

ADB TRANSPARENCY

How to Access Information from the ADB

This section is designed to help anyone who needs information about the ADB because he or she:

- wants to know what projects and programs the ADB is funding or planning in their country
- is concerned about a particular ADB project
- has been invited by the ADB to participate in a consultation

Citizens have a right to information about ADB projects and policies that will affect their lives. They are entitled to know how ADB operations are affecting their country's environment, economy, society and government structures and policies. They are also entitled to timely information so that they can be informed participants in development decision-making and not passive by-standers. However, citizens affected by ADB projects often are the last to know about them and thus frequently become a victim, rather than a beneficiary, of ADB-funded initiatives.

This section, based on the ADB's 1994 *Policy on Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information*, explains the types of information currently made available by the ADB, and explains how and when during the life of a project you can get a hold of this information.¹

Types of documents available:

Public Sector Projects

The documents listed below are prepared for infrastructure projects such as roads, dams, water and sanitation; social sector investments such as education and health; productive investments like mining, agriculture and fisheries, and sector loans, such as financial, energy, and water. The chart is broken up into *stages of the project cycle* to show which documents are produced at each stage and whether these are publicly available.

Unless specified, these documents are currently available only in English.

Document Type	Information it contains	Where/when to find it
Project Identification		
Country Strategy and Program (CSP)	<p>CSPs outline the development trends in a particular country and ADB lending to that country. They are a good source for upstream information about ADB initiatives. Each CSP includes an annex of concept papers for proposed ADB initiatives in a particular country. The concept paper identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type of assistance (i.e. loan or grant) - General theme (such as environmental protection, economic growth, etc.) - ADB staff person and department responsible for the project - Brief description of what the project will entail - Executing agency of the project - General timeline of when the project will be submitted for approval and years during which it will be implemented - Source of ADB funding (OCR, ADF, grant, co-financing) 	<p>Disclosed after Board approval. Available at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ADB HQ from Office of External Relations (OER) and Publications Unit - Resident Missions in borrowing country - On-line at: http://www.adb.org/Documents/CS-Ps/default.asp or ADB Country webpage

Document type	Information it contains	Where/when to find it
Project Preparatory Technical Assistance (PPTA) reports	PPTA reports are a good source of upstream project information because project preparation is often conducted through technical assistance grants. Borrowing governments use these grants to fund feasibility studies and impact assessments, improve the capacity of government agencies and institutions relevant to the proposed project, among other things. See the Technical Assistance Report row in the Technical Assistance Lending documents (below) for more details.	Disclosed after Board approval
Project Profile	<p>Project Profiles provide a summary of a project and identify the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dates of Bank missions (visits) to the project - Dates of project approval and estimated date of when the project will be completed - Cost of the project and the funding sources - Brief description of what the project entails, its goals and groups that will benefit - The environmental categorization of the project (whether the project is likely to have major environmental impacts) - Staff person responsible for the project and his/her contact information - Project executing agency and contact information <p>ADB staff is supposed to update Project Profiles any time major changes occur in the project up until the appraisal stage.</p>	<p>Disclosed at least 30 days before the Board meets to consider the project.</p> <p>Available at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ADB HQ from OER and Publications Unit - Resident Missions in borrowing country - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/profiles.asp
<i>Project Preparation</i>		
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	<p>EIAs are done for projects that may or will have severe and/or irreparable environmental impacts (categorized as "A"). They generally include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing environmental baseline conditions - Potential direct and indirect environmental impacts - A comparison of the proposed project alternatives - A mitigation plan, which identifies preventive, mitigation, and compensation measures, and an implementation schedule - Monitoring plans - Some EIAs may also include resettlement plans or indigenous peoples development plans 	<p>EIAs are only disclosed to the public upon request. Summary EIAs are disclosed 120 days before the loan goes to the Board.</p> <p>Summaries available at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ADB HQ (OER, and Publications Unit) - Resident Missions - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports.asp
Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)	<p>IEEs are done for projects that may or will have significant environmental impacts (categorized as "B"). They are also conducted for category A projects. They generally contain the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explanation of all anticipated environmental impacts - Mitigation details and implementation schedule - Monitoring plans 	<p>IEEs are only disclosed to the public upon request. Summary IEEs are disclosed 120 days before the loan goes to the Board.</p> <p>Summaries available at: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ADB HQ (OER, and Publications Unit) - Resident Missions - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports.asp

