



Building Trust through Transparency

Transparency and accountability are essential for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to achieve our vision of an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. These are the cornerstones of development effectiveness.

Since 2005, ADB's Public Communications Policy (PCP) has provided a framework for communications and the proactive disclosure of information, responding to information requests, and receiving feedback and insights from our stakeholders.

The 2011 PCP strengthens the 2005 PCP. It integrates lessons learned and feedback from hundreds of ADB stakeholders in our member countries. It commits ADB to an overall integrated communications program for its projects that will better inform stakeholders and affected people.

Incorporating increased and earlier disclosure of information, ADB will be able to build more productive development partnerships through greater stakeholder involvement, resulting in improved development outcomes.

Above all, the 2011 PCP commits ADB to providing all stakeholders with equal access to the information made available under the policy, recognizing the right of people to seek, receive, and share information. It also keeps ADB at the forefront of best practices in transparency.



Effective
2 April 2012

Key Changes in the 2011 PCP Expand and Speed Up Access to Information

Following are some significant changes in the 2011 PCP to make information more accessible to our stakeholders.

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Earlier Disclosure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and final papers of policies and strategies that have undergone public consultation are posted on ADB's website when these are sent to ADB's Board of Directors for consideration. • Final proposals for country partnership strategies, regional cooperation strategies, and sovereign project loans are posted on ADB's website when these are sent to ADB's Board of Directors, subject to country consent. |
| Expanded Disclosure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual audited project accounts for ADB-financed sovereign projects are disclosed. • Verbatim transcripts of formal ADB Board meetings may be disclosed, upon request, 10 years after the date of their creation, subject to exceptions. |
| Project Communications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overall communication approach for projects that includes more proactive disclosure. • In-country communications are expanded throughout the project cycle to give affected people—especially women and the poor—more information about projects and other ADB activities that could impact their lives. |
| Additional Translations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project data sheets for loans, grants, and project preparatory technical assistance are translated into the national language of the country concerned. |
| Independent Appeals Process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An independent appeals panel is established to provide additional recourse for parties whose information requests have been denied by ADB. |

The 2011 PCP recognizes the right of people to seek, receive, and share information on ADB's operations.

Greater Transparency and Accountability

The 2011 PCP will enable ADB's stakeholders to better participate in the decisions that affect them.

Key PCP Principles

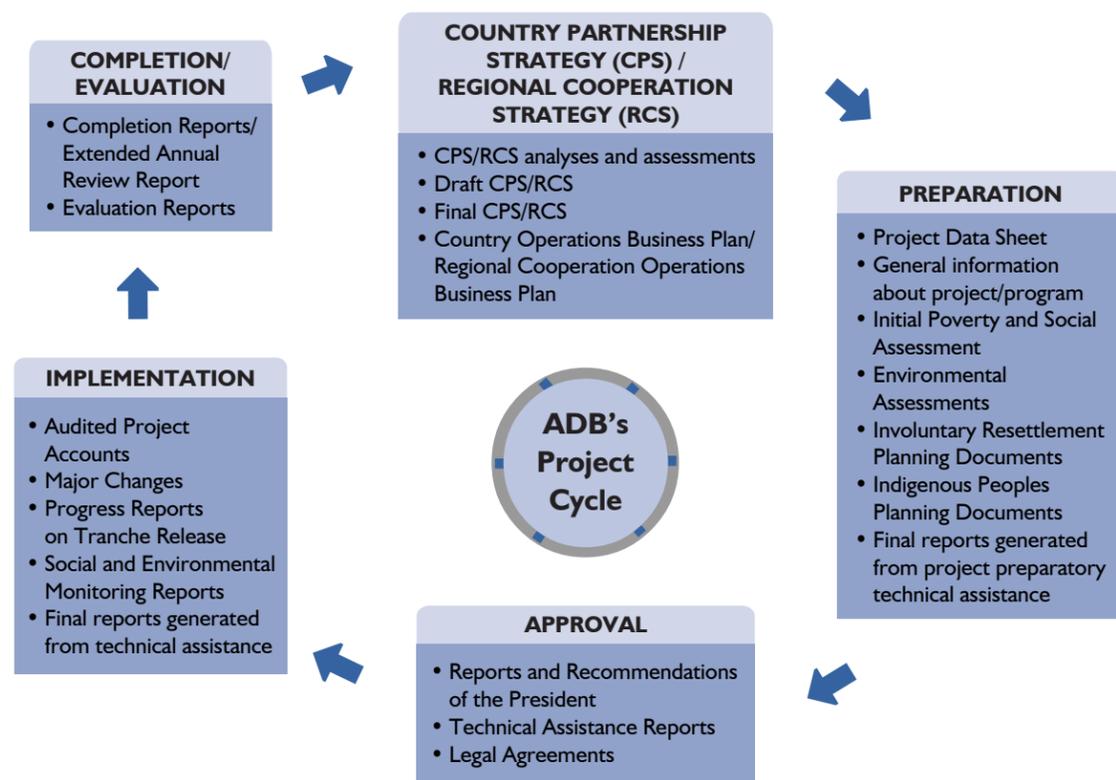
- Presumption in favor of disclosure
- Accountability and transparency in all ADB operations
- Proactive sharing of knowledge, information, and lessons learned
- Improved access to operational information
- Greater two-way information exchange to promote participatory development
- Timely response to requests for information and documents
- Promotion of an information- and knowledge-sharing culture

