

Client Survey 2009: Preliminary Analysis of Results

Highlights

- **Response Rate:** Out of a simple random sample of 691 WBG staff, 200 responded to the online survey which was conducted in July 2009. This translates into a response rate of 29 percent even though this rate varies within the survey. The margin of error is ± 6 percent. Given the initial 4 percent margin of error of the random sample, the results cannot be generalized to the population because of the possible non-response bias. However, a comparison of the population with the random sample, respondents and non-respondents along grade levels and organization suggests that there is no bias with regard to those attributes. Nevertheless, the results should be interpreted as giving an insight to how a randomly selected group of WBG staff perceives IEG evaluations.
- **Awareness:** The majority of respondents (69 percent) are “somewhat” or “very” familiar with IEG evaluations. Most respondents read IEG evaluations only occasionally (60 percent) but 32 percent read “most” or “many evaluations relevant to their work”. The respondents are most familiar with sector and thematic evaluations and project level evaluations.
- **Independence and Impact:** 96 percent of respondents rated IEG as either very independent (45 percent) or somewhat independent (51 percent) and 66 percent of respondents see IEG’s impact on the WBG as “moderate”, “great”, or “very great”.
- **Influence, Quality, and Use:** Overall the respondents rated the influence of IEG evaluations higher than the quality, which in turn was rated higher than the use of evaluations.
- **General Influence and Use:** The respondents’ ratings suggest that the impact of IEG evaluations is higher on a more general level influencing lessons learned and good practice, and being used for commenting on the work of others and for providing advice to clients.

1. Methodology

- a. The 2009 IEG client survey was carried out by an external survey firm in July 2009 with a different approach than previous IEG-WB client surveys. Its purpose was to obtain a general perception of IEG’s independence and the quality, impact, and use of its evaluations. For the first time, the survey included IBRD, IFC, and MIGA staff. In contrast to previous surveys we did not target recipients of specific IEG reports but randomly selected 691 WBG staff out of a population of 6625 operational WBG staff. This population was selected above the GE grade level (including JPA, JPO and YP staff) and based on whether they work in either a network or a region, or in OPCS. For IFC, the same criteria were applied. MIGA staff was included fully into population. The sample size is based on calculations for a margin of error of 4 percent and at a 95 percent level of confidence.

- b. We adapted the questionnaire to fit the whole WBG population and incorporated our survey approach and questionnaire after a review by an external survey expert.¹ In order to increase the survey's validity, we established two automatic filters in the online survey questionnaire sorting out ineligible respondents who were not at all familiar with IEG or never read IEG's evaluations.²
- c. The survey was distributed to 691 staff.³ After three reminder emails, the external survey firm called all non-respondents at HQ and FOs reminding them to complete the survey and resent the survey link upon request.⁴

2. Survey Results

a. How representative are the results?

- i. Of 691 WBG staff, 200 responded to the online survey. This translates into a response rate of 29 percent. The margin of error is ± 6 percent. Given the initial 4 percent margin of error for which we selected our random sample, the results cannot be generalized to the population without qualification because of the possible non-response bias. However, a comparison of the population with the random sample, respondents along grade levels and organization shows a normal distribution between the two groups suggesting no bias with regard to grade levels and organization.⁵ In addition, the percentage of respondents at the manager level (6.3 percent) did not suggest a bias either when compared to population (7.4 percent), random sample (6.4 percent), and non-respondents (6.5 percent).

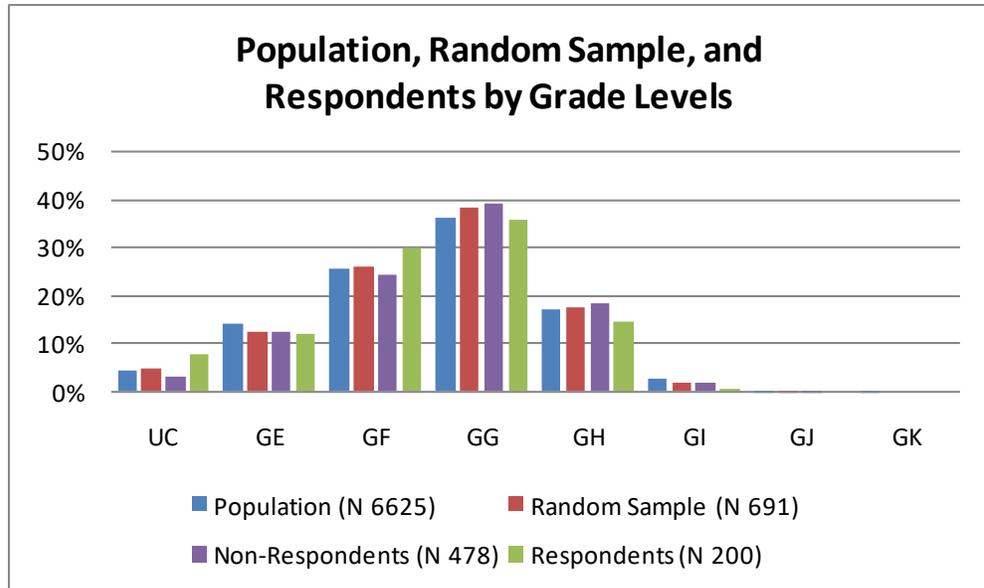
¹ The random sample included 2 GEF staff that was both "not" or "not too" familiar with IEG. Both were automatically directed to the end of the survey. Therefore, GEF does not appear as an organization in the comparison.

