

A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITIES AND OTHER AFFECTED PARTIES

1. What is the Office of Accountability (OA) and how can it help my community?

The OA addresses environmental or social concerns and conflicts that emerge around OPIC-supported projects, including environmental impacts, human rights, indigenous rights and labor rights issues. The OA provides an avenue for affected stakeholders (e.g. nearby communities and project workers) to raise such concerns and seek to have them addressed.

2. What types of services does the OA offer?

The OA offers two services: problem-solving and compliance review.

3. What can I expect from these services?

For the problem-solving mechanism, the OA will seek to create conditions that are conducive for affected communities and the OPIC client to resolve the conflict in a mutually acceptable manner. The OA does not take a position on any allegations that may be associated with the dispute.

For the compliance-review process, the OA will investigate and report on OPIC's implementation of relevant policies. The report may include recommendations for how OPIC could strengthen its application of policies to the project in question or to future projects.

4. How do I know whether problem-solving or compliance review is right for me?

Requests for service can be made for problem-solving or compliance review, both of them, and in either order. If you are uncertain which of these services is appropriate for you, your request does not have to specify them, and you may contact the Director of Accountability for guidance.

5. What information do I need to include in my request?

Requests should include the following information:

- The requester's identity and contact information.
- The identity, contact information and credentials of any representative for the requestor, and evidence of the representative's authority to represent the requestor.
- Whether the requester wishes his/her identity and/or information provided to the Office of Accountability to be kept confidential, giving reasons.
- The nature and location of the project that is the subject of the request, the identity of the project sponsor (if known), and whether the project is currently supported by OPIC (if known).
- A statement of perceived harm or risk of adverse environmental, social, worker rights or human rights impacts associated with the project.
- Any supporting information deemed appropriate by the requestor.

6. How do I request service?

You have several options to submit a written request, depending on which is most convenient for you. Your request may be written in English or your native language.

- You may send an email to accountability@opic.gov with the above information included in the body of the email.
- You may fill out the following form ([Request Form for Affected Parties or Their Representatives](#)) and send it as an attachment to an email to accountability@opic.gov.
- You may send a letter with the above information by mail, fax, or hand delivery.

Contact information for the OA is as follows:

Director, Office of Accountability
Overseas Private Investment Corporation
1100 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20527 USA

Tel 1-202-357-3910

Fax 1-202-408-5133

E-mail: accountability@opic.gov

7. How will the OA decide whether or not my request is eligible?

The OA will evaluate your request according to the following criteria:

- If the requestors are eligible (any individual, group, community, or other party affected or likely to be affected by an OPIC-supported project, or worker at an OPIC-supported project)
- If any representatives for the requestors clearly identify the people s/he represents, and explicit evidence of the representative authority is provided to OPIC;
- Whether OPIC currently has an active financial relationship with the project;
- If the request contains allegations of material, direct and adverse impacts or risks; and
- If there is a plausible relationship between the project and alleged impacts.

8. What happens to the request after it is submitted?

The OA will notify you that it has received your request, and will inform you as to whether or not your request is eligible. If your request is eligible, the OA will make a site visit to determine appropriate next steps. If your request is not eligible, the OA will so inform you, provide reasons for its ineligibility, and suggest other ways that your concerns might be addressed. For example, grievance mechanisms are established for some OPIC projects.

9. How will the OA treat confidential information?

In general, the OA seeks to be transparent in its functions. When explicitly requested, the OA will maintain confidentiality of the identities of requestors who so wish, proprietary business information, and other non-public information. The OA does not accept anonymous requests for service.

10. What situations are excluded from OA services?

The OA does not accept requests from ineligible requestors, or that do not contain minimum required information. The OA does not address concerns about corruption or other criminal activities, commercial/contractual issues, or the adequacy of OPIC policies to prevent harm.