

Public Management Guiding Institutions in the Americas

Exploratory Study

General Secretariat
Secretariat for Political Affairs
Department for Effective Public Management



Organization of
American States

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Introduction

The functioning of the state and of public-sector institutions—together with the need to support their modernization processes—has been a topic for analysis in the Hemisphere over the past three decades. To that end, governments have undertaken various initiatives intended to improve the provision of public services and, at the same time, to keep their economies in balance.

In most of the region's countries, the 1980s marked the return of electoral democracy and of civilian control over public institutions. However, this newly regained political freedom required states to promptly and broadly secure their social debts in fighting poverty and inequality, and that process was hampered by foreign-debt crises and violent conflicts in several of the region's countries.

It was not until the 1990s that the region's countries embarked on a broad process of modernization, redefining the role of the state from that of a productive agent to that of a regulator and renewing its capacity for investment in such key areas as education, health, citizen security, and the coordination of national strategies in pursuit of economic growth and the reduction of poverty and inequality.

Nevertheless, and in spite of the shock caused by the implementation of those reforms—due to the institutional changes put in place and the redefinition of social rights and of systems for state protection—some of our countries still have institutional frameworks that are incomplete, fragmented, and divergent, which directly affects the legitimacy of their democracies and governments.

It is therefore possible to claim that democracy and democratic governance are strengthened if democratically elected governments have a state apparatus that can address and re-

spond to public demands in a way that is transparent, sustainable, efficient, and effective. Today, we have better and more informed citizens, who have higher expectations of their governments and demand swift responses with concrete solutions: citizens who monitor more closely their governments' compliance with their electoral promises.

Thus, one of the current challenges facing the region's governments is to identify initiatives that can respond to those demands, guarantee the adequate provision of public services, and involve all sectors of society in the development of public policies, making the citizens active participants in the construction of a democratic society.

To assist in this undertaking, governments have provided for the existence of agencies charged with guiding the public administration: institutions responsible for the institutional development of the public administration policy at the national level, with the purpose of ensuring its proper functioning and administration in order to attain the government's goals and objectives, regardless of their sectoral nature or specialty.

These are therefore a special kind of agency: in general, not particularly visible within the public administration, but of singular importance because they enable, regulate, and support the operations of all other public entities by taking charge of such matters as planning, preparing budgets, the quality of public policies, evaluating public policies, citizen participation policies, etc., which affect all agencies of the public administration on a crosscutting basis.

In consideration of those issues, this study seeks to contribute elements for the in-depth exploration of the nature, work, and scope of these agencies; and, in pursuit of that goal, during the first quarter of 2013, the OAS Department for Effective Public Management (DEPM) organized a hemispheric consultation among the Public Management Guiding Institutions of its 34 member states, with a total of 23 responses received (**See Annex II**).

That consultation was carried out using a standardized survey of 48 questions, structured around four axes that reflect a complete development cycle for a public policy within any agency.

The cycle begins with the Strategic Management axis, during which aspects related to the agency's planning and strategic direction can be explored; then comes Process Management, analyzing matters related to the management of human resources, procurement and purchasing, logistics, risk management, etc.; Results Management, which examines how the agency's "deliverables"—its goods or services—are created, and how these offer possibilities for improvement and feedback; and finally, Institutional Relations Management, which provides information on the agency's ties and interrelations with other stakeholders in its development and actions, including members of the public, other entities, the private sector, civil society organizations, etc.

The information obtained has been expanded and contextualized through a general theoretical framework related to the "General Theory of Systems," which is an analytical tool that can be adapted to data on public administrations to cast light on the components and interrelations of public agencies and thereby to explain their functioning and scope.

Note that each axis and each question comes with a brief explanation of its scope, a chart setting out the answers given, and a reference to significant percentages or numbers in the results to assist in calculating or providing an idea regarding the status of each question.

Finally, a set of conclusions are offered, to provide an overview of the entire report and to allow determinations to be made regarding the status of each axis and regarding the Public Management Guiding Institutions in the countries of the Americas.

It should also be noted that this effort by the Department for Effective Public Management (DEPM) of the OAS Secretariat for Political Affairs represents a first step that will continue with a series of new publications from its specialists and experts with the aim of providing the academic community, public officials, and experts in public administration with inputs and knowledge for the development of initiatives and innovations within public administrations, and for the development of further research. This will assist with strengthening democratic governance and with providing optimal attention to the concerns of the citizens as the center, reason, and motivation of all those who work and serve in the public sector.

Washington, D.C., January 13, 2014

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Notes on Method Used

The methodology used for this study was descriptive and analytical. All the information set out below was provided by the Public Management Guiding Institutions of twenty-three (23) member countries of the Organization of American States (OAS), obtained by means of an in-depth survey containing forty-eight (48) questions divided into four (4) axes or parts—Strategic Management, Process Management, Results Management, and Institutional Relations Management—that was administered during the first half of 2013.

The figures were processed statistically and comparisons and estimates were made, in order to obtain reference values for each of the questions, so that grounded premises with a statistical backing could be offered.

These premises were systematized and analyzed, resulting in a set of conclusions and hypotheses that provide a general overview of the Public Management Guiding Institutions in the nations of the Americas.

Finally, the data obtained were aggregated and presented in the form of charts, tables, and graphs, to assist with interpretation and understanding.



■ General Theoretical Framework

Systemic Analysis of Public Administration Agencies

Since the start of the last century, the social sciences have had a powerful tool for interpretation: Ludwig Von Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory, which is undeniably one of the most important contributions to modern science¹.

This theory is important because it demonstrates the possibility of a broad study of aspects of scientific knowledge through universal principles, using a single theoretical framework that applies to all sciences. With this approach, all natural and social objects that are subject to scientific study and analysis are no longer conceptualized as separate, disconnected units; instead, they can be organized as "systems," understood as a set or collection of elements, components, or interrelated parts, which interact dynamically and act as a whole in pursuit of a common goal or purpose.

Thus, if we see the public administration as the set of public agencies that aim to ensure the well-being of citizens through the provision of public goods and services, it appears as a complex network of organizations interacting among themselves with a specific, essential goal.

It is then possible to offer approximations about the elements or parameters² that make up a system and to assimilate it into the public administration and the public agencies that constitute it.

¹ Bertalanffy, Ludwig Von (1968). *General System Theory. Foundations, Development, Applications*. George Brazillier: New York.

² Castro Sáez, Bernardo Alonso (2007), *Análisis organizacional desde la Teoría General del Sistema* (Thesis for Doctorate in Education), Universidad La Serena: La Serena, Chile, p. 106.

The first is the existence of “inputs,” which are all those elements that trigger actions within the system. In general, these come from outside or from the “environment.” They can be information, which enables the system to direct and plan its actions; energy, which is the input that allows the system to become dynamic and which varies according to the system’s nature; or materials, which are then used by the system to produce results.

In the realm of public administration, the inputs are all those elements that demand the public administration’s attention and that are the reason why it operates. In that case, we can identify the different stakeholders that interact with the public administration to gain its attention (citizens, private sector, political players, civil society). These use different methods to achieve that: for example, by providing information on the needs of the public or of a specific group; by facilitating “energy,” which can be political or regulatory decisions that guide and propel the administration in a given direction; or through much more tangible or material inputs, such as budgetary resources, specialized studies, volunteering, etc.

The second element is the existence of “outputs”: these are all the answers that the system gives to satisfy the demands of the inputs and, in themselves, represent the materialization of the system’s objectives or reason for being. Within the public administration, the outputs are all the public policies or affirmative actions taken by the public administration or administrations to resolve public problems.

If necessary, public administrations can issue regulations for different activities or directly provide such goods and services as education, health, justice, security, etc., depending on their nature and function.

The third element is the transformation apparatus, or “black box,”³ which is the set of units or subcomponents in a system that interact to process the inputs in order to produce outputs or answers from the system. In the case of the public administration, this role is played by the different entities that perform public functions, which, according to their nature and functions, process public needs and generate public policies to address different public problems.

The fourth element is the feedback mechanism whereby all systems re-assimilate their outputs in order to process them and generate corrections in pursuit of general improvements to the entire system and its sustainability. Within the public administration, this element is related to the functions of monitoring and evaluating public policies from different perspectives (political, technical, social) that are regularly performed by public agencies.

The fifth element is the “environment”, which relates to the surroundings in which the system operates: the location of the inputs and outputs that interact with the “black box” transformation apparatus that is responsible for processing and transforming them. In public administration, the environment comprises the political, social, economic, and administrative surroundings in which public administrations operate, where there are also a large number of agents or stakeholders that interact with public agencies and, in turn, receive the benefits they provide.

Similarly, systems have different characteristics that are also applicable to the analysis of public administrations.

³ The term “black box” was coined by David Easton to reflect the general lack of understanding among the public of how political systems function. Additional information may be found in: Easton, David. “An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems.” *World Politics*. 9 (April 1957); Jones, Charles O. *An Introduction to Public Policy*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1984.

The first of these is the global nature of their interactions, whereby an action by any component affects the functioning of the entire system. Within public administrations, this function is reflected in correct operations—when the areas responsible for support processes (procurement, human resources, logistics, etc.), essential processes (depending on the nature of the agency in question), or leadership processes (direction and planning) of any entity operate on an interconnected basis in order to attain its institutional objectives. Conversely, it is clear that dysfunctions or malfunctions within any of the entities’ components would lead to problems with meeting institutional responsibilities.

The second characteristic is negative entropy: a term borrowed from the physical sciences that refers to the tendency of systems to avoid a state of disintegration and chaos whereby they require to be fed with inputs coming from outside or from other systems. Therefore, all systems need to interact, to collect energy and information, and to open up to new inputs that will enable them to function; otherwise, they would end up isolated, obsolete, and disintegrated.

It is difficult to imagine a public administration not in full interaction with other systems—such as, for example, organized civil society or individual citizens—that perform such functions as providing it with impetus, demands, information, and other elements that make the public administration work.

A third characteristic is homeostasis, which means the capacity of a system to strike a balance between the inputs it receives and the outputs it produces and which allows it a permanent presence in the environment in which it operates. Applying this characteristic to public administration, we could describe it as a recognition of its functionality in pursuit of its mission of ensuring the common good by satisfying the citizenry’s needs.

Thus, the public administration receives demands as inputs from citizens, the private sector, or other stakeholders; they are then processed by the public administration in an attempt to strike a homeostatic balance between what is demanded and what can actually be provided. Clearly, however, this balance is not always attained, since there are many dysfunctionalities that prevent public administrations from successfully discharging their missions and, on many occasions, citizens’ needs are not fully satisfied.

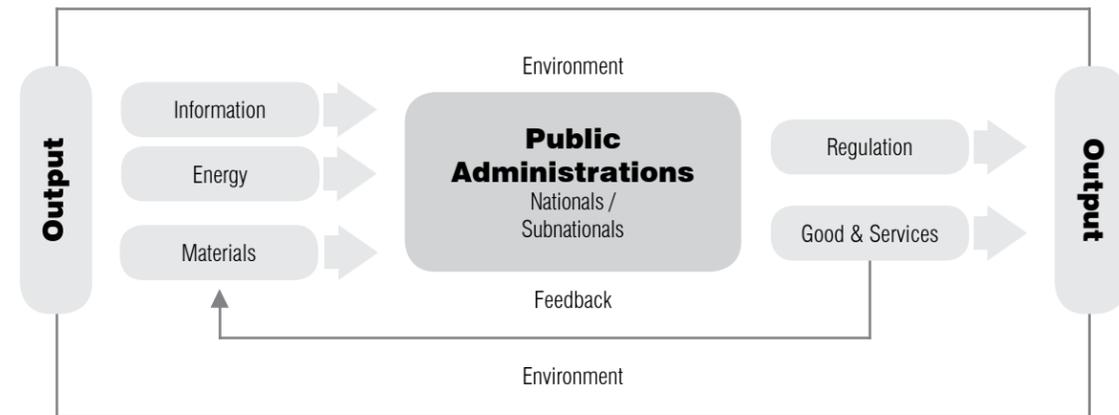
A fourth characteristic of any system is feedback, which entails oversight of its performance in order to allow it to regulate itself and improve its functions. Within the public administration, this function refers to the political evaluations regularly conducted by governments, and to the evaluations of public policies carried out by public agencies.

A fifth characteristic of systems is equifinality, which means that several different methods can be used to attain their purposes. In the case of the public administration, this characteristic can be seen in the possibility of using a number of strategies to reach a specific objective. There is a broad range of examples showing that often, faced by political, budgetary, logistical, and other changes, public administrations adopt changes and various strategies to continue meeting their institutional goals, thus maintaining regularity in the provision of goods and services to the citizenry.

Finally, the last characteristic is synergy, meaning the action of two or more components and/or systems to attain a different result that is greater than what could be achieved through the individual action of one of the players alone. In any system, interaction and cooperative work between different components to attain a specific goal can be seen.

For example, within public administrations, it is normal for entities to work together to reach different goals. The case of citizen security policy is an example of this, in which in addition to the police, organized citizens, private companies, the judicial authorities, and others also play a particular role. A similar phenomenon can be observed within a specific entity, where individual administrative units—such as budgeting, planning, human resources, etc.—are required to work together to ensure that the entity functions and attains its institutional objectives.

Systemic Chart of Public Administrations



Stakeholders

- Citizens,
- Private business
- Political agents
- NGO's, etc.

Elaborated by the DEPM



■ First Hemispheric Consultation on Public Management Guiding Institutions in the Americas

Using the systemic analysis approach described in the previous section, the Department for Effective Public Management (DEPM) designed a survey to examine all the systemic aspects of a public entity: in this case, the *Public Management Guiding Authorities in the countries of the Americas*.

By “*Public Management Guiding Authorities in the countries of the Americas*” we mean those entities responsible for public administration policy and institutional development for the entities of the public administration at the national level.

Analyzing the different questions reveals how the different components that make up these public agencies act and, additionally, the state of their internal processes and the way they relate to their environment within a system that is perfect in and of itself and, at the same time, as parts of a larger system: the public administration as a whole.

To that end, the questions sent to the OAS member countries were divided into the following four (4) parts: Axis 1: Strategic Management; Axis 2: Process Management; Axis 3: Results Management; and Axis 4: Institutional Relations Management.

The detailed findings were as follows:

Strategic Management

The first part, the Strategic Management Axis, contained a set of twelve (12) questions dealing with the components and processes related to the formulation of strategies and plans that guide the entity's actions.

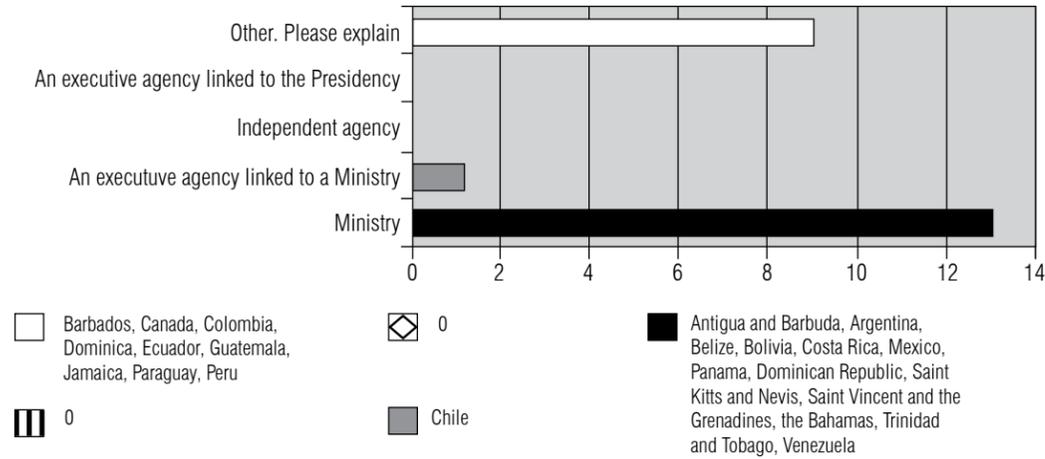
Thus, results were obtained regarding the organizational and functional nature of Public Management Guiding Institutions, the existence and preparation of strategic plans, the relations between strategic plans and other national-level planning instruments, the structure of strategic plans, how they connect with the agency's own functions, programs, and activities, and other aspects.

The available information is related to the "black box" transformation apparatus described above. In addition, this axis also reveals the global nature of the system, in that it is during the planning stage that public administrations target and interrelate the actions of all their component elements, seeking to give their actions a sense of comprehensiveness in order to attain the institutional objectives. It is therefore difficult to imagine a planning process that fails to take into account the functions, operations, and interactions of all the units responsible for institutional support processes (budget, logistics, internal planning, etc.) of the operational units and of other units that make up a public administration.

The first important finding was that of the twenty-three (23) countries that returned information, thirteen (13) indicated that their guiding institutions has ministerial status and nine (9) said they were administrative units within the structure of other entities.

