

Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman

The Office of the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman is the independent accountability mechanism of IFC and MIGA, established in 1999 and reporting directly to the president of the World Bank Group. The CAO serves as an ombudsman who responds to complaints from people affected or likely to be affected by projects; as an auditor who assesses IFC's and MIGA's compliance with environmental and social safeguards; and as an advisor, who provides independent advice to the organizations' senior management and president on policies and systemic issues, including those that arise in the process of complaint investigations and compliance audits.

During FY05, the CAO's office received 10 new complaints and continued its work on ongoing cases. Complaints were received regarding projects in Botswana, Georgia, Guatemala,

India, and Kazakhstan. To resolve complainants' issues and avoid future problems, the CAO uses a variety of methods, including mediation, negotiation, and fact-finding with project sponsors, IFC or MIGA management and staff, and affected persons. There was also one compliance audit completed during FY05.

The CAO makes its operational guidelines and all other public documents, including assessment reports on complaints received, available in print and online at www.cao-ombudsman.org. Most Web content is in English, French, and Spanish; the guidelines are available in these languages as well as in Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, and Russian. The guidelines and Web site include a model letter to the CAO's office to assist people in filing a complaint.

