

Completed Questionnaire on the Review of ADB's Disclosure and Information Policies

1. Public Perception of ADB in Implementing the Policy

- A. What is your view of ADB regarding access to information? Why? Please provide examples.
I think that ADB has a good Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information policy, but that not enough ADB staff understand and therefore know how to implement this policy.
- B. What is your view of ADB regarding transparency? Why? Please provide examples.
I think that ADB could improve its transparency by establishing a deadline for replies to requests for ADB documents. The deadline could be a long period of time such as 90 days. The replies may of course be in the affirmative or the negative. Negative replies should, nevertheless, provide as much information as is feasible.
- C. What can ADB do to strengthen public participation and communication with people living in project areas?
ADB could have legal opinions prepared by local lawyers indicating what local law requires in project areas concerning public participation and communication with people living in project areas. Each such legal opinion could be posted on the ADB website for each project.

2. Disclosure of Documents to the Public during the Operational Cycle

- A. At what stage in the project cycle (identification, design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation) would it be most appropriate for ADB to share information? At what stage would the information be most useful to your organization or affected communities in project areas?
ADB should provide information at each stage of the project cycle. The deadline for replies to requests for information could be as long as 90 days. Ideally, ADB would have the Office of External Relations in charge of each denial of a request or each instance when a reply is not provided within 90 days.
What kind of information?
The information could be a copy of the relevant document or a copy of a public information document created to provide the information requested by someone outside of the ADB.
What do you need the information for?
Information is needed to make intelligent decisions.
- B. Please give examples (if any) where failure to disclose information has decreased program or project effectiveness, or cost time and resources? Why?
An ADB loan for a sewer project in Pakistan was cancelled after local NGOs failed to obtain timely, adequate information. It appears that these NGOs then launched a campaign to cancel the loan, which would have improved local health and the environment at a low cost.

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- C. Have you requested a document/information about a project while it is being designed or implemented? If so, what kind of document/information? **No.**
Why did you want the document? **Not applicable.**
From which ADB office did you request the document? **Not applicable.**
Did you receive it? If not, why not? How long did you wait? **Not applicable.**
- D. ADB's Country Strategy and Program (CSP) process requires consultation with external stakeholders, including civil society. What information do you need about the CSP and its process to contribute to your country's strategy and program? When do you need it?
The information needed is project and policy related information in the CSP as soon as that information can legally be made available.
- E. English is the working language of ADB. However, in your opinion, when would it be most useful for ADB to translate documents into other languages in your country?
Concise, pertinent project and policy information, not necessarily the entire text of ADB documents, would usefully be made available in the language of each ADB developing country within 90 days of a request for such information.
- What should be the criteria for translation? (i.e., what kind of documents, at what stage, etc.)
The criteria should be what information would a project affected person or entity need to know to participate and/or object to an ADB project or policy. Such information, not necessarily the entire ADB document, should be made available in a translated form, if consistent with ADB's relevant policies, within 90 days of receipt by ADB of a request.

Information Policy and Strategy

- A. How well is ADB known in your country?
My country is the USA, and ADB is not known very well in the USA.
- B. Do you think ADB should be doing more to raise its profile in your country? If so, why? And how?
ADB should do more to raise its profile in the USA. Since face-to-face contact is the most effective, ADB should hire well qualified, former ADB staff to go on short speaking tours in the USA.
- C. What are the most important channels in your country for ADB to communicate information about its mission, objectives and operations? Print media? Radio/TV? Internet? Community presentations? Others (please specify):
I think that live question and answer sessions on the radio, TV and in community presentations would be the most effective.

Other Recommendations

I have not taken the opportunity to review the latest edition of these policies. Nevertheless, based on my understanding of these policies, I believe that ADB Policy on Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information and the Information and Policy and Strategy could be strengthened by (i) having local lawyers prepare a legal opinion for publication on the ADB website for each project indicating what local law requires for public disclosure and participation, (ii) establishing a deadline for replies to requests for information with the Office of External Relations being in charge of replies denying requests for information or any request that has not received a reply within 90 days, (iii) providing information relevant to a project affected person or entity (not necessarily the entire ADB document) translated into the local language within about 90 days of any request, and (iv) having ADB speakers give talks and answer questions in face-to-face encounters on radio and television and in community presentations.

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