Knowledge for Results

Simple Solutions for Large-Scale Institutional Reforms

IDB
Knowledge for Results (K4R)

Simple Solutions for Large-Scale Institutional Reforms
Executive Summary

This technical guide facilitates the application of the Knowledge for Results (K4R) methodology of the Innovation in Citizen Services Division of the Institutions for Development Sector (ICS/IFD) of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). K4R is a knowledge management and public innovation methodology that helps public institutions obtain better results by streamlining government processes and/or procedures and drawing from the knowledge of civil servants, firms, or third sector organizations.

Its use has helped to improve the management of various public institutions in Guatemala and Colombia—such as the Roosevelt Hospital in the former country and the National Cancer Institute (Instituto Nacional de Cancerología), National Mining Agency (Agencia Nacional de Minería, or ANM), Ombudsman (Defensoría del Pueblo), and Office of the Comptroller General (Contraloría General de la República) in the latter—with support from firms or other institutions such as banks, insurance companies, health service providers, phytosanitary agencies, and airport and hotel operators, among others. It has therefore been possible to implement public–private solutions that shorten wait times for cancer patients and optimize efficiency in procurement processes in the purchase and storage of inputs and material used in hospitals, mining revenue management capacity, and dealing with citizen complaints and requests.

The IDB has developed this guide at the request of the public institutions that have participated in applying the methodology and that consider it an extremely useful tool for driving institutional reforms in a creative and cost-efficient way. This material will enable managers, officials, and experts in knowledge management and innovation in public organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) to do two things: (i) simplify government procedures and/or processes that support service provision through the use of knowledge and innovation, and (ii) build the capacities that enable independent use of the methodology by decision makers and civil servants in the region’s public institutions.

Experts from the Administration and Organizations Research Group (Investigación en Administración y Organizaciones) at Colombia’s EAFIT University have analyzed the K4R methodology in light of the main theoretical concepts and current thinking on knowledge management. This paper, the first in the K4R series, demonstrates how public institutions in LAC have successfully transformed their management practices thanks to the application of the methodology.

The guide is divided into four sections. The first presents the main concepts of K4R; the second, its background; the third, the value-added arising from K4R application; and the fourth, the steps in the K4R implementation process.
We would like to thank Manuel Acevedo, the former dean of the Faculty of Business Administration at the EAFIT University, in Medellín, Colombia; Mariano Gentilín, coordinator of the Administration and Organizations Research Group; and, of course, Rector Juan Luis Mejía Arango, for facilitating the partnership between the IDB and the University to analyze and evaluate the K4R methodology from an academic perspective. We are also grateful to Mónica Henao Calad, Catalina Álvarez Mesa, Ana Cecilia Diez Gaviria, and Liliana Franco Giraldo, researchers in the Administration and Organizations Research Group at EAFIT University for their review of this material and their valuable theoretical and conceptual contributions.

We also wish to thank the Business Knowledge Unit, especially María Claudia de la Ossa Posada, her predecessor María Mercedes Barrera, and Daniela Randazzo. We are grateful to the managers and professionals of the companies within the Business Group of Antioquia (Grupo Empresarial Antioqueño) of Colombia, who signed up voluntarily for this initiative.

We would especially like to thank the manager of the Andean Region Group and IDB Representative in Colombia, Rafael De La Cruz, who supported innovation and allowed the application of K4R to be tested. Likewise, we thank Lea Giménez, Division Chief for ICS/IFD and the following colleagues from that division for their valuable contributions: Edgardo Mosqueira, Coordinator of the Public Sector Management Cluster; Joel Korn, Operations Senior Specialist; Sheila Grandio, Strategic Communications Coordinator; and Vanesa Montoya, consultant. The team also received valuable inputs from Martín Alessandro and Fernando Rojas, the peer reviewers for this work.

K4R is the fruit of the energy, efforts, and dreams of many professionals in the LAC region who, committed to public service, are convinced that their work can change lives. To each of you, we extend our deepest gratitude.

Acknowledgements
The team

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Ulises is an industrial engineer. He holds master's degrees in business administration from the Foundation University of the Americas, Puebla (Mexico) and in productivity management from JICA (Hachioji, Japan).

As a result of his experience as manager of innovation and institutional strengthening projects in public and private organizations for more than 28 years, he has developed his own concepts and methodologies, which go beyond the traditional focus in the areas of innovation, design of value-generation models, capacity-based management, change management for results, among others. Ulises is a K4R inventor and creator.
Citizens and firms of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) expect to be able to access public services in a simple, agile, and transparent way. For example, when they lodge a complaint, they want a fast and clear response; when paying their bills or opening a business, they wish to do so safely, without long lines or unnecessary red tape. When they need medical treatment, they expect to be seen immediately and, in emergency situations, they demand essential equipment, food, and supplies in a short time.

The State does not always have the extremely high response capacity that it should, due largely to the complexity of public service management procedures and processes. Overly ambitious or unclear goals, vague rules of operation, and contradictory or complex protocols are just a few examples of the problems that hamper the achievement of institutional aims and objectives on time and with appropriate quality. In addition to hindering achievement of positive results and reducing efficiency and effectiveness in LAC public administration, this complexity in government procedures and/or processes generates high transaction costs, slows economic growth, is fertile terrain for acts of corruption, and excludes the most vulnerable citizens.

The average time needed to complete a government procedure in the LAC region is 5.4 hours, although there are notable differences between countries. For example, while in Bolivia it takes 11.3 hours, in Chile, it takes only 2.2 hours. Added to the time taken is the problem of corruption: 29 percent (equivalent to more than 90 million) of all people in the region reported having paid a bribe related to a public service in the past year (Roseth et al., 2018).

The complexity of such bureaucracy affects investor confidence and the legal security needed to do business, which in turn affects countries’ productivity and competitiveness. According to the World Bank (2019),1 in the Andean region, for example, Colombia fell six places to occupy 65th place out of 190 countries, whereas the previous year it had occupied 59th place; Ecuador dropped 15 places in the last four years (129th in 2019 versus 114th in 2016) and is now above only Bolivia (which was in 150th place in 2019) (World Bank, 2019).