<p>Resettlement Plans</p>	<p>Resettlement plans are required for all ADB projects involving involuntary resettlement. They generally include information about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scale and impact of resettlement on the displaced population - Development of the resettlement plan - Socio-economic information gathered - Legal framework, including mechanisms for resolution of conflicts and appeals procedures - Valuation of and compensation for lost assets - Land ownership, tenure, acquisition, and transfer - Access to training, employment, and credit - Shelter, infrastructure, and social services - Environmental protection and management - Implementation schedule, budgets, and monitoring and evaluation 	<p>Resettlement information on compensation and resettlement options must be disclosed to affected people during project preparation and should be available locally.²</p> <p>Executing agencies are generally required to approve the posting of resettlement plans, or summaries, on ADB's website during project preparation. Web posting of resettlement plans and frameworks is mandatory upon Board approval of a project.</p> <p>Resettlement plans available online at: http://www.adb.org/Resettlement/plans.asp</p>
<p><i>Board approval</i></p>		
<p>Report and Recommendation to the President (RRP)</p>	<p>The RRP is the loan proposal submitted to the Board of Directors for approval. It contains all the information necessary for the Board to decide whether or not to approve a project. It identifies the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who's in charge of the project at the ADB - Who's in charge in the country (the implementing agency) - Financial information: the loan amount, cofinancers' information, and disbursement schedule - An in-depth description of the project - How the project supports the objectives of that particular country's CSP - Project alternatives that were considered and why they were rejected - Summaries of all assessments done in preparation of the project, including ISA, EIA or IEE, indigenous peoples development plans, resettlement plans, economic and technical assessments, etc. - Who participated in the development of the project: government, NGOs, project-affected people, etc. - Controversies: who might be opposing the project and what issues are they raising - Risks: corruption risks in the project, possibility of theft or misappropriation of money, financial management and procurement capacity of the government - Loan conditions: what the government has to commit to in order for disbursements to continue. 	<p>RRPs are disclosed after Board approval of a loan.</p> <p>Available at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ADB HQ from OER and Publications Unit - Resident Missions in borrowing country - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports-.asp
<p>Development Policy Letter (DPL)</p>	<p>This letter signals the borrowing government's commitment to the project</p>	<p>Disclosed after Board approval of the loan. Contained within the RRP.</p>
<p>Loan agreement</p>	<p>Loan agreements are the legal agreements between the ADB and the borrowing country on a specific loan.</p>	<p>Available upon request after Board approval</p>

<i>Project Implementation</i>		
The ADB currently does not disclose any documents to the public pertaining to implementation and supervision of a project.		
Document type	Information it contains	Where/When to find it
<i>Project Completion and Evaluation</i>		
Project Completion Reports (PCR)	PCRs are assessments of a project conducted by the ADB's Operations Evaluation Department after project completion.	Available one to two years after project completion. Available at: - ADB Publications Unit - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports.asp
Project Performance Audit Reports (PPAR)	PPARs are assessments of the impacts, effectiveness and sustainability of a project done after the project has been in operation for some time, conducted by the ADB's Operations Evaluation Department.	Generally available about three years after project completion Available at: - ADB Publications Unit - Online at http://www.adb.org/Evaluation/reports.-asp
Impact Evaluation Study (IES)	IESs evaluate the longer-term impact of selected programs and projects. They review groups of projects in the same sector and/or in the same country, and focus on the relevance to and impact on the development process.	Available at: - ADB Publications Unit - Online at http://www.adb.org/Evaluation/reports.-asp
<i>Technical Assistance Lending documents</i>		
Document type	Information it contains	Where/when to find it
Country Strategy and Program (CSP)	An annex of each CSP contains concept papers for proposed TAs, as well as loans. (See the CSP description in the chart above for more details)	Disclosed after Board approval. Available at: - ADB HQ from OER and Publications Unit - Resident Missions in borrowing country - On-line at http://www.adb.org/Documents/CSPs/-default.asp or ADB Country webpage
Technical Assistance (TA) Reports	These reports contain the following information: - Description of the problem or issue the TA is intended to address - Expected outputs and results of the TA - Key activities in the TA - Costs, budget and source of financing - Implementation of the TA and explanation of the roles of the government, ADB and any other relevant actors in implementation - Terms of Reference for consultants hired - If the purpose of the TA is to fund a feasibility study, the TA report will include an Initial Poverty and Social Assessment (IPSA)	Disclosed after Board approval or after President approval and Board circulation Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports.asp

