RE- 323

Evaluation of the IDB's Studies

Office of Evaluation and Oversight

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
APS	Analytical Policy Studies
Central Departments	INT, RES, SDS
CRG	General Management Review Committee
DEV	IDB's Development Effectiveness and Strategic Planning Department
DS	Descriptive Studies
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EXR	IDB's External Relations Department
FS	Foundation Studies
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INT	IDB's Integration and Regional Programs Department
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NLF	New Lending Framework
NFP	Non-Financial Products
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OED	The World Bank's Operations Evaluation Department
OPD	Operational Programming and Development
Operational Departments	RE1, RE2, RE3
OS	Operational Studies
OVE	Office of Evaluation and Oversight
RE1	IDB'S Department for Region 1
RE2	IDB's Department for Region 2
RE3	IDB's Department for Region 3
RES	IDB's Research Department
SDS	IDB's Sustainable Development Department
SEP	Economic Situation and Perspectives
SPO/DPP	Strategic Planning and Operational Policy Division (now DEV/SPO)
SS	Synthesis Studies
TRS	Time Recording System
WB	World Bank
WLP	Webpage List of Product

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Studies and Their Intended Significance

1.1 **Multilateral development finance institutions have historically provided both financial products (loans and technical cooperation grants) and non-financial products (studies or analytical work, consulting services, etc.) to their borrowing member countries.** Over time, a consensus has emerged that the potential contribution of non-financial services to the development process is substantial,[1] and that the institutions should pay particularly close attention to this aspect of their activities.[2] Both the World Bank and the IMF have launched substantial internal efforts to monitor, assess and improve their work in this area, with the World Bank making a major commitment in 1996 to become a "global knowledge bank" through the production and dissemination of high quality research and analytical work (called "Economic and Sector Work"—ESW—in their terminology).

1.2 **The IDB has made a similar commitment, with the emphasis on these activities increasing in recent years**. Research and knowledge dissemination are important IDB activities that are intended to complement Bank lending operations.[3] The IDB-8 Agreement calls for country-level analytic work on socioeconomic issues to inform country strategies, which in turn inform country programming exercises.[4] A recent Bank report noted:

> *The Bank has long recognized the importance of knowledge in the development process. Creating, sharing and applying knowledge has always been an important part of the Bank's programs to assist its member countries to promote growth and reduce poverty. Loans are the end-point of a broad process involving both analytical work and dialogue among stakeholders in borrowing member countries, and the Bank performs a wide array of non-financial activities in support of these areas. In addition, as a partner in development in the region, the Bank has taken on a responsibility to engage in analytical work designed to produce results with wide applicability across countries and sectors, by keeping abreast of emerging policy issues in order to yield better policy advice.*[5]

1.3 The New Lending Framework (NLF) states, "The analytical underpinnings of Bank strategies, programs and projects should be strengthened in order to implement the [rest of the NLF] recommendations."[6] And SPO/DPP states that the Bank's conversion to results-based management and its new focus on determining development impacts will likely increase the importance and number of IDB studies in the future.[7]

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[1] Belli, P., Pritchett, L. "*Does Good Economic Analysis Lead to Better Projects?*" HCO Diss. Notes. Number 53. Washington DC. 1995.
[2] Deininger, K., Squire, L., and Basu, S. "*Does Economic Analysis Improve the Quality of Foreign Assistance*?" World Bank Economic Review. Vol. 12, No 3. 1998. pp. 385-418.
[3] www.iadb.org, "What does the IDB do?", 10/5/04. http://www.iadb.org/aboutus/II/index.cfm?language=English
[4] IDB-8 Agreement, paragraph 2.5.
[5] CP-3083-1 "*Report on the Non-Financial Products (NFP) Program in 2005 and 2006* " paragraph 1.5, pg. 2
[6] CS-450-1, pg. 49.
[7] GN-2168-9, "*Report on the Non-Financial Products (NFP) Program in 2004 and 2005*." pg. 3.

1.4 **Despite its growing importance, the Bank's work in this area has not been systematically tracked, monitored or evaluated, unlike the situation in counterpart institutions**. In 1999, the IMF hired an external committee to "assess whether economic research in the IMF contributes successfully to the achievement of the Fund's objectives."[8] Specific questions involved the scale, organization, relevance, and quality of the IMF's research activities. The committee interviewed various stakeholders about related institutional processes, collected a list of studies produced, created a typology of studies based on their characteristics, and reviewed a sample of studies for quality and relevance. The IMF's Executive Directors agreed with the external committee's conclusions: that the IMF's research could be of higher quality and better linked to policy, that incentives matter, and that strategic coordination and prioritization of topics was lacking.[9]

1.5 The World Bank (WB) committed to becoming a 'global knowledge bank' in 1996. It aimed to use studies to improve the quality of operations and to obtain development results, and has spent $220 million on "ESW Reform" since 1997.[10] Much of the WB's efforts have focused on the production and dissemination of studies. Through stakeholder surveys and analysis of the data contained in WB information systems, assessments of the WB's processes attest to the difficulties in setting institutional rules that match supply of and demand for studies, and the difficulties in structuring incentives to improve quality.[11]

1.6 **Compared to its peers, the Bank has dedicated relatively fewer resources to evaluating its studies.** Peer institutions' assessments of the effectiveness of studies were possible because those institutions have systematically collected data about the characteristics of studies for years. On the other hand, recent efforts at the IDB have concentrated on compiling a "Non-Financial Products" list linked to the annual budget process.[12] Efforts have also begun to better track the production of NFPs both within departments and across departments.[13] And in 2003 an internal Working Group produced a document assessing the internal processes involved in the production of NFPs.[14]

1.7 These activities are a useful positive step, but they do not constitute a thorough self-evaluation of the Bank's production, dissemination and use of analytical work as a support to the development process in borrowing member countries. Evaluation work in other institutions has concentrated on substantive characteristics of analytical work (technical quality, cost-effectiveness, contribution to results achieved in operations, etc.), rather than on the processes of production of this type of product.

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[8] IMF, *"Summary of the discussion by the IMF Executive Board of the Report of the External Evaluation Committee on the IMF's Economic Research Activities."* September 7, 1999. Part II, pg. 13-16, and Part I, pg 4-6. www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/extev/res. March 22, 2006

[9] IMF, Part II, pg. 13-16, and Part I, pg 4-6.

[10] Gwin, C. *"Sharing Knowledge: Innovations and Remaining Challenges."* OED, World Bank, 2003. pg. ix.

[11] For example: OPCS, *"Fixing ESW: Phase II. Challenges and Next Steps in the ESW Reform Process."* World Bank, June 27, 2001. pg. 19.

[12] Most recently, GN-2168-9, "*Report on the Non-Financial Products (NFP) Program in 2004 and 2005*."

[13] Such as developing information systems including OPUS, IDBDocs, BPES, and via more structured use of the TRS system.

[14] GN-2168-5, *"Internal Review Mechanisms for Non-Financial Products"*, SPO/DPP. April 2003.

B. Objective of Evaluation

1.8 **This evaluation's objective is to assess the Bank's efforts in the production, storage, dissemination, and utilization of studies.** This is consistent with Management view, that in 2002, informed the Board that "To optimize the use of our scarce resources, [The Bank] consider[s] it important that the nature, scope, and cost of these activities be fully understood and that they be subjected to the same standards of review, quality control, and evaluation as other Bank activities." [15]

1.9 This statement recognizes the importance of having "standards of review, quality control, and evaluation" for analytical work, against which to measure the actual output of the Bank in this area. As of 2006, however, the Bank has established no formal standards in any of these areas. There is no definition of what constitutes a "study", there are no operations processing policies for analytical work, there are no quality standards or guidelines to use in assessing proposed or completed analytical work, and there is no system of internal self-evaluation of this important line of activity.

1.10 The Bank has approached the issue of establishing standards and procedures twice in recent years. In 2003, Management appointed a working group to deal with "Internal Review Mechanisms for non-financial products". The group issued a report that was discussed by the Programming Committee of the Board. In 2005, Management submitted a request to the Board to fund a new "Initiative to support country studies to improve and expand Bank loan Operations." This initiative was approved as part of the 2006 administrative budget.

1.11 Both of these efforts were very partial efforts to define standards for the Bank in this area. The Working Group limited its scope to "Non Financial Products" (NFPs), which include some types of analytical work but also include a range of other activities. The Initiative dealt with "country studies," which are not a part of the NFP program. Both proposed procedural and budgetary changes in the way these activities are managed, but neither established a set of coherent standards for the Bank in this area.

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[15] DR-537-1,*"Statement of the President on Priorities for the 2002 Work Program of the IDB Board of Executive Directors,"* President Iglesias, pg.4.

1.12 The NFP Working Group defined a key problem as the absence of an adequate evaluative framework:

Clearly, there is a necessity to develop criteria for evaluating NFPs. An evaluation framework is needed whereby NFPs can be objectively reviewed - collectively, as individual instruments, or by purpose - to assess whether they deliver the results originally expected […].[16]

And went on to suggest that OVE undertake work in this area.

OVE can provide important input for Bank direction on how to evaluate NFPs. In this respect, an evaluation framework, including relevant methodologies and cost considerations should be developed.[17]

1.13 This evaluation is a first attempt to respond to this request. While there is no fully articulated evaluative framework for studies in other development institutions, recent work at both the IMF and the World Bank has tackled parts of the problem. Building on the World Bank's "fixing ESW" initiative, and the IMF's recent independent evaluation of economic research, the following elements appear to be the core of an evaluation framework for research activities.

1. Research should be relevant to the operational needs of the institution and its clients, and should specify its anticipated contribution at the outset.

2. Research activities should be programmed, to establish priorities, avoid duplication of effort and to take maximum advantages of synergies within the institution.