² Of the 200 respondents, 18 (9 percent) answered that they are not at all familiar with IEG's evaluations and 14 (8 percent) never read IEG evaluations relevant for their work.

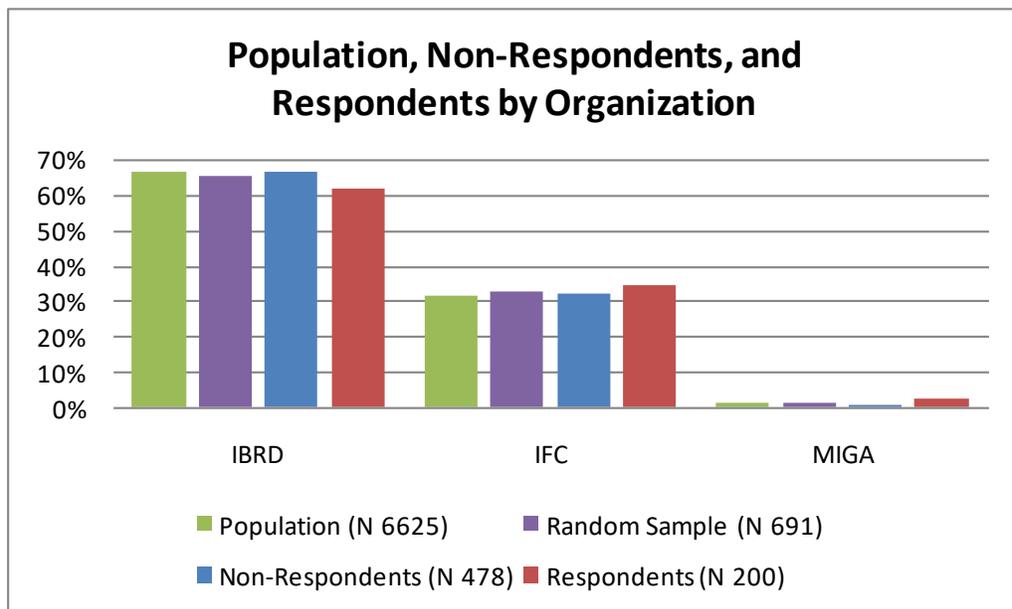
³ The survey was sent to an initial sample of around 600 World Bank Group staff. Together with the external survey firm, we decided to increase to sample to 691 in order to accommodate for staff that were on leave beyond our deadline (however, staff on leave remained within the overall sample).

⁴ To offer an incentive for taking part in the survey, all survey respondents were entered into a random prize draw to win an iPod shuffle.

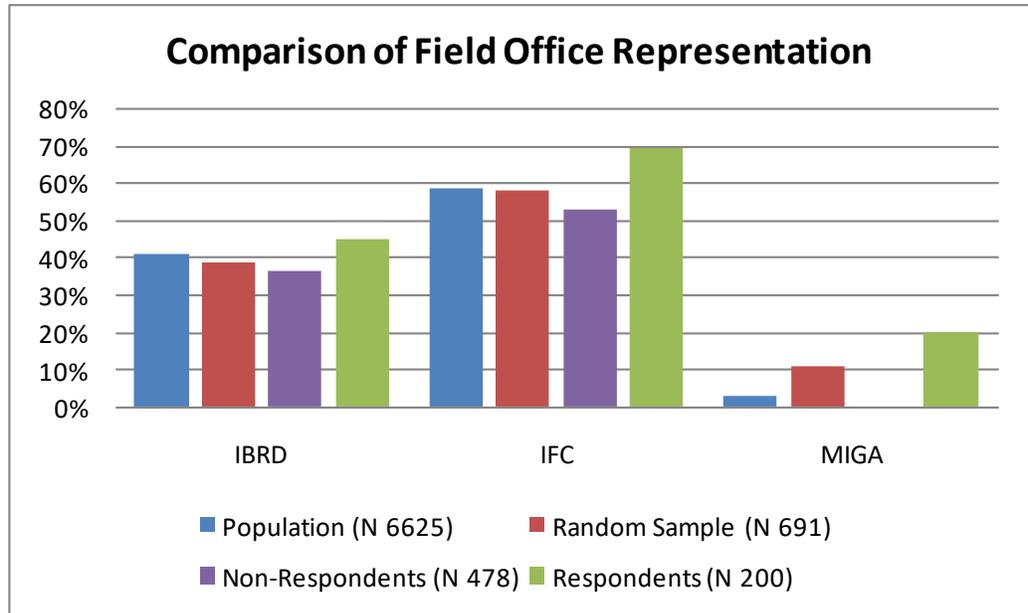
⁵ We were able to link the respondents' grade level with population, random sample, and non-respondents in 95-99 percent of the cases given the usual fluctuations between the available HR lists.



ii. Moreover, a comparison between the respondents and the non-respondents by organization suggests no significant bias.

