



1. Project Data

Project ID P089733	Project Name JUDICIAL REFORM SUPPORT
Country Russian Federation	Practice Area(Lead) Governance

L/C/TF Number(s) IBRD-48490,TF-90655	Closing Date (Original) 30-Mar-2012	Total Project Cost (USD) 51,798,445.49
Bank Approval Date 15-Feb-2007	Closing Date (Actual) 31-Dec-2017	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	50,000,000.00	1,896,800.00
Revised Commitment	51,895,592.01	1,895,592.01
Actual	51,798,445.49	1,895,592.01

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

According to the Loan Agreement (p. 5), the project's objective was to "assist the Borrower to strengthen judicial transparency and efficiency of selected courts through the implementation of information systems and judicial training."

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?



No

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

The project contained four components:

1. Institutionalizing transparency and accountability (appraisal: US\$ 7.15 million; actual US\$ 4.78 million). This component was to finance: (a) periodic surveys of users of judicial services on access to, quality of, and satisfaction with, judicial services and enforcement of judicial decisions, and public dissemination of the survey results; (b) research and analysis on further development of transparency, publication, openness, and accessibility of judicial decisions, processes, and practices, including obligatory publication of judicial decisions; and analysis on the introduction of modern information and communication technologies in judicial systems and on the further integration of the judicial system; (c) the creation, implementation, and dissemination of common case management standards, guidelines, and processes; (d) the development and piloting of criteria, indicators, and a policy to assess and periodically report on the effectiveness of the judicial system, and related capacity building; and a needs assessment for human capital development in the judiciary to inform policy and strategy updates; and (e) development and implementation of communications and change management strategies to promote judicial reform.

2. Harnessing information and communication technology (ICT) for judicial transparency and effectiveness (appraisal, US\$ 146.1 million; actual US\$ 168.76 million). This component was to improve judicial transparency through the public and public dissemination of judicial decisions at every level in the three branches of the judiciary; and improve judicial effectiveness through the implementation of shared (or standardized) ICT solutions for such key activities as case flow management, document flow management, facilitating access to justice in remote locations, and judicial electronic archiving. The component was to finance activities for the Constitutional Court (CC); the Supreme Court (SC) and Courts of General Jurisdiction (CGJ), all of which were under the oversight of the Judicial Department (JD); and the Supreme Arbitration Court (SAC, which oversaw commercial courts, abolished in 2014 with functions transferred to a newly-created Commercial Division in the SC), to: (i) modernize, develop, and deploy integrated information systems for courts to facilitate document flow, record management, information collection, and internal knowledge sharing; (ii) improve public access to and availability of judicial information through enabling the online publication of judicial decisions and other relevant information; and (iii) more effectively link courts, JD offices, and relevant entities/facilities through integrated information systems by enhancing mobile capabilities of access to electronic information and video conferencing.

3. Strengthening human capital (appraisal: US\$ 10.1 million; actual US\$ 7.09 million). This component was to finance information technology-related education and training for judges and court personnel for the CC, CGJ, SAC, and JD; and knowledge exchange, including seminars, workshops, etc., for the judiciary. The training was to supplement a much larger outlay for judicial education and training envisaged under the government's National Project for Education and the state budget.



4. Project management and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (appraisal, US\$ 9.06 million; actual US\$ 8.13 million). This component was to finance logistical and secretarial support for the Inter-Agency Coordination Council (IACC) and operating costs of the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), which was responsible for project implementation; expert ICT support for the judiciary; and implementation of the project's results framework and M&E indicators.

At a 2014 restructuring, the second component was revised to remove the JD and 900 CGJs as beneficiaries and to add instead the Moscow City Courts (MCC) and the Court of Intellectual Rights (CIR). This substitution followed from the difficulty that the CGJs were scattered across Russia's vast territory and mostly comprised small courts with three or fewer judges. Their total caseload represented less than 10% of the country's total caseload volume. From a supervision perspective, it was challenging to verify implementation across so many locations with a limited budget; in addition, the ICR made it clear (p. 40) that the ICT procurement for the CGJs was not proceeding smoothly. The MCC, on the other hand, was Russia's largest regional court system, annually handling more than twice the CGJ's caseload. The ICR (p. 18) argued that the shift of implementation focus from the CGJs to the MCC enhanced the project's impact and efficiency.

e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates

Project cost: Project cost at appraisal was US\$ 172.41 million. Actual costs were US\$ 188.76 million (ICR, p. 62).

