World Bank

Access to Information

Survey

2013

October 31, 2013
The World Bank’s Legal Vice Presidency, Operations Policy Practice Group (Lisa Lui, with the support of Karen Jones) prepared this paper.
During the period of July – October 2013, the World Bank (“Bank”) conducted its third annual Access to Information Survey (“2013 AI Survey”). The Bank directed the 2013 AI Survey to all members of the public who had electronically submitted an access to information (“AI”) request to the Bank during the period of July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2013. The 2013 AI Survey sought to obtain public feedback that could help the institution assess the public’s satisfaction with the Bank’s AI systems and processes, and identify opportunities to improve. Out of 497 requesters, 132 (27%) responded to the survey.

As in the prior surveys, the 2013 AI Survey focused on three specific areas: (i) the adequacy of the Bank’s information systems; (ii) the quality of the Bank’s service in support of the public’s requests for information; and (iii) the ability of the Bank to meet the requesters’ information needs. As highlighted below, the survey results show that the public’s overall satisfaction levels in 2013 stayed relatively the same as in 2012.

In 2013, 88% of the survey responses (89% in 2012) rated the adequacy of the Bank’s information systems in the satisfactory range. With respect to the Bank’s quality of service, 76% of the survey responses in 2013 (74% in 2012) gave the Bank a rating in the satisfactory range. Lastly, with respect to the Bank’s ability to meet the requesters’ information needs, 84% of the survey responses in 2013 (85% in 2012) rated the Bank in the satisfactory range. As in the past two AI Surveys, in the “quality of service” category, the 2013 AI Survey gave particular focus to those survey respondents who had their requests denied by the Bank. The chart below provides a summary of the survey respondents’ satisfaction levels in the three areas.

The 2013 AI Survey also requested survey respondents to provide comments on their satisfaction. The comments can be categorized under each topic as follows:

(a) **Adequacy of the World Bank’s information systems**
- accessibility of information in information systems;
- speed of response;
- sufficiency of information available on website;
- ease of searching and navigating through information categories in website;
- availability of older/historical material;
- availability of requested information;
- need for translation; and
- accessibility and usability of the AI request form.
(b) **The World Bank’s quality of service in support of the public’s requests for information**

- general satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the answer provided by the Bank;
- competency and professionalism of Bank staff;
- speed of response; and
- whether requested documents was provided (in whole/part).

(c) **The World Bank’s ability to meet the requesters’ information needs**

- general satisfaction/dissatisfaction;
- availability of information on Bank’s website / Archives files;
- response time / responsiveness;
- receipt of information requested;
- ability to search and navigate information categories in the Bank’s website; and
- need for translation.

Additionally, survey respondents who had their requests denied but chose not to file an appeal were asked the reason why they did not appeal. For those who had their denial upheld by the Access to Information Committee, the 2013 AI Survey also sought to ascertain why some requesters chose not to file a second level appeal. The survey respondents were also asked to provide information about their demographics, the topics related to their information requests, and how they have used the information obtained from the Bank.
The World Bank Access to Information - 2013 Survey

SUMMARY REPORT

Survey period: July 29 – October 1, 2013
Sent to: 497 members of the public who had made an access to information request between July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013, through the Bank’s AI Request Form.
Total No. Respondents: 132 survey respondents
Response Rate: 27%

Sections A-C. In these sections, survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction by selecting one of the following six options: Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied, and Not Applicable. For the purposes of this summary report, please note the following:

1) The data for each question are aggregated into two categories:
   a) Total – Satisfied comprising Very Satisfied, Satisfied, and Somewhat Satisfied ratings; and
   b) Total – Dissatisfied comprising Dissatisfied and Very Dissatisfied ratings.

2) Where applicable, the percentages exclude the number of respondents that identified the respective question as Not Applicable. The percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

See Annex for a detailed breakdown of the responses for each question, based on the total number of responses, including the Not Applicable responses.