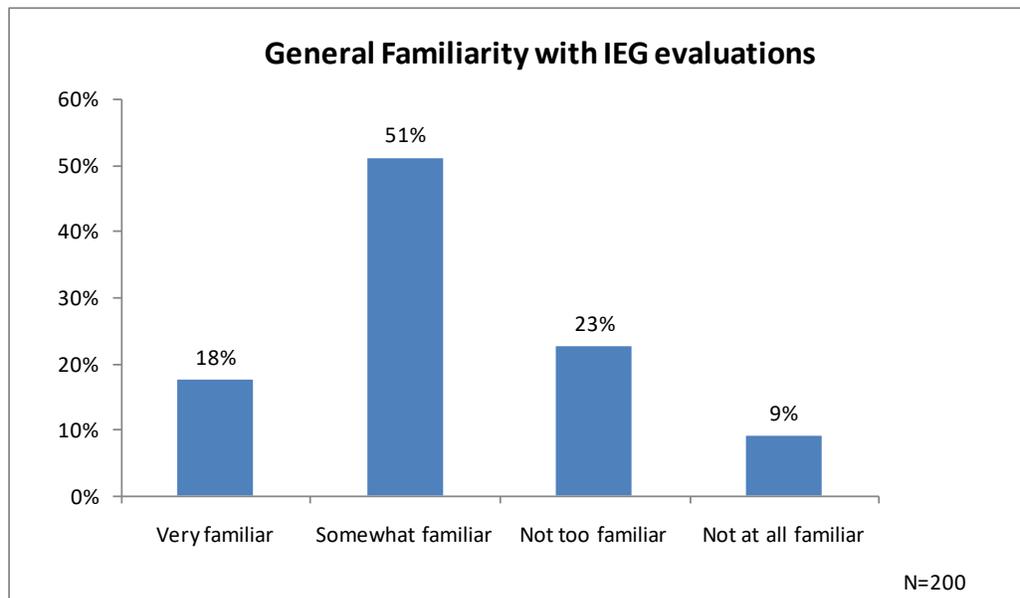


iii. There is a small bias in favor of Field Office respondents, especially among the IFC respondents.



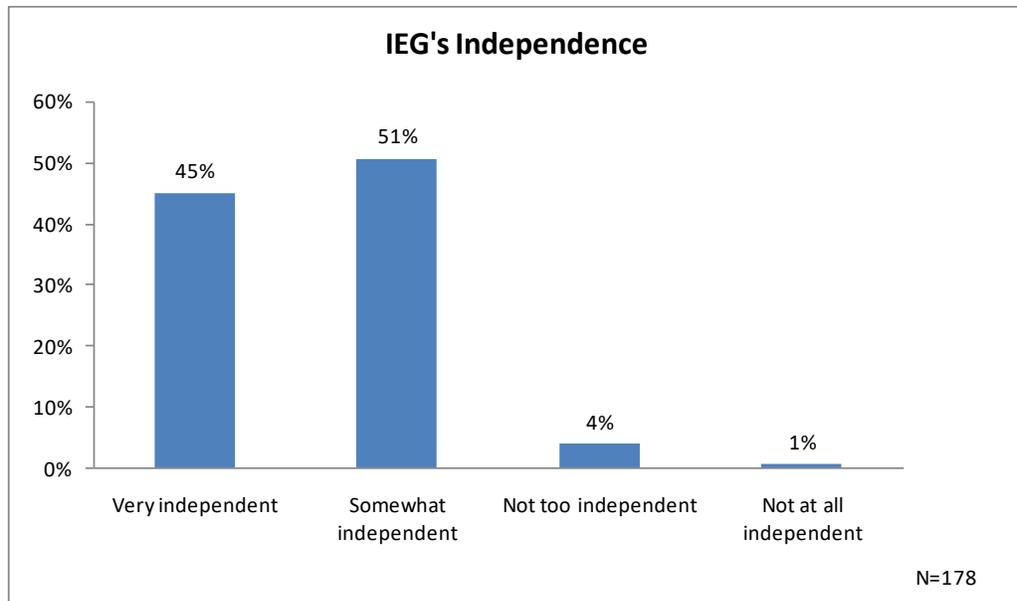
b. Familiarity with IEG

- i. **Overall:** The survey measures WBG respondents' general familiarity with IEG's evaluations. 51 percent of respondents were "somewhat" familiar with IEG's evaluations, and 17% were very familiar. Of the 22 respondents that were "not at all familiar" with IEG's evaluations, 17 either had duties unrelated to IEG or had just joined the WBG. A notable difference among respondents from the three organizations was that only 3 percent of IFC respondents were "not at all" familiar with IEG's evaluations (WB 12 percent, MIGA 20 percent).