This finding is important because it shows that in the region there is a tendency to place the utmost priority on public administration topics by assigning them to the ministerial level; this means that those entities enjoy administrative autonomy and their own full budgetary allocations, which gives them authority throughout the public administration. In addition, in one way or another, ministerial status strengthens the guiding role that these entities are called to perform.

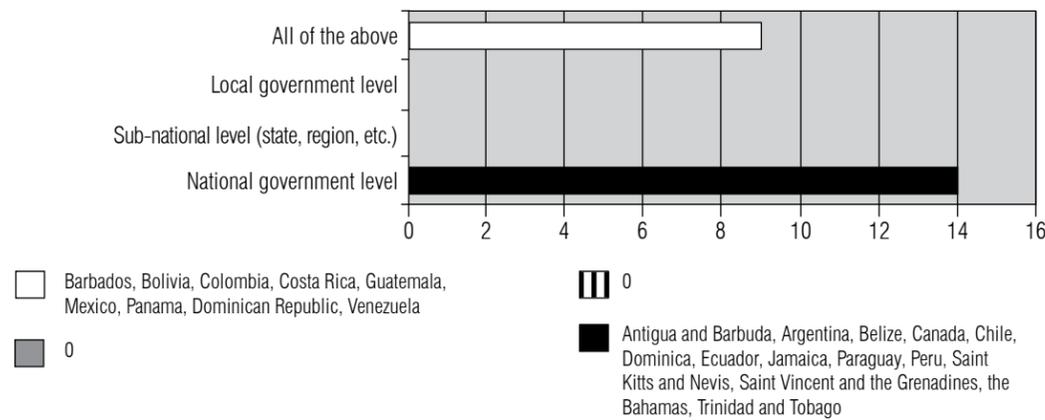
Organically, your institution is a(n)?



In terms of their jurisdiction, the scope of the Public Management Guiding Institutions is predominantly focused on the central level of government (60.8%), while the remainder (39.1%) have jurisdiction over the central level of government and, in addition, over the intermediate subnational levels (states, regions, etc.), and over local administration levels.

In light of these results, it can be deduced that there are two (2) types of considerations reflected in the possibility of performing the role of public administration guidance of the entities covered by the study that could well be explored in later research. The first consideration is the federal structure of some countries, where their jurisdiction is constrained to the national level, as a result of which other decentralized strategies must be considered to address public administration topics at the subnational levels of government. The second consideration is the possible weakness of those entities in discharging their functions at the national level.

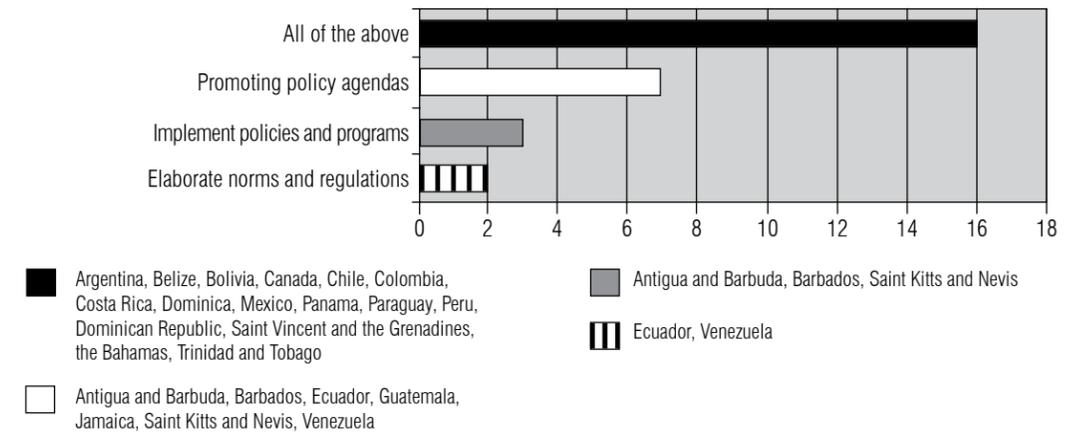
Scope of competence of your institution



Regarding the functions of Public Management Guiding Institutions, two (2) stated their functions were merely regulatory, three (3) had executive functions, seven (7) had promotional functions, and sixteen (16) had all the above.

This result shows a wide variety of options that offer a range of scopes in the jurisdictions of guiding agencies, breaking the traditional mold whereby they were seen as agencies responsible for the oversight of other entities. That notwithstanding, a subsequent research project could examine the nature of the executive tasks and of the promotion of government policies that some of the entities perform.

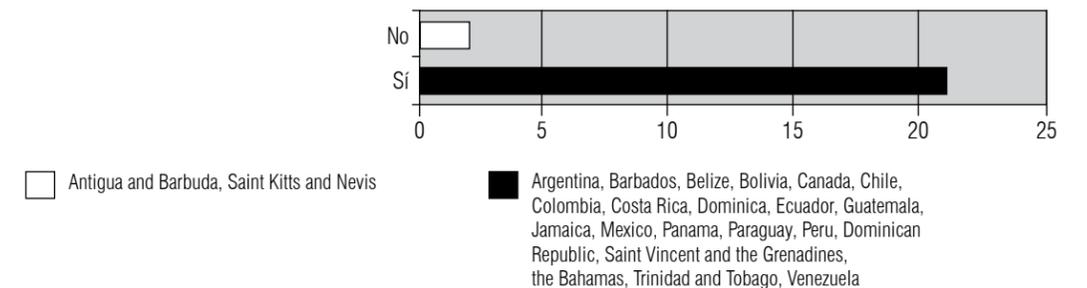
Functions of your institution



In addition, this part includes questions related to the strategic management of Public Management Guiding Institutions. Thus for example, twenty-one (21) of them, representing 91.3% of all the entities surveyed, said they had a strategic plan; while the remaining two (2), equal to 8.6%, said they did not.

It is clearly a good sign that most of the Public Management Guiding Institutions surveyed have strategic plans, because such plans represent a basic process of the public administration that enables the institutions to operate.

Does your institution have a Strategic Plan?

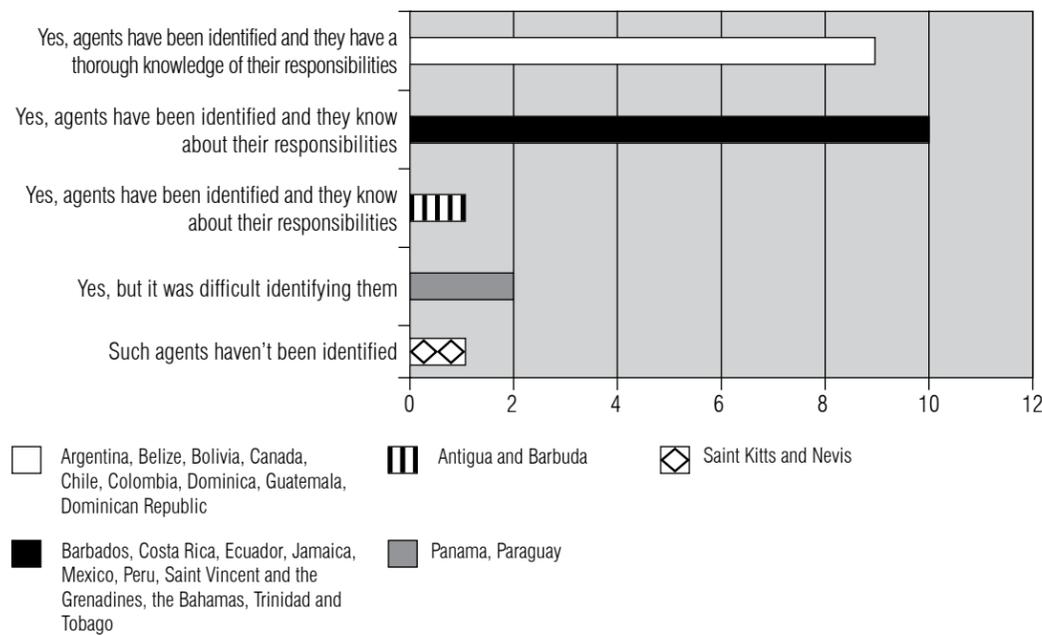


In addition to the existence of strategic plans, the survey also provides information on the planning process itself and on the way in which it is continually developing.

Thus, we have information on the identification of strategic planning responsibilities within the public agencies, which can be deduced if there are specific persons responsible for this process and if they are aware of their responsibilities within the Public Management Guiding Institutions. Accordingly, a broad range of answers were obtained: most of the Public Management Guiding Institutions had clearly identified the persons responsible for planning, and they are “adequately” (ten entities / 43.5%) and “very adequately” (nine entities / 39.1%) aware of their responsibilities.

A small number of guiding agencies reported: that they had not identified the people responsible for planning (one entity / 4.3%); that the people responsible had been identified poorly (two entities / 8.6%); and that although the individuals responsible had been identified, they were not aware of their responsibilities (one entity / 4.3%).

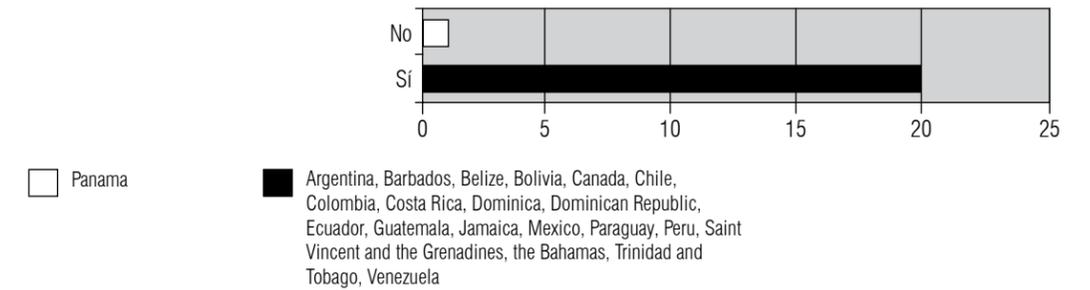
Within your institution, have agents responsible for strategic planning been identified? If yes, do these agents know about their responsibilities?



It can also be seen that the processes whereby strategic plans are produced are mostly participatory in nature, which is a positive aspect that strengthens the Public Management Guiding Institutions' ability to act, since the more people at all levels in the hierarchy who participate in preparing the plans, the easier it will be to implement them.

In statistical terms, twenty (20) entities said that their strategic plans were prepared in a participative way (86.9%) and only one said that it was not (4.3%).

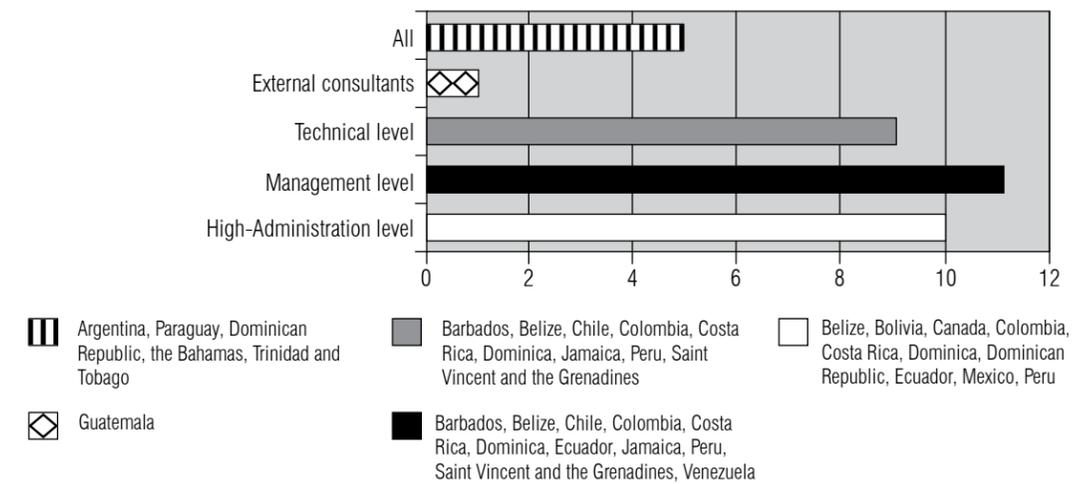
Has the making of the Institutional Strategic Plan been done in a participative way?



In terms of the levels involved in preparing their strategic plans, ten (10) entities said that the process took place at the high-administration level, eleven (11) at the managerial level, nine (9) at the technical level, one (1) by means of an external consultancy, and five (5) said that the process was shared between all those levels.

It should be noted that in answering this question, several entities chose to mark several options, which would indicate different combinations responsible for drawing up institutional strategic plans among the levels in the hierarchy.

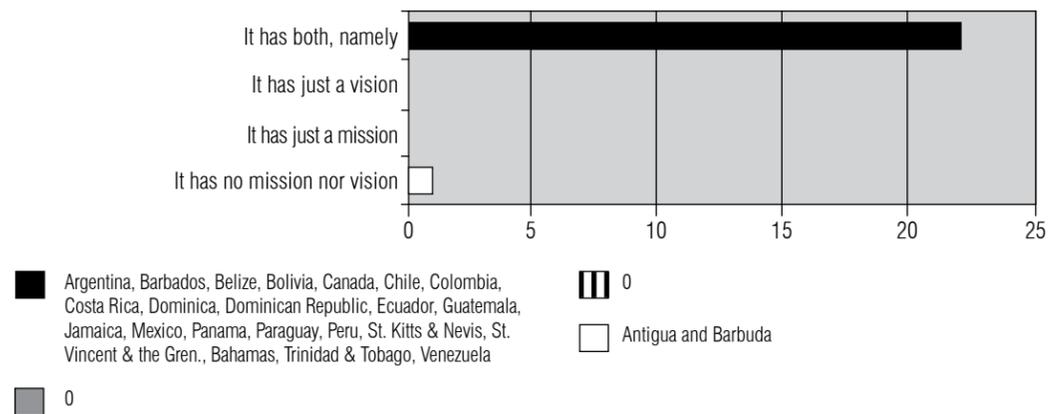
If yes, please indicate at which level belong those who made it



Focusing the information on more procedural aspects of strategic planning, the survey results identify the existence of institutional missions and visions in the vast majority of the Public Management Guiding Institutions (22 entities / 95.7%), with only one entity stating it did not have such instruments (one entity / 4.3%).

The identification of these planning categories is of vital importance because it serves to focus and locate the Public Management Guiding Institutions among all the entities of the public administration and, on that basis, allows the development of strategies, programs, projects, and activities.

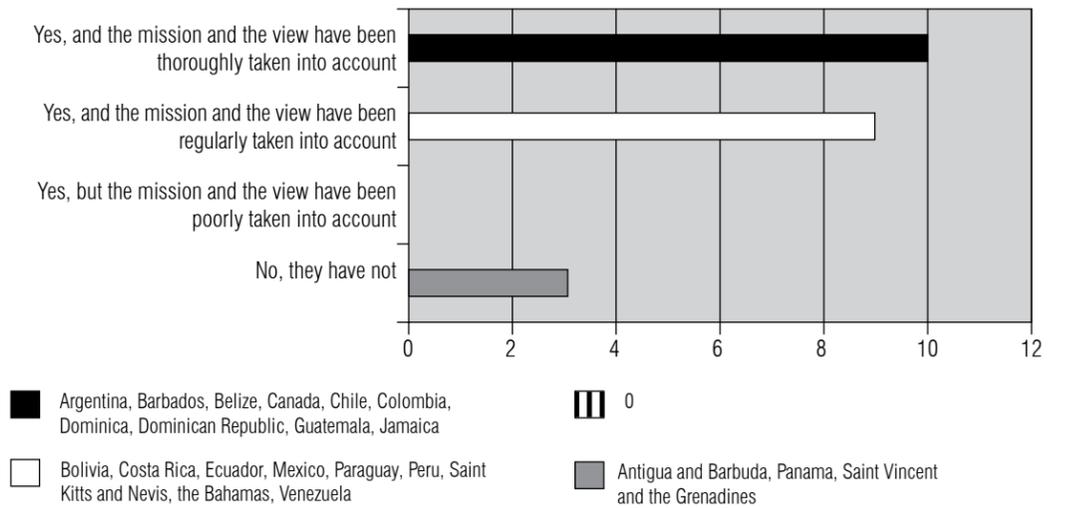
Does your institution have a long-term mission and vision? If yes, what is the term set for the realization of your long-term vision? Please, explain



In the previous question, it is positive that in terms of strategic and operational objectives, most of the entities see the mission and vision of the strategic plans as important prerequisites that enable the institutional objectives of the guiding agencies to be interconnected with the broad planning guidelines contained in the institutional mission and vision that give sense to and direct the entity's work.

Thus, we have nine (9) entities, representing 39.1% of the survey total, stating that in preparing their strategic objectives they did take into account the institutional mission and vision; ten (10) entities that did so "thoroughly," representing 43.5%; and only three (3) entities—13% of the survey total—stating that in identifying the institutional objectives they did not consider the mission and strategic vision set out in the institutional strategic plans.

