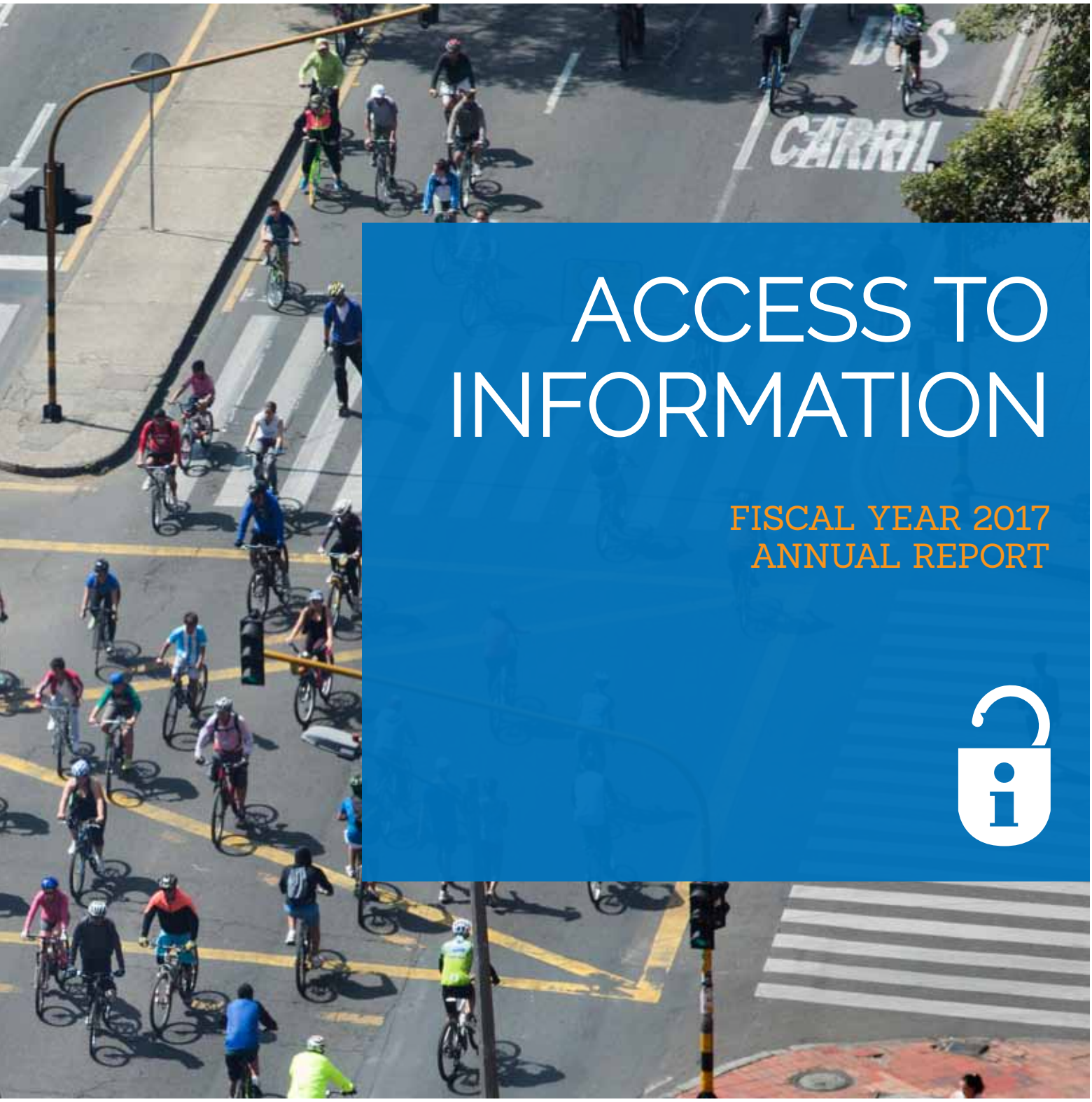


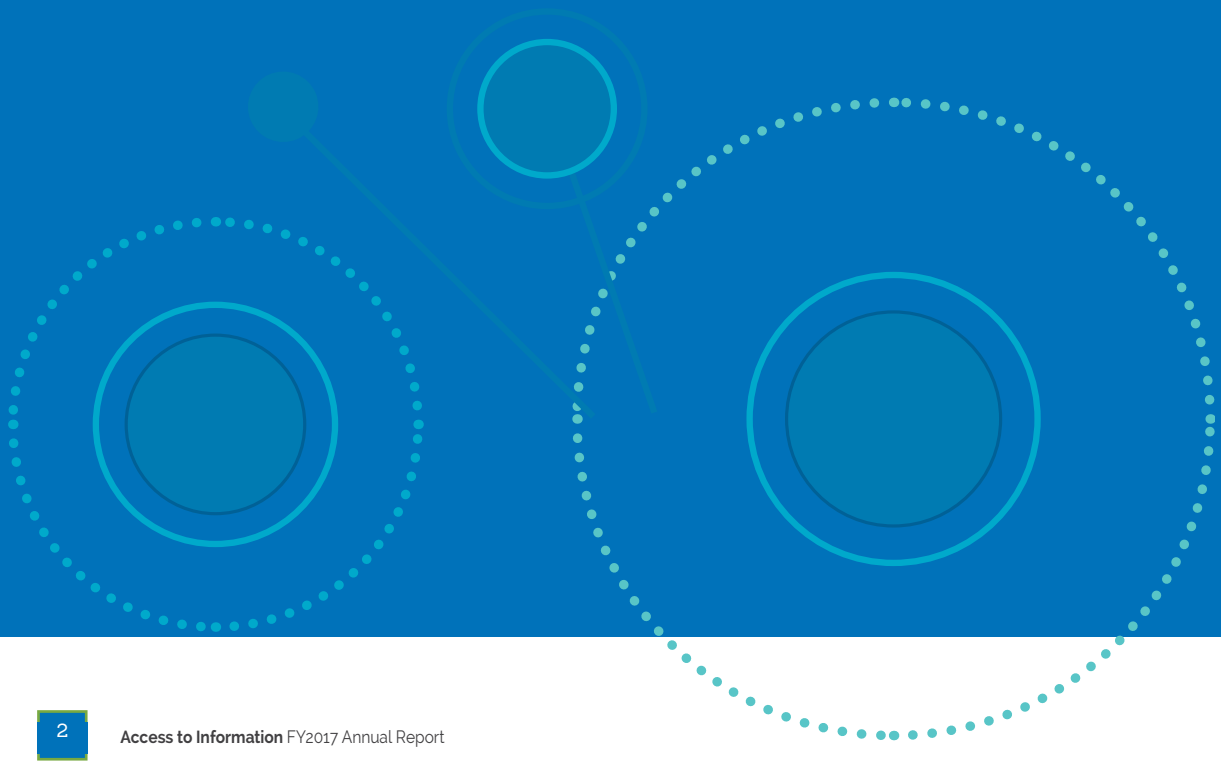
ACCESS TO INFORMATION

FISCAL YEAR 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

THE WORLD BANK
IBRD • IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
FY2017 Highlights	4
Access to Information Requests	6
Access to Information Committee Decisions	10
Access to Information External Appeals Board Decisions	13
Access to Historical Information	14
Procedures for Access to Board Records	15
General Inquiries	16



INTRODUCTION

Seen as the leader among international financial institutions on the transparency agenda, the World Bank has continuously pushed the boundary for greater openness over the years. Introduced in 2010, the World Bank's Access to Information (AI) Policy propelled the Bank into the forefront of the transparency space by moving from a limited list of disclosable documents to the transformative concept that all information in the Bank's possession should be accessible to the public, save for those documents falling under a defined list of exceptions. This fundamental shift to greater transparency was instrumental in the expansion of the Bank's relationships with clients, within the development community, and with new partners and influencers.

The AI Policy was the basis for the multitude of accompanying open initiatives—including Open Data, Open Finances, the Open Knowledge Repository, Open Archives, and the Consultations platform—all of which make the Bank's work transparent, accessible, and accountable.

