

13 December 2019

Jürgen Zattler  
German Executive Director  
Chair, Committee on Development Effectiveness  
The World Bank Group  
1818 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20433  
USA

Re: Disclose Final CODE Recommendations for Reforms to Inspection Panel

Dear Mr. Zattler:

We are writing to request that **the final Committee on Development Effectiveness (CODE) recommendations to the full Board of Directors on Inspection Panel reform be disclosed publicly prior to their adoption. Further, civil society should be consulted on any subsequent updates to the Panel's Operating Procedures.** As organizations that work to strengthen accountability within development finance and support communities when investments result in harmful impacts, we have followed the process with great interest and concern over the last two years, despite very limited opportunity for participation and almost no publicly available information about the proposed reforms. Now, as the process is drawing to conclusion, civil society must be in a position to discuss the final recommendations with our government representatives. The Inspection Panel was created in response to demands from communities and civil society worldwide. Changes to its mandate should not be made without public input on the actual proposals under consideration. It is too important to be done in the dark.

It is standard practice at development finance institutions (DFIs) to undertake public consultation processes before making any changes to their independent accountability mechanisms (IAMs). Just in the last year, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the European Investment Bank, the Green Climate Fund, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development concluded consultation processes on their IAMs. While they all varied in their approach—the EBRD held in-person regional consultations while the AIIB hosted online meetings and participated in civil society-organized events—each consultation process included the publication of the actual proposed reforms to the IAM with an opportunity to provide comments before the reforms were finalized. This has also been true of prior changes to the World Bank Group's IAMs. The last revision of the Inspection Panel's Operating Procedures in 2014 included a 60-day public comment period on the draft.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the 2013 revision of the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman's Operational Guidelines included a 90-day public comment period on its draft.<sup>2</sup>

This review started out with the intention of updating the Panel's mandate to bring it in line with its peers by adding, in particular, monitoring and dispute resolution. Instead of taking a straightforward path to that end, CODE, as we understand it, is considering proposals that go far afield from what currently exists at the Panel or any other IAM. We do not believe that such a fundamental re-envisioning of accountability at the World Bank should be done quickly and without adequate opportunity for public input.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.inspectionpanel.org/about-us/panel-mandate-and-procedures>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cao-ombudsman.org/howwework/2012OperationalGuidelinesUpdate.htm>

At this point in the discussion, we are not seeking our ideal reforms. We are not even advocating for measures that build on best practice of other IAMs. We are fighting to ensure that the World Bank's accountability framework is not undermined.

Sincerely,

Abibiman Foundation, Ghana  
Accountability Counsel  
AG Globale Verantwortung (Global Responsibility)  
Alliance for Rural Democracy, Liberia  
Alliance Sud  
Arabwatch Coalition  
Bank Information Center  
Bank Information Center Europe  
Both ENDS  
Bretton Woods Project  
Buliisa Initiative for Rural Development Organisation (BIRUDO), Uganda  
Center for International Environmental Law  
Centre for Financial Accountability, India  
Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO)  
CEE Bankwatch Network  
Community Empowerment and Social Justice Network (CEMSOJ), Nepal  
COMPPART Foundation for Justice and Peacebuilding, Nigeria  
Enda Lead Afrique Francophone  
European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad)  
Fundación para el Desarrollo de Políticas Sustentables  
Gender Action  
Green Advocates International  
Green Advocates USA  
International Accountability Project  
International Rivers  
Jamaa Resource Initiatives, Kenya  
Joy for Children, Uganda  
Leadership Initiative for Transformation and Empowerment (LITE-AFRICA)  
Lumière Synergie pour le Développement  
MiningWatch Canada  
Montpelier Consulting  
Natural Resources Women's Platform  
Urgewald

Cc: CODE members