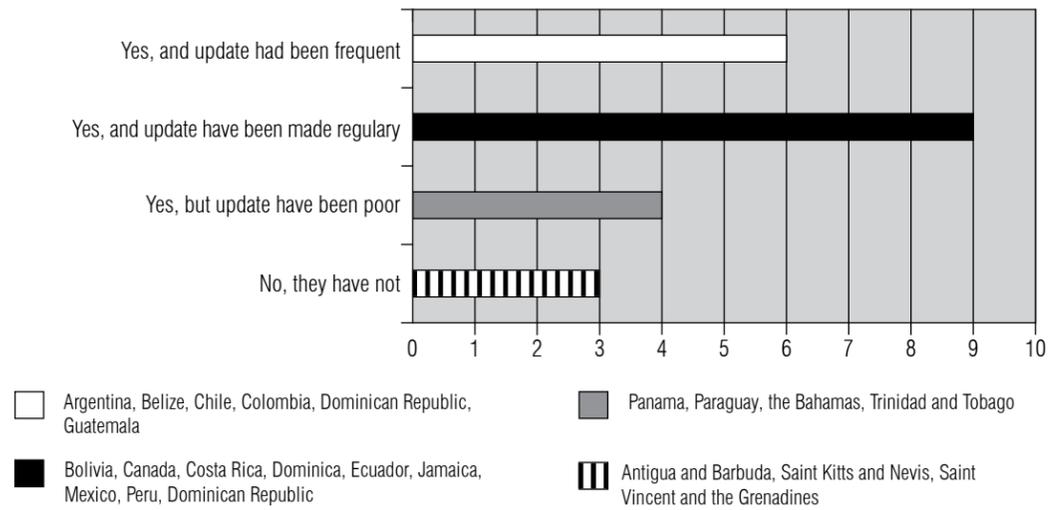
Have the strategic objectives and the operational objectives been made taking into account the mission and the view of the institution?



Similarly, working our way down the planning hierarchy, we can see whether the strategic plans, visions and missions, and strategic objectives have been translated into specific operating plans and activities. This process is of vital importance because if the entire design and strategic management process does not lead to specific actions it will be unable to be made operational, leading to a lack of guidance and strategy throughout the management of the institution.

In statistical terms, most of the survey respondents stated that their strategic objectives were put into operation in plans and activities; however, four (4) entities—accounting for 17.4% of the total—said that it had been done poorly; nine (9) entities, or 39.1%, stated it had been done adequately; and six (6) entities, representing 26% of the survey total, reported full satisfaction by stating that their strategic objectives were set out "very adequately" in operating plans and activities. In addition, three (3) entities reported that the strategic objectives were not set down in operational plans and activities.

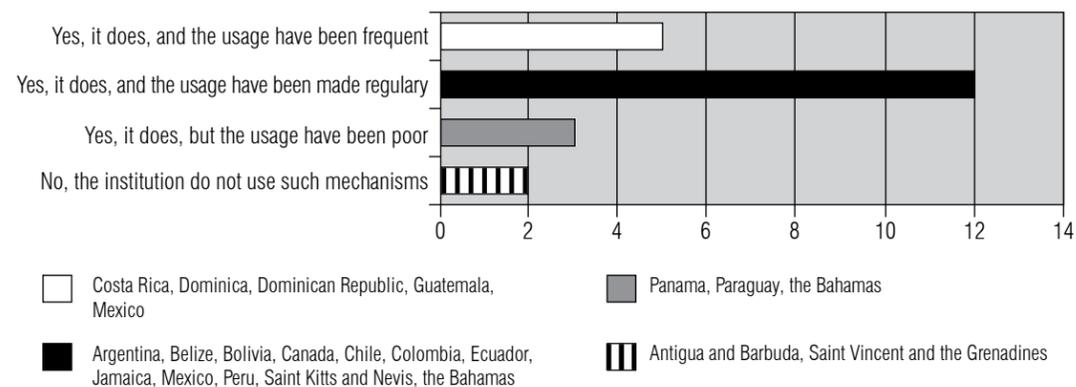
Have the strategic objectives and the operational objectives become operational plans and activities?



To conclude this strategic axis, a question was asked regarding the existence of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating compliance with strategic management planning and the frequency with which they were implemented, in order to obtain data on their usage and results and on the ability of the entity to provide itself with feedback for correcting or improving its future planning processes.

Most of the surveyed entities reported that they did have appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating compliance with the strategic plans and that they did implement them regularly (12 entities / 52.2%); five (5) entities, equal to 21.7%, said they had “very suitable” mechanisms that they implemented regularly; while another group said that although they had such mechanisms, their implementation was weak (three entities / 13%); finally, another group said it had no such mechanisms (two entities / 8.6%).

Does your institutions use mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation of the strategic planification? How frequently are these mechanisms used?



Process Management

Part 2, the Process Management axis, covers the array of interactions among the entity's components that make its functioning possible. It contains a total of twenty-six (26) questions broken down into five sub-axes, as follows: general processes; public-related processes; support processes / staff management; support processes / budget management; and support processes / logistics aspects.

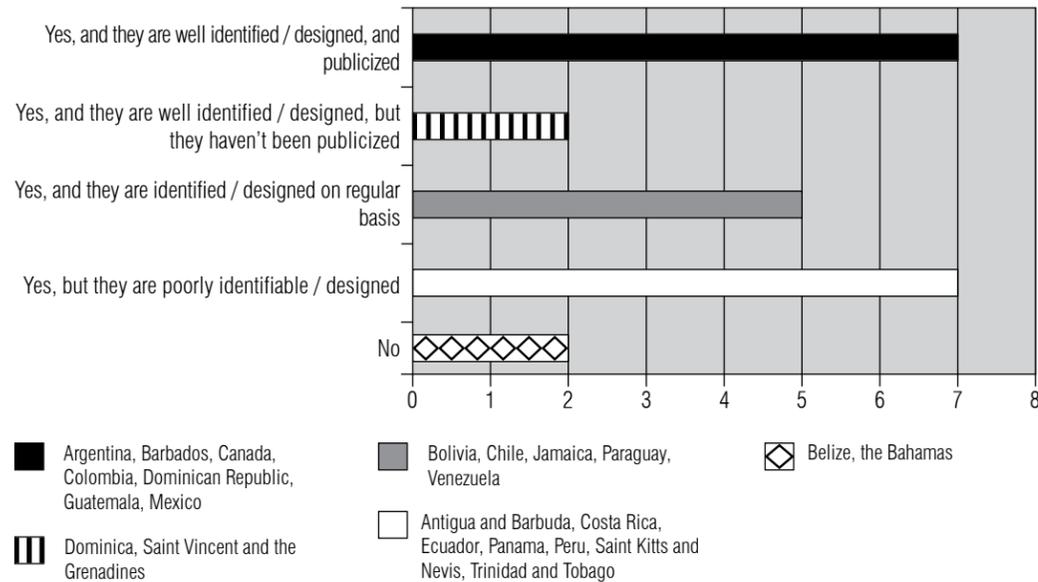
The information available under all the questions of these five sub-axes is related to the "black box" transformational apparatus described above. As for the system characteristics, its homeostasis can be seen in that it is through the interactions of public agencies' administrative units in the personnel and budgetary management processes and in their logistical aspects that they are able to meet their institutional objectives.

The **General Processes sub-axis** contains questions on the use of process management approaches or methods by the Public Management Guiding Institutions, on whether efforts have been made to identify, systematize, document, and socialize the entity's key processes, on whether those processes include issues relating to gender equality, etc.

In response to the question on whether key processes to implement strategic planning in the organization have been identified, designed, and/or publicized, only two (2) entities—accounting for 8.6% of the total number of entities surveyed—stated that they had not undertaken such activities; the remainder (91.4%) stated that they had done so to different extents ranging from poorly through adequately to very adequately, even though they had not publicized it, with some reporting having done so very adequately and having publicized it in the entity as a whole.

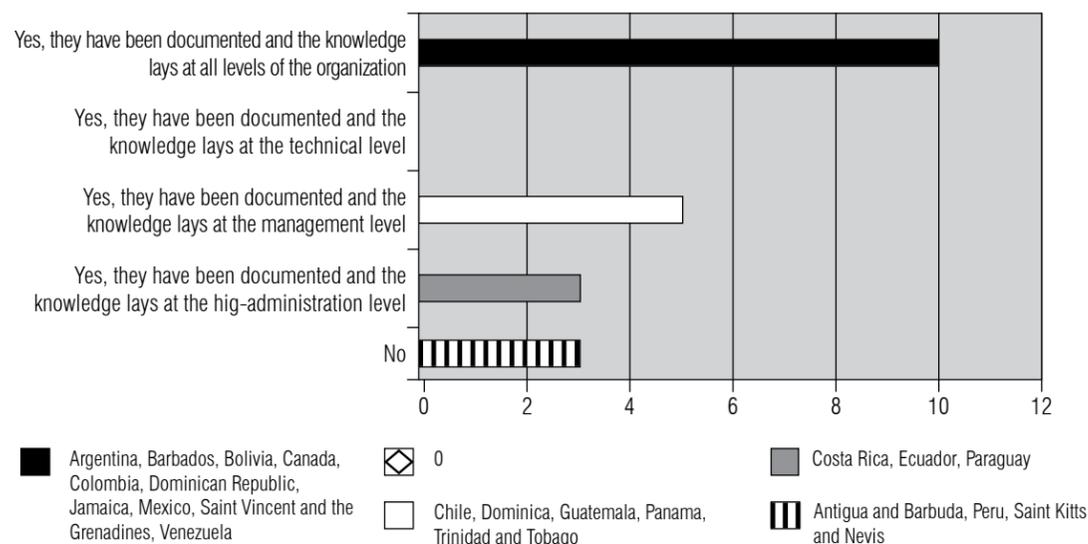
These positive results show that most of the Public Management Guiding Institutions in the countries of the Americas surveyed have adopted a clear and modern management approach, which has a positive impact on the discharging of their duties.

Have key processes to implement strategic planning been identified, designed and/or publicized?



One important aspect of process-based management is the documentation of those processes, in order to ensure they can be communicated and maintained in the face of changes. According to the results of the survey sent to the OAS member countries, 43.4% of the total (10 entities) stated that they had made efforts to document them and to make them known throughout the organization; in contrast, 13.04% (three entities) stated that although the processes had been documented, they were only known to the senior administrative level, and 21.7% (five entities) said they had been documented and were known to the managerial level. Only 13.04% (three entities) reported that they had not documented their processes.

Have the identified key processes been documented? Who know about such documents?

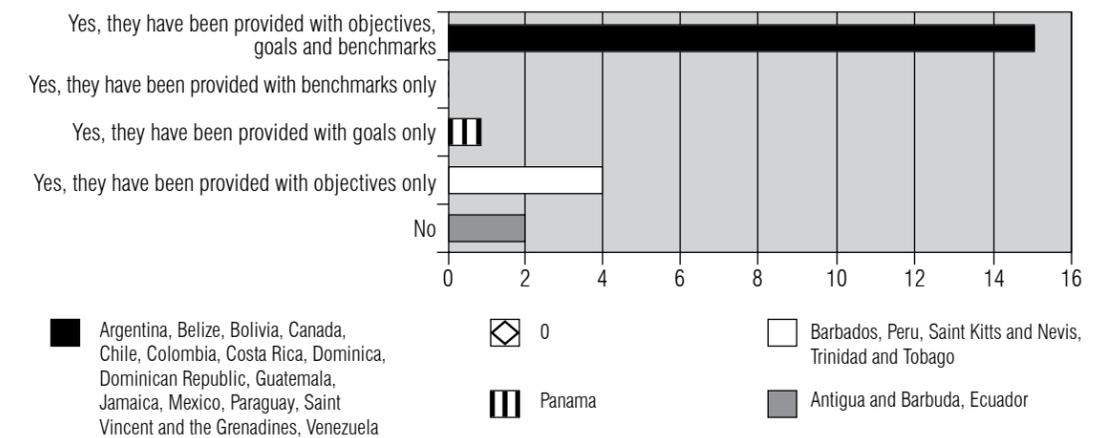


The countries were also asked whether the identified processes had goals and indicators, in order to determine whether they had an operational development to allow the attainment of specific achievements that can be monitored and evaluated.

The results obtained show that 68.18% of the entities that returned the survey do have processes with objectives, goals, and benchmarks; 18.18% (four entities) only have objectives; 4.54% (one entity) only has goals; and only 9.09% (two entities) have neither objectives, goals, nor benchmarks.

With these results, we can deduce that most of the entities that answered the survey have made efforts to measure their institutional progress by developing instruments for specifying, monitoring, and obtaining concrete results in their work.

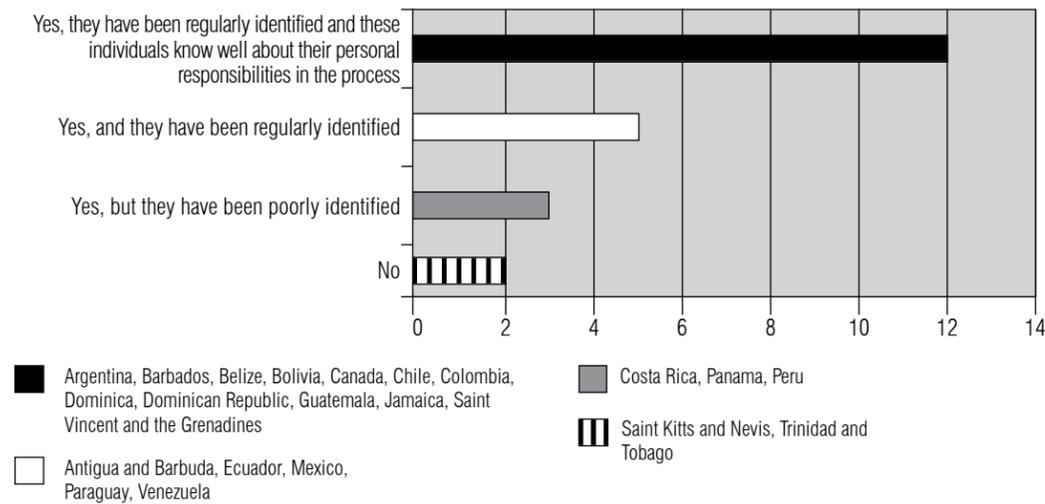
Have the identified processes been provided with objectives, goals and benchmarks?



One important step in the development of institutional processes is to identify the persons responsible for them at their different stages. This is of vital importance because it allows human resources to be aligned with the development of the processes by establishing responsibilities, profiles, and competences in the entity's work.

To this end, a specific question was asked regarding whether the entities had identified the persons responsible for the different stages in their processes; the results were that 9.09% (two entities) had not identified them, while the remaining 90.84% had done so to different extents. Of these, 54.54% (12 entities) had done so adequately and the individuals were aware of their responsibilities in the process; 22.7% (five entities) had identified them adequately; 13.6% (three entities) had identified them but only poorly.

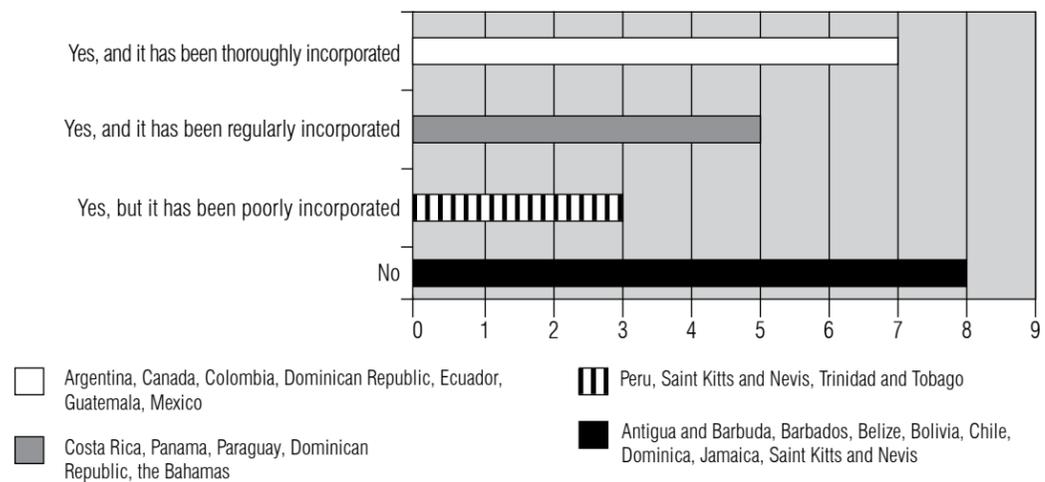
In the development of the processes, have the developers been identified?



One important aspect addressed in the survey was the inclusion of gender awareness in the entity's work, in order to reveal its level of adoption and operational development.