SECTION A. ADEQUACY OF THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. If you used the World Bank’s website (e.g., homepage; Documents & Reports page) to search for information, were you satisfied with the search engine’s ability to find at least some of the information that you were looking for? (125 respondents)
   Total – Satisfied: 86.4%  Total – Dissatisfied: 13.6%

2. If you used the World Bank’s Open Data site, were you satisfied with the available statistics and indicators? (95 respondents)
   Total – Satisfied: 90.5%  Total – Dissatisfied: 9.5%

3. If you used the World Bank’s Mapping for Results platform, were you satisfied with the usefulness of the information? (50 respondents)
   Total – Satisfied: 88%  Total – Dissatisfied: 12%

4. When you used the "Access to information - Request Form" to ask for information, were you satisfied with the form’s user-friendliness? (118 respondents)
   Total – Satisfied: 89%  Total – Dissatisfied: 11%
5. Survey respondents were asked to **comment on the WB’s information systems**.
   - Comments were received from 77 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

   **Related to Satisfaction:**
   - Information can be easily found in information systems (e.g., breadth of information; information systems are modern and easy to use, helpful assistance provided by staff) – 21 comments

   **Related to Dissatisfaction:**
   - Slow response time / lack of response – 13 comments
   - Insufficient information available in the WB’s website – 11 comments
   - Difficult to search and navigate through categories of information in the WB’s website – 7 comments
   - Older/historical material not scanned / not available / not catalogued – 7 comments
   - Requested document not found / not available – 5 comments
   - Translation needed – 2 comments
   - AI request form hard to find / hard to use – 1 comment

   The remainder of the comments (10) did not respond to the issue presented.

SECTION B. **QUALITY OF SERVICE**

1. If the World Bank contacted you after you submitted your "Access to information - Request Form," were you satisfied with the World Bank’s efforts to assist you (e.g., to help narrow the scope of your request or identify specific documents)? (112 respondents)

   Total – Satisfied: 79%  Total – Dissatisfied: 21%

2. If the World Bank had to take more than 20 business days to respond to your request, were you satisfied with the World Bank’s efforts to keep you informed of the process? (76 respondents)

   Total – Satisfied: 70%  Total – Dissatisfied: 30%

3. If your request for information was denied (in whole or in part), were you satisfied with the clarity of the World Bank’s explanation on why the request was denied? (43 respondents)

   Total – Satisfied: 70%  Total – Dissatisfied: 30%

4. If your request was denied and you filed a first level Appeal to the Access to Information Committee, were you satisfied with the clarity of the explanation in the Committee’s decision? (Note: if you did not file an appeal, please select N/A). (16 respondents)

   Total – Satisfied: 88%  Total – Dissatisfied: 12%

5. If you filed a second level appeal, were you satisfied with the clarity of the explanation in the Appeals Board’s decision? (Note: if you did not file a second level appeal, please select N/A). (12 respondents)

   Total – Satisfied: 92%  Total – Dissatisfied: 8%

**Note:** Since the inception of the AI Policy, on July 1, 2010, through July 2013, the AIC issued in total 25 decisions on appeals. Of which, six were issued in the 2013 AI Survey period. While the 12 respondents may have in fact filed an appeal to the AIC, and their views are responsive to the question, those appeals may not have all been filed within the period for the 2013 AI Survey. This should be taken into account when considering the overall results.
6. Survey respondents were asked to comment on the quality of WB’s service in supporting their information access requests.

- Comments were received from 57 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

**Related to Satisfaction:**
- General satisfaction with the answer provided by the Bank – 15 comments
- Competency and professionalism of World Bank staff – 9 comments
- Satisfaction with speed of response – 5 comments

**Related to Dissatisfaction:**
- Slow response time / lack of response – 11 comments
- General dissatisfaction with response – 6 comments
- Requested documents in (whole/part) not provided – 2 comments
- Dissatisfaction with Bank staff – 1 comment

The remainder of the comments (8) did not respond to the issue presented.