Technical Assistance Completion Reports	These brief (generally 2 page) reports include a condensed version of information in the TA report, plus the following additional items: - Evaluation of TA inputs and outputs - Overall assessment of the TA - Major lessons learned - Follow-up actions and recommendations	Disclosed after Board circulation Available online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports.asp
Technical Assistance Performance Audit Reports (TPAR)	TPARs evaluate the design, implementation, and performance of technical assistance (TA) projects a few years after the project has been in operation. Usually, several TAs are covered in one report.	Available online at: http://www.adb.org/Evaluation/reports.asp
<i>Private Sector Projects</i>		
Project Profile	See "Board Approval" portion above for content details of a Project Profile.	Disclosed at least 30 days before Board consideration, unless Management decides to reduce release time. Consent of project sponsors also required. If released, available at: - ADB HQ from OER and Publications Unit - Resident Missions in borrowing country - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/profiles.asp and http://www.adb.org/Business/Opportunities/default.asp
Report & Recommendation to the President (RRP)	See "Board Approval" portion above for content details of RRP.	Private sector project RRP's are classified as "confidential" and can only be released after having obtained consent of the private sponsor, and after redacting classified information. If released, available at: - ADB HQ from OER and Publications Unit - Resident Missions in borrowing country - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports.asp
Policy or Strategy Paper	This is the framework document for ADB private sector operations and gives information on: - Formulating and implementing ADB policies for direct assistance to the private sector - Processing funding for, and investments in private entities, including build-own-operate (BOO) and build-operate-transfer (BOT) projects - Supporting the establishment of pooled investment vehicles such as investment funds - Monitoring the portfolio and managing risk - Mobilizing funds for private sector activities, including guaranteeing commercial loans, syndicating loans for private sector operations, and designing investment funds for small and medium enterprises and infrastructure projects	Released unless classified by Management. If released, available at: - ADB HQ from OER and Publications Unit - Resident Missions in borrowing country - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Documents/Policies/P-SO/Strategic_Directions.pdf and http://www.adb.org/Documents/Policies/Private_Sector/private.pdf

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	See "Project Preparation" Section above for a description.	EIAs are only disclosed to the public upon request. Summary EIAs are disclosed 120 days before the loan goes to the Board. Summaries available at: - ADB HQ (OER, and Publications Unit) - Resident Missions - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports.asp
Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)	See "Project Preparation" Section above for a description.	IEEs are only disclosed to the public upon request. Summary IEEs are disclosed 120 days before the loan goes to the Board. Summaries available at: - ADB HQ (OER, and Publications Unit) - Resident Missions - Online at: http://www.adb.org/Projects/reports.asp
<i>Country-Specific Information</i>		
Document type	Information it contains	Where/when to find it
Country Strategy and Program (CSP)	See the section on "ADB Country Strategies and Programs" for a detailed explanation of what CSPs contain.	Disclosed after Board approval. Available at: - ADB HQ from OER and Publications Unit - Resident Missions in borrowing country - On-line at: http://www.adb.org/Documents/CSPs/default.asp or ADB Country webpage
Country Economic Reviews	- Describes the current economic situation in the country - Analyzes short- and medium-term economic prospects - Assesses the economic performance of the country - Gives a detailed analysis of the secular macroeconomic trends and the manner of management of structural change in the economy	Disclosed after Board circulation. Available online at: http://www.adb.org/Documents/CERs/
Country Assistance Program Evaluation (CAPE) ³	CAPEs evaluate ADB's country strategy and assistance program for one country. Looking back at experience over a longer period, these evaluations assess the development impact of ADB assistance.	Available online at: http://www.adb.org/Evaluation/reports.asp

