



July 2017

Public Communications Policy Annual Report 2016

This document is being disclosed to the public in accordance with ADB's Public Communications Policy 2011.

Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
ADO	–	Asian Development Outlook
CPS	–	country partnership strategy
DER	–	Department of External Relations
FAST	–	Faster Approach to Small Nonsovereign Transactions
IED	–	Independent Evaluation Department
OAI	–	Office of Anticorruption and Integrity
PCP	–	Public Communications Policy
PDS	–	project data sheet
RRP	–	report and recommendation of the President
TA	–	technical assistance

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Transparency and openness are cornerstones of the work of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Asia and the Pacific. These principles, which guide ADB's Public Communications Policy 2011 (PCP), improve the efficiency and efficacy of the bank's growing operational and knowledge portfolio. The fifth PCP annual report assesses and measures the implementation of the policy from 1 January 2016 through 31 December 2016.

In 2016, ADB disclosed 95% of project documents, the highest disclosure rate since the current PCP became effective in April 2012. Some document types monitored, notably draft environmental impact assessments, recorded perfect disclosure rates. Disclosure of other document types remained generally high, as shown in the table in Appendix 2.

The PCP establishes the deadlines by which many of ADB's key project documents should be publicly available on the corporate website or elsewhere. Deadlines were missed slightly more often in 2016 than in 2015 for most categories of project documents monitored, largely because of technical problems and unfamiliarity with a new online disclosure system, as well as delays in obtaining disclosure clearances from third parties. Compliance timeliness overall was 61% compared with 73% in 2015. Documents that require clearance from third-party clients before disclosure continue to pose the greatest challenges to timely disclosure.

In 2016, ADB received 3,028 external requests for information, slightly more than in 2015. Five requests were denied because they were considered deliberative, were provided in confidence, and/or contained confidential business information or financial information—all PCP exceptions to disclosure requirements.

Public visibility of ADB and its operations remained high in 2016. ADB had a strong presence in leading regional and international print and broadcast media with 921 articles in targeted media compared with 912 articles the previous year, the launch of a campaign to mark 50 years of ADB work and partnerships in the region, and rising engagement through key social media channels. More people used ADB's website, ADB.org, to obtain information in 2016 versus 2015, notably about projects. In all, 3.4 million people used ADB.org last year compared to 3.0 million in 2015.

ADB worked to improve engagement with external stakeholders by providing staff with training and advisory support on disclosure, as well as strategic project communication planning and media outreach. ADB translated 273 project or policy documents into 1 or more of 27 other languages to help build awareness in non-English speaking countries in the region. ADB will continue this work in 2017 and beyond.

ADB is mandated to review the PCP 5 years after its effectivity to assess if and how it can be improved. ADB consulted with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders from August through December 2016 and will conduct more consultations in 2017 to build on ADB's foundations of transparency and openness.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The fifth annual report on the implementation of the Public Communications Policy 2011 (PCP) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) covers 1 January to 31 December 2016. The report highlights ADB's public communications activities and compliance with disclosure requirements in accordance with the PCP's results framework (Appendix 1).

II. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

A. Media Profile

2. ADB maintained a strong presence in leading print and broadcast media in 2016. ADB was the focus of 921 articles (912 articles in 2015) in targeted top-tier international and regional media. The media covered major ADB events such as the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines Forum with ADB President Takehiko Nakao in Manila, Philippines; ADB's 49th Annual Meeting, including a high-level CNBC debate, in Frankfurt, Germany; and the launch of the *Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2016*¹ in Hong Kong, China.

3. ADB also published opinion pieces in 77 international and regional target publications, compared with 68 in 2015. ADB expanded its Developing Member Country Journalist Program to help regional journalists better understand development issues. ADB sponsored 17 journalists from 12 countries to attend its 2016 Annual Meeting and interact with experts and stakeholders. This resulted in 207 news articles related to the Annual Meeting as of 19 May 2016, including pickups by other media publications. In 2015, ADB sponsored 9 journalists from 8 countries with 90 articles tracked.

4. ADB now has the largest and fastest-growing social media presence among regional multilateral development banks.² ADB's corporate Facebook account acquired 44,500 new followers in 2016, bringing its total followers to 184,700. User reactions, shares, and comments increased by 588% to 1.7 million from 247,000 in 2015. ADB's Twitter followers increased by almost 50,000 to more than 100,000 by the end of the year. Interactions (retweets and favorites) increased to 90,000 (56,500 in 2015). At the end of 2016, 23 ADB field offices (74%) had a Facebook or Twitter account, or both. ADB's LinkedIn page acquired 23,000 new followers in 2016 and engagements increased to 42,400 from 28,000 in 2015.³

5. ADB used its blog site to provide content on ADB operations and to build relationships with external stakeholders. ADB published 281 blogs during the year (191 in 2015), but page views declined to 219,469 (258,912 in 2015) after a news aggregator stopped posting the blogs.⁴

¹ ADB. 2016. *Asian Development Outlook 2016*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/publications/asian-development-outlook-2016-asia-potential-growth>

² ADB's combined following is 408,500 versus 208,500 for the next highest, the African Development Bank.

³ This includes reactions, shares, and comments.

⁴ The news aggregator, asianfeeds.com, is a site that gathers news headlines from other sources, instead of producing its own content. The website most likely stopped posting on ADB content because the information was not relevant to its readership.