Economic growth and development in LAC countries requires improving the quality of its institutions as well as government effectiveness and

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1 In its Doing Business 2019 report, the World Bank presents an analysis of quantitative indicators of the conditions for doing business in 190 countries, which include business regulations and the protection of property rights.
“K4R is a methodology to streamline procedures and/or processes of public institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean using the knowledge available in the environment and innovation techniques.”

Despite all their efforts aimed at transforming government, LAC countries still fail to satisfy their citizens’ expectations: 80 percent of the countries’ expected results and outcomes are not achieved, while 60 percent of the middle class express dissatisfaction with basic services (McKinsey & Company, 2018). This situation becomes even more complex in emergency situations such as the one caused by COVID-19, which has brought to light that: (i) increasingly, the State must do more with less and be more effective and cost-efficient, and (ii) agile management tools and solutions that are adapted to digital environments must be developed to enhance decision making, facilitate remote access to citizen services, and ensure public transparency.

The Innovation in Citizen Services Division (ICS) of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has designed the Knowledge for Results (K4R) methodology to respond to these challenges. K4R is a knowledge management and innovation methodology that focuses on streamlining government procedures and/or processes to improve the achievement of results derived from fulfillment of the public service production chain by public institutions.

K4R revisits and further develops some of the characteristics of methodologies tested by other institutions, such as delivery chains used by centers of government and/or compliance units, the World Bank Rapid Assessments and Action Plans for Public Administration (RAAP) methodology (World Bank, 2009), and Harvard University’s Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA). It focuses its efforts, however,

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2 This Index analyzes a series of indicators that measure six dimensions of governance in more than 200 countries in the world, on a percentile scale from 0 (the lowest) to 100 (the highest). The dimensions are (i) voice and accountability, (ii) political stability and absence of violence, (iii) government effectiveness, (iv) regulatory quality, (v) rule of law, and (vi) control of corruption (World Bank, undated).

3 Understood as the simplification, standardization, elimination, optimization, and/or automation of procedures and/or processes to facilitate citizen access to the supply of public goods and services.

4 See, for example, Barber, Moffit, and Khin (2011).

5 See https://bsc.cid.harvard.edu/.
on streamlining government procedures and/or processes to create practical, realistic, sustainable, and easily implemented solutions, based on the following:

A. An analysis focused on the factors that affect the efficiency, quality, and/or effectiveness of such procedures and/or processes.6

B. An exercise in mobilizing, exchanging, and using the knowledge existing in public (state institutions), private (firms), and/or third sector organizations (universities, nongovernmental organizations, communications media, etc.), adapted to the context of the targeted public institution.

6 Although throughout the assessment stage of the procedure and/or process the macro factors are identified that can impact on service production—such as budget planning and execution, user-based approaches, political economy factors or regulatory frameworks, among others—the solutions sought by applying the methodology include micro factors (activities and/or procedures that do not add value in the process, such as delays in consultations, signing of agreements, certifications, etc.).
K4R has four guiding principles:

1. **FOCUS ON RESULTS**
   
   The methodology seeks to obtain concrete outcomes in short time periods and with minimal investment. This creates a domino effect that stimulates change and facilitates the institutionalization of solutions.

2. **LESS IS MORE: SIMPLE SOLUTIONS FOR LARGE-SCALE REFORMS**
   
   The methodology places the focus on sporadic reforms that, with minimum investment, lead to significant institutional transformations in the short term. It seeks an efficient and effective use of the institution’s resources.

3. **PEOPLE ARE AT THE HEART OF CHANGE**
   
   The methodology prioritizes the role of civil servants in institutional change and creates user-centered solutions, with the users being, in this case, officials from the public institutions that are applying K4R. This helps ensure that the effort invested is adopted and sustainable over time.

4. **AVAILABLE KNOWLEDGE MUST BE USED**
   
   The methodology catalyzes knowledge both within the institution and in the surrounding environment (in firms, universities, think tanks, civil society organizations, etc.) and promotes the creation of networks or ecosystems that can identify, adapt, and create practical, easily appropriated solutions to obtain results at the lowest possible cost. This is a win-win situation in which efforts are pooled for a common purpose: to create public value and social well-being.
By applying this methodology, public institutions obtain four products:

1. A specialized assessment made by and for the institution, which characterizes the process from beginning to end (logic, gaps, and opportunities for improvement) and includes both a present and a future perspective.

2. A designed, implemented, and evaluated pilot project that helps define and apply an operational model for immediate implementation and scalability.

3. A proposal for an optimal model with a road map and recommendations for improving the selected process in the short, medium, and long term that will help to progressively improve institutional performance.

4. Civil servants who are trained in a methodology that fully exploits the possibilities of results-based management, knowledge management, and innovation and who can be employed in different contexts of public and private administration.
Background
The IDB designed the K4R methodology based on three experiences: (i) the program to implement the External Pillar of the Medium-term Action Plan for Development Effectiveness (PRODEV), which it created in 2005 to strengthen the Management for Development Results (MfDR) capacity of borrowing member countries; (ii) the execution of K4R interventions in Guatemala 2011–2012; and Colombia 2015–2020; and (iii) the new wave of theoretical and practical developments in knowledge management and public innovation. The latter focuses on three areas: the theory of knowledge management as a key element for improving productivity in an organization (Choo, 2006; Davenport and Prusak, 1998; Nonaka and Toyama, 2007; Nonaka, Toyama, and Hirata, 2008); the development of collaborative networks of governance (network governance) to develop problem-solving strategies by incorporating knowledge and innovation (Klijm and Koopenjan, 1997; Bryson, Crosby, and Stone, 2015; Bryson, et al., 2016); and designing user-centered solutions and tackling public challenges, as currently undertaken by the public innovation laboratories and teams in Chile and Colombia.