This annual report covers the period of July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, "Fiscal Year 2017".

FY2017 HIGHLIGHTS

Promoting Openness and Transparency

The World Bank has taken significant steps to maximize its openness and transparency by: (i) employing information technology to simplify the capture of records and to facilitate access to such information; (ii) increasing training and outreach to raise awareness of the importance of records management in promoting transparency, and (iii) continuing to increase the proactive disclosure of information through Documents & Reports, the Open Knowledge Repository (OKR) and the Open Data Initiative.

Information Technology Enhancements

In fiscal year 2017, the Bank introduced several simplification mechanisms that enabled staff to electronically capture records in the Bank's official record-keeping systems. For example, the new mobile phone filing functionality allows World Bank mobile users to more easily and readily file documents. Several enhancements were made to the Documents & Reports database, including the addition of a new translation tool to support access to non-English document abstracts and titles; as well as process improvements to simplify the capture and disclosure of final reports.

Training and Outreach

Over 1,000 staff in Washington, DC, and country offices were trained on new filing techniques. Advanced training was provided to regional and global practice records and information coordinators in support of a campaign to encourage electronic filing of records. The Bank also launched a new and improved training module on access to information, classification and records management targeting all World Bank staff.

Proactive Disclosure and Open Access

Proactive disclosure and open access are two key aspects of transparency and openness at the Bank. Proactive disclosure is maximized through Documents & Reports, the World Bank's official disclosure mechanism for project documents, reports, and publications. This database currently contains over 280,000 public documents produced by the Bank Group since 1946. The Open Knowledge Repository, the Bank's official open access repository for its research outputs and knowledge products, is interoperable with other open access repositories and offers a robust range of usage statistics, including those by title, series, country, and author. Both Documents & Reports and the OKR have seen increasing usage and downloads over the past fiscal year.

OPEN KNOWLEDGE REPOSITORY

The World Bank Open Knowledge Repository (OKR) is the World Bank's official open access repository for its research outputs and knowledge products. The OKR is constantly updated with new content, as well as legacy reports and research.

2,920,607
abstract views*

4,602,873
downloads

*Refers to the number of distinct individuals requesting pages from the website during a given period, regardless of how often they visit.

OPEN DATA

Open Data enables free access to data portals on health, financial inclusion, poverty and more.

120 million
page views

2.5 million
files downloaded

25,000
development datasets available

DOCUMENTS & REPORTS

The Documents & Reports database is the World Bank's official curated collection of reports and publications.

5,622,464 page views

3,043,835 visits to the site

2,192,764 unique users

15,554,686 downloads

Access to Information (AI) Requests Handled in FY2017

Fiscal year in which the AI request was created	Number of AI requests handled in FY2017*	Number of AI requests closed in FY2017**	Percentage of AI requests closed in FY2017 (%)	Number of AI requests which remained open at the end of FY2017
FY2017	705	674	96	31
FY2016	44	42	95	2
FY2015	6	4	67	2
FY2014	0	0	-	0
FY2013	5	5	100	0
FY2012	1	1	100	0
TOTAL	761	726	95	35

* Handled means that the request was created in FY2017 or was carried over from previous fiscal years as an open case.

** Includes 21 appeals handled during FY2017 (18 appeals filed with the Access to Information Committee (AIC), and three second-level appeals to the AI Appeals Board).

AI Requests Fulfilled (in Whole or in Part) or Denied in FY2017

Of the 726 requests closed in FY2017, a total of 519 requests provided sufficient information and were handled by the AI system. 501 requests were fulfilled in whole or in part and 18 requests were denied in whole without fulfilling any part of the request. The manner in which the remaining 207 were handled is described in the table titled "Manner in Which the Remaining Cases Were Handled."

