

































# INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

## ***Disclosure of Project Contacts and Information on Mechanisms to Access Information and the Independent Accountability Mechanism***

- *Whether contact information for the borrower or client was provided*
  - Yes - 8
  - No - 150
  
- *Whether contact information for OPIC's project leads was provided*
  - Yes - 0
  - No - 158

Communities affected by development projects should also have access to contact details in case they would like to obtain additional information about a project or further engage. Unfortunately, for the vast majority of the projects in our dataset -- **142 out of 150 94%** -- **contact information for the borrower or client was not disclosed**. Contact information was only included in the initial project summary shared as part of the ESIA package for some Category A projects. Likewise, not one of the project summaries in the dataset **0% disclosed corresponding contact information for OPIC project leads**.

- *Whether information on submitting a request for access to information was provided*
  - Yes - 0
  - No - 158
  
- *Whether information on the Borrower's grievance mechanism was provided*
  - Yes - 62
  - No - 96
  
- *Whether information on OPIC's accountability mechanism was provided*
  - Yes - 0
  - No - 158

**None of the 158 project summaries 0% disclosed information on avenues to request additional project information**, including any reference to the United States Freedom of Information Act FOIA. **Similarly, none of the 158 projects 0% information on OPIC's independent accountability mechanism. 62 out of 158 39% referenced a Borrower grievance mechanism.** This disclosure practice is insufficient and falls far short of international best practice. Communities must know that they have access to remedy should they be adversely impacted by a DFC project, and that the institution itself has an mechanism they can access, independent from



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the Borrower. While information on a Borrower grievance mechanism is a welcome complement to information on the accountability mechanism, OPIC's disclosure practice for this criteria was inconsistent and appeared ad hoc.

## ***Looking Forward: Ensuring the DFC Adopts Robust Information Disclosure Practices and Policies***

OPIC's approach, as discussed in this practice analysis, compels the question, what is the purpose of disclosing this information, and for whom is it intended? Potentially affected communities should be the primary target for this information, with the aim of fulfilling their right to access information, and equipping them with the necessary information to meaningfully engage in the development process.

In the context of today's development climate, space is already often restricted for communities to voice their concerns about projects, or even request access to information, particularly in the regions where the DFC currently operates and hopes to increase investment. This makes the need to safeguard transparency and the right to access information more urgent, and accordingly, the institution's information disclosure practices and policies even more critical.

As this analysis demonstrates, OPIC's - and now the DFC's - disclosure practices are inadequate and fall far short of international best practice, including in relation to institutions where the US itself is a leading shareholder and advocate for transparency and participation.

Community access to information is further hampered by the absence of an institutional policy for proactive information disclosure, a practice that is implemented by most development finance institutions. While the United States Freedom of Information Act FOIA is critical for increasing government transparency, pursuit of this avenue is often inaccessible, if not also procedurally burdensome and cost prohibitive, for most project-affected communities. As such, the DFC should create an access to information system that will provide a first point of access to complement FOIA, including an access to information policy that governs proactive disclosure.

A commitment to transparency and access to information must also ensure those who need the information most are able to receive and understand it. Recognizing that it is unrealistic for local communities to visit the OPIC website each day to see if any proposed project may affect them, the [Early Warning System](#) team is closing this gap by summarizing and distributing projects proposed by OPIC and other development institutions to partners in country, as soon as possible, a responsibility that should be borne by the new DFC.

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We encourage the DFC to use the opportunity afforded by its inception to build upon and strengthen OPIC's disclosure policies and practices, including through a robust and open consultation process. In so doing, the new DFC can better prioritize communities, as the intended beneficiaries of and key stakeholders in development.

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