3. Research activities should be budgeted, to know in advance how much of the institutions scarce resources are being committed to a given effort, and tracked so as to determine compliance with programming.

4. Research activities should be quality controlled, to ensure that the institution is receiving value for the money invested and that evidence is being deployed to substantiate conclusions.

5. The written output of research activities should be disseminated upon completion, both as a quality-enhancement incentive and as a way of diffusing the benefits of knowledge throughout the relevant community.

6. The written output of research activities should be stored in manner that allows future users to find and make use of the knowledge.

[16] GN-2168-5, "*Internal Review Mechanisms for non-financial products*" pg. 11, paragraph 6.1
[17] GN-2168-5, "*Internal Review Mechanisms for non-financial products*" pg. 12, paragraph 6.4

7. The written output of research activities should be useful (and used) in the development of operational programs.

8. The written output of research activities should be evaluated in terms of its contribution to the improvement of development results.

1.14 OVE began work on this evaluation in 2005, and it quickly became apparent that items 1 and 8 in the framework were beyond the scope of this initial evaluation effort, and that the work would concentrate on items 2-7.[18] Because Bank information systems contain limited data linked to this topic, this evaluation has used several methodologies to collect evidence, including: desk reviews of the contents of relevant Bank information systems and budgets; hiring an independent panel to rate the quality of a sample of IDB studies; a project Team Leader Survey (TLS); an Author Survey (AS); structured interviews of other stakeholders throughout the Bank; and analysis of Bank web logs, IDBDocs, and citations of Bank studies. The methods are explained in detail in the annex. The main body of this evaluation aggregates the findings for each topic across all relevant methods (the source of each finding will be cited).[19]

1.15 **This initial evaluation has found a significant number of problems with the way in which the Bank manages research work and the production of studies, and makes recommendations for dealing with these process issues.** Questions of the relevance to client countries and impact of analytical work to development results will be incorporated into OVE's country program evaluations, and this work will lay the basis for an institution-wide evaluation of these issues in the future.

II. PRODUCTION OF STUDIES

2.1 This evaluation defines a 'study' as a written document that is intended to create and/or disseminate knowledge. Studies are the final output of analytical activities. They present data and advance hypotheses regarding the causes of development problems and the possible interventions that might contribute to their improvement. While this definition seems relatively straightforward, the Bank does not use such a definition to track "studies" as a distinct component of its work program. Some (but not all) types of "Non-Financial Products" are studies, other studies are classified as "Programming Products", and still others studies are produced to inform the preparation of projects, and fall elsewhere in the budget. This makes it difficult to get a precise picture of the universe involved.

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[18] *An Approach to Evaluating Studies*, OVE February 2005 http://opsws3.reg.iadb.org/idbdocswebservices/getDocument.aspx?DOCNUM=481296

[19] As stated in the approach paper, following precedent set in GN-2168-5, this evaluation does not assess studies funded outside the administrative budget (such as TCs).

2.2 **The Bank's information systems tracking studies are weak, so the number of studies the Bank produces can only be estimated.** There is no single source that describes all planned analytical studies, connects resources to all studies, stores all studies themselves, and provides a comprehensive means of searching for relevant information across the entire range of Bank studies.

2.3 The most developed formal information system is the database on projects in the Bank's pipeline (OPUS). Prior to 2003, Management maintained a separate database on "Non Financial Products" that tracked all programmed studies, but this data was combined in that year with OPUS data on financial products (loans and TCs) to give a complete picture of all types of planned Bank operations.

2.4 Although the databases are integrated, Management still reports separately on the Bank's program of Non-Financial Products. Prior to 2006, this periodic report covered only the activities that were programmed separately under the category "Non Financial Products"(NFP), but the latest report also includes another category "programming products" (PRG) that include both country strategy papers and the associated country and sector studies developed in the process of preparing country strategies. Both NFP and PRG products include a large number of items that would fall within the definition of "studies" used in this evaluation, and the following two tables **(Table 2.1 and 2.2)**, taken from the 2005-06 report (GN-2168-10), show Management's historical estimates and future projections of work in these areas. Documentation on PRG activities is less extensive, owing to the inclusion of this category only in the most recent report.

Table 2.1 NFPs by Functional Groups and Products, 1997-2006[20]

Table 1: NFPs by Functional Groups and Products, 1997-2006

NFP Functional Groups/Outputs	Actual									Planned					Actual 2005 Compared to Average Planned 2005	Average Planned 2006 Compared to Actual 2005
										2005		2006				
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002*	2003	2004	2005	Budget Low	Budget High	Pipeline	Budget Low	Budget High		
Group A. Non-Financial Services (Dev. Interventions)																
Economic Consultation Missions/Cabinet Retreats	8	4	8	6	5	26	15	14	5	6	11	13	6	11	59%	170%
Consultative Group Meetings	9	6	3	18	17	3	6	3	1	3	9	2	3	8	17%	550%
Support to Regional Initiatives	5	17	19	21	31	41	49	64	50	34	46	46	38	47	125%	85%
Policy Research and Analytical Papers	76	87	100	88	108	142	163	131	132	109	131	113	101	126	110%	86%
Conferences and Seminars (external)	28	46	47	54	50	50	57	67	75	43	69	42	39	62	134%	67%
Technical Training Delivered (external)	29	54	38	41	26	44	64	41	70	74	87	45	45	55	87%	71%
Sub Total	155	213	215	228	237	306	354	320	333	269	353	261	232	309	107%	81%
%	62%	63%	65%	65%	70%	74%	79%	81%	83%	79%	75%	74%	79%	75%	107%	94%
Group B. Policy & Strategy (Intermediate Products)																
Economic Assessment Reports	0	5	8	6	1	16	15	25	15	19	22	6	13	15	73%	93%
Economic Situation and Perspectives Report (SEP)	52	52	52	52	52	36	16	16	7	5	7	6	1	1	117%	14%
Policy Papers	2	8	0	1	3	5	9	12	10	10	18	14	9	15	71%	120%
Strategy Papers	11	10	4	3	4	11	4	3	1	2	6	8	4	7	25%	550%
Operational Guidelines	3	12	9	16	7	12	10	7	13	14	22	26	11	20	72%	119%
Sector Performance Reviews	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	4	1	4	6	2	6	160%	100%
Best Practice Papers	27	38	41	44	34	20	33	10	20	20	40	28	20	38	67%	145%
Sub Total	95	125	114	122	101	105	92	73	70	71	119	94	60	102	74%	116%
%	38%	37%	35%	35%	30%	26%	21%	19%	17%	21%	25%	26%	21%	25%	75%	131%
Grand Total	250	338	329	350	338	411	446	393	403	340	472	355	292	411	99%	87%

** New classification from this point forward, numbers differ from previous NFP Annual Report (GN-2168-6) due to the elimination of all reported OVE products. Conferences and Seminars and training activities reallocated between internal and external on a 50:50 basis lacking a detailed re-classification*

Sources: 1997-2005, Annual Reports on Operational Program Outputs
Planned 2005 and 2006: Program and Budget Proposals

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[20] See Table 1 in Annex III, GN-2168-10, *"Report on the Non-Financial Products (NFP) Program in 2005 and 2006,"* pg.1

TABLE 2.2. PROGRAMMING PRODUCTS (PRGS)[21]

Type	Completed 2005	Projected 2006*
Strategy Papers		
Country Strategy Papers	4	5
Regional Strategy Papers	0	1
Intermediate Products		
Country and Sector Studies	82	45
Country and Sector Notes	65	49
Country Programming Reports	16	17
Regional Programming Reports	0	1
Private Sector Programming	3	3

** Midpoint of projections in GA-225-1*

2.5 The premise of this evaluation is that all "Studies" prepared to meet the knowledge needs of the Bank should meet the minimum standard of containing verifiable evidence. In this context, it should not matter under what budget category the study is financed or which specific organizational purpose the study is designed to contribute. The requirement of containing verifiable evidence should also not be a function of the methodology selected or the Unit or Department preparing or financing the study. Such a premise is consistent with the organizational purpose of management for results and also consistent with the objective of improving the effectiveness of all Bank activities. From this point of view, this evaluation categorizes studies to include the following broad NFP categories: "Policy Research and Analytical papers", "Economic Assessment Reports"; "Economic Situation and Perspectives Reports"; "Policy Papers", "Strategy Papers", "Sector Performance Reviews", and "Best Practice papers"; as well as the following PRG products: "Country Strategy Papers", "Regional Strategy Papers", "country and sector studies" and "country and sector notes." According to the data in these tables, the Bank in 2005 produced 336 possible studies, 189 in the NFP program and another 147 in the PRG program.

2.6 **In addition to these categories, the Bank also produces annually a substantial volume of analytical work in the process of producing loans. Because they are not formally programmed (like NFPs or PRGs), it is very difficult to develop precise information on the number of such studies undertaken in any given year.** OVE estimated the size of this universe by asking team leaders to report their production of this type of study. The Team Leader Survey (TLS) indicated that the average project commissioned at least three studies using administrative budget resources during the

[21] GN-2168-10, "Report on the Non-Financial Products (NFP) Program in 2005 and 2006", pg.11

preparation process.[22] With 89 projects approved in the average year from 1999-2003, this would imply an estimate of at least 267 studies a year in this category. This is broadly consistent with the fact that the three regional departments issue between 266 and 292 consultant contracts worth $10,000 or more per year, charged to the budget program codes relating to project preparation. These are likely, but not certain, to be contracts for the production of studies.

2.7 Studies for project preparation can also be funded from sources other than the administrative budget. Trust funds, project preparation facilities and approved loans themselves have all been used to support the production of studies, but there is no easy way to track such expenditures. These other sources suggest that the 267 per year estimate for studies relating to projects, is very likely a substantial underestimate. Combining these outputs with the 336 NFP and PRG activities suggests an estimated annual production volume of more than 600 "studies."