Financing: The project was initially to be financed by a US\$ 50 million Specific Investment Loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. US\$ 49.9 million was disbursed by project closing.

Borrower contribution: The government contributed US\$ 138.86 million of a planned US\$ 122.41 million, having added almost US\$ 19 million in 2017. The project team explained that the Russian government frequently contributed additional funds in projects it perceived as proceeding effectively, and that this far into implementation, IT systems required further investment in modernization.

Dates: The project was approved on February 15, 2007 and became effective on November 15, 2007. It was restructured seven times.

- In September 2010, at the time of the mid-term review, the project was restructured to align the wording of the objectives in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and the Loan Agreement (this alignment was undertaken at this time for all projects in the Bank's Russia portfolio).
- In March and May of 2012, the project underwent a two-part restructuring. In the first part, the closing date was extended from March 30, 2012 to March 30, 2014 to allow time for preparation of the second part. In the second part, some indicators and baselines were revised; activities were added or deleted



to conform with evolving judicial reorganization and modernization priorities and to address implementation challenges; and the Foundation for Enterprise Restructuring (FER) was designated as the new project implementation unit after the BEA ceased functioning.

- In March and September of 2014, the project again underwent a two-part restructuring. The first part extended the closing date to allow time for the second part -- which involved ICT modernization of 900 CGJs being replaced by similar activities in the Moscow City Courts (MCC) in order to cover institutions with higher and more geographically concentrated caseload volume (see Section 2d) -- to be prepared.
- The closing date was again extended two more times, in October of 2016 and May of 2017. The project closed on December 31, 2017, over ten years after approval. The cumulative delay of five years and nine months amounted to 113 percent of the original schedule.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

At appraisal, annual case loads across all courts were growing rapidly. Information technology, however, was underused, court staff were underpaid, court premises were wholly unsatisfactory, and access to proceedings was severely limited. After Russia joined the Council of Europe, thousands of Russian citizens appealed to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) concerning the lack of competence, integrity, and transparency in the judicial system -- a set of shortcomings openly acknowledged by the government. In 2005, only 20% of Russian firms thought that Russian courts were "honest and uncorrupted." Reform focus prior to the project had concentrated on legal modernization rather than capacity development and mindset change. The Government's approach at appraisal therefore called for a three-pronged strategy, supported by two successive Federal Targeted Programs (2002-2006 and 2007-2011) encompassing harnessing the power of information technology to improve the quality and accessibility of information (to strengthen transparency and efficiency and reduce opportunities for corruption), raising judicial competence and independence through education and training, and institutional development.

The project was relevant to the World Bank Group's Country Partnership Strategy at appraisal (FY 2007-2009), which contained priorities for strengthening public sector governance and service delivery, as well as strengthening the business environment. There was no Country Partnership Strategy in effect at project closing. The objectives remained relevant to the government's 2016 anti-crisis plan, which included initiatives to strengthen judicial processes, as well as a May 2018 Presidential Decree on introduction of digital technology and platform solutions. The objectives supplemented the federal targeted program for development of Russia's judicial system for 2013-2020, which focused on judicial independence; the Ministry of Finance specifically commented (ICR, pp 79-80) that the project's objectives were intended to complement these other government efforts. The World Economic Forum's 2015 Global Networked Readiness Index identified inefficiency in the judicial system as an ongoing challenge. The Bank's 2017 Systematic Country Diagnostic for Russia, which reviewed justice system achievements and constraints,



acknowledged the country's progress in improving judicial efficiency and transparency. It made the case (pp. 140-141) that these objectives were relevant as foundational building blocks toward the remaining (and even more challenging) goal of accountability and ridding courts of susceptibility to executive influence.

