

TECHNICAL NOTE N° IDB-TN-02961

# Unveiling the IDB's Project Executing Units

## Performance Indicators, Results-Based Management, and Demand for Knowledge

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Services Office

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**Cataloging-in-Publication data provided by the  
Inter-American Development Bank  
Felipe Herrera Library**

Unveiling the IDB's project executing units: performance indicators, results-based management, and demand for knowledge / Camilo Acosta, Gina Cambra, José Martínez-Carrasco, Maikol Cerda, Minji Kang, Harold Villalba, María Consuelo Yépez.

p. cm. — (IDB Technical Note; 2961)

Includes bibliographical references.

1. Economic development projects-Management-Latin America. 2. Economic development projects-Management-Caribbean Area. 3. Knowledge management-Latin America. 4. Knowledge management-Caribbean Area. 5. Project management. I. Acosta, Camilo. II. Cambra, Gina. III. Martínez, José. IV. Cerda, Maikol. V. Kang, Minji. VI. Villalba, Harold. VII. Yépez, Consuelo. VIII. Inter-American Development Bank. Knowledge and Learning Division. IX. Inter-American Development Bank. Office of Strategic Planning and Development Effectiveness. X. Inter-American Development Bank. Operations Financial Management and Procurement Services Office. XI. Series.

IDB-TN-2961

<http://www.iadb.org>

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### **Abstract\***

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The implementation of Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) projects rests with the borrowers through project executing units (PEUs), where the strong collaboration, capacity, and commitment of all stakeholders, including other government entities, are paramount to achieving results. This technical note highlights the potential approaches the IDB can adopt to promote results ownership among borrowers and PEUs. Observations Results are based on a comprehensive survey of 36 PEUs from the public sector that examines motivations, internal key performance indicators, proactive engagement levels in achieving development outcomes, and needs for IDB knowledge and technical support in project execution. Three key insights emerge among the findings. First, while PEUs extensively utilize key performance indicators to gauge performance, there remains a predominant focus on monitoring products rather than development outcomes. Second, to instill ownership of key results, a deeper understanding of impact-achievement management through timely discussions on the project theory of change is imperative. Finally, while all PEUs acknowledge the value of lessons and findings from previous projects and maintain mechanisms for documentation, utilization of this evidence is still limited.

**JEL Codes:** F53, O19, O22, O54

**Keywords:** executing units, performance, project management, knowledge, development effectiveness

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\* The authors thank Lorena Rodríguez Bu, Adela Barrio Sarmiento, María Eugenia Roca, and all participants of the SPD Open House 2024 for their valuable comments, as well as the IDB Client Connectivity team for their collaboration in designing the survey and making information available.

# 1. Introduction

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) aims to boost development effectiveness in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region by “[focusing] on progress against results and impact indicators, adjusting approaches based on this feedback” (IDB Group, 2024: x). Currently, the IDB assesses the success of these approaches upon project completion through a standardized evaluation of how well the objectives—established during the design phase—have been achieved. These objectives are quantified through a Project Completion Report (PCR) using specific results indicators, ensuring a measurable and structured approach to evaluating impact.

Previous literature has examined the factors contributing to the success or failure of IDB-projects utilizing project management data (see Álvarez et al., 2021 and Corral et al., 2022). Studies cite critical dimensions, such as disbursements and product cancellations, to explain project effectiveness. The IDB's Office of Evaluation and Oversight (OVE) has documented important factors affecting the success of projects, such as the country's political landscape, coordination challenges, and low institutional capacity of some project executing units (PEUs) (Corrales and Alvarez, 2013; Piza et al., 2012; Suarez et al., 2015). However, it is important to further examine the role of clients, specifically the PEUs, to understand the factors behind the results.

Government teams, including individuals from existing public officials or consultants explicitly hired for the project, serve as the PEUs in the execution of the projects. The PEUs are not typically involved in the initial design phase, which is when the IDB team usually sets the primary objectives. This lack of involvement can lead to a misalignment between the Bank's goals and those of the PEUs tasked with execution.

During the execution phase, the IDB employs various tools to oversee the progress and how it aligns with the government agreements, including the Project Monitoring Report (PMR) and portfolio review meetings. These mechanisms primarily focus on disbursement achievements and output progress rather than on attaining tangible results and impacts. Consequently, discussions between governments and IDB teams often revolve more around financial expenditures than the actual effectiveness of the interventions. Achieving results is contingent upon project implementation on the ground, which the PEUs manage. In this context, full awareness, accountability, and commitment to the development goals from all parties involved is pivotal to successful outcomes. In essence, all stakeholders, including the PEUs, share the responsibility for development effectiveness.

As part of the IDB's Client Connectivity initiative, this study examines pertinent characteristics of the PEUs, such as their overall composition, awareness of development effectiveness, ability to access knowledge, and management practices. With a deeper understanding of these issues, the IDB can intervene to foster results ownership among these units.

To study these issues, a comprehensive survey was conducted of 36 PEUs that are part of the IDB Client Portal, a technological tool that allows them access to pertinent project information. The survey examines the units' motivations, internal performance indicators, proactive engagement level in achieving development outcomes, and demands for IDB knowledge and technical support in project execution. The findings are grouped into four subsections with the following focuses: (i) PEU managerial practices and their perceptions of successful performance; (ii) PEU understanding and application of the concept of development effectiveness; (iii) relevance and use of knowledge among units during their operation; and (iv) IDB Client Portal and other relevant contractual requirements used to monitor PEUs.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Although our sample covers around 80 percent of all executing units inside the Client Portal, they constitute around 10 percent of all PEUs executing IDB projects. The present work is meant as motivation for future and more representative rounds of the survey.

This introduction highlights four findings. First, while PEUs extensively utilize their own indicators to measure performance and results, there is a predominant focus on monitoring products and disbursement rather than development outcomes. Second, encouraging a deeper understanding of impact-achievement management through discussions on the projects' theory of change is imperative to implant PEUs' ownership of key results and impact. Third, all PEUs recognize the importance of documenting evidence from previous projects (i.e., lessons, findings, and training), and most maintain mechanisms for doing so. However, less than half of the units who responded to the survey actually use such evidence. Fourth, preliminary findings indicate that the IDB Client Portal effectively serves its purpose of providing convenient access to pertinent project information.

Following these highlights, Section 2 examines existing literature on the role of PEUs in achieving satisfactory execution performance, while Section 3 outlines the data collection methodology and describes the PEU sample. Section 4 presents the main findings and specific observations, and finally, Section 5 concludes and outlines the next steps for future research.

## 2. Related Literature

While it was not possible to find studies that address how PEUs' priorities and managerial practices influence project outcomes, much of the literature examines the general factors that contribute to project success and execution performance. This section synthesizes key findings, underscoring the contribution of the present work.

The objective of development assistance is to achieve tangible outcomes.<sup>2</sup> Previous literature has examined the determinants of project success, highlighting the dependence on solid design and seamless execution, minimizing deviation from the initial plan. For example, using data for IDB projects, Álvarez et al. (2021) find evidence that higher-quality results matrices and evaluation plans can determine project effectiveness and success. Their study reveals that projects that cancel 20 percent or more of their original approved loan amount and encounter deviations from their initial plans in both physical and financial progress during the initial three-year execution period are more prone to be ineffective in achieving their objectives. Additionally, projects with a higher rate of output discontinuation compared to the startup plan are more likely to be deemed unsuccessful.<sup>3</sup>

Prior literature demonstrates that execution poses unexpected challenges and larger deviations from the original plans diminish the likelihood of project effectiveness in achieving their development goals. For example, Ika, Diallo, and Thuillier (2012) highlight the relevance of execution performance in successful World Bank projects, while Denizer, Kaufmann, and Kraay (2013) show that effective project supervision, less evaluation delays, and early warning indicators of potential issues during project implementation are all significantly associated with positive project outcomes.

Other research explores factors that drive satisfactory execution performance. A recurring theme in studies on multilateral development banks (MDBs) is that while country characteristics such as macroeconomic, fiscal, and political environments play an important role, specific project-level characteristics have a more significant impact on performance (Álvarez, Bueso-Merriam, and Stucchi, 2012; Avellán et al., 2018; Corral and McCarthy, 2020; Lagarda et al., 2018). They can be

2. Since the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, multilateral development banks (MDBs) have made substantial efforts to promote effective projects that can achieve tangible results (Carneiro and Garbero, 2017; Corral and McCarthy, 2020; Crespo et al., 2013). Through the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG), MDBs have agreed upon guiding principles and good practices for evaluating results after closing an operation. Projects are rated successful when they show evidence of sustainable and efficient contribution to the development objectives in their final reports. Although methodologies differ across MDBs, they all cover aspects of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

3. Corral et al. (2022) validate these results by bringing in a year of additional data and other project design and execution characteristics. They show that the factors mentioned earlier play a role in elucidating partial financial cancellations relative to the initially approved amount for each respective project.



grouped accordingly: (i) project specificities and quality at design (Corral and McCarthy, 2020);<sup>4</sup> (ii) those related to projects' main stakeholders, such as MDB's project leader identity, location, and turnover frequency (Álvarez et al., 2021); (iii) those related to PEUs; such as their institutional capacity (Avellán et al., 2018);<sup>5</sup> and (iv) those related to unexpected challenges.