B. Digital Communications

6. Users of ADB's website (ADB.org) increased to 3.4 million (3.0 million in 2015), with more than 5.5 million sessions⁵ (5.2 million in 2015), showing increased engagement. ADB posted on its website more than 4,100 documents and reports—including project, institutional, and evaluation documents—in 2016. Document and publication downloads totaled 1.6 million, the same as in 2015. The projects section of the ADB website was the busiest with more than 3.1 million page views and more than 300,000 downloads of project documents.

7. An extensive range of articles, case studies, and multimedia materials were disseminated on the website, providing additional sources of information for audiences such as academics, sector experts, journalists, and other interested users.

C. Publications

8. In 2016, ADB produced 232 publications (254 publications in 2015), including the *Development Effectiveness Review 2015 Report* and *Together We Deliver 2015: Partnerships against Poverty*. Downloads of publications totaled 674,000 in 2016 (666,000 in 2015). ADB continued to produce its flagship products including the *ADB Annual Report 2015*,⁶ *ADO 2016* (footnote 1), *ADO Update 2016*,⁷ and *Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2016*.⁸ The most downloaded publication was the *Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2015*⁹ (73,926 downloads). This was supplemented by more active marketing outreach to expand distribution, while the monthly publications e-newsletter went to more than 14,000 subscribers.

D. ADB at 50 Campaign

9. To mark 50 years of work in the region, ADB launched a campaign to showcase its development successes and knowledge, increase brand awareness and international reach, and strengthen partnerships. Almost all resident missions and representative offices have been part of the campaign, which has included in-country exhibitions and events, publications, and outreach through traditional and social media. By the end of 2016, the campaign had reached a global audience of about 500 million people. The campaign—Fifty Years of Improving Lives for a Better Future—won the Asia-Pacific PR Excellence Award for Public Affairs (2016).

E. Project Communication Support

10. ADB is required to communicate with people affected by its projects and other stakeholders. In 2016, the Department of External Relations (DER) supplemented project staff outreach by providing a range of project communication services to its operations departments and developing member countries for 17 projects. This supported strategic communication in due diligence and safeguards activities throughout the project cycle. To increase knowledge and build an experience base, DER conducted two training sessions and four briefings for ADB staff

⁵ A session is a group of interactions that take place on a website within a given time frame. A visitor who goes to any page on the ADB website starts a session. On ADB.org and most other websites, a session will expire when a visitor stops interacting with the website for more than 30 minutes.

⁶ ADB. 2016. *ADB Annual Report 2015*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/adb-annual-report-2015>

⁷ ADB. 2016. *Asian Development Outlook Update 2016*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/publications/asian-development-outlook-2016-update>

⁸ ADB. 2016. *Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2016*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/publications/key-indicators-asia-and-pacific-2016>

⁹ ADB. 2016. *Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2015*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/publications/key-indicators-asia-and-pacific-2015>

and clients on communication planning, and six sessions on effective design and implementation of communication strategies.

F. Translation

11. ADB recognizes the need to communicate more widely and effectively by reaching out to non-English-speaking audiences. In 2016, ADB translated 273 country planning, awareness-raising, and institutional documents into 1 or more of 27 other languages. This was 22% lower than in 2015 because of fewer requests to translate documents. Some of the documents and information that were not translated in 2016 were ADB's publication Together We Deliver, Strategy 2020 Midterm Review information for executing agencies, web content, and training and instructive materials. The translation of awareness-raising and institutional documents accounted for about 68% of the translation volume in 2016 (60% in 2015). Many other project and media materials were translated and distributed by other ADB staff. The non-English language documents most downloaded from the ADB website in 2016 were in Chinese, Japanese, and Vietnamese.

G. Disclosure of ADB Operations

12. The PCP mandates the proactive disclosure of documents on ADB.org throughout the project cycle—from country programming to completion and evaluation. This section describes compliance with these requirements, specifically which documents should be disclosed and when.

13. The reasons for nondisclosure or late disclosure are discussed in paragraph 42 below.

1. Country Partnership Strategies and Regional Cooperation Strategies

14. ADB requires country partnership strategies (CPSs), interim CPSs, and regional cooperation strategies to be posted on ADB.org at the same time they are submitted to the ADB Board of Directors for general endorsement—subject to the concurrence of the member country concerned. If consent is not given for simultaneous disclosure, the documents are disclosed after general endorsement by the Board. Of the six CPSs generally endorsed by the Board in 2016, none was simultaneously disclosed because member countries did not consent to it. All were posted on ADB's website within the prescribed time frame after the Board's general endorsement.

15. All of the chair's summaries of the Board's discussions of these CPSs were disclosed. The six CPSs were also required to be translated. Three of the translated CPSs were disclosed within the prescribed time frame; two were disclosed late, on average 103 days from approval, because of the lack of clarity on initiating the translation process; and one was still being translated as of the end of 2016. The only regional cooperation strategy prepared during the year was disclosed within the prescribed time frame. The chair's summary of the Board discussion of this regional cooperation strategy was also posted on ADB.org.

16. The PCP requires the disclosure of country or regional operations business plans within 2 weeks of their circulation to the Board. In 2016, 36 of the 37 country operations business plans circulated to the Board were disclosed within the prescribed time frame; 1 was disclosed 18 days late because it should be disclosed only after the new country CPS was approved. The only regional operations business plan prepared during the year was disclosed within the prescribed time frame.