Rating

Substantial

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

Objective 1

Objective

Strengthen judicial transparency of selected courts

Rationale

The project's theory of change held that the implementation of information systems and related judicial training would help transform the judiciary into an institution that is more transparent and efficient. Transparency was to be strengthened through drafting of a law to mandate publication of all judicial decisions; location of information screens and kiosks in courts to enable citizens, litigants, and lawyers to access their cases and to obtain information about court functioning in general; and inclusion of transparency enhancing elements such a reporting on complaints received and resolved in ICT systems.

The PAD (pp. 22-25) presented a lengthy list of other Bank projects and other donors active in Russia's judicial sector. Given this context, it should be noted that the ICR did not discuss issues of attribution of observed results to the interventions financed specifically by this project. The project team later explained that other partners, primarily the European Union and United States Agency for International Development, were primarily involved in training that was not financed by this Bank project, and that these donors had largely withdrawn from the country by 2011-2012. The Bank's emphasis on modernization of IT systems, leveraging a relatively small investment in a sector where the government was spending about a billion dollars annually, was intended to promote transparency of judicial decisions and support stakeholders within Russia's judicial system who were pursuing transparency goals.

Outputs:

The project provided examples of, and experts in, international good practice on transparency law. Federal Law 262 was passed in 2010, mandating publication of judicial decisions.

The project supported modernization of the SC, CC, and CIR integrated systems for document storage and flow management, as well as development of electronic banks of court decisions, e-libraries, and internet portals. The SAC and commercial courts were provided with modern, secure corporate e-mail



systems. Decisions and data files of the SC were retrospectively converted into electronic format. A publicly accessible web portal for the commercial court system was designed and implemented. A functional and secure data processing center serving the MCC was completed in 2016. The MCC integrated information system now allows citizens and businesses to lodge complaints with the court by electronic means and remotely track the status of the complaint.

All of the SC, CC, commercial courts, and MCC, and half of all penitentiaries, were provided with functioning videoconference facilities enabling remote participation in court proceedings by the end of the project period, and the audio and video recordings were stored and made available for later review by judges, staff, lawyers, and the public. Similarly, all courts covered by the project were provided with new information kiosks giving electronic access to judicial decisions, available to all users. The project supported the implementation of a modern system of taxonomy and classification of CC decisions to make them more easily searchable and accessible by judges, researchers, lawyers, and the public.

7,703 judges and judicial staff of commercial courts, the MCC, arbitrazh courts, CGJ, the JD, and the SC were trained on ICT systems under the project, exceeding the original target of 4,000 and the revised target of 4,300. Knowledge exchange visits were made to Germany, Austria, Australia, Singapore, and South Korea. Modern equipment was procured for 720 judicial workspaces. The project reached 39,760 beneficiaries, of whom 66.75% were female, exceeding the target of 32,000 beneficiaries (40% female). Direct project beneficiaries included the judges and judicial staff of the SC, CC, SAC, commercial courts, MCC, and CIR.

A study was conducted on interaction between the courts and the mass media. Its recommendations led to joint trainings for court spokespersons and members of the media, as well as the development of a communications strategy.

A study, emerging from a joint request from the CC and the SC, analyzed the high and increasing numbers of Russian judicial decisions being appealed to the ECHR and the non-implementation of many ECHR decisions. As a result, the courts pinpointed issues that could be addressed by the Russian authorities. The ICR did not state whether any concrete outcomes resulted from this activity.

Outcomes:

The percentage of individuals believing that an ordinary Russian citizen could have their case considered fairly and without prejudice increased from 46% in 2006 to 64% in 2010, 73% in 2012, and 76% in 2017. The change from 2006 to 2017 represents a 65% increase, approaching the target of a 75% increase. These survey results were published by the Levada Center, a respected independent polling agency, and the last two rounds were also published by the MCC on its website. The percentage reporting that the public standing of courts in the community was very high or rather high increased from 41% in 2011 to 54% in 2017, and the percentage reporting that the courts' public standing was very low or rather low decreased from 49% in 2011 to 37% in 2017. The percentage of businesses feeling that their property rights were not protected decreased from 54% in 2010 to 44% in 2017. It should be noted, however, that these



indicators centered around general perceptions of fairness, public standing, and effectiveness, rather than around either of the specific project objectives of transparency and efficiency.