Despite their significance, studies on how PEUs influence execution performance are limited. One exception is Tique et al. (2013), which examines the determinants of procurement and operational delays in IDB projects using structured questionnaires, manual review of various project documents, and qualitative analyses. Some findings are particularly relevant to the present study. First, internal bureaucratic procedures and lack of organizational clarity within PEUs often hinder efficient operations. Second, PEUs often do not have sufficient planning capabilities, characterized by disjointed efforts, unrealistic estimations, and poor coordination with stakeholders. Last, PEUs may not have effective management and contract supervision capacities, compounded by high personnel turnover rates.

This note enriches the existing literature by outlining PEU primary performance goals, analyzing organizational arrangements, and assessing their understanding of results-based management (RBM). By doing so, it highlights the extent to which PEUs share the commitment to achieving tangible results and have the tools to pursue them. The present study also explores how the IDB can bolster its knowledge and technical support to enhance PEU effectiveness.

Previous qualitative studies have expressed the importance some of the themes covered herein. For instance, Hatton and Schroeder (2007) discuss the advantages and challenges of the RBM culture in international development organizations, highlighting three challenges related to PEUs: (i) Confusion when working for different development agencies as they must comply with different frameworks and requirements, (ii) Lack of understanding of RBM practices within PEUs, which can lead to weak implementation, and (iii) Insufficient capacity within PEUs to identify risks and make timely changes to the projects.

Another common thread between the present study and existing literature on other developing countries is the attention to organizational characteristics in the performance of procurement and public investment offices. In Bangladesh, for example, Khan (2013) finds that established rules and standard procedures strongly guide PEU procurement processes. However, the application of these rules is not always straightforward due to the existence of informal working systems or "unwritten ground rules." Agency theory can explain many of these findings, as the PEUs often have a highly uncertain environment due to their dependence on external stakeholders. Moreover, Rasul and Rogger (2018) and Rasul, Rogger, and Williams (2018) evaluate the relationship between organizational practices in public investment offices and effective project completion in Ghana and Nigeria. Both studies investigate the impact of clear delineation of functions, flexibility, incentives, and supervision, as well as clarity of goals and objectives on project effectiveness. The results show that practices that promote bureaucrats' autonomy are positively associated with their performance and that excessive monitoring of bureaucrats are negatively associated with it.

The literature review highlights the importance of PEU priorities, managerial practices, and organizational dynamics in achieving positive tangible outcomes, while underscoring the need for further research. With this framework in mind, the next section discusses data sources and methodology.

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4. Corral and McCarthy (2020) examine whether projects with higher quality at entry (measured using the Development Effectiveness Matrix—DEM) perform better in terms of implementation performance indicators (e.g., actual versus planned schedules, cost outlays, percentage of the loan disbursed). Their results validate this hypothesis along different dimensions of quality-at-entry and project performance.

5. Avellán et al. (2018) find that projects administered by subnational units are more prone to delays, while those managed within broader international programs or projects that include multiple operations at the same time are likely to have less delays.



## 3. Data Sources and Methodology

This section covers the IDB's Client Portal, a primary source of project information, and its role, goals, limitations, and present requirements in terms of supporting PEUs in their daily activities. It discusses the survey created to collect information about the PEUs already using the portal and explains its format, concluding with a present a brief characterization of the survey respondents.

### 3.1 Client Portal

The Client Portal is the IDB's first digital transformation initiative to enhance its clients' experiences, reflecting a strategic pivot toward streamlined processes with a profound commitment to a client-centric approach, fortified by providing real-time information, automation capabilities, knowledge, and learning opportunities. Within this digital landscape, the Portal emerges as a single point of entry, offering a comprehensive digital solution that simplifies access to vital IDB project information and serves as a conduit for seamless transactions. This transformative tool empowers PEUs to navigate project execution with greater efficiency and efficacy while simultaneously managing complexities and bolstering accessibility to resources and technical support.

Rooted in a comprehensive approach, the portal's focus spans the following areas:

- Adaptive engagement, a customized experience.
- Connected workflows, real-time sense of project execution, and collaboration throughout this phase, while reducing operational back-and-forth needed to generate documentation.
- Predictive planning, data leveraging, and predictive analytics to make better decisions about project planning and execution, empowering PEUs with actionable insights.
- Knowledge in context, relevant project information and documentation, and lessons learned to support PEUs during project planning and execution.

The Client Portal includes modules for acquisitions and procurement and financial management. A commitment to understanding and responding to the intricacies of client journeys and behaviors underpins this concerted effort. By analyzing these patterns, the IDB Group aims to foster a dynamic synergy between the institution and the region, propelling mutual growth and progress. To ensure that the Portal remains finely attuned to its users' evolving needs and preferences, a survey was created for participating PEUs.

## 3.2 Survey

The survey gleans invaluable insights from PEUs on internal organizational and administrative processes that underscore the effectiveness of project execution, as well as on the perceived value of IDB knowledge and technical support. The main survey instrument contains seven modules:<sup>6</sup>



**i. General characterization of the PEU:** After a brief characterization of the respondent, the PEU's experience is requested in number of years, contracts, and projects. The survey also includes questions about workforce—size, occupation, and contracting—and the use and training in project management and other relevant digital products.



**ii. Planning, monitoring, and performance of the PEU:** This section gathers information about activity planning within the PEU, including frequency and instruments. It also includes questions about internal key performance indicators (KPIs) or units used to measure organizational performance along several dimensions. Moreover, there are questions on the monitoring of the PEU's activities and IDB commitments. Finally, there are questions regarding the distribution of effort around different tasks and the standardization of some processes.



**iii. Project management for results achievement:** Questions in this section relate to the PEUs' understanding of project management and familiarity with the objectives, results matrix, and associated indicators.



**iv. Obstacles and bottlenecks for better performance:** This section gathers data from PEUs about the factors they consider crucial for achieving their goals, obstacles they face most frequently when trying to achieve them, and their possible impact on achieving their goals.



**v. Knowledge products:** Questions in this section focus on access to and use of knowledge products (e.g., guides, templates, courses, and tutorials). Moreover, it gathers data regarding lessons learned from other projects or other types of evidence, their perceptions about these, and whether they have mechanisms to document their own.

<sup>6</sup> The full survey is available upon request.



**vi. Stakeholder engagement:** This section gathers input regarding the PEU's engagement with the IDB and other relevant stakeholders, in particular about their perceived autonomy in performing different tasks and perceptions of these stakeholders' monitoring practices.



**vii. Client Portal:** The final questions pertain to the IDB Client Portal and its perceived usefulness and outcomes.

### 3.3 Sample Characterization

The IDB contracted an external firm to conduct the survey between September and October 2023.<sup>7</sup> The sample consisted of 47 PEUs (in 13 countries) that had been using the Portal since its early implementation and had at least one active IDB investment loan at the time of the survey. Of the sample, 39 respondents (83 percent) were interested in participating of which 36 actually took the survey (77 percent response rate) over the phone using a combination of structured and semi-structured formats.<sup>8</sup>

Table 1 presents a general characterization of both the PEUs and respondents. Most respondents are project coordinators/directors (75 percent), hold a master's degree (81 percent), and have, on average, 16 years of project management experience, but only 6 for IDB-financed projects. Most PEUs were created exclusively to execute IDB-financed projects (83 percent) and have operated on average 7.6 years in total and 7.1 with the IDB. The median PEU has executed (or is executing) 3 contracts, 2 of them with the IDB, and 17 percent are in a project with another co-executing unit. Furthermore, 86 percent of the units have received training in project management and all but one have access to the Internet and Microsoft Office during working hours, while 78 percent have access to PM software.

The average size of the PEU is 19 people, but the median is 13. Most of the personnel are full-time (91 percent), and 30 percent are public officials. A typical PEU will have 1 to 2 people in the positions of coordination, procurement, financial, and monitoring/evaluation, and 3 to 4 working as sector technical specialists (e.g., engineers and architects) or other (e.g., assistants, advisors, accountants, secretaries, and communications specialists).

7. Table A1 shows the weekly distribution of the executed surveys.

8. Table A2 shows the number of invitations sent and number of respondents by country.

Table 1. Respondents' and PEUs' Main Characteristics

Characteristics	Description	Value
<b>Panel A: respondent</b>		
<b>Position</b>	Project coordinator	75%
	Financial/administrative coordinator	11%
	Other position	14%
<b>Education</b>	Master's degree	81%
	Bachelor's degree	19%
<b>Experience</b>	Total (average years)	16
	(Min, max)	(2.5, 44)
	With IDB (average years)	6
	(Min, max)	(0, 16)
<b>Panel B: executing unit</b>		
<b>Contracting</b>	Executed contracts (with IDB), median	3 (2)
	IDB's exclusivity	83%
	Multi-bank cooperation	17%
<b>Experience</b>	Total (years, mean)	7.6
	With the IDB (years, mean)	7.1
<b>Workforce</b>	Size (mean, median)	19, 13
	Full-time personnel	91%
	Staff positions	30%
	Coordinator/leader	13%
	Procurement specialist	15%
	Financial specialist	10%
	Monitoring and evaluation specialist	15%
	Sector technical specialists	26%
	Other	21%
	Project management Training in PM	86%
	Access to PM software	78%

Source: Authors' elaboration.

