

External Consultative Group First Meeting of 2018

Summary

Re:	1 st Meeting of 2018
Via:	WebEx Teleconference
Attendees:	<p>For the GCE: Ana-Mita Betancourt Maximiliano Brandt Juan Martín Carballo Leonardo Crippa Paulina Ibarra Manuel Iván Morales Feijoo Andrea Repetto Melanie Salagnat</p> <p>For MICI: Victoria Márquez- Mees Arantxa Villanueva Gastón Ain Eva Heiss Esteban Tovar Axel Dávila Isabel Berdeja</p>
Date:	May 10, 2018
Recorder of the minutes:	Isabel Berdeja (MICI)

Summary of the session:

The first meeting of the External Consultative Group (GCE) in 2018 was held as a virtual teleconference initiated from IDB Group (IDBG) headquarters, with the following objectives:

- Present to GCE members the progress made in the areas of efficiency, access, transparency, and learning, and
- Discuss and exchange views on the challenges and opportunities in each area.

In preparation for said meeting, GCE members received several reference documents in advance. The Agenda and the list of documents can be found in the Annexes section.

Victoria Marquez-Mees, the Director of MICI, opened the session with welcoming remarks. Once the methodology and form of interaction for the teleconference was outlined, the conversation began.

Efficiency

Victoria commented on recent adjustments to MICI's internal structure to increase the efficiency of MICI's workflows, for which four core areas of work were established.

In addition, the main challenges related to the contractual constraints of the phase coordinators (non-renewable maximum term of five years) were discussed, as well as challenges stemming from the high staff turnover.

The members of the GCE raised concerns about both of these constraints, given the challenge they represent in terms of the learning curve, the continuity of the MICI processes and capacities already in place, and institutional memory. They also underscored that institutional challenges are common to many similar bodies and that it is important to help the IDB Group understand the need for a permanent and robust organizational structure to effectively perform the function of an independent accountability mechanism.

In other developments, MICI's Consultation Phase Coordinator presented the main principles and specifications of the Consultation Phase Guidelines that seek to foster the predictability, efficiency, and institutionalization of processes. He also discussed the purpose of forming the Roster of Experts in Facilitation to manage dispute resolution cases.

The members of the GCE noted the confusion created by the name of the Consultation Phase, which could be seen as the equivalent of public consultation rather than a dispute resolution process.

Access

During the first quarter of 2018, fewer requests were received for the IDB than in previous years, and no requests were received from IDB Invest.

While the specific reasons for this situation are not known, MICI continues with outreach activities to make MICI better known in the region, in keeping with its mandate. In addition, to increase the level of familiarity with MICI among external (civil society in Latin America and the Caribbean) and internal (IDB Group) audiences, it is carrying out a number of innovative activities, including sessions with strategic actors in the region on case-related missions; participation in events consistent with MICI's mandate; and virtual sessions with IDB Group staff, especially with staff in the country offices in order to provide them with tools for publicizing MICI in their countries.

Finally, the knowledge products generated within the MICI Reflections Program to be launched in 2018 will be used to promote access by emphasizing the results obtained from a MICI process.

The members of the GCE expressed their willingness to support the promotion of access and to raise awareness about MICI among civil society and affected populations.

Transparency

MICI is working on guidelines to address the risk of retaliation, and also mentioned the possibility of holding a workshop on the issue within the IDB Group. The members of the Group underscored the importance of this work, as well as the importance of keeping the identity of complainants confidential.

The significance of the March 2018 adoption of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean was also discussed, especially the article on human rights defenders. That article seeks to ensure a safe and encouraging climate in which individuals, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters can act free from threats, restrictions, and insecurity.

Learning

The MICI Learning Program, called MICI Reflections, seeks to share case management experience both within the Bank and with external audiences. The first product will be presented during the summer.



Other topics and conclusions

Finally, other current issues were discussed, including the evaluation of the IDB's environmental and social safeguards system being conducted by the Office of Evaluation and Oversight (OVE), as well as the public consultation process on IDB Invest's Access to Information Policy.

The final part of the session was spent discussing the objectives, format, and tentative date of the face-to-face meeting scheduled for November 2018.

In conclusion, this GCE session allowed MICI to report on progress in the work areas, exchange perspectives, and benefit from the expertise of the participants.

Annex I. - Agenda

Time	Agenda Items
10:00-10:10 am	Welcome and session objectives
Summary of activities since the December 2017 meeting, focusing on areas of work with the GCE	
10:10–10:20 am	Efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MICI 20/20 Vision Retreat • Consultation Phase Guidelines • Roster of Experts in Facilitation
10:40-10:50 am	Questions and Comments
10:50–10:55 am	Access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics on the receipt of requests • 2018 Plan of activities to promote access
10:55-11:05 am	Questions and Comments
11:05–11:10 am	Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional Reflections Program - progress
11:10-11:15 am	Transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing risks of retaliation
11:15-11:20 am	Questions and Comments
11:20-11:40 am	Other current issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the Bank's Environmental And Social Safeguards System by the Office of Evaluation and Oversight (OVE) – Evaluation of MICI • Review of IDB Invest's Access to Information Policy - Open consultation • Others
11:40-11:55 am	Questions and Comments
11:55 am- 12:00 pm	Planning the November in-person session and meeting closure