AI Requests Fulfilled (in Whole or in Part) in FY2017

Indicator	Requests Fulfilled in Whole	Requests Fulfilled in Part	Total
Total number	410	91*	501
% of total	82	18	100

* Of the 91 requests that were fulfilled in part, the outcomes included the following reasons:

- The requester was unresponsive (seven requests)
- The information was restricted by the "Deliberative Information" exception (fifteen requests)
- The information was restricted by the "Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence" exception (three requests)
- Some of the records were not in custody and part of the information was restricted by the "Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence" exception (four requests)
- Part of the information was restricted by the "Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence" and "Corporate Administrative Matters" exceptions (one request)
- Part of the information was restricted by the "Deliberative Information" and "Safety and Security" exceptions (two requests)
- Part of the information was restricted by the "Personal Information" and "Corporate Administrative Matters" exception (one request)
- Part of the information was restricted by the "Deliberative Information" and "Corporate Administrative Matters" exception (one request)
- Some of the records were not in custody and part of the information was restricted by the "Deliberative Information" exception (three requests)
- Some of the records were not in custody and part of the information was restricted by the "Deliberative Information," "Corporate Administrative Matters" and "Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence" exceptions (two requests)
- Part of the request was handled through the Open Data portal (eleven requests)
- Part of the information was restricted by the "Financial Information" exception (one request)
- Some of the records were not in custody (eighteen requests)
- The information was covered by other disclosure policy regimes (eleven requests)
- The information was restricted by the "Attorney-Client Privilege", "Deliberative Information" and "Financial Information" exceptions (one request)
- The information was restricted by the "Attorney-Client Privilege" and "Deliberative Information" exceptions (five requests)
- Some of the records were not in custody and part of the information was restricted by the Bank's Prerogative to Restrict Access (one request)
- Part of the request was handled through the World Bank Development Data team (two requests)
- Part of the request was handled through the World Bank Human Resources Operations (one request)
- Part of the request was handled through the World Bank publishing team (one request)

AI Requests Denied (in Whole or in Part) in FY2017

Of the 519 requests handled by the AI system and closed in FY2017, 18 requests were denied in whole or in part, without fulfilling any part of the request.

Indicator	Requests Denied	Denied and Records Not in Custody	Total
Total number	14	4	18
Percent of total	78	22	100

Of the 18 requests that were denied in whole or in part without fulfilling any part of the request, the outcomes were due to the following reasons:

- The information was restricted by the "Deliberative Information" exception (three requests).
- The information was restricted by the "Deliberative Information" and "Attorney-Client Privilege" exceptions (two requests).
- The information was restricted by the "Deliberative Information", "Corporate Administrative Matters" and "Attorney-Client Privilege" exception (one request).
- The information was restricted by the "Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence" exception (seven requests).
- The information was restricted by the "Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence", "Corporate Administrative Matters" exception (one request).
- The information was restricted by the "Corporate Administrative Matters" exception (two requests).
- The information was restricted by the "Financial Information" exception (one request).
- The Bank exercised its Prerogative to Restrict Access (one request)

Manner in Which the Remaining AI Requests Were Handled in FY2017

As mentioned on page 7, of the 726 requests closed in FY2017, a total of 519 were handled by the AI system and a response was provided. The remaining 207 requests were handled as follows:

Indicator	Request for World Bank Data	Information Restricted Under Separate Disclosure Regimes*		Additional Information Needed or Unresponsive Requester	Records not Found in World Bank Custody	Records not Found in World Bank Custody and Unresponsive Requester	Total
		Only the Exception	Exception and Unresponsive Requester				
Total	39	107	2	17	41	1	207

*Requestors were instructed to submit their requests directly to the respective units.

Timeliness of AI Requests Closed in FY2017

Indicator	Number of Requests	Percentage of Requests (%)
Within 20 working days*	524	72
More than 20 working days**	202	28
Total number of requests closed	726	100

* The World Bank endeavors to provide a comprehensive response to AI requests within 20 working days.

** These AI requests required consultations with relevant business units and/or external parties, including member countries and/or the requestors.

Appeals Concluded by the Access to Information Committee (AIC) in FY2017

The AIC received and concluded 18 appeals during FY2017. Of these, two were reversed and the requested information disclosed, four were upheld as being correctly restricted, five were dismissed as ineligible or insufficiently supported, two were reversed/upheld, four were upheld/dismissed, and one was upheld/not considered.