## 4. Results

The main insights and takeaways from the survey are grouped into four subsections, which deliver the IDB's main messages from the perspectives of effectiveness, supply of products/tools, and knowledge production and use: (i) managerial practices and whether their perceptions of successful performance align with the Bank's internal assessments during execution, (ii) development effectiveness and how PEUs internally understand and apply it, (iii) relevance of knowledge products and supporting technologies, and (iv) IDB client portal and other relevant contractual requirements to communicate with and monitor PEUs.

### 4.1 Managerial Practices

#### Current State of PEUs' Project Management Capacities

Effective execution plays a pivotal role in realizing the development outcomes outlined during program design. Given that PEUs are primarily responsible in this stage, it is important to examine their time management and managerial practices.

Based on the survey, technical tasks (64 percent), project management (58 percent), and report preparation for different stakeholders (45 percent) impose a significant (high or very high) workload on PEUs. In contrast, administrative tasks (only 31 percent of the coordinators consider this task as a high or very high workload), report and briefing preparation for the IDB (23 percent), and systematization and dissemination of challenges and lessons learned (14 percent) require less effort. Table 5 shows the percentage of the overall time PEUs allocate to these main activities.

**Table 2. PEU's Main Activities and their Relevance**

Activity	Mean estimate of overall effort (in percent)
<b>1. Project management</b>	27.6
<b>2. Technical tasks (i.e., technical supervision of contracts, works, and consultancies)</b>	26.0
<b>3. Report preparation for different stakeholders</b>	13.5
<b>4. Administrative tasks</b>	13.0
<b>5. Report and briefing preparation for the IDB</b>	12.4
<b>6. Systematization and dissemination among the team of challenges and lessons learned</b>	9.2

Source: Authors' elaboration.

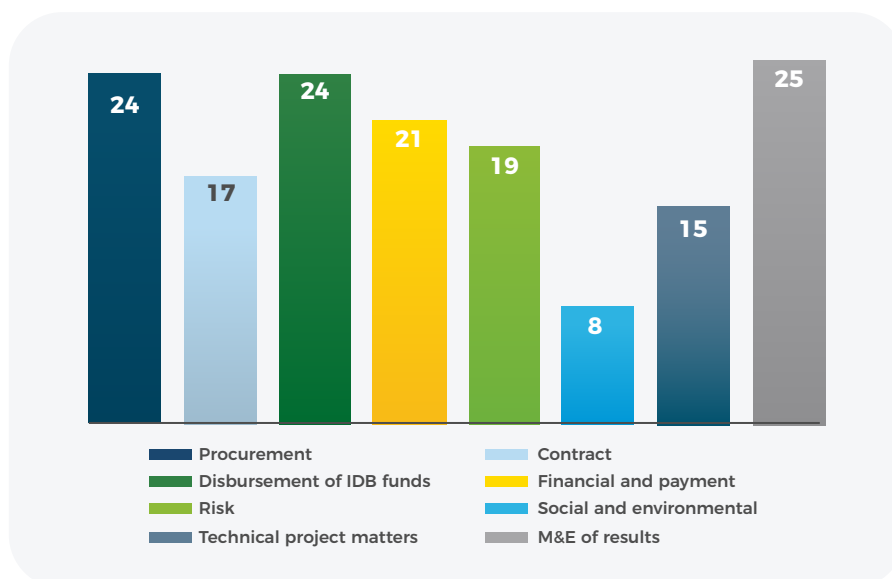
PEUs also have regular meetings for planning purposes (64 percent of those surveyed meet at least once a month). During these meetings, most PEUs (92 percent) discuss past issues. Regarding the role of standardization of internal processes in helping PEUs' planning and monitoring, less than 60 percent (21 out of 36 PEUs) consider that the internal processes are highly or entirely standardized. However, most coordinators agree that (i) the standardization of processes is reflected in manuals, documents, or guides (81 percent); (ii) the main processes are almost always or always adjusted based on the needs, experiences, lessons learned, and feedback from team members (81 percent); and (iii) the necessary adjustments include innovative practices, new rules, and new technologies (69 percent).

### Planning and Monitoring: Relevance of Key Performance Indicators

Efficient planning and monitoring practices are imperative during project execution to achieve development goals. What specific actions are PEUs implementing in practice to track and measure the outcomes? Most respondents (27) mentioned defining and using KPIs to monitor the fulfillment of activities, processes, financial obligations, and project goals during execution. Of these 27 respondents, 25 confirmed that most team members were aware of the KPIs. In this regard, PEUs have implemented not only formal communication mechanisms (22) and tracking processes (27) but also corrective action plans as a result of continuous monitoring over time (25).

To gather insight into which specific areas PEUs apply KPIs, the survey includes eight categories deemed crucial for achieving impact and often consuming a considerable amount of the unit's resources throughout project implementation (Figure 1). According to 93 percent of the respondents (25 of 27), the most important categories for KPI implementation are monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of results, while 89 percent (24 of 27) felt strongly about the relevance of both procurement and disbursement of IDB funds. Conversely, the categories with the lowest relevance for defining KPIs among PEUs are technical project matters (56 percent) and social and environmental (30 percent).

**Figure 1. Relevance of Management Categories for Achieving Impact**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

Besides the differences in the relevance of the eight management categories when defining KPIs, there is also a relevant heterogeneity regarding KPIs' tracking frequencies. In 4 of the 8 categories of management (procurement, contract, financial and payments, and technical project matters), more than 75 percent of the respondents mentioned that they track the evolution of their KPIs at least once a month. However, for KPIs linked to disbursement of IDB funds, risk, social and environmental, and M&E of results, more than 35 percent of the PEUs only track indicators semi-annually at most, which could be related to the frequency of the IDB's semi-annual review.

### ***Project Management: The Use of KPIs and its Relationship with Stakeholder Engagement***

The predominant use of KPIs by PEUs to track and measure performance is a good practice from the point of view of project management. In fact, the Bank uses indicators to monitor the performance of PEUs and, simultaneously, expects that they internally implement a similar exercise. In this regard, the roles that the PEUs' main stakeholders have played (if any) in influencing the proliferation of managerial practices based on KPIs is relevant.

Virtually all survey respondents stated that both the IDB and government executing agencies (i.e., the ministries executing the loan) continuously interact with the PEUs.<sup>9</sup> More importantly, respondents highlighted the IDB's focus on impact achievement. All respondents agreed that the IDB monitors PEU performance, and 89 percent responded that it did so using indicators (89 percent). The majority (72 percent) answered that target achievement is the primary performance indicator, while a quarter agreed that it is budget execution.

Regarding the role of the government executing agency, respondents indicated that its performance indicators are more budget-based (e.g., percentage of the total budget executed). Specifically, 59 percent of PEUs consider that the agencies focus more on budget, while 36 percent consider that they focus more on physical and impact achievements (see Table 3).<sup>10</sup> Moreover, a larger share of respondents considers that (i) the IDB uses more rewards than their respective governments do and (ii) the IDB's monitoring measures are more adequate and go through a formal process (1 out of 5 PEUs considers that the government executing agency monitoring measures are not adequate).<sup>11</sup>

Regarding efforts to adjust their time and activities to the specific needs of these stakeholders, 81 percent agreed that the unit continuously redefines its schedule, 16 percent declared to take actions to try to respond to specific needs, and only 3 percent stated that they do not attempt to accommodate the specific needs of stakeholders. Moreover, when asked about their autonomy in carrying out their tasks and adapting to implementation challenges, the coordinators consider that the unit has slightly more autonomy in its relationship with the IDB than it does with the government's executing agency. In particular, the respondents gave an average score of 3.6 versus 3.4 (out of 5) and median scores of 4 and 3, respectively.

Appendix A.2 provides a brief overview of the correlation among PEU autonomy, the establishment of KPIs, and perception of KPI goal achievement, revealing that units perceiving higher autonomy are more inclined to incorporate KPIs to monitor performance. Additionally, units with greater autonomy tend to perceive that they achieve KPI goals more frequently.

9. Other stakeholders that interact frequently with PEUs include the country's ministry of economic and finance and, to a lesser extent, the audit office (contraloría) and a co-financing partner.

10. For the calculation, the survey performance indicators are grouped into indicators associated with budget execution and target achievement, among others.