The IDB learned two key lessons from the implementation of PRODEV:

- Knowledge is fundamental when it comes to managing the project cycle and achieving results more effectively.
- Knowledge management must be developed as a key institutional capacity in the public sector over the long term.

It also adapted three lessons from the execution of pilot interventions to apply K4R in Guatemala and Colombia

- Knowledge is an extremely valuable asset that, used appropriately, can drive rapid changes in the State at low cost and with high-impact results.

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7 For more on this subject, see García López (2005).
8 MfDR is an integrated strategy that takes into account the different elements of the management cycle (planning, budgeting, financial management, project management, and monitoring and evaluation) and the role they play in creating public value. See, for example, García López and García Moreno (2010).
9 In Guatemala, within the framework of the program to strengthen management capacities in public institutions, Coaching for Results (ATN/SF - 1213 2 - GU), an intervention was made in the Ministry of Public Health and Welfare (Ministerio de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social) to improve the procurement process at Roosevelt Hospital (ATN/SF - 12132 - GU). See Johnson et al. (2011).
10 Within the framework of operations ATN/AA-15118-CO (CGR), ATN/AA-16808-RG, and ATN/CN-16809-RG (MMME), ATN/AA-16737-CO (OPC), ATN/AA-16344-CO (PGN), seven pilot interventions were developed in Colombia to improve the process of dealing with citizens’ requests and complaints at the Office of the Comptroller General, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Ombudsman; extend mining leases and improve management of the mining portfolio at the National Mining Agency; reduce waiting times for high-risk patients at the National Cancer Institute; and optimize procurement management at the National University of Colombia.
11 See The Government Laboratory of Chile (Laboratorio de Gobierno) and the Public Innovation Team (EIP) (Equipo de Innovación Pública) at Colombia’s National Planning Department (DNP) (Departamento Nacional de Planeación).
**“Organizations share a common DNA. This implies that what is done in one or the other can be adapted to different contexts regardless of the nature of the institution—public, private, and/or third sector.”**

- Organizations share a common DNA. This implies that what is done in one or the other can be adapted to different contexts regardless of the nature of the institution—public, private, and/or third sector.

- Institutional reforms can be carried out with small-scale solutions.

Moreover, based on the new wave of theory and practice, which has motivated projects that incorporate knowledge and public innovation in modernization of the State processes, the IDB established the following:

- Applying K4R can help enrich the knowledge management and public innovation agenda in the short term.

- Knowledge and its management have become strategic themes for businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and governments. The IDB, the European Commission, the OECD, the United Nations, and the World Bank, for example, have adopted knowledge management frameworks in their strategic management and demonstrated a relationship between appropriate knowledge management and knowledge-based development (Ergazakis, Metaxiotis, and Psarras, 2004). By the same token, these theoretical developments regarding knowledge management have revealed the importance of harnessing the knowledge that already resides in people and organizations, either tacitly or explicitly, to improve an organization’s productivity and performance. Also, those working with multi-actor or collaborative governance (network governance) have demonstrated its effectiveness in tackling significant public challenges in a cost-efficient manner. This implies strengthening coordination between official institutions and finding more synergies among governments, businesses, and citizens with the aim of designing cost-effective solutions to generate greater public and social value.

Finally, the group of experts in knowledge management and innovation at Colombia’s EAFIT University\(^2\) carried out an external analysis of the methodology and reached two conclusions. First, K4R amplifies existing knowledge, rather than failing to exploit it and seeking external sources, as often happens when public institutions wish to create new processes. It therefore generates better cost performance. In other words, the State

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\(^2\) A group of specialists involved in similar lines of study as the Administration and Organizations Research Group at EAFIT’s Faculty of Business Administration.
“Knowledge is an extremely valuable asset that, used appropriately, can drive rapid changes in the State at low cost and with high-impact results.”

avoids unnecessary expenditure and exploits available knowledge to the fullest extent. Second, the K4R methodology can mobilize knowledge at zero cost because it considers the interactions between the social actors that create it and identifies critical or relevant knowledge and its subsequent use. The State can thus make use of contributions from experts in other organizations, who exchange knowledge while committing and contributing to achieving the proposed objectives. This represents an opportunity for the public sector to use such knowledge to strengthen and consolidate the conditions needed to improve performance (Henao Calad, 2018).

With respect to its contribution to the public innovation agenda, K4R complements and aligns with national public innovation strategies, as in the case of Colombia (DNP, 2018). It also helps to practically apply knowledge management in the LAC public sector.
Why Implement K4R?
K4R is an alternative for improving effectiveness and efficiency and for obtaining positive results. It is a tool to enable public institutions to rationalize the simplest unit of the service provision chain—government procedures and/or processes—with simple solutions based on knowledge, innovation, and rapid iteration. Thanks to the above, K4R can help accomplish the following:

Transform public results-based management by focusing on tackling large-scale reforms with simple solutions.

Establishing overly complex and ambitious routes of transformation makes it impossible for the State to fulfill its objectives and achieve high-impact results in the short term. K4R introduces a results-based management focus, based on simple reforms and institutional transformation derived from streamlining procedures and/or processes in light of the following five key aspects:

- Discovering what really matters to citizens, businesses, and public officials in their daily lives and making it the objective of the change.
- Targeting the transformation on achieving concrete and specific results and outcomes (less is more).
- Determining the procedures and/or processes that must be streamlined to comply with priorities and achieve the desired results.
• Anchoring institutional transformation on a baseline, on metrics- and evidence-based change analysis and a flexible and easily deployable compliance plan.

• Focusing the transformation on obtaining early victories and rapid decisions that can be replicated as large-scale models that magnify the impacts.

Government procedures and/or processes to achieve better results in a cost-efficient manner, made possible thanks to available knowledge.

Most procedure or process rationalization exercises suffer from two drawbacks: they fail to clearly understand the need for change based on results-based management and its delivery chain, and they are not based on a culture of systematic knowledge management. K4R helps streamline government procedures and/or processes by taking full advantage of the knowledge available both within and outside of public institutions, through economies of scale based on exchanging knowledge and co-creating solutions with the public, private, and third sectors. This brings multiple benefits.

First, using institutional know-how means that collaborative work schemes between different areas and hierarchical levels can be easily established and bottom-up solutions designed that ensure commitment to and involvement in the change, as well as the sustainability of the efforts. Second, because organizations share a common DNA, improvements in processes made in one of them can be very quickly adapted to another institutional context. Therefore, solutions co-created through K4R can be easily appropriated or applied by other public institutions at the country or regional level that face similar challenges.

K4R is a valuable tool that enables those responsible for administrative simplification in LAC to use knowledge in a practical and systematic way, with a view to improving results-based management. It can also help to harmonize policies to streamline procedures and/or processes that are scalable or transferable to other national or regional public institutions facing similar challenges over the medium and the long term.
K4R has helped to improve management in both Guatemalan and Colombian public institutions—such as the Roosevelt Hospital in the former country, and the National Cancer Institute, the National Mining Agency, the Ombudsman, and the Office of the Comptroller General in the latter—with support from businesses or other institutions such as banks, insurance companies, health service providers, phytosanitary agencies, and airport and hotel operators, among others. It has thus been possible to implement public–private solutions that have shortened wait times for cancer patients and optimized efficiency in procurement processes, the purchase and storage of inputs and materials used in hospitals, the capacity to manage mining revenues, and the processing of citizen complaints and requests.

Annex 1 presents a summary of some of the interventions carried out and the results achieved.
After several years of K4R implementation, it has been possible to establish the lessons learned and remaining challenges for continuous improvement of this methodology. These include the following:

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**Sustainability**

Targeted pilot interventions are very effective in demonstrative terms, but they should be designed in such a way that they can be incorporated satisfactorily into the organizational culture and have mechanisms to maintain the results and the defined mode of operation. To this end, the institution’s planning and human resources teams must become increasingly involved, thereby ensuring stronger adherence to the arrangements and the institutional culture.

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**In-house involvement and accountability**

K4R application has established that change and adoption processes are much simpler when civil servants from all hierarchical levels are part of the solution and they can freely and openly present the results achieved.

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**Knowledge hubs and multi-actor innovation**

Collaborative work between the public, private, and third sectors must be systematic and based on a platform of permanent dialogue, focused on a common aim—generating public value—that encourages synergies. Moreover, the interventions have demonstrated that collaboration generates a mutual learning process in which the private sector sets a benchmark for best practices, and the public sector and its dynamics can also be very useful and adapt to private and/or third sector operation.

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**Capacities for applying the methodology over the long term**

There is an increasing need to appropriately train civil servants in the methodology, either to apply it in their day-to-day work or in longer-term institutional reform processes. This guide hopes to contribute to that purpose.
K4R operates under traditional project management logic (planning, design, implementation, and evaluation) and is developed over six stages. Although the time needed for each intervention depends on institutional conditions (political will, commitment, counterpart team, etc.), the average duration of K4R implementation ranges from between four and eight months.
The following table details the stages of K4R:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLANNING</th>
<th>DESIGN</th>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION and EVALUATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Stage 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Stage 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SCOPE AND SET-UP</td>
<td>ASSESSMENT</td>
<td>MOBILIZATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strategic, managerial, and operational</td>
<td>game-based, practical</td>
<td>public–private knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3 MONTHS</td>
<td>1 - 3 MONTHS</td>
<td>1 - 2 MONTHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>KICK-OFF</td>
<td>LEARNING</td>
<td>ADAPTATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and definition of the scope of the intervention.</td>
<td>based on exchange of know-how and practical, personal, and organizational experiences.</td>
<td>of ideas to tackle public problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT AND HOW</td>
<td>IN-HOUSE EXPERTS</td>
<td>WHAT OTHERS DO AND HOW THEY DO IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining the intervention’s horizon and objectives.</td>
<td>Civil servants know their institution inside-out—what works and what does not.</td>
<td>Firms or public institutions face the same dilemmas and will surely have identified successful alternatives for resolving them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF IT WORKS, CARRY ON!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive results drive adoption of solutions.</td>
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</table>

**IN PRACTICE**

- Evaluation of the highest authority’s interests and priorities.
- Choosing the work team: the IDB and its counterpart.
- Definition of the scope and focus of the process to be improved.
- Conceptual and methodological transfer by the IDB and professional training tailored to the institutional context.
- Institutional assessment characterizing the selected process and identifying gaps that affect performance.
- Definition of current capacities and identification of opportunities for improvement.
- Identification of needs and public, private, and/or third sector sources of knowledge that could participate.
- Management of partnerships with the relevant public, private, and/or third sector actors.
- Development of knowledge transfer and exchange and/or co-creation workshops with public, private, or third sector partners.
- Definition of a pilot project, applying solutions such as:
  1. Techniques existing in the institution that could be applied to adjust the process.
  2. Adaptation of previous experiences implemented by the partners participating in the process.
  3. New ideas that could possibly be implemented.
- An experimentation exercise is carried out over a period of time and operation of the designed solutions is analyzed.
- Metrics are generated that can express the achieved results.
- After measuring the results, the institution is encouraged to implement officially the successful solutions to ensure their adoption and sustainability.
- Documentation of the process showing the results of the pilot. This is analyzed in light of an optimal short-, medium- and long-term operating model that integrates the action plan identified in the assessment.
- The IDB writes a managerial report that includes results and findings for institutional decision making.
Stage 1. Scope and Set-up

The first stage consists of preparing the institutional conditions for developing an intervention, beginning with a planning and management exercise at the strategic, managerial, and operational levels. This phase is divided into three steps:

**STEP I Ensure institutional commitment at the highest level.**

The priorities of the highest authority must be identified, and a leader chosen from senior management with the decision-making capacity to ensure the commitment and political will to adopt the required changes and achieve the expected results. A management team (consisting of one or more civil servants from the technical level, delegates, and/or volunteers) must also be selected to guarantee that the operational and logistical conditions will be present throughout the intervention.