Request number and information requested	Violation of AI Policy	Public interest	Decision on Appeal	Applicable exception(s)
AI4300 Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement "Nuton Jibon" Project	X	X	Reversed	Exception does not apply (violation of policy)
AI4409 Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement "Nuton Jibon" Project	X	X	Upheld (violation of policy)/ Dismissed (public interest)	Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence and Financial Information
AI4431 Bangladesh Income Support Program for the Poorest	X	X	Upheld	Deliberative Information
AI4381 Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement "Nuton Jibon" Project	X	X	Upheld (violation of policy)/ Dismissed (public interest)	Deliberative Information/ Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence and Financial Information
AI4428 Myanmar Agriculture Development Project	X	X	Upheld (final version disclosed)	Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence and Financial Information was in error; draft was Deliberative. Final version was disclosed.
AI4406 Democratic Republic of Congo, Audited Financial Statements for Forest and Nature Conservation Project	X	X	Partially upheld/ partially dismissed	Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence

Appeals Concluded by the Access to Information Committee in FY2017 (continued)

Request number and information requested	Violation of AI Policy	Public interest	Decision on Appeal	Applicable exception(s)
AI4350 Salary Scales		X	Reversed	No exception applies
AI4496 Vietnam Sustainable Agriculture Transformation Project	X	X	Upheld (final version disclosed)	Deliberative Information and final version disclosed
AI4523 Bangladesh Reaching Out of School Children Project	X	X	Partially upheld/ partially reversed	Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence
AI4148 (2nd appeal on additional docs) Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement "Nuton Jibon" Project	X	X	Upheld (violation of policy)/ and dismissed (public interest)	Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence
AI4495 Bangladesh Safe Migration for Bangladeshi Workers Project	X	X	Dismissed	Failure to provide reasons for appeal
AI4498 Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement "Nuton Jibon" Project	X	X	Dismissed	Requested information not in the Bank's possession (denial was in error)
AI4525 Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement "Nuton Jibon" Project	X	X	Dismissed	Requested information not in the Bank's possession (denial was in error)
AI4674 Maldives ASPIRE Project information	X	X	Partially upheld/ partially reversed	Deliberative Information in part, and part of the information was made public

Appeals Concluded by the Access to Information Committee in FY2017 (continued)

Request number and information requested	Violation of AI Policy	Public interest	Decision on Appeal	Applicable exception(s)
AI4218 McNamara records		X	Dismissed	Failure to file within required time
AI4459 Country Policy and Institutional Assessment Dataset	X		Upheld	Deliberative Information
AI4813 Certain information related to the streamlining of the procedures for the disclosure of Board Records	X		Dismissed	No authority to consider (decision by the Board)
AI5009 India Amaravati Sustainable Capital City Development Project Terms of Reference for the independent assessment of the Land Pooling Scheme	X	X	Upheld (violation of policy)/ Not considered (public interest)	Deliberative Information but information was disclosed by exercise of the Bank's prerogative to disclose

Dismissed means that the appeal is not considered on its merits and is, therefore, rejected, because (a) the requester failed to file the appeal within the required time; (b) the requester failed to provide sufficient information that would reasonably support the appeal; or (c) the requester appealed a matter that the AI Committee does not have the authority to consider (e.g., decisions by the Board).

Reversed means that the AI Committee has decided to provide access to the information, overturning the World Bank's initial decision to deny access to the information.

Upheld means that the AI Committee has confirmed the World Bank's initial decision to deny access to the information.

Appeals Concluded by the External AI Appeals Board in FY2017

AI request number and information requested	Upheld or Reversed AI Committee's decision upholding World Bank Decision to Deny Access	Applicable exception(s)
AI4381 Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement "Nuton Jibon" Project	Upheld	Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence, Deliberative Information and Financial Information
AI4300 and AI4409 Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement "Nuton Jibon" Project	Upheld	Information Provided by Member Countries or Third Parties in Confidence, and Financial Information (banking and billing)
AI4431 Bangladesh Income Support Project for the Poorest	Upheld	Deliberative Information

Dismissed means that the appeal is not considered on its merits because (a) the requester failed to file the appeal within the required time; (b) the requester failed to provide sufficient information that would reasonably support the appeal; or (c) the requester appealed a matter that the AI Appeals Board did not have the authority to consider (e.g., decisions by the Board).

