World Bank
Access to Information
Survey
2012

November 30, 2012
The World Bank’s Legal Vice Presidency, Operations Policy Practice Group (Lisa Lui, with the support of Davinia Levy) prepared this paper.
For the second year, in 2012, the World Bank conducted a survey directed to all members of the public who had electronically submitted an access to information ("AI") request to the World Bank ("2012 Survey"). The 2012 Survey covered the period of July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012, i.e., the second year of implementation of the World Bank’s Policy on Access to Information ("AI Policy"). The objective of the 2012 Survey was to obtain public feedback that could help ascertain client satisfaction, and identify opportunities for additional enhancement of the World Bank’s AI systems and processes. The 2012 Survey had a response rate of 32% (197 respondents out of 621 persons surveyed). The 2012 response rate is consistent with that of 2011, in which the response rate was 34% (215 respondents out of 635 persons surveyed). As highlighted below, the overall public satisfaction levels in 2012 improved compared with those of 2011.

The 2012 Survey sought to determine the respondents’ satisfaction with respect to the following topics, and survey respondents’ comments were grouped into categories related to satisfaction and dissatisfaction as listed below under each topic:

(a) The adequacy of the World Bank’s information systems:
   (i) information can be easily found in information systems (e.g., breadth of information; information systems are modern and easy to use);
   (ii) difficulty to search and navigate through categories of information in the World Bank’s website;
   (iii) response time / lack of response;
   (iv) no availability of certain types of data or information in the World Bank’s website;
   (v) document not found / not available;
   (vi) older/historical material not scanned / not available / not catalogued;
   (vii) access and use of AI request form.

(b) The World Bank’s quality of service in support of the public’s requests for information:
   (i) satisfaction with speed of response;
   (ii) general satisfaction with the answer provided by the World Bank;
   (iii) competency and professionalism of World Bank staff;
   (iv) slow response time / lack of response;
   (v) requested documents not provided (in whole/part);
   (vi) general dissatisfaction with response;
   (vii) AI request form hard to find / hard to use.

(c) The World Bank’s ability to meet the requesters’ information needs:
   (i) general satisfaction (e.g., very helpful, documents available);
   (ii) slow response time/lack of response;
   (iii) the World Bank should make more information available / declassify earlier;
   (iv) general dissatisfaction;
   (v) did not receive information at all;
   (vi) difficulty in searching and navigating categories of information in the World Bank’s website;
   (vii) inconsistency in information available on World Bank website / website content not kept up to date;
   (viii) lack of publicity of the World Bank’s work.
Additionally, survey respondents were requested to provide information about their demographics, the topics related to their information requests, and how they have used the information obtained from the World Bank.

The chart below provides a summary of the survey respondents’ satisfaction levels. The overall public satisfaction levels in 2012 improved compared with those of 2011. In 2012, 89.2% of survey respondents rated the adequacy of the World Bank’s information systems as satisfactory (compared with 83.7% in 2011), 74.1% rated the World Bank’s quality of service as satisfactory (compared with 72% in 2011), and 84.9% rated the World Bank’s as satisfactory in meeting their information needs (compared with 74.1% in 2011). As in 2011, in 2012, the “quality of service” category gave particular focus to those survey respondents whose requests for information were denied by the World Bank, and their related responses had significant weight on the category’s overall result.

The full survey results are set out in the summary report. Also publicly available (without identifying information about the survey respondents) are the full sets of comments received on six questions, which sought specific views of the survey respondents on their satisfaction and on the use of information.
The World Bank Access to Information Survey 2012

SUMMARY REPORT

Survey conducted by Information Policy Group, LEGOP
Survey period: August 2 – October 1, 2012
Sent to: 621 members of the public who had made an access to information request, between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012, through the Bank’s AI Request Form
Total No. Respondents: 197 respondents
Response Rate: 32%

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, the data for each “question” have been aggregated into two categories: (i) “Total – Satisfied” consisting of responses that indicate Very Satisfied, Satisfied, and Somewhat Satisfied; and (ii) “Total – Dissatisfied” consisting of responses that indicate Dissatisfied and Very Dissatisfied. Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. The percentages discount the number of respondents that identified the respective question as “not applicable.” See Annex for a detailed breakdown of the responses for each question, based on the total number of responses, including those that indicated “not applicable” (N/A).