2.8 It is important to keep in mind, however, that these are only estimates. Studies related to project preparation are based on extrapolations from a limited survey of team leaders, while the data on NFP and PRG activities come from a database of planned activities, rather than on finished products.

2.9 To confirm that planned studies are in fact carried out, OVE reviewed the data on NFP and PRG studies for 2005. Management's 2006 report on these activities contains the table cited above **(Table 2.2)**, showing 82 country and sector studies and 65 country and sector notes as "completed" during 2005, as well as an annex listing the other NFPs also completed in the same year. OVE examined the data used to construct these tables, and looked at each individual study to see if it had either consumed inputs (budget dollars or staff time recorded in TRS) or produced outputs (documents in IDB-docs). Table 2.3 shows the results of this inquiry.

Table 2.3 NFP and PRG Studies "Completed" in 2005

Type of Product	Number	With any doc	With Study	With $	With hours
Country & Sector Studies	82	26	10	53	49
Economic assessment reports	15			9	10
Country & Sector Notes	55	5	1	30	25
Operational guidelines	11			11	11
Policy papers	10			10	10
Policy research and analytical papers	129			58	61
Economic situation and perspectives	7	3		5	3
Sector performance reviews	4			4	4
Sector Portfolio Reviews	12	2		11	8
Strategy paper	1			1	1
Total	**326**	**36**	**11**	**192**	**182**
Pct of Total	100%	11%	3%	59%	56%

[22] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey

2.10 **It is difficult to discern if what has been planned has been completed.** Of the 326 NFP and PRG activities recorded, by July of 2006 only 36 (11%) had posted any document whatever (including emails and memos) to IDBDocs associated with its project number, and only 11 (3%) had posted something that looked like a final report. 192 (59%) had recorded any budget expenditure, and 182 had posted any staff or consultant hours.

2.11 There are a variety of possible reasons for the discrepancies in the data. Management may have reported as "completed" only items that were in the pipeline for 2005. The studies may have been filed in the system but the authors may have restricted access so that the studies are not visible. Alternatively, studies may have been completed and produced documents that are posted to IDB-docs but without the project number attached. To test this hypothesis, the titles of all 129 Policy Research and Analytical papers listed in OPUS as completed in 2005 were compared with all Microsoft Word and PDF documents posted in IDBDOCS in 2005 through June of 2006, and the results were supplemented by a search using iadb.org. As of July 2006, the results found close matches for only 32% for the 129 potential studies. Assistance was requested from the RES, SDS and INT Units in locating copies of the missing studies. INT located 27 of the 29 studies and placed these studies within IDCDOCS. RES located 28 out the 37 studies (18 in the Unit Web-Page and 10 as electronic copies); additionally, RES requested that 4 studies of the remaining 9 studies be deleted from the systems. SDS provided electronic copies of 10 of the 12 studies; of the remaining two, one was a Resource Guide and the other was an activity incorrectly classified as a study. This exercise clarifies and documents two points: first, the level of extraordinary effort necessary to locate studies prepared as recent as 6 months ago; and second, the potential risk that if these studies were left unfound, then a similar search exercise five years in the future would almost certainly have found just a fraction, as documented in the analysis below of the studies produced in the period 1997-2003. We discuss next the likelihood that the universe of studies identified is significantly incomplete, as a large proportion of the studies prepared have not been formally programmed.

2.12 **Much of what is done is not planned.** This evaluation reviewed the NFP database on studies planned from 1997 to 2003 and compared those with documents posted on departmental websites over the same period. A comparison of documents on Bank WebPages with the programming data on NFPs and PRGs shows relatively low correspondence (Table 2.4). Only 335 of the 2,626 studies were found both on the web and in the NFP database of planned products. The 927 documents that were found only on departmental web pages provides a rough estimate of the volume of output that is not tracked in the formal planning system.[23] Although it is impossible to program each study with perfect foresight, clearly a very large fraction of studies is unplanned.

[23] See Annex B: Matching the Studies

Table 2.4 Studies in the NFP Database and Posted on the Web 1997-2003

Department	Unmatched NFP	Unmatched web	Matched NFP and web	Total # DOCS
SDS	297	296	114	**707**
RES	294	364	89	**747**
INT	226	87	18	**331**
REG1	197	16	1	**214**
REG2	155	127	89	**371**
REG3	195	37	24	**256**
Total	**1,364**	**927**	**335**	**2,626**

2.13 **Because of the ambiguities and inconsistencies in the data, it is impossible to determine with any accuracy from available Bank reports how many studies of what type are actually produced in any given year.** This finding is at odds with Management's conclusion expressed in its 2003 review of the Non Financial Products program that: "The completion markers as currently defined in the NFP framework are deemed adequate."[24] The present evaluation was unable to determine what "completion markers" existed and whether they reliably signaled completion.

III. PROGRAMMING: HOW DO STUDIES ORIGINATE AND RECEIVE RSOURCES

3.1 **The Bank has a variety of formal programming processes to establish its anticipated work in the region.** Loans and technical cooperation activities are formally programmed, with a pipeline of intended operations reviewed by the Programming Committees of both Management and Board. Programming is designed to establish priorities for Bank action, define anticipated budgetary needs, and provide a guide for Bank staff and country authorities as to what the Bank is intending to do in the near future. It also helps define the work program of the various departments that have a role to play in the production of these products.

3.2 In theory, a similar programming process exists for studies. Management's latest report on the Non Financial products work program contains a description of programming, shown here in **Box 3.1**. It is important to note that this process is considerably less directive than that used for programming loans and technical cooperation activities. Senior Management reviews and approves the lending and TC program, and informs the Board of its intentions.

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[24] GN-2168-5, *"Internal Review Mechanisms for Non-Financial Products"* April 21, 2003, paragraph 3.13.

Box 3.1 The Processing of the Non Financial Work Program at the Bank

NFPs and PRGs have distinctly different processing and management procedures in the Bank. While in the case of NFPs, a bank wide mechanism for the processing of products was established in 2003 which includes the creation of a pipeline, definition of its characteristics and then a review process, PRGs are still managed at the departmental level.

NFPs are conceived by the producing departments and are subsequently presented to the Programming Committee of Management (PCM) on a *for information basis* to be formally accepted into the NFP pipeline. This aims to ensure that NFPs undertaken by various departments meet some predetermined criteria for inclusion and that there be a minimal duplication of labor.

….The procedures related to intermediate PRGs (those that are inputs into the Country Strategy Papers) are much less formal in nature and are applied largely at the discretion of producing departments.
-GN-2168-10 27 June 2006. Italics added.

3.3 **However, with the NFP program, ideas are presented by producing departments and to the Programming Committee of Management on a "for information" basis.** Management's document mentions "predetermined criteria" for inclusion in the final list, no Bank-wide criteria have been established for the programming of NFPs, and there is no record of a formal process in which Senior Management determines the priorities for the studies program in the coming year. The Board receives reports on the NFP program, but in 2003 the Programming Committee of the Board requested that such reports be sent only "for information."[25]

3.4 **In the case of country studies and work done for project preparation, programming at the institutional level is largely absent.** Management indicates that "PRGs are still managed at the departmental level," as is the production of all project-related study work Studies that are directly related to a country program are theoretically supposed to be programmed in the Bank's country strategy documents,[26] yet OVE's review of recently-produced country strategies found that the programming of analytical studies was often omitted from these documents. Furthermore, the survey of authors indicated that client country requests were rarely the main reason for producing studies. Consequently, it is unclear what mechanism client countries use to influence the prioritization of potential studies during the programming process.

3.5 There is also some confusion relating to programming of "intermediate PRGs" (country and sector studies and notes). Management's latest report (27 June, 2006) states that these are programmed "largely at the discretion of producing departments", a previous

[25] GN-2168-7, "Report on the Non-Financial Products (NFP) Program in 2002 and 2003." pg. 3.
[26] GN-2020-6, "*Country paper guidelines. Final revised version,*" paragraph 3.22.6

document (GN-2381-3, 21 February 2006), noted problems of coordination arising from this decentralized approach and proposed a new coordinating structure to prioritize studies and manage the pipeline of such studies.[27] However, since this earlier document was approved by the Board, and resources were approved for the initiative in the 2006 budget, it seems likely that the description of programming contained in the more recent Management report is not fully current with operational reality. Several individual departments have generated procedures for programming studies and managing the pipeline. These procedures are often revised, and were not evaluated. Note however, that these recent efforts are not standardized and implemented across the Bank. Furthermore, the more disciplined programming procedures outlined in the February 2006 document apply only to "PRG" studies not to the even larger group of NFP studies.

