholders who were consulted emphasised that internal practices and initiatives, such as the FLN, YPP, and JPOs, as well as human resource practices, are part of the same picture—i.e., ‘what we do out there, must reflect what we do in here’. Internal initiatives related to youth have been further developed during the YPOS period without clear linkages to YPOS (**see Finding 16**); establishing more intentional strategic coherence between inward- and outward-facing youth initiatives could help reinforce institutional alignment and enhance the credibility of CDB’s youth development agenda. For example, the IsDB YDS includes an action item to revamp its internship and visiting fellows programme to cover new areas (including youth development, humanitarian response, and green growth), contributing to the integration of youth development across IsDB’s key sectors. Considerations around the inward- and outward-orientation of YPOS should also consider harmonisation with other CDB policies; in particular, stakeholders noted that CDB may launch a new Education and Training Policy and Strategy, which should be aligned with the YPOS.

### Accountability for Implementation

Clearly assigning responsibilities among all staff—specifying who is accountable, what actions are

expected, and for what purpose—is essential to translating policy into practice. Ensuring that these responsibilities are understood and embraced across the Bank is equally important. This would require broad dissemination of the policy and targeted training for relevant staff on how to apply YPOS within their respective areas of work and why doing so contributes to the Bank’s broader development objectives. Several CDB staff also emphasised that the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic should not be understated, as it significantly shifted institutional priorities and constrained the Bank’s capacity to implement certain elements of the strategy.

### 4.1.2 Alignment with Youth Needs, Aspirations & Priorities<sup>40</sup>

#### Finding 3:

YPOS was informed by global and regional youth diagnostics and aligned with the diverse needs, aspirations, and priorities of Caribbean youth, including those at risk of emigration. It remains relevant to youth today, although evolving global and regional contexts present new considerations for policy refinement.

As described in **Finding 1**, YPOS presents a comprehensive and well-researched ‘problem analysis’ on regional and global developments regarding youth in areas such as youth economic participation, youth social and intellectual capital, health and safety (including mental health and psychosocial support), climate change, and more. It also recognises high rates of emigration, particularly in relation to employment opportunities. This problem analysis informs the policy’s vision, objectives, pillars, and intended outcomes.

Evaluation team consultations with youth, including virtual consultations with youth across the region as well as in-person consultations in Belize, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia confirmed that the policy continues to be aligned with the diverse needs, aspirations, and priorities of Caribbean youth.<sup>41</sup>

Virtual focus group participants<sup>42</sup> were asked: “What are the biggest needs, concerns, priorities, or aspirations of youth in the Caribbean?”. The responses show strong alignment with YPOS Pillars (see Figure 3 and 4 in Volume II, Appendix 5) For example:<sup>43</sup>

- **Pillar 1:** Youth participation in the economy—responses included “employment,” “financial security,” “career,” “room for entrepreneurship,” and “financial stability.”
- **Pillar 2:** Social and intellectual capital and education—youth highlighted “relevant education,” “education transformation,” “quality education,” “literacy in schools,” and “experiential learning.”
- **Pillar 3:** Healthy and safe communities—responses included “peace and security,” “safe spaces,” “mental health,” “crime,” and “public safety.”
- **Pillar 4:** Climate change and environmental sustainability—youth emphasised “climate resilience,” “environmental protection,” and “climate.”
- **Pillar 5:** Active citizenship—responses included “civic participation,” “opportunity,” and “empowerment.”
- **Pillar 6:** Enhancing capacity for youth development interventions—responses included “inclusive policy,” “representation,” and “stronger data ecosystems.”

In terms of what may be missing in the YPOS Pillars, FGDs with youth in BMCs, especially in Belize, but also in Saint Lucia, additionally emphasised the importance of sports for youth development. Sports not only is a priority for youth in countries but also presents opportunities for further alignment with National Youth Policies, as further discussed in **Finding 8**.

### Box 1 Examples of Youth Perspectives on Emigration

“I love Belize, but when I’m home I’m so stressed. I was lucky with my last job, but many people with the same qualifications as me struggle to find jobs and are relegated to the service industry. We are vulnerable to pandemics and hurricanes...I understand why people leave—corruption, nepotism, lack of jobs.”

– Regional FGD participant (female)

“I left [my country] 5 years ago. It’s not a bad thing...There are very tangible ways to support national development from abroad. There is limited representation from the Caribbean at [international organisation], and in my job, I am able to represent and to support projects in [Caribbean countries].”

– KII participant (male)

“I would not discourage an individual from migration. It’s not necessarily a bad thing. I like the idea of CARICOM and free movement in the region. It gives an opportunity for youth to explore the region itself, while at the same time improving themselves.”

– Regional FGD participant (male)

Changes in global and regional contexts introduced new factors to be considered. **The Covid-19 pandemic** highlighted the importance of **digital inclusion, mental health, economic resilience, and crisis preparedness**, according to consulted youth.

**Digital inclusion:** While the YPOS emphasises education and skills development (particularly under **Strategic Pillar 2**), the pandemic highlighted major gaps in digital access and remote learning infrastructure, especially related to digital equity, online education, and tech-enabled youth services.<sup>44</sup>

**Mental health:** COVID-19 exacerbated mental health challenges among youth due to isolation, economic stress, and uncertainty.<sup>45</sup> The YPOS could benefit from a more explicit emphasis on mental health services, psychosocial support, community-based support, and resilience-building, building on existing model actions presented under **Strategic Pillar 3**.

**Economic resilience:** The pandemic disproportionately affected youth employment, while also disrupting their education and training, and placing obstacles in the ways of those seeking to enter the labour market.<sup>46</sup> The YPOS could be strengthened by addressing economic shocks, social protection for youth, and reskilling for post-pandemic economies under **Strategic Pillars 1 and 2**. This could also encompass its own internal efforts through internships, YPP, and JPOs, which can be models for other organisations and firms looking to employ and economically empower youth.

**Crisis Preparedness:** COVID-19 underscored the need for youth to be actively involved in disaster preparedness, public health response, and community resilience. Youth globally mobilised

during the pandemic—leading initiatives in health education, supporting vulnerable populations, and contributing to recovery efforts.<sup>47</sup> These examples demonstrate the importance of integrating youth leadership into formal crisis response systems, as part of their active citizenship and participation in community life (**Strategic Pillar 5**), and can also translate to action on climate change (**Strategic Pillar 4**).

### Box 2 Youth Innovation Spotlight: Saint Lucia

Through support from the Youth Economy Project, young entrepreneurs in Saint Lucia are building cutting-edge businesses that blend creativity with technology. For example, Soaring Leads is developing web and app solutions tailored to local and regional markets, while Real3DSolutions is pioneering the use of 3D printing to create customised products and prototypes. These ventures showcase how youth are leveraging digital tools to drive innovation, create employment, and contribute to the island's economic transformation.

Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic had profound and lasting impacts on young people, not only in terms of disrupted education, employment, and social development, but also in shaping their behaviours, aspirations, and readiness for life transitions. Consulted stakeholders in BMCs visited and regional organisations working in education and youth development observed that many youth emerging from the pandemic were less prepared for tertiary education and exhibited different expectations and engagement patterns compared to previous cohorts. This presents a challenge for YPOS and youth policymaking more broadly, as the youth demographic is not static.

Generational experiences (such as being a youth during Covid) and generational shifts (such as the transition from millennials to Gen Z) mean that while core youth issues may persist, the ways in which young people experience and respond to them vary significantly. Effective policy must therefore be responsive to these evolving dynamics. A lifecycle approach, as reflected in the YPOS, offers a useful framework, but it must be continually adapted to reflect the changing composition and lived realities of the youth population.

Beyond the effects of the **pandemic, rapid digital transformation, including the rise of artificial intelligence and the pervasive influence of social media**, has introduced new risks and opportunities for youth. These technologies impact employment prospects, mental health, identity formation, and civic engagement. At the same time, they may also offer powerful tools for innovation, economic opportunity, and learning. In Saint Lucia, for example, several young entrepreneurs supported by the Youth Economy Project and the BNTF Youth Economic Empowerment through Enterprise (YEETE) Pilot Project have successfully harnessed digital technologies. One such entrepreneur, a DJ supported by YEETE, shared that by sharing his music online: **“My small business is sustained by an international market” (FGD participant, male)**. Additional examples of digital innovation from the Youth Economy Project are highlighted in **Box 2**. In Jamaica, youth consulted in FGDs identified a strong interest in engaging in entrepreneurship that remains locally based but has access to regional and international markets—which is possible if digital platforms are used to reduce administrative and financial barriers. This approach offers a way to access global economic opportunities without needing to migrate, helping youth stay and thrive within their communities.

**Emigration** remains a complex and enduring issue for Caribbean youth, shaped by a range of push and pull factors. On the one hand, limited employment opportunities, under-resourced education systems<sup>48</sup>, political instability, violence and insecurity, and environmental degradation are driving youth to seek better prospects abroad.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, pull-factors such as access to better education and health opportunities, higher incomes, professional advancement, and the appeal of more stable or inclusive societies encourage youth to migrate.<sup>50</sup> While emigration poses risks for talent retention and economic development, consulted youth emphasised its potential as a pathway for growth and learning. Many expressed a desire to contribute to the Caribbean from abroad (e.g., by representing the Caribbean at international organisations, or working at a firm that sells valuable goods to the region), challenging traditional notions of “brain drain.” Emerging opportunities such as intra-regional migration within specific CARICOM countries<sup>51</sup> and remote/digital work models suggest that mobility and global engagement can be leveraged for regional development. The piloting of deeper and more enhanced free movement arrangements for youth than have previously existed in select countries also presents a valuable opportunity for future case studies, provided baseline data is collected now.

### 4.1.3 Alignment with Youth Priorities Across Case Study Thematic Areas<sup>52</sup>

#### Box 3 Youth Economic Empowerment Projects: focus on entrepreneurship

Most CDB interventions related to youth-targeted economic empowerment have focused on entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship can be a powerful tool for employment and many youth are increasingly drawn to it, motivated by the perception of greater financial gain and flexibility, a desire for creative autonomy, discomfort with traditional work structures and 9–5 environments, and the influence of social media and digital income streams. However, entrepreneurship is not a universal solution. Not all youth aspire to be entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurship carries inherent risks, including income instability, lack of access to social protection (e.g., health insurance, pensions), and vulnerability to market fluctuations. Future programming should consider a broader range of economic pathways, including employment readiness, vocational training linked to labour market demands, and support for youth entering traditional job markets. Building on its long history of supporting TVET and financing for MSMEs, CDB can adapt these approaches to better support the specific needs and priorities of youth.

#### Finding 4:

YPOS and CDB’s youth-related operations aligned with youth priorities, needs, and aspirations related to their economic empowerment, though there remains room to deepen this alignment.

CDB has a long history of supporting economic empowerment, particularly through technical and vocational education and training (TVET) initiatives<sup>53</sup> and on-lending for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) through Lines of Credit provided to Development Finance Institutions.<sup>54</sup> Although not framed as explicitly youth-focused projects, they have addressed issues highly relevant to young people across the region. In recent years, particularly through SDF 10 replenishment and the launch of YPOS—which has a dedicated pillar for **“enhancing young people’s participation in, and contributions to sustainable economic growth” (Pillar 1)**—CDB has placed a more intentional emphasis on economic empowerment for youth.<sup>55</sup> Recent youth-targeted initiatives supported by the CDB, include those at the regional level (e.g., Vybzing 2019, the Caribbean Youth Leaders’ Summit 2019, and Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Spirit of Caribbean Youth 2019-2022) and national level (e.g., the Youth Economy Project, Maritime Training for Yachting Sector, and Youth Economic Empowerment through Enterprise Pilot Project in Saint Lucia and the Youth Entrepreneurship Education and Training Programme in Haiti). Feedback from youth participants in these operations has generally been positive, though some areas for improvement were noted—particularly around inclusivity.

Although there were no CDB youth-related operations in Belize<sup>56</sup> and Jamaica focused on economic empowerment, FGDs identified priorities aligned with **YPOS Pillar 1** and other specific areas of concern. Youth in Belize identified the complexities of rural-urban migration in search of job opportunities, the economy’s reliance on the significant employment opportunities provided by Business Processing Operations (BPO)<sup>57</sup> and implications for career development, the limitations

of an education system that is not aligned to labour market demand, and the limited opportunities for small business development and entrepreneurship. In Jamaica, youth identified the value of workforce skills development (such as that offered by the organisation HEART) as well as business development training and incubators, while also highlighting challenges related to mismatches between youth interests (in creative and tech-driven fields) to labour market demands (manufacturing, logistics, and agriculture). Alignment of TVET with labour market needs has also been identified as a challenge in CDB interventions.<sup>58</sup> **Box 3** highlights one of the key observations emerging from the analysis of youth-targeted economic empowerment projects.

The CDB also piloted a BNTF Youth Empowerment Framework, focused on youth economic empowerment projects, especially related to entrepreneurship. It provides guidance for project execution from project start-up to skills training, peer support, micro-business grants, and ongoing support for entrepreneurs. The Framework was tested through a few projects, including the YEETE project in Saint Lucia, and BNTF is revising the framework for use in BNTF 11.

For a more detailed analysis, please see the thematic case study focused on youth economic empowerment, presented in *Volume II Appendix 8*.

### Finding 5:

YPOS and CDB's youth-related initiatives have tested approaches to preventing crime and violence that align with the needs and aspirations of vulnerable youth, with some areas for improvement.

Youth crime and violence in the Caribbean present complex and multifaceted challenges. The YPOS presents an analysis of the various drivers of youth crime and violence, acknowledging the interplay of psychosocial and biological changes during adolescence, alongside structural factors such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment. This analysis is operationalised through **Strategic Pillar 3: "Contributing to the creation of healthy, safe, nurturing, and peaceful communities"** which outlines a range of model actions aimed at both direct prevention and response, as well as the creation of broader enabling environments for youth. For example, actions include supporting youth-led citizen security and peacebuilding programming, developing tools for juvenile justice reform, and constructing or rehabilitating youth-friendly residential care facilities and youth centres. In addition, the strategy promotes broader systemic support through initiatives like expanding access to youth-friendly psychosocial and mental health services and supporting inclusive livelihood programmes. Collectively, these interventions reflect a holistic, preventative, and youth-centred approach that seeks to reduce risk factors, strengthen protective environments, and empower young people as agents of peace.

CDB has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing youth crime and violence through its youth-focused investments, even predating YPOS. Notably, two of the highest-budgeted projects in the evaluation's reviewed sample—the Youth and Community Transformation Project in Belize City approved in 2012 (USD 5.2 million), and the Youth Empowerment Project in Saint Lucia approved in 2016 (over USD 3.6 million)—directly target these issues. These initiatives, along with others like the BNTF Maritime Training for the Yachting Sector Project, reflect CDB's recognition of the urgency and complexity of these challenges in the region, even predating the YPOS.

Consultations with youth both online and in-person, as well as youth who participated in these projects and those who have not, emphasised the importance of integrated and holistic approaches to addressing youth crime and violence (i.e., approaches that address more than the direct issue alone, but also the wider enabling environment). The Belize Community Transformation Project and the Saint Lucia Youth Empowerment Project are examples of interventions that integrated safe spaces, a range of activities for youth to participate in as an alternative to engaging in crime, and support services for at-risk youth or youth who have come into conflict with the law, among other components. The BNTF Maritime Training for the Yachting Sector Project had a much smaller budget and thus a more targeted focus; youth and other community members consulted regarding this project shared that it was a challenge to address such long-standing and complex issues without also actively engaging families, schools, churches, and other social institutions. Beneficiaries across projects also emphasised the importance of age-specific interventions that begin early in life to help prevent the development of harmful behaviours in young adulthood. Additional informative insights, including around the differences between crime and violence and the need for tailored approaches are provided in the thematic case study focused on youth crime and violence provided in *Volume II Appendix 8*.

### Finding 6:

YPOS includes a dedicated pillar on climate and the environment. While CDB has prioritised climate in its broader operations and strategic planning, youth-focused projects have rarely addressed this theme directly, despite significant opportunities for the youth to engage in learning about and contributing to the environmental resilience of the region.

One of YPOS's six Pillars of Action focuses on youth awareness, education, and action in climate change, disaster mitigation, environmental sustainability, and food security. It acknowledges that youth are among the most vulnerable to environmental degradation and climate-related disasters, which can disrupt education, affect mental health, increase violence, and lead to displacement. YPOS also recognises a **"small but actively engaged youth movement"** in the region, while noting significant barriers to broader youth participation—particularly the limited access to climate education and resources for youth inclusion.