2. Project Documents

17. The PCP specifies the project documents that need to be disclosed—and the timing of disclosure—at each stage of the project. ADB’s overall compliance with the disclosure of project documents improved slightly to 95% in 2016 (93% in 2015). However, overall timeliness of disclosure decreased to 61% in 2016 (73% in 2015). This decline was largely because of staff’s unfamiliarity and technical issues with a new online disclosure system introduced in May 2016. Staff also pointed to lack of awareness of disclosure timing requirements. Project data sheets (PDSs), technical assistance (TA) reports, and the abbreviated versions of the extended annual review reports accounted for a large portion of the delayed documents. Appendix 2 compares web posting and timely disclosure of selected project documents on the ADB website from 2012 to 2016.

a. Project Data Sheets

18. The PCP requires the initial PDS to be posted on ADB.org upon approval of the concept paper for sovereign projects and no later than 30 calendar days before Board consideration for nonsovereign projects. In 2016, 97% of initial PDSs due for disclosure were posted on ADB.org (96% in 2015), but only 58% within the prescribed time limit (62% in 2015) because of oversights and delays in obtaining clearance from third parties. PDSs should be updated at least twice a year (by the end of March and September). At the end of March 2016, 83% of PDSs due for updating had been posted on time. At the end of September, 78% of documents due to be updated had been posted by that deadline.

19. The PCP requires that PDSs for all loans, grants, and project preparatory TA projects be translated into relevant language or languages. The translation must be disclosed within 6 months of the concept papers being approved, and again after project approval for sovereign projects. For nonsovereign loans and grants, the PDS must be translated and disclosed within 6 months of the initial PDS web posting. In 2016, 131 PDSs were translated into at least 1 of 27 developing member country languages, with 71% posted on time (34% in 2015) and the rest were posted, on average, 93 days late due to the extended review period of translated PDSs for quality and accuracy by field offices.

b. Initial Poverty and Social Analyses

20. ADB’s PCP requires the initial poverty and social analysis to be posted on ADB.org upon approval of the concept paper for sovereign projects and upon completion of the credit approval process for nonsovereign projects. In 2016, 85% of initial poverty and social analyses due for disclosure were posted on ADB.org (83% in 2015), of which 61% were on time (63% in 2015), and the others were posted late, on average 60 days from the prescribed deadline. The delay is due to lack of awareness of the procedure to detach the initial poverty and social analysis from the approved project concept paper and submit it for web posting.

c. Environmental Assessments and Safeguard Plans and Frameworks

21. In accordance with the requirements of the Safeguard Policy Statement (2009), draft environmental impact assessments for projects classified as environment category A must be posted on ADB.org at least 120 calendar days before the project is considered by ADB’s Board of Directors. In 2016, 11 projects required draft environmental impact assessments, all of which were posted on ADB.org in accordance with the 120-day rule. Further, a draft or, if available, the final initial environmental examination for projects classified as environment category B should be posted on ADB.org upon Board approval of the project. Of the 54 projects approved in 2016

that required disclosure of an initial environmental examination, all were posted before the required deadline (41 of 52 projects in 2015).

22. Drafts of environmental assessment and review frameworks, involuntary resettlement plans and frameworks, and indigenous peoples plans or planning frameworks must also be posted on ADB.org before appraisal.¹⁰ All 11 draft environmental assessment and review frameworks due for disclosure during the year were posted, of which 9 were disclosed on time. Of the 47 draft resettlement plans and frameworks due for disclosure, all were posted on ADB.org, of which 96% were on time (98% in 2015). Of the 15 draft indigenous peoples plans and frameworks due for disclosure, all were posted on ADB.org, of which 93% were on time (92% in 2015). Late disclosure of draft safeguard frameworks is attributed to delays in the finalization of these documents.

d. Environment and Social Monitoring Reports

23. The Safeguard Policy Statement requires environment and social monitoring reports to be posted on ADB.org upon ADB's receipt of the report from the borrower or client. In 2016, 875 environment and social monitoring reports were posted on ADB.org (752 in 2015).

e. Technical Assistance Reports and Project Preparatory Technical Assistance Reports

24. The PCP requires TA reports to be posted on ADB.org upon approval. Project preparatory technical assistance reports are also disclosed upon approval of the project concept paper. In 2016, 89% of TA reports due for disclosure were posted (88% in 2015), of which 57% were on time (68% in 2015), and the others were disclosed late, on average 26 days from the prescribed time frame. The delay is also due to the lack of awareness on the procedure to detach the project preparatory TA report from the approved project concept paper and submit it for disclosure.

f. Final Technical Assistance Consultant Reports

25. Final consultant reports generated from grant-financed TA projects are required to be posted on ADB.org upon completion of the report. In 2016, 115 final TA consultant reports were posted on ADB.org compared with 84 final TA consultant reports in 2015.

g. Reports and Recommendations of the President

26. Reports and recommendations of the President (RRPs) are required to be posted on ADB.org either when they are circulated to the Board (subject to government's concurrence) or within 2 weeks of Board approval. Only one sovereign RRP was simultaneously disclosed last year (Appendix 3). In 2016, 95% of RRP's due for disclosure were disclosed on ADB.org (90% in 2015), but only 72% by the prescribed deadline after Board approval largely due to delays in obtaining disclosure clearance from third parties, the same compliance rate as the previous year. The others were disclosed, on average, 11 days late for sovereign projects and 65 days late for nonsovereign projects.

¹⁰ If no further mission for appraisal is required, the document will be posted before the Management review meeting or the first staff review meeting for sovereign projects, or before the final Investment Committee meeting for nonsovereign projects, as applicable.

h. Other Approving Documents of Loan and Grant Projects

27. The periodic financing request reports of the multitranche financing facility tranches are required to be posted on ADB.org upon approval of tranches. In 2016, 88% of the periodic financing request reports due for disclosure were posted on ADB.org, but only 59% within the prescribed deadline (compared with 95% posted and 58% disclosed on time in 2015). As this disclosure requirement was introduced only in 2015, not all staff were aware of it. Three grant assistance reports were approved and disclosed in 2016, but only one was posted on ADB.org on time.

28. The project design advance under ADB's pilot Project Design Facility¹¹ is required to be disclosed within 2 weeks of Management approval. In 2016, five project design advance documents were approved and all were posted on ADB.org, but only 60% were disclosed within prescribed time frame (25% in 2015) because of a lack of staff awareness of the disclosure requirement.

29. Since 2015, an abbreviated version of the Faster Approach to Small Nonsovereign Transactions (FAST) reports is required to be disclosed within 2 weeks of transaction approval. In 2016, 80% of FAST reports due for disclosure were disclosed, but only 20% by the prescribed deadline (all FAST reports due in 2015 were disclosed, but none within the prescribed time frame). The low level of compliance was because of delays in obtaining private sector clients' clearance to disclose the redacted version of the document.

i. Legal Agreements

30. The legal agreements for sovereign projects are required to be posted on ADB.org upon signing. In 2016, 196 legal agreements were posted on ADB's website, 78% of which were on time (66% in 2015); the others were posted, on average, 12 days late.

j. Annual Audited Project Financial Statements

31. The PCP requires the disclosure of the annual audited project financial statements for sovereign projects for which the invitation to negotiate was issued on or after 2 April 2012. These statements should be disclosed either within 30 days of ADB's receiving the report or no later than 14 days after ADB's confirmation of their acceptability. In 2016, 157 audited project financial statements were posted on ADB.org, but only 24% were disclosed within the prescribed time frames because the period for ADB's internal review of the document is 60 days, which is longer than the prescribed disclosure time frame. This has been resolved with the updated Operations Manual and project administration instructions on project financial reporting and auditing.

k. Major Change Reports

32. Reports on major changes in projects are required to be posted on ADB.org upon approval by ADB's Board of Directors. In 2016, the Board approved four major change reports and all were disclosed on time.

¹¹ On a pilot basis for an initial 3-year period up to 31 December 2013 and extended to 31 December 2017.

I. Progress Reports on Tranche Releases for Policy-Based Loans and Grants

33. Progress reports on tranche releases of policy-based loans and grants are required to be posted on ADB.org upon approval. Of the two tranche release reports approved in 2016, one was disclosed on time and the other one was disclosed 13 days late because the submission of the document for disclosure was overlooked.

m. Completion Reports

34. Project and TA completion reports for sovereign projects must be posted on ADB.org upon circulation to ADB's Board of Directors. For nonsovereign projects, an abbreviated extended annual review report is required to be posted upon Board circulation. In 2016, all completion reports for sovereign projects were disclosed on time. Of the six extended annual review reports due for disclosure, all were posted on ADB.org but only one was disclosed within the prescribed time because of the delay in obtaining disclosure clearance from third parties.

3. Other Information about Projects and Programs

35. Evaluation reports prepared by the Independent Evaluation Department (IED) are required to be posted on ADB.org upon circulation to Management and the Board. For nonsovereign projects, a redacted version is disclosed. In 2016, 22 evaluation reports were posted—all on time.¹² The IED annual evaluation review report was also posted on ADB.org within the prescribed time frame from the date of discussion by the Board's Development Effectiveness Committee. For evaluation reports discussed by the committee, the chair's summary of the committee meeting is also required to be posted on ADB.org upon circulation to the Board. Management responses to independent evaluations, and IED comments on the Management response, if any, are also required to be disclosed. In 2016, four chair's summaries of Development Effectiveness Committee meetings and seven Management responses were disclosed on ADB.org.

36. The annual report of ADB's Office of Anticorruption and Integrity (OAI) for 2016 is disclosed on ADB.org. OAI conducts reviews on project procurement to confirm compliance with applicable ADB policies, guidelines, and loan or grant agreements. Such reviews aim to identify and promptly address potential vulnerabilities, particularly integrity risks. In 2016, five reviews of project procurement were posted on ADB's website. OAI continued to provide updated information on its anticorruption work through its website (www.adb.org/integrity) and circulated the Anticorruption and Integrity e-Bulletin quarterly. In December 2016, ADB's Board of Directors approved an update of its Anticorruption Policy to (i) enhance ADB's role on tax integrity and (ii) help its DMCs improve domestic tax compliance and their ability to stem cross-border and domestic tax evasion and avoidance.¹³ The working paper on the update of the Anticorruption Policy was also publicly disclosed before Board approval.

¹² They included 3 corporate and thematic evaluations, 1 country assistance program evaluation, 4 country partnership strategy final review validations, 11 project or program and TA evaluations, 2 topical papers, and the annual evaluation review.

¹³ ADB. 2016. *Anticorruption Policy: Enhancing the Role of the Asian Development Bank in Relation to Tax Integrity*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/anticorruption-policy-enhancing-role-adb-tax-integrity-r-paper>

4. Policy and Strategy Papers

37. The PCP requires policy and strategy papers to be disclosed within 2 weeks of approval by the ADB Board or Management. Draft and final safeguard, sector, thematic, and other ADB policies and strategies that have undergone public consultations must also be disclosed at the time they are circulated to the Board for consideration. In 2016, the Board approved eight policy or strategy papers. The following were posted on ADB.org within the prescribed time frame: (i) Concessional Assistance Policy;¹⁴ (ii) Review of ADB's Lending Instruments for Crisis Response;¹⁵ (iii) Ordinary Operations (Concessional) Loan Regulations and Revised Ordinary Operations Loan Regulations, Special Operations Grant Regulations, and Externally Financed Grant Regulations;¹⁶ and (iv) Anticorruption Policy: Enhancing the Role of the Asian Development Bank in Relation to Tax Integrity. The following were kept confidential and withheld from disclosure: (i) Review of ADB's Investment Strategy and Authority, (ii) Borrowing Program for 2017, (iii) Review of ADB's Loan Charges and Allocation of 2016 Net Income, and (vii) Review of Financial Policies. A chair's summary for each policy or strategy approved by the Board at a meeting also must be posted on the website upon the paper's final circulation to the Board. Of the eight policy and strategy papers mentioned above, only three required chair's summaries and all were disclosed on ADB's website.

38. Other policy and strategy papers posted on ADB.org were (i) Capacity Development in ADB Operations: Review of the Medium-Term Framework and Action Plan for Capacity Development;¹⁷ (ii) Better Performing Institutions in ADB Developing Member Countries;¹⁸ (iii) Operational Plan for Regional Cooperation and Integration, 2016–2020;¹⁹ and South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Operational Plan, 2016–2025.²⁰ The PCP requires that a list of policy and strategy papers on safeguards and sector and thematic issues that will be developed or reviewed in the forthcoming 12 months be made publicly available on a rolling basis. At least one draft of each policy and strategy paper is to be made publicly available for consultation. Drafts of the updates to the Anticorruption Policy, Review of ADB's Public Communications Policy, and draft framework of Road to 2030: ADB's New Strategy were disclosed on ADB.org for consultations and public comments in 2016.

H. Requests for Information

39. ADB acknowledges external requests for information within 5 working days, and responds no later than 20 working days from the receipt of the request. In 2016, ADB received 3,028 external requests for information (2,562 in 2015). Of these requests, ADB acknowledged 2,458 (81%) on time and responded to 2,871 (95%) within the prescribed time frame. The requests came from 120 countries, mostly from India, the Philippines, the United States, and

¹⁴ ADB. 2016. *Concessional Assistance Policy*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/concessional-assistance-policy>

¹⁵ ADB. 2016. *Review of ADB's Lending Instruments for Crisis Response*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/review-of-adb-lending-instruments-for-crisis-response>

¹⁶ ADB. 2016. *Ordinary Operations (Concessional) Loan Regulations and Revised Ordinary Operations Loan Regulations, Special Operations Grant Regulations, and Externally Financed Grant Regulations*. Manila.

¹⁷ ADB. 2016. *Capacity Development in ADB Operations: Review of the Medium-Term Framework and Action Plan for Capacity Development*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/capacity-development-adb-operations>

¹⁸ ADB. 2016. *Better Performing Institutions in ADB Developing Member Countries, Positioning ADB's Approach to Public Sector Management and Institutional Performance*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/better-performing-institutions-adb-dmcs>

¹⁹ ADB. 2016. *Operational Plan for Regional Cooperation and Integration, 2016–2020*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/operational-plan-regional-cooperation-integration-2016-2020>

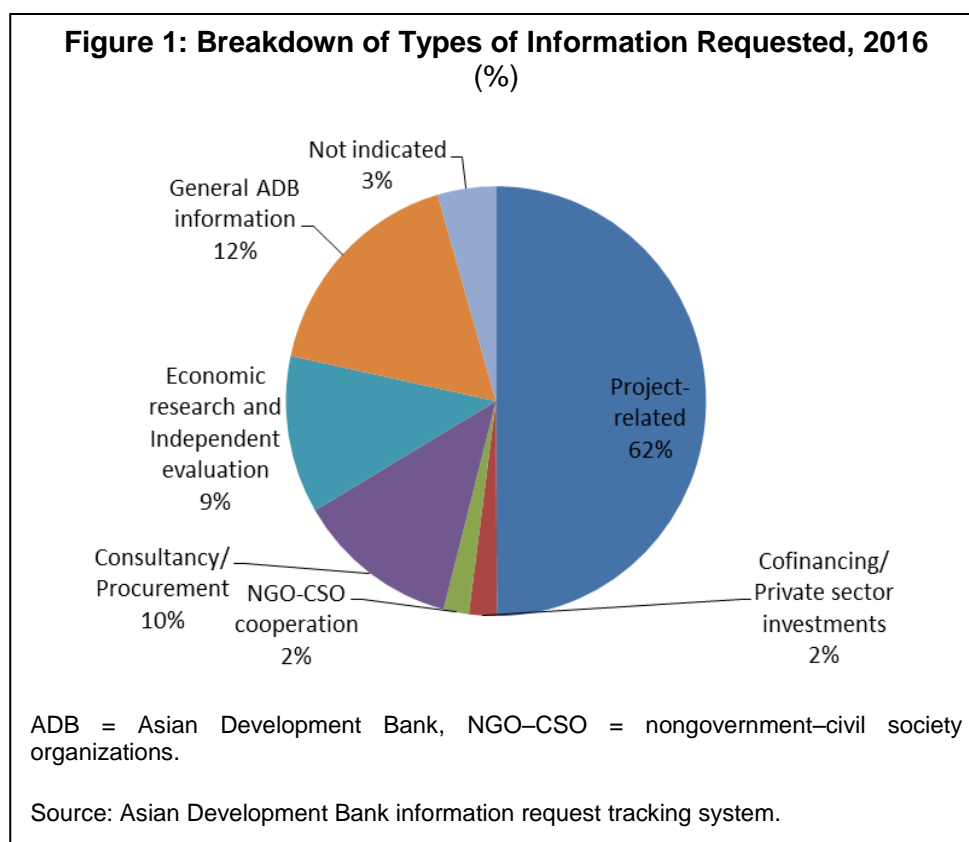
²⁰ ADB. 2016. *South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Operational Plan, 2016–2025*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/sasec-operational-plan-2016-2025>

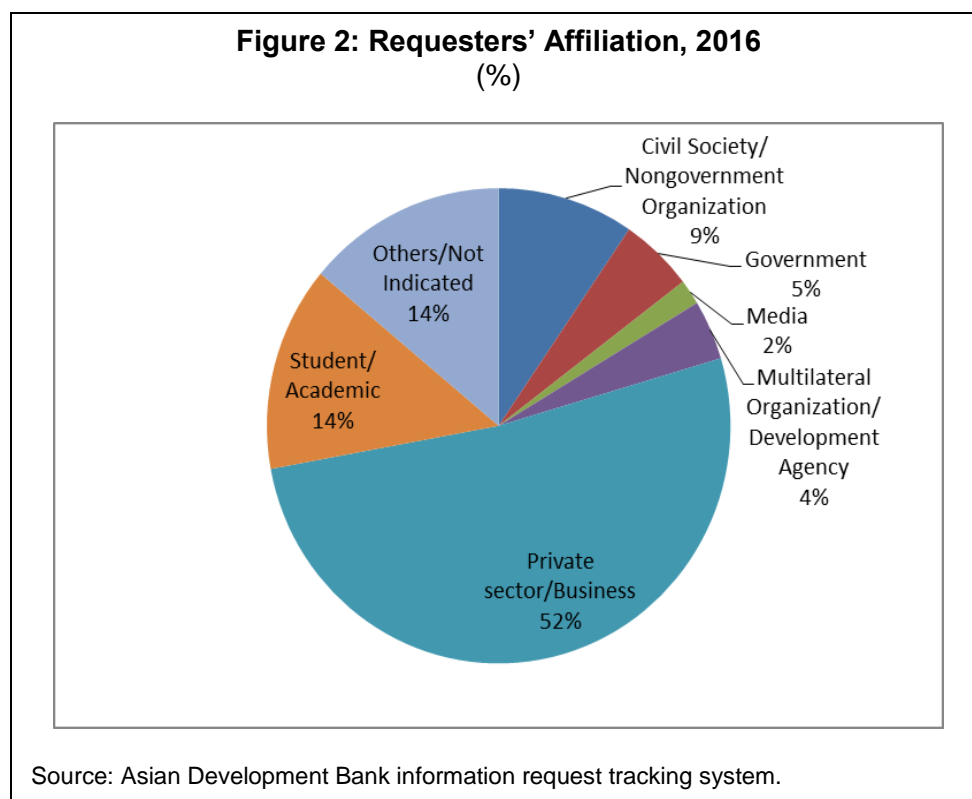
Australia. Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the types of information requested, while Figure 2 shows the sector affiliation of requesters.

40. Five requests for information were denied in 2016. All related to internal deliberative information, information provided to ADB in confidence and/or confidential business information, and financial information. Appendix 5 lists these denied requests and the relevant PCP exception rationale.

I. Appeals

41. The PCP provides for an appeals mechanism for requesters who believe that ADB unreasonably denied their request for information on the grounds of public interest and/or a violation of the policy. One appeal was submitted to ADB's Public Disclosure Advisory Committee in 2016. The committee considered the appeal and confirmed the initial denial of the request. No appeal was filed to the Independent Appeals Panel.





III. CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

A. Challenges

42. Overall, the regional and private sector operations departments maintained a high level of compliance in disclosing project documents. However, slippage occurred in the timely disclosure of some project documents, notably PDSs, initial poverty and social analyses, project preparatory TA reports, draft safeguard documents, and extended annual review reports. The main causes of the slippage cited by ADB staff were (i) technical problems and unfamiliarity with ADB's new online disclosure system rolled out in May 2016; (ii) lack of awareness of the disclosure timing requirements; (iii) lack of understanding, and insufficient detail in the staff guide, on disclosure procedures; and (vi) delays in obtaining clearance from third parties to disclose documents.