**STEP II Define the scope of the intervention.**

To define the scope, the highest-priority problems must be identified, as well as those whose solution will generate the greatest possible impact in terms of results and/or improvement in the quality of procedures and service provision for citizens. The following two actions must be taken:

1. Select one process in which to intervene from among the priorities defined by the authority and its team.
2. Define the objectives, their relevance, and the action plan proposed to address the process: establish time frames, activities, and the people responsible.
STEP III  Transferring the methodology.

The IDB transfers the K4R focus to standardize the main methodological concepts and aspects. In this way it seeks to ensure appropriate theoretical uptake and complete understanding of the exercise to be applied in the institution. It carries out the transfer at two points: while training civil servants in the methodology and during the theoretical and practical application.

“From this moment on, collective knowledge-building gets underway through interaction within the organization. According to the theory of organizational knowledge creation, this scope and set-up helps identify institutional know-how (what is available and what is not) and facilitates the standardization of concepts and development of a common language, thereby creating empathies and establishing conditions for the optimal development of future projects.” (Henao Calad, 2018).

Stage 2. Assessment

The second stage consists of elaborating an institutional assessment based on a characterization of the business model (that is, how the organization is set up to generate value) and data mining to determine the state of the selected process and analyze the changes or adjustments that need to be implemented.\(^\text{13}\)

The IDB leads this exercise with the guidance of the highest authorities and support from the management team, but the officials involved in the day-to-day management of the process participate actively in identifying the main bottlenecks, the problems that affect process operation, and the opportunities for improvement to resolve them, using their knowledge and experience to the fullest.

Based on this institutional analysis, the IDB determines the most appropriate data collection technique or method for applying the

\(^{13}\) Elements are taken from the process mapping and reengineering methodology (Business Process Reengineering). See, for example, Mohapatra (2013).
assessment. To apply the assessment, advised by experts, the IDB evaluates the analysis of the institutional context to define the best data-gathering technique and/or method. The following are some alternatives:

### A sampling of the techniques used

The IDB team of experts is specialized in elaborating this type of assessment, using techniques such as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown Paper</td>
<td>An analytical tool that lays out in a visual, sequential, and detailed way all of the activities, procedures, policies, and information that are part of a process. It enables the exchange of ideas and facilitates identification of problems and possible solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical analysis of capacity</td>
<td>A tool for evaluating the performance and maturity of the capacities required for a given process. Capacities are analyzed based on the processing of information on a percentage scale of 0 to 100.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lego Serious Play</td>
<td>The construction of strategies in real time to create effective solutions to any problem. It is derived from scientific research based on constructionism and constructivism, and is linked to the way that adults resolve problems. This tool was developed by the LEGO® company, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Lausanne University (Switzerland).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamification</td>
<td>The application of elements and mechanisms that belong to the world of play that, through planning and experimentation exercises, seek to modify people's conduct to promote change and innovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play, creativity, art, and cultural diversity</td>
<td>The application of artistic and cultural techniques such as music, theater, cinema, gastronomy, and the mechanical arts, among others, to facilitate leadership training, effective communication, and digital transformation processes. The objective is to improve the organizational climate and the value chain and to strengthen abilities such as empathy, empowerment, critical thinking, and problem solving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional coaching</td>
<td>With a view to addressing aspects associated with human talent, personalized or group activities are designed and/or led by teams that are expert in coaching, learning, and development, or team training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This stage is divided into two steps:

**STEP I Description and analysis of the current situation.**

This step begins with an analysis of the institutional context of the process. The analysis emerges from the collection and processing of qualitative and quantitative information and a review of primary and secondary sources, including official studies and data, systems, archives, surveys, chats, and/or discussion workshops.

This exercise helps to: (i) discover how the institution operates, (ii) identify clear and quantifiable gaps that detract from the organization’s performance, and (iii) establish a closure plan and/or approach plan to bridge the identified gaps. In this step, there are five key activities, outlined below.

### 1 > MAKING A DRAWING OF THE PROCESS

This means rebuilding the complete map of the process and its operation in a participatory way, through visual thinking and gaming techniques and based on the following key questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY QUESTIONS</th>
<th>HOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How does the process currently operate from beginning to end?</td>
<td>Graphic survey of the process to enable the work team to understand the logic, configuration, and characteristics of the current operation. Reconstruction of the sequence of execution of process activities, as well as of the concepts, definitions, policies, rules, criteria, and norms that regulate it. The actors that intervene in the operation must also be identified, as well as the estimated project execution period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should the process be to comply with the institution’s mission and achieve the expected results?</td>
<td>Once the process has been drawn up, technical discussions are held to enable civil servants to consider the map of opportunities and to identify the micro-opportunities that can be adjusted quickly and practically and that, in turn, will generate better organizational performance more aligned with the institutional mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would the ideal process, or the future process, be like?</td>
<td>Finally, the technical discussions use techniques to stimulate disruptive thinking about the institution’s future and about how the targeted process should or could contribute to that objective.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 K4R seeks to rationalize procedures and/or processes by proposing practical solutions that generate results irrespective of the rigidities present in institutional contexts (budgetary, regulatory, governance, etc.).
2 > ANALYZING THE CAPACITIES NEEDED FOR THE PROCESS TO OPERATE