Survey results were positive specifically for transparency (information availability) in the commercial courts. 63% of entrepreneurs responded in 2017 that they used the database of commercial court decisions, and 24% used templates of court documents. 47% of entrepreneurs in 2017 reported that it was not difficult, and 27% that it was rather easy, to get information on commercial court jurisprudence. 71% were satisfied with the amount of information on commercial court websites, 66% were satisfied with the search features, and 64% were satisfied with the regularity and timeliness of information updates. The percentage of entrepreneurs indicating that commercial court web sites were important sources of information increased from 32% in 2010 to 49% in 2017.

However, some Levada Center surveys showed only small improvement across several direct measurements of transparency perceived by the general public in relation to the judicial system as a whole. Respondents stating that court proceedings are not sufficiently transparent for interested persons and relatives fell slightly from 31% in 2010 to 28% in 2017; those saying that proceedings are not sufficiently transparent for the mass media also declined by a small amount, from 41% in 2010 to 38% in 2017; and those saying proceedings are not sufficiently transparent for the public fell only from 48% in 2010 to 45% in 2017. The percentage of respondents stating that information on court activities was fully accessible to citizens and the public at large remained low, at 3% in 2010 and 4% in 2017; those indicating that information was mostly accessible remained stable at 20% in 2010 and 2017; and those stating that information was limited fell only from 51% in 2010 to 44% in 2017.

MCC surveys found that satisfaction with functioning of all MCC information systems increased by 10-20 percentage points between 2014 and 2017. The number of cases challenging the minutes of court sessions was reduced by over 35% between 2014 and 2017, and the number of complaints from litigation participants on abuses of rights during court proceedings decreased by over 31% (not quite reaching the target of a 40% reduction). The ICR (p. 46) attributed the shortfall in reaching the target to delays in making the normative laws applicable and in completing interagency linkages with the MCC system.

Based on survey results covering perceptions of transparency among actual users of the commercial courts and MCC, achievement of this objective is rated Substantial, though it should be noted that the project's impact on judicial transparency appears not yet to have become apparent to the general public. It should also be noted that the ICR did not provide information on the level or quality of use of many of the upgraded facilities.

Rating
Substantial



Objective 2

Objective

Strengthen judicial efficiency of selected courts

Rationale

Judicial efficiency was to be strengthened through streamlining of business processes and automation through ICT systems in the courts at all levels.

Outputs are the same as under Objective 1, as the ICT systems that automated business processes and digitized information on cases and court functioning also enhanced judicial efficiency.

Outcomes:

The percentage of survey respondents among the general public saying that red tape, delays, and/or lack of productivity were "acute" issues in judges' work fell from 29% in 2010 to 20% in 2017. The percentage criticizing the judicial system for unnecessary bureaucracy and poor management decreased from 22% in 2012 to 17% in 2017.

The percentage of decisions in MCC civil cases that were actually enforced increased from 24% in 2014 to 38% in 2017 and 39% in February of 2018, almost reaching the target of 40%. The ICR (p. 23) explained that MCC decisions in civil cases had to be enforced by public bailiffs in order for the successful party to obtain the benefit of the court decision, and that the new MCC ICT system, which was linked to the bailiff ICT system, made it more difficult for bailiffs to delay or avoid enforcement. According to the ICR (p. 44), achievement could have been higher absent implementation challenges related to the interface with the bailiff ICT system. Attribution of observed results to the project is not clear, however, as the project did not support the work of federal bailiffs. The extent to which the transparency of the MCC ICT system provided incentives for bailiffs to increase enforcement of decisions is not known.

The number of days taken by MCC to respond to citizen applications decreased from 30 days in 2014 to 16 days in 2017, far exceeding the target of 24 days.

The amount of time taken by MCC to forward criminal and civil cases to courts of appeal decreased from two months in 2014 to 1.5 months in 2017, meeting the target.