Environmental resilience is one of five pillars of resilience in CDB's 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, which also determine the operational direction of SDF 11. The SDF 11 report describes building environmental resilience as **"enhancing the ability of natural and human systems to withstand, adapt, respond to and recover from environmental stresses and disasters while performing the necessary functions to support life..."**, encompassing areas such as environmental and biodiversity management, climate adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk management and sustainable energy solutions. SDF 11 has a special emphasis on climate change and climate finance in particular.<sup>59</sup>

Despite the emphasis on environmental resilience and climate change in YPOS and broader CDB strategies, there are no projects specifically focused on youth engagement in environmental resilience in the CDB youth portfolio. There are examples, however, of projects such as the BNTF coral reef restoration project in Saint Lucia that include youth beneficiaries and the UKCIF Southern Plains Agricultural Development project in Jamaica that included youth in climate smart agriculture training.<sup>60</sup>

In-person and online consultations with youth for the evaluation confirmed that there is a “**small but actively engaged**” group of youth involved in climate change and environmental resilience. Youth in Saint Lucia and Jamaica showed higher levels of interest and engagement, including through participation in the blue and green economies, although they also noted the need for more education and engagement opportunities, particularly to expand the youth involvement, noting that current involvement is largely limited to a more privileged and well-educated minority or a takes a ‘tokenistic’ approach. At the Youth Townhall hosted by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wider Caribbean Regional Risk Conference 2025, observed by the evaluation team, youth noted their own personal experiences with climate effects, especially heat waves, and expressed that climate should be a key priority for governments in the region (See *Figure 5 and Figure 6 in Volume II, Appendix 5*). On the other hand, FGDs with youth leaders in Belize suggest that many do not personally identify with the issue and report seeing this as a “global fight” where their role is unclear, beyond dealing with the consequences such as beach clean ups and hurricane response. This highlights the importance of inclusion as well as active cultivation of youth leadership and ownership in environmental resilience efforts.

#### 4.1.4 Internal Coherence<sup>61</sup>

##### Finding 7:

The CDB YPOS 2020–2025 and CDB Strategic Plan 2020–2024 are aligned, with the YPOS providing additional specificity by identifying youth as a distinct demographic requiring tailored strategies and targeted actions. While the alignment exists in principle, practical application of the YPOS has been inconsistent. The upcoming Strategic Plan (2026–2035) is expected to place even greater emphasis on youth development, presenting an opportunity to strengthen alignment in practice.

The CDB Strategic Plan 2020–2024 focused on CDB’s existing core areas of strength while adding a new area of emphasis: youth development. The strategy explicitly references YPOS and its strategic pillars in this regard. Conversely, YPOS also includes direct reference to alignment with CDB’s mandate, as articulated in the 2020–2024 Strategic Plan. Both documents demonstrate strong alignment across key thematic areas (e.g., economics, education, citizen security), with the Strategic Plan providing a broad, high-level framework and the YPOS offering more detailed guidance on how these priorities can be specifically tailored to youth (see *Table 13 in Volume II, Appendix 5*). The Strategic Plan Results Monitoring Framework (RMF) also considers youth, and the YPOS RMF aligns with Strategic Plan priority areas. Many indicators in the corporate RMF, such as those related to youth unemployment, education completion, TVET, community infrastructure, private sector development, and the environment, are relevant to the YPOS and youth priorities in the region, although additional disaggregation by age would be helpful to capture.

While there is coherence among the CDB strategies and the policy, there is inconsistent application in operational practice. Although CDB Country Engagement Strategies and in-country portfolio should correspond to YPOS priorities, several CDB staff consulted suggested that in practice they do not consistently draw on YPOS to inform approaches in priority sectors. YPOS is more likely to be consulted when an intervention is youth-targeted (although this is still not always the case), and much less likely to be consulted when youth are beneficiaries among other age groups; this presents an issue especially in terms of youth-mainstreaming.

Stakeholder consultations suggest that the forthcoming Strategic Plan will give even greater emphasis to youth and issues that are important to youth, such as climate resilience and employment. CDB has consulted with youth in the formulation of the new Plan, engaging with youth in the context of a broad-based perception survey with additional consultations with youth planned, though it remains unclear if these took place.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, the Bank's leadership has signalled strong commitment to youth; for example, at the Youth Townhall of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wider Caribbean Regional Risk Conference 2025, the President of the CDB, Daniel Best, emphasised the importance of CDBs youth-related projects and programmes, as well as its internal initiatives such as internships, YPPs, and JPOs. Prior to his role as President, Mr. Best also played a key role in advancing YPOS development and launching the FLN, in his role as Director of the Projects Department. This policy alignment and leadership commitment present a significant opportunity for the Bank to effectively operationalise youth-mainstreaming and youth-focused interventions.

## 4.1.5 External Coherence<sup>63</sup>

### Finding 8:

The YPOS is broadly coherent with National Youth Policies (NYPs) across Borrowing BMCs, presenting an opportunity for CDB to strengthen country-level engagement and programming.

A desk review of NYPs across BMCs (see *Table 14 in Volume II, Appendix 5*) found that 16 out of 19 countries have publicly available NYPs in place;<sup>64</sup> the 3 exceptions being Haiti, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,<sup>65</sup> and Suriname.<sup>66</sup> YPOS is broadly coherent with NYPs, especially in the emphasis given to economic participation, health and safety, youth engagement, and the environment. Alignment is strongest with newer NYPs, which tend to adopt more comprehensive, right-based, inclusive, and participatory approaches consistent with international standards such as the 2014 Baku Commitment to Youth Policies. However, many NYPs risk becoming less relevant or losing momentum during implementation: 10 out of the 16 reviewed are over a decade old and several remain in draft form without formal government approval or clear operational status. According to ECLAC research in 2020, only five NYPs were accompanied by formal Action Plans, highlighting a gap in implementation readiness.<sup>67</sup>

Effective NYP implementation requires robust coordination mechanisms, a clearly designated and accountable focal point, and an accompanying accountability framework and budget. In BMCs, responsibility for NYP development and implementation rests with ministries/departments of youth and sports (or equivalent).

These entities often operate with limited institutional capacity and resources, which constrains their ability to lead and sustain youth development initiatives in accordance with their NYP.

Nonetheless, NYPs across the region reflect a strong commitment to institutional strengthening and professionalisation of youth governance, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Declaration.

**Pillar 6** of the YPOS, focused on capacity building, is still relevant and provides an opportunity for CDB to support capacity-building efforts and enhance the effectiveness of youth ministries. Indeed, the evaluation finds that CDB often engages in implementing ministries other than those directly responsible for youth affairs. For example, in Saint Lucia, none of the four youth-focused projects were implemented by the Ministry of Youth Development and Sports. This pattern is likely at least partially attributed to the limited financial and institutional capacity of youth-focused ministries, the institutional arrangements within BMCs (for example, where responsibility for all education and training of youth rests with Ministries of Education, National Training Agencies, or other entities), and retirement or reassignment of former Directors of Youth Ministries who may have been engaged during YPOS design, but are no longer in those roles. While cross-sectoral collaboration is valuable, it is important that youth ministries—often the authors and custodians of NYPs—are empowered and recognised as key stakeholders in youth development. CDB can play a pivotal role in supporting these ministries by: **i)** facilitating access to funding and resources for youth-focused initiatives, **ii)** providing technical assistance and capacity-building support, particularly for youth workers, and **iii)** supporting the development and operationalisation of Action Plans linked to NYPs.

One notable difference between NYPs and the YPOS is the absence of sports as a strategic priority area in YPOS. In contrast, six NYPs reviewed explicitly include sports as a strategic focus, and others reference it under health and well-being. Field consultations with youth and community stakeholders in Belize and Saint Lucia also underscored the importance of sports in youth development. Enhanced collaboration with ministries/departments dedicated specifically to youth (which most often also cover sports) could help align CDB's programming with national and youth priorities in this area. In terms of the life-cycle approach, this can also be an effective way to support the younger youth cohorts who are in school, and who can benefit from access to sports in that environment.

A review of CDB's Country Engagement Strategies (CES) in Belize, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia revealed varying degrees of youth integration. While Saint Lucia's CES includes substantial youth-related content, Belize and Jamaica's CES are less concrete in addressing youth-related challenges. The Saint Lucia and Jamaica CESs mention their National Youth Policies, but with little detail on avenues for support or alignment. Importantly, none of these three CES mention National Youth Councils (NYCs). Most BMCs with NYPs also have NYCs (although some are inactive and face varying challenges). Engagement with and empowerment of NYCs presents a valuable mechanism for youth-led and participatory development. Including such structures in future CES development could provide an avenue to support these structures in BMCs and enhance youth ownership and accountability in CDB-supported initiatives.

### Finding 9:

YPOS coherence with other national frameworks in BMCs, including security, employment, education, and environment strategies is mixed and context dependent. While full alignment is not always feasible or necessary, leveraging areas of synergy presents valuable opportunities to enhance youth outcomes.

As discussed in **Finding 8**, YPOS is aligned with national youth policies across BMCs; however, its coherence with other national strategies, particularly those in education, employment, security, and environment—is more complex and nuanced. These frameworks present sector-specific goals that may not fully reflect the holistic, rights-based, and participatory principles underpinning YPOS.

For instance, national security strategies often tend to emphasise enforcement and crime control, which may diverge from YPOS's emphasis on prevention, rehabilitation, youth-led citizen security and peacebuilding, although some are starting to integrate more elements of community-based violence prevention and addressing relevant issues such as youth-on-youth violence.

In terms of education and employment, Saint Lucia's Youth Economy Act stands out as a legislative framework designed specifically to promote youth entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, including through skills development and training. The Act established the Youth Economy Agency, which is the implementing agency of CDB's Youth Economy Project, demonstrating direct alignment between national policy and CDB programming. Another relevant policy development is the free movement agreement signed by Barbados, Belize, Dominica, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which

came into effect on October 1, 2025, and builds on broader CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) agreements. The new agreement allows nationals of these four countries to live, work, study, and move freely without the need for work or residency permits. It expands access to employment and education opportunities in the region and can reduce the incentives for youth to migrate outside the Caribbean in search of work or education. This supports CDB's broader goals of regional integration, talent retention, and inclusive development, and should be closely monitored for its potential to shape youth mobility and labour market dynamics across the region.

Environmental strategies in BMCs increasingly recognise the importance of youth, though the extent and depth of this inclusion vary across countries and policy frameworks. Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030 stands out for its presenting a dedicated section regarding the role of youth<sup>68</sup>; it explains youth-targeted strategies, including integrating learning about environmental responsibility into schools' curricula and supporting economic opportunities across various sectors that support environmental resilience (including agriculture, natural resources, information technology, and more).

Overall, national frameworks in various areas that are important to youth (e.g., security, employment, education, and the environment) are not always aligned with youth priority areas. Therefore, strategic coherence should be pursued selectively and critically, ensuring that alignment supports positive youth outcomes. CESs can serve as one mechanism for such integration. Good practices in formulating and implementing youth-led and youth-targeted strategies across BMCs can also potentially be replicated or drawn on by other BMCs in the region, supported by CDB as part of its youth-focused development agenda.

## 4.1.6 Gender-Responsiveness and Intersectionality<sup>69</sup>

### Finding 10:

YPOS meaningfully integrates gender equality through an intersectional lens. To ensure these commitments lead to tangible outcomes, further embedding and operationalising gender and intersectionality dimensions in implementation is essential.

Key social issues regarding youth in the Caribbean become more complex when looking at gender and intersectionality. While youth unemployment is high overall (17.6% excluding Haiti), the unemployment rate is 1.6 times greater for young women than young men, despite higher levels of educational attainment among women.<sup>70</sup> In regard to climate change and the environment, youth are among the most vulnerable groups to natural disasters, but ‘non-mainstream’ youth (such as youth with disabilities, youth living in poverty, rural youth, etc.) experience greater deprivation among an already disadvantaged cohort.<sup>71</sup> In terms of crime and violence, young males are predominantly both the victims and perpetrators of crime<sup>72</sup>, but young women are disproportionately affected by sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

The policy is grounded in an understanding of the gendered and intersectional dimensions of youth economic empowerment, education, health and wellness, and other key socio-economic issues. One of its six core principles is to **“integrate intersectionality, gender-responsiveness and social inclusion”**, and as part of this commitment, it explicitly aligns with the GEPOS and incorporates lessons learned from the implementation of the 2008 GEPOS to inform its design.

YPOS also identifies as a key intended outcome for **“CDB and BMCs (to) have increased capacity for delivering gender-responsive and inclusive youth mainstreaming and youth-targeted interventions.”**

Stakeholders emphasised the importance of viewing youth through an intersectional lens—not as a homogenous group, but as individuals shaped by multiple social identities. This includes youth with disabilities, youth living in poverty, rural youth, Indigenous youth, and more. The CDB has taken steps to put these principles into practice, but there is also room for improvement with accessibility not always consistently considered. For example, the recent engagement of youth as part of CARIFESTA XV in Barbados (August 2025) was hosted in a building that was not accessible (e.g., the building did not contain an elevator).

The unique insights and tailored roles that individuals from diverse backgrounds and life experiences can bring have also not been fully leveraged through the platform, according to consulted FLN members. While the Bank has supported young people from Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Groups to engage in various fora and conferences<sup>73</sup>, there is opportunity to better engage Indigenous youth across the Bank’s operations, particularly through further collaboration with CDB’s Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG). For example, this could take the form of a youth branch of the IPAG or a designated youth representative who sits on both the FLN and IPAG to help create stronger linkages between the two bodies and their work. Previous CDB-IPAG projects have collected data related to Indigenous youth and engaged Indigenous youth as beneficiaries and co-researchers<sup>74</sup>; these experiences can provide valuable insights for CDB’s work with youth through an intersectional lens.

Lessons from CDB initiatives that target at-risk youth illustrate the importance of considering the diverse lived experiences of youth and the implications this has for project closure and sustainability (e.g. Youth Empowerment Project in Saint Lucia and the Youth Community Transformation project in Belize). The intersectional lens may also entail adaptation to initial project design. For example, following an observation by the Youth Economy Agency that the Youth Economy Project was not effectively including vulnerable populations, the agency began addressing this through targeted community outreach and deploying field officers to assist with applications and provide tailored support. All youth-focused projects will also be tested under the GEPOS gender marker, but further consideration around gender and intersectionality is important especially for young people who are in their formative years. Intersectionality is important especially for young people who are in their formative years.

## 4.2 What early implementation steps have been taken?

As a formative evaluation, this section provides observations on early implementation of the YPOS and CDB's youth-related operations, including those developed prior to or independently of the launch of the YPOS. The findings do not assess results of the YPOS or of the projects per se. They extrapolate learning about strengths and limitations related to institutional mechanisms, resourcing, and capacities to support the implementation of YPOS.

### 4.2.1 Operationalisation of YPOS<sup>75</sup>

#### Finding 11:

The YPOS elevates the Bank's stated ambitions and commitment to youth development, however it has not been accompanied by institutional mechanisms and resources to realise its strategic and operational intent. These challenges have limited Bank-wide ownership of YPOS, resulting in a strategy that lacks the necessary authority and enforcement 'teeth' to drive implementation.

Despite the sound design of the YPOS, its implementation was limited by lack of an action plan, a dedicated 'youth fund,' a viable champion within senior management, and dedicated staffing (e.g., CDB youth unit and officer, assignment of a JPO or intern) for overseeing implementation.

According to stakeholders consulted, an Action Plan was drafted but never finalised. A few stakeholders consulted noted the lack of management support and resourcing constraints as plausible explanations for the lack of an approved Action Plan. As a result, YPOS does not have an operational accountability framework to help translate YPOS' strategic intent into a Bank-wide obligation, with clear responsibilities, timelines, performance targets and resource allocations to specific units or roles across CDB. Stakeholders consulted agreed that the lack of an accompanying Action Plan remains a principal constraint for effective bank-wide implementation of YPOS and challenges the ability to move the Policy from paper to practice.

The example of CDB's GEPOS and its accompanying Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) underscores the added value of action plans in translating high-level policy intent into systematic implementation through concrete, time-bound activities with specific outputs, and monitoring and accountability mechanisms. For example, dedicated gender specialists were specifically tasked with GEPOS implementation. Moreover, GEPOS' Action Plan outlines funding for training, guidance materials, and institutional strengthening for national gender machineries in BMCs. According to findings from the 2019 Evaluation of the CDB's Gender Equality Policy and Operational Strategy, the adoption of GEAP facilitated systematic and coordinated tracking of GEPOS implementation, provided an important impetus for gender mainstreaming outputs, knowledge products, and tools (e.g., Country Gender Assessments, Gender Markers), and bolstered funding allocations for gender mainstreaming within the Bank (e.g., training and workshops for staff).<sup>76</sup>

Similarly, recognising the limited fiscal space of BMCs and demand for grant resources, the YPOS proposed establishing a 'Youth Fund' to prioritise innovative responses to development challenges in the core areas of work of the Bank and on emerging issues.<sup>77</sup> However, this Fund has not yet been established, likely for the same reasons that affected the Action Plan. Instead, where grant funds were required, they were to be sought for each proposal with funds allocated on a case-by-case basis. In addition, there has been limited investment in the sixth pillar of the YPOS, which aimed to support capacity-building efforts within CDB and in BMCs, with implications for staff and external stakeholder uptake of the policy directions (see Finding 13).