The results obtained show that work is still needed on the inclusion of gender policies, since 34.7% of the survey respondents (eight entities) stated that they had not incorporated gender awareness into their work; in contrast, the remaining 65.3% (15 entities) stated that they had done so to different degrees: seven (7) of them thoroughly, five (5) adequately, and three (3) weakly.

Does the institution incorporate a gender equality perspective in its activities?



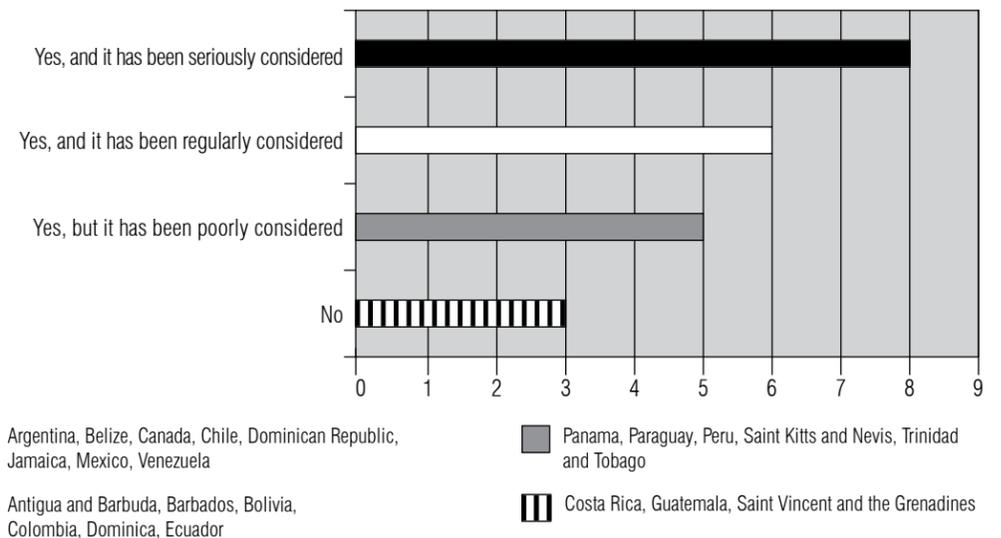
The **Public-related Processes sub-axis** addresses the entities' relations with members of the public and how citizens participate and are involved in the entity's undertakings. It therefore contains questions on the attention given to citizens and their needs, the way in which the entity processes those inputs, the methods the entity uses to approach and inter-relate with members of the public, procedures for challenging the entity's decisions, etc.

Regarding system characteristics, "negative entropy" can be seen in this section in that the questions deal with how public administrations can receive inputs or needs from the public in order to feed themselves and to be operational.

The first general question asked of the Public Management Guiding Institutions was whether, in the identification of the institutional processes, the participation of public service customers/citizens/users was considered. Only 13.6% (three entities) replied that they had not been taken into consideration, while the remaining nineteen (19) had done so to different degrees: five entities (22.7%) said they had done so poorly, six (27.2%) said they had done so adequately, and eight (36.3%) had done so seriously.

From these results, it can be deduced that the citizens, users, and customers of public services have been taken into account in identifying and designing the institutional processes of the Public Management Guiding Institutions, showing a positive orientation that takes into consideration the concerns of the final consumers of the public goods and services provided by the public administration.

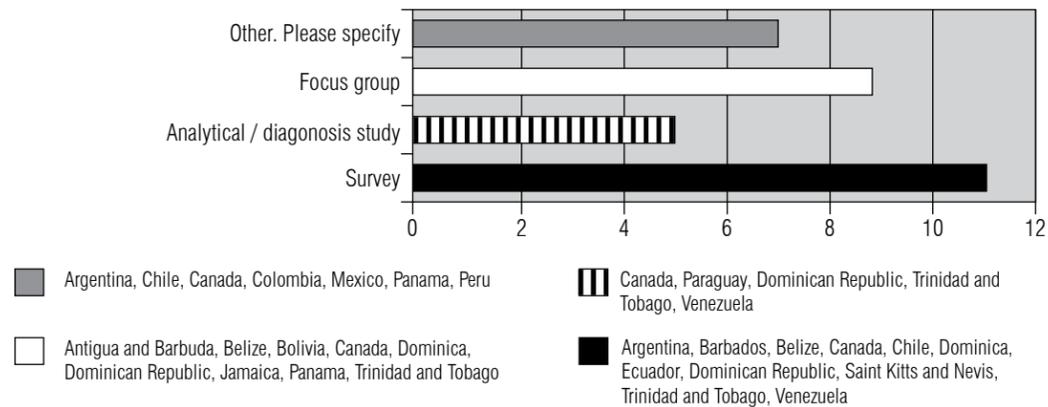
In the identification and design of the institutional processes, has the participation of the public service customers/citizens/users have been considered?



In addition, the survey investigated the method used by the entities to consider the inputs provided by customers, users, and/or citizens: eleven (11) entities used surveys; five (5) entities used specialized analytical studies; nine (9) entities used focus groups; and seven (7) entities used various methods.

The following institutions were notable among this latter group: the Cabinet and Administrative Coordination Secretariat of Argentina, which uses a mechanism involving the creation of networks with the consumers of public services; the Ministry General Secretariat of the Presidency / Modernization and Digital Government Unit of Chile, which organizes consultations over its web page; the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, which consults with CSOs; the Administrative Public Function Department (DAFP) of Colombia, which publishes its planning documents on its web page and has opened up on-line forums for consultations; the Public Function Secretariat (SFP) of Mexico, which organized a process of public consultations and sectoral dialogues to prepare the National Development Plan, which involves planning strategies for the sector; the Interior Ministry of Panama, which organized conferences and community meetings; and the Public Administration Secretariat (SGP) of Peru, which uses a recommendations book to collect public demands for future planning activities.

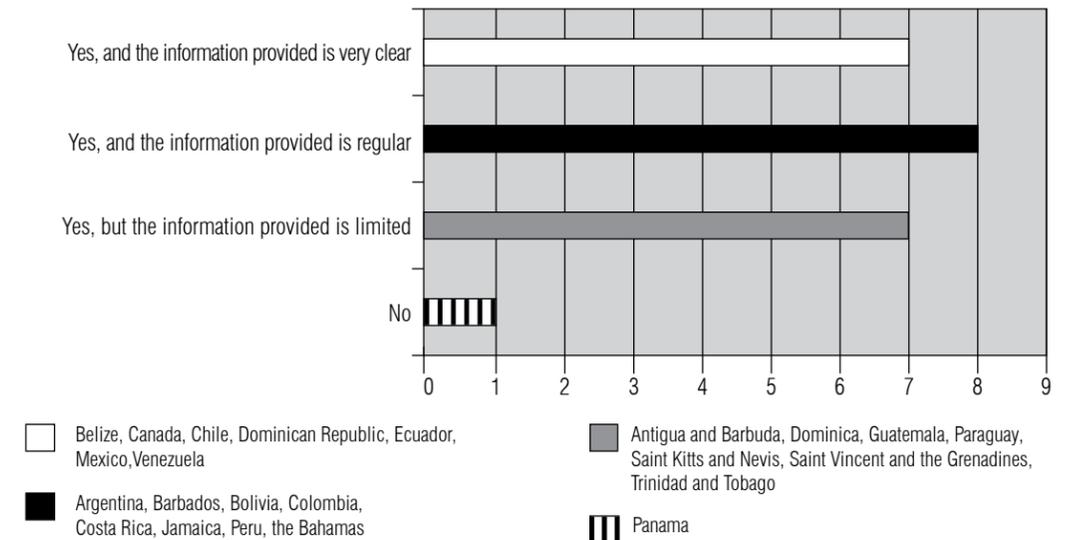
If you answered yes, please indicate what were the means that had been used.



Providing information about the institution and its services is as important as gathering the opinions of the people at whom public entities' goods and services are targeted. This serves to improve relations between the two sides and to optimize the results of public policies.

For that reason, the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked whether they provided information to their customers, users, and/or citizens about the institution and the services it provides. The results were that only one entity (4.3%) provides no information, while the remaining 22 entities (95.7%) do so to different extents: seven entities (30.4%) on a limited basis; eight entities (34.7%) on an adequate basis; and seven entities (30.4%) on a very adequate basis.

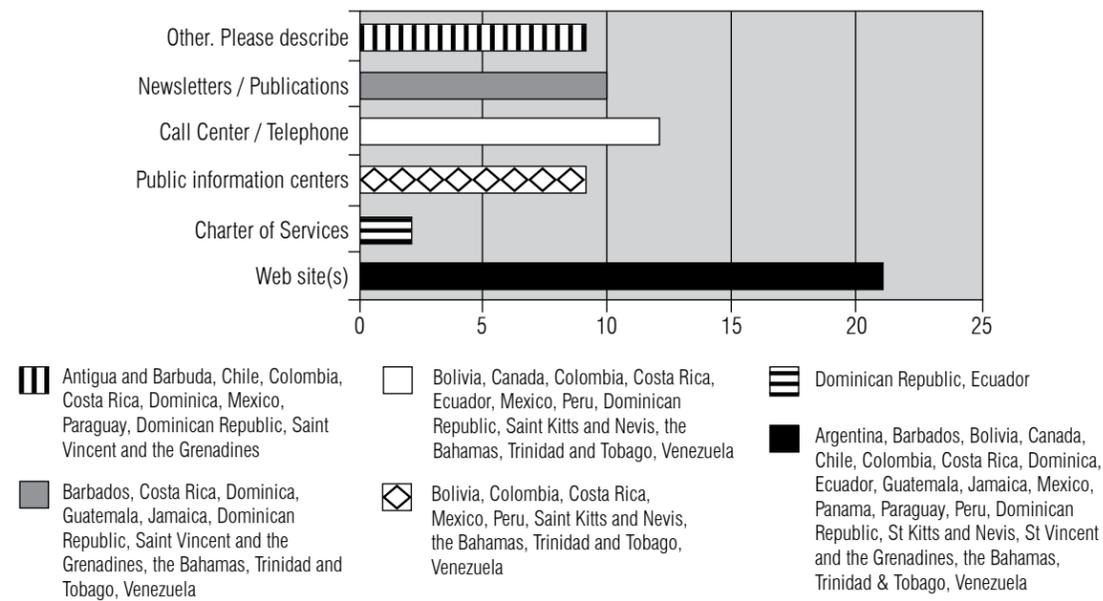
Have reference information on your institution and its services been provided to the customers/citizens/users?



There is a broad range of mechanisms used for this purpose by Public Management Guiding Institutions. Thus, twenty-one (21) entities use their web pages to provide information about the institution and its entities; two (2) have information service letters; nine (9) have citizen assistance centers; twelve (12) provide specialized attention over the telephone; ten (10) have graphic bulletins and publications; and nine (9) use other alternative methods.

The following are notable among this last group: the Public Sector Transformation Unit of Antigua and Barbuda, which uses publication strategies through private channels; the Ministry General Secretariat of Government / Modernization and Digital Government Unit of Chile, which uses social networks; the Public Function Administrative Department (DAFP) of Colombia, which uses advisory services, training, and verbal and written guidance; the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (MIDEPLAN) of Costa Rica, which uses press releases, regional offices, social networks, the print media, and television; the Establishment, Personnel and Training Department of Dominica, which provides information directly to other entities, ministries, and government agencies; the Public Function Secretariat (SFP) of Mexico, which has a specialized web site called "Focused Transparency" with information in addition to what is obligatorily required; the Public Function Secretariat (SFP) of Paraguay, which carries out public accountability activities every six months; the Ministry of Public Administration of the Dominican Republic, which uses information access mechanisms, pamphlets, talks, seminars, networks, etc.; and the Public Sector Reform Unit (PSRU) of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, which has a weekly radio program.

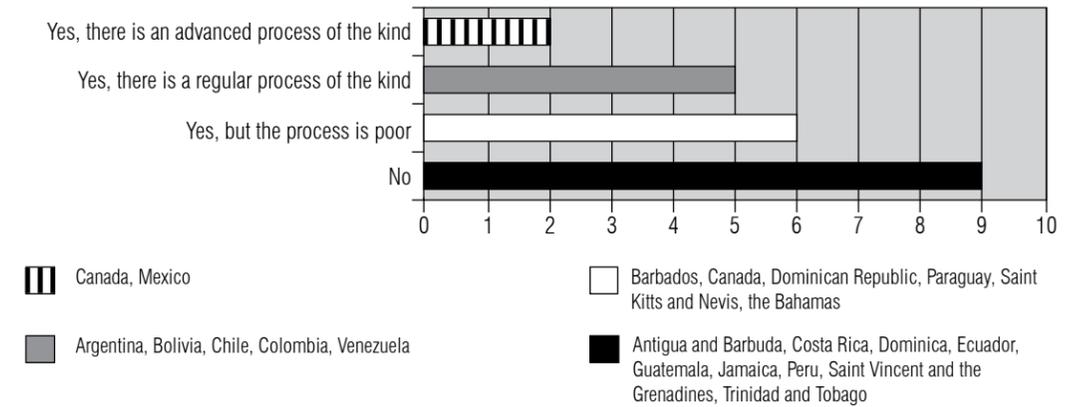
What is/are the means through which the public service customers/citizens/users access that information?



It is also positive that the public administrations have much more proactive procedures to assist in solving the problems that users, customers, or citizens may encounter in their dealings with public services and that they are not merely limited to passively providing information. For that reason the Public Management Guiding Institutions were specifically asked whether they had a specific process for providing customers/users/citizens with help and assistance in the provision of a service when they were unable to request it personally.

The results obtained show that nine (9) entities (40.9%) have no specific processes for providing customers/users/citizens with help and assistance in the provision of a service when they are unable to request it personally, and that thirteen (13) entities do have processes of this kind, to different degrees: six entities (27.2%) described their processes as weak; five entities (22.7%) described them as adequate; and only two (2) entities (0.09%) described them as advanced.

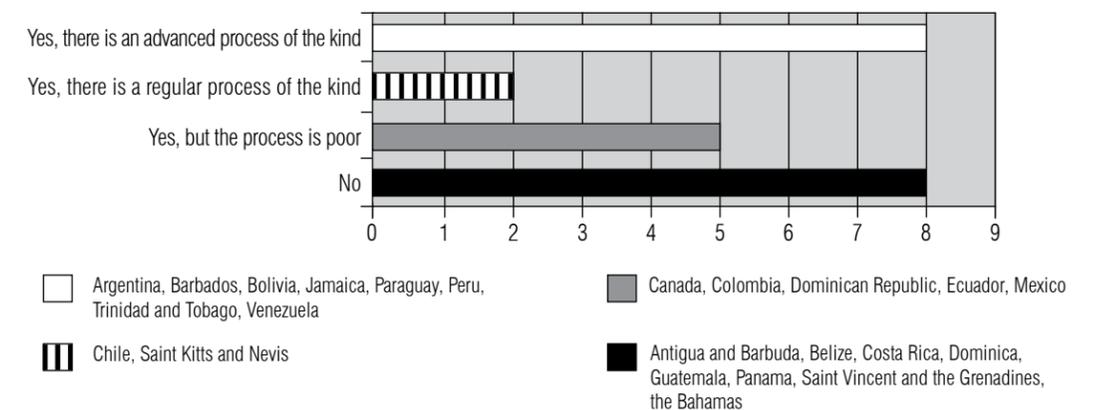
Is there any process that aim to provide assistance and help to the customers/citizens/users when they cannot require it personally?



In addition, the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked whether they had a process for dealing with complaints and suggestions from customers/users/citizens in order to reveal whether the entities had systems for providing effective responses to the public's needs and thus for improving their internal processes.

Thus, eight entities (34.7%) said they had no specific processes of this kind, while the remaining 15 entities said they did have specific process, at different levels, for dealing with complaints and suggestions: two entities (8.6%) described their processes as weak, eight entities (34.7%) described them as adequate, and five entities (21.7%) described them as advanced.

Is there any processes to deal with the customers/citizens/users complaints and feedback?

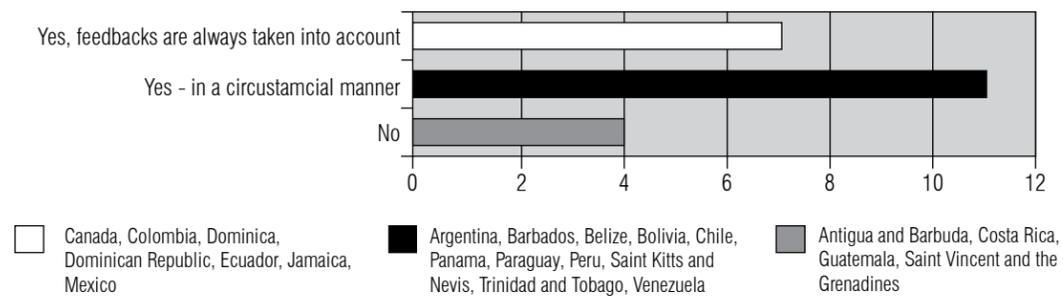


Finally, to complete the questions under this sub-axis, the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked whether their institutional improvement or feedback actions took into account the satisfaction, suggestions, complaints, and requests of citizens/customers/users of public services. This was to reveal the entities' level of receptiveness to inputs

from the public and to identify whether the processes described above were reflected in specific measures for improvements.

