

**Consultation Workshop on ADB's Draft Public Communications Policy
Jakarta, 27 April, 2004
Summary of Participant Recommendations**

Evaluation by NGO Representatives

A. Strengths of the Draft Policy

- The policy exemplifies ADB's commitment to public participation and information disclosure.

B. Suggestions for Improvement of the Policy

1. ADB Policies:

- Provide more opportunities for the public to review draft policies (require drafts to be disclosed).

2. Project Information (General):

- Most disclosed documents are selected or have already been approved. The public should be involved in, or consulted during, the preparation of documents (draft stage), not after everything has been approved.
- Project Information Documents (PIDs) should be consistently updated for both public sector *and* private sector projects.
- The contact persons for particular projects should be included in the PID.
- Technical Assistance outputs should be regularly available in *draft* form.
- Budget-related information should be disclosed prior to the project taking effect.
- All documents related to discussions between the Indonesian government and ADB on projects should be disclosed.
- Supervision reports made by ADB personnel regarding the status of a project should be disclosed.
- Reports & Recommendations of the President (RRPs) should cover the progress of on-going projects.
- Information regarding progress of the project and its aftermath should be disclosed.
- Minutes of meetings, not only a summary, should be disclosed.
- Create and apply a proper mechanism to encourage public involvement; the communication is "one-way" (ADB providing information *to* others).
- ADB should provide reports regarding impacts, risks, trade-offs, and benefits of projects soon after completion of the consultant's report.

3. Project Information to Project Affected Stakeholders (para 87):

- The policy should require that stakeholders have "free and prior informed consent" about development initiatives that affect them.
- Develop an appropriate information disbursement mechanism for reaching the affected public, such as a learning house; the draft relies on the Internet too much.
- Develop a mandatory dissemination schedule to ensure that information is well received by the affected group.
- The types of information provided should include information on the impact on society, scope of work, and involved participants.

4. Project Evaluation:

- ADB should encourage civil society participation in project evaluation.
- TA and Project Completion Reports should be completed within 6 months of project close, rather than 12-24 months.

5. Constraints Section/Exceptions to the Policy of Presumed Disclosure:

- Define “business sensitive” and “confidential” information and provide criteria.
- Disclosure is highly dependent on the government; if the government does not have the good will to implement it, the policy will not be effectively carried out. ADB needs to set requirements to make the policies more effective in operations.
- The draft allows limiting disclosure when it is considered to harm ADB’s interests.
- All information should be disclosed except information pertaining to intellectual property rights and information that may provoke conflict in particular regions.

6. Translation:

- Paragraphs 71-72 say ADB will offer documents in local languages, but paragraph 76 says ADB will not be responsible for accuracy of translation. ADB should provide authentic translations and control the quality of its translated documents. The disclaimer in paragraph 76 should be deleted.

7. Format and Language of the Document:

- Use simpler language so the public can understand the policy’s impact.
- Consider the information divide between the central and local government; local government needs information.
- The draft has contradictory statements that might be falsely interpreted or interpreted in various ways.
- The draft lacks clear linkages between other ADB policies and the PCP.

8. Implementation Arrangements:

- The Public Communications Advisory Committee (PCAC) must have comprehensive knowledge regarding each member country. Some administrative procedures may not match those of the host country. It would be better if there was a PCAC for each member country.
- ADB should develop a mechanism that is more independent than the proposed PCAC to settle information disputes and avoid a conflict of interest.

9. Anticorruption Information:

- ADB should publish information on “corruption cases” rather than simply “statistics”, and take actions to eradicate corrupt practices.

C. Consultation Process

- Involve women and project-affected people in formulating the PCP.

D. Good Practices/Models of Transparency and Access to Information:

- Use key persons in society to popularize the policy.
- Conduct discussions to clarify policies.
- Publish local magazines in a project area. The Citanduy community manages a local magazine during project implementation (funded by the project).

Evaluation by Government Representatives

A. Strengths of the Draft Policy

- It encourages openness in disclosing information related to ADB's activities.
- The policy covers the types of information to disclose, objectives, targets and society's participation.

B. Suggestions for Improvement of the Policy

1. Project Information (in General):

- Disclose information from identification to implementation.
- People should be informed of both the benefits and potential drawbacks of the project.
- Empower and involve local community leaders to reach society with project information, and involve them in the development of the project.
- Consider government limitations with regard to costs, environmental impact assessment, etc.
- Communications plans should be *required* for each project.

2. Project Information to Project Affected Stakeholders (para 87):

- The policy should emphasize stakeholder participation from the very beginning; the local community should assess the initial project plan and be involved in preparing the project.
- Precisely define "indigenous people."
- Information should reach the affected people, or the smallest unit of the government, 3 months after the project is approved, at the latest.

3. What information should not be disclosed:

- All kinds of information are acceptable to disclose (Group 1)
- Information related to the ADB's bidding processes and other information that might arouse conflict should not be disclosed. (Group 2)

4. Translation:

- Translation of project information is of primary concern.

5. Format and Language of the Document:

- The draft should clearly articulate that various parties make use of information related to ADB-supported activities.

6. Implementation Arrangements:

- The draft should include indicators to measure the policy's performance.

7. Other Concerns:

- ADB policies are not accommodating current issues.
- ADB policies should address education, since it is closely related to poverty reduction.

C. Good Practices/Models of Transparency and Access to Information:

- Getting a project through e-procurement.
- Invite key persons in the society.

- Disclose information through the media (leaflet). Partner with local radio stations & TV programs (Selamat Pagi Bupati or interactive dialogs).
- Form partnerships with the government.
- Routinely disclose information to stakeholders.
- Pay campaign activities.

Evaluation by Academic Institutions, Media & Private Sector

A. Suggestions for Improvement of the Policy

1. Project Information (in General):

- ADB should provide updated information on its web site.
- The communication mechanisms between the government, non-state actors or local communities, and ADB are unclear. Communications should be multi-directional.
- It is also unclear who will take the initiative: government? ADB? the target public?
- Project Information Documents should include key performance indicators and information on the project's sustainability.

2. Project Information to Project Affected Stakeholders (para 87):

- The policy lacks social indicators to measure the impact of ADB's projects on affected people. ADB should periodically disclose quantitative and qualitative information.
- ADB should provide grants to those affected by its policies.
- The sources of ADB funding should be disclosed to affected people.
- Ensure major changes in projects are effectively communicated to affected groups.

3. Project Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Media should function as a watchdog for ADB-supported projects.

4. Suggestion for the Format and Language of the Document:

- The policy paper should more clearly articulate the vision and mission of information disclosure and outreach.

5. Implementation Arrangements:

- ADB should support and encourage good governance.
- ADB should monitor and evaluate information disclosure; monitoring reports should be disclosed to the public and the media.
- ADB should set up information centers at universities, and develop information centers for those at the grassroots. In doing so, ADB should cooperate with universities and CSOs.