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? (188 respondents)
   - Total – Satisfied: 89.4%
   - Total – Dissatisfied: 10.6%

2. If you used the World Bank’s Open Data site, were you satisfied with the available statistics and indicators? (127 respondents)
   - Total – Satisfied: 89.8%
   - Total – Dissatisfied: 10.2%

3. If you used the World Bank’s Mapping for Results platform, were you satisfied with the usefulness of the information? (73 respondents)
   - Total – Satisfied: 91.8%
   - Total – Dissatisfied: 8.2%

4. When you used the "Access to information - Request Form" to ask for information, were you satisfied with the form’s user-friendliness? (179 respondents)
   - Total – Satisfied: 87.7%
   - Total – Dissatisfied: 12.3%

5. Survey respondents were asked to comment on the WB’s information systems.
   - Comments were received from 91 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) – 26 comments.

   Related to Dissatisfaction:
   - Difficult to search and navigate through categories of information in the Bank’s website – 11 comments.
   - Slow response time / lack of response – 9 comments.
   - Certain types of data or information not available in the Bank’s website – 7 comments.
   - Document not found / not available – 7 comments.
   - Older/historical material not scanned / not available / not catalogued – 2 comments.
   - AI request form hard to find / hard to use – 2 comments.

The remainder of the comments (27) 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)?  

   Total – Satisfied: 83.4%  
   Total – Dissatisfied: 16.6%  
   (157 respondents)

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?  

   Total – Satisfied: 72.1%  
   Total – Dissatisfied: 27.9%  
   (122 respondents)

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?  

   Total – Satisfied: 56.5%  
   Total – Dissatisfied: 43.5%  
   (69 respondents)

4. If your request was denied and you filed an Appeal, were you satisfied with the quality of the explanation given by the Access to Information Committee?  

   Total – Satisfied: 70.8%  
   Total – Dissatisfied: 29.2%  
   (24 respondents)

   [The data for this question are invalid because 24 respondents provided ratings, even though the AIC only issued 12 decisions on appeals in the period surveyed (for the first two years of the AI Policy’s implementation, a total of 19 decisions on appeals were issued). For this reason, the data from this question is not included in the calculation of the overall results.]

5. Survey respondents were asked to comment on the quality of WB’s service in supporting their information access requests.

   - Comments were received from 59 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

   **Related to Satisfaction:**
   - Satisfaction with speed of response – 11 comments.
   - General satisfaction with the answer provided by the Bank – 8 comments.
   - Competency and professionalism of World Bank staff – 8 comments.

   **Related to Dissatisfaction:**
   - Slow response time / lack of response – 13 comments.
   - Requested documents not provided (in whole/part) – 7 comments.
   - General dissatisfaction with response – 7 comments.
   - AI request form hard to find / hard to use – 1 comment.

   The remainder of the comments (4) did not respond to the issue presented.
6. 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:
     - Found appeal unnecessary / information found through other means – 5 comments.
     - Satisfaction with the decision – 4 comments.
     - General lack of confidence in the system – 3 comments.
     - Lack of time/perception that appeal would take too much time – 3 comments.
     - Request was not technically denied / information belongs to other institutions – 3 comments.
     - Lack of knowledge of the appeals mechanism – 1 comment.
     - No basis for appeal – 1 comment.

   The remainder of the comments (13) did not respond to the issue presented.

7. 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 20 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:
     - Lack of time/perception that appeal would take too much time – 2 comments.
     - Found appeal unnecessary – 1 comment.
     - General lack of confidence in the system – 1 comment.

   The remainder of the comments (16) 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? (150 respondents)

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

2. Overall, are you satisfied with your experience in requesting information from the World Bank? (168 respondents)

   Total – Satisfied: 82.1%  
   Total – Dissatisfied: 17.9%

3. Survey respondents were asked to comment on the WB’s efforts to meet the public’s information needs. Comments were received from 57 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

   Related to Satisfaction:
   - General satisfaction (e.g., very helpful, documents available) – 24 comments.

