World Bank

Access to Information

Survey

2015
This paper was prepared by the Access to Information team of the Global Practices Communications Unit, External and Corporate Relations Vice Presidency (ECR) (Hannah George, Frances Allen, Davinia Levy Molner, and Isabel Tepedino).
During the period of July 21st, 2015 through September 15th, 2015, the World Bank (“Bank”) conducted its fifth annual Access to Information Survey (“2015 AI Survey”). The Bank directed the 2015 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 21st, 2015 through September 15th, 2015.

The 2015 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 394 requesters, 149 (37.8%) responded to the survey.

Similar to the prior surveys, the 2015 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 2015 were relatively higher than its corresponding values in 2014.

In 2015, 79% of the survey responses (76% in 2014) rated the adequacy of the Bank’s information systems in the satisfactory range. With respect to the Bank’s quality of service, 72% of the survey responses in 2015 (57% in 2014) gave the Bank a rating in the satisfactory range. Lastly, with respect to the Bank’s ability to meet the requesters’ information needs, 79% of the survey responses in 2015 (71% in 2014) rated the Bank in the satisfactory range.

Alike the past two AI Surveys, in the “quality of service” category, the 2015 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 2015 Survey also requested survey respondents to provide comments on their satisfaction. The comments can be categorized under each topic as follows:

1. Adequacy of the World Bank’s information systems:
   i. accessibility of information in information systems;
   ii. speed of response;
   iii. sufficiency of information available on website;
   iv. ease of searching and navigating through information categories in website;
   v. availability of older/historical material;
   vi. availability of requested information;
   vii. Accessibility and usability of the AI request form.

2. The World Bank’s quality of service in support of the public’s requests for information:
   i. general satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the answer provided by the Bank;
   ii. competency and professionalism of Bank staff;
   iii. speed of response;
   iv. availability and accessibility of requested information; and
   v. information available in multiple languages.

3. The World Bank’s ability to meet the requesters’ information needs:
   i. general satisfaction/dissatisfaction;
   ii. availability of information on Bank’s website / Archives files;
   iii. response time / responsiveness;
   iv. consistency between information requested and received;
   v. ability to search and navigate information categories in the Bank’s website;
   vi. direct communication with Bank staff members; and
   vii. information available in multiple languages.

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 2015 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 Survey 2015

REPORT

Survey conducted by ECRGP

| Sent to: | 394 members of the public who had made an access to information request, between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, through the Bank’s AI Request Form |
| Total No. Respondents: | 149 respondents |
| Response Rate: | 37.8% |

Sections A-C. In these sections, survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction, by selecting one of the following six options: Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Don’t Know 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 Satisfied and Somewhat Satisfied, and (ii) “Total – Dissatisfied” consisting of responses that indicate Somewhat Dissatisfied and 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 “don’t know” or “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 “don’t know” and “not applicable” (N/A).

SECTION A. ADEQUACY OF THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. If you used the World Bank’s website (e.g., homepage; Projects & Operations page; Documents & Reports page) to search for information, how satisfied were you with the search engine’s ability to find the information that you were looking for?  
   (N=141 respondents)
   - Total – Satisfied: 79.4%  
   - Total – Dissatisfied: 20.6%

2. If you used the World Bank’s Open Data site, how satisfied were you navigating it to find information?  
   (N=127 respondents)
   - Total – Satisfied: 76.4%  
   - Total – Dissatisfied: 23.6%

3. Was the Access to Information website easy to find from the World Bank’s homepage?  
   (N=133 respondents)
   - Total – Satisfied: 72.2%  
   - Total – Dissatisfied: 27.8%

4. How satisfied were you with the information available on the World Bank’s Access to Information website?  
   (N=140 respondents)
   - Total – Satisfied: 81.4%  
   - Total – Dissatisfied: 18.6%

5. Survey respondents were asked to comment about any specific information they would like to see in the Access to Information website. 

Comments were received from 54 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

- Information and/or links routing to WB data, procurement, projects & documents, Bank history, scholarship, etc. websites – 29 comments;
6. The World Bank’s Access to Information case management system that allows users to track the status of their requests and communicate with the World Bank. How satisfied were you with the system?

(N=135 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 81.5%  
Total – Dissatisfied: 18.5%

7. How satisfied were you with the user-friendliness of the Access to Information request form when submitting your information request to the World Bank?

(N=136 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 86%  
Total – Dissatisfied: 14%

8. Survey respondents were asked to comment on the WB’s information systems.

Comments were received from 51 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

Related to Satisfaction: 19 respondents

- Information systems is transparent, systematic and very helpful (e.g., precise, accurate and adequate information; resourceful; prompt and easy to use) – 25 comments.

Related to Dissatisfaction: 29 respondents

- Slow response time/lack of response – 4 comments;
- Technical problems with the new system or links (associated with the response) – 2 comments;
- Difficulty to search and navigate through categories of information in the Bank’s website - 13 comments;
- Lack of availability or accessibility of information/data – 8 comments;
- Non-synchronous or generic information provided – 1 comments;
- Lack of direct communication with staffs – 1 comments;

The remainder of the 3 comments did not respond to the issue presented.
SECTION B. QUALITY OF SERVICE

9. If the World Bank contacted you after you submitted your request for information, how satisfied were you with the World Bank’s efforts to assist you (e.g., to help narrow the scope of your request or identify specific documents)?