Thus, four entities (18.2%) said that they did not take the satisfaction, suggestions, complaints, and requests of citizens/customers/users into account in their improvement processes; 11 entities (50%) said they did so in a circumstantial manner; and seven entities (31.8%) said they always took them into consideration. This is clearly an important area in which the entities could be strengthened in order to increase their receptiveness toward the public.

Do the customers/citizens/users satisfaction, complaints, and other kinds of feedback are taken into consideration when continuous improvements actions are implemented?

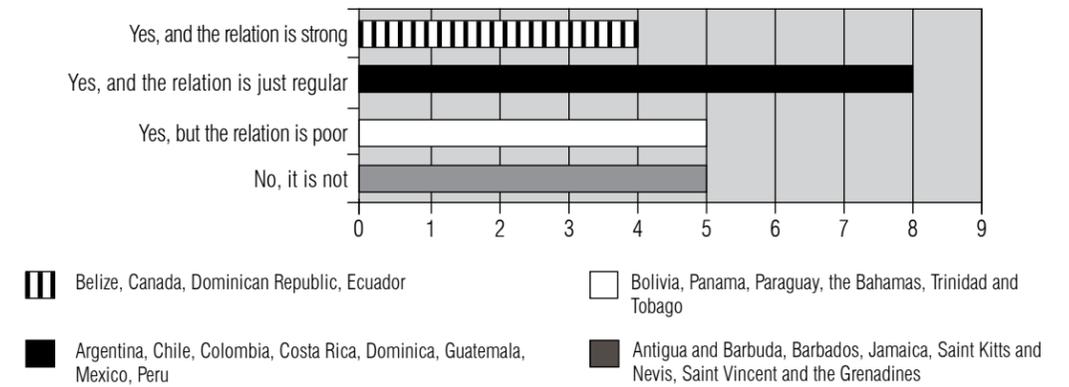


The **Support Processes / Staff Management sub-axis** addresses all the entity’s internal interactions for the administration of its human resources. This process is of vital importance in any entity, and through the questions asked information can be obtained on how the entity’s human resources are aligned with its planning, on interactions between the different horizontal and vertical levels within the entity, on the existence of mechanisms for measuring the performance of the human resource policy as a whole and of the workers in particular, on evaluation mechanisms and their correlation with permanent improvement and training processes, etc.

Thus, the first question asked of the Public Management Guiding Institutions was whether their human resource strategies were related to the entity’s strategic planning, in order to reveal whether there was a correlation between the two processes and whether human resource management was carried out on a planned basis in accordance with the entity’s needs and expectations.

Thus, five entities (22.7%) answered that their human resource policy was not related to the entity’s strategic planning, while the remaining 17 replied that they were related to some degree: five entities (22.7%) said that the two processes were weakly related, eight entities (36.4%) said they were adequately related, and four entities (18.2%) said there was strong relation between the two.

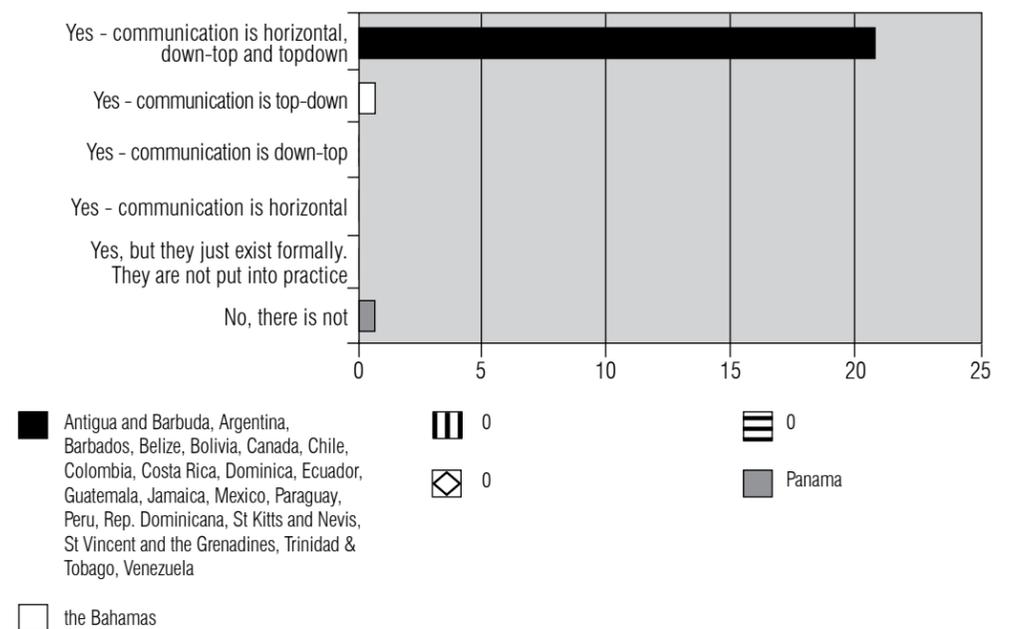
Is the Human Resources Policy related to the institution’s strategic planification — in terms entrance steps, promotion, training and cessation?



The entities were also asked whether they had horizontal and vertical (both upward and downward) communications channels between their different administrative levels (executives, managers, and staff), given that this is an important prerequisite for ensuring the proper implementation of an entity’s public policies.

Only one entity (4.3%) said that it did not have communications channels between its administrative levels; one entity (4.3%) said it had downward communications channels; and the remaining 21 entities (91.4%) said they had multiple communications channels, including horizontal, upward, and downward.

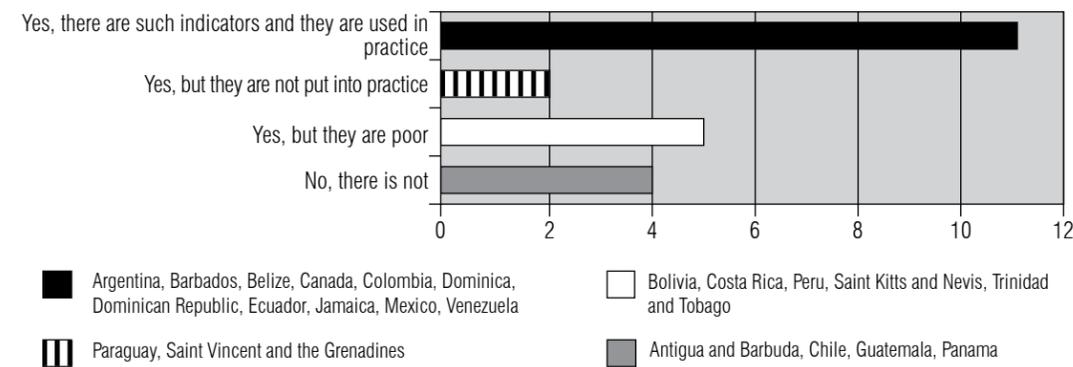
Within the institution, is there channels of communication? If yes, are those horizontal? down-top? top-down?



Moving deeper as regards personnel management itself, the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked whether they had performance indicators and whether they reported positive results. This issue is of vital importance because it reveals whether the entities have instruments for measuring the performance of their workers in the pursuit of the agency's institutional objectives. It assists in the staff evaluation process and in aligning management with the institutional objectives.

The results indicate that four entities (18.2%) have no staff performance indicators, while the remaining 18 have such indicators to varying degrees: thus, five entities (22.7%) described them as very weak, two entities (9.1%) said they had indicators but did not use them, and 11 entities (50%) said they had them and used them in managing their personnel.

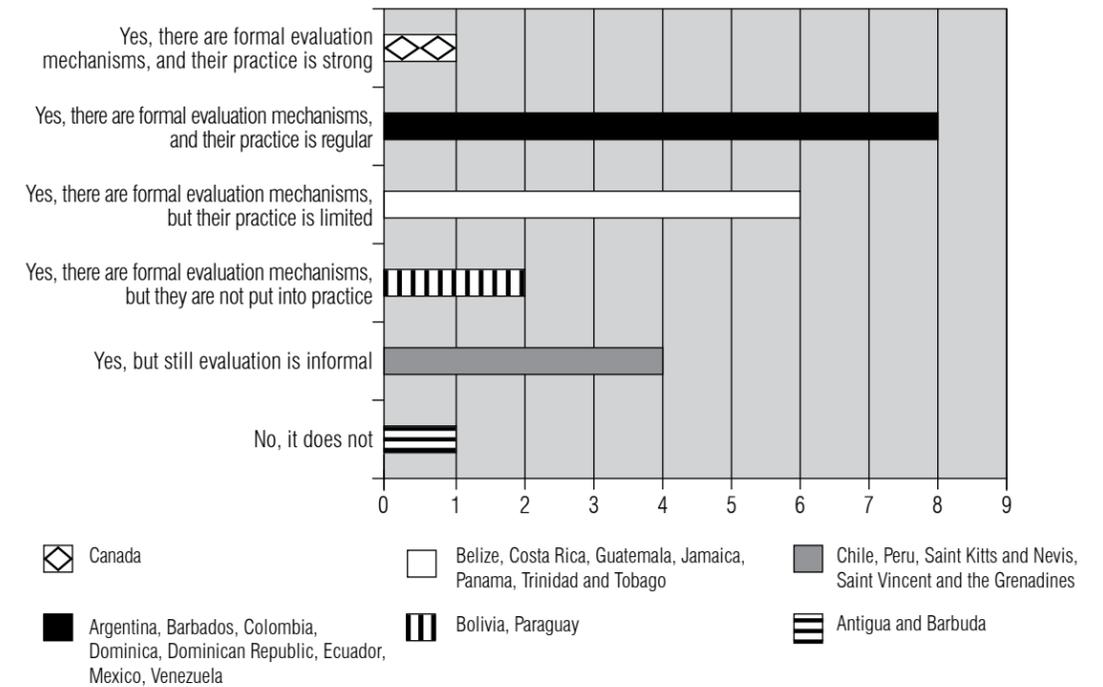
Is there any indicators related to staff performance? If yes, how are they used?



Related to the previous question, the entities were asked about the use of result-based evaluation systems for assessing staff performance. This human resource management process is of vital importance because it reveals the workers' level of compliance with their functions and, consequently, can provide human resources with feedback and allow the establishment of incentives or corrective measures, as appropriate.

Only one entity (4.5%) said that it did not evaluate its staff, while the remainder said they did so to different extents. Thus, four entities (18.2%) said they did so informally, two entities (9.2%) said they had formal mechanisms although they were not used, six entities (27.3%) said they had evaluation mechanisms but they were applied only weakly, eight entities (36.3%) said they had evaluation mechanisms that were applied adequately, and one entity (4.5%) said it had evaluation mechanisms that were applied rigorously.

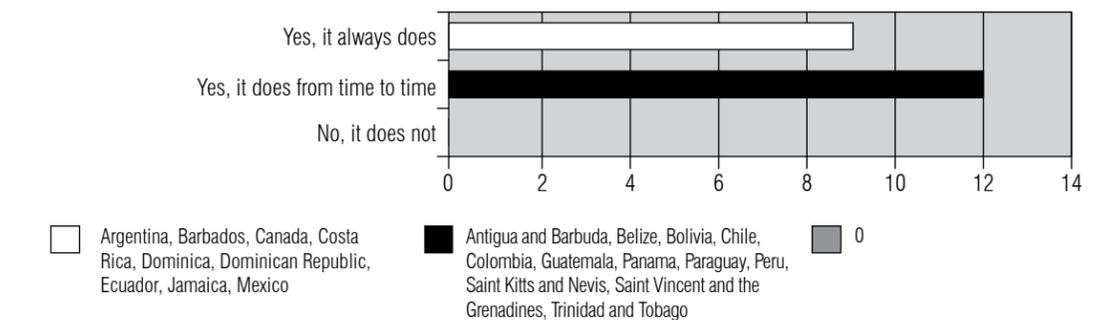
Does the institution use any results-based performance evaluation system to measure the staff's performance?



The Public Management Guiding Institutions were also asked whether their evaluation processes were communicated to the staff in order to provide feedback on their performance. This is an important issue because it serves to improve the staff performance evaluation process and thereby to bring about changes within the entity. Performance evaluations are meaningless if the results are not communicated to the personnel so they can take steps to improve.

In the results obtained, all the entities responded that their staff members were given feedback on their workplace performance. However, 12 entities (57.2%) said they only did so occasionally, compared to nine entities (42.8%) that said they always did.

Do the institution's managers provide some feedback to the technical staff about its performance?



Within personnel management, one process closely related to performance evaluation is staff training, which allows areas or competences identified as weak to be strengthened and for the personnel's knowledge, skills, and competences to be brought in line with the institution's needs.

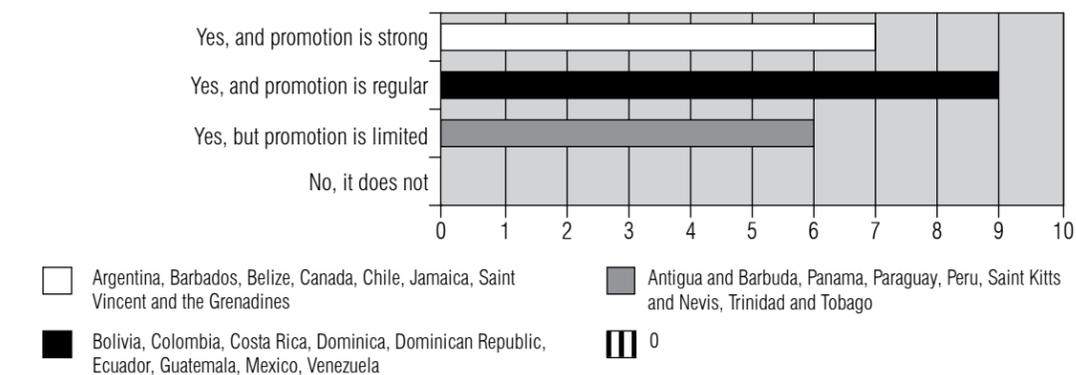
Thus, four entities (18.1%) said they had no training plans addressing institutional needs and responding to performance evaluation processes; five entities (22.8%) said they did have training plans but they did not take into account either the institution's needs or its performance evaluations; and 13 entities (59.1%) said they did have training plans that did take into account the institution's needs and performance evaluations.

Are there any training plans that take into account the needs identified by a regular assessment of staff capacity gaps?



Another important aspect of human resource management addressed by the survey is the workplace culture, which generally depends on the competences of the entities' authorities. A specific question on the promotion of teamwork was therefore asked, with the responses indicating that no entities did not do so, six entities (27.3%) did promote it, albeit weakly, nine entities (40.9%) promoted it adequately, and seven entities (31.8%) promoted it strongly.

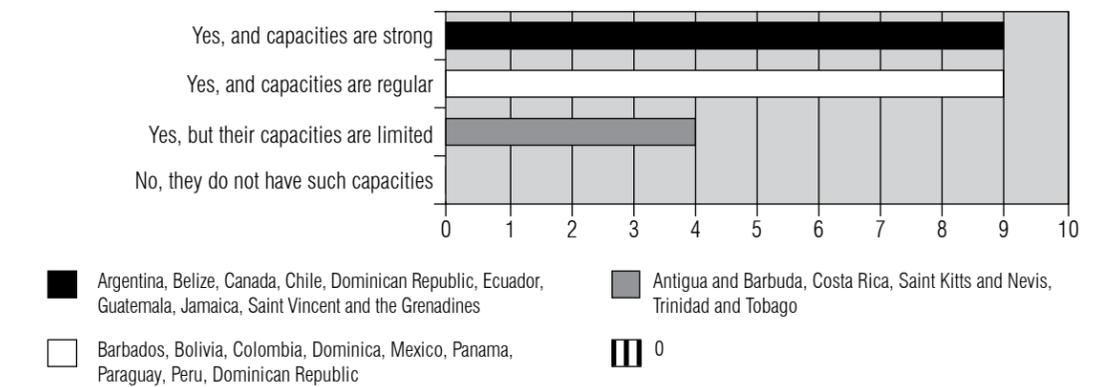
Do the High-Administration promote a team work environment?



Finally, to close the personnel management axis, a general question was asked in order to comprehensively portray the situation of human resources in the Public Management Guiding Institutions: In a general way, do you believe that the officers and staff of the institution have the capacity to adequately and efficiently fulfill their functions? Consider as "capacity" the set of preexisting required conditions for the realization of their work, for example, professional knowledge, organizational and functional materials (human resources, budget, logistics, etc.).