The YPOS recognised that implementation would involve complementary efforts across the Bank's departments and divisions, and envisioned this to be led by the Vice President of Operations and the Social Sector Division.<sup>78</sup> In practice, this approach designated responsibility to the same stakeholders tasked with championing GEPOS and contributed to an implementation approach that was more siloed within operations and the social sectors. The 2019 evaluation of GEPOS highlighted the importance of senior leadership in driving policy implementation.<sup>79</sup> This is further reaffirmed by interviews for this evaluation of YPOS, which identified three key ingredients for effective operationalisation of the GEPOS: designating the VP of Operations as gender champion, establishing a specialised technical unit with a dedicated officer, and working with an approved and budgeted Action Plan with clear roles and responsibilities across organisational units. The absence of this institutional set-up for YPOS meant that, in practice, responsibility remained within a focal point (later expanded to a primary and secondary focal point), and there was a lack of formal mechanisms for follow up at senior management level (i.e. senior management team).

## Finding 12:

YPOS implementation progress towards youth outcomes are only partially visible within the Bank's performance measurement and reporting architecture.

Despite CDB support for a range of youth-related projects, limited monitoring and reporting fail to adequately reflect the scope of this engagement. YPOS and its outreach materials emphasised the importance of youth-disaggregated indicators and monitoring of implementation and put forward a Results Framework that includes indicators to be monitored at both the project and policy level.<sup>80</sup> However, CDB's project monitoring system is not yet set-up to deliver on these commitments. A review of the Corporate RMF, DERs, and special fund reports (e.g., SDF, BNTF) reveals limited tracking of youth outcomes through the following indicators:

- **Level 1: (1.7)** Youth unemployment rate (%)
- **Level 2: (2.12)** Beneficiaries of youth at risk interventions, and some consideration for the number of youth Beneficiaries of community-based citizen security interventions (2.11)

However, there is a lack of age-disaggregation to identify areas where the youth might be disproportionately affected or capture broader impacts on the youth. Project-level documents and fund reports capture youth participation in isolated cases, but the corporate RMF and DER materials do not present youth as a consistently measured, age-disaggregated indicator stream. Some youth metrics are captured at project level (e.g., counts of youth beneficiaries, occasional employment or education measures), but these are

not standardised, age-disaggregated, or routinely aggregated to demonstrate contribution to YPOS objectives. As a result, the Bank can demonstrate fragmented, individual youth-focused interventions but cannot reliably aggregate, compare or trend youth impacts across its portfolio at the corporate level. Interviews and document review confirm that while many operations affect youth, those effects are rarely captured in a systematic way.

Moreover, there is minimal explicit reference to YPOS in project design or reporting, with no centralised tracking of youth-related investments against the YPOS framework, and public communications seldom trace activities or outcomes to the strategy's pillars. The Bank's public-facing materials and subsequent operational documents rarely use YPOS as the organising framework for youth-related investments. Interviews and document review suggest that YPOS lacks outward-facing visibility, and that youth-related programming is often not explicitly branded or tracked under the strategy. The lack of explicit linkage to YPOS in design, documentation, and monitoring undermines the strategy's visibility, limits its utility as a coordination and accountability tool, and undermines the ability to demonstrate YPOS' impact. This disconnect also contributes to the perception among stakeholders that the YPOS has not been meaningfully implemented, despite ongoing activities that align with its principles.

### Finding 13:

Low levels of awareness among internal and external stakeholders have limited the shared understanding of YPOS and engagement with its implementation.

The Bank made some deliberate efforts as part of the design and development of YPOS—such as presenting the Bank’s intention to clarify its strategic objectives and integrate youth priorities, however the initial momentum was not sustained. Interviews with CDB staff revealed a range in level familiarity with the strategy, with some exhibiting minimal awareness of YPOS. Sustaining momentum on YPOS has been affected by staff turnover, shifting priorities, and lack of on-going training, which have diluted institutional memory. New staff are not systematically oriented to the strategy. This lack of knowledge across the Bank hinders efforts to mainstream youth considerations across departments, divisions, and sectors of the Bank.

Field visits and regional interviews also revealed very limited outward-facing awareness of YPOS among stakeholders—including follow-up or re-engagement with stakeholders that were involved during the design phase. For example, while some stakeholders recall the consultation process, a majority were largely unaware of subsequent implementation. This disconnect has contributed to a perception that CDB is not strongly associated with youth development, despite its stated commitments. In Belize, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia, most stakeholders were made aware of the YPOS for the first time as part of the invitation to participate in this evaluation. Ultimately, awareness is critical to strategically drive YPOS, and without it the Bank’s ability to build an institutional identity and gain stakeholder recognition as a key actor

in the youth development sector remains limited. Limited awareness of the YPOS and related opportunities for BMCs may be one of the reasons for limited investments in the sixth pillar of the YPOS that aims to strengthen both CDB and BMC capacity for delivering gender-responsive and inclusive youth mainstreaming and youth-targeted interventions.

### 4.2.2 Dual-Track Approach<sup>81</sup>

The YPOS proposed a dual-track approach to youth-responsive development via (a) delivery of youth-targeted programming and (b) mainstreaming of youth considerations in development priorities within the Bank and in BMCs.<sup>82</sup>

Through this approach, the intention is to embed youth considerations across core sectoral work while also maintaining discrete, youth-focused instruments and interventions to address specific needs that require specialised, targeted responses. The following findings reflect on the CDB portfolio of youth-targeted investments (see Finding 14) and offer insights on CDB experience with youth mainstreaming (see Finding 15). Overall, the evaluation identified the importance of maintaining a dual-track approach, particularly in consideration of resource scarcity, in order not to limit the options available to CDB, which in turn would limit the potential for positive effects for youth in different sectors.

### Finding 14:

CDB's targeted youth investments demonstrate a useful range of small-scale pilot interventions across the portfolio that offer some valuable lessons learned for wider application. However, these have not yet matured into a sustained, scaled, or bank-wide practice of targeted youth programming.

YPOS' envisioned targeted youth investment stream is emerging, with a few pilots demonstrating promise for further strengthening, learning, and scaling to become more substantive. Interviews and documentary reviews indicate that only a handful of such projects explicitly reference YPOS or illustrate how YPOS might have influenced their design.

Analysis of operations shows multiple small-scale investments and technical assistance activities that reflect YPOS principles and map to YPOS pillars (e.g., community youth outreach, skills development, entrepreneurship support that map to **YPOS Pillar 2: Promoting Economic Empowerment**); *Appendix 6 in Volume II* provides detailed project mapping of targeted youth investments across the portfolio. These range from USD 15,000 to USD 6,742,200, with three exceptional investments over one million. Most investments are much smaller with a mean of USD 170,510. The portfolio is composed primarily of technical assistance or capital projects, CTCS and BNTF initiatives, and one project through the Cultural and Creative Industries Innovation Fund (CIIF). However, the youth-focused investments remain fragmented across the portfolio, constraining the achievement of measurable, large-scale impact and systemic change.

Notable exceptions, such as Saint Lucia's Youth Economy initiatives and CDB-supported entrepreneurship pilots, show that targeted youth projects can generate rapid outreach, behaviour change and market-oriented innovations when they are designed in partnerships with strong local institutions.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, stakeholders consulted from the Youth Empowerment Project in Saint Lucia (including youth beneficiaries) reported that the project was very beneficial, with noted improvements in the mental health and behaviour of participating youth; youth themselves described increased self-confidence, improved emotional well-being, and a preference for engaging in programme activities over other common alternatives in their communities, such as substance use and criminal behaviour. Additionally, the 'boat boys' intervention<sup>84</sup> initially reported early positive stories from beneficiaries, such as increased skills, growth in self-confidence, and significant increases in income.<sup>85</sup> These cases demonstrate that where discrete youth instruments are resourced and locally anchored, they have the potential to move beyond pilot experimentation to tangible youth engagement and initial outcomes.

At the same time, interviews underscore that interest and demand for targeted youth investments is high across BMCs<sup>86</sup> to respond to critical issues (e.g., to address worsening youth unemployment and curb crime and violence) and harness the demographic dividends in-country. However, documents and stakeholders consulted indicate the presence of several systemic constraints to scaling targeted investments. For example, Country Engagement Strategies seldom identify youth as an explicit investment priority, so youth-specific project requests are uneven across BMCs. Ministries charged with youth portfolios are often under-resourced and disconnected from financing

pipelines or sector strategies, limiting the ability to clearly demonstrate bankable priorities for youth programming that CDB can respond to directly. As a result, these gaps mean the Bank sees only sporadic, opportunistic requests rather than a steady, well-defined pipeline of youth investments it can support and scale.

Furthermore, CDB itself may lack the products or incentives that make youth investments more attractive to governments and private partners (e.g., through blended finance windows, a special youth fund, or youth-tailored concessional terms). To translate growing interest into a scaled pipeline, the Bank needs to make targeted youth investments more explicit in its country engagement and product offerings, align more closely with national youth policy priorities, and design financing packages attractive enough to mobilise sustained demand across BMCs.

### Finding 15:

CDB has made strides in integrating youth across its internal systems and processes, signalling a growing institutional commitment. However, this progress remains sporadic and ad hoc, lacking a systematic approach and clear guidelines for mainstreaming youth.

As part of its stated dual-track approach, the YPOS proposes mainstreaming youth considerations at two levels: at the institutional level across the Bank, and at the project-level in BMCs. However, YPOS does not explicitly define what mainstreaming youth entails in practice. Stakeholders consulted generally understand this to mean taking into consideration the different needs of young people and determining whether and to what extent interventions or initiatives might need to be tailored to meet those specific needs.

Over the past five years, the Bank has made modest gains since YPOS' launch in mainstreaming youth at the institutional level through the Bank's functional units. Interviews suggest that a range of functional units are beginning to develop different initiatives to integrate young people, although the links to YPOS have been ambiguous. For example, CDB's human resource and talent mechanisms have launched the Young Professionals Program in 2023, Junior Professional Officers (JPO) in 2025, and summer internship programme formally in 2023 (with a more informal history of interns prior to 2023). Additionally, within OIE, there are efforts to engage Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) through a dedicated roster across BMCs, the recently signed Youth Manifesto in Evaluation<sup>87</sup>, and the inclusion of external youth stakeholders in the ERG as part of this evaluation. Moreover, the communications unit is identifying and compiling a centralised database of young persons across BMCs for sustained outreach and tailored communications.

At the project-level youth mainstreaming remains largely opportunistic. It is primarily driven by the YPOS focal point(s), and Social Sector Division (SSD) social analysts and gender specialists. As part of the revised Gender Marker tool (2017), the analysis score provides guidance on incorporating gender, age, ability, geographic location, occupation, and other markers of social differentiation into the background analysis of projects. While this is an entry point for factoring youth dimensions into the Gender Marker, it remains unclear how systematically project analyses factor in age in practice.

Although YPOS calls for youth disaggregated indicators and monitoring of youth mainstreaming, there is a lack of a standardised approach, such as a Youth Marker or youth screening tool to ensure consistent identification, budgeting and reporting

of youth components across the portfolio. Efforts remain fragmented and reliant on individual teams or champions rather than sustained by centralised tools, targets and reporting systems that would make mainstreaming demonstrable and verifiable across the Bank's work.

In the absence of a systematic approach, there is limited tracking of projects that (i) are youth-focused, (ii) have youth components, (iii) target youth beneficiaries, or meaningfully engage youth. As a result, many youth-related impacts go uncaptured or unaggregated across the Bank's operations. Without codified mainstreaming guidance, markers or checklists, and incentives (budgetary or performance-based), mainstreaming risks slipping through the cracks.

#### Box 4 Lessons Learned from CDB's Gender Mainstreaming

Though reflecting a higher degree of maturity based on a longer history and track record at the Bank, CDB's experience with gender mainstreaming under GEPOS offers lessons that can be transferred about policy and strategy design as well as implementation. The independent evaluation of CDB's 2008–2018 Gender Equality Policy and Operational Strategy (GEPOS) found that the dual track model—pairing targeted gender investments with mainstreaming tools and accountability mechanisms—delivered important gains but required stronger resourcing, clearer operational guidance, and sustained capacity building to be effective in practice. The GEPOS evaluation specifically highlighted the value of an accompanying Action Plan, a corporate marker, training and a financial set aside as mutually reinforcing elements, while noting implementation gaps where these instruments were insufficiently institutionalised.

Comparative analysis with the 2019 GEPOS and current tools developed to improve gender mainstreaming reveals the added value of pairing a focused, resourced Action Plan with mainstreaming tools so that strategic ambition is matched by operational accountability. The gender mainstreaming model combines Thematic Guidance Notes (TGNs) for sectors, a corporate Gender Marker as a quality at entry and reporting tool, dedicated capacity building and specialist unit support, integration into Country Engagement Strategies (CES), and a funding envelope tied to the Action Plan. This mix of instruments creates clear entry points for staff, measurable project screening, and a modest but predictable resource stream to underwrite gender specific interventions.

To translate potential lessons with GEPOS to youth, interviews suggest that a viable dual-track approach for YPOS should include a mix of instruments to support both targeted investments and mainstreaming to provide various options for the Bank to pursue. This could include a funded YPOS Action Plan, operational guidelines or thematic-specific guidance notes for priority areas, and youth specialist support and training for project teams to ensure meaningful, measurable youth engagement rather than episodic consultation. While the Bank continues to implement interventions targeting youth beneficiaries across key sectors, there is a need for dedicated funding to scale up investment in targeted interventions that can have greater impact for youth. In the pursuit of mainstreaming youth considerations, CDB staff stressed the need to strike the right balance to avoid overly "check listing," which could increase administrative burden, lead to a compliance-driven exercise, or duplicate gender/other inclusion tools.

At the same time, all interviews with staff emphasised the need for structured guidance to prompt reflection on youth impacts, opportunities for meaningful engagement, feasible follow-up actions, and to support aggregated corporate reporting.

### 4.2.3 Meaningful Youth Engagement<sup>88</sup>

#### Finding 16:

The CDB has successfully infused youth engagement in different workstreams. These experiences offer a strong foundation to deepen youth engagement and strengthen institutional readiness for more systematic and substantive youth engagement.

CDB's YPOS positions youth as partners, knowledge holders, and agents of development whose perspectives should inform policy and operations. Developed through a consultative process, the strategy elevated youth voices, framing YPOS as a policy by youth, with youth, for youth. This participatory genesis had downstream effects: youth were visible in launch events, consulted in design workshops, and subsequently tapped as interlocutors in policy fora, helping to cement youth as a Bank priority. The policy links youth engagement to the Bank's development mandate and the SDGs, portraying youth as sources of innovation and as actors who can drive social, economic and environmental transformation.

#### Internal Mechanisms for Youth Engagement

While not an explicit objective of YPOS, CDB has created concrete internal entry points that bring

young people into the Bank's work and expand youth representation in regional development practice. Specific programs and practices include:

- **CDB Internship Programme:** Formalised in 2023, the programme builds on earlier, informal intern engagements and is now anchored in written guidelines and structured expressions of interest. It offers paid, work-based learning placements for current students and recent graduates from CDB BMCs who have completed at least a bachelor's degree. Interns are placed in substantive departments for a full-time, three-month period (typically over the summer), where they gain practical experience in areas such as project appraisal, policy analysis, research, and stakeholder engagement. The programme includes structured onboarding and team-based supervision and serves as a recruitment and capacity-building pipeline for regional talent. It is promoted through the Bank's careers portal and partner networks.<sup>89</sup>
- **Young Professionals Programme (YPP):** The Young Professionals Programme targets high potential early-career professionals from CDB BMCs and places them in two-year, developmental assignments at the Bank's headquarters to deepen technical skills and institutional knowledge while contributing to operational work across divisions.<sup>90</sup> Participants are paired with experienced staff for guidance, and take on substantive responsibilities in project preparation, policy inputs and sectoral analysis; the programme is explicitly framed as a pathway to build the region's development capacity, diversify the Bank's talent pool and create longer-term career trajectories in multilateral and public sector roles.<sup>91</sup>

→ **Junior Professional Officers (JPO):** JPO placements provide early-career professionals with fixed-term assignments inside multilateral institutions, sponsored and financed by donor governments or scholarship arrangements and administered through established JPO channels (for example UNDESA's JPO mechanisms). At CDB, JPOs are used as a strategic talent pipeline that brings externally funded junior specialists into substantive roles across departments, enabling the Bank to tap into technical expertise without creating recurrent salary obligations. JPOs typically undertake policy and operational tasks similar to other junior staff and are expected to contribute to project preparation, analytical work and sectoral initiatives, while building regional professional capacity. Through JPO arrangements, CDB has enabled external young professionals to rotate into MDB roles, broadening recruitment sources and diversifying the talent pool.

CDB's early-career talent strategy demonstrates clear strengths and commendable good practice. Programmes such as internships, YPP and JPO placements diversify recruitment and bring in fresh perspectives and innovations and are considered successful in attracting technically trained candidates who otherwise had limited opportunities for early career development, particularly in finding viable entry points into MDBs. Interviews suggest that these youth engagement streams have filled short to medium-term skill needs while creating durable regional capacity, with alumni then contributing their experience across governments, civil society and the private sector.