Reversed means the AI Appeals Board has decided to provide access to the information, overturning the AI Committee's decision to uphold the World Bank's initial denial of access to the information because there was no violation of policy.

Upheld means that the AI Appeals Board has confirmed the AI Committee's decision to deny access to the information on appeals alleging a violation of the policy; thus, the AI Appeals Board confirms the World Bank's initial decision to deny access to the information.

ACCESS TO HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The World Bank continues to provide greater access to historical information over 20 years of age through the World Bank Group Archives Holdings, https://archivesholdings.worldbank.org/, and the Bank's Projects and Operations database, www.worldbank.org/projects. At the end of fiscal year 2017, the metadata of more than 227,000 folders of archival records were listed for some 7,200 projects in the Projects and Operations database to enhance access to these records. The Archives declassified more than 242,000 pages of archival records in fiscal year 2017, bringing the total number of pages declassified since July 1, 2010, to just over 3.2 million. Some 209,000 pages of archival records were digitized and made available through the Projects & Operations database and through the World Bank Group Archives Holdings. The Archives proactively declassified and added over 600 reports to Documents & Reports. The archives also continues to disclose metadata of Official Use Only reports older than 20 years in Documents & Reports to facilitate known item requests.

In fiscal year 2017, 49 researchers accessed 303,232 pages of archival records declassified under the Access to Information Policy.

ON-SITE RESEARCH

40

Number of researchers on-site in reading room in Washington, DC

259,148

Number of pages researched on-site in reading room in Washington, DC

REMOTE RESEARCH

9

Number of remote researchers

44,084

Number of pages researched remotely

PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS TO BOARD RECORDS

As part of continuing efforts to improve implementation of the AI Policy, procedures addressing requests for certain Board documents and records have been consolidated and streamlined in FY2017. For example, certain requested Board records are now automatically disclosed when internal consultations with Executive Directors and managers result in no concerns being raised about their possible disclosure. Under the updated procedure, only requests for such records which either the Executive Directors or management raise concerns with the possible disclosure are now submitted to the full Board for consideration and decision. This streamlining is part of broader efforts to speed up the disclosure of requested Board documents and records subject to the Board's authority, and in response to feedback from external users.

GENERAL INQUIRIES

In fiscal year 2017, the External and Corporate Relations Vice Presidency continued the use of the UserVoice Helpdesk solution to provide efficient service delivery for general public inquiries. The general public can check public information about the World Bank or submit specific questions through the help desk platform. The requests are addressed in a timely manner by redirecting users to the public link where they can find the requested information. The general public is able to find the answers to the most commonly asked questions 96% of the time they visit the site.

11,405	page hits
1,080	unique users
3,450	average number of answers provided to users per month
96%	first-time answers through web portal

Documents & Reports

is the official disclosure mechanism for more than 280,000 documents starting from the 1940s that enables sharing of the institution's extensive knowledge base and implementing its access to information policy.

The World Bank Group Archives

offers a variety of online historical resources and information products, such as ISAD(G) finding aids, transcripts of oral history interviews, and exhibits featuring the Archives' collection and World Bank history.

Projects & Operations

provides access to basic information on all of the World Bank's lending projects from 1947 to the present.

The Open Knowledge Repository

is the Bank's official open access repository and is interoperable with other open access repositories. It offers a robust range of usage statistics, including those by title, series, country, and author.

The Open Government Partnership

is a multilateral initiative that secures concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens and fight corruption.