In the survey responses, no entity said it did not have sufficient capacities, although four entities (18.2%) said they were limited, nine entities (40.9%) said their capacities were adequate, and the remaining nine entities (40.9%) said they had strong capacities for discharging their functions.

In a general way, do you believe that the officers and staff of the institution have "capacity" to adequately and efficiently fulfill their function?



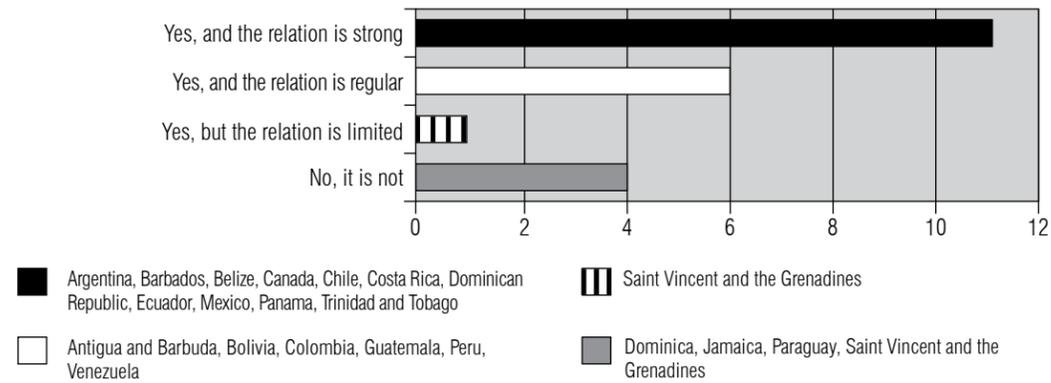
The Support Processes / Budget Management sub-axis contains a set of questions intended to reveal how budgets are connected with the entity's plans, programs, projects, and activities and with the pursuit of its institutional objectives. Thus, questions were asked about budget planning, purchasing and contracting, audits of budget execution processes, and systems for detecting possible irregularities in those processes.

Without extensively exploring specific topics and details, the first question asked of the Public Management Guiding Institutions was whether their budgets were related to the programs and projects planned by the institution.

This was intended to yield information on the relationship between the two processes: if plans are reflected in the budget, it can be inferred that there are better conditions for the success of the entity's work.

In the results obtained, four entities (18.2%) said that their budgets bore no relation to the planned programs and projects, one entity (4.5%) said its budget had a limited relation to the planned programs and projects, six entities (27.3%) described them as being adequately related, and 11 entities (50%) said their budgets and planning were strongly related.

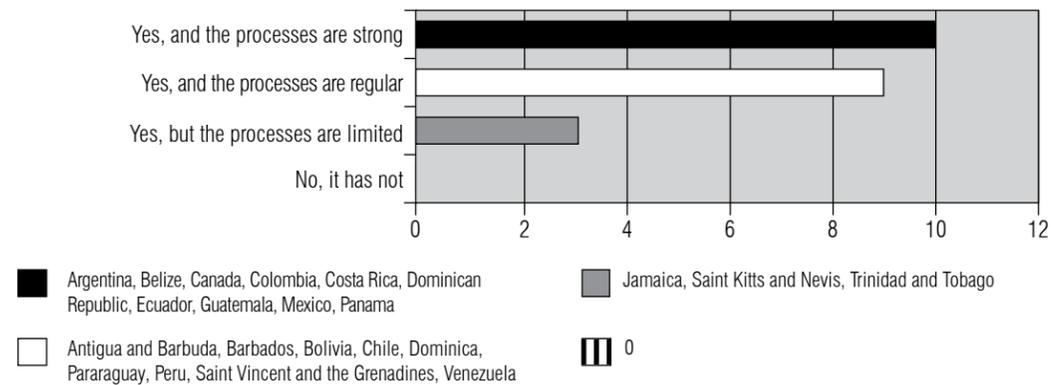
Is the institution budget adequately related to programs / projects planned for achieving the objectives?



The entity's purchasing and contracting processes are as important as the relation between its planning and budget¹, because they represent the way in which public policies are actually executed.

Accordingly, the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked about the effectiveness of those processes. In response, three entities (13.6%) said their purchasing and contracting processes were limited, nine entities (41%) said their processes were adequate, and ten entities (45.4%) said they were strong.

Has the institution an effective purchase and hiring processes for the delivery of goods and / or services?

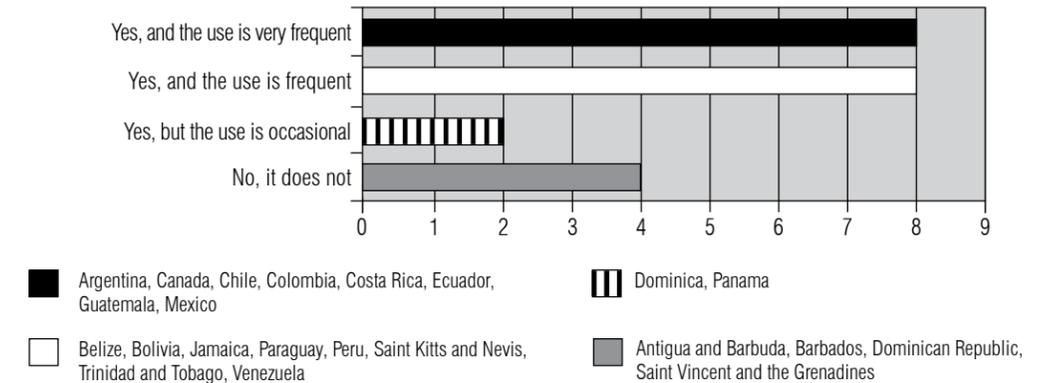


In addition, the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked whether they conducted audits of their programs and projects in order to discover whether budget execution is overseen in such a way as to provide appropriate incentives for the correct use of public resources.

¹ Note that in the survey, the term 'purchasing' was used for the procurement of goods, and 'contracting' for the enrolment or hiring of staff to provide services within the entity.

The results indicated that four entities (18.2%) did not conduct audits of their programs and projects; two entities (9.2%) did so occasionally; eight entities (36.3%) did so regularly; and the other eight entities (36.3%) did so permanently.

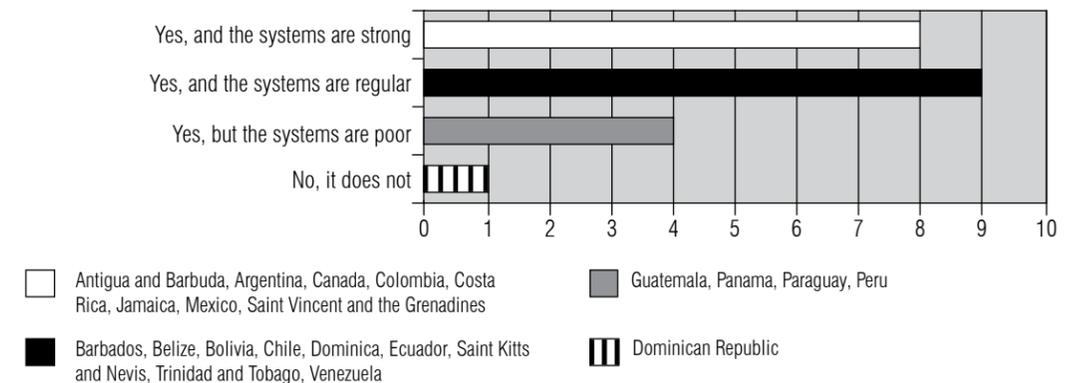
Does the institution use appropriate audits in its programs and projects?



Finally, they were asked about the suitability of their systems for monitoring financial irregularities, including fraud and corruption. It should be noted that this particular question is closely related to self-perceptions, in that there is no more detailed information on possible evaluations of these systems.

A range of answers were received: one entity (4.5%) said its systems for monitoring financial irregularities were not appropriate; four entities (18.2%) said they had poor systems; nine entities (41%) said their systems were adequate; and eight entities (36.3%) stated they had strong systems.

Does the institution have appropriate systems for monitoring financial irregularities, including fraud and corruption?

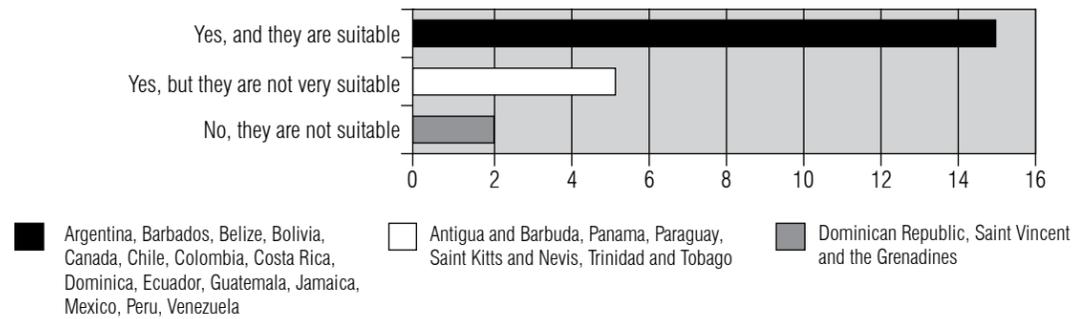


The **Support Processes / Logistics Aspects** sub-axis includes questions on issues that are essential for the entity's work, such as infrastructure, the use of technological tools, risk management, etc.

The first question the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked was whether they had suitable facilities for carrying out their activities.

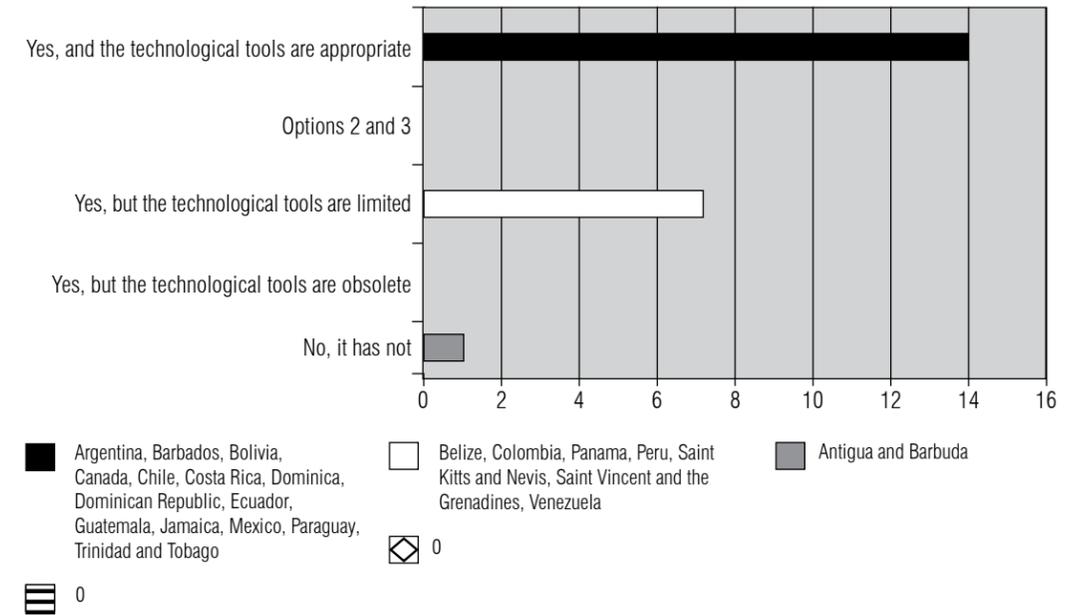
According to the results obtained: two entities (9.1%) do not have suitable facilities for carrying out their activities; five entities (22.7%) have barely suitable facilities; and the remaining 15 entities (68.2%) have suitable facilities.

Are the facilities in which the institution is located suitable for the development of the planned activities and for an effective service delivery to customers/citizens/users?



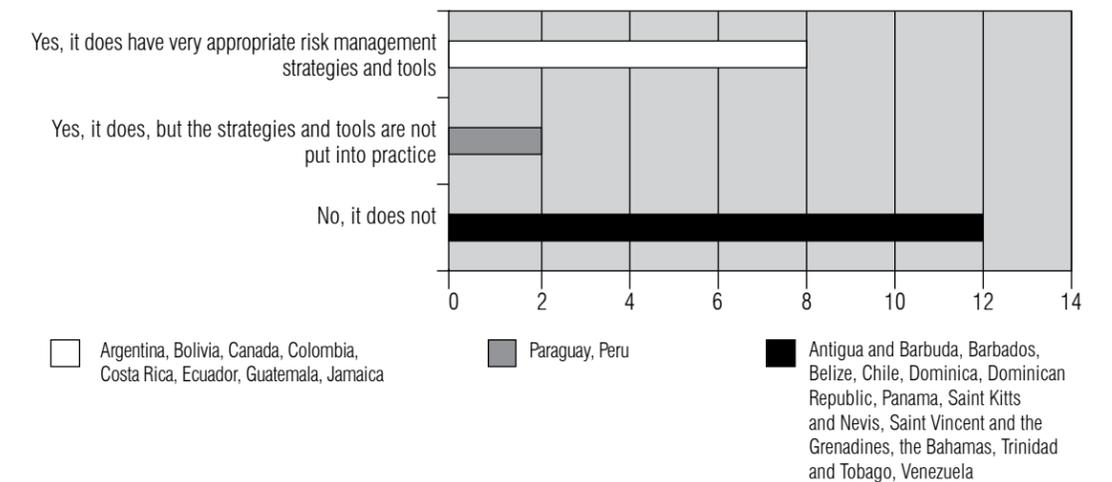
The Public Management Guiding Institutions were also asked whether they had the appropriate technological tools for discharging their functions. According to the responses received, one entity (4.5%) did not have technological tools for carrying out its work; seven entities (31.9%) had limited technological tools; and 14 entities (63.6%) did have access to appropriate technological tools.

Does the institution have the appropriate technological tools for developing its programs/projects/activities?



Finally, the entities were asked whether they had appropriate risk management strategies and plans. In response, 12 entities (54.5%) said they had none; two entities (9.1%) said they did but did not use them; and eight entities (36.4%) said they had them and that they were very suitable.

Does the institution have appropriate risk management strategies and tools?



Results Management

Part 3, the Results Management axis, explored the strategies used by Public Management Guiding Institutions to monitor and assess their results. In this, a dual approach was used: obtaining information both from the entity's own workers, and from the customers/users and/or citizens who receive the goods and services provided by the Public Management Guiding Institutions.

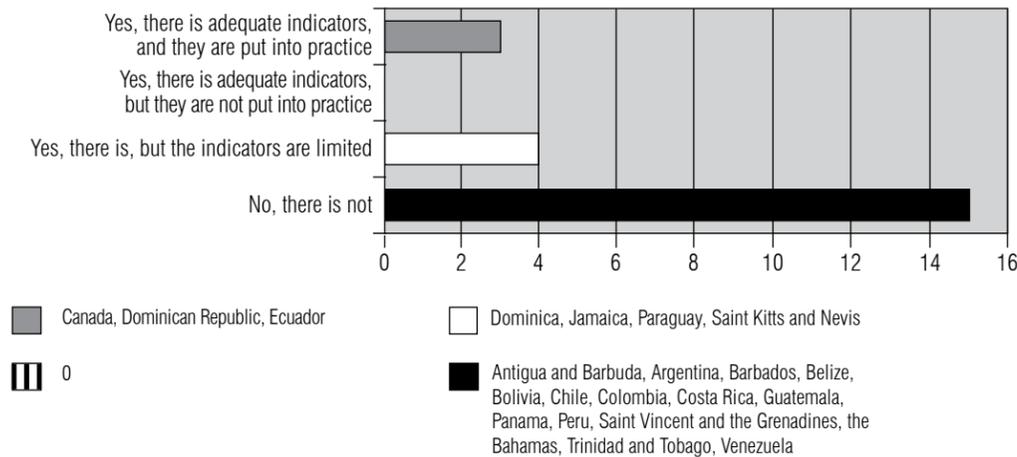
Thus, a set of four (4) questions was designed, dealing with indicators for measuring the satisfaction of the workers with the entity's actions, indicators of satisfaction among the citizens who use the entity's goods and services, the use of quality measurement instruments, etc.

This part's questions are related to the "outputs" and "feedback" elements and, also, to the name itself, in that it can be seen that public administrations self-regulate according to the results that they obtain and continuously adapt to the environment and the new stimuli they receive.

Thus, in response to the question on the existence of indicators for measuring worker satisfaction regarding the pursuit of the institution's functions, 15 entities (68.2%) said they had no such indicators; four entities (18.2%) said they did have indicators but they were limited; and only three entities (13.6%) said they had adequate indicators that were put into practice.

This result indicates that most of the surveyed entities do not take their workers' satisfaction into account in the pursuit of its functions, which is an important issue that is reflected in a good workplace climate and, consequently, in the entity's increased productivity.