Interviews with program participants reaffirmed the value-add in supporting their professional

development and skill-building. Structured onboarding, including 'buddy' systems, help new hires integrate quickly and assume substantive responsibilities that accelerate learning and institutional knowledge retention. The model is also cost-effective: JPOs bring externally financed specialists into teams without creating long-term salary commitments. Internships serve as internal pipelines, enabling longer-term professional roles and expanding the Bank's talent pool. To enhance the effects, evidence points to three operational refinements: formalise mentorship and onboarding standards, clarify JPO/Young Professional role descriptions and performance goals tied to departmental needs, and strengthen post-assignment tracking to demonstrate regional impact and inform workforce planning.<sup>92</sup>

### External Mechanisms for Youth Engagement

In tone and intent, YPOS suggests that youth inputs should feed into project design, sector programming and regional convening. While the strategy articulates youth as partners and agents, it does not outline pathways for turning consultation into action or providing tailored feedback (e.g., closing feedback loops, demonstrating youth influence on decisions and outcomes). According to youth consulted, current practice tends to be more piecemeal, favouring opportunistic avenues such as events, networks and champion-led efforts, over a systematic, resourced model that embeds youth leadership at different levels. Stakeholders who were consulted consistently shared the need to move beyond consultation to true partnership for co-designing solutions that empower young people as an agenda of change and transformation in their communities. In doing so, there is the need to apply an intersectional lens to engage diverse young people who may

experience multiple forms of marginalisation, such as related to indigeneity, disability status, gender or sexual orientation. Specifically, this includes the need to more meaningfully engage Indigenous youth by removing barriers to their inclusion, adopting culturally grounded, flexible and trust-based approaches that begin with Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) and operate through recognised Indigenous institutions that ensure authenticity, transparency and community ownership.

As examples, young people have been engaged in annual Youth Forum events which have provided valuable spaces for dialogue, learning and collaboration.

However, stakeholders consulted have also **“underscored the importance of creating consistent, structured opportunities”** for diverse youth to contribute to policy discussions and inform regional development agendas. Moreover, regional partners consulted noted that engagement with CDB in this area remains limited, highlighting the potential for deeper collaboration that is grounded in inclusivity and **“a shared commitment to empowering the next generation of leaders.”**

Progress is more evident at the institutional level, but it is less clear at the country level (e.g., through Country Engagement Strategies). There is also a gap in project level integration, despite youth expressing interest and willingness to be engaged in project advisory or oversight roles.

CDB has piloted institution-wide- consultation, through the Future Leaders Network (FLN) and there appears to be some efforts to engage youth in the Strategic Planning Process; for example, during the inception phase of this evaluation, the Strategy and Accountability Office (SAO) team explained that they engaged youth in the context of a broad-based perception survey,

with plans for deeper engagement with youth (particularly leveraging the FLN and CARICOM networks) through more structured FGDs—though it remains unclear if these additional consultations with youth took place.<sup>93</sup> However, youth feedback collected as part of this evaluation highlights room to strengthen engagement by shifting from ad hoc efforts to structured, multi-level approaches that create clear oversight roles and participation pathways at country and project levels. Consultations with the IPAG also highlighted examples of meaningful youth engagement in preparation for key events leading up to the CDB Board of Directors meeting in 2024, whereby young people were involved in developing the outcome statement and ensuring youth perspectives and aspirations were reflected in IPAG collective messaging. However, consultations also revealed opportunities to more strongly embed diverse youth—particularly Indigenous youth—to provide continuous input on project design, selection criteria and monitoring frameworks to ensure development strategies are informed by lived experiences, deepen inclusivity, strengthen trust, and ultimately enhance the impact of CDB’s operations.

### Box 5 Lessons Learned from FLN model

The FLN demonstrates several elements of good practice worth institutionalising more widely across the Bank.

→ **Rigorous, merit- based selection and regional balance:** Competitive applications produced a transdisciplinary cohort with complementary technical strengths and pan Caribbean representation, raising the credibility of youth inputs.

- **Intentional inclusion and intersectionality:** Purposeful recruitment of diverse profiles, including youth with disabilities and sector specialists, increased the legitimacy and technical quality of engagement.
- **Staff championing and facilitation:** Dedicated and active staff leadership created respectful, high value interactions and was central to FLN's early successes.
- **Shift required from consultation to co design:** FLN has been successful as a consultative and ambassadorial forum but less so in upstream co design and decision rights; formalising co design roles would amplify youth technical contributions.
- **Institutionalise resourcing beyond a single focal point** (later expanded to a primary and secondary focal point): Dependence on one staff focal point constrains scale; resourcing and procedural mainstreaming across teams would embed youth engagement.
- **Continuity and transition mechanisms:** Shadowing, internships and advisory transition roles would preserve institutional memory and strengthen long term programmatic impact.
- **Monitoring and youth accountability:** Routine monitoring and well-designed accountability roles for youth (for example, periodic program audits) are needed to ensure that youth inputs translate into concrete Bank actions.

The FLN is CDB's most advanced external model for engaging youth and represents a demonstrable operational success with a set of practical lessons that can deepen operationalisation (see Box 5).<sup>94</sup> The FLN was established through a competitive, merit-based application process that produced a transdisciplinary, pan-Caribbean cohort with broad-based technical expertise in law, social policy, climate, disability advocacy and other related fields. The FLN has established itself as a key partner in advancing the YPOS and youth development agenda more broadly. However, the FLN has not fully been maximised to realise its initial vision as a conduit to reaching other diverse young people across BMCs or as an entry point to mobilising youth engagement in national mechanisms or processes.

According to document review and consultations with youth participants, there is limited evidence that CDB is leveraging the full potential of FLN members—including their valuable connections and strategic positioning in-country as youth leaders. Through this Network, members acted as regional connectors to national contexts, presented at conferences, and were moderately consulted by CDB to bring technical knowledge to further enrich Bank deliberations.

FLN is guided by a Concept Note<sup>95</sup> and draft manual<sup>96</sup> that outline the Terms of Reference for the Network, which represents good practice. However, consultations with FLN highlighted a perceived disconnect between their roles defined on paper compared to practice (see Table 4.1 below for an assessment of progress against these four defined roles).

**Table 4.1:** Assessment of FLN Roles on Paper vs. Practice

Role	Role On Paper	Progress	Key Progress Made	Key Limitations / Next Steps
<b>Advisory</b>	Provide technical advice to Bank units and projects	 Green	Regular invitations to consultations and conferences; technically credible, transdisciplinary inputs	Advisory inputs often episodic; need explicit protocols to map how advice is reviewed, responded to and institutionalised
<b>Advocacy</b>	Amplify youth perspectives and represent youth publicly	 Green	High visibility at conferences; strengthened Bank outreach and legitimacy among youth constituencies	Uneven translation to national policy influence; formal channels to link advocacy to country teams are needed
<b>Innovation</b>	Incubate youth-led ideas and pilot new approaches	 Amber	Consistent ideation and proposal of novel solutions; access to technical assistance opportunities	Ideas frequently platformed without funded, time-bound pathways to prototype, test and scale; require pilot funding and success criteria
<b>Coordination</b>	Convene youth actors, co-design events and pool resources for national initiatives	 Red	Helped populate panels and connect Bank with grassroots actors	Mostly invited into pre-existing events rather than co-designing; limited authority, planning funds or mandate for research, agenda setting or youth audit tasks

**Progress Stoplight Legend:**

-  **Green—Advanced progress:** Role is functioning with clear, sustained activity and demonstrable influence; operational pathways, regular engagement, and tangible outputs are in place.
-  **Amber—Partial progress:** Role is active but constrained by limited authority, resources, or continuity; contributions occur but lack consistent mechanisms to translate them into scaled or sustained outcomes.
-  **Red—Gap:** Role is minimally realised or absent in practice; lacks formal mandate, resourcing and decision pathways needed for meaningful operational influence.

Consultations with young people at various levels (regional and country levels) yielded fruitful reflections on strategies that have worked well and areas for further improvement. Analysis of youth feedback highlighted the following common themes:

**Consultation quality and co-creation:** The Bank has achieved some success in engaging youth in a consultative and advisory role, primarily focused on event representation, youth feedback calls for an expansion of opportunities for deeper, sustained collaboration and co-creation partnerships. Event logistics and episodic programming have at times weakened impact, and participants call for stronger continuity to convert short-term engagement into lasting outcomes. As an example, the Youth Forum side-event at the regional Risk Conference illustrates this disconnect; CDB staff viewed the forum as a success where youth were visible and represented, yet youth participants consulted felt sidelined because the forum was scheduled as a parallel, end-of-agenda session with limited visibility, no dedicated youth speaker in the main programme and only one youth representative listed in the outcome document. This contrast shows that convening high level meetings with youth is valuable, but visibility, meaningful integration into the main agenda and clear pathways for youth input to feed directly into conference outcomes determine whether participation feels substantive or merely symbolic. Moreover, the Youth Forum did not involve the CDB's youth engagement specialists in the planning. Alternatively, the approach utilised for Youth Fire 2024 and TESP 1 and 2 offer lessons; supported by CDB youth engagement specialists, youth were engaged over the course of several weeks in the planning and preparation and took on more visible roles as resource persons and experts, including presenters.

This area offers promise to be leveraged further, where gatherings can provide greater access to Bank teams and ministers, shape technical conversations, incubate locally informed solutions and build cross-country peer networks whose alumni can carry ideas back into government, civil society- and the private sector.

**Governance and oversight roles & closing feedback loops:** Youth feedback signals a gap in accountability and governance roles for youth. While stakeholders have proposed youth auditing or appraisal roles, few mechanisms currently place youth in oversight positions that could help play a role in holding the Bank and governments accountable to youth-centred commitments to overcome current limitations in YPOS monitoring and accountability. Youth highlighted the absence of routine mechanisms tracking how their inputs are captured, acted upon and reflected in Bank decisions. Without clearer feedback loops or periodic performance reviews of youth programming, engagement risks being valuable for narrative and outreach but limited in actual influence over policy or project outcomes.

**Visibility, communications and knowledge-exchange:** Based on a review of social media and website communications, and further reaffirmed by youth consulted, visibility and communications for FLN and broader youth engagement are inconsistent, limiting the potential for grassroots mobilisation. Youth reported inadequate promotion and follow up on engagement activities and recommended a digital hub, youth think tank or archive to capture, showcase and disseminate, exchange, and scale youth solutions, training resources and outputs.

Such a platform could serve as a living repository of innovations and proof points for replication, strengthen intraregional peer collaboration, and as a mobilisation tool for national action and help carry ideas from Bank forums into national policy and practice. Finally, Youth consulted also warned that engagements often produced high visibility for a relatively small group of 'repeat champions', but that reach does not yet consistently extend broadly to youth in remote or under-resourced communities.

**Mentorship, capacity transfer and scalability:**

Youth feedback also raised that mentorship and capacity transfer are often underutilised in current engagement mechanisms. YPOS and related practices do not systematically embed structured mentorship, peer buddying or practical apprenticeships. For example, CDB could do more to draw on FLN cohorts as a conduit to extend reach to other young people across the region in order to achieve multiplication effects. Youth requested that mentorship scale beyond the selective FLN cohort to benefit youth across BMCs, to provide mentorship that builds their technical capacity, enhances navigational knowledge of Bank systems and establishes pathways for young professionals to work with peers in BMCs.

**Institutional readiness to meaningfully engage young people:**

Youth consulted reported repeated unresponsiveness to young people's applications for youth engagement opportunities with the Bank, which has undermined trust and risks diminishing young people's self-confidence. While partly linked to human resource and capacity constraints, this trust deficit raises the stakes for engagement and suggests limited institutional readiness to engage this cohort consistently. Demographic shifts, such as millennials aging out and Generation Z rising, mean interventions must adapt in design, messaging and channels. The Bank's lifecycle approach offers a useful framework to accommodate these changes, but it requires clearer operationalisation and consistent follow-up to sustain relationships and avoid deepening youth disillusionment. Moreover, timing and bureaucratic tempo repeatedly emerged as operational constraints. Youth reported that Bank processes do not move quickly enough, creating a risk that cohort members will age out before initiatives move from concept to implementation. Members urged the Bank to adopt clearer, time-bound deliverables and funding mechanisms that enable cohorts to implement and sustain work during their tenure, and to reduce procedural bottlenecks where possible.

## Box 6 Good Practices and Suggested Strategies for Meaningful Youth Engagement

According to youth consulted as part of this evaluation, the following were identified as good practices and suggested strategies to enhance meaningful youth engagement.

- **Respond quickly and follow up:** Acknowledge inputs, report how suggestions were used, and provide staged updates to build trust.
- **State purpose and authority clearly:** Define goals, decision pathways and expected influence before engagement.
- **Use multi touch engagement cycles:** Sequence scoping draft feedback validation final review rather than one off events.
- **Embed mentorship and buddying:** Pair youth with staff/alumni for hands on guidance about Bank processes and proposal design.
- **Fund time bound pilots:** Provide seed funding and streamlined approvals so cohorts can move ideas to tested pilots within their tenure.
- **Create a youth digital hub:** Host plain language toolkits, short videos, event summaries and searchable archives organised by YPOS pillars.
- **Prefer interactive, bite sized formats:** Use microsites, short videos and interactive tools rather than static PDFs.
- **Avoid tokenism; broaden representation:** Include marginalised and grassroots voices, not just repeat champions. To avoid tokenistic participation and ensure that a small selection of youth is not only present at events but are afforded space to contribute, and that their contributions are recorded and acted on.
- **Institutionalise continuity:** Set up shadowing, alumni roles and transition protocols to preserve momentum across cohorts.
- **Leverage national youth structures:** Partner with National Youth Councils, youth parliaments and municipal programs to ground engagement locally.
- **Scale full cycle examples:** Replicate cases where youth co designed, piloted and presented tangible outputs (e.g., AI forum, youth risk forum) as models.

## 4.3 What factors influenced early implementation?

This section analyses additional internal and external factors that enable or limit the implementation of YPOS and youth-related operations. They illustrate strengths and gaps over the past five years.

### 4.3.1 Partnerships<sup>97</sup>

#### Finding 17:

Effective youth development programming requires a multi-partner approach. CDB engaged numerous regional and international partners in YPOS design, however, coordination and alignment with partners during implementation has been limited. There is a clear opportunity to strengthen strategic partnerships to enhance the impact of CDB's investment in youth development.

Stakeholders consistently emphasised that addressing the multifaceted challenges facing youth, such as crime prevention, community development, and the transition from education to employment, requires a holistic, ecosystem-based approach. Given the limits of CDB's institutional capacity to operate simultaneously across multiple levels and sectors, the Bank's ability to achieve more systemic, region-wide youth outcomes is contingent on forging strategic partnerships that coordinate efforts and pool complementary resources. As outlined in the YPOS, partnerships can take many forms—including collaborations with international and

regional development institutions, governments, the private sector, civil society organisations, and, importantly, with youth themselves, their families, and their communities. These diverse partnerships are essential for creating inclusive, sustainable solutions that reflect the needs and aspirations of young people.

A YPOS Reference Group was established to support the policy design. It included representatives from the CRYC, ECLAC, ILO, OECS, the OAS, and UWI, Cave Hill Campus. Stakeholders who participated in the design of the policy expressed that their involvement was meaningful and valuable during this process. However, since then, there has been little to no engagement between the CDB and these or other relevant regional and international organisations working in youth development. Similarly, several youths who were consulted during the YPOS design and this evaluation shared that they were also not followed up, and that they would have appreciated updates on how the YPOS and their inputs were actualised. Strengthening communication, coordination and alignment with potential partners presents an opportunity to enhance the implementation and impact of the YPOS. Consultations with regional and international organisations highlighted several areas where partnership could be leveraged to strengthen YPOS delivery:

- **Reputation-building:** Partnering with organisations that have established credibility in youth development could help build CDB's visibility and reputation in this space.
- **Knowledge exchange:** Collaborating with experienced organisations offers opportunities to learn from lessons learned and good practices.

- **Strategic coordination:** Aligning efforts with other actors working in youth development can maximise impact, recognising that CDB cannot address all youth-related challenges in the region alone.

Organisations consulted operating at both regional and country levels also identified areas for improvement in how CDB engages with partners:

- **Enhancing communication and feedback loops,** including establishing clear and respectful coordination protocols.
- **Clarifying CDB's role in youth empowerment** through wider visibility of YPOS and CDB's Youth-related operations to external organisations, as several partners noted that while CDB is a critical development actor, its specific contributions to youth development are not always well understood.
- **Responding to partnership requests,** as some organisations reported reaching out to collaborate on youth initiatives but receiving no or delayed response—resulting in missed opportunities for joint action.

#### Examples of partnership opportunities include:

- Engaging in joint advocacy or programming focused on economic empowerment of young women, with UN Women.
- Strengthening collaboration and coordination between the FLN and CARICOM Youth Ambassadors.
- Co-developing indicators, building regional capacity, and strengthening data systems in support of the CARICOM youth development index.

- Extending beyond CDB's FLN and CARICOM's Youth Ambassadors, engaging other partner agencies who also have youth mechanisms and considering youth-led partner organisations. For example, setting up a tool—collaboratively with partners—allowing for closer collaboration between organisations and/or their youth mechanisms, as an opportunity for greater relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of partnership across the ecosystem.<sup>98</sup>

Such partnerships—anchored in clear roles, shared metrics, and aligned financing modalities—would enable CDB to leverage its comparative advantages (concessional financing, regional convening power, technical expertise) while mobilising the additional capital, implementation capacity, and sectoral reach necessary to scale impact for youth.