Information Disclosed during the ADB Project Cycle

In the course of doing business, ADB produces or requires our borrowers and clients to produce various information and documents. The 2011 PCP sets out which documents will be disclosed at certain stages during the life of a project.

The primary vehicle for proactively disclosing information remains the ADB website. ADB and its borrowers and clients may also use other means, depending on the intended audience and reason for disclosing the information. For instance, new technologies, such as social networking and mobile applications, may offer exciting opportunities for information exchange. Also, because large groups of stakeholders may not have access to technology, more traditional methods of communications must be used when needed.

Types of Project Documents Covered by the 2011 PCP



Two-Way Information Exchange

The 2011 PCP commits ADB to keeping borrowers, clients, partners, project-affected people, and other stakeholders aware of our activities. It also commits us to seeking and allowing stakeholder views to be considered at project design and throughout the project cycle. This creates the kind of two-way information exchange crucial to building the mutual understanding and trust that forms the foundation of solid partnerships and development effectiveness.

Types of Information that May Not Be Disclosed

While ADB recognizes the public's right to know and is committed to a presumption in favor of disclosure, full disclosure is not always possible. There are instances, for example, when ADB needs to explore ideas, share information, and hold frank discussions internally and with its members. In some instances, disclosure of personal information could endanger the safety of personnel. Certain financial information can also be sensitive if it can harm businesses or a member's economy.

ADB reserves the right not to disclose information, as set out in a list of exceptions. The basis for these exceptions is ADB's determination that disclosure would or would likely cause harm that outweighs the benefit of disclosure.

Exceptions to Disclosure

The 2011 PCP clarifies exceptions to disclosure and, in some cases, identifies the harm that disclosure of the relevant information could cause to the interests protected by the exception. Below is a list of the categories of information exempt from disclosure with an abbreviated rationale for each. Paragraph 97 of the 2011 PCP contains exact information that must be referred to when considering specific exceptions.

| Exception | Reason for Exception |
|--|---|
| Deliberative and Decision-Making Process | Where disclosure might inhibit candid exchange of ideas and communications within ADB and between ADB and/or its stakeholders |
| Information Provided in Confidence | Where disclosure could materially prejudice ADB's relations with that party or any other ADB member |
| Personal Information | Where disclosure could compromise the legitimate privacy interests of the person concerned |
| Financial Information | Where disclosure could compromise legitimate financial or commercial interests or the ability of a member to manage its economy |
| Security and Safety | Where disclosure could endanger the life, health, safety, or security of any individual |
| Legal or Investigative Matters | Where information could materially prejudice an investigation or the administration of justice |
| Internal Audit Reports and Trust Fund Audit Reports | Where public disclosure would violate applicable auditing standards |

Transparency is what ADB's Public Communications Policy is all about.

The number of documents posted on the ADB website has increased by 145% since 2005.

Since 2005, ADB has released documents for 95% of the requests received.