Are there indicators to measure workers' satisfaction regarding the development of programs/projects and/or activities of the institution?

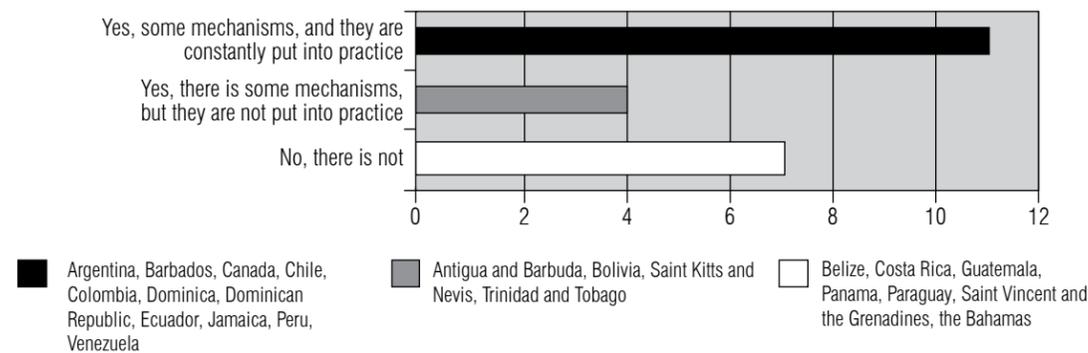


To reveal public perceptions, a question was asked regarding the existence of mechanisms for measuring the satisfaction of customers/citizens/users with the quality of public services.

This question is of vital importance because the end users of the goods and services of Public Management Guiding Institutions are the best placed for providing information on their quality, and that information, used properly, provides the entity with feedback: when it knows the opinions of its customers, it can redirect its internal processes and thereby improve the quality of its goods and services.

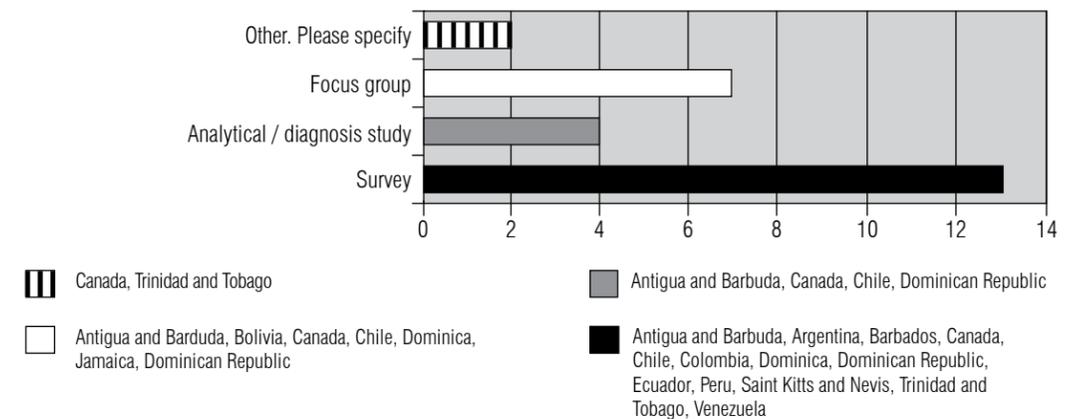
The results obtained were that seven entities (31.8%) said they had no mechanisms for revealing the satisfaction of their customers/citizens/users with service quality; four entities (18.2%) said they did have such mechanisms but they were not used; and 11 entities (50%) said they had those mechanisms and that they were always used.

Are there any mechanisms to measure the customers/citizens/users satisfaction towards the service quality?



Related to the previous question, the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked about the mechanisms used to measure the satisfaction of their customers/users/citizens with the quality of public services. In response, 13 entities said they used quality perception surveys; four entities said they used specialized analytical studies; seven entities said they used focus groups; and two entities said they used other methods, such as different ways of consulting the users of the goods and services provided, including electronic consultations in Canada and user satisfaction forms in Trinidad and Tobago.

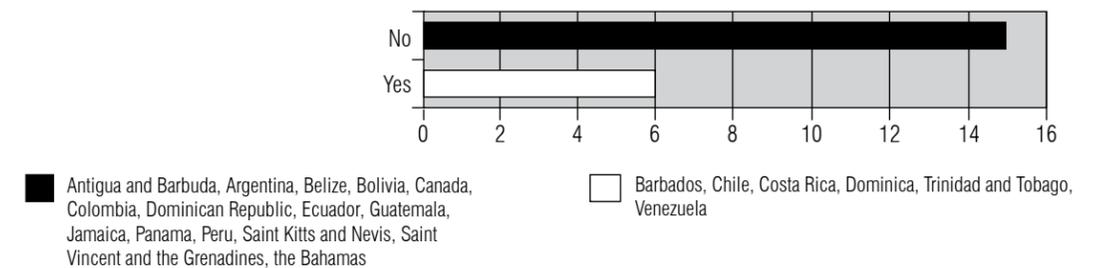
If yes, could you please mention what are these mechanisms?



Complementing the previous questions, the Public Management Guiding Institutions were asked if they had effected any measurements on the quality of the services provided with a more comprehensive view of those services and a broader framework for analysis.

In response to this question, six entities (28.5%) said they had no measurements of service quality, and 15 entities (71.4%) said that they did.

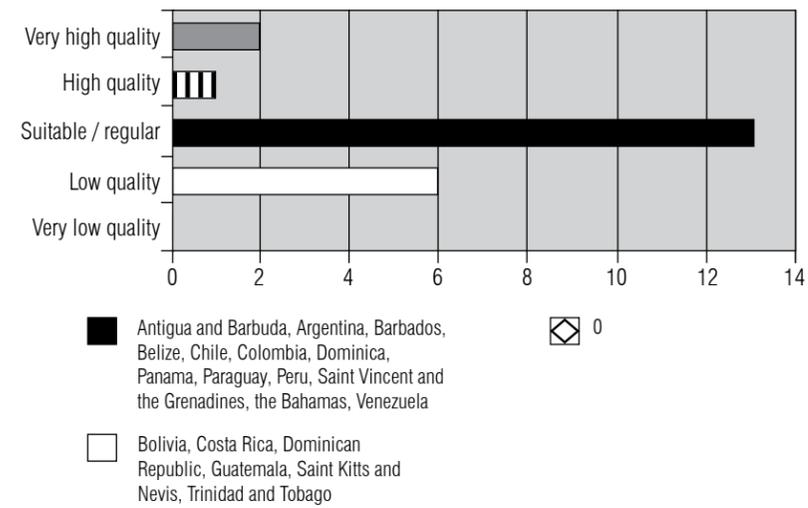
Does your institution have performed any kind of assessment focusing the perceived quality of public services provided by the governmental organizations under your institution supervision?



Finally, the guiding agencies were asked to provide information on their own perceptions regarding the quality of their services.

The results were varied, with six entities (27.3%) stating that their services were of very low quality, 13 entities (59.1%) saying they were adequate or regular, one entity (4.5%) saying its services were high quality, and two entities (9.1%) saying they were of very high quality.

In a global perspective and generally speaking, how do you think citizens perceive the services provided by the public institutions in your country?



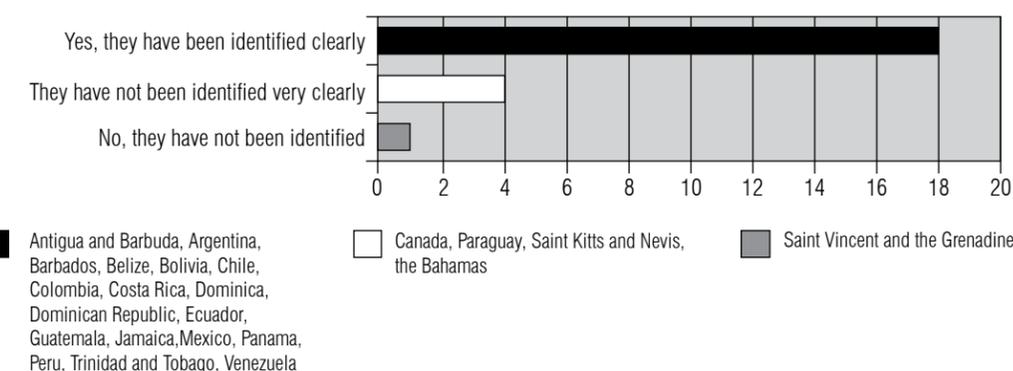
Institutional Relations Management

Part four, the Institutional Relations Management axis, complements the previous parts with three (3) questions on relations between the agency and other players and strategic partners. This axis is important because it reveals the way in which the entities work with other agencies and whether they can create synergies for the pursuit of their institutional objectives.

Thus, the questions it contains are related to the “environment” and to “synergy,” since this is where the public administrations can report strategies for combined efforts and partnerships with other stakeholders and interest groups.

The first question to the Public Management Guiding Institutions was whether the institutions had identified suppliers and strategic partners for carrying out their programs, projects, and/or activities, taken as meaning all those players—of different kinds, as appropriate—who could potentially assist the public entities in attaining their institutional objectives. The results obtained indicate that one entity (4.3%) said it had not identified them; four entities (17.4%) have not identified them clearly; and 18 entities (78.3%) have clearly identified them.

Have strategic providers and allies used to be identified in advance prior to the implementation of key programs / projects / activities?

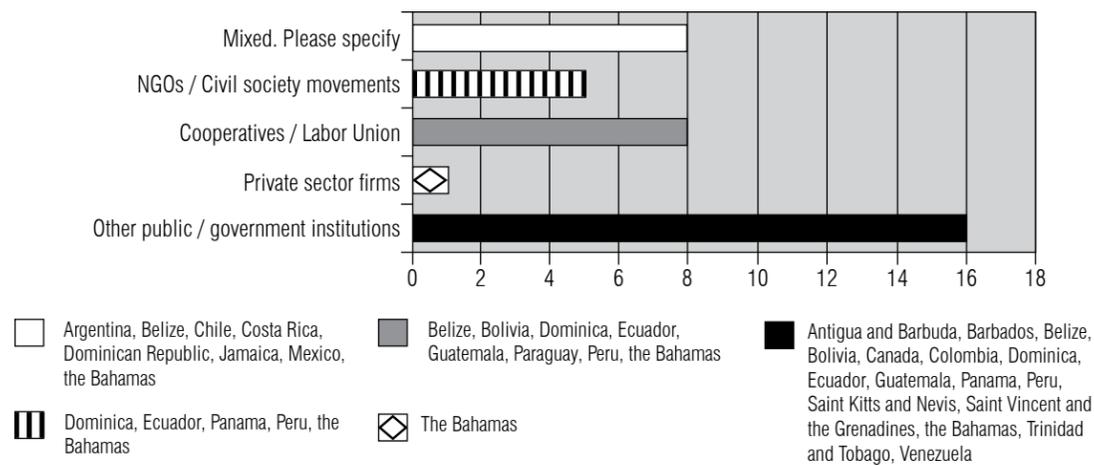


Complementing the previous question, and in order to obtain data on the cooperative governance strategies of the Public Management Guiding Institutions, they were asked about the strategic partners with whom they work.

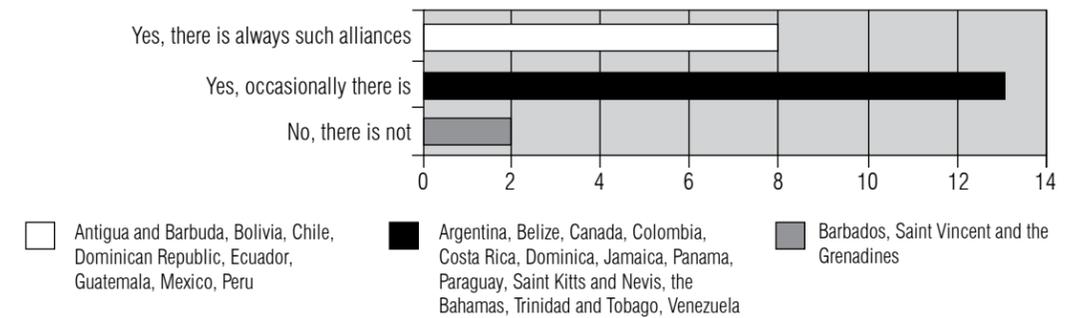
The responses indicated that 16 entities (69.5%) had public entities as their strategic partners; one entity (4.3%) had private entities or companies; eight entities (34.8%) had partners of different kinds; five entities (21.6%) worked with civil society organizations; and eight entities (34.8%) had mixed partners.

Notable among this group is Belize’s Ministry of the Public Service and Elections, which undertakes activities with the public service trade unions and associations of senior civil service staff; the Ministry General Secretariat of Government / Modernization and Digital Government Unit of Chile, which has partnerships with technology industry companies; and Jamaica’s Public Sector Transformation Unit, which has partnerships with places of learning and other bodies.

What is the nature of your main strategic partners?



Are strategic public-private alliances used for designing, developing and implementing top-priority projects within your organization?



Finally, one important next step after their strategic partners have been identified is the capacity of the institutions to pursue partnerships or projects with them. The Public Management Guiding Institutions were therefore asked if they had promoted or organized such efforts. In response, two entities (8.7%) said they had neither promoted or organized such undertakings; 13 entities (56.5%) said they did so occasionally, and eight entities (34.8%) said they always promoted or organized such efforts.

This is an important finding that shows that the region’s public administration agencies pursue cooperative governance strategies, which are vital in a successful modern public administration.



■ Conclusions

1. Public administrations in the countries of the Americas are undergoing a process of permanent modernization that has led them to consider a systemic development model for their organization, with “guiding entities” that deal with them as a whole and direct them in order to ensure coherence and effectiveness in the actions of all public agencies.

Thus, most states have centralized the function of guiding the public administration’s processes—understood as the crosscutting institutional development policies that affect all agencies, regardless of their sectoral focus—in specialized entities that are responsible for regulating, supplying technical assistance, and, in some cases, directly providing goods and services to other public entities and to the different stakeholders involved in state governance.

Although they have developed significantly and are of increasing importance in dealing with the public administration as a special administrative area that is independent of other agencies, these entities face major challenges going forward: chiefly, improving their operational processes as regards planning; closer relations with the beneficiaries of their policies and actions in order to provide feedback on their actions; and the necessity of their being able to interconnect with other entities and stakeholders.

2. Planning is a process that has been internalized in the management of Public Management Guiding Institutions, as can be seen in the different findings reached through the surveys; clearly, this is an important finding that should be highlighted in that it is a basic process of the public administration that allows public entities to operate.

In spite of that progress, there are still weaknesses at the operational level: thus, many of the entities that replied to the questionnaire said they had difficulties in translating operating plans into strategies, programs, projects, and specific activities. This process is of vital

importance: if the design and strategic management does not lead to specific, concrete actions, the plans cannot be implemented and, consequently, the entire planning process will be meaningless.

Accordingly, and although it is notable that most of the entities have instruments for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of their operating plans—activities that are essential because they produce information or data on the implementation and results of strategic plans and, hence, allow for feedback on and corrections to their processes—there is little that can be evaluated and monitored if, in the real world, the strategic plans do not correspond with the entity’s activities.

3. Process-based management represents a widespread trend in the region’s Public Management Guiding Institutions; nevertheless, it needs to be strengthened in the development of tools and instruments for managing the development of administrative processes.

Thus, as indicated by the survey’s findings, most of the Public Management Guiding Institutions in the countries of the Americas have made efforts to identify, systematize, document, and socialize their entities’ key processes, understood as meaning the interconnecting of the different units’ activities in order to achieve a concrete result. However, it must be noted that only a third of the Public Management Guiding Institutions said they had done so adequately and had socialized the processes with the rest of the entity, whereas the remainder acknowledge that there are shortcomings in the design or socialization or simply have not adopted that method for administrative development and organization.

Similarly, and in spite of the existence of a relatively widespread methodology for process-based management, certain aspects still need strengthening: these include the consideration of goals and indicators for the entities’ processes, identifying the persons in charge of processes in order to establish responsibilities, profiles, and skills in the entity’s work, and the inclusion of a gender perspective.

Consequently, it is clear if those instruments are not available for quantifying the progress and achievements of the public administration’s internal processes, or for managing the skills of its human resources in light of the entity’s needs, it will be difficult to attain effectiveness in the implementation of public policies and in the pursuit of the entity’s objectives.

4. Citizen participation has been taken into account to different extents in most of the Public Management Guiding Institutions; this means positive guidance for the administration of those entities because it allows the inclusion of the views, opinions, and impressions of the final consumers of their public policies.

However, there is still a need for improvements to the proactiveness of this relationship between public entities and the citizens, since the information flow often goes from the entity to the public (through web pages, services letters, etc.) while communications in the other direction are not necessarily encouraged or facilitated. This is a weakness because if the satisfaction levels of the targets of public policies are not known, the performance of those policies cannot be improved. This can be seen in the fact that most of the surveyed entities stated that they did not have mechanisms for handling complaints and suggestions.