3.6 **Interviews with staff producing studies, however, indicate that actual programming is much less disciplined that would be inferred from the formal statements shown above.** A survey of authors of studies suggests that the topics of studies arise in ad hoc ways: (i) as inputs for the preparation of projects or strategies, (ii) due to the priorities of managers, and (iii) due to the personal interests of authors. Less frequently, topics arose from interactions with other departments or peer institutions, and still less frequently were requests from the countries themselves. One author said there were no standard procedures for identifying studies.[28]

3.7 **Surveys of project team leaders and of authors indicate that there is weak collaboration across the Bank regarding studies.** Over half of the team leaders surveyed had never requested that another IDB unit conduct a study to help in project preparation. Of those who had, the experiences were mostly satisfactory, but difficulties arose regarding bureaucracy, delays, and the time constraints faced by their collaborators (TLS Q.27 and Q.28). Only 20% of their projects had teams that included a member from SDS or RES.[29] When a random sample of authors from across the Bank was asked how they interacted with other departments, 32% of responses indicated that they had little to no interaction. And only 12% of responses suggested that their interaction came in the form of co-producing studies. One stated that regarding studies, departments did not interact much, as the Bank is in fact like three small banks, and thus very compartmentalized (AS Q.4). The roots of the issues can be traced to 1994, when the Bank adopted its current organizational structure and dispersed its technical expertise across departments. Another author explained: in truth, regarding studies, we do not interact with other departments; we interact with individuals in other departments.[30]

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[27] "*In order for priorities to be set and work methodologies to be proposed, the study agendas will be submitted each year and reviewed each quarter by a country-studies committee, to be composed of the Regional Economic Advisors of the three regional departments, one representative from INT, one representative from SDS, and the Chief Economist and Manager of RES, who will preside. The annual agendas should be presented to the committee prior to the preparation of the Bank's annual budget, so that the program of studies may be incorporated into the individual departmental budgets beginning in 2007. The committee will also be responsible for specifying the technical support and consultancy requests that the Region will require from the central departments in the following six months*." *Initiative to support country studies and improve and expand Bank loan operations GN-2381-3*

[28] See Annex J: Author Interviews

[29] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey

[30] See Annex J: Author Interviews

3.8 **The programming process does not assign resources to studies.** Budgeting at the Bank has historically been done by departments and by broad program category, not by individual work product such as a study. The Bank's systems now permit departments to both budget and execute by individual product, but this is not required. Historical data on the cost of studies is therefore only available at the program level, and this data is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Original Budget Totals for Study Related Program Categories

Study Type	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Programming Products					
Country & Sector Notes	317,365.76	525,694.47	1,147,533.52	1,605,779.12	1,544,125.68
Country & Sector Studies	2,987,683.98	3,820,051.57	4,608,060.04	4,780,713.85	8,103,719.45
Subtotal	3,305,049.74	4,345,746.04	5,755,593.56	6,386,492.97	9,647,845.13
Non Financial Products					
Economic assessment reports	907,386.39	1,195,723.17	928,241.90	1,041,869.12	398,065.80
Economic situation and perspectives	789,046.85	915,496.74	601,612.98	560,458.80	533,888.06
Operational guidelines	1,589,273.71	1,702,166.09	2,021,796.50	3,397,697.41	2,990,898.10
Policy papers	1,196,210.52	1,770,294.30	1,854,670.21	2,019,611.72	2,349,590.33
Policy research and analytical papers	4,368,164.53	4,408,797.44	4,492,315.62	4,700,893.58	6,292,019.77
Sector performance reviews	559,652.36	381,504.48	465,682.01	443,298.37	435,873.36
Sector Portfolio Reviews	418,406.41	1,335,911.07	728,864.85	698,470.31	820,847.77
Strategy paper	1,528,285.02	1,070,029.60	1,511,783.09	1,398,977.13	1,197,943.21
Subtotal	11,356,425.79	12,779,922.89	12,604,967.16	14,261,276.44	15,019,126.40
Study-related project work (OVE estimate)	7,055,816.80	7,829,333.95	7,707,633.27	7,894,438.18	8,031,934.90
TOTAL ALL STUDIES	**21,717,292**	**24,955,003**	**26,068,194**	**28,542,208**	**32,698,906**

3.9 **Data on PRG and NFP products comes from the Bank's budget system directly, but annual expenditures on studies related to project preparation, need to be estimated** The Team Leader Survey provides an estimate of the costs of studies used in project preparation (paid for by the operational departments (RE1, RE2, RE3). The average study in this set costs $49,300,[31] and if 267 studies were produced per year, this would amount to over $13 million spent annually on this activity, (28% of resources budgeted for project preparation). This number may be inaccurate owing to projection from a small sample, so this evaluation uses a more conservative estimate of 20% of the funds budgeted for project preparation as an estimate of the cost of these studies.

3.10 **The table shows that the cost of studies is substantial, and that recently, budgets for this activity have risen sharply**, particularly for Country and Sector Studies. Because the evidence regarding studies actually produced is so weak and inconsistent, however, it is not possible to estimate the average cost per study for this activity.

[31] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey

3.11 **In conclusion, weak collaboration across departments, limited involvement by Senior Management in the programming of studies, and the absence of a formal process for budgeting for studies, means that this effort is both weak and largely "supply driven".** Ideas for studies emerge from the staff, are funded by decisions that are taken almost entirely within a single department, and are inadequately integrated into the country programming process. Furthermore, little attempt is made to validate compliance with the programming decisions to ensure that programmed activities actually result in the production of studies.

IV. QUALITY

4.1 **As a contribution to development in the borrowing member countries, studies need to be evaluated in terms of both quality and utility.** A subsequent section of this report will deal with utility, but in this section we attempt to assess the technical quality of the Bank's studies. This is a complex area, since the Bank itself has established no standards for study quality, and there is not a strong consensus on how to measure study quality in the multilateral system. The following section will therefore explore the quality issue using a variety of assessment tools.

4.2 **A simple first-cut approach to the issue of quality is to look at the formal mechanisms for quality control.** Even if there are no Bank-wide formal standards of quality, review procedures in and of themselves may provide incentives to authors to conform to some minimum common quality standards. However, as Management reported in 2003 Management reported that: "The quality control processes that are normally applied to other Bank financial operations are not applied to NFPs. While lending products have institutional reviews at different processing stages to assess their technical viability and fit with country strategies (e.g. Profile 1, Profile 2, etc.), most NFPs have no further institutional review after the approval of the Administrative Budget."[32]

4.3 **It appears that formal methods of quality control are not systematically applied to the production of most studies.** Although some departments have quality control procedures for some types of studies, for the majority of studies in the Bank, there is no indication of any sort of quality review such as a CRG. It is important to note, however, that the new procedures adopted in February of 2006 for country studies do envision a disciplined CRG process, although this still does not apply to the studies produced by central departments under the heading of NFP, nor to studies related directly to project preparation.

4.4 Team leaders report that quality control of the studies they commission for project preparation consists of maintaining constant communication with the consultants and reviewing drafts. None of the team leaders mentioned quality control methods such as peer reviews or seminars (TLS Q.16).[33] When asked "Once you have written a study,

[32] GN-2168-5, "*Internal Review Mechanisms for non-financial products*" pg 7.
[33] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey.

what steps do you take to control for quality?" only 31% of the authors surveyed responded that their individual departments have formal quality control procedures while 44% stated that quality control was fundamentally self-regulated by the authors.[34] The broad problem is related to the heterogeneity of quality control rules and procedures across Units and Departments and the evidence here documents that these rules and procedures are being implemented inconsistently and unsystematically.

4.5 **Diffusion of studies is another form of quality control.** Knowing that both internal and external audiences are likely to read a study creates a strong incentive for improving quality. Most studies produced by SDS and RES are published on the web, and these departments also produce the highest volume of peer-reviewed publications. For the large number of studies related to project preparation, however, disclosure is an extremely rare event.

4.6 **Project team leaders report lack of incentives for commissioning high quality studies for the preparation of projects.** Most project team leaders surveyed (86%) said they were not explicitly rewarded for commissioning the production of high quality studies. However, 50% recognized implicit rewards such as "producing a higher quality loan that then serves the country better due to its pertinence and ease of execution." Other ways they were rewarded included personal satisfaction, client satisfaction and improved professional reputation (TLS Q.17). One team leader wrote, "We are rewarded implicitly in terms of the personal satisfaction we feel at having used good material to produce a good product. [But] we are penalized when these studies inevitably take longer than anticipated and delay the preparation of the project and/or require us to take shortcuts which [limits] the utilization of studies."[35]

4.7 **Authors also report weak incentives for preparing high quality studies**. When authors were asked what incentives they faced regarding studies, only 30% of responses dealt with formal incentives (recognition of boss). Other common responses were incentives at a personal level, or very few incentives at all. Only 20% stated that they had clear and appropriate incentives to produce high quality studies. The majority of those surveyed (86%) argued that the Bank does not reward its employees for making decisions informed by evidence.

[34] See Annex J: Author Interviews.
[35] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey.

4.8 **Even though formal quality control procedures are weak or nonexistent, it could still be the case that Bank authors on their own still manage to produce high quality studies.** There are a variety of methods than can be use to check for quality independent of an internal review process. The first of these assessment tools involves publication in reviewed journals. Published studies meet the minimum quality standards established in the academic world, and this can serve in some ways as an initial quality proxy**.** Using this standard, it appears that the Bank has significant production of quality studies, leading all other regional banks in the production of reviewed articles. Thomson ISI's data record publications in 367 social science journals that meet its high quality control criteria.[36] In these data, the number of IDB publications per year rose from 10 in 1994 to 23 in 1999, and has declined slightly through 2004. Authors from the IDB have published 173 studies from 1990-2004, which is more than the other regional development banks, but only a fraction of the 3658 studies published by the World Bank authors. Clearly, the IMF and WB are significantly larger than the IDB, yet the IDB publishes approximately 0.09 studies per employee, while the IMF and World Bank both publish over 0.40 studies per employee **(Table 4.1)**.[37]

Table 4.1: Publications in Journals[38]

	ADB	AfDB	EBRD	IDB	IMF	WB
Studies Published 1990-2004	122	1	71	173	1,340	3,658
Approximate number of employees (2004)	2,394	1,043	1,202	1,884	3,010	8,800
Studies published per employee	0.05	0.00	0.06	0.09	0.45	0.42
Proxy of Quality: Expected Citation Rate	2.21	0	3.38	2.55	4.23**	3.88*

* Difference between this institution and IDB significant at 5%
** Difference between this institution and IDB significant at 1%

4.9 Using the same database, a second measure of study quality is the expected citation rate, i.e. the number of citations received by the average article in a journal in a specific year. Arguably, higher quality studies are published in the journals that receive the most citations. By this measure, the IDB is statistically indistinguishable from the Asian Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, but its expected citation rate is significantly smaller than the studies published by both the World Bank and the IMF.[39]

4.10 Taken as a whole, the publication data indicates that the IDB has produced a substantial number of high-quality studies. Compared with the total output of studies produced by the Bank, however, these high quality efforts appear to be only a small fraction. Econlit covers a broader universe of reviewed journals than Thompson ISI, covering over one

[36] For more detail on the Thomson ISI data, see Thomson ISI. "Institutional Citation Report." http://www.isinet.com/rsg/icr/. July 21, 2005 http://www.isinet.com/rsg/icr/ July 21, 2005, and Annex J: Author Interviews
[37] Clearly the composition of the staff who are producing studies varies across institutions, but the total head count was the best proxy available for all six institutions. Also note that the IMF and WB publish their own journals, which increases their publication totals. Additionally, while the Bank did not have a fully-fledged research department until 1994, other units such as the Research Division in DES did produce research outputs.
[38] See Annex J: Author Interviews, Table J7
[39] See Annex J: Author Interviews, Table J7

thousand journals. It contains 458 publications by employees of the IDB since roughly 1990. If, as noted earlier, total IDB production of studies is over 600 per year, then over the past 15 years, then only 5% of total IDB study production is published or quality controlled by any of the 1000 journals in Econlit.

