CAO at a Glance: Fiscal Year 2014

In FY2014, CAO addressed a total of 54 cases, of which 38 were carried over from 2013, and 16 were new, including one case triggered by the CAO Vice President. All 16 new cases relate to IFC projects. Fifty percent (16) of complaints received in 2014 were deemed ineligible for assessment.

Complainants: Forty-eight percent of cases handled in 2014 were filed solely by local community members, with the remainder filed with the assistance of local, national, and international civil society organizations (CSOs). Cases filed by international CSOs accounted for only 11 percent of complaints. Nine percent of the caseload were compliance reviews initiated by CAO (see figure 1).

Regions: In terms of regional distribution, the majority of cases related to projects in Latin America and the Caribbean (39 percent), followed by Sub-Saharan Africa (20 percent), East Asia and the Pacific, and South Asia (both 15 percent), and Europe and Central Asia (9 percent). Two percent of cases are multiregional (see figure 2).

Sectors: The cases were in a variety of sectors, including extractive industries (26 percent), infrastructure (19 percent), and agribusiness (18 percent)—sectors that are typically resource intensive, with large physical footprints. Fifteen percent of cases in the education sector reflect several complaints filed regarding one IFC project in Mexico. Other cases related to IFC Advisory Services to governments (11 percent), the manufacturing sector (4 percent) and IFC investments in financial intermediaries (7 percent, an area where CAO is seeing growth) (see figure 3).

Environmental and social issues: In over half of FY2014 cases, complainants raised concerns related to IFC/MIGA due diligence and supervision; socioeconomic benefits, including loss of livelihoods; and inadequate consultation and information disclosure. Complaints related to land (land appropriation, resettlement and compensation) accounted for 44 percent of cases. CAO has seen a significant rise in labor complaints (41 percent), with some IFC projects giving rise to multiple worker claims. Other issues raised by complainants include pollution; water access, quality, and quantity; community health, safety and security; biodiversity; Indigenous Peoples; and cultural heritage (see figure 4).
**IFC project categorization:** IFC projects are assigned a category of A, B, or C in descending order of environmental and social sensitivity, or FI in the case of financial intermediary investments. In FY2014, Category A projects (significant impacts) accounted for 31 percent of cases. Just under half of all cases—48 percent—related to Category B projects (limited impacts). Fifteen percent of cases related to financial intermediary projects with potential impacts in the subproject portfolio. Six percent related to Category C projects with limited impacts (see figure 5).

**Status of cases:** The 54 cases handled during the year are in different phases of CAO’s case handling process, including assessment, dispute resolution, post-settlement monitoring, compliance appraisal, investigation, and post-investigation monitoring. Figure 6 shows the status of these cases at the end of FY2014 (June 30, 2014).

**Figure 4. Issues Cited in Complaints, FY2014**

![Figure 4. Issues Cited in Complaints, FY2014](chart)

Note: Percentages add up to more than 100 percent because most complaints raise more than one type of issue.

**Figure 5. Cases by Environmental Category, FY2014**

![Figure 5. Cases by Environmental Category, FY2014](chart)

Note: Six cases are unlisted or not applicable (IFC Advisory Services projects and MIGA projects).

**Category A:** Projects expected to have significant adverse environmental and/or social impacts that are diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented.

**Category B:** Projects expected to have limited adverse impacts that can be readily addressed through mitigation measures.

**Category C:** Projects expected to have minimal or no adverse impacts, including certain financial intermediary projects.

**Category FI:** Investments in financial intermediaries (FI) that themselves have no adverse environmental and/or social impacts, but may finance subprojects with potential impacts.

**About CAO**
The Office of the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO) is the independent recourse mechanism for IFC and MIGA, Members of the World Bank Group. CAO addresses complaints from people affected by IFC and MIGA projects with the goal of improving social and environmental outcomes on the ground. CAO reports to the President of the World Bank Group. For more information, visit www.cao-ombudsman.org