International Aid Transparency Initiative

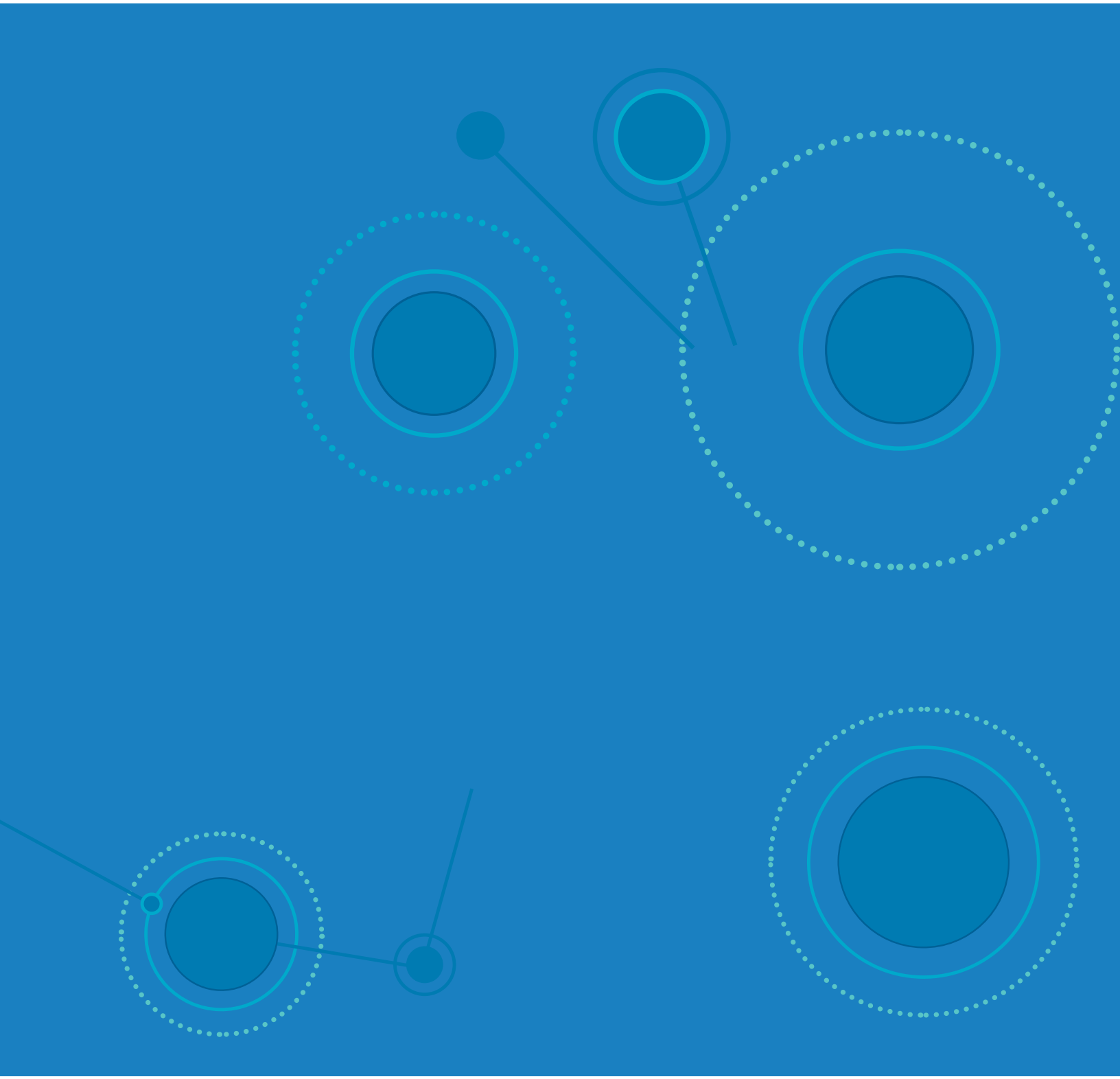
is a global campaign to create transparency in the records of how aid money is spent. The World Bank is an IATI member and publishes data on a quarterly basis.

World Bank Group Finances

makes data related to the WBG's financials available to everybody in a social, interactive, visually compelling, and machine readable format.

Open Data Initiative

provides free and open access to thousands of development data indicators.



THE WORLD BANK
IBRD • IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP