IDB Group Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism Complaint Template

This template has been created by Accountability Counsel to make it easier for communities or individuals harmed by an Inter-American Development Bank Group (IDB Group) project to file a complaint with its Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (MICI). Fill in each section as completely as possible. If you need help, reach out to an advisor or organization you trust, or to Accountability Counsel at [accountabilitycounsel.org/advice](http://accountabilitycounsel.org/advice).

[date]

**Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (MICI)**

Inter-American Development Bank

1300 New York Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20577

Email: [mecanismo@iadb.org](mailto:mecanismo@iadb.org)

Phone: 202-623-3952

**Complaint Against Inter-American Development Bank Project**

We write to you to submit a formal complaint against an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB Group) project causing or threatening environmental and social harm to communities.

### **The Complainants & the Impacted Group/Communities**

We are: *[check the box that applies]*

* Members of an impacted group/community
* Advisors and/or representatives of an impacted group/community. We have included evidence of our authority to file this complaint on behalf of the impacted group/community at the end of this complaint. *[Complete Annex 1 & Section 2 below]*

**List of complainants:** *(at least two are required. If there are more, add additional rows or annex your own list. There is an opportunity to request confidentiality later in this document)*

| **Name** | **Email** | **Phone/WhatsApp** | **Country of Residence** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**Why we are filing this complaint:**

| *Explain here, in summary, why you are filing this complaint (more details can be provided in the sections that follow):* |
| --- |

**Who is represented by this complaint:**

| *If this complaint is being filed on behalf of a broader community, village, or other group of impacted people, please provide information about this broader group. Where are they located? How do they identify themselves (i.e. as Indigenous, tribe name, Afro-descendent, caste, fisherfolk, rural, urban, youth, etc.)? Include any other information that seems relevant for you. If possible, please identify or estimate the number of people that are represented by/included within this complaint.* |
| --- |

### **Advisors & Representatives**

We are filing this complaint with support from advisors and/or representatives, such as a non-governmental organization, community group, or another person who is not themselves directly impacted by the IDB Group project: (select one)

* Yes, we are filing this complaint with support from advisors and/or representatives
* No, we do not have advisors and/or representatives

If yes, please: (i) provide the information below, and (ii) complete Annex 1 to confirm that you have authorized your representative to engage with MICI.

**List of advisors/representatives:**

| **Name** | **Email** | **Phone/WhatsApp** | **Country of Residence** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

| *[Optional] If you wish, please share more information about any advisors/representatives or other organizations involved in preparing this complaint, including their connection to a group or community impacted by this project:* |
| --- |

### **The Project**

The IDB Group project that we are concerned about is:

| *Describe the IDB Group project, location, and why you believe IDB Group is involved. If unsure, say so and describe why you suspect IDB Group involvement. You can also mention if the IDB Group project is linked to other projects in the area that are causing harm, whether or not those other projects are financed by the IDB Group.*  *You can find information about projects on the IDB Group’s website. There are separate project databases for:*   * *IDB*: [*https://www.iadb.org/en/project-search*](https://www.iadb.org/en/project-search) * *IDB Invest*:[*https://idbinvest.org/en/projects*](https://idbinvest.org/en/projects) * *IDB Lab:* [*https://bidlab.org/en/projects*](https://bidlab.org/en/projects)   *You can also search the DeBIT tool (*[*https://debit.datascience.uchicago.edu/database*](https://debit.datascience.uchicago.edu/database)*) or the Early Warning System (*[*https://ews.rightsindevelopment.org/*](https://ews.rightsindevelopment.org/)*) (databases you can search). You can also submit an Access to Information request for information about the project at* [*https://www.iadb.org/en/who-we-are/ati-request-form*](https://www.iadb.org/en/who-we-are/ati-request-form) *and* [*https://idbinvest.org/en/access-information-policy*](https://idbinvest.org/en/access-information-policy)*.* |
| --- |

### **The Harm**

We are concerned that the IDB Group project has caused or will cause substantial environmental and social harm to the impacted group/community/communities. We are specifically worried about: *[check any/all that apply]*

* A lack of meaningful and inclusive consultation
* People being forced to leave their homes, shelter, or land (including problems with compensation)
* People losing their jobs or their livelihoods
* Pollution (air, soil, or water)
* Reduced access to, or availability of, water
* Harm to forests, plants, or animals
* Climate change impacts
* Other harm to the environment
* Impacts on peoples’ health and safety, or movement
* Reduced access to education
* Harm to Indigenous peoples
* Damage to cultural heritage
* Labor violations, including problematic workplace conditions, workplace injuries or deaths, exploitative or unsafe child labor, or forced labor
* Private property damage
* Public property damage
* Violence against the community (actual or feared), by security forces or others acting in the interests of the project
* Retaliation for raising concerns about this project (actual or feared)
* Gender-based or sexual violence, exclusion, or discrimination

*Note: The boxes below provide an opportunity to provide additional details about any of the harm identified above. This is also a good opportunity to identify any relevant documents that support your concerns, or to incorporate direct testimony (retelling of events witnessed) from impacted community members, workers, or other witnesses.*

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any failure to meaningfully consult communities on the project here, including any failure to disclose project information in a format or language that is accessible to communities:* |
| --- |

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any loss of shelter, homes, or land, compensation concerns, or other impacts on livelihoods* ***and how the project caused this****:* |
| --- |

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any environmental concerns here (such as air, soil, or water pollution, harm to forests, plants, or animals, climate change impacts, or other harm to the natural environment)* ***and how the project caused this****:* |
| --- |

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any impacts on community health and safety, access to education or healthcare, or movement of people* ***and how the project caused this****:* |
| --- |

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any private or public property damage* ***and how the project caused this****:* |
| --- |

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any impacts on Indigenous peoples or cultural heritage* ***and how the project caused this****:* |
| --- |

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any impacts on specific impacts on women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities* ***and how the project caused this****:* |
| --- |

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any impacts on specific impacts on project workers:* |
| --- |

| ***If relevant:*** *please add more details of any violence, intimidation, or retaliation towards impacted groups/communities* ***and how the project caused this****:* |
| --- |

| *Please add anything else you’d like the AM to know about the harm that impacted groups/communities are experiencing and/or fear and how the project caused this:* |
| --- |

**Prioritization of issues *[optional]***

Of the impacts/types of harm we have described above, the following are our **highest priorities** for resolution: *[we recommend that you list up to three, but you can add more if they are highly important to you and the communities or groups you represent]*

|  |
| --- |

### **The IDB Group’s Contribution to the Harm**

We believe that the IDB Group has contributed to this harm by not following its environmental and social safeguards. The following is a non-exclusive list of our concerns about the project.

| *Explain, as best you can, what you think went wrong with this project. What did the IDB Group do wrong, or fail to do?* |
| --- |

***[The rest of section 5 is optional. You may delete it and continue with section 6. Or, if you need help using it, reach out to an advisor or organization you trust, or to Accountability Counsel at*** [***accountabilitycounsel.org/advice***](http://accountabilitycounsel.org/advice)***]***

Although it is not required by the MICI policy, below we have identified some of the ways in which the IDB Group has violated its environmental and social safeguards.[[1]](#footnote-0) [[2]](#footnote-1) *[check all that apply]*

**Due diligence**

* The project should not have been approved because it involves activities that the IDB Group has said it wouldn’t fund, it is inconsistent with the IDB’s commitments to address the challenges of climate change and promote sustainability (ESPF Annex 1), and/or because it was unclear, at the time of project approval, that the project could comply with ESPS/ESSP in a timely way (ESPF Policy Statement; IDB Invest ESSP)
* The project’s environmental and social assessments were incorrect or incomplete (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1; ESSP, PS 1)
* The project does not comply with national and international law (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1; ESSP, PS 1)
* The project violates internationally recognized human rights standards and/or fails to address risks to and impacts on the human rights of workers, local communities, and other impacted groups (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1, 4; ESSP, PS 1)

**Consultation & information disclosure**

* Relevant project information was not disclosed in timely way, and in a manner (format, language, location) that is culturally appropriate and accessible to impacted group/community/communities (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1 and 10; ESSP, PS 1)
* Impacted groups/communities were not inclusively and meaningfully consulted before or during the project (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, and 10; ESSP, PS 1)

**Labor**

* The project fails to respect and protect workers’ rights and otherwise provide safe, healthy, and non-discriminatory work conditions (ESPS 2; EHSG; ESSP, PS 2)
* The project (and/or its supply chain) is employing exploitative or unsafe child labor (ESPS 2; ESSP, PS 2)
* The project (and/or its supply chain) is employing forced labor (ESPS 2; ESSP, PS 2)

**Environment**

* The project is causing environmental pollution and waste (ESPS 1, 3, 4; EHSG; ESSP and PS 1, 3, 4)
* The project unsustainably consumes vital natural resources (such as water, forests, pasture, and fisheries) (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1, 3, and 6; ESSP and PS 1, 3, and 6)
* The project is contributing, and/or increasing our vulnerability, to climate change (ESPS 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7; EHSG; ESSP and PS 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7)
* The project fails to safeguard natural habitats, ecosystems, and biodiversity (ESPS 1, 4, 6; ESSP and PS 1, 4, 6)
* The project fails to manage risks of, and/or increases vulnerability to, natural hazards or disasters (ESPS 1, 3, 4, and 5; EHSG; ESSP and PS 1, 4, and 5)

**Displacement**

* Displacement has not been avoided or minimized, and is being carried out in a way that it is unfair, unsafe, and reducing community members’ standard of living (ESPS 1, 5, 7, and 9; ESSP and PS 1, 5, and 7)

**Community health & safety & other social impacts**

* The project is causing social impacts (including impacts on peoples’ movement, health, safety, and access to healthcare and education) (ESPS 1, 4; EHSG; ESSP and PS 1, 4)
* The project is causing damage to private or public property (ESPS 1, 4, and 5; ESSP and PS 1, 4, and 5)
* The project fails to protect and respect cultural heritage (ESPS 7 and 8; ESSP and PS 7 and 8)

**Impacts on Indigenous Peoples, women, & other vulnerable or marginalized groups**

* The project is violating the specific rights and interests of Indigenous, African-descendent and other traditional peoples (ESPS 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10; ESSP and PS 1, 7, and 8), including the right of Indigenous peoples to give or withhold Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (ESPS 7; ESSP and PS 7)
* The project is causing gender-related risks and impacts, and reinforcing or exacerbating existing gender inequalities (ESPS 1 and 9; ESSP and PS 1)
* The project is contributing to the exclusion of, discrimination against, or disproportionate impacts on vulnerable groups (ESPS 1, 4, 10 and 2, 7 and 9 if relevant; ESSP and PS 1, 4, 10 and 2 and 7 if relevant).

**Violence & retaliation**

* The project failed to protect communities from violence, retaliation, intimidation and/or coercion perpetrated by security forces or other entities or individuals acting in the interests of the project (EPSF Policy Statement and ESPS 1, 4, and 10; ESSP and PS 1 and 4)

**Benefit-sharing**

* The project failed to provide opportunities for the impacted community to equitably share in the benefits of the project (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10; ESSP and PS 1, 5, 7, 8)

**Supervision & monitoring**

* The project does not have a functioning, safe, accessible, and effective project-level grievance mechanism and/or grievances raised are not responded to or managed appropriately (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1, 2, 5, and 10; ESSP and PS 1, 2, 5, 7)
* The IDB/IDB Invest failed to properly monitor the project and supervise its client, including by responding appropriately to any issues or concerns that are raised about the environmental and social impacts of the project, and remedying any harm caused (ESPF Policy Statement and ESPS 1; ESSP and PS 1)

### **Previous Attempts to Resolve These Concerns**

We understand that MICI’s policy requires complainants to first engage with IDB Management, unless there are security concerns that prevent this: *[check the box that applies]*

* We have previously contacted IDB Group Management and they did not respond or we are dissatisfied with their response.
* We have not yet reached out to IDB Group Management because we fear retaliation/reprisals.

*Note: if you need help to identify email addresses for IDB Group staff, please see here:* [*https://www.iadb.org/en/who-we-are/country-offices*](https://www.iadb.org/en/who-we-are/country-offices)*. We recommend that you send your concerns to the relevant country office, at a minimum.*

**Evidence of prior efforts:**

| *If you have previously contacted the IDB Group, please describe who you contacted, when, and the response. You can attach copies of that communication to the complaint, if you wish. Note that even a single email or phone call is relevant, even if they did not respond.* |
| --- |

| ***Optional -*** *If you have previously contacted the project company or the government (rather than the IDB Group), please add details here. Who did you contact, when, and how did they respond? Note that even a single email or phone call is relevant, even if they did not respond.* |
| --- |

**Barriers to communication:**

| *If you have not contacted the IDB Group or the project company/client, please explain why. Include any information about fears of retaliation or safety risks, any barriers to communicating with the IDB Group (such as distance from their offices, lack of access to phones or the internet, or language barriers), any urgency around the complaint filing, and/or any bad experiences engaging with project stakeholders in the past.* |
| --- |

**Previous complaints about the same project (if known):**

| *If you are aware of a previous complaint to MICI about the same project, please explain why this further complaint process is needed:* |
| --- |