### 4.3.2 Internal Factors<sup>99</sup>

#### Finding 18:

CDB demonstrates internal strengths through its individual champions and an organisational culture that helps catalyse youth-related initiatives. However, this is constrained by the limited resourcing (human and financial) that is dedicated to advancing this agenda. Opportunities exist to strengthen communications and systematise knowledge management to boost visibility, build stakeholder trust, and better capture lessons for broader learning and replication.

## Human Resources

The CDB approach to human resources to support YPOS helped catalyse initial implementation but is insufficient to scale up investment. As noted in **Finding 15**, CDB designated strong focal point(s) in SSD and leveraged individual champions to enable the broader uptake of YPOS and expand the Bank's youth portfolio since 2020. The focal point model allowed the CDB to identify visible champions who mobilise networks, sensitise some project teams, organise youth engagement activities, and incorporate youth components in some operations. However, policy ownership and stewardship for youth development initiatives have been concentrated in focal points (who manage these responsibilities alongside other portfolios of operational work).

Rather than being embedded in predictable, Bank-wide systems, youth programming often depends on the availability and commitment of specific staff members. This approach makes youth work particularly vulnerable to staff turnover, limits the Bank's ability to scale its efforts institutionally, and undermines the sustainability of engagement. Embedding youth development more systematically across departments and processes could help mitigate these risks and promote more consistent, strategic action. Moreover, approval of the Action Plan would further strengthen the operational accountability framework to establish a dedicated governance mechanism that identifies clearly defined institutional roles and responsibilities, timelines, and performance targets to support implementation, safeguard commitments, and embed YPOS more deeply into the Bank's internal processes.

Funding for the Action Plan would need to be complemented with additional human resources to support the Bank in achieving the intended outcomes of YPOS. To move from pilot-level successes to sustained, scaled programming, the Bank will need to consider expanding and professionalising capacity through a specialised youth function or embedding youth specialists across thematic teams, increasing staff levels in strategic units (e.g., private sector, agriculture, rural development). Strengthening resourcing would improve continuity, enable proactive pipeline development, and reduce the 'trust' risks youth organisations report when outreach is not followed by sustained engagement (see *Section 4.2.3 and Finding 16 on meaningful youth engagement.*)

CDB youth-infused institutional arrangements and professional development pilots (see *Table 4.2 below*) have yielded promising results in supporting an organisational culture that fosters youth development inside and outside of the CDB. Notable among these is the now formalised Summer Internship Programme, the inaugural Young Professionals cohort, and this year's JPO placements (**See Finding 16**). These initiatives have served as valuable proof-of-concepts, delivering observable benefits and receiving positive feedback from both participating young people and CDB staff. Interviews suggest that these efforts offer a viable pathway to embed youth perspectives and participation more systematically across the institution. Interestingly, these initiatives have largely been implemented as human resources programmes and remain conceptually and operationally disconnected from the YPOS and CDB's broader youth development portfolio. Stakeholders noted a marked 'awakening' within the Bank in 2023, characterised by growing staff interest and enthusiasm for youth engagement.

This momentum presents a strategic opportunity to bridge internal initiatives with external youth programming, fostering a more cohesive and institution-wide approach to youth development.

Despite their promise, these programmes are under-resourced relative to ambition—particularly the internship and YPP which are budgeted from CDB’s human resource budget.<sup>100</sup> Budget constraints limit the ability to hire Young Professionals as permanent staff at CDB after completion of the YPP. While human resource units lacked the managerial bandwidth and resources to leverage these programmes further, it is envisioned that new hires in the unit dedicated to early career could help mitigate this.

Additionally, CDB staff interviews explained that the quality of experience is dependent on manager temperament and individual personalities. With 2023 marking the first cohort, the YPP builds on learnings from a well-established program at the World Bank, and similarly applies iterative improvements informed by experimentation, research and feedback. The CDB plans to make the next YPP cohort more structured, providing greater opportunities for professional development and more support to managers.

**Table 4.2:** Assessment of FLN Roles on Paper vs. Practice

Programme	Year	Cohort Total (Disaggregated By Gender)
Internship Programme	2023	7 total (4 male, 3 female)
	2024	7 total (5 male, 2 female)
	2025	6 total (1 male, 5 female)
Young Professionals Programme	2023-2025	6 (3 male, 3 female)
Junior Professional Officers	2025	2 (0 male, 2 female)

## Organisational Culture

CDB largely reflects an enabling culture for enhancing YPOS implementation. As reflected in human resource initiatives, CDB shows an important and enabling disposition toward youth, with senior leadership and several staff expressing genuine belief in young people's capacities and the value of the fresh perspectives and innovation young people bring to the table. This leadership-level buy-in has created critical momentum and a willingness among division chiefs and line managers to consider youth as valuable partners. However, this cultural goodwill coexists with structural and systems gaps that hinder its consistent integration into routine practice. The Bank's culture fosters receptivity and occasional innovation, however, in the absence of routinised expectations, clear roles, and distributed leadership across functions, this cultural support tends to produce uneven outcomes that rely heavily on the initiative of individual staff or teams. While the presence of high-level champions is important, cultural support has not translated into institutionalised mechanisms (e.g., systematic inclusion of youth in governance or design fora) to convert positive attitudes into sustained practice.

## Financial Resources

The most frequently mentioned challenge to implementing YPOS was limited financial resources for targeted investments in youth. As mentioned in **Finding 11**, YPOS's vision for a Youth Fund has not materialised. According to some interviewees, the financing arrangements constrain the Bank's capacity to move from pilot-level activity to scaled youth investment. The Bank's pool of concessionary funds (e.g., Special Development Fund) could, in principle, be used to incentivise youth programming, but BMCs and the CDB

have not used the funds for large youth-focused operations.<sup>101</sup> Even when concessional funding is available, limited human resources reduce the Bank's capacity to support BMCs in designing youth-focused operations, leverage other regional partners to support a major investment, manage any new youth-targeted grant windows, or provide the accompanying capacity building required if youth-led groups or organisations are to participate in design, implementation, or oversight of such initiatives.

In the SDF, thematic set-asides for gender and climate illustrate one approach for incentivising funding in certain areas. The absence of an analogous or more significant youth funding envelope means the Bank currently lacks a lever to rapidly incentivise youth-focused initiatives, strengthen organisations involved in youth programming, and support BMCs in scaling successful youth development programming. Operations staff interviewed underscored the absence of a clearly allocated youth set-aside or a dedicated youth financing envelope at a larger scale. As a result, the default has been to embed youth components into broader sectoral operations rather than to finance youth as a discrete, visible funding stream. The current financing architecture creates limited incentives for BMCs to prioritise youth results within loan and TA packages.

## Communications

As noted above (**see Finding 13**), communications for CDB's youth work are currently limited in reach and responsiveness, undermining visibility and public perception of the Bank as a key actor for youth development in the region. Where CDB has public-facing materials and impact stories, these are often confined to small sections or embedded links within the corporate website rather than proactively promoted across channels frequented by youth (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, Facebook).

Staff interviews confirmed that CDB's communications approach is traditional and protocol-driven, which has produced technically sound outputs but also slows decision-making and limits creativity. Communications tend to spotlight launches, ribbon-cutting and handover ceremonies, with limited dissemination and promotion of knowledge products or storytelling. Social media has proven to be a particularly effective strategy for reaching young people. For example, in 2025, targeted use of Instagram and X for intern recruitment, alongside university mailing lists, generated roughly 700 applications for seven positions. This significantly outstripped the number of applicants for the previous two years, when recruitment relied mainly on traditional job boards. The results suggest that modern, platform-specific outreach outperforms more narrow tactics. This presents an opportunity for further leverage, including training on audience-focused messaging and digital engagement, and involving youth directly in the content-creation process.

The limited communications capacity noted by staff is consequential for implementation. Communications specialists and national media channels or news outlets (are underutilised in amplifying project impacts. While the evaluation found evident goodwill toward youth engagement, limited responsiveness to youth (**see Finding 16**) and the absence of a deliberate communications plan for YPOS implementation pose important risks. For example, applying to youth-targeted grants and receiving no acknowledgement or follow-up, which undermine the Bank's ability to build trust and manage expectations, particularly among youth groups who may be less familiar with donor procedures.

This pattern has real reputational risks of eroding trust in the Bank and diminishing the credibility of CDB's youth commitments, weakening the Bank's potential to build sustained relationships that are necessary for participatory youth-led programming, and most importantly risks shattering young people's self-confidence.

## Knowledge Management and Learning

Interviews, portfolio mapping, and review of documents illustrate that knowledge management and learning related to youth programming at CDB relies on key individuals and is weakly institutionalised. This may lead to the loss of valuable lessons and limits the Bank's ability to capture and scale organisational learning. In many cases, project implementation knowledge resides with individual staff or external implementing partners rather than in a structured Bank repository. Although CDB's Policy & Procedures Manual formally requires the capture of lessons learned, a review of project appraisal documents and completion reports reveals limited evidence that these provisions are being consistently applied to support organisational learning on youth development.

For example, the evaluation team faced difficulties tracking down and collating available reporting on CDB-funded youth projects, despite implementing partners recounting valuable lessons learned and innovative approaches during the field visits. These partners shared reports they had prepared that included practical lessons, yet these insights were not captured in CDB systems nor public knowledge products. Additionally, smaller projects (under USD 1 million) funded through technical assistance grants are not required to submit formal completion reports, and thus informal exchanges remain the primary vehicle for transmitting experience.<sup>102</sup>

Without a more intentional and structured knowledge management architecture, CDB is limited in its ability to mitigate potential risks and transform isolated innovations into regional good practices. If the Bank aspires to lead in youth development, it will need to treat lesson capture, knowledge management, and dissemination as core operational functions so that learning is preserved beyond individual staff tenures and remains accessible to inform program redesign and scaling.

### 4.3.3 External Factors<sup>103</sup>

#### Finding 19:

The implementation of YPOS and youth-related operations, has been shaped by a range of external factors. These have introduced both opportunities and challenges that affect the relevance, resilience, and effectiveness of youth development efforts in the Caribbean.

**Key external factors affecting youth-related operations since 2020 include:** environmental shocks and crises, political environments and government capacities, socio-cultural and economic contexts, technology and innovation, and public perceptions of CDB's strategic positioning. Each of these factors has affected YPOS implementation to date, and many will continue to shape youth programming in the future. A proactive and adaptive response to these dynamics is essential for strengthening outcomes and ensuring that youth initiatives remain responsive to regional realities.

### Environmental Shocks and Crises

Major disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters<sup>104</sup> have significantly affected youth engagement and programming. The pandemic led to school closures, increased dropout rates, and a rise in mental health concerns among youth. It also exposed gaps in digital readiness as services shifted online. Natural disasters have also displaced communities and interrupted youth initiatives. Yet, these crises have also catalysed youth-led responses, particularly in climate awareness and disaster preparedness, as seen in Jamaica where young people have creatively promoted safety and resilience in preparation and response to the most recent Hurricane Melissa.<sup>105</sup> Similarly, in Belize, the National Emergency Management Organization has ramped up engagement with youth since 2024 through a national youth forum and new efforts to encourage youth participation in community-based emergency preparedness and response teams.

### Political Environment and Government Capacity

Political shifts and varying levels of government capacity across BMCs (especially among certain ministries or departments dedicated to youth) have influenced the sustainability and effectiveness of youth programs. Changes in government can disrupt continuity and commitments to youth-focused projects and initiatives. Conversely, strong political commitment, such as through Saint Lucia's Youth Economy Act and Youth Economy Agency, is an enabler of effective youth programming. However, political commitment alone is not sufficient; it must be matched by institutional capacity.

Government stakeholders consulted across BMCs identified limited resources and capacity as a persistent challenge, especially departments responsible for youth services and programming. Strengthening these capacities—as a key priority under **YPOS Pillar 6**—remains essential for successful implementation and long-term impact.

### Socio-Cultural and Economic Contexts

Stakeholder consultations with youth and their communities consistently reiterated the importance of considering a complex interplay of socio-cultural and economic factors which affect youth development. These include access to education, community dynamics, employment opportunities, family structures, gender norms, and broader societal expectations. When these factors converge in ways that limit opportunity or reinforce marginalisation, they can contribute to negative outcomes such as disengagement, emigration, or involvement in crime and violence. When these same factors are supportive and inclusive, such as strong community networks, equitable education, and positive role models, they can foster resilience, leadership, and meaningful youth contributions to societies and economies.

**“It has to start with building a good community”**

—[Community stakeholder, Maritime Training for Yachting Sector Project, Soufriere Saint Lucia]

### Technology and Innovation

Stakeholder consultations with youth, partners, and CDB at regional and country levels emphasised that digital technology and AI are opening new pathways for youth empowerment across the Caribbean, particularly through remote work, digital entrepreneurship, and creative innovation. However, they also indicated that these opportunities are accompanied by challenges, including misinformation, online crime, and unequal access to digital infrastructure. For governments and organisations working to support youth development, access to reliable data—often dependent on digital tools—is a persistent challenge. Data availability remains a critical issue for effective programming and policymaking, but emerging innovations offer promising solutions. CDB staff and other development stakeholders in the region have highlighted ongoing difficulties in collecting intersectional youth data, which limits the ability to measure impact and design responsive interventions. Tools like Kobo ToolBox and partnerships with organisations such as UN ECLAC, which are investing in the use of population data to generate meaningful indicators, offer potential ways forward. Notably, the Commonwealth’s 2025 initiative to champion a data-driven approach to youth development in the Caribbean signals growing momentum toward more evidence-based and inclusive strategies.<sup>106</sup>

## Public Perception and Strategic Positioning

Consultations with governments, international organisations, and non-profit stakeholders working across the region generally shared the perspective that CDB's role in youth development it's not widely recognised, with the institution primarily seen as focused on infrastructure.

This perception may hinder its ability to establish credibility and influence in the youth sector. Building visibility, trust, and effective partnerships will be essential for positioning CDB as a strategic leader in youth development and for advancing the goals of YPOS (see Finding 17).



## 5.1 Conclusions

Conclusions stem from evaluation findings on YPOS design, early policy implementation, youth-related operations and factors affecting policy implementation. They offer a snapshot of policy's evolution after five years.

### Conclusion 1:

The CDB YPOS (2020) set a relevant and strategic course for the CDB in support of positive youth development in the Caribbean. The policy's scope and design process has positioned the Bank as a thoughtful actor on youth policy and programming in the region.

The evaluation confirms the sound design of policy and strategy. The scope of the policy, which is holistic in its approach to youth development rather than sector-specific, makes it stand out from other MDBs. Similarly, the CDB's consultative design process illustrated an institutional commitment to youth engagement. Through its six pillars, YPOS provides a framework of themes and areas of action that are relevant to the region and to the priorities and challenges faced by youth at the time. It also provides an institutional model for contributing to these areas through its proposed dual-track approach of targeted youth investments and mainstreaming youth considerations Bank-wide. The evaluation confirms ongoing relevance of its thematic areas and the dual-track approach within the current context. Evaluation findings also identify internal Bank activities, such as youth-infused human resource initiatives, that have evolved since the adoption of YPOS but were not formally part of the policy.

Similarly, some aspects of the policy remained as good concepts but were not sufficiently defined in terms of how they can be applied in CDB investments and operations (e.g., the lifecycle approach and socio-ecological model).

### Conclusion 2:

Youth voices call on CDB to enhance its institutional role in youth development, increase targeted financing, and further leverage engagement with youth. The CDB can build on this to enhance its organisational readiness for further engaging with this demographic.

Feedback from youth leaders engaged with CDB since 2020 generally portrays a positive outlook on the Bank's efforts to meaningfully engage youth and provide opportunities for their inputs, leadership and growth. At the same time, youth share valuable insights on the roles that the Bank can play and how it can be more effective in its efforts to promote youth-centred development in the region. Youth emphasised the need for the Bank to increase targeted investments in youth-focused initiatives, further leverage the willingness, interest and desire of young people to play more active roles across the project cycle, and strengthen communication and follow-up mechanisms to ensure visibility and continuity of youth-related opportunities and programs. They also highlighted the importance of capacity-building support for youth organisations and leaders and accessible funding mechanisms for youth-led projects. Youth enthusiasm about the CDB's role in this area reflects the Bank's perceived credibility, reach, and potential as a regional development finance institution with an institutional role in youth development.

The Bank explored and expanded mechanisms such as the FLN with the intention to provide an advisory, advocacy, innovation, and coordination role for the Bank. This commitment to engage young people is a key strength of the CDB's approach to youth development. FLN members generally appreciated their role and noted positive outcomes, while also identifying areas for improvement, particularly in terms of opportunities for increased innovation and coordination by formalising co-design roles that move beyond consultation to co-creation, accountability and governance of youth-led initiatives at the Bank. At the same time, the evaluation underscores the need to extend youth engagement to enhance inclusion and diversity—including youth voices that are often left unheard such as those living with disabilities, at-risk youth, indigenous youth, youth from rural communities, and others—to ensure that insights reflect a broad spectrum of experiences rather than the repeated voices of a few. In efforts to scale-up FLN youth engagement models, there is also a need to further coordinate with CARICOM Youth Ambassadors.