Country Environmental Analysis (CEA) ⁴	A country environmental analysis (CEA) is prepared as an input to the Country Strategy and Program (CSP) exercise. The CEA : - provides the background information on environmental constraints, needs, and opportunities in a developing member country (DMC) ⁵ , - outlines environmental issues that are most important to a DMC's development strategy and describe ADB's role in helping to provide remedies - is directed at the policy, program, and sector levels, although it may highlight issues associated with environmentally sensitive projects in the pipeline. - is envisaged as a participatory process that is initiated before the CSP, and continues through CSP preparation to assess potential environmental issues associated with the CSP.	Disclosure status unknown. For more information contact RSES division of RSDD.
<i>General ADB information</i>		
Document type	Information it contains	Where/when to find it
ADB Annual Reports	Presents a record of ADB activities in a given year. Information is provided in a narrative and financial format. Provides useful cumulative data.	Disclosed after Board approval. Online at: http://www.adb.org/Documents/-Reports/Annual_Report/2003/default.asp?p=aadb (report for 2003)
Annual Evaluation Reports	Annual evaluation reports provide a summary of evaluation activities and findings in a particular year, and an assessment of ADB portfolio performance.	Online at: http://www.adb.org/Evaluation/reports.asp

ADB Website

A good starting point for accessing information about the ADB and its operations is its website: www.adb.org.

In addition to the weblinks mentioned above, the ADB's website contains a Business Opportunities section, <http://www.adb.org/business/opportunities/>, which is useful for tracking the status of proposed project loans and technical assistance. The Business Opportunities page lists the following:

- 1) **Proposed projects** (<http://www.adb.org/Business/Opportunities/prpprjcs.asp>): lists projects that are under consideration for receiving ADB financing
- 2) **New projects** (<http://www.adb.org/Business/Opportunities/new.asp>): lists projects that have been deemed suitable to receive ADB financing
- 3) **Removed projects** (<http://www.adb.org/Business/Opportunities/removed.asp>): lists projects that are no longer in the pipeline because they have either been

approved for financing, or have been dropped altogether from the ADB's portfolio.

Another useful tool on the ADB's website is the Index and Style guide which provides information on ADB terminologies and definitions of ADB acronyms and services. It can be accessed at: <http://www.adb.org/Help/Index/default.asp>

Getting information from ADB Headquarters

The ADB maintains a Library and Public Information Center (PIC) at its Headquarters in Manila. All publicly disclosed documents should be available at this office. The PIC also has computers with an internet connection which the public can use to research through the ADB's website. The PIC can be contacted via email at adbpub@adb.org, telephonically at +632 632 5883 and +632 632 5894 and via fax at +632 636 2648. PIC working hours are 8 a.m.

to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday and a valid identification card is required to enter the ADB Headquarters.

Getting information in your country: Resident Missions, Country Office, Extended Missions, and Representative Offices

The ADB has Resident Missions in 16 countries throughout Asia.¹ In addition to these, the ADB has a country office in the Philippines, extended mission offices in Gujarat (India), Papua New Guinea, East Timor, and Vanuatu for the South Pacific, and Representative Offices in the US (Washington, DC), Japan (Tokyo), and Europe (Frankfurt, Germany).⁶

ADB Resident Missions and country offices should be able to provide information about projects, programs and policies relevant to your country. Before visiting one of these offices to acquire information, it is helpful to call ahead to verify the office hours and find out whether the office charges for documents and whether it is necessary to set up an appointment. It is also advisable that you bring a form of government-issued identification such as a passport or driver's license, for security clearance purposes.