B. Actions to Address Challenges

43. Training, advisory support, and monitoring on the disclosure requirements continued throughout the year. In 2016, 114 new staff completed the basic PCP e-learning modules and 98 staff attended briefings on the PCP. Reminders on disclosure requirements were issued through ADB's internal e-newsletter, ADB Today, while reference materials, staff guides, and handbooks were updated and made available on ADB's intranet site.

44. ADB introduced a new online disclosure system in May 2016 which was designed to help ADB staff submit project and non-project documents for disclosure, immediately see the list of project documents they need to disclose, and monitor their compliance with the disclosure requirements. This suffered from some technical problems. These were reviewed and largely resolved during the course of the year by relevant ADB departments, and this will continue. Briefings and capacity building sessions on the new disclosure system were conducted before

and following the May rollout, but more sessions are planned for 2017. Quick reference guides and reference materials were developed and will be updated, distributed, and announced. Staff awareness activities, such as training sessions, briefings, and reminders on the disclosure requirements, will continue in 2017. Biannual disclosure monitoring reports will be issued to operations departments to keep track of compliance. ADB will also consider the “deemed consent” approach in seeking disclosure confirmation of documents from third parties, whereby documents will be disclosed if third parties do not object to disclosure by a specified date.

IV. REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

45. With the aim of updating and improving access to information and communication, ADB started a review of its PCP in July 2016. The first phase of the review comprised an internal assessment of PCP implementation since the policy became effective on 2 April 2012 and a benchmarking exercise against main comparators. Both were completed in September 2016. The second phase of the review started in September 2016 with the preparation of a consultation draft of the proposed revised policy and the list of routinely disclosed ADB documents. These were translated into four languages and were used to solicit comments from the public and during country consultations in December. A web page was also established on ADB.org to inform readers of the review process and to seek feedback. Comments were also sought from ADB staff. The PCP review is ongoing.

RESULTS FRAMEWORK FOR THE PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Design Summary	Indicators and Targets	Status
Impact		
Improved development effectiveness	Monitored by reform agenda progress reports	Development Effectiveness Review annual reports ^a
Outcome		
Stakeholders' trust in, and ability to engage with, ADB significantly enhanced	Improvements in stakeholders' perceptions of ADB and their assessment of its openness, accountability, and partnering	2012 ADB Perceptions Survey ^b
Outputs		
Proactive public communications	<p>Communication strategy for key ADB initiatives, projects, and policies developed and implemented</p> <p>Sustained presence in key international, regional, and national media</p> <p>Informative and user-friendly ADB external website (ADB.org) maintained</p> <p>High-quality flagship publications produced and disseminated</p>	<p>Communication strategies developed for major events and initiatives</p> <p>921 articles on ADB operations and opinion articles published in 77 targeted top-tier and regional media (para. 2–3)</p> <p>More than 3 million visitors and 1.6 million document and publications downloads (para. 6)</p> <p>232 publications produced, including flagship publications: <i>ADB Annual Report 2015</i>, <i>ADO 2016</i>, <i>ADO Update 2016</i>, and <i>Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2016</i> (para. 8)</p>
Improved access to information on ADB operations	<p>Communications and information sharing integrated in ADB-supported projects and programs</p> <p>100% of requests for information responded to within 20 working days</p> <p>100% compliance with disclosure requirements</p>	<p>DER and other operations departments' communication specialists provided strategic guidance on the formulation of project communication strategies for more than 17 projects (para. 10)</p> <p>95% of external requests for information responded to within 20 working days (para. 39)</p> <p>Overall compliance in disclosing project documents improved</p>

Design Summary	Indicators and Targets	Status
	<p>Annual increase in documents posted on the ADB website</p> <p>Increased high-quality translations of awareness-raising materials and other documents</p>	<p>from 93% (2015) to 95%, but decreased in terms of timeliness of disclosure from 73% (2015) to 61% (para. 17)</p> <p>More than 4,100 documents and reports posted on ADB.org (more than 5,700 in 2015) (para. 6)</p> <p>273 country planning and key awareness-raising and institutional documents translated into 1 or more of 27 national languages (para. 11)</p>

ADB = Asian Development Bank, ADO = Asian Development Outlook, DER = Department of External Relations, PCP = Public Communications Policy.

^a ADB. 2017. *2016 Development Effectiveness Review*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/documents/development-effectiveness-review-2016-report>


^b ADB. 2013. *ADB Perceptions Survey, Multinational Survey of Stakeholders 2012*. Manila. <http://www.adb.org/publications/adb-perceptions-survey-2012>


Source: Department of External Relations, Asian Development Bank.

DISCLOSURE COMPLIANCE OF SELECTED ADB PROJECT DOCUMENTS, 2012–2016

Project Documents ^a	2012			2013			2014			2015			2016		
	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)
1. Initial PDS	121	93	34	147	95	62	149	92	44	300	96	62	221	97	58
2. Draft environmental impact assessments (subject to 120-day rule)	13	100	100	11	100	100	16	100	100	11	100	100	11	100	100
3. Draft environmental assessment and review frameworks	11	100	73	18	100	83	21	95	86	15	100	100	11	100	82
4. Draft resettlement plan and/or frameworks (before appraisal, MRM, SRM, and final ICM)	42	100	98	37	100	89	38	97	92	43	100	98	47	100	96
5. Draft indigenous peoples plan and/or planning frameworks (before appraisal, MRM, SRM, and final ICM)	9	100	100	12	100	92	9	100	100	13	100	92	15	100	93
6. Initial poverty and social analyses	79	48	25	90	86	49	83	73	51	95	83	63	87	85	61
7. TA reports, PPTA paper	188	68	43	186	91	83	170	90	75	157	88	68	160	89	57
8. Reports and recommendations of the President, PFR report, grant assistance report, FAST report	108	93	47	102	88	68	112	88	60	103	90	72	148	95	72