### **Security Concerns & Confidentiality**

We: *[check the box that applies]*

* **REQUIRE** that our identities or other details contained in the complaint are kept confidential during this process. If you check this box, MICI will not share your identity (or any other details that you identify as confidential) with anyone else outside MICI (such as with bank management, the government, or the project company), unless you want them to.
* **DO NOT REQUIRE** that our identities or other details contained in the complaint are kept confidential during this process.

| *If you require confidentiality, please explain what information should be kept confidential:* |
| --- |

| *Please share any security concerns or fears of retaliation that you want to share with MICI:* |
| --- |

1. **What We Would Like to Achieve**

We are bringing this complaint because we want: *[check all that apply]*

* Disclosure of project information
* Meaningful and inclusive consultation
* A Free, Prior, and Informed Consent process for Indigenous communities
* Independent studies to confirm the harm (or not)
* Investigation into whether the bank’s policies were met (or not)
* Changes to the project to avoid future harm
* Pausing or stopping the project
* Fair, safe, and dignified resettlement
* Fair compensation for land, assets, or resources lost
* Support to improve livelihoods
* Other forms of social support (such as support for health, education, infrastructure, sanitation, safety, etc)
* Remedying environmental harm (such as addressing water or soil pollution)
* Better monitoring of project impacts
* Establishment of, or improvements to, a project-level grievance mechanism
* Changes to employment conditions
* Compensation for workplace injuries
* An opportunity to equitably share in the benefits of this project (such as access to water, power, or revenue from the project)
* Measures to restore or protect cultural heritage
* Recognition of our individual or community rights (such as recognition of our land rights)
* An apology
* Changes to bank policies or practices to avoid similar harm in the future
* Other: explain

*Note: this is a tentative list intended to provide you with an indication of our goals. It may change as the complaint process progresses, if our circumstances change, or if we obtain additional information or advice. We understand that outcomes differ case-to-case and depend on a range of factors.*

### **Temporary Project Suspension**

We understand that the MICI Director has the power to recommend to the IDB Board that an IDB-financed project be suspended while the MICI process is underway if serious irreparable harm would result from its continued operation. We understand that this recommendation is discretionary, and the final decision will be made by the Board.

We: *[optional]*

* Request that the MICI Director considers making a recommendation to temporarily suspend the project under paragraph 18 of the MICI Policy.
* Do not have an opinion, or do not request such a recommendation at this time.

| *If you are requesting temporary project suspension, please explain what “serious irreparable harm” will occur if the project continues during the MICI process:* |
| --- |

### **Complaint Pathway**

We are: *[check all that apply]*

* Interested in a dialogue or dispute resolution process facilitated by MICI, that brings the community, the company or government implementing the project, and/or the bank together in a facilitated discussion, to find solutions that everyone can agree on.
* Interested in an investigation into whether the IDB Group has complied with its environmental and social rules (known as compliance review).
* Interested in both dispute resolution and compliance review.
* Would like further advice before deciding.

| *Please share any other information you wish to share about your preferences for how this complaint is handled, including any urgency* |
| --- |

We look forward to your prompt registration of this complaint, and to receiving more information about the eligibility process.

Sincerely

| *Insert names and signatures of the complainants* |
| --- |

**Annex 1: Representation Authority**

*Only fill out if you are filing this complaint as representatives of an impacted group/community/communities, rather than as directly impacted people.*

We are directly impacted by [insert name of the project causing harm].

We hereby authorize [names of representatives] to act as our advisers and representatives in this complaint to MICI about that project. We grant permission to MICI to communicate with us through our advisers/representatives.

This representation agreement shall continue until the complaint to MICI has been resolved, or at any time that either party terminates the representation in writing.

**Signed by the directly impacted group/community/communities:**

| Name:  Date: |
| --- |
| Name:  Date: |

**Additional names can be added below, if desired:**

1. Throughout this list “IDB/IDB Invest and” refers to the IDB Group’s specific obligations under the ESPS and ESSP to support its client to take steps to avoid, minimize, mitigate, and manage certain risks or take put in place certain safeguards, as well as its general due diligence and supervision obligations under the ESPS and ESPF 3.13-3.24 (in the case of IDB) and ESSP paras. 28-53 (in the case of IDB Invest). It also refers to the IDB Group’s overarching commitment that it will only support projects that meet those safeguards within a reasonable timeframe (ESPF Policy Statement, ESPF 3.19; IDB Invest ESSP para. 29) and to exercise remedies to ensure compliance (ESPF 3.19-3.21; IDB Invest ESSP paras 29 and 50). [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. If the Borrower's Framework is being utilized, the ESPF and ESPS references are relevant to the question of whether the Borrower's Framework is indeed functionally equivalent (ESPF 5.1): which will also require assessment. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)