4.11 Publication data is clearly biased toward an academic audience. It is possible that the quality of Bank studies as support to the development process may thus be underestimated. In order to address this issue directly, this evaluation sent a structured sample of 60 studies to two independent academic reviewers for quality assessment. 40 studies were randomly chosen from RE1, RE2, RE3, SDS, INT and RES; 10 randomly chosen from the studies identified by the Team Leaders as useful, and 10 from among the top downloaded off the web.

4.12 The reviewers were asked to complete a quality assessment form whose content was derived in part from the evaluation of study quality at the IMF. Five separate quality dimensions were used to determine if a given study contained:[40]

i. **A question**: Questions make explicit what is unknown. Although a request for a description can technically be phrased as a question (for example, "What does the Peruvian economy look like?"), in fact, the associated answer provides only information, relying on the reader to turn this information into knowledge.

ii. **A framework**: The framework explains possible reasons why phenomenon related to the question might occur. It does this by outlining potential determinants and identifying assumptions.

iii. **Data**: Data are a vital component to evidence-based decision making. Secondary data are evidence that includes facts, estimates, results from secondary sources. Primary data comes from sources such as surveys, randomized experiments, information systems, national accounts, etc. Data can be both qualitative and quantitative.

iv. **An evidence-based methodology**: Evidence-based studies have a methodology that uses data to answer the question, and thus provides a clear description of the approach that can be replicated by other researchers. There are many methodologies, and depending on the question, framework and data, some are more appropriate than others.

v. **Policy implications**: A policy is a definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions

[40] Note that the Bank has not made explicit its quality standards for its various types of studies. Therefore, this evaluation used the five quality dimensions as outlined in the evaluation's Approach Paper. Also note that although each study should support its conclusions using that rarely a evidence (see paragraph 1.13(4)) a study need not satisfy each dimension to play an institutional role. For instance, a study without a question or policy implications could be a 'Descriptive Study'.

4.13 **Annex F** provides the details of this exercise. This exercise found that 61% of the reviewed studies scored low overall (1 or 2 on a 5 point quality scale), primarily because they made no use of primary or secondary data (20% of studies), failed to contain a specific question (34%), or a framework that identifies determinants (49%). 53% did not contain a replicable evidence-based methodology. Only 11% of the studies structured the hypothesis as a function of parameters and only 4% proposed a model that was quantifiable. Only 2% of the studies had a strategy to identify causation (rather than correlation) and only 3% had policy implications that were explicitly chosen from among policy alternatives.

4.14 The reviewers were also requested to comment on the overall quality of the studies. **In some cases, the independent reviewer's comments were positive**: "the questions, framework and methodology were clear and explicit"; "it is evidence based and is replicable"; "there is an adequate connection between the results and the policy implications"; "the results can be useful in the design of policies."[41]

4.15 **However, far more frequently, the comments of the independent reviewers were negative.** For example: "the paper is very poorly written"; "there are many statements based on *a priori* knowledge"; "the author uses data without indicating the source"; "there is no data"; "there is no methodology, only… subjective judgment"; "the methodology followed is weak because it is not evidence-based"; "the ideas are not based on any solid evidence"; "the interpretation of the results is too simplistic and naïve"; "some conclusions are more guess than solid evidence-based deductions"; "it is hard to see how this policy implication comes from what is presented in the text" ; "there are no policy implications at all."[42]

V. DISSEMINATION, STORAGE AND SEARCHING

5.1 The purpose of studies is to generate knowledge that can help improve development outcomes for the Bank's clients. Some of this benefit is a "private good", improving the design of a specific intervention, but a much larger part of the benefit has a "public good" character, in that it develops knowledge that may be useful in other Bank operations or in other development activities carried on by actors outside the Bank. To capture this public benefit, studies need to be brought to the attention of others seeking knowledge. Accessibility, in turn is a function of how studies are disseminated initially, and how they are stored and retrieved after the study is completed. The following sections review these critical elements of the Bank's management of studies once produced.

5.2 **Stakeholder interviews suggest that procedures for dissemination vary across departments and individuals.** Authors indicate that they use dissemination methods that might include posting the study on the web, sending it to a network of people, presenting it at seminars, or publishing the study. Dissemination methods are ad hoc, as the authors do not use the same methods for each study they write (AS Q.3). The responses of team leaders regarding the efforts to disseminate the studies they commissioned were also

[41] See Annex E: Quality Assessment
[42] See Annex E: Quality Assessment

mixed.[43] Again, as with other aspects of the programming and production of studies, dissemination methods are not standardized across the Bank.

5.3 **Most of the project team leaders say they were not rewarded for disseminating the studies they commissioned.** When asked if they were rewarded for dissemination of studies, one team leader wrote, 'Not really. If a colleague asks for a copy of something relevant to his/her current work, and one of these studies happens to fit that description, then we are thanked for providing it." Others frequently stated that there are no incentives for team leaders to disseminate the studies they contract for the project. (TLS Q21). The Bank does not clearly or systematically set authors', team leaders' or EXR's incentives for the storage and dissemination of its studies.

5.4 **As a result, active dissemination efforts do not occur for most Bank studies.** For example, one stakeholder stated that only a few studies have their own budget for dissemination built in.[44] Seminars are held for some studies, but not for most, and it is not clear the breadth of coverage of the seminar dissemination format. One author mentioned that for some of his seminars, only his own research assistants came. Another author stated that he put some of his studies on the intranet, but acknowledged that many people do not know the page exists, or even have access to the page itself. One author believes that the Bank does not think very much about dissemination (AS Q.3).[45] Even in the cases of the active dissemination efforts listed above, the Bank puts little effort into identifying the potential audiences for its studies, into writing the studies in distinct formats targeted to each audience, and into developing distinct dissemination strategies for each potential audience of a study.

5.5 Direct, face-to-face dissemination methods also appear to be biased toward the analytical work produced by the central departments (RES, INT, and SDS), rather than toward project-related analytical work in the regions. For instance, half of the team leaders' responses indicated that there were no efforts made to disseminate the studies commissioned for project preparation (TLS Q. 20).

5.6 If active dissemination methods are ad hoc and only applied to few Bank studies, then the main way studies can be located—and the knowledge used by others-- is via searches for documents conducted by potential users. The next section discusses mechanisms of document storage, searching and retrieval within the Bank.

5.7 **The Bank has information systems that store its studies in several places. These systems are not integrated, and not all studies are stored.** There are four principal locations in which Bank studies are stored: i) As paper documents in departmental archives (technically named 'regional file stations'), ii) As electronic documents on departmental web pages iii) As electronic documents stored in IDBDOCS, iv) As publications on EXR's web page.

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[43] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey
[44] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews
[45] See Annex J: Author Interviews

5.8 **Archives**. All departments have paper files storage systems that include some studies. These files stations are maintained both in Headquarters and in the Bank's country offices. In addition to the formal storage systems, the Team Leader survey revealed that some studies related to project preparation are maintained only in the personal files of individual staff members (TLS Q.18).[46] For the formal paper archives of the studies related to project preparation, Bank practice has been to move them physically to the Bank's Record and Information Center sometime after last disbursement, and destroy them three years after last disbursement.[47] Although there can be valid reasons for destroying records that are no longer useful, this practice means that the paper archives are unlikely to contain copies of older studies that may still be of use. And for more recent studies, the archives are generally not indexed by author or the title of the study, either at headquarters or in the country offices.[48]

5.9 **Web pages**. All departments and some country offices maintain web pages. These often contain links to electronic versions of studies produced by those departments. For the departments with the highest production of studies (RES, SDS), their departmental web pages are the principal location for the storage of their output.[49]

5.10 **IDBDocs.** To help centralize information regarding Bank studies and improve the access to the content of those studies, the Bank has recently created IDBDocs as an electronic file depository. The system allows for the storage of all types of electronic files, including memos, emails, presentations, drafts and final versions of studies. It also permits the storage of meta data (data about the primary data). Metadata includes things like keywords, sector, author, related projects, and document type.

5.11 **Publications.** The Bank's External Relations Department (EXR) annually publishes in paper form some fraction of the Bank's output of studies. It also puts a subset of the Bank's studies on its web page. Recently, it has attempted to use IDBDocs to identify potential "publications" from the universe of documents stored. In 2004, EXR surveyed the Departments and found a universe of approximately 5,000 documents that would qualify as "publications". Using its own resources, EXR entered approximately 1,000 of these into IDBDocs and made them available to the public through the EXR website. Subsequently, approximately 600 new studies have been added, but most of the 4,000 "legacy" publications identified by EXR have not been entered into the system by mid 2006.[50]

5.12 Further complicating matters is the fact that each of the Bank's 26 country offices have their own version of IDBdocs, which do not communicate with the headquarters system. SDS has its own system for storing studies, and this system is not currently integrated into IDBDocs. The Bank's multiple storage systems are not coordinated, and there is no central source of information on what the Bank has produced and where it can be found. It is thus impossible to answer the simple question: "list all of the studies produced by the IDB in the last five years and show where each can be found."