c. IEG’s independence

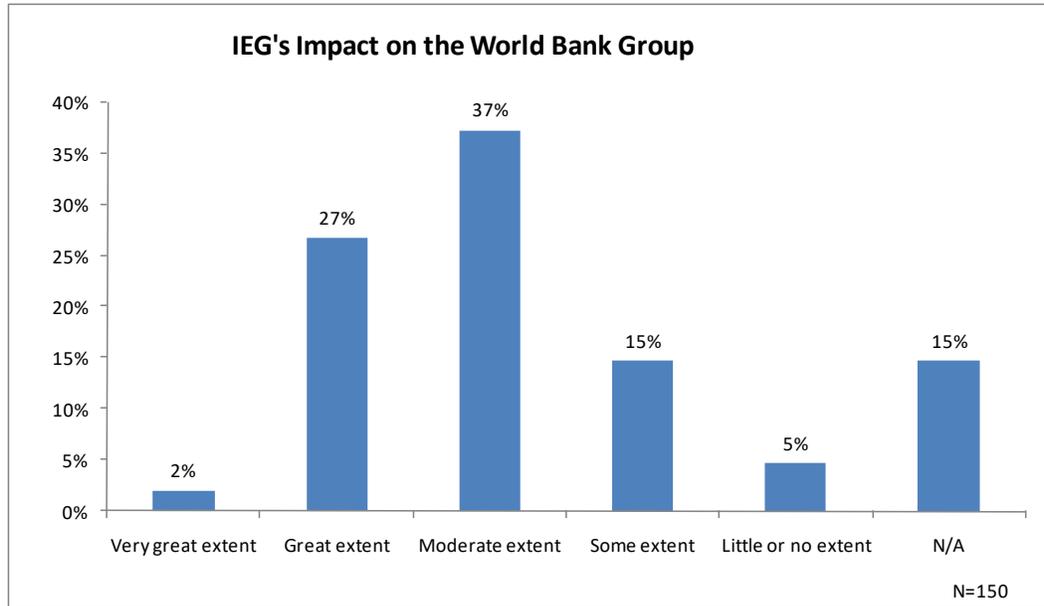
- i. **Overall:** When asked to rate IEG’s independence, 96 percent of respondents rated IEG as either very independent (45 percent) or somewhat independent (51 percent). Half of the respondents’ written comments (6/11) confirmed the high ratings for IEG’s independence. When compared by organization, it was notable that all respondents who rated IEG as “not too independent” or “not independent at all” were IBRD staff (4 percent).



d. IEG’s impact

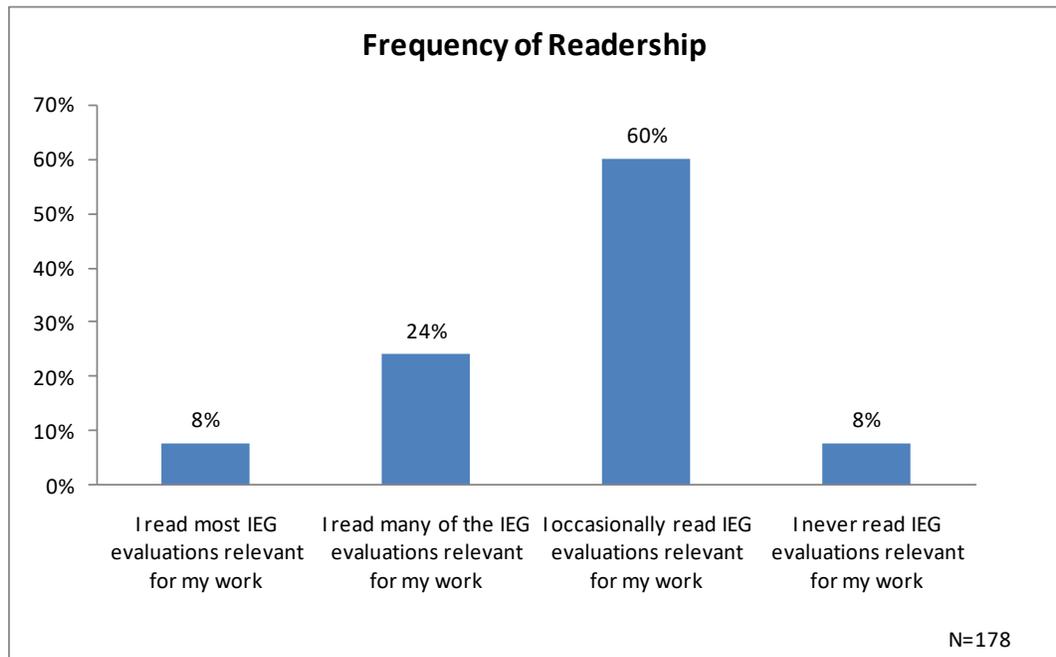
- i. When asked to rate IEG’s impact on the WBG on a five-point scale from “little or no extent: to “very great extent”, 29 percent of respondents see IEG’s impact on the WBG as great, or very great while 37% see its impact as moderate. Only 5 percent of respondents perceive IEG’s impact to be of little or no extent.⁶