11. The respective questions were: "Does the stakeholder reward and/or penalize the executing unit or its members based on the PEU's performance indicators?" and "Regarding your opinion on the performance indicators used by the stakeholder, (i) the measures are not adequate, (ii) the measures are adequate, but monitoring is not standard, and (iii) the measures are adequate and monitored through a formal process."



Table 3. Monitoring by Stakeholders

Questions	Possible responses	Government executing agency	Inter-American Development Bank
Does the stakeholder monitor the PEU's performance?	Yes/no	91%	100%
Does the stakeholder use indicators to monitor the PEU's performance?	Yes/no	69%	89%
Primary performance indicator used by the stakeholder	Main examples: budget execution	59%	25%
	target achievement	36%	72% (incl. PMR, matrix)
Does the stakeholder reward and/or penalize the PEU or its members based on the performance indicators?	Rewards	6%,	17%
	Penalize	18%	11%,
	Both	15%	19%
	None	59%	50%
Regarding your opinion on the performance indicators used by the stakeholder, which statement do you agree with?	Measures are not adequate.		
	Measures are adequate, but monitoring is not standard.	20%,	3%
	Measures are adequate and formal	33%,	32%
	monitoring is standard	43%,	62%

**Source:** Authors' elaboration. **Notes:** The shares in the last two rows do not add to 100 percent, as one PEU did not respond to these two questions. Performance indicators were categorized manually between budget execution and target achievement. The complete list is available on request.

### Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation: Assessing Project Impact versus Product Oversight

The goal of development assistance is to attain tangible outcomes that enhance people's well-being. This section examines PEU commitment and comprehension levels regarding RBM, in particular the understanding of M&E of results, identified as the most significant KPI (Figure 1).

When defining the M&E of results category, the survey accounts for PEUs having specific responsibilities, tasks, and KPIs in mind that aim to monitor and track the evolution of the indicators associated with the pre-defined development objectives. However, after delving into the KPIs mentioned by the respondents, the M&E of results is mainly understood as the tracking of products/activities and financial obligations. Out of the 26 PEUs that have defined KPIs in this category, only two respondents (8 percent) mentioned the word objective when describing the primary KPI. In contrast, 12 respondents (48 percent) referred to fulfilling physical and/or financial obligations. In practice, these KPIs are tracking (i) what has been executed compared with the planned ex-ante, (ii) the achievement of physical milestones, and/or (iii) the actual versus planned financial progress, rather than detailing the way they plan and monitor the progression/achievement of the project's development objectives, associated indicators, or the result matrix itself (Table A3).

## Contrast between Perceptions of Achievement and Execution Monitoring

Regarding the PEU's perceptions of KPI achievement that they have defined to track performance, the results are similar across the eight management categories. In general, the perceptions are overwhelmingly positive. When asked whether or not they achieve their targets, no respondents answered "never" or "almost never"; rather, in six of the eight management categories, more than 74 percent responded "always" or "almost always." The exceptions are management related to disbursement of IDB funds (70 percent) and technical project matters (64 percent) (Table A4).

Since most PEUs perceive that they "always" or "almost always" achieve their KPIs targets, the survey digs further, applying the most recent IDB project monitoring report (PMR) classification, to determine whether these positive perceptions correlate with the Bank's monitoring mechanisms used to track PEU execution processes.<sup>12</sup> The PMR classifies execution performance as "problematic," "in alert," or "satisfactory." Table 4 shows that there is no positive correlation between perceptions of achievement by PEUs and the PMR classification. If any, there seems to be a negative correlation, as most of the time that the respondent answers "always" or "almost always," the PMR classification is either "problematic" or in "alert" (percentages highlighted in red), signaling a misalignment.

**Table 4. Perceptions of Achievement and IDB Monitoring**

Management category	KPIs' achievement perception	PMR class	
		Problematic/ in alert	Satisfactory
1. M&E of results (N=23)	Sometimes or -	14%	14%
	Almost always or +	54%	18%
2. Disbursement IDB funds (N=22)	Sometimes or -	27%	5%
	Almost always or +	36%	32%
3. Procurement (N=21)	Sometimes or -	19%	0%
	Almost always or +	52%	29%
4. Financial and payments (N=19)	Sometimes or -	16%	5%
	Almost always or +	58%	21%
5. Risk (N=17)	Sometimes or -	5%	12%
	Almost always or +	65%	18%
6. Contract (N=15)	Sometimes or -	20%	0%
	Almost always or +	53%	27%
7. Technical project matters (N=14)	Sometimes or -	36%	0%
	Almost always or +	43%	21%
8. Social and environmental (N=7)	Sometimes or -	0%	0%
	Almost always or +	71%	29%

**Source:** Authors' elaboration. **Notes:** Percentage sum equal 100 percent in each management categories. Results in red relate to the PEUs that "always" or "almost always" achieve their KPIs and are categorized as "in alert" or "problematic" in their PMRs.

**12.** The PMR is the development effectiveness instrument that tracks the operation's progress from approval until closure. It mainly focuses on the financial, disbursement, and cost dimensions. The classification and the specific formulas depend on the project's stage.

## Current Factors, Obstacles, and Bottlenecks Impacting KPI Achievement

As most investment projects face execution obstacles at one point or another, from the Bank's perspective, it is essential to investigate whether PEUs are facing recurrent, common, and somehow solvable problems when executing projects. With this information, the Bank can predict the main determinants during execution and ex-ante contribute to diminish or mitigate them, taking more informed actions to facilitate PEU achievement and ultimately positively impacting development effectiveness.

To better understand how execution is carried out on the field, the survey includes the following questions: "What is the main factor determining the fulfillment of their goals?" Table 5 categorizes the responses into six different categories, revealing that the main factor determining project effectiveness is the performance and experience of its team—that is, every PEU member plays a key role and experienced coworkers are valuable. Connected to this determinant, effective PEU project management (monitoring, supervision, engagement, and coordination during execution) is also crucial. These two factors are the most important for around 56 percent of respondents.

The remaining three categories incorporate the role of external actors. Here, respondents highlight the relevance of engagement, coordination, and alignment of incentives among project actors (especially the governments and end-users).<sup>13</sup> The network identifies those related to (i) the team's quality, (ii) project management, and (iii) procurement.

**Table 5. Main Factors or Determinants Impacting Achievement of Goals**

Factor/determinants	Times mentioned/percentage
1. PEU team performance and experience	11 (31%)
2. PEU project management	9 (25%)
3. Public officials' role and bureaucracy	7 (19%)
4. Coordination among projects' actors	4 (11%)
5. Procurement and contract obstacles	4 (11%)
6. Others	1 (3%)
<b>Total answers</b>	<b>36</b>

Source: Authors' elaboration.

13. Figure A1 presents a similar analysis of these answers but in the form of a text network, which is similar to a word cloud in that the most important words are represented by larger nodes (circles). Moreover, a text network shows the most common connections between words (using their distance and number of links) and clusters them according to topics (colors). The networks herein include only words appearing in at least three responses.

The next open question asks respondents to mention the two most recurrent obstacles that have hindered their performance in achieving annual targets (Table 6). Besides the category project's external factors (which may be influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and has been identified in 14 percent of all the answers), the responses align with the findings described above. The most recurrent obstacles that the PEUs currently face are those connected to their relationship with public officials and bureaucracy (29 percent), the lack of adequate and flexible project management (21 percent), and difficulties in building and preserving a good team (recruitment of experienced professionals and high turnover, 15 percent). Figure A2 presents a similar analysis using a text network, allowing for the identification of four broad issues: (i) lack of technical capacity, (ii) procurement processes and communication with the government, (iii) project management and high team turnover, and (iv) problems with deadlines and executions.

**Table 6. PEU Main Obstacles**

PEU activity or process	Times mentioned
<b>1. Relationship with public officials and bureaucracy</b>	18 (29%)
<b>2. Obstacles directly related to planning and execution</b>	13 (21%)
<b>3. Project's external factors</b>	9 (14%)
<b>4. Issues related to procurement's timing and contractual process</b>	6 (10%)
<b>5. Problems in recruiting experienced professionals</b>	6 (10%)
<b>6. Turnover</b>	3 (5%)
<b>7. Problems with resources from the national budget</b>	3 (5%)
<b>8. Politics and country stability</b>	2 (3%)
<b>9. Others</b>	2 (3%)
<b>Total answers</b>	<b>62</b>