Information must be collected to evaluate the current state of three dimensions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE</th>
<th>HUMAN TALENT AND CULTURE</th>
<th>INFRASTRUCTURE AND ICT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What is the logic behind the way that the organizational units/areas are grouped?</td>
<td>• What is the existing level of competencies (knowledge, abilities, experience, and skills)?</td>
<td>• Is the functionality of the system sufficient to support process management?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How are responsibilities distributed within the process?</td>
<td>• How willing are the personnel to embrace change?</td>
<td>• Is the functionality of the system sufficient to support process integration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How are workloads monitored within the process?</td>
<td>• How accustomed are the officials participating in the process to working in teams?</td>
<td>• Is the functionality of the system sufficient to support information storage and management?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is the degree of process centralization or decentralization?</td>
<td>• How committed are staff to participating in the process to achieve the process objectives?</td>
<td>• Is the functionality of the system sufficient to support virtual operation of the process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How can it be guaranteed that actors from different organizational units/areas are integrated and communicate with each other?</td>
<td>• What is the degree of motivation and sense of belonging among the work team?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are the decision-making mechanisms within the current structure?</td>
<td>• How proactive are staff when it comes to improvement and innovation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 > ANALYZING THE BEHAVIOR OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: DATA FOR CHANGE

Data must be gathered that can reveal the behavior of performance indicators associated with the process and its dimensions. This analysis is crucial, as it focuses the intervention on concrete data that can establish and measure results. In this way it will be possible to:

- Analyze historical information.
- Identify patterns and trends.
- Establish baselines (when applicable) regarding expected behaviors or standards of reference for the intervention.
- Establish goals and objectives: identify the quantitative or qualitative gaps between current and expected behaviors. (Wherever pertinent, make calculations to convert these gaps into financial impact.)
- Establish who is responsible for generating information on the process.
- Determine the mechanisms for systematizing information reporting.
- Deliver a managerial report for decision-making purposes.

4 > IDENTIFY THE MAIN INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT PROCESS PERFORMANCE

Based on the data collected, the problems, barriers, and causes that detract from performance must be identified. Then, elements to be created or strengthened can be selected to improve performance (activities that add value) and other elements can be eliminated, simplified, or reconfigured because they inhibit optimal performance (those that do not add value).

5 > IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THE PROCESS

In the final step, the team analyzes the findings of the assessment and proposes opportunities for improvement in each case. The opportunities are set out in an action plan and prioritized by their level of complexity, benefits, required resources, and time needed for their implementation (immediate, early victories, and short, medium, and long term). This action plan will be used to design the best possible operating model at the end of the process.
STEP II  Identification and selection of early victories.

The IDB work team and management present and validate the main findings (situation, problems, and opportunities) to the process leader to build understanding and a common approach to the situation. As opportunities can be wide-ranging and ambitious, the team selects only one of them with the aim of obtaining early victories.

Then, a pilot exercise is undertaken to achieve rapid results with solutions requiring minimal investment. This pilot is managed as a micro project with various elements: (i) challenge, objective, and route; (ii) indicators and metrics; and (iii) workplan. Moreover, it uses knowledge already existing in the institution or the environment (Stage 3) to come up with different solutions that can effectively tackle the selected challenge (Stage 4). This pilot seeks to create a demonstration effect that can showcase the achievement of immediate results and encourage adoption of the methodology in different cases. The exercise requires two activities:

1 > IDENTIFY THE CHALLENGE TO BE ADDRESSED

For example, dealing more quickly with citizen information requests or improving timely access to medication for cancer patients, among others.

2 > PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE PLAN TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGE (SCOPE OF THE PILOT PROJECT)

To ensure the success of the test, details must be given of how, when, where, and why the identified challenge will be tackled. In general, concepts must be standardized, and data cleansed during this activity to clearly establish the baseline (before) and the expected results or impacts (after) derived from the experiment.

“These identification and diagnostic activities are considered as knowledge processes that nurture one of the initial phases in order to act effectively and manage organizational knowledge for two purposes: (i) provide basic information that will help to program specific actions and (ii) provide a snapshot of the situation that can be used to select the appropriate process, strategies and tools to use. Moreover, the results of the diagnostic act as a unit of analysis and synthesis of the current situation of organizational knowledge, which is in permanent construction.” (Henao Calad, 2018).
Stage 3. Knowledge Mobilization

This stage involves setting up a knowledge ecosystem that creates the conditions needed to initiate experimentation with the pilot project. During this process, four sources of knowledge can be exploited:

- Institutional practices: plans, programs and projects, digital repositories, technical guidelines, documentation of experiences, best practices, and lessons learned, among others.

- Civil servants are understood to be knowledgeable people who create their own experience and, at the same time, generate learning processes through their day-to-day actions within the institution.

- Citizens: knowledgeable people who interact with public institutions and their officials through citizen participation processes, such as petitions, complaints, requests, and suggestions (PCRS), oversight, interviews and public consultation processes, or who, in some cases, participate in knowledge transfer and/or co-creation.

- Other institutions (public or private) that have capitalized their organizational knowledge and sometimes achieved the level of expert with consolidated models that can be transferred and replicated in other places, sectors, or institutions (Henao Calad, 2018).
This stage is developed in two steps:

**STEP I  Identify and define strategic partnerships.**

IDB knowledge management experts identify the sources of knowledge that can be used, based on the challenge (what, how, where, and why). Here, the IDB plays two essential roles:

- It identifies and selects the public or private organizations, either within or outside of the sector, that have developed similar management practices and whose knowledge should be mobilized to contribute to the improvement process.

- It manages partnerships with other institutions willing to freely share and transfer their own knowledge about the issues and needs identified.

**STEP II  Prepare the exchange.**

Once the project team has enlisted strategic public, private, or third sector partners, the following two activities must be carried out:

- **Contextualize exchange within the framework of the intervention.** Technical sessions are held to standardize the K4R methodological concepts, the institutional context, and the intervention to be carried out (at both the strategic and the operational level).

- **Define the knowledge exchange activities.** Participants agree on a work agenda, setting out the issues needing to be addressed, the activities to develop, and the experts who will take part.