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[46] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey
[47] For example, see: *Project Operations: Description of Fields Covered by the General Records Schedule*. http:/records/English/POREv0505eng.pdf. pg 1, PO-General.
[48] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews
[49] See Annex G: Analysis of WebPages and Web logs.
[50] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews

5.13 In theory, IDBdocs was designed to answer this question. It is defined as: *"the official electronic Document and Record Management system of the Bank"*[51] but there is no bank wide policy with regard to posting documents to this system. Nor is there a requirement that metadata fields be populated, so many documents have blank fields for such things as keyword, country references, sector and other similar information that could facilitate searches**.**

5.14 The data storage modalities described earlier create an enormous impediment to effective search. Search costs are high, and the probability of success in finding specific information is low. Two storage locations, the paper archives and only Bank staff can search IDB-docs, while departmental web pages and EXR publications are available to an audience outside the Bank.

5.15 The formal **archives (Record and Information Center)** and regional files stations store physical copies of documents, organized by project number. Most documents in storage are operational (loan documents, contracts, memos, etc.), but some are lengthy documents meeting our criteria as "studies". In at least 2 of the operational departments, an electronic inventory of the contents of a department's files stations is incomplete or does not exist. Physically searching these files (along with contacting the project team leader) was the most effective way to track down studies commissioned for project preparation. However, searching the archives is time consuming and difficult. The file storage systems of the three operational departments are not integrated, so searching for studies in a sector would entail visits to all three stations. For this evaluation, the staffs in regional file stations were given a sample of authors and titles of studies, but were not able to locate them until they were given the project number as well. Even then, the search was conducted by hand and only 22 percent of the studies were found.[52]

5.16 **IDB-docs** has severe limitations with respect to searching. Authors of documents are allowed to establish their own security levels; Bank staff as a whole cannot view so many documents in the system. Searches by keyword depend on author's providing entries in the "keyword" metadata field, and many documents lack this information. IDBdocs was also designed as a comprehensive system to store all types of electronic records. It therefore includes tens of thousands of memos, agendas, letters, emails, presentations, terms of reference, CVs of consultants, and other such material. Full-text searches will return every document that matches, including duplicate English and Spanish versions of the same document, along with thousands of trivial and irrelevant documents such as memos and terms of reference, rather than studies themselves.[53]

5.17 In theory, the IDB-docs system allows searches to be restricted to a specific document type, however there is no standardization across the Bank as to how to designate a particular document type. Users establish their own types, with the result that there are 83 different document types stored in the system. The document type "STUDY" does not always produce only studies, for many authors declare their studies to be of type

[51] http://itc-web-01/idbdocsguidelines/aspx/opsAboutIdbdocs.aspx
[52] See Annex F: Analysis of Search Tools, and Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews
[53] See Annex F: Analysis of Search Tools

"REPORT" or "FULLDOC" or "DEFAULT" or "MAINDOC." Other authors will use these same types to describe different products.

5.18 As a result of these problems, it should come as no surprise that, when asked if they used IDBDocs to search for studies, **all** authors said no (AS Q.11). As one put it, in IDBDocs, studies are missing, it is difficult to use, time-consuming, and it cannot be easily searched. And over 90% argued that the Bank's information systems do not make it easy to locate the studies the Bank has produced.[54] One Team leader wrote, "Finding IDB studies is like searching for a needle in a haystack compared to accessing those of other groups such as the WB or IMF.[55]

5.19 **Over 90% of the authors surveyed state that the most effective way to search for a study is to phone their peers in the Bank.** One author stated that there is no ways to know what studies other departments have done. The Bank's systems are so bad; he has given up trying to use them. Instead, he will call his colleagues in other departments to find studies. There is no other way (AS Q.7). Another stated that using her personal network to find studies is the most successful search method, and another author stated that people learn of studies through word of mouth (AS Q.11).[56]

5.20 If the most effective way to find studies in the Bank is through personal networks, **there may be several consequences**. First, if an employee leaves the Bank, their tacit knowledge disappears. Second, personal networks are often dependent on ad-hoc factors and are not formed for institutionally strategic reasons. Third, this makes it difficult for new employees and stakeholders outside the Bank to find the Bank's studies because they do not have access to an informal network of Bank employees.

5.21 **For external clients, the Bank's knowledge-producing activities are effectively searchable only on the web-pages of the Bank or individual departments.** Global search engines such as Google and Yahoo will find documents only if they are posted to a web server, which most IDB documents are not. For example, of the 765,151 documents stored in IDB-docs as of July 2006, only 1.8% is also posted on a web page and thus accessible via the Internet.

5.22 **External users cannot search IDB-docs directly, so the Bank has purchased a separate search engine and made it available on the Bank's homepage**. This engine searches all documents posted on departmental Internet pages, plus all documents in IDB-docs where the author has allowed the document to be viewable over the Internet. As of July 2006, there were over 14,000 documents in IDB-docs searchable over the Internet.

5.23 There are several limitations to both the search engine itself and the data it is able to search. As to data, many older studies are not available on the web. Most of the 4,000 "legacy" studies identified by EXR in 2004 have still not been posted to IDB-docs and only some are available on individual departmental pages. Studies commissioned for

[54] See Annex J: Author Interviews
[55] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey
[56] See Annex J: Author Interviews

project preparation can often be found in IDB-docs, but are flagged for internal use only and thus not available on the Internet. In July of 2006, for example, IDB-docs contained 472 reports from individual consultants for work related to projects, only 5 of which were available on the Internet.

5.24 **The search engine itself also limits access.** The software purchased by the Bank for this task lacks keyword search capabilities, and thus performs its search on the full text of Bank Internet documents. This results in a large number of returns for each search query and a generally poor "relevance" profile of the returned documents. The search engine does not allow searches for only a certain type of document (for example, study, survey or report). Query results also do not provide much information about the underlying document, so that users may have to download the document to find out such things as length, author, sector or year of production. Given that 79% of visitors to iadb.org were from outside the US where Internet access is slow, this constraint limits the utility of the results returned by the search engine.[57]

5.25 **As a result of these problems, relatively few employees use the global search engine on iadb.org, as they perceive it as ineffective**. One team leader wrote, "Searching by key words on the IDB net is ineffective (TLS Q.30)."[58] An author stated the Bank has bad search technology (AS Q.7).[59] Often it is stated that to find studies, Google is more effective than the Bank's search engine.[60] The Bank also has a search engine for Bank publications (www.iadb.org/publications), which received only 228,977 page views in 2005. This suggests it is not heavily utilized relative to external search engines and perhaps the Bank's global search engine.[61]

5.26 **Taken together, the Bank's multiple data storage locations and search engines create very high search costs combined with a low probability of success in locating sought material**. Even armed with precise information about studies, many cannot be found. A sample of project team leaders were asked to identify the studies they commissioned or used in the preparation of their projects. The team leaders identified 32 IDB produced studies as important to project preparation. This evaluation attempted to track down these studies through emails to the team leaders themselves, and if this failed, by working with the staff in the regional file stations (the team leaders had suggested using these methods to track down the studies). Yet even with the help of the people who had commissioned and identified the studies, 56% of the studies could not be located (**Table 5.1**). The team leaders did not store most of the studies they commissioned in IDBDocs or on the Web. The projects in the sample were approved before 2004 (when IDBDocs was rolled out), and there has not been an effort to input past studies in IDBDocs.

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[57] See Annex F: Analysis of Search Tools
[58] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey
[59] See Annex J: Author Interviews
[60] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews
[61] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews

Table 5.1: Finding the Project Preparation Studies[62]

IDB Studies Identified	Found	% Unfound	Found via Emailing Team Leader	Found via File Stations
32	14	56%	9	5

5.27 Since late 2005 some team leaders have stored the studies used in project preparation in OPUS.[63] This was assessed using a random sample of 25 projects approved in the last half of 2005. Of these, 56% had no working links from OPUS to any project preparation studies. It is possible that these projects did not commissioned any studies, but that seems unlikely since at least half of the loan documents mentioned what seem to be IDB studies in their bibliography or footnotes (one cannot be sure due to the limited information provided in footnotes and bibliographies).

5.28 External users typically do not know the nature of the precise study they are seeking, and want to browse the Bank's Internet site to find potentially useful material. Because the Bank's information systems are weak, this search method is much less likely to be successful. The Bank's Webmaster and the Public Information Center get a few hundred requests for information a month to their generic email accounts. Relatively few of these are related to studies: a minority involves a request for studies the Bank has done in a certain country or sector, and only a handful are requests for specific studies. The requests received by Bank librarians are much more likely to ask for information on broad topics than specific studies.[64]

5.29 Furthermore, web logs indicate that the top search phrases that led to the Bank's web pages included broad topics, such as poverty, sustainable development, civil society, etc. This suggests that the most common visitors to iadb.org do not know which study they are looking for. Instead they are looking for information produced by the Bank about broad topics. However, IDB web pages allowing the visitor to browse studies by subject topic (or year, author, etc.) are very rare.[65] And because the Bank's studies are stored in so many places, it is impossible to browse for all of the Bank's studies simultaneously. In sum, browsing for Bank studies is even less effective than searching for Bank studies.