The evaluation also generated lessons about CDB's readiness to engage in meaningful youth engagement. In this first phase of YPOS the Bank does not have in place the necessary staffing, and communications approaches required for sustained trust-building with youth, which requires timely responses, use of diverse communications channels, and feedback loops designed to follow-up on how their inputs have helped shaped the Bank's strategy and action or informed decision-making.

### Conclusion 3:

The Bank did not establish the conditions required for full YPOS implementation. This has constrained the extent of YPOS implementation to-date and limits the potential scale of its effects.

Although at the time of YPOS design the CDB intended to put in place mechanisms to support policy implementation, such as an action plan with a corresponding accountability framework, the plan was never formalised. Similarly, the YPOS proposed the creation of a Youth Fund to foster innovative approaches to youth development and incentivise BMCs to invest in targeted programs for youth. That funding mechanism was not put in place to support these first years of YPOS implementation due to a variety of plausible factors. Moreover, the first two years of YPOS were also marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which required on-going adjustments of priorities in CDB and other development actors.

The CDB did not strategically invest in the sixth pillar of the YPOS, which aimed to strengthen capacities in CDB and BMCs for mainstreaming youth and targeted youth investments. Within CDB, the result was: limited dedicated technical staff to support teams, engage with youth, and develop partnerships; limited awareness among staff about YPOS and how it applied to their work (either in corporate services, functional units, or in operations); and a portfolio of smaller-scale youth-related activities that demonstrates potential but limited learning about what works and bringing to scale. Individual informal champions led the piloting of youth-related projects and activities, but this was not part of a Bank-wide strategic approach to investing in youth development.

Across BMCs, the evaluation also signals the on-going relevance of the YPOS for supporting the enabling environment, with growing interest and demand for targeted youth interventions. However, the government and NGOs have critical capacity gaps in policy, resourcing, programming, and approaches to youth engagement.

#### Conclusion 4:

The CDB is now at a critical juncture in which there is growing internal and external interest and demand for engaging with youth. At the same time, CDB's strategic position and value addition in this area needs to be reaffirmed.

In 2025, the CDB welcomed a newly elected president, concluded negotiations on the replenishment of SDF 11, and conducted a consultative process for the ten-year Strategic Plan 2026-2035 that has identified youth as a critical axis. This is an important moment in which CDB is defining its direction, investment priorities, and a framework for how the Bank partners with countries, institutions, and communities to accelerate sustainable development. These strategic directions will be complemented by updates to policies such as the Education and Training Policy and Strategy, which are also relevant to YPOS. These developments are raising the level of priority given to youth. At the same time, there is a strong motivation on the part of the young people consulted to engage with and support the CDB in this prioritisation.

This swelling of interest coincides with limited understanding of the Bank's specific role and value addition in positive youth development in the region.

For the most part, consulted government and NGO stakeholders in BMCs were not aware of CDB's commitment to youth (as espoused in the policy) and its experience in youth engagement and youth-focused programs. Regional partners that were initially consulted on the YPOS were not re-engaged over time and had also lost sight of CDB's work in this area and its current value addition. Notably, many expressed eagerness to partner with CDB on YPOS implementation and youth-related operations. This suggests that the next iteration of YPOS should be supported by robust communications, strengthened partnership, and a youth engagement strategy that not only clarifies CDB's role but also expands and leverages the efforts of other actors in this space—recognising that CDB is not working in isolation.

## 5.2 Lessons Learned

This section identifies several generalisable insights/transferable lessons emerging from YPOS and project implementation.

### 5.2.1 Lessons About Policy

This section identifies several generalisable insights/transferable lessons emerging from YPOS and project implementation.

**Continuous outward-facing communications about policy implementation is important for building institutional identity and partnerships.**

The YPOS design invested in significant consultations but was not followed by on-going communication about implementation. Field visits and regional interviews revealed limited outward-facing awareness of YPOS among stakeholders, reflecting lack of institutional capacity for follow-up or re-engagement with stakeholders that were involved during the design phase.

This had ripple effects on the Bank’s ability to build its institutional identity as a key actor in the youth development sector.

**In-ward facing communication and capacity building for policy implementation is as important as the policy itself.**

The YPOS design was strong, but interviews with CDB staff revealed gaps in understanding of how to apply the policy (including roles, responsibilities, and objectives). This resulted in weakened capacity to deliver on commitments and highlights the importance of internally communicating policies and providing training and capacity building for its implementation.

## 5.2.2 Lessons About Monitoring

**Monitoring of youth-targeted projects is important for accountability, learning, and sharing operational experience.**

Many youth-focused CDB projects have small budgets<sup>107</sup> and as such they do not require completion reports. On the ground, implementing agencies and staff generally do collect project data but this is not systematically captured by the CDB for learning and sharing purposes. Particularly when working with youth, it is important to track and capture simple “where are they now” measurements to support accountability, learning, and sharing results (*which can support Lesson 1*).

## 5.2.3 Lessons on Youth Programming

**Interventions yield meaningful gains only when enabling conditions are acknowledged and addressed.**

Numerous projects, especially in the area of youth crime and violence, emphasised the importance of taking a holistic approach—keeping in mind the socioecological model and the life cycle. If structural constraints and incentives do not change, violent and criminal behaviour is also unlikely to change. For example, stakeholders engaged in the ‘boat boys’ project in Saint Lucia emphasised that sustainable change “**requires stronger law enforcement as a deterrent, as well as a holistic, community-based approach**” engaging families, schools and churches. Where regulatory or market barriers affect livelihoods, projects need integrated policy/enforcement components and community mobilisation to shift norms and enable durable improvements.

**Ending a project without clear roles, a handover plan, and open communication can damage trust—especially when working with at-risk groups. There is a need to plan closure as carefully as implementation.**

The Youth Empowerment Project in Saint Lucia produced meaningful youth engagement but was undercut by an abrupt, unexplained termination which disappointed youth and made them feel more vulnerable. Similar concerns were expressed among stakeholders of the Youth Community Transformation project in Belize, which ended without clear plans for sustaining activities for youth beyond project completion.

The following Recommendations present actionable pathways to address the key findings and conclusions outlined in this evaluation report. A mapping of the linkages between Recommendations, Conclusions, and Findings is provided in *Volume II, Appendix 7*. Recommendations have been informed by a co-creation workshop with key stakeholders, ensuring that the proposed actions reflect shared priorities, operational realities, and the collective insights of relevant actors.

The Recommendations are intentionally ordered to reflect a logical progression, from foundational actions that must be taken first, to those that are more complex and require more time and negotiation. This sequencing is designed to support a coherent, staged approach to implementation, where early gains create the enabling conditions for subsequent, more ambitious reforms.

**Recommendation 1:** CDB should designate a YPOS Champion and Alternate within senior management to spearhead implementation of the policy across the Bank.

**Action(s): a)** SSD develops a Terms of Reference for the YPOS Champion and Alternate (Male and Female) in collaboration with other units, **b)** SSD presents rationale for the positions to the Strategic Advisory Team (SAT), **c)** SSD to coordinate with other units to provide orientation, training and technical support for the designated Champion and Alternate to support uptake of the role.

**Responsible Unit:** SAT and SSD

**Timeline:** June 2026

**Recommendation 2:** CDB should develop and resource an Action Plan that identifies a clear path forward for implementing YPOS 2026–2029.

**Action(s): a)** Establish a working group or community of practice of staff from across the Bank to support drafting of the Plan (operations and corporative services), **b)** Establish agreed-upon priority areas for enhancing operationalisation of the dual-track approach (i.e., targeted youth investments and youth mainstreaming), for example by focusing in on targeted thematic areas (e.g., economic empowerment and crime and violence) **c)** Establish agreed-upon inward-facing processes for internal systems, CDB capacities and responsibilities across units along with outward-facing processes for programmatic engagement with BMCs and youth, **d)** Define an accountability framework **e)** Prepare the budget required to implement the Action Plan, **f)** Approve Action Plan and related implementation budget and **g)** Hold sensitisation meetings with staff and partners about the plan and rollout.

**Responsible Unit:** SAT YPOS Champion and SSD

**Timeline:** October 2026

**Recommendation 3:** CDB should invest in its own capacity in priority areas required to scale up youth development programming.

**Action(s): a)** Plan for the financing of dedicated staffing arrangements to support bank-wide implementation—such as an Operations Officer and specialised position on youth development (technical expertise) in SSD with assignment of a JPO or intern—to be approved within the following year's budget, **b)** Strengthen on-boarding, sensitisation, and regular training on YPOS for all staff and senior management,

**c)** Integrate HR initiatives such as the YPP, JPOs, and Interns into YPOS, **d)** Draft and implement an internal communications strategy to increase internal awareness of YPOS; **e)** Prepare guidance on good practices for targeting and integrating youth in priority sectors, **f)** Strengthen internal knowledge management of lessons learned through a Community of Practice.

**Responsible Unit:** SAT YPOS Champion, with SSD, Communications, and Human Resources  
**Timeline:** December 2026

**Recommendation 4:** CDB should strengthen the FLN to enable it to play a more substantive role in corporate strategic planning and country level processes, in collaboration with other youth organisations in the region.

**Action(s): a)** Improve capacity to coordinate youth engagement across the Bank through a dedicated intern or other human resource, **b)** Develop a youth engagement strategy that includes timely responses, feedback loops and differentiated approaches for communicating with and reaching diverse young people—including the most marginalised, **c)** Resource and support a structured approach to leveraging FLN members as a conduit for mobilising youth (including reaching more marginalised youth) to enhance youth engagement in country-level processes (e.g., Country Engagement Strategy, National Committees), **d)** Establish coordination strategy with Caribbean Regional Youth Council, CARICOM Youth Ambassadors, and youth members of IPAG.

**Responsible Unit:** SSD and SAT YPOS Champion, with support from the Department of Communications and Corporate Affairs (DCCA)  
**Timeline:** December 2026

**Recommendation 5:** CDB should strengthen its partnerships in support of an enabling environment for more impactful youth development policy and programming.

**Action(s): a)** Enhance strategic coordination and knowledge exchange with other actors working in youth development, **b)** Design and implement an external communications strategy on CDB's role and priorities in youth development, including youth-friendly communications (such as a popular youth-friendly version of the YPOS) **c)** Design and leverage 1–2 strategic partnerships linked to specific products (e.g., CARICOM Youth Development Index that entails co-developing indicators, building regional capacity, and strengthening data systems).

**Responsible Unit:** SSD and the DCCA  
**Timeline:** July 2027

**Recommendation 6:** CDB should establish a dedicated Youth Fund with concessional financing that incentivises large-scale targeted youth development initiatives in BMCs.

**Action(s): a)** Clarify purpose, size, design, and scope (thematic windows) of this Fund of concessional resources, **b)** Include a financing window for capacity building support for BMCs and implementing partners to design and manage youth programs (in alignment with Pillar 6 of YPOS), **c)** Determine resource mobilisation strategy (potentially drawing on SDF 12 resources), **d)** Define a monitoring framework and identify roles and responsibilities for it.

**Responsible Unit:** SAT YPOS Champion  
**Timeline:** June 2027

<b>Title</b>	Management Response – Implementation of YPOS Evaluation Recommendations
<b>Due date of Management Response:</b>	24th February 2026
<b>Coordinator of Management Response:</b>	Social Sector Division (SSD)
<b>Submission for Management Response</b>	Social Sector Division (SSD)

**General comments on the evaluation (if any)**

Management welcomes the formative evaluation of the Youth Policy and Operational Strategy (YPOS) and appreciates the constructive, evidence-based analysis provided by the Office of Independent Evaluation (OIE).. The evaluation affirms the continued relevance of the Policy to addressing the complex and evolving challenges facing the region as well as opportunities available to youth in Borrowing Member Countries (BMC), while appropriately identifying areas where greater clarity, coherence, and operational strengthening are required.

Management concurs with the overall direction of the findings and recognises the need to enhance strategic alignment, improve results measurement, strengthen mainstreaming across operations, and deepen partnerships to maximise impact. The evaluation provides a timely opportunity to refine implementation approaches and reinforce institutional accountability. Management remains committed to ensuring that YPOS delivers measurable, sustainable outcomes for young people across the region and will implement the recommendations through the Bank’s established planning and reporting processes.

**Evaluation recommendation #1** (*'the what'*)

CDB should designate a YPOS Champion and Alternate within senior management to spearhead implementation of the policy across the Bank.

**Lead entity** (*'who' is responsible*)

**Participating partners** (*'who else is responsible'*)

SAT with SSD

**Overall management response**

(*'if' - accepted, partially accepted, rejected*)

(*'how' - in 250 words or less to explain the management response*)

- Accepted**
- Partially accepted**
- Rejected**

Management accepts this recommendation as a priority action to strengthen governance, accountability, and sustained senior leadership for YPOS implementation across the Bank. YPOS, approved by the Bank's Board of Directors in March 2020, makes provision for leadership at the level of the Vice President, Operations. SSD's coordination role and the existing youth focal point(s) function, supported by periodic cross-unit collaboration, have helped to advance the Bank's Youth Agenda. However, implementation experience has underscored the need to formalise senior management leadership to ensure more consistent Bank-wide uptake, clearer accountability, and sustained coordination. To operationalise this, SSD will draft the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the YPOS Champion and Alternate (male and female), in consultation with relevant units, to define roles, responsibilities, expectations, and coordination. SSD will submit a rationale and proposal for Senior Advisory Team (SAT's) consideration and designation in advance of the presentation and expected approval of the Youth Development Action Plan (YDAP) by Q3, 2026. This is to ensure senior management leadership and buy-in of the process and deliverables. Following appointment, SSD will coordinate an orientation and support package, including departmental engagement, structured training and sensitisation, and ongoing technical support to enable the Champion and Alternate to effectively drive uptake, facilitate cross-unit collaboration, and champion YPOS operationalisation.

Suggested lines of action			
Lines of action	Suggested actions to be implemented (to articulate how to implement the recommendations)	Timeline	
		Start date	End date
a. SSD develops a Terms of Reference for the YPOS Champion and Alternate (Male and Female) in collaboration with other units.	SSD will draft the ToR for the Champion and Alternate and conduct divisional and departmental reviews to support its finalisation. To ensure implementation of the YPOS (and the forthcoming YDAP) across the Bank.	April 2026	April 2026
	SSD proposes institutionalisation of a Youth Development Community of Practice (YDCoP) to bridge high-level policy and operational imperatives. The draft ToR for the YDCoP is currently under review within SSD.	May 2026	June 2026
b. SSD presents rationale for the positions to the Strategic Advisory Team (SAT).	The TOR, inclusive of the rationale, for the proposed senior management Champion and Alternate for youth development will be presented to SAT in advance of the presentation of YDAP.	April 2026	April 2026
c. SSD to coordinate with other units to provide orientation, training and technical support for the designated Champion and Alternate to support uptake of the role.	<p>Building on lessons from the (i) YPOS Working Group that supported coordination efforts in the YPOS development process as well as (ii) GECOP model, SSD, in collaboration with the members of the YDCoP will develop a capacity-building plan for senior management including the designated Champion and Alternate. This will commence in tandem with the review and update of YDAP.</p> <p>Key implementations steps will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Convening interdivisional/ departmental meetings to align roles, expectations, and support needs.</li> <li>2. Setting out the training programme.</li> <li>3. Providing training using a mixed-modality approach.</li> </ol>	June 2026	September 2026

**Evaluation recommendation #2** (*'the what'*)

CDB should develop and resource an Action Plan that identifies a clear path forward for implementing YPOS 2026–2029.

<b>Lead entity</b> ( <i>'who' is responsible</i> )	<b>Participating partners</b> ( <i>'who else is responsible'</i> )
<b>SAT member and alternate as YPOS Champions; SSD; YDCoP</b>	Young leaders including Future Leaders Network (FLN); Private Sector; Comm Sec; CARICOM; OECS; UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies; Ministries responsible for youth affairs; youth-led organisations; and youth-serving organisations.

