



العربية

FRANÇAIS

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ESPAÑOL

中文

BAHASA INDONESIA

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KISWAHILI

ENGLISH

PORTUGUÊS

РУССКИЙ ЯЗЫК

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## How We Work : Ombudsman

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The goal of a dispute resolution process is to address specific issues that have contributed to a conflict and help people identify solutions that meet the interests of all the parties.

### CAO Dispute Resolution (formerly Ombudsman)

CAO's Dispute Resolution function responds to complaints from project-affected communities about the social and environmental impacts of IFC/MIGA projects. Through an ombudsman process, the CAO helps parties identify alternatives for resolving the issues of concern.

Our dispute resolution specialists are trained in assisted negotiation methods – including conflict assessment, mediation and dispute resolution, consensus building, multi-stakeholder problem solving, and interest-based facilitation and negotiation. CAO does not make judgment about the merits of a complaint, nor does it impose solutions or find fault. Its objective is to help the parties play a lead role in identifying and implementing their own solutions.

#### Eligibility Criteria

Complaints are eligible for assessment if they meet 3 criteria:

1. The complaint relates to an IFC or MIGA project
2. The complaint raises social and environmental issues
3. The complaint is filed by an individual and/or community directly affected by the project, or filed by their representative(s).

The CAO does not assess cases involving fraud or corruption. We refer those complaints to the [World Bank Integrity Vice Presidency \(INT\)](#). Complaints relating to procurement decisions also are not eligible for CAO assessment. Complaints relating to World Bank (IBRD or IDA) projects will be referred to the [Inspection Panel](#).

CAO will inform complainants of the eligibility of their case within 15 working days.

#### Assessment

When a complaint is accepted for further assessment, CAO has approximately 120 working days to conduct an assessment of the conflict and the stakeholders' alternatives for resolving the issue(s). The purpose of this assessment is to clarify issues raised by the complainant, to gather information on how other stakeholders view the situation, and to help the parties determine whether and how they may be able to resolve the complaint.

CAO partners with neutral third-party facilitators who are independent of CAO and IFC/MIGA, and who possess the appropriate cultural and linguistic skills to work effectively with local stakeholders.

In helping parties craft solutions, CAO Dispute Resolution will not support agreements that may be coercive to one or more parties, are contrary to IFC/MIGA policies, or that violate relevant domestic or international laws.

CAO Dispute Resolution will respect any requests for confidentiality of stakeholders' identities or information communicated to the CAO. Parties will be advised by the CAO if confidentiality may constrain efforts to seek a satisfactory resolution.

Based on the results of the assessment, CAO specialists will:

- Work with the stakeholders to develop a jointly agreed process of assisted negotiation, mediation or other collaborative strategy for addressing issues raised in the complaint

OR

- Determine that a collaborative solution is not possible and transfer the case to CAO Compliance for appraisal of IFC's/MIGA's environmental and social performance.

See [CAO's Operational Guidelines](#) for a step-by-step guide to the dispute resolution process.

See [Our Cases](#) for all past and present dispute resolution work.



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