Tips for Information Requests

Below are some useful tips to consider when requesting information from the ADB:

1. Get a copy of the following ADB documents which explain the ADB's Information Disclosure Policy and the type of information that should be readily available:
 - *Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information Policy* (1994)
 - *Information Policy and Strategy* (1994)
 - *OM Section 52: Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information* (2003)
 - Matrix of Disclosable Documents. This Matrix is available at the ADB website at <http://www.adb.org/Disclosure/disclosurematrix.pdf>
2. Be specific about what information you are looking for. If possible, include the project name, date of approval and country in your information request. If you have access to the internet, check the project profile for the name and contact details of the project's ADB contact person.

3. Put your information request in writing, even if you are personally visiting an ADB office. If your request is not answered or is denied this allows you to create a paper trail of how the ADB is addressing (or ignoring) your request.
4. The ADB is required to respond to information requests within 22 days of receiving them⁷. If they cannot provide you with the information you need, they must provide a written explanation of why the information cannot be disclosed. Mention these obligations in your request so that the ADB realizes you are aware of what you are entitled to.
5. Whenever possible, carbon copy (cc) your information request to the Principal Director of the External Relations Department.⁸ This Department is responsible for ensuring that all ADB staff comply with the ADB's information disclosure policy.
6. Be persistent. If you don't receive a response within the 22-day period, send a follow-up letter citing your initial request. You may want to cc your second request to the department's Director General.
7. If you continue to have trouble, contact NGO Forum on ADB or the Bank Information Center for help in getting your information request addressed.

Rhetoric vs. reality: problems with access to information and a tendency toward secrecy

Unfortunately, the information that the ADB provides is often neither adequately accessible to affected people, nor provided in a timely manner that would allow them to participate effectively in any project or policy decision-making process. For example, most relevant Bank documents — including policies, project proposals, environmental impact assessments and resettlement plans — are available only in English, thus the information is inaccessible to the majority of people affected by ADB lending. Also, with few exceptions, most Bank documents are only available after the Board has approved them. Those citizens who want to influence projects before they are decided are excluded from the very information that would help them to participate effectively.

ADB Disclosure Policy Review

On July 19, 2004 the ADB concluded its 13 country face-to-face consultations on the first draft of its new disclosure policy with a final consultation in Dhaka. A

revised second draft of the Public Communications Policy is expected in November 2004. The review process itself is due to conclude in March 2005 with a new policy expected soon thereafter. Read more about the Public Com-

munications Policy review on BIC's ADB Transparency Web page at http://www.bicusa.org/bicusa/issues/transparency_at_the_asian_development_bank/index.php.

Endnotes

¹ The ADB has Resident Missions in the following countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam

² ADB's policy on involuntary resettlement requires that "information" about compensation and resettlement options be disclosed to affected people prior to the first Management Review Meeting (MRM) of the project. Depending on the nature of the project, the first MRM generally takes place between 8-32 weeks before the Board makes a decision about the project.

³ So far, the ADB has completed 6 CAPEs (Bangladesh, China, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, and Vietnam), and is working on others.

⁴ For more information, see http://www.adb.org/Documents/Guidelines/Environmental_Assessment/eaguidelines001.asp

⁵ The ADB prepares CEAs for each of its DMCs except for DMCs in the Pacific Region whose environmental needs/conditions are noted in a Regional Environmental Strategy which is part of the Pacific Regional Strategy.

⁶ Locations and contact information for all of these offices can be found at <http://www.adb.org/About/field.asp> and in Annex IV of the Toolkits

⁷ If the ADB receives requests in languages other than English, its policy grants staff extra time to respond to allow time for translation of the request.

⁸ The current Principal Director of the Office of External Relations is Robert Salamon: rsalamon@adb.org