7. Survey respondents whose requests for information were denied and did not file an appeal were asked to comment on the reasons why they did not file an appeal (i.e., to the first level, AI Committee).

- Comments were received from 33 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

- Lack of time / perception that appeal would take too much time – 5 comments
- Request was not technically denied / information belongs to other institutions – 3 comments
- Satisfaction with the decision – 2 comments
- Found appeal unnecessary / information found through other means – 1 comment
- General lack of confidence in the system – 1 comment
- Dissatisfaction with the Bank’s AI request process – 1 comment
- Would try to access the information from another source – 1 comment

The remainder of the comments (19) did not respond to the issue presented.

8. Survey respondents who had filed a first level appeal and the AI Committee upheld the decision to deny their request were asked to comment on the reasons why they did not file a second level appeal to the AI Appeals Board.

- Comments were received from 24 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

- Lack of time/perception that the appeal would take too much time – 1 comment
- General lack of confidence in the system – 1 comment

The remainder of the comments (22) did not respond to the issue presented.
SECTION C. MEETING YOUR INFORMATION NEEDS

1. Were you satisfied with the World Bank’s accuracy in giving you documents in line with what you had requested? (102 respondents)

| Total – Satisfied: | 87% | Total – Dissatisfied: | 13% |

2. Overall, are you satisfied with your experience in requesting information from the World Bank? (119 respondents)

| Total – Satisfied: | 81% | Total – Dissatisfied: | 19% |

3. Survey respondents were asked to comment on the WB’s efforts to meet the public’s information needs. Comments were received from 50 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

Related to Satisfaction:
- General satisfaction (e.g., very helpful, documents available, timely response) – 16 comments

Related to Dissatisfaction:
- Information not available on WB website or Archives / files incomplete or not up to date – 8 comments
- Slow response time/lack of response – 6 comments
- General dissatisfaction – 5 comments
- Did not receive all information requested – 3 comments.
- Difficulty in searching and navigating categories of information in the Bank’s website – 2 comments
- Translation necessary – 1 comment

The remainder of the comments (9) did not directly respond to the issue presented.

SECTION D. ABOUT YOURSELF

1. How familiar are you about the World Bank? (122 respondents)

| Very familiar | 31.1% | Somewhat unfamiliar | 3.3% |
| Somewhat familiar | 49.2% | Very unfamiliar | 2.5% |
| Neutral | 13.9% |

2. How many times did you visit the World Bank’s website in the period between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013? (112 respondents)

| (1-10 times): | 46 | (51-100 times): | 9 |
| (11-20 times): | 17 | (101+ times): | 2 |
| (21-50 times): | 23 | Unclear/inaccurate response (e.g., “don’t remember”): | 17 |

3. How many times did you submit a request for information using the “Access to Information - Request Form” in the period between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013? (114 respondents)

| (1-10 times): | 104 | Unclear response (e.g., “don’t remember”/”zero”): | 7 |
| (21-50 times): | 3 |
4. Which of the following topic(s) relate(s) to the information that you requested?:

Finance (i.e., banking, microfinance, capital markets, housing finance, etc.) 14% Public Administration, Law & Justice 7%
Agriculture, Fishing & Forestry 10% Health and other social sectors 6%
Industry and Trade 9% Education 5%
Energy & Mining 8% Information & Communications 4%
Transportation 8% Other 21%
Water, sanitation & flood protection 8%

* A total of 87 respondents answered this question. Because respondents were allowed to select more than one topic, the data above reflect 243 selections.

** Respondents selecting the “Other” category were asked to write in relevant topics. Write-in topics can be categorized as follows: carbon finance; country specific issues; economics and development; governance/anticorruption; internal World Bank governance; financial information; environmental issues; statistics; gender; population; and procurement.

5. Survey respondents were asked to comment on how they used the information that they had received, whether the information was used in matters concerning development, and if so, what areas of development.