Project Documents ^a	2012			2013			2014			2015			2016		
	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)	Due (No.)	Posted on ADB Website ^b (%)	Posted on Time ^c (%)
9. Major change reports	3	33	0	7	71	29	6	100	67	12	100	92	4	100	100
10. Progress reports on tranche releases	7	100	71	3	100	67	None			2	100	100	2	100	50
11. Audited project financial statements	None due			3	100	67	24	100	50	115	83	53	157	100	24
12. Completion reports and extended annual review reports	214	96	93	220	97	94	227	97	92	225	99	96	81	95	89
Total	795	84	59	836	93	77	855	92	71	1,091	93	73	944	95	61

 Increased from 2015

 Decreased from 2015

ADB = Asian Development Bank, FAST = Faster Approach for Small Nonsovereign Transactions, ICM = Investment Committee meeting, MRM = Management review meeting, No. = number, PDS = project data sheet, PFR = periodic financing request, SRM = staff review meeting, TA = technical assistance.

^a Key project documents that ADB monitors for timely disclosure:

- (i) Initial PDS covers projects (loans, grants, and TA projects) with concept papers approved, and tranches of multitranchise financing facilities with completed fact finding during the year.
- (ii) Draft environmental impact assessment (subject to 120-day rule) documents posted on the ADB website for projects approved during the year and classified as environment category A.
- (iii) Draft environmental assessment and review framework covers projects requiring this document to be produced and whose appraisal, MRM, SRM, or final ICM falls during the year.
- (iv) Draft resettlement plan and/or framework (before appraisal, MRM, SRM, or final ICM) covers projects categorized as involuntary resettlement A or B and whose appraisal, MRM, SRM or final ICM falls during the year.
- (v) Draft indigenous peoples plan and/or indigenous peoples planning framework (before appraisal, MRM, SRM, or final ICM) covers projects categorized as indigenous peoples A or B and whose appraisal, MRM, SRM or final ICM falls during the year.
- (vi) Initial poverty and social analysis covers stand-alone project preparatory TA projects and loan and grant projects whose concept papers were approved during the year.
- (vii) TA report covers TA projects approved by ADB Management or Board of Directors during the year, excluding small-scale TA projects and subprojects of TA clusters.

- (viii) Report and recommendation of the President covers loans and grant projects approved during the year.
- (ix) Major change report covers major changes approved by the ADB Board of Directors during the year.
- (x) Progress report on tranche release of policy-based loans and grants approved by the ADB Board of Directors during the year.
- (xi) Annual audited project financial statement covers projects that received this document from borrowers during 2016 and falls within the scope of the disclosure requirement (invitation to negotiate was sent on or after 2 April 2012).
- (xii) Completion report covers project, program, and TA completion reports and extended annual review reports circulated to the ADB Board of Directors during the year.

^b Document posted by the end of reporting period.

^c Document disclosed within the prescribed time limit in accordance with the Public Communications Policy 2011.

Source: Department of External Relations, Asian Development Bank.

DOCUMENTS DISCLOSED SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH BOARD CIRCULATION, 2016

Table A3.1: Country Partnership and Regional Cooperation Strategies

Country	Title	Board Circulation	Date Disclosed
None during the year			

Table A3.2: Reports and Recommendations of the President

Country	Project Name	Board Date	Date Disclosed
Kyrgyz Republic	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Corridors 1 and 3 Connector Road Project: Report and Recommendation of the President	27 Sep 2016	7 Sep 2016

Table A3.3: Policies and Strategies

Title	Board Date	Date Disclosed
Anticorruption Policy: Enhancing the Role of the Asian Development Bank in Relation to Tax Integrity	13 Dec 2016	22 Nov 2016

INFORMATION REQUESTS DENIED, 2016

Type of Information and/or Document	No. of Requests	Reason(s) for Denial
Technical details of Manila North-East Water Supply project (TA 1513)	1	PCP para. 97, (ii) Information exchanged, prepared for, or derived from deliberative and decision-making process with other entities
April 2016 version of draft ESIA of the proposed Combined Heat and Power 5 project	1	PCP para. 97, (i) and (ii) as the document is still deliberative in nature and its disclosure could potentially harm ADB's relationships with the project sponsor and other
Financial projections, term sheet, and covenants of the Tiwi and Makban Geothermal Power Green Bond project	1	PCP para. 97, (viii) financial information that if disclosed would or would likely prejudice legitimate financial or commercial interests of ADB and its activities
ADB's Information Security Policy, Information Classification Standard and Data Protection Policy	1	PCP para. 97, (i) internal information
Source of financing and instruments for the Off-Grid Prepaid Solar Leasing project	1	PCP para. 97, (v) information, including proprietary information, provided to ADB by a party, if disclosed would or would be likely to materially prejudice the commercial, financial, and/or competitive position of such party
Total	5	

ADB = Asian Development Bank, ESIA = Environment and Social Impact Assessment, PCP = Public Communications Policy.

Source: Department of External Relations, Asian Development Bank.