Specific information on response time was not provided for courts other than the MCC. In addition, the PAD (Annex 1) prominently discussed a range of other possible indicators of efficiency such as case clearance rate, case backlog, frequency and duration of cases from filing to disposition, and percent of cases that are appealed. These indicators were not part of the results framework (see Section 9a).



Achievement of this objective is rated Modest. Achievements were significant with regard to the MCC and overall public perception, but outcome data were not reported on the other court systems supported by the project and on other indicators of efficiency.

Rating
Modest

Rationale

Overall efficacy is rated Substantial, though barely so given the shortcomings noted under each specific objective.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

The PAD (pp. 12, 61) did not conduct a formal economic analysis. It stated that "it is difficult to quantify the economic benefits of the anticipated improvements," but that "a review of the current impact of the inefficient functioning of the system on the costs of doing business suggests that costs associated with a poorly functioning judiciary are significant." No details of that review were provided. The PAD postulated that improved delivery of judicial services would help lower business costs by accelerating and reducing the cost of litigation, maintaining a level playing field for all businesses, and accelerating resolution of disputes, all of which would help spur investment and promote economic growth.

The ICR's economic analysis (pp. 63-78) found a Net Present Value of US\$ 121.8 million equivalent (using the end-2017 exchange rate) and an economic internal rate of return of 63%. The Comprehensive Economic Effect (summing direct and indirect projected economic impacts) through 2022 was estimated at US\$ 665.9 million equivalent, a result that held under a sensitivity analysis that varied assumptions by plus or minus 10%. Conceptually, benefits included savings on staff time of judges and other court officials; lowered transaction costs between courts, other government institutions, and users of courts such as citizens and businesses; and reduced costs of processing information and providing information to citizens, businesses, and government agencies. However, it should be noted that the actual calculation of the economic impact of judicial reforms was based on an extended series of assumptions regarding the validity of the Bank's Doing Business indicators as measures of economic impact; the relative impact of those indicators and their relationship to the judicial reforms supported by the project; the correlation between those indicators and internal lending interest rates; and the value of labor cost savings. Although the ICR is to be commended for



making both the methodology and the assumptions underlying it explicit, the findings should be recognized as estimates only, with the results highly subject to change under equally reasonable alternative assumptions and approaches.

The ICR (pp. 36, 39) referred to some factors that hindered implementation efficiency, including performance and governance issues at the BEA between 2008 and 2010, procurement challenges for the CGJ ICT systems over the same period, and slowdowns prior to national elections in 2012 and due to the abolition of the SAC. Positive markers of project efficiency (cost-effective use of project resources, compared to alternatives) included the decision to remove the JD and CGJ from the project and to focus instead on the higher-impact MCC system, and the replacement of the BEA with the FER as the implementing agency, which was reported to have accelerated procurement and implementation (ICR, p. 30). The government allocated budgetary resources for ICT modernization of small CGJs in 2014, further supporting the Bank's decision to focus on MCCs (for which no government funds had been allocated for ICT modernization), an efficient decision from a targeting perspective. Furthermore, MCCs' implementation of an integrated ICT system was described as an "example of global good practice in design and implementation of complex ICT systems," with a two-stage bidding process taking only seven months (ICR, p. 30). Nonetheless, there were extensions amounting to over five years, while the initial implementation schedule was just over five years.

Project efficiency is rated Modest, given the questionable assumptions underpinning the economic analysis and the lack of activity during 2007-2011 due to the performance, governance, and procurement challenges noted in the previous paragraph.

Efficiency Rating

Modest

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	63.00	100.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome



The objectives were substantially relevant to country conditions, government strategy, and Bank strategy. Achievement of the transparency objective is rated substantial, based on survey results covering perceptions of transparency among actual users of the commercial courts and MCC. Achievement of the efficiency objectives is rated modest, due to lack of information about efficiency in project-supported court systems other than the MCC, and to the absence of most commonly used indicators of judicial efficiency. Efficiency is rated modest based on questions about the assumptions and methodology used for the economic analysis, and on extensive delays across the first four years of project implementation. Taken together, these ratings indicate moderate shortcomings in the project's preparation and implementation, leading to an Outcome rating of Moderately Satisfactory.