- Comments were received from 66 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:
  - Education / academic purposes – 18 comments
  - Research – 8 comments
  - Publications (not specifically development related) – 8 comments
  - Personal/business reasons (not related to development) – 8 comments
  - Development (e.g., program/project evaluation, conference, interest of project-affected party, aid effectiveness, feasibility studies, research for other development projects) – 7 comments

The remainder of the comments (17) did not directly respond to the questions presented.

6. Please let us know what country you are located in (grouped by regional categories for the purpose of this report):

Europe and Central Asia (ECR) 31% Africa (AFR) 8%
United States and Canada 31% South Asia (SAR) 7%
East Asia & Pacific (EAP) 9% Australia & New Zealand 4%
Latin American & Caribbean (LCR) 8% Middle East & North Africa (MNA) 3%

* Of the 111 survey respondents for this question, 34 (28 percent) are located in borrower countries. For those located in LCR, SAR, and AFR regions, 100 percent of the respective survey respondents are located in borrower countries. For those respondents located in the EAP and MNA regions, respectively, 60 percent and 67 percent of the survey respondents are located in borrower countries. All survey respondents from Europe are located in non-borrower countries. None of the survey respondents are located in Central Asia.

---

7. Please indicate your affiliation: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic/Education</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business or private enterprise</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO/CSO</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilateral development agency</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other public international organization</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15%**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* While the survey respondents were asked to make one selection, some respondents (109 in total) made more than one selection.
** Respondents selecting the “Other” category were asked to write in their affiliation. Write-in affiliations can be mainly categorized as follows: student, World Bank retiree, and consultant.
ANNEX

Survey Sections A-C: Detailed Breakdown of Percentages (including N/A indications)

SECTION A. ADEQUACY OF THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. If you used the World Bank’s website (e.g., homepage; Documents & Reports page) to search for information, were you satisfied with the search engine’s ability to find at least some of the information that you were looking for? (131 respondents)

2. If you used the World Bank’s Open Data site, were you satisfied with the available statistics and indicators? (128 respondents)

3. If you used the World Bank’s Mapping for Results platform, were you satisfied with the usefulness of the information? (128 respondents)
4. When you used the "Access to information - Request Form" to ask for information, were you satisfied with the form’s user-friendliness? (129 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very dissatisfied</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION B. QUALITY OF SERVICE

1. If the World Bank contacted you after you submitted your "Access to information - Request Form", were you satisfied with the World Bank’s efforts to assist you (e.g., to help narrow the scope of your request or identify specific documents)? (124 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very dissatisfied</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. If the World Bank had to take more than 20 business days to respond to your request, were you satisfied with the World Bank’s efforts to keep you informed of the process? (124 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very dissatisfied</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. If your request for information was denied (in whole or in part), were you satisfied with the World Bank’s efforts to explain why the request was denied? (122 respondents)

4. If your request was denied and you filed a first level Appeal to the Access to Information Committee, were you satisfied with the clarity of the explanation given by the Committee’s decision? (Note: if you did not file an Appeal, please select N/A).* (122 respondents)

* Note that the satisfaction levels reflected above may not solely reflect those of surveyed period. In the surveyed period he AIC issued six decisions on appeals, and a total of 25 decisions since the inception of the AI Policy, from July 1, 2010, through July 2013. Thus, while the 12 respondents may have in fact filed an appeal to the AIC, and their views responsive to the question, those appeals may not have all been filed within the surveyed period.

5. If you filed a second level appeal, were you satisfied with the clarity of the explanation in the Appeals Board’s decision? (Note: If you did not file a second level appeal, please select N/A). (121 respondents)
SECTION C. MEETING YOUR INFORMATION NEEDS

1. Were you satisfied with the World Bank’s accuracy in giving you documents in line with what you had requested? (124 respondents)

2. Overall, are you satisfied with your experience in requesting information from the World Bank? (122 respondents)