Find further details on the disclosure rules of documents in Chapter 6 of the 2011 PCP, effective 2 April 2012, at www.adb.org/disclosure.

Find complete information on disclosure exceptions in the 2011 PCP, effective 2 April 2012, at www.adb.org/disclosure.

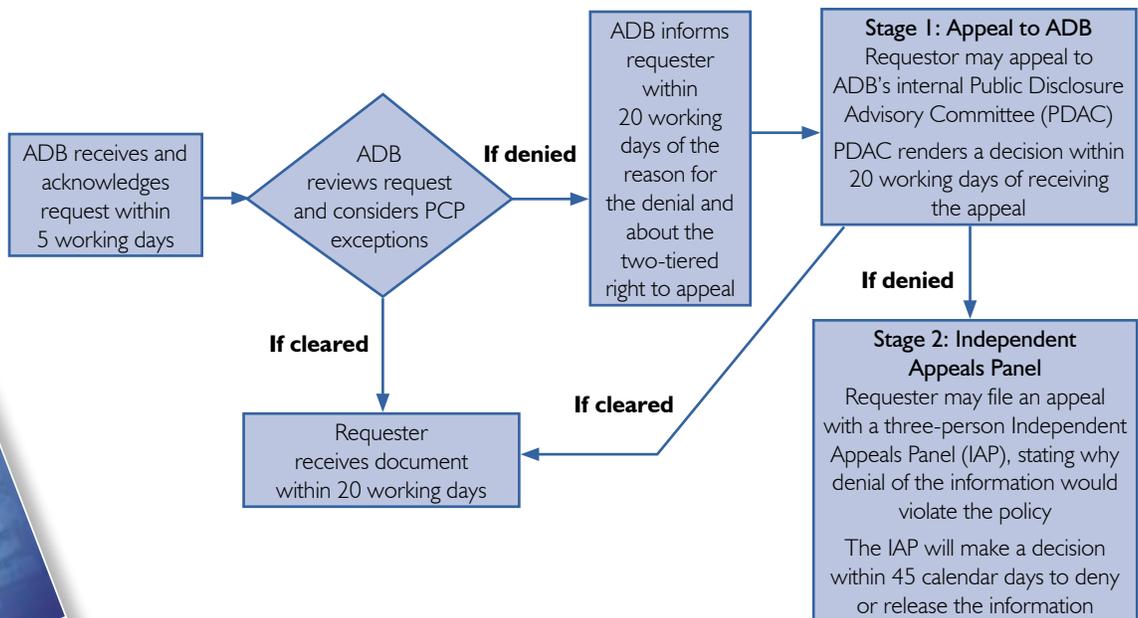
How to Ask for Information

All requests for information and documents must be made in writing by e-mail, mail, internet feedback form, or fax. Please refer to paragraphs 131–135 under the heading “Procedures for Accessing Information” in the 2011 PCP for guidelines on obtaining historical data and translations, and for more specific information about requests and how to fill them out.

| Requests should be directed by | Requests may also be directed to a |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mail to Public Information and Disclosure Unit Department of External Relations Asian Development Bank 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City 1550 Metro Manila, Philippines e-mail to disclosure@adb.org fax to +63 2 636 2649 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> resident mission, representative office, or ADB department or office concerned <p>See www.adb.org/contacts for contact information.</p> |

In its response to requestors, ADB will provide the requested information, unless it falls under any of the PCP exceptions. When information is denied, ADB informs the requester the reason the request has been denied and of the two-tiered right to appeal under the new policy. Details on the appeals process and how to appeal may be found in paragraphs 136–141 of the 2011 PCP.

How External Requests and Appeals Are Handled



ADB posts on its website a list of all appeals received, the nature of each appeal, and the decision taken in each case. The list is updated upon issuance of each decision.

ADB's 2011 PCP guides our efforts to be transparent, accountable, and responsive to the people we serve. We encourage you to visit www.adb.org/disclosure, where you can download a copy of the 2011 PCP and learn more about access to information at ADB.

Find further details on requests and disclosure in the 2011 PCP, effective 2 April 2012, at www.adb.org/disclosure.

The more people know, the more they can contribute to development.



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