(N=121 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 78.5%  Total – Dissatisfied: 21.5%

10. If the World Bank had to take more than 20 business days to respond to your request, how satisfied were you with the World Bank’s efforts to keep you informed throughout the process?

(N=85 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 64.71%  Total – Dissatisfied: 35.3%

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

(N=52 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 55.8%  Total – Dissatisfied: 44.2%

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

(N=14 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 78.6%  Total – Dissatisfied: 21.4%

13. If you filed a second level appeal, how satisfied were you 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.

(N=12 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 83.3%  Total – Dissatisfied: 16.7%

Note: Since the inception of the AI Policy, on July 1, 2010, through July 1, 2014, the AIC issued in total 40 decisions on appeals. Of which, five were issued in the 2015 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 2015 AI Survey. This should be taken into account when considering the overall results.
14. Survey respondents were asked to comment on the quality of WB’s service in supporting their information access requests.

Comments were received from 44 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

**Related to Satisfaction:** 24 respondents

- Competency and professionalism of the Bank staff – 8 comments;
- General satisfaction with the answer provided by the Bank – 13 comments;
- Satisfaction with speed of response – 3 comments;

**Related to Dissatisfaction:** 16 respondents

- Slow response time/lack of response – 4 comments;
- General dissatisfaction with response – 5 comments;
- Lack of availability or accessibility of information/data (including language issues) – 7 comments.

The remainder of the 4 comments did not respond to the issue presented.

15. 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, AIC)

Comments were received from 31 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

**Positive:** 2 respondents

- Satisfaction with the decision – 2 comments;

**Negative:** 7 respondents

- General lack of confidence in the system – 5 comments;
- Lack of time/perception that appeal would take too much time – 1 comments;
- Lack of knowledge of the appeals mechanism – 1 comment.

**Neutral:** 1 respondent

- Request was not technically denied / information belongs to other institutions – 1 comment;

The remainder of the 21 comments (including N/A responses) did not respond to the issue presented.
16. Survey respondents who had filed a first level appeal and the AIC 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 AIAB.

Comments were received from 25 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

- Perception that appeal would take too much time/complex – 1 comment;
- General lack of confidence in the system – 3 comments;
- Lack of knowledge of the second level of appeal mechanism – 2 comments;

The remainder of the 19 comments (including “N/A” responses) did not respond to the issue presented.

SECTION C. MEETING YOUR INFORMATION NEEDS

17. How satisfied were you with the World Bank’s accuracy in giving you the information or documents you had requested? (N=112 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 80.4%  Total – Dissatisfied: 19.6%

18. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience in requesting information from the World Bank? (N=124 respondents)

Total – Satisfied: 76.6%  Total – Dissatisfied: 23.4%

19. Survey respondents were asked to comment on the WB’s efforts to meet the public’s information needs.

Comments were received from 52 respondents. Relevant comments can be generally grouped into the following categories:

Related to Satisfaction: 5 respondents

- General satisfaction (e.g., very helpful, documents available) – 5 comments;

Related to Dissatisfaction: 40 respondents

- Slow response time / lack of response – 9 comments;
- Lack of availability or accessibility of information/data – 18 comments;
- Difficulty in searching and navigating categories of information in the Bank’s website – 8 comments;
- General Dissatisfaction (e.g. comments about the AI policy and procedures) – 4 comments;
- Technical problems with the new system or links (associated with response) – 1 comment.

Neutral: 2 respondents

- Encourage partners in developing countries to share information
- Partner with universities to access the information reserved in the repositories of those institutions

The remainder of the 5 comments did not directly respond to the issue presented.
SECTION D. ABOUT YOURSELF

20. How familiar are you with the World Bank? (N=130 respondents)

| Very familiar | 33.9% | Not very familiar | 16.1% |
| Somewhat familiar | 47.7% | Not familiar at all | 2.3% |

21. Approximately, how many times did you visit the World Bank’s website in the period between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015? (N=128 respondents)

| (1-10 times): | (11-20 times): | (21-50 times): | (51-100 times): | More than 100 times: |
| # | 51 | 31 | 23 | 10 | 13 |
| % | 39.8% | 24.2% | 18% | 7.8% | 10.2% |

22. How many times did you submit a request for information in the period between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015? (N=130 respondents)

| Once | Twice | Thrice | Four times | Five times | Six times | Seven times | Eight times | Nine times | Ten times |
| # | 78 | 25 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| % | 60% | 19.2% | 6.9% | 5.4% | 2.3% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0% | 3.8% |

23. Which of the following topic(s) relate(s) to the information that you requested? (N=130 respondents*)

| Agriculture | 6.8% | Climate Change | 3.8% |
| Finance and Markets | 9.6% | Water | 3.8% |
| Macroeconomics & Fiscal Management | 7.8% | Health, Nutrition | 6.5% |
| Governance | 10.6% | & Population | 1.4% |
| Poverty | 3.8% | Social, Urban, Rural & Resilience | 3.8% |
| Education | 4.8% | Fragility, Conflicts & Violence | 0.7% |
| Energy | 6.5% | Social Protection & Labor | 2.7% |
| Private and Public Partnership | 4.1% | Transport & ICT | 1.7% |
| Environment & Natural Resources | 7.2% | Gender | 1.7% |
| Trade & Competitiveness | 3.4% | Others** | 9.6% |

* 130 respondents answered this question. Because respondents were allowed to select more than one topic, the data above reflects 293 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; financial information; record management; staff or employee information; procurement; statistics and data; monitoring & evaluation; country portfolio and online training programs.
24. 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.