5.30 **Finally, it is not clear that the Bank is fully compliant with its Information Disclosure Policy as it applies to studies.** Because the Bank's information systems do not systematically track the studies that are planned and delivered, it is difficult to ensure compliance with the Bank's Information Disclosure Policy, which includes as a basic principle: "Information concerning the Bank and its activities will be made available to the public in absence of a compelling reason for confidentiality."[66] Although many types of operational documents (memos, emails, contracts, etc.) stored in IDBDocs and the archives have compelling reasons for confidentiality, the logic for restricting access to studies is less clear. The policy states, for each study the Bank produces, absent a compelling reason for confidentiality, the study should be available to the public. And the cheapest and most effective way to do so is posting on the internet. The Bank produced over 600 studies in 2005, and put 178 in iadb.org/publications, as well as another 228 on

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[62] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey
[63] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews
[64] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews
[65] See Annex G: Analysis of WebPages and Web logs
[66] See Annex G: Analysis of WebPages and Web logs

iadb.org/sds. But that means approximately 32% of the studies produced by the Bank in 2005 have not been put on the web. This evaluation was not able to find statements of compelling reason for confidentiality for these studies.

5.31 The limited access granted to the studies completed, both at headquarters and field offices, documents that is clear that the Bank is not compliant with the spirit of the disclosure policy in regards to its intent to foster greater transparency, to subject the studies produced by the Bank to greater client and academic scrutiny, and to maximize their impact on knowledge generation at the client level.

VI. UTILIZATION OF STUDIES

6.1 **A study that has been produced, stored, and disseminated is still ineffective unless it has been utilized.** Measuring utilization is notoriously difficult—especially as different types of studies may be used in different ways. This problem has been compounded by the Bank not making its objectives explicit for each of the various types of studies. A first measure of utilization is acquisition (how much and what type of IDB material is sought out by users). A second relates to citation (how much of what type of information is cited by others in developing their own arguments. And a third involves a survey of relevant users regarding their utilization of Bank studies.

6.2 **Acquisition can be measured by downloads from the web.** The Bank maintains records on the 1,000 most frequently downloaded files. For the purposes of this evaluation, OVE examined the top 150 downloads in 2002 and 2005. **Table 6.1** shows that about 1/3rd of the most frequently downloaded documents were not studies, and that 61 documents had links in 2002 that no longer worked in 2005. If any of these broken links had been to studies, anyone pursuing the web reference would find no document.

Table 6.1: Top Downloads From www.iadb.org in 2002[67]

	SEP	Strategy Documents	Other study	Non-study	Broken links
Total downloads	45,418	160,437	69,900	730,700	822,975
Documents	6	13	13	49	61
Average	7,570	12,341	5,377	14,912	13,491

6.3 **Similar data from 2005 shows that downloads have increased, and utilization is shifting away from strategy and diagnostic documents towards studies.** Comparing files download data from 2005 to 2002 demonstrate important changes in the types of files downloaded (**Table 6.2**). Downloads have increased markedly, and the proportion of studies in the mix of top downloads has increased significantly.[68] Internet data suggest that utilization of studies is occurring, and trending upwards.

[67] WebTrends: Default Reports, Q1 – Q4, 2002.
[68] See Annex G: Analysis of WebPages and Web logs

Table 6.2: Top Downloads From www.iadb.org in 2005[69]

2005	SEP	Strategy Documents	Other Study	Not a study	Broken Links
Total Downloads	34,560	79,185	684,689	1,251,774	66,912
Documents	2	6	32	53	5
Average	17,280	13,198	21,397	23,618	13,382

6.4 **Usage of IDB self-published books is mixed.** IDB self-published books are sold to libraries and individuals. Using data from the 34 top selling self-publications from 1998-2006, the average IDB self-publication was sold 691 times (however some of these may be purchases made by the Bank itself). Citation of these books can be measured by requests made by Academic Departments to receive copyright permission to use sections of IDB self-publications. Of the 78 requests they have tracked, 74% come from universities in the US and Canada. Only 14% come from universities in LAC. This may suggest that IDB self-publications have limited penetration in universities in LAC.[70]

6.5 **Citations can be measured directly for articles published in journals.** Citation data from 1990-2004 (within 367 top social sciences journals) from Thomson ISI demonstrate that there is a statistically significant (at the 5% level or above) difference between the number of citations per study of the IDB and those of the WB, EBRD, and IMF (**Table 6.3**).[71] In fact, the average published study from those institutions has at least twice the citations of the average IDB study.

6.6 **Relative to some of its peers, the studies published by the IDB are not heavily utilized in journals.** An IDB study that is published (and therefore subject to more quality control than most of the other studies produced by the Bank) has a 55.5% chance of never being cited. On average, the IDB's studies receive half the citations that are expected in each journal / year, while the World Bank and EBRD perform relatively better. Finally, the IDB's studies have relatively fewer second generation cites, suggesting the people who are citing the IDB are themselves less widely read than those who cite the EBRD, IMF, and WB.

Table 6.3: Citation Analysis[72]

	ADB	AfDB	EBRD	IDB	IMF	WB
Studies Published 1990-2004	122	1	71	173	1,340	3,658
Total citations	228	0	391	343	5,458	16,485
Citations per study	1.87	0.00	5.51**	1.98	4.07*	4.51**
Average # Citations per study per author	0.84	0	2.85**	1.05	2.62*	2.56*
Probability that a study is not cited (%)	63.11	100	49.3	55.49	48.06	50.3
Over/Under Performance: average (citations / expected citations)	0.66	.	1.17**	0.54	0.71	0.89*
Average second generation citations (that also cite original)	7.04	0	18.64	8.09	19.51	24.93

* Difference between this institution and IDB significant at 5%
** Difference between this institution and IDB significant at 1%

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69 WebTrends 2005.
70 Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews
71 Thomson ISI. "*Institutional Citation Report.*" http://www.isinet.com/rsg/icr/. July 21, 2005
72 See Annex J: Author Interviews

6.7 **The IDB is most cited for its studies on economics and the environment, and the IDB's citations plateau from 1995 to 2000.** The IDB's citations jumped for studies published starting in 1995. For the next few years, citations were maintained at a slightly lower level, and then starting in 2000, the IDB's published studies received substantially fewer citations.[73] A similar pattern was observed for the time series of the average number of citations per publication.[74] As for areas of study, the IDB's publications on economics are by far the most cited. Its publications on the environment and to a lesser extent public health also perform relatively well. The IDB has barely been cited in fields such as education, agriculture, and social policy.[75]

6.8 Another search tool, Google Scholar, allows a search of citations by individual authors. RES reports that it has used the program successfully, and finds citations to the work of IDB team members. This tool requires, however, that an individual author be identified, which is very often not the case for IDB studies. Bank's lists of NFPs produced and scheduled to be produced often lacks the identification of authors, contain only the name of the Unit Chief in the author field or provide the incorrect name of the author, additionally, titles are often missing or do not correspond to the studies ultimately completed. Finally, even when name of the author and title of the study were available, Google Scholar searches need to be performed one study at a time and is not a convenient tool to measure intensity of citations controlled broadly by originating publishing Units or Organizations.

6.9 **A sample of project team leaders was surveyed regarding their utilization of studies.** They were asked to identify the most important specific sources of information they used in project preparation (**Table 6.4**). Of these sources, 31.5% came from each of the following three categories: i) the studies commissioned by the team leaders themselves, ii) external studies (for example, written by the World Bank or Universities), and iii) conversations with individuals in the team leader's personal network.

6.10 **The data suggest that project team leaders use the studies they commission directly for the project, as well as studies written by other institutions.** Team leaders then ranked the top five individual sources according to their importance to the design of the project. **Table 6.4** demonstrates that team leaders found the studies that they commissioned the most useful category of information source, but that other external studies and professional consultations with individuals are also important.

[73] See Annex J: Author Interviews, Table J3.
[74] See Annex J: Author Interviews, Table J4.
[75] See Annex J: Author Interviews, Table J6.

Table 6.4: Sources of Information Used in Project Preparation[76]

	Total Sources of information used in project preparation	Commissioned studies	Other IDB studies	External studies	Conferences	Professional Consultations
# Sources of information used in project preparation	92	29	1	29	4	29
% Of total sources	100.0%	31.5%	1.1%	31.5%	4.3%	31.5%
# Ranked in top 5	56	22	1	17	4	12
% Of ranked in top 5	100.0%	39.3%	1.8%	30.4%	7.1%	21.4%

6.11 **However, studies produced elsewhere in the Bank were rarely used to inform project preparation.** Project team leaders surveyed found only a single study produced elsewhere in the Bank that was useful for project preparation. Clearly these numbers are only rough estimates, due to the small sample size of the team leader survey, and the weak nature of Bank information systems (the IDB does not systematically track which studies informed project design). They do, however, suggest that there may be a problem regarding the utility of many Bank studies to the basic work of the Bank.

6.12 **Part of the reason for such a low reported usage of Bank studies is the absence of a culture of citation.** Other Bank studies may be used, but are invisible to team leaders because of the Bank practice of minimal citation. Stakeholders state that Management has actively discouraged citations in project documents.[77] For the projects of the team leaders surveyed by this evaluation, 73% of the loan documents did not include footnotes, and none had footnotes citing the documents and page numbers. Furthermore, 26% of the projects had no bibliography. Even the studies commissioned directly for project preparation do not cite other IDB work. A random sample of 10 studies commissioned by project team leaders contained only 2 studies with other IDB studies in their bibliographies one stakeholder stated, "It could very well be that the problem is that operations do not make adequate use of studies in general… for all the weaknesses in supply, the main problem may be in demand." Another task team leader indicated, "to rely on studies can delay project preparation." Limited usage of studies in project preparation might consequently be due to the Bank's 'Culture of Loan Approvals.[78]

6.13 **In summary, there appears to be very limited utilization of Bank studies.** Usage of IDB self-publications is mixed, journal articles received fewer than expected citations, and when preparing projects, team leaders rarely report using studies prepared elsewhere in the Bank. While it is true that not every study needs to be directly linked to a Bank loan to be relevant, it should be useful to the Bank and its clients. On the other hand, while unused studies are likely not relevant, part of the problem may be related to the quality of the projects themselves. However, to ensure the utilization, studies topics should be strategic chosen and the completed studies need to be adequately disseminated.

