

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

How did the African Development Bank learn from the experiences and failures of other MDBs when implementing their own Review Mechanism?

When introducing the Independent Review Mechanism, the Bank was aware of challenges faced by other IFIs. That the IRM includes problem-solving exercises as one tool to resolve the issues raised by the Requestors, is a lesson learned from the limitation of the World Bank's Inspection Panel which just conducts compliance reviews. The most important improvement, however, is the third dimension of the IRM which is to discuss lessons learned and to give recommendations on improving policies and their implementation. In this way, the Mechanism ensures that staff can learn from shortfalls or mistakes that have been made and therewith enhance project effectiveness considerably in the future.

How will the Panel make the distinction between a shortfall and the ones responsible for it because shortfalls in the process of implementation often are not due to Bank staff?

The Experts affirmed that their mission only covers compliance by the Bank with Bank policies and that they will not review or investigate the actions of other parties. If it turns out that shortfalls have been caused by other parties, this lies outside the scope of IRM. In addition, the goal of a compliance review is to identify acts or omissions by the Bank not individual bank staff members.

How to balance the time constraint to deliver projects with the time needed to consult with civil society?

According to the Experts a solution to the time constraint may be an early engagement of communities in designing the project. Project activities and policies should be explained in a comprehensive way to local communities in order to ensure that people have adequate information to bring in their ideas of improvements at an early stage.

Why do the Experts not take a more proactive approach to contact communities and review projects rather than waiting for requests to come?

The IRM rules and procedures clearly define that a compliance review can only be triggered by a Request. However, CRMU is developing a strong outreach strategy to inform people about the Mechanism and the possibility to file a request. CRMU therewith takes a more proactive approach in matters of communication and information about the Mechanism.

Most requests are motivated by international NGOs rather than local groups. How can CRMU make sure that local groups file requests?

This again can in part be achieved by the outreach strategy that CRMU is establishing in cooperation with local NGOs to inform local groups and civil society about the existence of the Mechanism. But in order to reach the local groups it is also crucial to cooperate with field offices and operations departments who are encouraged to help promote the Mechanism.