**Overall management response**

<i>'if' - accepted, partially accepted, rejected</i>	<i>'how' - in 250 words or less to explain the management response</i>
<b>✘ Accepted</b>  <b>Partially accepted</b>  <b>Rejected</b>	<p>Management accepts this recommendation and will develop and resource a costed YPOS Action Plan (2026–2029) to provide a clear, sequenced path for operationalising the Plan.</p> <p>SSD, supported by YDCoP, will review and update the draft YDAP which was prepared in collaboration with internal and external partners on approval of YPOS. The Action Plan will be finalised through structured consultation with diverse stakeholders, including the Projects Department First Team/Projects Department/DRC as appropriate; FLN, heads of youth departments across BMCs; regional and international development partners; and youth-led/youth-serving organisations.</p>

Suggested lines of action			
Lines of action	Suggested actions to be implemented (to articulate how to implement the recommendations)	Timeline	
		Start date	End date
a. Establish a working group or community of practice of staff from across the Bank to support drafting of the Plan (operations and corporative services).	CDB will reconstitute and expand the previous YPOS working group in the form of the YDCoP. YDCoP members will be drawn from across the Bank and will be sourced from specialisations including inter alia environmental sustainability; private sector development; education; economics; infrastructure; and legal. Importantly, the YDCoP will include representatives of FLN. Early sessions with YDCoP will include sensitisation on YPOS evaluation findings and the Management Response Action Plan (MRAP).	May 2026	July 2026
b. Establish agreed-upon priority areas for enhancing operationalisation of the dual-track approach (i.e., targeted youth investments and youth mainstreaming), for example by focusing on targeted thematic areas (e.g., economic empowerment and crime and violence).	SSD with the YDCoP will facilitate prioritisation workshops to confirm thematic focus areas for targeted youth investments as well as youth mainstreaming aligning with YPOS. This will also allow the Bank to include additional priority focus areas identified in the formative evaluation, including sports and creative industries, to be reflected in the YDAP.	September 2026	November 2026
	SSD will develop and roll out a Youth Marker with associated training and guidance to support consistent mainstreaming, documentation, and reporting of youth integration across the Bank's operations and processes.	April 2026	December 2026

c. Establish agreed-upon inward-facing processes for internal systems, CDB capacities and responsibilities across units along with outward-facing processes for programmatic engagement with BMCs and youth.	To strengthen implementation quality and measurability, workshops will be convened, facilitated by the Bank's Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. The objective will be to identify the internal processes; roles and responsibilities as well as outward-facing processes for BMCs and youth-related stakeholders. This will also include targeted support to ensure coherence with CDB's strategic outcomes and inform the accountability framework that establishes roles and milestones for management oversight. It will ensure that the YDAP is not only costed but managed for delivery across units.	September 2026	September 2026
d. Define an accountability framework.			
e. Prepare the budget required to implement the Action Plan.	SSD, with YDCoP and other key stakeholders, will revisit, review, and update the draft YDAP along with the budget for its implementation. This will be submitted to SAT for approval.	September 2026	November 2026
f. Approve the Action Plan and related implementation budget.			
g. Hold sensitisation meetings with staff and partners about the plan and rollout.	Department of Communications and Corporate Affairs (DCCA) along with SSD and YDCoP, will develop/roll-out a communications plan including the preparation of digital assets for the YPOS and YDAP. Communications package(s) will be designed to be inclusive and accessible. Capacity-building sessions and assets will be delivered via a mixed-modality approach. These meetings with staff and partners will be a key component of the communication strategy.	September 2026	March 2027

**Evaluation recommendation #3** (*'the what'*)

CDB should invest in its own capacity in priority areas required to scale-up youth development programming.

<b>Lead entity</b> ( <i>'who' is responsible</i> )	<b>Participating partners</b> ( <i>'who else is responsible'</i> )
SAT member and alternate as YPOS Champions; SSD, Department of Communications and Corporate Affairs (DCCA), and Human Resources and Administration Department (HRAD)	

**Overall management response**

<i>'if' - accepted, partially accepted, rejected</i>	<i>'how' - in 250 words or less to explain the management response</i>
<p>✘ <b>Accepted</b></p> <p><b>Partially accepted</b></p> <p><b>Rejected</b></p>	<p>Management accepts this recommendation. Management agrees that strengthening internal capacity is essential to scaling youth development programming and embedding the dual-track approach across operations and corporate processes. To this end the findings of this report, as it relates to capacity and/or capability gaps will be data points in the forthcoming Workforce Analysis Exercise. Actions that can be implemented within existing systems such as internal communications, onboarding materials, and improving knowledge management through YDCoP will be prioritised immediately. In parallel, recognising current capacity constraints, SSD has embedded resourcing measures within proposed Technical Assistance (TA) and work planning to secure additional implementation support through HRAD initiatives. The approach will focus on integrating and optimising HRAD mechanisms (e.g., Intern and Young Professional Programme (YPP) support) to provide near-term staffing capacity, while advancing the inclusion of an Operations Officer (OO, Youth) and specialised youth development expertise within core staffing arrangements through established budget and processes. Other staff resources will be proposed through YDAP.</p>

Suggested lines of action			
Lines of action	Suggested actions to be implemented (to articulate how to implement the recommendations)	Timeline	
		Start date	End date
a. Plan for the financing of dedicated staffing arrangements to support bank-wide implementation – such as an Operations Officer and specialised position on youth development (technical expertise) in SSD with assignment of a JPO or intern – to be approved within the following year’s budget.	<p>Recognising existing capacity constraints and growing delivery demands across the youth portfolio, SSD has embedded resourcing measures within a TA project that is currently under development. The team has also submitted proposals to HRAD to secure additional implementation support for youth development via the Internship and YPPs. It is also proposed that there be recruitment and/or assignment of an OO (Youth) as a part of the Bank’s core staffing and approved within this year’s budget.</p> <p>As such, CDB will optimise options available via HRAD to bolster capacity.</p>	February 2026	November 2026
b. Strengthen on-boarding, sensitisation, and regular training on YPOS for all staff and senior management.	Having increased capacity, SSD – with YDCoP - will develop onboarding materials that reflect the Bank’s evolving youth agenda and create consistent messaging for staff awareness.	September 2026	March 2027
	Delivery of training on YPOS and YDAP for all staff and senior management will be implemented through the structured capacity-building initiatives under action to be taken for recommendation 1(c) to ensure sequencing and coherence.		
c. Integrate HRAD initiatives such as the YPP, JPOs, and Interns into YPOS.	Integration of HR initiatives will be formalised through the action plan in the first instance. See recommendation 2(f). This will ensure that all youth programmes across the Bank are aligned and tracked through the YDAP accountability framework.		

<p>d. Draft and implement an internal communications strategy to increase internal awareness of YPOS.</p>	<p>DCCA will support the development and implementation of an internal communications strategy to increase internal awareness of YPOS priorities, tools, and expectations.</p>	<p>November 2026</p>	<p>December 2028</p>
<p>e. Prepare guidance on good practices for targeting and integrating youth in priority sectors.</p>	<p>As dedicated capacity is strengthened under 3(a), SSD, with YDCoP, will coordinate the development of practical guidance notes and good practice tools. This will be supported, in the first instance, by the Youth Coordinator financed under the Youth For Innovation and Resilience (FIRE) and FLN Programme TA (see recommendation 4(b)).</p> <p>Intern, YP and OO assigned to youth development will support further preparation and capacity building.</p>	<p>June 2026</p>	<p>March 2027</p>
<p>f. Strengthen internal knowledge management of lessons learned through a Community of Practice.</p>	<p>The draft TOR for the YDCoP is currently under review in SSD. Among roles and responsibilities is knowledge management. Leveraging the YDCoP as the primary knowledge platform, SSD with support from DCCA will structure learning and knowledge management products to capture practice, experiences and lessons learned from youth initiatives across the Bank.</p>	<p>June 2026</p>	<p>December 2028</p>

**Evaluation recommendation #4** (*'the what'*)

CDB should strengthen the FLN to enable it to play a more substantive role in corporate strategic planning and country level processes, in collaboration with other youth organisations in the region.

<b>Lead entity</b> ( <i>'who' is responsible</i> )	<b>Participating partners</b> ( <i>'who else is responsible'</i> )
SAT member and alternate as YPOS Champions; SAO; SSD; DCCA and YDCoP	BMCs

**Overall management response**

<i>'if' - accepted, partially accepted, rejected</i>	<i>'how' - in 250 words or less to explain the management response</i>
<p>✗ <b>Accepted</b></p> <p><b>Partially accepted</b></p> <p><b>Rejected</b></p>	<p>FLN coordination has been anchored within SSD through the youth focal point function, which has provided continuity for planning, partner liaison, and internal coordination across divisions, and has supported delivery of youth engagement activities linked to CDB priorities. Experience to date has confirmed the value of the FLN as a structured mechanism for youth voices.</p> <p>Management accepts this recommendation and will strengthen the FLN as a core mechanism for structured youth engagement and youth voice in CDB's corporate and country processes. Implementation will be supported through dedicated coordination capacity (including HR-supported resources and the Consultancies financed through the Youth FIRE and FLN Programme TA). The TA will provide an enabling platform to formalise governance, expand national-level mobilisation through national cells, strengthen digital outreach via a dedicated web landing page, and establish an annual work plan to guide implementation. SSD will lead strategic coordination with OECS Commission and CARICOM Youth Ambassadors with collaboration strengthened through regular partner engagements to improve alignment across regional youth initiatives.</p>

Suggested lines of action			
Lines of action	Suggested actions to be implemented (to articulate how to implement the recommendations)	Timeline	
		Start date	End date
a. Improve capacity to coordinate youth engagement across the Bank through a dedicated intern or other human resource.	The FLN has been anchored in SSD through a youth focal point which has provided continuity for FLN planning, partner liaison, and internal coordination. Building on this, SSD recognises the need to strengthen and institutionalise this coordination capacity of the FLN by including a Youth Coordinator financed under the Youth FIRE and FLN Programme TA, see recommendation 4(b). In addition, dedicated personnel will be assigned to coordinate youth engagement across the Bank as per recommendation 3(a).	May 2026	December 2028
b. Develop a youth engagement strategy that includes timely responses, feedback loops, and differentiated approaches for communicating with and reaching diverse young people – including the most marginalised.	<p>SSD will develop a TA for the design of a Youth Engagement Strategy and Operating Model that includes timely responses, feedback loops, and differentiated approaches for communicating with and reaching diverse young people – including the most marginalised.</p> <p>The Youth Marker will serve as a mainstreaming mechanism through which youth engagement is built into the appraisal, implementation and evaluation of the Bank's projects and programmes.</p>	September 2026	June 2027

<p>c. Resource and support a structured approach to leveraging FLN members as a conduit for mobilising youth (including reaching more marginalised youth) to enhance youth engagement in country-level processes (e.g., Country Engagement Strategy, National Committees).</p>	<p>Through the Youth FIRE and FLN Programme TA, CDB will continue to strengthen the FLN's operation. Once approved, the TA will support the operationalisation of the FLN including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update, finalise and approve FLN Governance Manual.</li> <li>2. Widen the network by building National Clusters.</li> <li>3. Through DCCA, a landing page on CDB's website will be created to provide a dedicated space to disseminate information and reach wider youth beyond the FLN and national cells.</li> <li>4. Draft and approve the FLN Work Plan.</li> </ol> <p>CDB will formalise a structured pathway for FLN contributions to selected country processes (e.g., County Engagement Strategy (CES) consultations and national committees), supported by guidance and coordination tools developed through SSD/YDCoP. FLN mobilisation will be strengthened through National Cells that will expand the direct reach of the Bank beyond each national focal point and targeted outreach methods that enable broader, more inclusive youth inputs.</p>	<p>May 2026</p>	<p>December 2026</p>
<p>d. Establish coordination strategy with Caribbean Regional Youth Council, CARICOM Youth Ambassadors, and youth members of IPAG.</p>	<p>SSD will develop with the FLN and youth-serving organisations – a strategy to guide collaboration with partners as a tool to strengthen existing and build new partnerships and synergies. Among key partners are CARICOM, Commonwealth Secretariat, OECS Commission. The strategy will include actions for coordination with the FLN and youth arms of partner agencies as well as with youth-led organisations such as the Caribbean Regional Youth Council; CYA; UN youth networks; youth in the Bank's Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group; the OECS YAN and others.</p>	<p>September 2026</p>	<p>September 2027</p>

**Evaluation recommendation #5** (*'the what'*)

CDB should strengthen its partnerships in support of an enabling environment for more impactful youth development policy and programming.

**Lead entity** (*'who' is responsible*)

SSD; DCCA; YDCoP; FLN

**Participating partners** (*'who else is responsible'*)

Comm Sec CARICOM OECS CRYC UN Agencies; Programmes and Funds.

**Overall management response**

(*'if' - accepted, partially accepted, rejected*)

(*'how' - in 250 words or less to explain the management response*)

✗ **Accepted**

**Partially accepted**

**Rejected**

Management accepts this recommendation. SSD has maintained communication with regional entities such as CARICOM and the OECS, alongside other youth development actors, to support a more enabling environment for youth policy and programming. SSD has also started external communications readiness through the development of knowledge products (2023–2024), including bi-yearly updates/reports, FLN introductory carousels, and youth quotes/spotlight content that communicate YPOS priorities and the FLN mandate, pending revision and approval.

SSD and DCCA will lead a structured partner mapping and engagement approach to identify priority actors, initiatives and coordination opportunities aligned with CDB's youth agenda and the YPOS Action Plan. DCCA will also design and implement an external communications strategy that clearly articulates CDB's role, priorities, and value proposition in youth development, supported by youth-friendly communications products, including a simplified, accessible version of YPOS. The Bank will continue consultation with key development partners including Commonwealth Secretariat, OECS Commission and CARICOM to explore at least one concrete project for joint programming. These actions will be reflected in the YDAP and accountability framework.

Suggested lines of action			
Lines of action	Suggested actions to be implemented (to articulate how to implement the recommendations)	Timeline	
		Start date	End date
a. Enhance strategic coordination and knowledge exchange with other actors working in youth development.	<p>Building on CDB's growing network of youth-focused collaborations with CARICOM, OECS Commission and Commonwealth Secretariat and other partners, SSD will undertake a mapping of priority partners, initiatives, activities that align with CDB's youth agenda and YPOS priorities to support coordination strategy with partners. Moreover, CDB will reestablish consultations with youth-serving organisations to establish a strategic coordination mechanism to aid joint action and more efficient and effective use of resources.</p> <p>Moreover, The Bank will sustain participation in policy level engagement by participating in the COHSOD meeting involving Ministers of Youth; the OECS Council of Ministers of Youth and Sports (COMYS).</p>	September 2026	December 2028
b. Design and implement an external communications strategy on CDB's role and priorities in youth development, including youth-friendly communications (such as a popular youth-friendly version of the YPOS).	<p>SSD has already advanced external positioning of CDB's youth agenda through the preparation of key products in 2023-2024, including bi-yearly updates/reports, FLN introductory carousels, and youth quotes/spotlight content that communicate YPOS priorities and the FLN mandate. When approved by the relevant departments in CDB, e.g. DCCA. DCCA will support the packaging, refinement, and dissemination of these products within a coherent external communications strategy that articulates CDB's role, priorities, and value proposition in youth development. The strategy is to be expanded to cover the Bank's wider youth programme and will also include youth-friendly and accessibility-informed communications to expand reach beyond established networks and strengthen engagement with diverse youth audiences and partners.</p>	June 2026	December 2028

<p>c. Design and leverage 1-2 strategic partnerships linked to specific products (e.g., CARICOM Youth Development Index that entails co-developing indicators, building regional capacity, and strengthening data systems).</p>	<p>CDB and partners continue to signal the need to strengthen evidence-based youth programming regionally. Early partnerships have covered areas including youth health and safety and citizen security. However, efforts have been hampered by resource constraints. Engagement with partners, including Commonwealth Secretariat, is ongoing with commitment to jointly expand strategic engagement and identify at least one key joint initiative, likely the regional YDI, with long-established partners in the CARICOM Secretariat and OECS Commission and others.</p>	<p>May 2027</p>	<p>December 2028</p>
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**Evaluation recommendation #6** (*'the what'*)

CDB should establish a dedicated Youth Fund with concessional financing that incentivises large-scale targeted youth development initiatives in BMCs.

<b>Lead entity</b> ( <i>'who' is responsible</i> )	<b>Participating partners</b> ( <i>'who else is responsible'</i> )
<b>SSD SAT member and alternate as YPOS Champions; YDCoP with PSD as a lead resource</b>	Private sector

**Overall management response**

<i>'if' - accepted, partially accepted, rejected</i>	<i>'how' - in 250 words or less to explain the management response</i>
<b>✘ Accepted</b>	<p>The 2020 YPOS recognised that effective implementation would require dedicated financing and included an intention to establish a funding mechanism to incentivise and scale youth development initiatives across BMCs. CDB has continued to advance youth programming through a mix of operational initiatives and TA support, while recognising the need to further strengthen concessional financing pathways to enable larger-scale, targeted youth investments. Establishment and capitalisation of such a Fund require a structured design phase, clear governance and resourcing decisions, and alignment with CDB's broader concessional financing and resource mobilisation frameworks.</p> <p>Management accepts this recommendation and will therefore proceed with preparation of a concept note to clarify the Fund's purpose, size, design features, and thematic windows, including a dedicated capacity-building financing window aligned with Pillar 6 of YPOS. The concept note will also outline a resource mobilisation strategy, potentially drawing on SDF 12 resources and the private sector as a strategic development partner. It will include a proposed monitoring and results framework with defined roles and responsibilities. The concept note will inform internal decision-making and next steps toward potential establishment of the Fund.</p>
<b>Partially accepted</b>	
<b>Rejected</b>	

Suggested lines of action			
Lines of action	Suggested actions to be implemented (to articulate how to implement the recommendations)	Timeline	
		Start date	End date
a. Clarify purpose, size, design, and scope (thematic windows) of this Fund of concessional resources.	<p>The 2020 YPOS recognised that effective implementation would require dedicated financing and included intent to establish a funding mechanism to incentivise and scale youth development initiatives across BMCs. This recommendation advances that original policy direction by moving from concept to a structured design phase. CDB will therefore prepare a concept note to clarify purpose, size, design, and scope (thematic windows) of this Fund of concessional resources. The concept note will also include:</p> <p>Financing window for capacity-building support for BMCs and implementing partners to design and manage youth programmes (in alignment with Pillar 6 of YPOS) and.</p> <p>Resource Mobilisation Strategy (potentially drawing on SDF 12 resources and private sector contribution) to be supported by PSD, ED, and SAO.</p>	June 2027	May 2028
b. Include a financing window for capacity building support for BMCs and implementing partners to design and manage youth programs (in alignment with Pillar 6 of YPOS).			
c. Determine resource mobilisation strategy (potentially drawing on SDF 12 resources).			
d. Define a monitoring framework and identify roles and responsibilities for it.			