It is therefore worthwhile to underscore the importance of citizen participation as a way to legitimize public undertakings and the activities of the administration in particular, which

could easily be encouraged through the use of information and communications technologies, social networks, and other media.

5. Human resource policy in the Public Management Guiding Institutions needs to be strengthened.

Thus, for example, greater efforts are needed to interconnect human resource policy and planning, because planning allows the entity’s needs to be aligned with the effective work of the organization’s members, and, in light of the survey results, the entities have different levels of development, including some that are barely adequate, poor, and in some cases, simply nonexistent.

A similar requirement exists with respect to the process of monitoring, evaluating, and training the staff of Public Management Guiding Institutions, particularly as regards indicators related to staff performance, the existence and correct use of personnel evaluation mechanisms, communicating evaluation results to staff members, and adopting measures for improvements and corrections; this is because, as indicated by the evidence, although most of the countries have made progress with developing such instruments, the process is still weak and informal, and so appropriate human resource policies in the Public Management Guiding Institutions of the nations of the Americas cannot be guaranteed.

It should be noted that the survey focuses more on questions related to human resource monitoring and evaluation because this issue is more closely related to the effectiveness of public policies; this is, of course, without prejudice to a subsequent study that could yield additional information on all the subprocesses related to human resource policies within Public Management Guiding Institutions.

6. In the area of budget management processes, the majority of the Public Management Guiding Institutions have adequate conditions and subprocesses for ensuring the appropriate use of resources and for correlating them with their functions and results. It should nevertheless be noted that some specific countries still need to strengthen this public administration process.

This can be seen in an appropriate relationship between budgets and planning, suitable supply processes (procurement and purchasing), regular and permanent audits, and adequate or very adequate systems for following up on financial irregularities, including fraud and corruption.

7. Results-based management is progressing in the region’s Public Management Guiding Institutions. Nevertheless, there is still the challenge of strengthening this process to direct it toward satisfying the needs of the customers/users/public as well as those of the workers themselves.

This implies reviewing the internal processes of the Public Management Guiding Institutions to make them much more receptive to their surroundings, in light of the fact that only half the surveyed entities said they had mechanisms for exploring satisfaction levels among the target beneficiaries of public policies and the other half said they either did not have or did not use such mechanisms.

From these results, it can be concluded that bureaucratic management based on rules and procedures continues to dominate in the region’s administrations, and that this often obscures the mission of the State and of the public administration, which is the satisfaction of the beneficiaries they serve, whose opinion is a necessary prerequisite or chief input for

providing the entity with feedback in order for it to improve its performance. And that is without ignoring the opinions of the workers themselves, who are ultimately the people most familiar with the entity's problems and challenges.

This situation could possibly lead to dysfunctionalities or to public policies that do not respond to the real needs or demands of their beneficiaries; and that situation is corroborated by the Public Management Guiding Institutions' perceptions of themselves, which are mostly that the services they offer are of standard or very low quality.

8. According to the results of the First Consultation Hemispheric on Public Management Guiding Institutions in the Americas, the management of institutional relations shows a slight inclination toward the cooperative management of public policies.

So, although most of the entities have succeeded in identifying strategic partners and suppliers for carrying out their programs, projects and/or activities, more than half the agencies surveyed said they undertook joint actions occasionally and predominantly in conjunction with other public sector entities.

In light of these figures, and without prejudice to future research, it can be deduced that there are difficulties in strengthening cooperation between the guiding agencies and other stakeholders, particularly with the private sector and with civil society organizations. This situation might be explained by the existence of administrative hurdles to cooperative efforts with nonpublic agencies, low levels of confidence in the private sector and CSOs, and other reasons that constitute challenges that still have to be overcome.

■ Annex I

1st Hemispheric Consultation on Public Management Guiding Institutions in the Americas (self-evaluation / self-perception questionnaire)

Thanks for participating in the realization of this questionnaire developed by the Department for Effective Public Management of the OAS.

This consult aims to gather information about different functional and organizational aspects of the guiding institutions in public management throughout the Americas, with the goal of stimulating regional co-operation and technical assistance projects provided by the OAS to its member-states.

The information that you will give us will be exclusively used by the OAS with the purpose of establishing statistics - making impossible to identify the different participants.

We would like to stress that your answers are very important for the success of this consult. Thus, we thank you again for your participation.

With this purpose, the questions have been organized in three parts, as follows :

1. Strategic management
2. Processes management
3. Results management
4. Institutional relations management

It is preferred that the person who answers the questionnaire had an institutional position that allows him/her to know all the different administrative aspects of the organization.

Please indicate your name (optional):
.....

Please indicate the name of your **institution**:
.....

Please indicate your **position** within the institution:
.....

Please indicate your **country**:
.....

Please indicate your e-mail (**optional**):
.....

Instructions for Returning the Questionnaire

This questionnaire should be returned to DEPM before March 25th, 2013. Please email it to the following address: hinga@oas.org.

Alternatively, this questionnaire could be returned to: (a) the Permanent Mission of your country to the OAS in Washington-DC or (b) to the OAS National Liaison Office in your country.

Part 1 : Strategic Management

1. Organically, your institution is a(n) :

- Ministry
- An executive agency linked to a Ministry
- Independent agency
- An executive agency linked to the Presidency
- Other. Please explain:
.....
.....
.....

2. Scope of competence of your institution

- National government level
- Sub-national level (state, region, etc.)
- Local government level
- All of the above

3. Functions of your institution

- Elaborate norms and regulations
- Implement policies and programs
- Promoting policy agendas
- All of the above
- None of the above

4. Within your institution, have agents responsible for strategic planning been identified? If yes, do these agents know about their responsibilities?

- Such agents haven't been identified
- Yes, but it was difficult identifying them
- Yes, agents have been identified although they don't know about their responsibilities
- Yes, agents have been identified and they know about their responsibilities
- Yes, agents have been identified and they have a thorough knowledge of their responsibilities

5. Does your institution have a Strategic Plan?

- Yes
- No

6. Has the making of the Institutional Strategic Plan been done in a participative way?

- Yes
- No

7. If yes, please indicate at which level belong those who made it

- High-Administration level
- Management level
- Technical level

- External consultants
 All

8. Has the strategic plan got the expected results regarding your country's national strategies?

- No, the results were not the expected
 Yes, but they were not very well aligned with the national strategies
 Yes, they were aligned
 Yes, and they were very well aligned
 The national strategies of development had not been identified

9. Does your institution have a long-term mission and vision? If yes, what is the term set for the realization of your long-term vision? Please, explain :

- It has no mission nor vision
 It has just a mission
 It has just a vision
 It has both, namely

10. Have the strategic objectives and the operational objectives been made taking into account the mission and the view of the institution?

- No, they have not
 Yes, but the mission and the view have been poorly taken into account
 Yes, and the mission and the view have been regularly taken into account
 Yes, and the mission and the view have been thoroughly taken into account

11. Have the strategic objectives and the operational objectives become operational plans and activities?

- No, they have not
 Yes, but update have been poor
 Yes, and update have been made regulary
 Yes, and update had been frequent

12. Does your institutions use mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation of the strategic planification? How frequently are these mechanisms used?

- No, the institution do not use such mechanisms
 Yes, it does, but the usage have been poor
 Yes, it does, and the usage have been made regulary
 Yes, it does, and the usage have been frequent

Part 2 : Processes Management

1. Have key processes to implement strategic planning been identified, designed and/or publicize ?

- No
 Yes, but they are poorly identifiable / designed
 Yes, and they are identified / designed on regular basis

- Yes, and they are well identified / designed, but they haven't been publicize
 Yes, and they are well identified / designed, and publicized

2. Have the identified key processes been documented? Who know about such documents?

- No
 Yes, they have been documented and the knowledge lays at the high-administration level
 Yes, they have been documented and the knowledge lays at the management level
 Yes, they have been documented and the knowledge lays at the technical level
 Yes, they have been documented and the knowledge lays at all levels of the organization

3. Have the identified processes been provided with objectives, goals and benchmarks?

- No
 Yes, they have been provided with objectives only
 Yes, they have been provided with goals only
 Yes, they have been provided with benchmarks only
 Yes, they have been provided with objectives, goals and benchmarks

4. In the development of the processes, have the developers been identified?

- No
 Yes, but they have been poorly identified
 Yes, and they have been regularly identified
 Yes, they have been regularly identified and these individuals know well about their personal responsibilities in the process

5. Does the institution incorporate a gender equality perspective in its activities?

- No
 Yes, but it has been poorly incorporated
 Yes, and it has been regularly incorporated
 Yes, and it has been thoroughly incorporated

Processes related to citizenship

6. In the identification and design of the institutional processes, has the participation of the public service customers/citizens/users have been considered?

- No
 Yes, but it has been poorly considered
 Yes, and it has been regularly considered
 Yes, and it has been seriously considered

If you answered yes, please indicate what were the means that had been used.

- Survey
 Analytical / diagnosis study
 Focus group
 Other. Please specify:

.....

7. Have reference information on your institution and its services been provided to the customers/citizens/users?

- No
 Yes, but the information provided is limited
 Yes, and the information provided is regular
 Yes, and the information provided is very clear

8. What is/are the means through which the public service customers/citizens/users access that information?

- Web site(s)
 Public information centers
 Call Center / Telephone
 Newsletters / Publications
 Other. Please describe :

.....

9. Is there any process that aim to provide assistance and help to the customers/citizens/users when they cannot require it personally?

- No
 Yes, but the process is poor
 Yes, there is a regular process of the kind
 Yes, there is an advanced process of the kind

10. Is there any processes to deal with the customers/citizens/users complaints and feedback?

- No
 Yes, but the process is poor
 Yes, there is a regular process of the kind
 Yes, there is an advanced process of the kind

11. Do the customers/citizens/users satisfaction, complaints, and other kinds of feedback are taken into consideration when continuous improvements actions are implemented?

- No
 Yes - in a circumstantial manner
 Yes, feedbacks are always taken into account

Support processes / Staff management

1. Is the Human Resources Policy related to the institution's strategic planification — in terms entrance steps, promotion, training and cessation?

- No, it is not
 Yes, but the relation is poor
 Yes, and the relation is just regular
 Yes, and the relation is strong

2. Within the institution, is there channels of communication? If yes, are those horizontal? down-top? top-down?

- No, there is not
 Yes, but they just exist formally. They are not put into practice
 Yes - communication is horizontal
 Yes - communication is down-top
 Yes - communication is top-down
 Yes - communication is horizontal, down-top and top-down

3. Is there any indicators related to staff performance? If yes, how are they used?

- No, there is not
 Yes, but they are poor
 Yes, but they are not put into practice
 Yes, there are such indicators and they are used in practice

4. Does the institution use any results-based performance evaluation system to measure the staff's performance?

- No, it does not
 Yes, but still evaluation is informal
 Yes, there are formal evaluation mechanisms, but they are not put into practice
 Yes, there are formal evaluation mechanisms, but their practice is limited
 Yes, there are formal evaluation mechanisms, and their practice is regular
 Yes, there are formal evaluation mechanisms, and their practice is strong

5. Do the institution's managers provide some feedback to the technical staff about its performance?

- No, it does not
 Yes, it does from time to time
 Yes, it always does

6. Are there any training plans that take into account the needs identified by a regular assessment of staff capacity gaps?

- No, there is not
 Yes, there is, but they do not take into account the needs and the assessment of the institutions and its staff
 Yes, there is, and they do take into account the needs and the assessment of the institutions and its staff

7. Do the High-Administration promote a team work environment?

- No, it does not
 Yes, but promotion is limited
 Yes, and promotion is regular
 Yes, and promotion is strong

8. In a general way, do you believe that the officers and staff of the institution have "capacity" to adequately and efficiently fulfill their functions? NB: Do consider as "capacity" the set of a preexisting required conditions for the realization of their work, for example, professional knowledge, organizational and functional materials (human resources, budget, logistics, etc.).

- No, they do not have such capacities
- Yes, but their capacities are limited
- Yes, and capacities are regular
- Yes, and capacities are strong

Support processes/ Budget management

1. Is the institution budget adequately related to programs / projects planned for achieving the objectives?

- No, it is not
- Yes, but the relation is limited
- Yes, and the relation is regular
- Yes, and the relation is strong

2. Has the institution an effective purchase and hiring processes for the delivery of goods and / or services?

- No, it has not
- Yes, but the processes are limited
- Yes, and the processes are regular
- Yes, and the processes are strong

3. Does the institution use appropriate audits in its programs and projects?

- No, it does not
- Yes, but the use is occasional
- Yes, and the use is frequent
- Yes, and the use is very frequent

4. Does the institution have appropriate systems for monitoring financial irregularities, including fraud and corruption?

- No, it does not
- Yes, but the systems are poor
- Yes, and the systems are regular
- Yes, and the systems are strong

Support processes / Logistics aspects

1. Are the facilities in which the institution is located suitable for the development of the planned activities and for an effective service delivery to customers/citizens/users?

- No, they are not suitable
- Yes, but they are not very suitable
- Yes, and they are suitable

2. Does the institution have the appropriate technological tools for developing its programs/projects/activities?

- No, it has not
- Yes, but the technological tools are obsolete
- Yes, but the technological tools are limited
- Yes, and the technological tools are appropriate

3. Does the institution have appropriate risk management strategies and tools?

- No, it does not
- Yes, it does, but the strategies and tools are not put into practice
- Yes, it does have very appropriate risk management strategies and tools

Part 3: Results Management

1. Are there indicators to measure workers' satisfaction regarding the development of programs/projects and/or activities of the institution?

- No, there is not
- Yes, there is, but the indicators are limited
- Yes, there is adequate indicators, but they are not put into practice
- Yes, there is adequate indicators, and they are put into practice

2. Are there any mechanisms to measure the customers/citizens/users satisfaction towards the service quality?

- No, there is not
- Yes, there is some mechanisms, but they are not put into practice
- Yes, some mechanisms, and they are constantly put into practice

If yes, could you please mention what are these mechanisms?

- Survey
- Analytical / diagnosis study
- Focus group
- Other. Please specify:

.....

3. Does your institution have performed any kind of assessment (survey, interviews, diagnosis study) focusing the perceived quality of public services provided by the governmental organizations under your institution supervision? If so, please attach the reference document.

- Yes
- No

4. In a global perspective and generally speaking, how do you think citizens perceive the services provided by the public institutions in your country?

- Very low quality
- Low quality
- Suitable / regular
- High quality
- Very high quality

Part 4: Institutional Relations Management

1. Have strategic providers and allies used to be identified in advance prior to the implementation of key programs / projects / activities?

- No, they have not been identified
- They have not been identified very clearly
- Yes, they have been identified clearly

2. Are strategic public-private alliances used for designing, developing and implementing top-priority projects within your organization?

- No, there is not
- Yes, occasionally there is
- Yes, there is always such alliances

3. What is the nature of your main strategic partners?

- Other public / government institutions
- Private sector firms
- Cooperatives / Labor Union
- NGOs / Civil society movements
- Mixed. Please specify:

.....

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer this questionnaire and share your perspective with us.

A fulfilled copy of this questionnaire can be emailed back to DEPM staff at hinga@oas.org – preferably up to March, 25th. 2013.

Department for Effective Public Management
 Organization of American States

■ Annex II

List of Public Management Guiding Institutions in the Americas that Replied to the First Hemispheric Consultation

No.	COUNTRY	GUIDING ENTITY / OFFICE
1	Antigua and Barbuda	Public Sector Transformation Unit - PSTU
2	Argentina	Cabinet and Administrative Coordination Secretariat
3	Barbados	Ministry of the Civil Service / Office of Public Sector Reform
4	Belize	Ministry of the Public Service and Elections & Boundaries
5	Bolivia	Ministry of Development Planning
6	Canada	Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
7	Chile	Ministry General Secretariat of the Presidency / Modernization and Digital Government Unit
8	Colombia	Administrative Public Function Department - DAFT
9	Costa Rica	Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy - MIDEPLAN
10	Dominica	Establishment, Personnel and Training Department
11	Ecuador	National Secretariat for Planning and Development - SENPLADES
12	Guatemala	Secretary of the Presidency of the Republic - SEGEPLAN
13	Jamaica	Cabinet Office / Public Sector Transformation Unit - PSTU
14	Mexico	Public Function Secretariat
15	Panama	Interior Ministry
16	Paraguay	Public Function Secretariat
17	Peru	Public Administration Secretariat
18	Dominican Republic	Ministry of Public Administration
19	St. Kitts and Nevis	Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Permanent Secretariat
20	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Public Sector Reform Unit - PSRU
21	The Bahamas	Ministry of Finance
22	Trinidad and Tobago	Ministry of Public Administration / Direction Strategic Services and Information Technology
23	Venezuela	Ministry of Planning