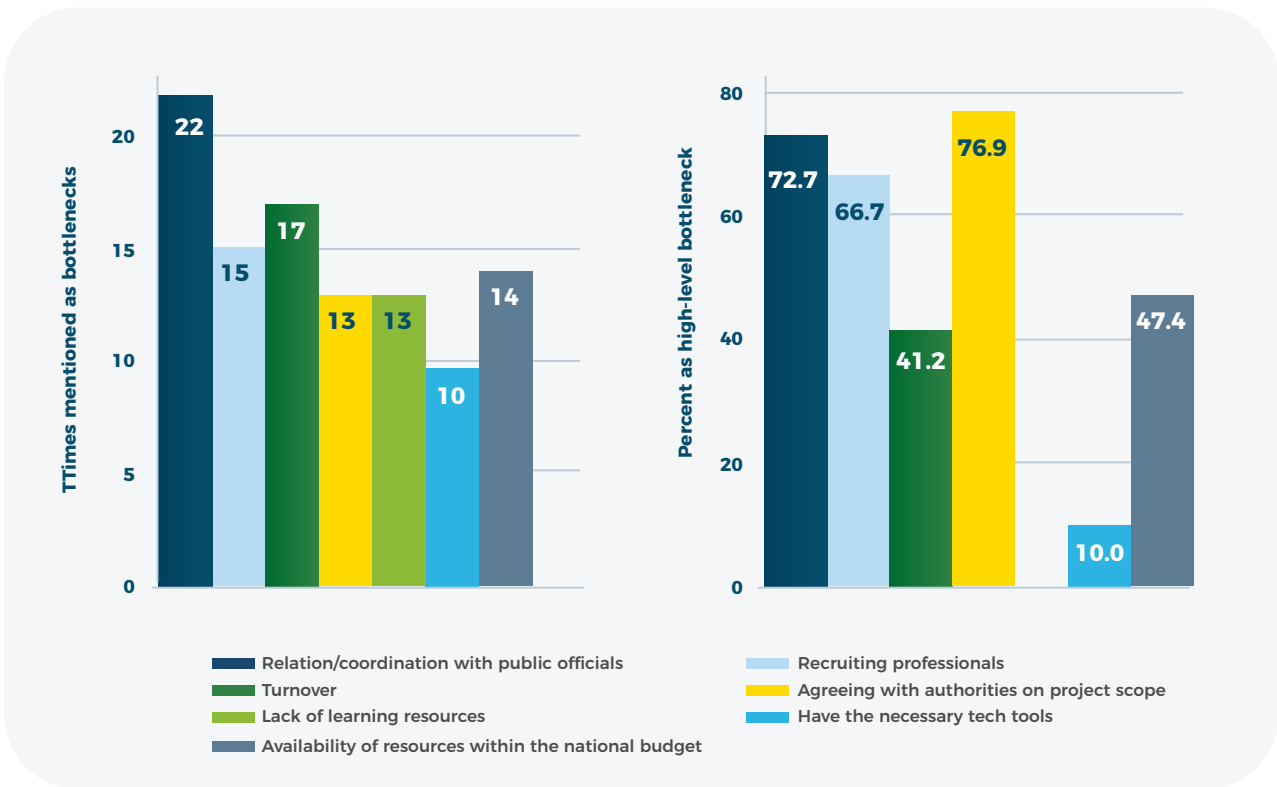
**Source:** Authors' elaboration. **Notes:** PEUs were asked to mention two obstacles, but some mentioned only one. Obstacles directly related to planning and execution include the wrong use of products, complex implementation in practice, and failing procurement processes. External factors include COVID-19, unexpected market conditions, and lack of suppliers.

The results are similar regarding specific bottlenecks faced during execution, which are classified under seven predefined categories. Respondents agree on the three most recurrent and relevant obstacles: the relationship and coordination with public officials (61 percent), turnover within the team (47 percent), and recruiting professionals with the necessary knowledge and experience (42 percent).<sup>14</sup> In contrast, problems related to having "the necessary technological tools" (28 percent), getting "the availability of project resources within the general budget of the nation" (39 percent), and "the lack of learning resources to improve project management capabilities" (36 percent) are the least relevant (Figure 2). Despite the different obstacles, more than 75 percent of the coordinators believe their team has a highly effective responsiveness capacity.

**14.** In the first and third cases, more than two-thirds of the coordinators agree that the obstacle is relevant ("high" or "very high"). However, only 41 percent of the coordinators consider the team rotation problem relevant.

Finally, the survey examines the relevance of IDB M&E processes in execution difficulties. In this regard, most coordinators agree that it is relatively straightforward (“very simple” or “simple”) to request a disbursement (54 percent), monitor portfolio agreements (68 percent), and access relevant project documents (75 percent). At the same time, respondents consider that it is relatively more challenging to develop a procurement plan (26 percent consider it straightforward) prepare and write the semi-annual report (38 percent consider it straightforward) and justify expenses (50 percent consider it straightforward).

**Figure 2. Problems as Recurring Obstacles to Achieve Annual Goals**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

## 4.2 Development Effectiveness and Project Management for Impact Achievement

### Project Management for Results Achievement

All PEUs in the present sample have access to the Client Portal and thus are aware of the project development objectives and their relevance. To probe further, the survey gathers information on the level of understanding and commitment to development outcomes. A primary concern is that PEUs still confuse results-oriented management with exclusively monitoring the performance of products delivered and honoring financial commitments.



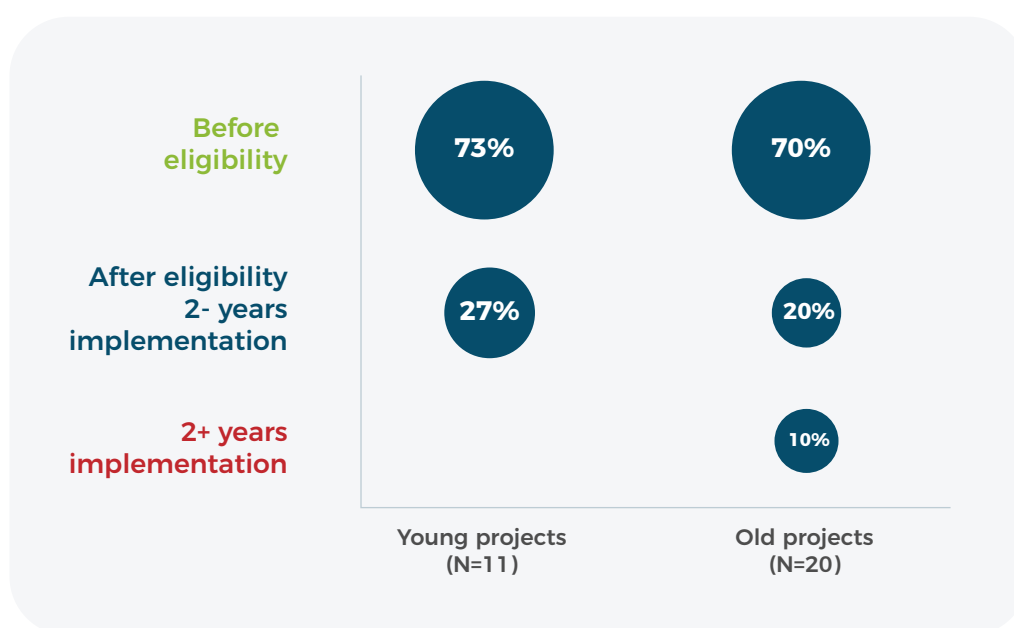
Of the respondents who have internalized the project's theory of change, 74 percent believe that the result and impact indicators defined in the results matrix adequately measure its objectives. The rest do not understand how the outputs and outcomes are connected, which may generate ownership and incentive problems that may negatively impact project execution.

### **Development Effectiveness and Bank's Engagement**

The IDB's new institutional strategy prioritizes development effectiveness by highlighting that financed programs must have a significant social impact (IDB Group, 2024). Considering this prioritization, the survey addresses awareness of the development objectives and result matrix of PEU programs. The results show that all PEUs are familiar with both concepts. Additionally, besides knowing the indicators associated with the physical progress of the products, most respondents are also aware of those measuring the project's impact results (89 percent).

According to the respondents, results indicators are usually known/informed when the project is eligible or before (71 percent). For the "young" projects (four years of execution or less), this information is almost always received when the project reaches its eligibility or earlier (73 percent, as shown in Figure 4). Additionally, the communication always takes place before the project reaches an advanced implementation stage (two or more years after eligibility). These positive findings are weaker for "old" projects. The present study distinguishes between young and old projects as, contrary to younger projects, there is less communication between the design and supervisory teams and operational teams in older projects and the focus was higher on products than on results.

**Figure 4. Project's Outcomes and Impact Indicators Awareness and Project's Age**



**Source:** Authors' elaboration.



Connected to the previous findings, respondents—when asked about the most recent IDB project they have worked on—also agreed that someone explained the connection between the physical scope of the products and positive results and impact of the project (77 percent).

## 4.3 Use of Knowledge

Knowledge, drawn from evidence and lessons learned, is one of the main pillars of every IDB operation. Its proper usage is a cornerstone for effectiveness in the execution and design of current and subsequent projects. A recent internal IDB report argues that the feedback loop between operations and knowledge breaks down when operations are not evidence-based and information is not systematically collected and analyzed.<sup>16</sup>

Since PEUs play a crucial role in operation implementation, understanding their demand and use of knowledge is vital to maintaining an active feedback loop. The survey gathers information in this respect, in particular regarding guidelines, templates, and courses, as well as evidence and lessons learned from previous projects.