⁶ This question was asked at the end of the survey to all recipients. However, if cross-tabbed for previous answers, the majority of respondents who answered this question are familiar with IEG. 82 percent (18 out of 22 respondents) of those respondents that answered “not applicable” had previously answered not being familiar at all or never reading IEG’s evaluations.

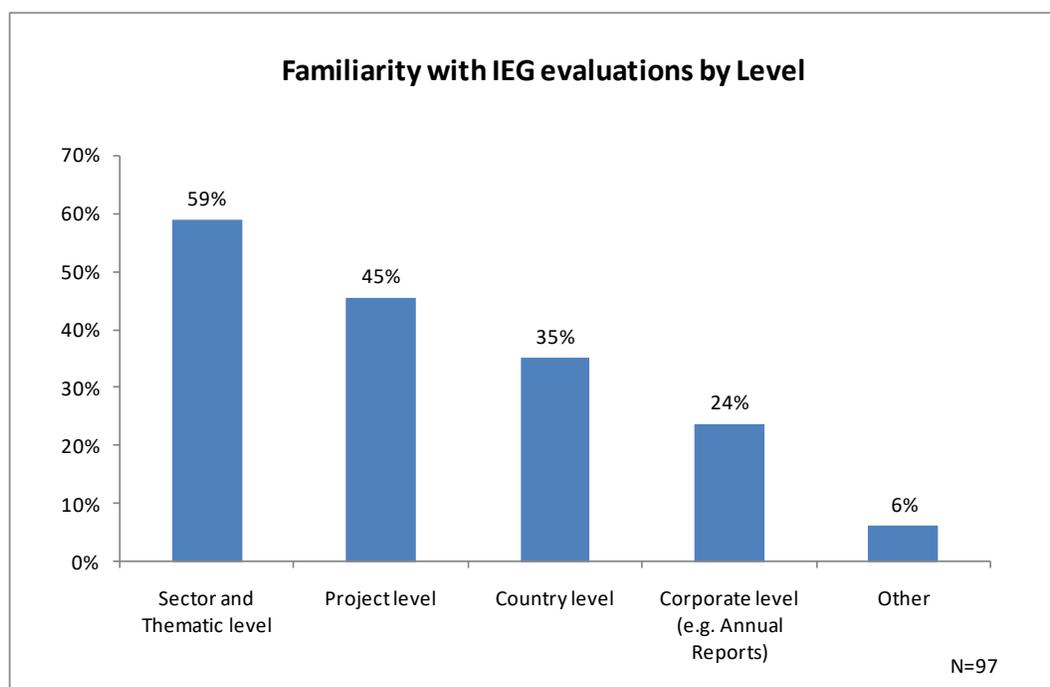


e. Readership and Awareness with IEG reports

- i. **Frequency of readership:** The survey recipients were asked to rate their general familiarity with IEG’s evaluations. 32 percent of the respondents answered that they read “most” or “many evaluations relevant to their work” while 60 percent are occasional readers of IEG reports that are relevant to their work. When cross-tabbed for organization, IFC respondents stood out: 19 percent (9/47) of respondents answered that they “never” read IEG evaluations relevant to their work.



- ii. **Readership by type of report:** : When asked about with which level of IEG’s evaluations they have read, the majority of survey respondents mentioned IEG’s thematic and sector reports.⁷ Within this category, the most often-mentioned reports are Public Sector Reform (6), Environmental Sustainability (5), Health, Nutrition and Population (5), Water-related reports (5), and Climate Change (3). Moreover, the two IEG joint reports on Guarantees and Doing Business mentioned more than once as was the recent report on IFC’s Advisory Services. With regard to the project and country level, the respondents were most familiar with ICR Reviews, CAEs, and a few CASCR Reviews.⁸ On average, the respondents mentioned more than one evaluation.



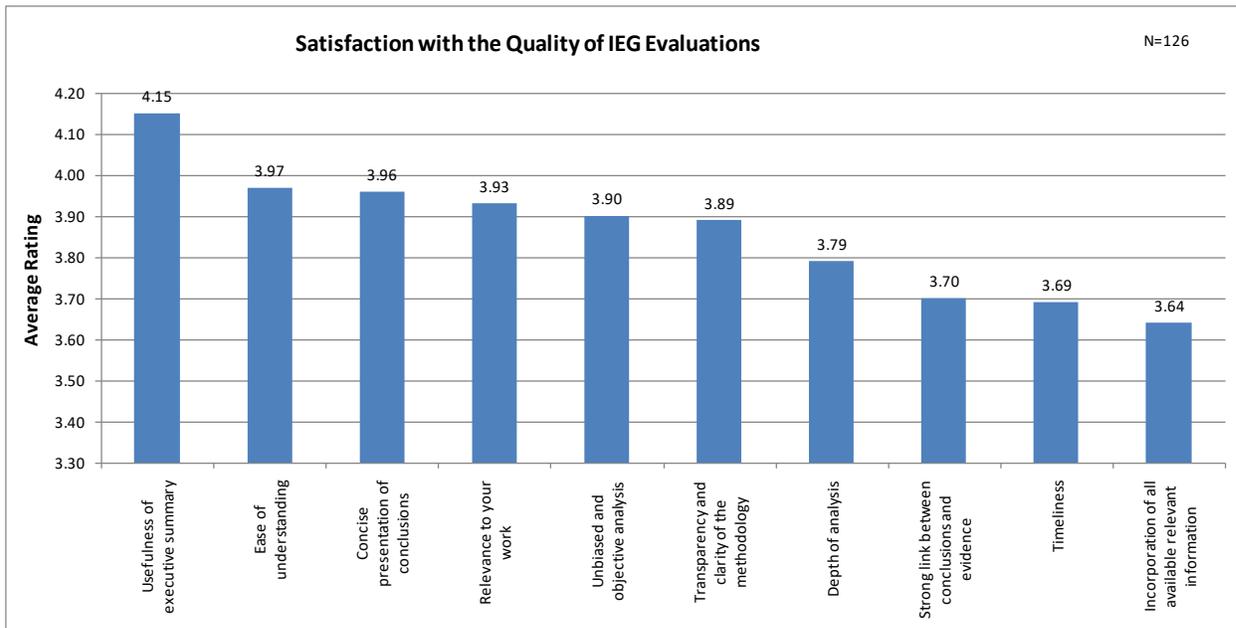
f. Quality of IEG evaluations

- i. **Overall:** Survey recipients were asked to rate their satisfaction with IEG’s evaluations on a six-point scale for ten attributes of quality: relevance to their work, ease of understanding, concise presentation of conclusions, timeliness, usefulness of recommendations, transparency and clarity of the methodology, the strength of the link between conclusions and evidence, the depth of analysis, and whether all available information was incorporated.
- ii. The survey respondents (126 WBG staff answered to this question) gave the highest ratings for the usefulness of executive summaries (average of 4.15 with 73 percent rating it 4 or better), the ease of understanding (average of 3.97), the concise presentation of conclusions (average of 3.96), and the relevance of IEG evaluations to their work. The respondents were least satisfied with IEG's evaluations' incorporation of all available relevant

⁷ This frequency list of most read IEG reports concurs with the one of IEG Help Desk requests for publications.

⁸ On the country level, only the Indonesia and Nigeria CAEs were mentioned more than twice.

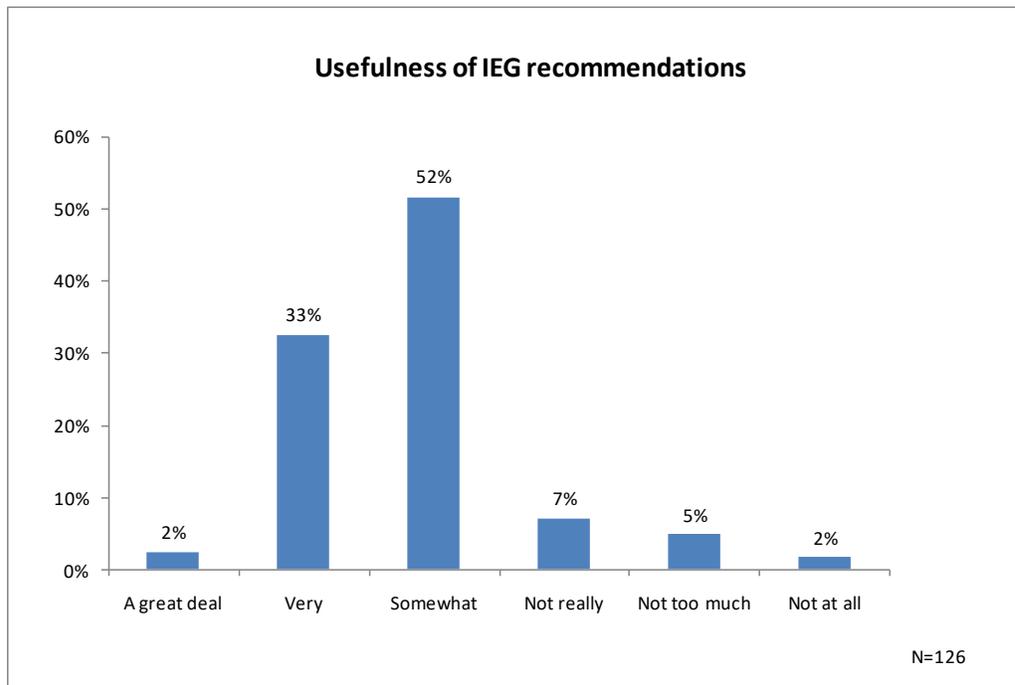
information (average of 3.64), their timeliness (average of 3.69), and the attribute of a strong link between conclusions and evidence (average of 3.70).⁹



iii. **Usefulness of recommendations:** The survey recipients were asked to rate the usefulness of recommendations from IEG’s evaluations on a six-point scale. 126 WBG staff answered to this question. 35 percent of respondents found IEG’s recommendations to be either, “very”, or a “great deal” useful while 52 percent found them “somewhat” useful. The remaining 13 percent of respondents were asked to give a qualitative assessment on their rating. A common theme within the nine received comments was that IEG’s recommendations would be too general to be of value during their implementation and would lack an appreciation for the realities on the ground.¹⁰

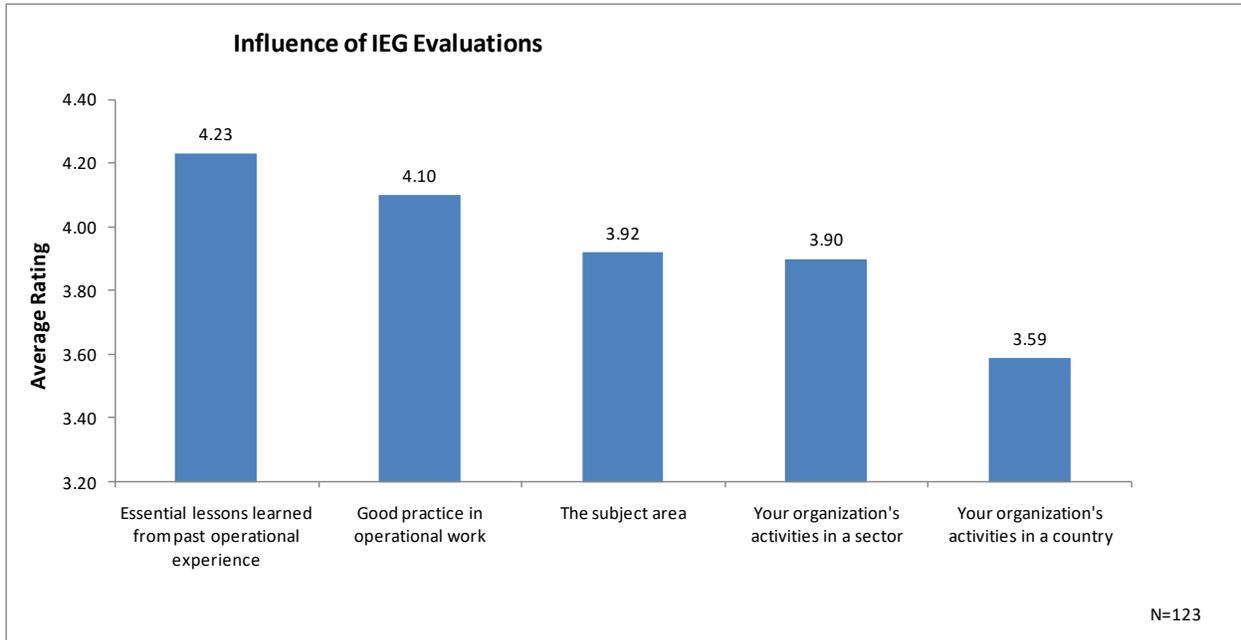
⁹ On average, MIGA staff rated every attribute one grade lower than IBRD and IFC staff.

¹⁰ The three most critical comments on this issue came from MIGA staff.



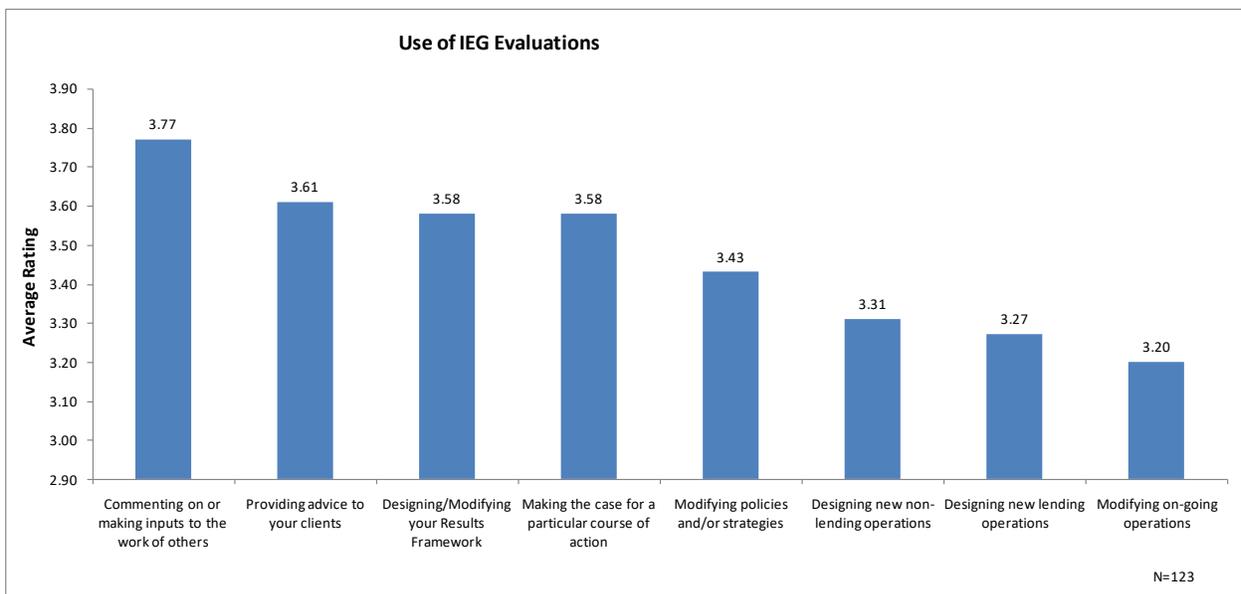
g. Influence of IEG Evaluations

- i. The respondents were asked to rate on a six-point scale – from 1=“not at all” to 6=“a great deal” – with a “not applicable” option the influence of an IEG evaluation on their understanding of essential lessons learned from past operational experience, Good practice in operational work, a subject area, their organization’s activities in a sector, or their organization’s activities in a country. 123 WBG staff responded to this question.
- ii. The respondents rated the influence of IEG evaluations on their understanding of essential lessons learned from past operational experience and good practice in operational work. The two front runners were essential lessons learned from past operational experience and good practice in operational work with a mean of 4.23 (74 percent rating it 4 or higher) and 4.10 (68 percent rating it 4 or higher) respectively.



h. Use of evaluations

- i. **Overall:** The recipients were asked how they use evaluations to give advice, comment, design new products and strategies, and modify ongoing operations and strategies. 123 WBG staff responded to this question.
- ii. The respondents use IEG’s evaluations to comment on or make inputs to the work of others, and providing advice to clients to a higher degree (a mean of 3.77, and 3.61 respectively) than to design new non-lending or lending operations or to modify on-going operations (a mean of 3.31, 3.27, and 3.20 respectively). An average of 16 percent of respondents answered that none of these options would be applicable to their situation.



- iii. When asked to give an example of how an evaluation had been useful and/or relevant to their work, almost all of the 31 respondents pointed out specific IEG evaluations on the project, country and thematic or sector level as the following examples highlight:
- *“In Nigeria we used the PPAR assessing three water supply and sanitation projects to lobby with the Nigerian federal government to focus on building capacities at the state and communities levels in order to better implement WSS projects.”*
 - *“I found the CAS Completion Report for Mexico to be very useful. In particular in trying to think about CAS design for a MIC and issues of accountability and results. Actually found it more useful than OPCS guidelines (or lack thereof).”*
 - *“I work in the anchor (non lending arm of the Bank) so I find some of the conclusion quiet useful coming out from Bank funded projects. The conclusions help me in understanding the pitfalls of front loaded projects which aim to improve services through infrastructures. This helps us in making our case that investment is not the only tool to improve services rather it should be reform and improved management of productive assets than dead assets.”*
 - *“IEG Evaluations on Advisory Services and Development Results were very useful to calibrate expectations in project design (advisory services).”*
- iv. Overall, the 31 respondents find IEG’s evaluations’ useful for their work in three main categories: **designing** new projects, their work program, or results frameworks, using evaluation results to **make the case** for a particular course of action with management or the client government, and getting a better **understanding** of their work with regard to lessons learned.¹¹ IBRD staff were more highly represented in the responses to this question (77 percent compared to 62 percent in the respondents’ population).

i. Other comments

- i. **Overall:** 15 respondents provided general comments at the end of the survey. Some comments addressed IEG’s independence and the issue of IEG being too removed from operational knowledge and clients. Another respondent noted that although IEG findings are valuable for background knowledge, they are too general and not helpful to inform the day-to-day operational work. Respondents pointed to the helpful role in making projects more effective and mentioned the supervision role in the preparation of self-evaluations. Critical comments came mainly from MIGA staff but they included some suggestions on how to improve IEG’s impact.

¹¹ We have to take into consideration a possible internal bias of the questionnaire since the previous question asked about specific use of IEG’s evaluations.