[76] See Annex D: Team Leader Survey
[77] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews.
[78] See Annex K: Other Stakeholder Interviews

VII. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Production

Findings:

7.1 **Studies play a key role in the new lending framework:** Given the context of net decreased financial flows to borrowing countries, the NLF calls for strengthening the Bank's analytical work to support Bank strategies, programs and projects. Studies are a key element for the Bank's results-based management and evidence-based decision-making.

7.2 **The number and cost of completed studies can only be very imprecisely estimated:** Rough estimates suggest that the Bank produces over 600 studies a year. Because of the ambiguities and inconsistencies in the data, it is impossible to determine with any accuracy from available Bank reports how many studies of what type are actually produced in any given year. Furthermore, expenditures incurred in actual studies are not known.

7.3 **Weak programming:** The Bank is not strategic about how it prioritizes potential studies. Many studies are not programmed. Supply is generally ad-hoc. Little attempt is made to validate compliance with programming decisions to ensure that programmed activities actually result in the production of the expected studies.

7.4 **Quality is an issue:** An independent assessment of IDB studies indicates that many studies are of low quality. A substantial number of studies (20%) made no use of primary or secondary data. Over half did not use a replicable, evidence-based methodology, and 3/4 did not provide policy implications that were logically consistent given the rest of the study. And as for the small subset of IDB studies that are published, the IMF and WB produce twice the publications per employee than the IDB, even though the average IDB publication is in journals of lower quality.

7.5 **Quality control process is sporadic:** Bank internal documents and stakeholder interviews suggest that the studies produced by the Bank are not systematically quality controlled. Only a fraction of IDB studies are published, and have thus been quality controlled by academic journals.

7.6 **Systems are weak:** The Bank does not systematically track the studies it has in the pipeline, or their costs. Studies are treated differently depending on how they are paid for in the budget.

7.7 **Production incentives are weak and ad hoc:** The evaluation has found several shortcomings in the Bank's system for producing studies. This is suggestive that incentives are not set strategically. And the opinions of stakeholders across the Bank also suggest incentives are not strategically set: Managers in the operational departments have incentives linked to the number and amount of loans approved, not to studies produced. The NFP process tracks only number. Authors' efforts are typically driven by personal interest, but this is counterbalanced by the stigma of being seen as 'too academic'.

Recommendations:

7.8 **Improve Programming:**

a. **The Bank in each country program, department and region should articulate clear strategic goals to guide the process of planning future studies and facilitate collaboration across departments and task managers of the studies.** The quality control function should be clearly and uniformly defined, from the profile stage to conclusion, possible publication and dissemination. In considering the profile for each proposed study, intended audiences should be clearly specified, as well as role of local institutions and clients in the implementation of the study. The intended impact of the study should be also clearly specified at all stages, and means of verification and monitoring proposed.

b. **More attention needs to be paid in the context of the country dialogue to the process of selection of studies, to encourage the production of studies that are demanded by potential users such as Bank operations, strategies, and especially country authorities**.

7.9 **Improve budgeting and monitoring information systems:**

a. **TRS codes should be standardized across the Bank, and be made hierarchical for easy aggregation, desegregation, and analysis.** Proposed and executed budgets should be tracked at the level of individual studies (including discretionary budget and staff costs). (e.g. Studies that were created for a loan preparation must be linked hierarchically to the loan).

b. **The Bank should systematically track the profiles of studies it has in the pipeline**, for all studies (including those commissioned for project preparation), from proposal to completion. The profile for each study should track the names of the managers that officially approved the study, as well as the names and institutions of each study's peer reviewers.

7.10 **Formalize the quality control process for all studies:**

a. **Require at least one peer reviewer from outside the producing department**. More important studies should have two paid peer reviewers from outside the Bank. Systematically store the written comments of the peer reviewers.

b. **Quality control processes should be formalized to ensure that the conclusion of studies is based on clearly cited evidence and replicable methods.**

7.11 **Improve incentives for the production of quality studies**. Provide project team leaders and authors with incentives regarding the commission and preparation of quality studies. The Bank personnel policy should be analyzed to ensure that professional career growth opportunities are adequate for experts who work in the preparation of analytical studies.

B. Storage and Dissemination

Findings:

7.12 **The Bank does not systematically store the studies it produces:** Institutional storage procedures are ad hoc, and compliance is limited.

7.13 **Information systems are weak, not user-friendly, and not integrated:** The Bank does not have a unique repository for its studies, many departments don't store their studies in IDBDOCS, SDS has its own repository system. Consequentially, there is no single place to simultaneously search all storage locations for IDB studies. A more detailed analysis and possible recommendations are in **Annex L: IDBDOCS Recommendations**.

7.14 **Active dissemination efforts do not occur for most Bank studies:** Dissemination strategy is not part of Concept Papers, are often ad hoc and in general not prioritized during the planning and execution of Bank studies.

7.15 **High loss rates:** A substantial fraction of the studies produced by the Bank cannot be found by any search method (including searching the archives, library, IDBdocs, Bank webpages, and asking the authors themselves). For the studies that could be found, the search costs are high. Thus employees are forced to rely on informal personal networks to find studies. Although searching is difficult, it is even more difficult to browse by categories such as country or sector.

7.16 **Noncompliance with information disclosure:** of the studies produced by the Bank in 2005, approximately one third are not on the Bank's web pages. It is not clear if each of the non-posted studies has a compelling reason for confidentiality.

Recommendations:

7.17 **Ensure the Bank's stock of studies is stored:**

a. **The Bank should ensure compliance with storing all studies it produces** in its information systems (for all sets of studies, for users in both headquarters and the country offices).

b. **The information/knowledge sources of the Bank need to subscribe to standard (possibly international) metadata rules. It should ensure that sufficient metadata about each study are entered, and that the process is user-friendly with limited transaction costs. For example,** a user-friendly web page front end would allow studies to be uploaded into IDBdocs and with the appropriate meta data, without requiring the users to know IDBDOCS).

c. **The Bank should upload its entire stock of past studies it has in electronic form** (spring cleaning week).The Bank should explore the possibility of scanning its stock of paper studies. Studies should not be sent to be the destroyed. The Bank also should integrate the systems that store the studies of all Departments and each country office.

d. **To comply with its information disclosure policy, it should ensure that all studies are posted on the Internet, unless they have a compelling reason for confidentially**. The policy should be applied to the fullest extent possible to expose the Bank's information resources to the rigors of public use, including our comparator organizations and academia.

e. **The Bank needs to establish institutional archives for its documents of enduring value (in all formats).** This would involve not only digitizing the existing paper files, but would also involve the creation of the finding aids necessary to support research as well as providing the human and other resources to select, arrange, preserve and make available the Bank's studies both for today's researchers and those of tomorrow.

7.18 **Integrate and coordinate the storage systems:**

a. **Information systems should be integrated** so that searches can be conducted in a single, user-friendly system (for both internal and external users). Searches should be conducted within IDBdocs records, but using the global search engine (which should include an advanced search according to the meta data).

b. **Information systems should be integrated so that the profiles of studies in the pipeline, as well as their costs are linked to the completed studies themselves.**

c. **The Bank should standardize its web pages**. The Bank should ensure that links to studies are maintained so they do not break over time. The web pages should be easily searchable using keywords and metadata, and it should be possible to browse for studies according to the metadata. The web pages should be designed in a way that allows external search engines to locate IDB studies.

7.19 **Include dissemination in each study's profile:** the information system containing each study's profile should also include the study's target audience(s), dissemination plans, and dissemination budgets.

7.20 **Provide incentives to project team leaders, authors** and filers regarding the storage and dissemination of studies.

C. Utilization

Findings:

7.21 **Limited utilization is driven in part by the findings above: poor quality, limited relevance, limited storage of studies, and high search costs**. It is not clear that there is a demand for many of the studies the Bank produces.

7.22 **The Bank does not routinely cite its sources of evidence:** the Bank's project documents (and some of its studies) do not include citing footnotes with pagination. This constrains the Bank's ability to ensure its decisions are based on evidence.

7.23 **Mixed utilization via the web:** downloads of studies from the web have been increasing, but only a subset of studies is available. Furthermore, the sales of self-published studies are relatively small.

7.24 **Relatively limited utilization in the academic community:** relative to the EBRD, IMF and WB, IDB studies have limited citations within the academic community. 56% of IDB journal publications have never been cited.

7.25 **Limited utilization by operations:** authors do not believe that the Bank is systematically using all of the studies they produce. Furthermore, project team leaders use only the IDB studies that they commission themselves.

7.26 **The Bank does not track the utilization of its studies.**

Recommendations:

7.27 **Ensure sources of information are cited:** the Bank should ensure that its documents use footnotes to clearly cite all internal and external sources of information, including page numbers, according to a common standard method. Ideally, the reference to a document produced by the IDB should be linked to the document and the link should be to an IDBDOCS document.

7.28 **Track the utilization of studies**

a. **The Bank should be interested in how its studies are being used, and how this utilization leads to development results**. Usage should be tracked via updates to citation analysis, reports on downloads from IDBDocs and the Internet, consults to Google Scholar and user surveys (including surveys of potential users in client countries). The Bank should collect user feedback for its studies (a rating system and comments similar to Amazon.com). A monthly report listing new studies, as well as the most downloaded studies from IDBDocs could create a competition amongst authors. This usage information could be used to rank search results.

b. **Usage should be linked to the incentives of authors.**

c. **Bibliographies of loan documents should be stored as metadata** with each document, allowing the Bank to perform citation analysis in the future.

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