“In light of the theory of knowledge management, considering the interactions that take place among different social actors that create and/or produce knowledge, and identifying critical or relevant knowledge and its subsequent exploitation is, in itself, a means of knowledge mobilization. For the State, this mobilization is of zero cost whenever expert knowledge is available from other organizations that, by exchanging, commit and contribute to the achievement of the proposed objectives. Zero cost knowledge exchange within public institutions, between public institutions or between private and public institutions represents an opportunity for the public sector, given that, with this knowledge, the conditions for improving performance are strengthened and consolidated.” (Henao Calad, 2018).
Stage 4. Conception

The fourth stage involves inventing a creative design process to experiment and create solutions and/or tools capable of achieving the desired outcomes. To this end, it makes use of the know-how and knowledge of civil servants with respect to their own institution, its dynamics, and arrangements, as well as the knowledge acquired throughout the entire experimentation process.

The solutions follow an operating model scheme that ensures logical and operational consistency, thereby helping to improve the process according to the challenge set. This stage is developed in a single step:

**STEP I Design solutions based on knowledge exchange.**

Exchange takes place in collaborative spaces and environments (in a workshop format and/or in-person or virtual chat rooms) to transfer knowledge and/or create solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>WHAT IS IT?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>The public, private, or third sector partners joining the project pool their experiences concerning matters of interest, problems, and/or opportunities for improvement identified by the institution during the assessment stage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Creation  | With the help of the IDB and the management team, civil servants, and the public, private, or third sector partners jointly invent solutions that may resolve the issues identified by the institution during the assessment stage. Solutions may be found in several ways:  
  - In-house. The civil servants define the strategies, exploiting institutional know-how.  
  - Co-creation with public, private, or third sector partners. The civil servants and partners jointly design solutions, adapting existing practices and/or inventing new tools based on their experience. |
Stage 5. Steering and Results Measurement

The proposed solutions require a pilot project to check whether they are effective or need adjustments. This experimentation process is fundamental to organizational analysis and decision making. A trial-and-error approach does not cause frustration, but rather opens up opportunities and naturally encourages officials to make the project a success. This stage is developed in two steps:

**STEP I  Monitoring, practice review, and adjustments (if necessary).**

The civil servant team involved in the process implements the solution(s) created during the pilot test period, while the management team monitors the exercise. Specifically, it monitors the operation of the proposed solutions and the behavior of the agreed result indicators. The management team leads review and operational balance meetings to monitor the practice in real time and, if necessary, make progressive adjustments, with specialist advice from the public, private, or third sector partners and/or the IDB.

**STEP II  Closure of the test project: results, lessons learned, and conclusions.**

Once the test is over, the IDB brings in an external evaluation team (technical and/or academic) to measure and analyze objectively the quantitative and qualitative process results. Then, the management team, along with the IDB, presents the results to the leader and to the institution’s highest authority, for knowledge and decision-making purposes.

“K4R develops a focus that is based on collective practice, joint construction and collaborative work between public and private organizations as a way of improving institutional performance in the public sector. It starts from the premise that people create knowledge, which is then expanded and exists within organizations as an intangible value. Insofar as the capacity to share knowledge is developed, then other capacities are also strengthened, such as creativity, innovation and the timely implementation of rapid and effective solutions.” (Henao Calad, 2018).
Stage 6. Intervention Implementation and Closure

The final stage consists of carrying out activities to ensure the implementation, sustainability, and internal and external communication of the intervention. It has two main aims: (i) for the institution to officially adopt the solution created by the team and incorporate it into its day-to-day operations and (ii) for the institution to have a longer-term road map that can be used for future planning and/or institutional transformation processes. This stage is divided into three steps, detailed below.

**STEP I  Defining the final operational model and providing support to institutionalize the process.**

The IDB integrates all of the information collected from the process into a technical and managerial report that provides the institution with a comprehensive institutional record and a road map for implementing both the solutions that emerge from the pilot exercise (operational model) and an optimal model. The latter contains all the elements required for adjusting the process, opportunities for improvement action plan, pilot project outcomes, and recommendations for decision making by the institution.

**STEP II  Sustainability.**

The IDB helps the institutional team (leader, manager, and participants) identify the necessary actions—political, technical, or regulatory—to ensure the sustainability of the efforts invested. Moreover, a closing workshop is held to present the results and the actions that must be relayed to the institution’s highest authority to ensure broad adoption of the solutions.

**STEP III  Documenting and reporting the practice.**

The final step involves systematizing the process in an informative way, describing the case, and highlighting the main outcomes, practices, and lessons learned for the general public. The IDB carries out this process by bringing in academic specialists and/or experts in producing such materials. Finally, results are reported at the local and regional levels, using the available channels of communication, with a view to sharing knowledge of this type of case with stakeholders and citizens.
References


DNP (Departamento Nacional de Planeación). 2018. Hacia una Estrategia de Innovación Pública en Colombia. Bogota, Colombia: DNP. Available at: https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/227/Prensa/Presentaci%C3%B3n%20Hacia%20una%20Estrategia%20de%20Innovaci%C3%B3n%20P%C3%BAblica.pdf.


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### ANNEX 1. Results of K4R Interventions in Colombia