- 1 UNESCO (2024). [The value added on meaningful youth engagement in the Caribbean.](#)
- 2 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2022). *World population prospects 2022: Summary of results*. United Nations. AAs cited in 2025 Summary Report of the Caribbean Youth Dialogues. Available at: <https://population.un.org/wpp>
- 3 PAHO. (2018). [A Profile of Adolescents and Youth in the Americas.](#)
- 4 UNFPA & ECLAC. (2011). [Regional overview: Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)
- 5 Note that there is no standard definition of 'youth'. Different organisations and nations define the age-range of 'youth' differently. This is recognised in YPOS, which draws on various youth statistics, and broadly recognises it as "the period during which one transitions from childhood to the independence of adulthood." (CDB YPOS, pg. 1)
- 6 Including Haiti, youth unemployment jumps to 30.5%.
- 7 ILO. (26 August 2025). [A Generation in transition: Rethinking youth employment in the Caribbean.](#)
- 8 Pacal Jaupart. (April 2023). [International Migration in the Caribbean: Background paper for the World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies.](#)
- 9 CARICOM. (nd.). [Achievements-Free movement for some CARICOM skilled nationals.](#)
- 10 The Guardian. (October 2025). [Caribbean nations launch EU-style deal to let citizens work freely across borders.](#)
- 11 World Bank, in a collaborative effort of the Inter-Agency Network for Youth Development (coordinated by the Focal Point on Youth at UNDESA). *Youth as a Smart Investment*. <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-smart-investment.pdf>
- 12 CARICOM and UNICEF. (October 2025). [CARICOM-UNICEF Study finds Caribbean youth facing high rates of depression and anxiety.](#)
- 13 EarthDay.org. (n.d.) [The Case for Climate Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.](#)
- 14 United Nations. (2018). [World Youth Report](#); World Bank. (2024). [Change-Makers: Empowering Youth for Inclusive Societies.](#)
- 15 The countries with formal or draft national youth policies include: [National Youth Policy of Anguilla \(referenced in government documents but full policy not available online\)](#), [National Youth Policy of Antigua and Barbuda](#), [National Youth Policy of The Bahamas \(2014–2021\)](#), [National Youth Policy of Barbados](#), [National Youth Development Policy of Belize \(2012\)](#), [National Youth Policy of Dominica](#), [National Youth Policy of Grenada \(2003\)](#), [National Youth Policy of Guyana \(2015\)](#), [National Youth Policy of Jamaica \(2017–2030\)](#), [National Youth Policy of Montserrat \(Draft 2013\)](#), [Federal Youth Policy of Saint Kitts and Nevis \(2017\)](#), [National Youth Policy of Saint Lucia \(2003\)](#)—not available online (new draft in process), [National Youth Policy of Trinidad and Tobago \(2020–2025\)](#), [Virgin Islands National Youth Policy \(2014–2019\)](#), [National Youth Policy of the Cayman Islands \(2000\)](#), and [National Youth Policy of the Turks and Caicos Islands \(2020–2025\)](#).
- 16 Caribbean Development Bank. (2024, February 5). *CDB's youth outreach gives voice and opportunity to the next generation*. Retrieved June 10, 2025, from <https://www.caribank.org/newsroom/news-and-events/cdbs-youth-outreach-gives-voice-and-opportunity-next-generation>.

- 17 The BNTF also has its own Youth Empowerment Framework which includes elements such as youth engagement, technical and vocational training, seed capital/start-up grants, coaching and mentoring, psycho-social support, etc.
- 18 Typically, formative evaluations focus on generating insights to support learning, improvement and adaptation, while summative evaluations focus on the overall value, effectiveness, or impact.
- 19 As stated in the Terms of Reference.
- 20 According to consultations with CDB staff, contributors to SDF-11 have agreed to consider mid-term revisions to the recent replenishment agreement, which provides a window to further strengthen youth investment.
- 21 Reference to national youth development frameworks were removed in this question to avoid repetition with sub-question below focused on national frameworks.
- 22 Merges original questions: "How well does the YPOS align with youth needs and priorities identified within the Caribbean region?" and "How well does the strategy reflect the aspirations, concerns, and developmental needs of Caribbean youth, especially those at risk of emigration?" to reduce overlap
- 23 Merges questions "To what extent is the YPOS coherent with key regional youth development frameworks, national youth policies and strategies of Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs)?" and "How aligned is the YPOS with regional and national education, employment, and security policies that seek to reduce youth vulnerability and foster long-term retention of talent in the Caribbean?" Removes reference to regional youth frameworks which are covered in the first sub-question.
- 24 Merges questions "What conditions have been established or are required to ensure the implementation of the YPOS?" and "What early lessons can be drawn to support a responsive and inclusive implementation strategy? [...]".
- 25 The IOA Framework was developed by Universalia and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). See here: Universalia (n.d.). *Institutional and Organizational Performance Assessment*.
- 26 Including youth with disabilities, youth from rural communities, and youth from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds.
- 27 Particularly to provide timely inputs to the CDB Strategic Plan that is under development.
- 28 Hurricane Melissa was a Category 5 Hurricane which made landfall in Jamaica on October 28, 2025.
- 29 In response to the following Evaluation Sub-Question: To what extent is the YPOS conceptual design and strategic framework informed by robust evidence and aligned with global and regional youth development frameworks and diagnosis?
- 30 In particular, [CDB's Gender Equality Policy and Operational Strategy \(GEPOS\) 2019](#) and the [evaluation which was conducted of the previous GEPOS 2008–2018](#).
- 31 Note that most of the staff and partners who supported YPOS (through the Working Group and the Reference Group) have now retired, moved organisations, or changed positions.
- 32 CDB YPOS, particularly Appendix 1.
- 33 CDB YPOS, pg. 14
- 34 CDB YPOS, pg. iv.

- 35 Islamic Development Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, and Inter-American Development Bank.
- 36 For example, Jamaica has a full National Youth Policy as well as a ‘popular version’. It should be noted that the YPOS itself is more similar to Jamaica’s ‘popular version’, including visuals and succinct information. However, YPOS could still have two versions, one being an even shorter (e.g., 3–5 page) summary. For example, the existing executive summary of YPOS could be extracted with visuals added, to fill this purpose.
- 37 CDB YPOS, pg. 15.
- 38 CDB YPOS, pg. 35.
- 39 This perspective was shared by staff in various divisions of the Bank.
- 40 In response to the following Evaluation Sub-Question: *“How well does the YPOS align with the diverse needs, aspirations, and priorities of Caribbean youth, including those at risk of emigration?”*
- 41 For example, through CDB conferences or events.
- 42 Conducted with youth from CDB’s Future Leaders Network (FLN) and other youth who have had engaged with CDB through specific conferences or events.
- 43 Note: Pillar 6 is not included as an example as this Pillar is about the needs and capacities of CDB, BMCs, and partners to support youth development (rather than the needs of youth themselves).
- 44 UNESCO. (2021). [Scaling up digital learning and skills in the world’s most populous countries to drive education recovery.](#)
- 45 World Health Organization. (2022). [COVID-19 pandemic triggers 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide.](#)
- 46 ILO. (2020). [ILO: More than one in six young people out of work due to COVID-19.](#)
- 47 UNDP and UN Volunteers. (n.d). [Youth volunteering: Supporting young people’s engagement in the COVID-19 response and recovery.](#)
- 48 World Bank. (2025). [The Caribbean’s education system: What do declining pass rates reveal?](#)
- 49 UNDP. (2025). [Human Mobility and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Story of Resilience.](#)
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 The Guardian. (2025). [Caribbean nations launch EU-style deal to let citizens work freely across borders.](#)
- 52 In response to the Evaluation Sub-Question: *“How well has YPOS aligned the CDB’s work with youth priorities, needs or aspirations in three priority areas? (1) youth economic empowerment; (2) youth crime and violence; (3) youth engagement in environmental resilience”*
- 53 CDB. (2023). [Review of the Caribbean Development Bank’s Education and Training Policy and Strategy with Management Response—Final Report.](#)
- 54 CDB. (2021). [Evaluation Report Caribbean Development Bank’s Work Through Development Finance Institutions and Other Financial Intermediaries \(2012–2019\) with Management Response.](#)

- 55 CDB. (2023). [Review of the Caribbean Development Bank's Education and Training Policy and Strategy with Management Response—Final Report.](#)
- 56 Note that citizen security interventions in Belize, such as the Youth and Community Transformation project, also included elements of economic empowerment through training and livelihood enhancement, recognising the importance of addressing the need for income-generation among at-risk youth, in the context of tackling poverty reduction.
- 57 Also known as call centres
- 58 CDB. (2023). [Review of the Caribbean Development Bank's Education and Training Policy and Strategy with Management Response—Final Report.](#)
- 59 The SDF-specific climate finance target will be set at 35% for the first two years of the SDF 11 period and may be increased to 40% for the final two years. CDB's existing portfolio-wide climate finance target will aim to allocate 30% of own resources (including, but not limited to, SDF) as climate finance. The Bank-wide target will be assessed after two (2) years with consideration for increasing to 35%." (SDF Replenishment report, pg. ii)
- 60 UKCIF. 2021. [UKCIF project profile: Jamaica Southern Plains Agricultural Development.](#)
- 61 In response to the Evaluation Sub-Question: "How coherent are the YPOS strategic pillars and anticipated outcomes with the CDB's strategy and results?"
- 62 Unfortunately, further details on these consultations with youth could not be confirmed; despite repeated attempts, the evaluation team was unable to conduct an interview as part of data collection to obtain further details or follow up on what was planned at the time of inception.
- 63 In response to the Evaluation Sub-Question: "To what extent is the YPOS coherent with national frameworks, including youth policies, education, employment, and security strategies that address youth vulnerability and talent retention in BMCs?"
- 64 The exceptions are Haiti, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname
- 65 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines did have a policy from 1996, but it is outdated/not in use. Source: ECLAC. (2020). [Caribbean synthesis report on the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes](#)
- 66 Suriname has a policy dedicated to both children and youth ages 0–21 (the Integrated Child and Youth Policy 2014) but young adults over the age of 21 are not considered. Source: ECLAC. (2020). [Caribbean synthesis report on the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes](#)
- 67 ECLAC. (2020). [Caribbean synthesis report on the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes](#)
- 68 Government of Guyana. (2022). [Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030.](#) Pg. 102.
- 69 In response to the Evaluation Sub-Question: "To what extent does the YPOS design incorporate gender-responsive strategies, address gender disparities, and promote gender equality (with an intersectional lens)?"
- 70 ILO. (2025). *A Generation in transition: Rethinking youth employment in the Caribbean.*
- 71 United Nations. (2013). *Youth Regional Overview: Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC).* (as cited in the YPOS).
- 72 United Nations Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. (2023). *'Data', the Crime-Fighting Superhero.*

- 73 Such as Youth FIRE fora; education transformation symposium; CDB's Indigenous Peoples Fora 2023 and 2024 (note that there was no IPF in 2025) and the SIDS 4 conference.
- 74 These include the Development of a Framework for Enhancing Engagement with and support for Indigenous Peoples in the Caribbean—Regional Project and the CDB support of Belize's Cassava Festival.
- 75 In response to the following Evaluation Sub-Question: *"To what extent have institutional mechanisms, resources, and capacities been established within CDB and BMCs to operationalise the YPOS?"*
- 76 CDB Office of Independent Evaluation. (2019, March). *Evaluation of the Caribbean Development Bank's Gender Equality Policy and Operational Strategy (GEPOS)*. [https://www.caribank.org/sites/default/files/publication-resources/GEPOS%20EvaluationFinalReport\\_Vol%20I%20and%20Vol%20II.pdf](https://www.caribank.org/sites/default/files/publication-resources/GEPOS%20EvaluationFinalReport_Vol%20I%20and%20Vol%20II.pdf): p.12; p.30
- 77 See: YPOS 4.01(b), p.21.
- 78 See: YPOS 4.02, p.21.
- 79 CDB Office of Independent Evaluation. (2019, March). *Evaluation of the Caribbean Development Bank's Gender Equality Policy and Operational Strategy (GEPOS)*. [https://www.caribank.org/sites/default/files/publication-resources/GEPOS%20EvaluationFinalReport\\_Vol%20I%20and%20Vol%20II.pdf](https://www.caribank.org/sites/default/files/publication-resources/GEPOS%20EvaluationFinalReport_Vol%20I%20and%20Vol%20II.pdf): p. 43
- 80 For example, see Appendix 4 in YPOS.
- 81 In response to the following Evaluation Sub-Question: **How well is the dual-track approach of YPOS understood and coordinated within CDB and reflected by ongoing operations?**
- 82 See YPOS p.vi.
- 83 Youth Business Caribbean. (n.d.). *Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Spirit of Caribbean Youth (SESCY) (CDB partnership)*. <https://youthbusinesscaribbean.com/sescy-project/>.
- 84 The 'boat boys' as they are known ran into frequent law enforcement issues for lack of licenses as well as issues related to poor service, safety and security risks, and unprofessionalism. The project supported the 'boat boys' to gain licenses, build the capacity of SYSA through extensive training and skills development.
- 85 CDB BNTF. (n.d.). *Basic Needs Trust Fund Cycle 9 Case Studies*.
- 86 For example, see: CDB approves project to improve support for youth development in the Caribbean Region, 20 Oct 2017. <https://www.caribank.org/newsroom/news-and-events/cdb-approves-project-improve-support-youth-development-caribbean-region>
- 87 <https://www.eval4action.org/youth-in-evaluation-manifesto-english>
- 88 In response to the following Evaluation Sub-Question: **To what extent are youth engaged meaningfully in informing the strategy of the CDB and in planning, monitoring, and implementation of YPOS and related initiatives?**
- 89 CDB Internship Programme webpage. <https://www.caribank.org/internship-programme>
- 90 <https://www.caribank.org/young-professionals-programme>
- 91 <https://www.caribank.org/young-professionals-programme>;
- 92 <https://theglobalhumanitarian.com/ultimate-guide-to-the-united-nations-junior-professional-officer-jpo-program/>

- 93 Unfortunately, further details on these consultations with youth could not be confirmed; despite repeated attempts, the evaluation team was unable to conduct an interview as part of data collection to obtain further details or follow up on what was planned at the time of inception.
- 94 [Mapping FLN Engagement in CDB-funded fora—for dissemination.docx](#)
- 95 Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). (2023, June 14–15). Background documents: Meeting of the Caribbean Development Bank’s Future Leaders Network, Sir Arthur Lewis Community College. [Internal SharePoint Document]. [Link](#)
- 96 [CDB FLN Manual Draft.docx](#)
- 97 In response to the following Evaluation Sub-Question: **How effectively does the YPOS coordinate and align with the efforts of regional and international partners and stakeholders involved in youth development?**
- 98 Stakeholder consultations suggest that there have been efforts have been made in this direction, but that no such tool has yet been established or utilised.
- 99 In response to the following Evaluation Sub-Question: *How have other internal factors affected YPOS implementation to date? (e.g., organisational motivation and culture, capacity)?*
- 100 JPOs are organised and funded externally by member countries. Stakeholder consultations suggest that there have been efforts have been made in this direction, but that no such tool has yet been established or utilised.
- 101 As noted in earlier findings, the exception is Saint Lucia where CDB financing has underwritten sizable youth targeted national projects such as the USD 7.6 million Saint Lucia Youth Economy Agency project. <https://kaieteurnewsonline.com/2024/02/07/cdb-honours-commitment-to-youth-transformation-with-launch-of-yea-project-in-saint-lucia/>
- 102 Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). (2012). *Technical Assistance Policy and Operational Strategy*. <https://www.caribank.org/about-us/policies-and-strategies/technical-assistance-policy-and-operational-strategy>
- 103 In response to the following Evaluation Sub-Question: *How have external factors affected YPOS implementation to date? (e.g., policy, political, socio-cultural environments)?*
- 104 Key examples during the YPOS period include the La Soufriere eruption in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (2020–2021), Haiti earthquake (2021), and Hurricane Beryl (2024), among others. Most recently Hurricane Melissa (October 2025) has also had a devastating impact.
- 105 Forbes. (2025). *After Hurricane Melissa, Jamaica Shows The World What Resilience Looks Like*.
- 106 The Commonwealth. (2025). [Championing a data driven approach to youth development in the Caribbean](#).
- 107 Technical Assistance with a value of less than USD 1 million



[evaluation@caribank.org](mailto:evaluation@caribank.org)



PO Box 408  
Willey, St Michael  
Barbados, W.I.  
BB11000



Office of Independent Evaluation | Caribbean Development Bank →