a. Outcome Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

The SC, commercial courts, and MCC benefited from enhanced institutional capacity to design, tender, contract, and implement sophisticated ICT systems. That capacity is likely to be sustained. During 2016-2017, the SC and MCC designed a US\$ 460 million follow-on judicial modernization project with the New Development Bank (formerly the BRICS Development Bank), approved on August 31, 2017. This follow-on project focuses on modernization of the MCC bailiff ICT system, a crucial next step toward judicial system efficiency (see Section 4). ICT systems in the CC and SC are being further modernized with their own budgets. A May 2018 Presidential Decree prioritizes progressive digitalization of all state functions and services, including the courts.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

The project's objectives were clearly and succinctly stated, supported by a well articulated theory of change. Project design was predicated on a series of assumptions that proved valid: that the courts had the capacity to design and implement technically and institutionally challenging ICT-based reforms; that the BEA had adequate implementation capacity; and that the courts would collaborate effectively with the Bank. Lessons learned from the implementation of similar projects in other countries and in Russia included the complexity and risk of judicial reform (and therefore the need to build solid political consensus with strong champions), the importance of clearly defined results indicators for the project as a whole and for each component, the imperative of integration and interoperability of information systems, and the critical role of transparent and competitive procurement. The project was recognized as high-risk, high-reward (PAD, p. 9), with the following risks rated High: political risk arising from the complex interplay and



sometimes conflicting agendas of major actors; reputation risk around the Bank's ability to influence the overall modernization agenda; the differing priorities of multiple agencies involved; a lack of effective cooperation and communication among major entities involved in the project; and weak implementation capacity in beneficiary institutions. Proposed mitigation measures included consultative design, clear communications, explicit and transparent inter-agency agreements, appropriate stakeholder representation in the IACC, and clarity on the activities to be financed and implementation arrangements.

The IACC, including representatives of all participating courts and the Ministry of Finance, was created to undertake high-level strategic project oversight and management. The BEA, a non-commercial foundation, was selected as the implementation unit. Although it was common practice at the time in the Region to avoid the use of stand-alone implementation entities in order to ensure ownership and accountability and to facilitate long-term capacity building, the BEA had accumulated over a decade of knowledge and experience in Bank procedures and processes. However, the BEA's ability to manage the procurement of a large ICT package for the JD/CGJs was overestimated; the failure to identify and mitigate this risk led to slowdowns and an eventual need to restructure the project. There were also weaknesses in M&E design (see Section 9a).

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

The Bank team was stable and had strong technical, operational, and fiduciary strengths. When the BEA proved unable to engage on issues of substance with courts' technical working groups, obtain results information from courts, or help courts prepare satisfactory terms of reference and technical specifications, the Bank team stepped in to play these roles. The Borrower's ICR (p. 143) specifically noted the Bank's flexibility in project management and the team's consideration of specific elements of national legislation that impacted the project. Candor in reporting on early challenges facilitated proactive restructurings, though the BEA's focus on process rather than outcomes during the project's first four years (see Section 9b) limited available information on development outcomes.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design



The IACC and Ministry of Economic Development and Trade were responsible for overall project monitoring, with the BEA to consolidate information provided by various counterparts in order to track progress against the monitoring plan. Each beneficiary entity identified a technical team (usually with participation from that court's statistical unit and the unit responsible for project activities) to handle project-related data collection and reporting. The project's results framework contained project-specific indicators and actionable monitoring arrangements. Project results were also to be monitored in parallel with the results and indicators of the governments 2007-2011 Federal Targeted Program so as to provide a broader assessment of the achievement of key government judicial reform goals. The PAD (p. 9) stated that there would be a comprehensive annual evaluation of progress against project indicators, to be used for analyzing intermediate outcomes and making adjustments to project activities or priorities as needed. To the extent possible, the monitoring results were to be widely publicized to the judicial community and the general public.