The estimates presented here are the product of analysis conducted ex-ante and during the process, and an ex-post cost–benefit analysis, all carried out by the IDB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>NATIONAL MINING AGENCY (ANM) COLOMBIA</th>
<th>OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL (CGR) COLOMBIA</th>
<th>OMBUDSMAN COLOMBIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCOPED AND SET-UP</strong></td>
<td>• The ANM decided to undertake process re-engineering to improve its institutional performance and service provision to mining rights holders and citizens.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 31 procedures were collectively evaluated and analyzed by around 20 civil servants (directors and process managers).</td>
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<td>• They decided to analyze in depth the contract stage amendment process.</td>
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<td>• It was decided to analyze the mining resource financial management process.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Within the framework of a technical cooperation with the IDB, the CGR decided to revise the citizen complaints management process.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The DPC receives an average of 120,000 citizen requests annually, with an average response time of 60 days.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It was decided to analyze the citizen requests management process, with the aim of improving response times, focusing on a specific sector and on some of the regional offices to test and eventually scale up to the national level.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ASSESSMENT</strong></td>
<td>• The validated assessment led the ANM to intervene in the most critical stage of this process: the extension of mining rights.</td>
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<td>• Managing this procedure took, on average, 568 days, which affected project continuity and thus the payment of economic compensation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The validated assessment led the ANM to intervene in the most critical stage of this process: mining portfolio management.</td>
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<td>• In 2017, the ANM had an estimated portfolio of approximately COP 297,000 million, with a risk of increase due to the lack of a management model.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The mining portfolio consists of five themes: ground rent, royalties, economic compensation, pecuniary sanctions, and fines. Despite the fact that these themes comprise the portfolio, institutional management is fragmented in three areas.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The CGR receives a high volume of citizen complaints, which are not answered within the legal time frame and with appropriate quality. This is due, among other factors, to the presence of shortcomings and activities without value-added in the CGR complaints management process.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Likewise, these complaints are not used as an input to stimulate fiscal control activities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The validated assessment led the institution to focus on intervening in health requests, which had the highest volume and complexity, and would be a representative sample for scaling up to the national level or in other sectors.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MOBILIZATION</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge transfer: Lean manufacturing concept (IDB expert). ANM team know-how.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Knowledge transfer and co-creation: Two professionals from the country’s principal private bank (Bancolombia) participated in six knowledge transfer and co-creation of solutions workshops (18 hours) to:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Define the stages of management of past due accounts.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Determine the main activities for each stage of management.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Identify the main quantitative analysis instruments.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Analyze the portfolio according to depth and maturity.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Mechanisms for the recovery of portfolio (call script and model of communication for payment reminders).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge transfer: Lean manufacturing concept (IDB expert). CGR team know-how.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Knowledge transfer and co-creation: The manager of the Regional Cundinamarca private healthcare provider, EPS SURA, participated in three workshops on knowledge transfer and co-creation of solutions (nine hours in total) to:</td>
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<td>• Characterize the request management process, its main gaps, and people responsible.</td>
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<td>• Identify and define a citizen help protocol.</td>
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<td>• Characterize users and create standardized citizen care forms.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Define a governance model that integrates the delegations and regional offices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHALLENGE 1: Improve mining lease extension times.</td>
<td>CHALLENGE 2: Recover the mining portfolio.</td>
<td>CHALLENGE: Improve response times at the citizen complaints help desk.</td>
<td>CHALLENGE: Reduce the response times at the citizen requests help desk.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| PILOT: Creation and launch of a group of experts in mining rights amendments, applying the cellular manufacturing model, to reduce lease extension times. Created with in-house knowledge of ANM officials. | PILOT PROJECT: design and implementation of a past due accounts management strategy, experimenting with a regional help desk (Bucaramanga) and adapting the experience of Bancolombia to the institutional context. The pilot was developed in two phases:  
- Structuring of a past due accounts portfolio management strategy without payment agreement (from March to June 2018).  
- Structuring of a past due accounts portfolio management strategy with payment agreements (July-December 2018). |  | PILOT: Design and launch of a strategy to improve quality control of complaints management process. |
| TOOLS: Design and implementation of three types of procedures:  
- Ensure compliance with minimum requirements in handling requests, from the moment of reception at the ANM help desks, to reduce possible refunds and future administrative burden.  
- Prioritize requests according to the need to manage each mine right.  
- Monitor priority processes to ensure greater speed in responding to requests, thereby avoiding future congestion. |  | TOOLS:  
- Questionnaire to evaluate complaints handling, including manner, time, and place.  
- Mechanisms for requesting information from entities and citizens.  
- Adjustment of procedures for managing transfers, complaints referrals and substantive attention and response. |  |
|  | TOOLS:  
- Procedures for sending reminders before setting a predetermined value.  
- Model for requesting payment of overdue accounts.  
- Call script for the call center that handles calls from mining rights holders.  
- Model of negotiation with mining rights holders.  
- Methodology for identifying the depth and maturity of the entity’s entire portfolio, and rapid cleaning actions to support decision making by the portfolio committee. |  | TOOLS:  
- Standard email response forms (non-signature).  
- Governance model at the national level, by creating a support group enabling ombudsman delegations to respond to professional consultations by citizens (mobile phone/email).  
- Elimination of physical signature to facilitate email transactions. |
| IMPLEMENTATION AND CLOSURE | STEERING AND MEASUREMENT | MEASUREMENT AND CLOSURE |  |
| • A net saving of 568 days was made with respect to the previous situation (with group support, the procedure took 180 days).  
• Efficiency was improved by 50 percent by reducing the number of departments involved in managing lease extensions (from 14 to 7).  
• Technical and legal criteria related to the procedures were harmonized, which significantly improved their management. | • USD 24.5 million recovered (27 percent of the mining portfolio) in one month at the regional help desk regional (Bucaramanga).  
• Signing of the first payment agreement (historical) for US$90,000 and negotiation of six agreements worth COP 468,000.  
• 14 out of 23 overdue mining rights cancelled for failure to make payments. | • To document this experience, a partnership was established with the innovation and knowledge management group from the EAFIT Faculty of Business Administration.  
• In 2018, the results were presented to the director of the Harvard School of Government and at the annual meeting (Chile) of Red Pilares, a network of business administration postgraduates from Latin America and the Caribbean, of which EAFIT is a member.  
• On April 22 and 23, 2019, this experience was presented at the first regional IDB forum on transparency and governance for the extractive industries (Washington, DC).  
• The ex-post cost/benefit analysis of the intervention determined that, thanks to the support of Bancolombia, the ANM saved around COP 168 million in consultancy services, at zero cost. | • Response times for citizen complaints improved by 42 percentage points (from 45 percent in 2015 to 87 percent in 2018).  
• After conducting an internal survey of the process, 82 percent of those questioned considered that the solution would help significantly to improve the timeliness of both procedural and substantive response to citizen complaints. |
|  | • Reduction of internal management times by 70 percent.  
• Response times reduced by 50 percent. |  | • Reduced correspondence costs.  
• Reduction in paper consumption. |