   Related to Dissatisfaction:
   - Slow response time/lack of response – 6 comments.
   - The World Bank should make more information available / declassify earlier – 5 comments.
   - General dissatisfaction – 3 comments.
   - Did not receive information at all – 3 comments.
   - Difficulty in searching and navigating categories of information in the Bank’s website – 3 comments.
   - Inconsistency in information available on WB website / website content not kept up to date – 3 comments.
   - Lack of publicity of the World Bank’s work – 1 comment.

   The remainder of the comments (9) did not directly respond to the issue presented.
SECTIO N D.  ABOUT YOURSELF

1. How familiar are you about the World Bank?   (169 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familiarity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very familiar</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat familiar</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat unfamiliar</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unfamiliar</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How many times did you visit the World Bank’s website in the period between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012?  
(160 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1-10 times)</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11-20 times)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(21-50 times)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(51-100 times)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(101+ times)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear responses</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How many times did you submit a request for information using the “Access to Information - Request Form”, in the period between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012?  
(159 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1-10 times)</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11-20 times)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(21-50 times)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0 times)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear responses</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Which of the following topic(s) relate(s) to the information that you requested?:  
(131 respondents*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance (i.e., banking, microfinance, capital markets, housing finance, etc)</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and other social sectors</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration, Law &amp; Justice</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy &amp; Mining</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, sanitation &amp; flood protection</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Fishing &amp; Forestry</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Communications</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry and Trade</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18.7%**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 131 respondents answered this question. Because respondents were allowed to select more than one topic, the data above reflect 327 selections.

** Respondents selecting the “Other” category were asked to write in relevant topics. Write-in topics can be categorized into the following topics: historic documents; economics and development; Bank internal institutions; peace building and reconstruction; tourism; financial information; environmental issues; natural disasters; statistics; and gender.

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 92 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

  - Education / academic purposes – 23 responses.
  - Research – 23 comments.
  - Development (e.g., program/project evaluation, conference, interest of project-affected party, aid effectiveness, feasibility studies, research for other development projects) – 20 responses.
  - Publications (not specifically development related) – 8 responses.

The remainder of the comments (18) 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): (153 respondents*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe and Central Asia</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States and Canada</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia &amp; Pacific</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia &amp; New Zealand</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East &amp; North Africa</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 153 survey respondents for this question, 39 percent are located in borrower countries.¹ For LCR, SAR, and AFR regions, 100 percent of the respective survey respondents are located in borrower countries. For those located in the EAP, MNA and ECA regions, respectively, 77 percent, 60 percent and 18 percent of the survey respondents are located in borrower countries.

7. Please indicate your affiliation: (170 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic/Education</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business or private enterprise</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO/CSO</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other international organization</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Agency</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.3%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Respondents selecting the “Other” category were asked to write in their affiliation. Write-in affiliations can be categorized into the following affiliations: Student, World Bank retiree, Consultant, United Nations.

¹ The list of IBRD/IDA and Blend Countries can be found in the Operational Manual OP3.10 – Annex D, and in the following link: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/OPSMANUAL/Resources/OP310_Annex_D_July_24_2012_Rev_Final.pdf
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? (195 respondents)

2. If you used the World Bank’s Open Data site, were you satisfied with the available statistics and indicators? (194 respondents)

3. If you used the World Bank’s Mapping for Results platform, were you satisfied with the usefulness of the information? (189 respondents)
4. When you used the "Access to information - Request Form" to ask for information, were you satisfied with the form’s user-friendliness? (195 respondents)

![Bar chart showing satisfaction levels for form's user-friendliness](chart1.png)

**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)? (175 respondents)

![Bar chart showing satisfaction levels for the World Bank's assistance](chart2.png)

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? (174 respondents)

![Bar chart showing satisfaction levels for keeping informed](chart3.png)
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? (173 respondents)

4. If your request was denied and you filed an Appeal, were you satisfied with the quality of the explanation given by the Access to Information Committee? (Note: if you did not file an Appeal, please select N/A). * (172 respondents)

* Note that some of the percentages reflected above are flawed because they reflect the satisfaction / dissatisfaction ratings of 24 respondents, concerning the quality of the AIC’s explanation on appeals, even though the AIC issued only 12 appeals decisions in the period surveyed; moreover, in the first two years of the AI Policy’s implementation, the AIC issued a total of 19 decisions on appeals.

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

(173 respondents)