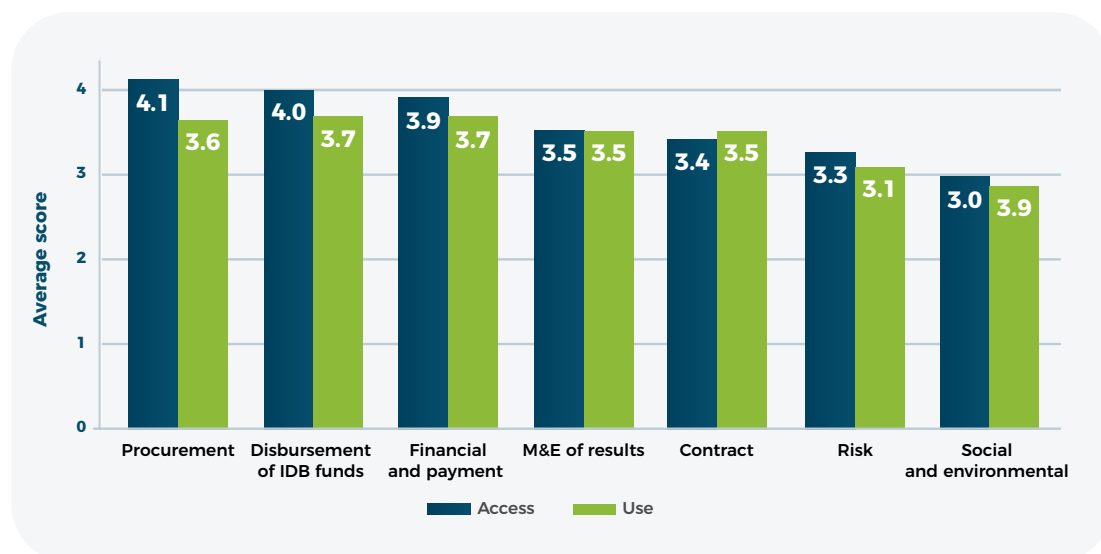
When asked about their current access to evidence from other similar projects (in the form of lessons learned and other findings), less than half of PEUs reported doing so (42 percent). Out of those that do, most state that the IDB or their colleagues are the primary sources of this evidence, but other PEUs or previous project completion reports also appear as secondary sources. Despite this low usage, four out of five PEUs report having formal mechanisms to document lessons learned and findings from their own projects, including written reports (monthly or semiannual, internal or mandated by the IDB), coordination meetings, and presentations. Moreover, all PEUs consider knowledge from previous projects to be either “useful” or “very useful.”

If all PEUs consider evidence useful and have mechanisms to document it but declare barely using evidence from previous projects, there must be a current opportunity to improve their capture, storage, and dissemination processes. When asked how they would like to access evidence, respondents suggested search platforms (36 percent), audiovisual material (31 percent), PDF summaries (25 percent), or a combination of these formats (8 percent). Current initiatives being developed inside the IDB Group to better capture, store, and disseminate lessons learned and findings from previous projects should be aligned with these findings.

Following this approach, the survey includes questions on access and use of knowledge products, such as guidelines, documents, courses, and templates around seven management categories: (i) procurement, (ii) contract, (iii) disbursement of IDB funds, (iv) financial and payment, (v) risk, (vi) social and environmental, and (vii) M&E of results. Figure 5 shows the average score for each question (out of 5), where each pair of graphs represents each of the seven subjects, with the blue and red bars representing access and use of knowledge products, respectively. Even though the scores are highly similar across all categories, access to and use of knowledge products is particularly high for procurement, disbursement, and financial and payment management categories and relatively low for risk and social and environmental management. Second, the average scores for access are higher than those for the use of these knowledge products: 3.6 and 3.4, respectively.

16. The literature recognizes the importance of learning from both successful and failed projects as a way to prevent recurring mistakes and improve project success (Jugdev, 2012; van der Graaf et al., 2024). As stated by Jugdev (2012), “lessons learned are an efficient and effective way of transferring valuable project knowledge—the good, the bad and the ugly.”

**Figure 5. Access and Use of Knowledge Products**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

Proper use of knowledge products and evidence from other projects should lead to better practices and operational efficiencies that ultimately reflect on the success of the projects. For instance, producing relevant knowledge products and adequately using them should help alleviate the recurring obstacles that PEUs face regarding hiring technical personnel and lack of learning resources (Figure 2). Alternatively, proper use of knowledge can also affect the setting and achievement of KPIs. Table 7 shows how the use of knowledge correlates with setting practices and achievement of KPIs.

Even though the number of observations is statically low, there are some interesting patterns. PEUs that establish KPIs report accessing, using, and requiring more knowledge products than those that do not. Moreover, PEUs that establish KPIs access more lessons learned and findings from previous projects and are more likely to have mechanisms for reporting them. Regarding the achievement of KPIs, there is no consistent correlation between how regularly the PEUs comply with achieving KPIs and the practices around knowledge products and lessons learned.

**Table 7. Knowledge Products, Previous Evidence, and Results**

Indicator	Has the PEU established KPIs?		How regularly does the PEU comply with achieving KPIs?	
	No	yes	Sometimes	Often
Access to knowledge products*	3.34	3.67	3.5	3.77
Use of knowledge products*	3.22	3.47	3.60	3.27
Require knowledge products*	3.42	3.56	4.17	4.28
Access to lessons Learned or findings**	22%	48%	50%	46%
Have mechanisms for lessons learned**	67%	81%	83%	85%

Source: Authors' elaboration. Notes: Notes: \* Average across seven management subjects (1 to 5). Knowledge products refer to guidelines, templates, documents, courses, and tutorials. \*\* The variable shows the percentage of PEUs that responded yes.

Contrary to findings of low use of evidence from previous projects, the survey shows a high use of learning products. Three out of four respondents have participated in IDB training or courses offered in the last six months, while one out of three have participated in training provided by the executing or another government agency. In total, 86 percent of PEU coordinators have accessed training in the last six months. The importance of these activities is twofold: if well-defined and structured, they are both a knowledge product and way to disseminate other products. PEUs seem to recognize this importance as coordinators show high participation rates in training activities.

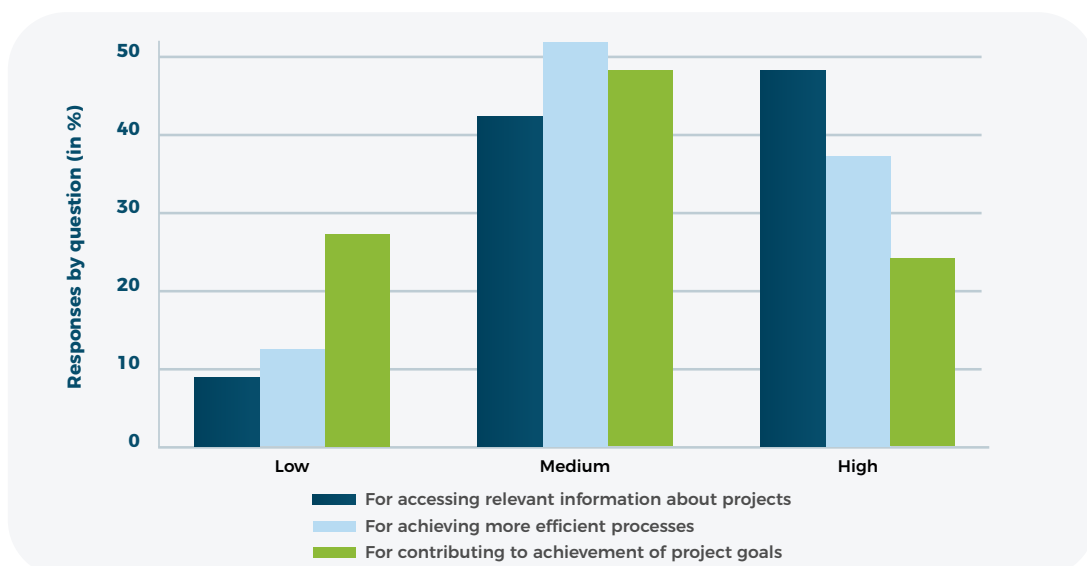
Among the IDB courses, the most popular is Project Management for Results (PM4R), a course taken by around two-thirds of the respondents. Other popular courses include those related to the IDB Client Portal and acquisitions and disbursement processes. The list of courses received from the executing organism or other government agency is more varied and includes training in ethics and implementation of control or payment systems, among others. Regarding time and availability, 44 percent of PEU coordinators spent five hours or more per month in training activities during the last six months, and 25 percent spent three to four hours per month. Moreover, even though 44 percent of respondents stated that they needed a significant amount of training (scores of 4 or 5), 50 percent of them said to have little to no time for it (scores of 1 or 2), and only 22 percent stated that had a good amount of available time (scores 4 or 5) (Figure A3).

