BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE CAN IMPROVE PROJECT DESIGN

DIAGNOSING THE PROBLEM

Behavioral insights can shed light on potential “behavioral biases” (a systematic error in thinking that can lead an individual to make a less desirable choice); pre-existing mental models (someone’s thought process about how something works in the real world); and underlying social norms.

IMPROVING THE DESIGN OF THE INTERVENTION

By identifying behavioral bottlenecks, behavioral insights can improve the efficiency of an intervention in cost-effective ways.

IMPROVING THE EVALUATION OF THE INTERVENTION

By looking at behavioral responses to projects, evaluators can better appreciate the real-world impact of their projects. This requires new approaches—looking beyond traditional metrics, to new indicators and more nuanced baselines. Evaluators should always be asking: “What indicators can be collected to measure people’s behavioral responses (or lack of them) to an intervention and the impact on outcomes?”

To illustrate some of the opportunities, a recent IEG report assembled examples of effective behavioral approaches from three sectoral domains: education, health, and social protection.

Read more about the findings of this report: https://ieg.worldbank.org/behavioral-approaches