Responses were received from 59 respondents. Relevant responses can be generally grouped into the following categories:

- Education / academic purposes – 25 responses;
- Development (e.g., interest of project-affected party, aid effectiveness, feasibility studies, research for other development projects) – 10 responses;
- Research – 11 responses;

The remainder of the 13 comments did not directly respond to the questions presented.

25. Which country are you located in? 

(N=130 respondents*)

![AI REQUESTS BY REGION](ai-requests-by-region.png)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe and Central Asia</td>
<td>33.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States and Canada</td>
<td>27.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia &amp; Pacific</td>
<td>6.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>5.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</td>
<td>9.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East &amp; North Africa</td>
<td>5.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia and New Zealand</td>
<td>3.85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Of the 130 survey respondents for this question, 33 percent are located in borrower countries. All survey respondents from AFR, LAC, and SAR are located in borrower countries. 50 percent of the survey respondents from EAP and 86 percent of the survey respondents from MNA are located in borrower countries. Remaining 50 percent

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of the respondents from EAP, 14 percent of the respondents from MNA and all of the respondents from ECA are located in non-borrower countries.

26. Please indicate your affiliation. (N=130 respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic/Education</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business or private enterprise</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO/CSO</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other public international</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Group</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilateral development agency</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal profession</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others*</td>
<td>6.2%</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: Consultant, student, training.

ANNEX I
Survey Sections A-C: Detailed Breakdown of Percentages including Don’t Know and N/A indications

SECTION A. ADEQUACY OF THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. If you used the World Bank’s website (e.g., homepage; Projects & Operations page; Documents & Reports page) to search for information, how satisfied were you with the search engine’s ability to find the information that you were looking for? (N=149 respondents)
2. If you used the World Bank’s Open Data site, how satisfied were you navigating it to find information? (N=149 respondents)

4. How satisfied were you with the information available on the World Bank’s Access to Information website? (N=149 respondents)
6. The World Bank’s Access to Information case management system that allows users to track the status of their requests and communicate with the World Bank. How satisfied were you with the system? (N=149 respondents)

7. How satisfied were you with the user-friendliness of the Access to Information request form when submitting your information request to the World Bank? (N=149 respondents)
SECTION B. QUALITY OF SERVICE

9. If the World Bank contacted you after you submitted your request for information, how satisfied were you with the World Bank’s efforts to assist you (e.g., to help narrow the scope of your request or identify specific documents)?

(N=138 respondents)

10. If the World Bank had to take more than 20 business days to respond to your request, how satisfied were you with the World Bank’s efforts to keep you informed throughout the process?

(N=138 respondents)
11. If your request for information was denied (in whole or in part), how satisfied were you with the clarity of the World Bank’s explanation on why the request was denied?

(N=138 respondents)

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

(N=138 respondents)
13. If you filed a second level appeal, how satisfied were you 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.

(N=136 respondents)

**SECTION C. MEETING YOUR INFORMATION NEEDS**

17. How satisfied were you with the World Bank’s accuracy in giving you the information or documents you had requested?

(N=131 respondents)
18. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience in requesting information from the World Bank?

(N=131 respondents)

Annex II
Selected Questions, 2011-2015 Trends

1. If you used the World Bank’s website (e.g., homepage; Projects & Operations page; Documents & Reports page) to search for information, how satisfied were you with the search engine’s ability to find the information that you were looking for?

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2 On the AI Surveys from 2011 to 2013, the questions and data were aggregated into two unevenly distributed categories: a) Total – Satisfied: comprising Very Satisfied, Satisfied, and Somewhat Satisfied ratings (3 scale points) b) Total – Dissatisfied: comprising Dissatisfied and Very Dissatisfied ratings (2 scale points). To increase accuracy, starting on 2014 the questions and data were aggregated into two evenly distributed categories: a) Total – Satisfied: comprising Satisfied and Somewhat Satisfied (2 scale points) b) Total – Dissatisfied: comprising Somewhat Dissatisfied and Dissatisfied (2 scale points) The change in scale may impact the overall satisfaction results compared to previous results.
17. How satisfied were you with the World Bank’s accuracy in providing you the information or documents requested?

18. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience in requesting information from the World Bank?
Affiliation of the Requesters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>NGO/CSO</th>
<th>Business or Private enterprise</th>
<th>Development Agency</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Other international organization</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Legal Profession</th>
<th>Youth Group</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>