## 4.4 Client Portal and Other IDB Requirements

As discussed in Section 3, the IDB created its Client Portal with the goal of improving the digital experience of PEUs, putting their needs and requirements at the center of the platform and allowing for efficient access to information while facilitating necessary transactions. In terms of whether PEUs are accessing this tool, around 46 percent of respondents said they used it at least once a week (31.4 percent weekly and 14.3 percent daily) and another 20 percent use it monthly. The remaining third stated that they use it less frequently, as needed, or declared themselves to be new users.

The survey also gathered data on the perceived usefulness of the Client Portal in terms of (i) accessing relevant information, (ii) achieving more efficient processes, and (iii) contributing to the achievement of project goals. Figure 6 presents the responses, where each bar corresponds to one question, the horizontal axis the possible scores, and the vertical axis the percentage of PEU's coordinators that gave a particular score. A low score is categorized 1 to 5, medium 6 to 8, and high 9 and 10.

**Figure 6. Usefulness of the Client Portal**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

In general, coordinators find the Client Portal highly useful for accessing relevant information about their project: 48 percent and 42 percent gave a high or medium score, respectively. These high scores make sense, as one of the portal's main objectives is to allow PEUs to access relevant information about their project. In addition, a large share of PEUs consider the portal useful for achieving more efficient processes: 36 percent and 52 percent gave a high or a medium score, respectively. The perceived usefulness of the portal is lower when asked about its contribution to the project goal achievement: 24 percent and 48 percent gave a high or a medium score, respectively.

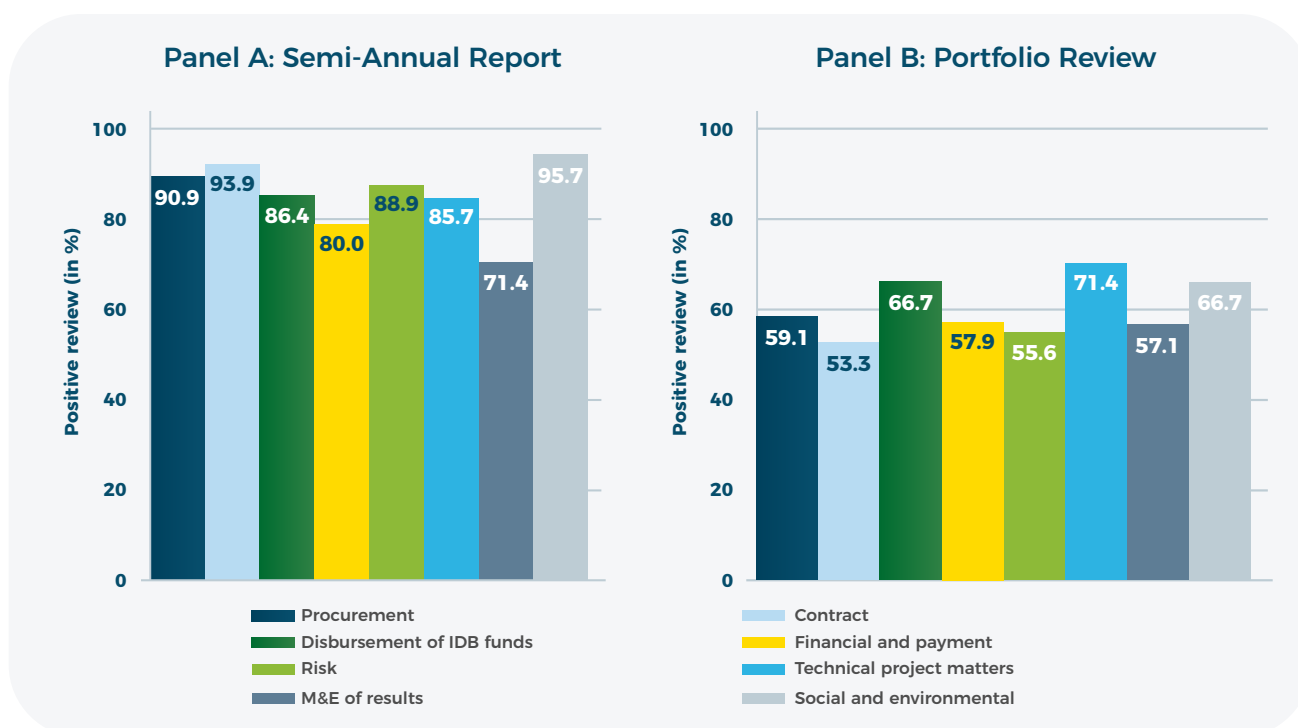
Two conclusions arise from these findings: (i) the Client Portal provides PEUs with convenient access to pertinent project information and (ii) while it plays a significant role in streamlining processes and improving their efficiency, its impact on achieving project goals appears to be less pronounced.

These results resonate with the Client Portal goals, which serves as a centralized hub for sharing and accessing IDB information and services, streamlining processes through digitalization, and consolidating data and knowledge to reduce time and costs. By offering contextual information such as project lists, transaction summaries, and fiduciary activities, the Portal enhances the quality of outputs and reduces preparation time, thereby boosting efficiency in project execution. However, increased process efficiency does not necessarily equate to attaining project goals. Moreover, as these questions are about perceptions, the direct and indirect impacts of the Client Portal require further research and refinement.

In a further review of process efficiency, IDB monitoring tools, and persistent challenges during project execution, a pertinent question is: How effectively do the Bank's contractual requirements support PEU tasks? The survey gathers data from respondents regarding the significance and effectiveness of semi-annual reports and portfolio reviews in monitoring KPIs and addressing operational bottlenecks.

Among the PEUs that have defined KPIs, the vast majority believe that the semi-annual report contributes to and is timely for monitoring their KPIs. In Figure 7, Panel A shows the share of positive ratings for the contribution of the semi-annual report to the monitoring of KPIs among the different categories, which ranges from 71 percent for KPIs related to M&E of results to 96 percent for those related to social and environmental management.

**Figure 7. Share of Positive Reviews to IDB's Products**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

At the same time, less respondents agree that the Bank's portfolio review contributes to solving the bottlenecks related to their activities. Panel B in Figure 7 shows the share of positive ratings for the portfolio review (in terms of its contribution to the monitoring of KPIs), which ranges from a low 53 percent for KPIs related to contract management to a high 71 percent for KPIs associated with the management of project technical matters.

## 5. Conclusions

PEUs play a crucial role in achieving the intended impact of a development project. As the primary entities responsible for day-to-day project execution, PEUs make it possible to achieve results. Gaining insight into their priorities and understanding their grasp in implementing a RBM approach is essential for devising an actionable plan to enhance client ownership. Despite its relevance, information regarding PEU internal structure, motivation, and decision-making processes is limited. The survey helps to fill the knowledge gap about their functioning and role in project success, covering topics such as performance indicators, RBM for impact, and knowledge demand.

The key findings herein can be summarized into three main messages. First, PEUs require assistance to implement an RBM approach effectively. While PEUs in the current sample extensively use specific performance indicators to track their performance, their indicators related to M&E of results primarily focus on assessing the achievement of outputs and financial disbursements. Although most PEUs have been informed of the project objectives and outcome indicators, they do not always agree that the chosen indicators are relevant to the intervention. Thus, investing in generating awareness and ownership over the project's theory of change among PEUs is essential. Client ownership is imperative for effectively implementing an RBM approach, ensuring that adjustments to project execution plans maintain a focus on development goals.

Second, it is critical to foster client ownership of results within the PEU and as well as in relevant government agencies overseeing specific project investments. While the PEUs highlight the monitoring of physical outputs and results by their IDB stakeholders, their government executing agencies primarily focus on budget execution. Additionally, executing units often encounter obstacles during project execution, notably bureaucratic hurdles and coordination challenges. To realize tangible outcomes, it is imperative to cultivate a culture of results ownership among government counterparts and equip them with appropriate training and skills to become effective partners.

Finally, addressing the difficulties in accessing or consuming knowledge from past projects is crucial. All PEUs consider evidence useful during project execution and have mechanisms to document it. This evidence could come from findings and lessons learned from previous projects or training programs. However, less than half of the units claim to use this evidence. These results represent an opportunity to strengthen knowledge management within the bank with programs that include more knowledge capture, exchange, and dissemination.

The results herein come from a small sample of PEUs, making it impossible to infer the causal link between these relations. Nonetheless, these results are novel and provide a starting point to scale the exercise to a bigger sample of projects. This can lead to a better understanding of their needs in project implementation to increase development effectiveness. The survey results should be taken as a first snapshot of PEUs in terms of what motivates them, their decision-making processes, and what the IDB can do to help them embrace a culture of impact-driven execution.

This technical note also highlights the need to establish a broader and more permanent knowledge agenda in this area. By the end of 2024, the IDB's Client Connectivity Initiative is expected to extend across the entire active portfolio, covering around 400 PEUs. The creation of a longitudinal database with information from a sample of PEUs that is representative of the Bank's portfolio and includes outcome data from performance and impact indicators will enable the evaluation of new initiatives aimed at enhancing project management and development effectiveness at the PEU and project level.