There were shortcomings, however, with the quality and adequacy of the project's output and outcome indicators. There were no output indicators measuring level or quality of use of many of the upgraded court facilities. Some efficiency indicators -- enforcement rate for MCC civil cases, and time taken by MCCs to respond to citizen applications -- were added at the 2014 restructuring. However, the PAD (Annex 1) prominently discussed a range of other indicators of efficiency such as case clearance rate, case backlog, frequency and duration of cases from filing to disposition, and percent of cases that are appealed. These indicators were not part of the results framework, nor were any efficiency measures for courts other than the MCCs. The project team later explained that, given the political sensitivity of interventions in Russia's judicial system and related procurements, it was decided to focus on a relatively narrow set of indicators around transparency rather than the more conventional set of efficiency measures related to speed and appeals. Nevertheless, it remains the case that achievement of the efficiency objective -- representing fully half of the project's objectives -- was not comprehensively measured.

b. M&E Implementation

During 2007-2012, the BEA's reporting focused exclusively on process rather than results indicators. At the 2012 restructuring, when the FER replaced the BEA as the project's implementation unit, M&E arrangements were strengthened, and results reporting began to improve. The FER enhanced processes of support for the M&E units of each beneficiary entity.

c. M&E Utilization

The ICR (p. 39) reported that the 2012 and 2014 restructurings were, in part, based on M&E findings and analysis. MCC, in particular, used project M&E to track results and adjust elements of its ICT system.



M&E Quality Rating

Modest

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project was rated Environmental Assessment category C and did not trigger any safeguard policies. According to the ICR (p. 39), no safeguard issues arose during implementation.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

According to the ICR (p. 39), project financial management was rated Satisfactory throughout implementation. Audit reports were received on time.

There were delays in procurement across the project's first several years related to capacity issues at the BEA and technical and procurement issues around ICT activities for the 900 CGJs from 2007 through 2011. After the FER became the implementing agency, procurement improved significantly. The ICR (p. 39) cited the rapid (eight months from concept to contract signing) two-stage procurement for the US\$ 42 million MCC ICT system as a noteworthy achievement.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

None reported.

d. Other

11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Achievement of the efficiency objective is rated modest due to inadequate measurement of achievement. Project



			efficiency is rated modest based on questions about the assumptions and methodology used for the economic analysis, and on extensive delays across the first four years of project implementation.
Bank Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	---
Quality of M&E	Substantial	Modest	There were shortcomings in the results framework that were not addressed during implementation.
Quality of ICR		Modest	---

12. Lessons

The ICR (pp. 41-42) offered insightful lessons, including:

Judicial reform projects require buy-in from both executive and judicial leadership, creating conditions allowing the courts to proceed with appropriate sequencing of reform activities and restructuring where necessary. Rushing significant institutional change in the courts, in a political economy environment as complex as Russia's, could have led to a convergence of interests opposed to modernization. Instead, in this case, careful addressing of both technical issues and institutional concerns beyond ICT led to positive and sustainable results.

Relatively small loan amounts can bring significant value-added to middle-income countries. In this case, project strategy aligned tightly with Russia's judicial modernization strategy, providing desired implementation support, policy advice, technical feedback, and a menu of alternative approaches for beneficiaries. The courts used the project as a vehicle to access Bank expertise for conceive, design, and implement complex, high-risk, ICT-intensive systems.

Stable teams, on both the Bank and counterpart sides, can together address implementation risks and challenges. In this case, the Bank team remained constant throughout the project's lifetime, an unusual feature that contributed to a trusting relationship between the Bank and Russia's courts, the implementing agencies, and the MOE. The quality of this relationship helped counterparts to identify shortcomings and turn the project around with restructurings.

13. Assessment Recommended?



No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR was insightful, candid, and results-oriented, with thorough assessments of the project's early roadblocks, restructurings and adjustments, and achievements. Annex 6, which provided an overview of key judicial and legal reforms in Russia, was useful in understanding the project's objectives and activities. The economic analysis was highly detailed and drew from other Bank analytic work, though it relied on a series of debatable assumptions in order to derive its findings. However, the ICR was far too long (with 34 pages of text, and slides in annexes 9 and 10 were not readable), occasionally repetitive, and explanations of some of the formal results indicators were not clear. The modest rating reflects the excessive length of the ICR.

a. Quality of ICR Rating Modest