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## → Appendix

**Table A1. Number of Interviews by Week**

Week	Number of Interviews	Percent Total
September 4-8	6	17%
September 11-15	5	14%
September 18-22	8	22%
September 25-29	5	14%
October 2-6	7	19%
October 9-13	5	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Authors' elaboration.

**Table A2. Initial Sample by Country**

Country	Project executing units			
	Target sample	Open to participate	Surveyed	Percent surveyed
1. (The) Bahamas	3	3	2	67%
2. Barbados	2	2	2	100%
3. Belize	1	1	0	-
4. Costa Rica	2	2	2	100%
5. Dominican Republic	3	1	1	33%
6. Ecuador	6	6	6	100%
7. Honduras	1	1	1	100%
8. Panama	4	3	2	50%
9. Paraguay	1	1	1	100%
10. Peru	16	14	13	81%
11. Suriname	5	4	4	80%
12. Trinidad and Tobago	1	0	0	-
13. Uruguay	2	2	2	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>77%</b>

Source: Authors' elaboration.

**Table A3. Specific Answer when EUs Mention They Have a KPI Related to the Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Results**

N	3.6. What is the most important goal related to the KPIs in the category?	Classification
1	Police delegations, construction of civil works	1. Related to outputs and/or financial targets or other
2	No goal	
3	Executed versus planned	
4	Executed as Planned	
5	The dollar value of guarantees issued	
6	The progress and execution of the project based on the state objectives	
7	Compliance	
8	Budget execution (reach 100% at the end of the year)	
9	Milestones achieved between planned milestones (or deliverables) for the specific period	
10	Compliance with physical and financial goal of the project	2. Related to objectives
11	To achieve the objective	
12	Fulfillment of objectives	
13	Achievement of indicators at the product or result level	3. Related to both
14	Quantity/progress/impact indicators	
15	To be able to met or surpass the committed results	4. Unclear
16	Making sure targets meet/achieve the results	
17	Achieve planned results	
18	Deviations from baseline with respect to the project	
19	Compliance with indicators in a timely manner	
20	Evaluate compliance with the schedule	
21	Meet planning objectives	

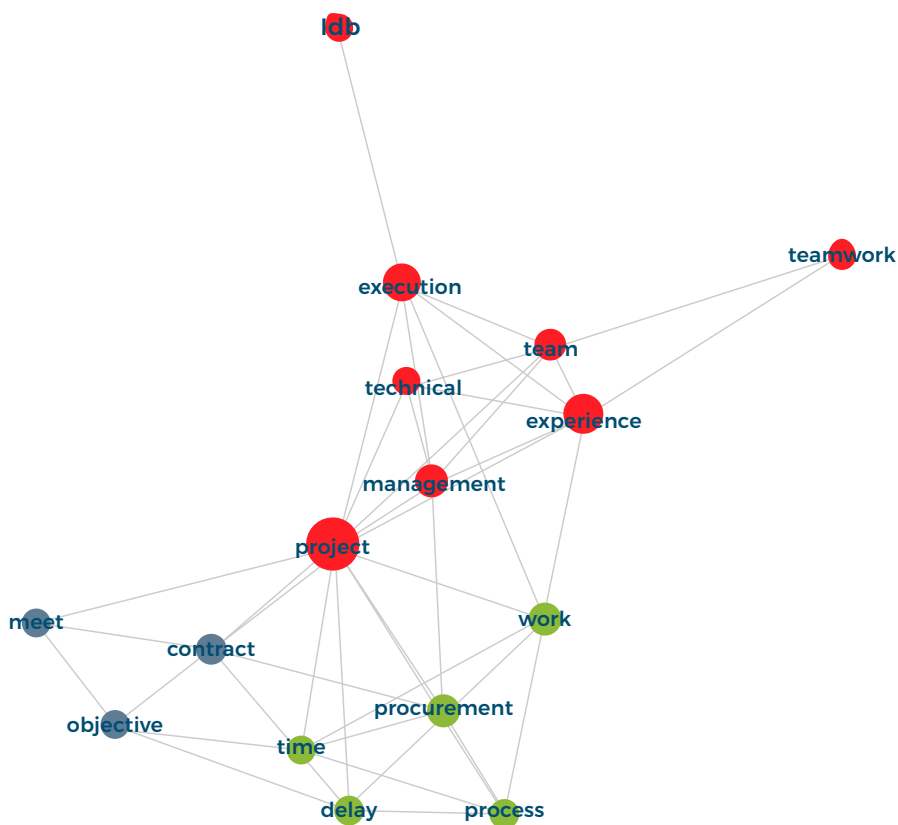
**Source:** Authors' elaboration. **Notes:** 21 PEUs answered this question. The responses are presented as written by the executing unit.

**Table A4. Perception of Achievement**

Management category	Almost always or +	Sometimes	Total
1. M&E of results	17 (74%)	6 (26%)	23
2. Disbursement of IDB funds	16 (70%)	7 (30%)	23
3. Procurement	17 (77%)	5 (23%)	27
4. Financial and payments	16 (80%)	4 (20%)	20
5. Risk	15 (83%)	3 (17%)	18
6. Contract	12 (76%)	4 (24%)	16
7. Technical project matters	9 (64%)	5 (36%)	14
8. Social and environmental	7 (100%)	-	7

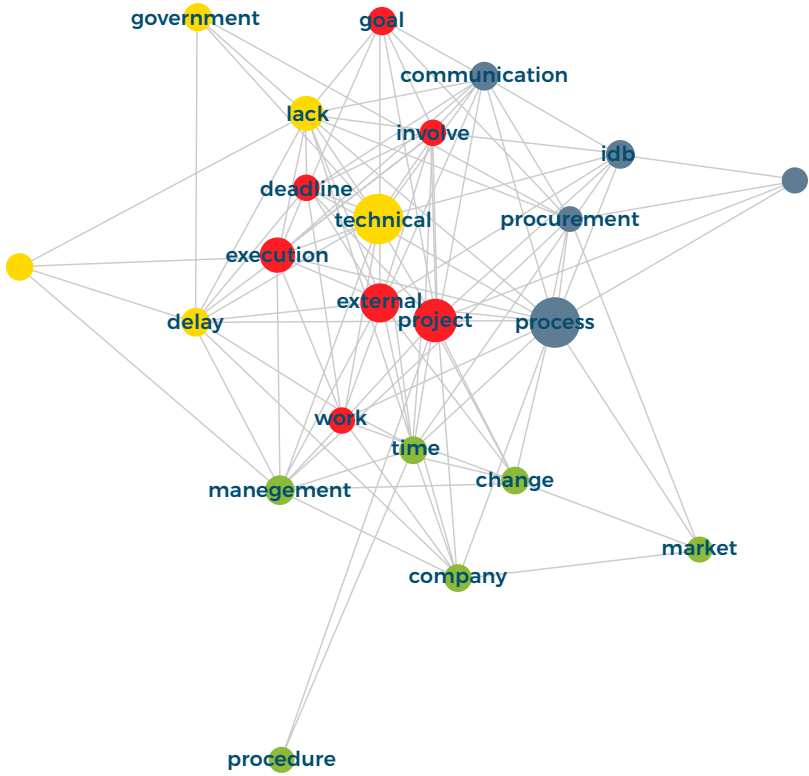
Source: Authors' elaboration.

**Figure A1. Main Factors Determining Achievement of Goals**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

**Figure A2. Most Identified Obstacles for the Achievement of Goals**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

**Figure A3. Training Need and Time Availability**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

## A.2. Autonomy and its Relationship with the KPI Establishment and Achievement

Based on Rasul, Rogger, and Williams (2018) the index for the present study measures autonomy more subjectively. Using the average across the scores of the three dimensions mentioned above, it is possible to compute an index of autonomy that can take values from 1 to 5, where 5 indicates the highest level of autonomy. For this work, the autonomy index has an average of 4.1, a median of 4.3, and a standard deviation of 0.62, which are slightly higher than the self-perceived autonomy score reported (3.6 for the relationship they have with the IDB and 3.4 for the one with the government executing agency).

Table A5 compares the scores with KPI-related questions to see if there is a correlation between autonomy and KPI setting and result achievement. Despite the low number of observations that does not allow for statistically strong conclusions. First, according to our autonomy index, two interesting patterns emerge, PEUs with established KPIs have more autonomy than those without. However, those who set KPIs consider themselves to have less autonomy. Second, focusing on the results within the group that has established KPIs, when comparing those that “sometimes” achieve the proposed targets with those that “often” achieve them, the latter have more autonomy, both using the index and self-perceived measure.

**Table A5. Autonomy and Results**

Indicator	Has the PEU established KPIs?		How regularly does the PEU comply with achieving KPIs?	
	No	yes	Sometimes	Often
<b>Autonomy IDB</b>	3.67	3.56	3.29	3.92
<b>Autonomy government executing institution</b>	3.67	3.33	3.27	3.42
<b>Autonomy index</b>	3.96	3.14	4.17	4.28

**Source:** Authors' elaboration.

