

## TOPIC: The IFIs – Accountability Mechanisms at the Regional Development Banks

**Conceptual rating:** [BASIC to INTERMEDIATE level](#)

**Suggested module objectives:**

- 1) Learn about the accountability mechanisms for the regional development bank relevant for your country
- 2) Provide an opportunity to evaluate the ability to use these mechanisms as a tool to advance gender equality

*Notes to facilitator:*

- a. *These objectives assume that the audience will have at least a rudimentary knowledge of your regional development bank, the role of IFIs, and a gendered critique of IFI policy conditionality.*
- b. *Consider pairing the material from this module with Module 12 in order to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the ability to advance gender equality through your regional development bank.*

**Key concepts:**

- 1) Accountability for adherence to procedures vs. accountability for outcomes of procedures or policies
- 2) Rights and responsibilities of various stakeholders *vis a vis* the relevant regional development bank

**Cross references:**

- ***Link with Module 12*** – Mission and structure of the IFIs
- ***Link with Module 13*** – IFI rationale for not adopting feminist gendered macroeconomic policies
- ***Link with Module 15*** – Gender policies at the regional development banks
- ***Link with Module 16*** – Accountability mechanisms at the World Bank Group and IMF

**Time required:** at least 90 minutes

**Suggested methodology:** BRAINSTORM. Large and small group DISCUSSION.

*Note to facilitator: If reading material can be distributed in advance, that would improve the quality of the discussion. Also, if you can find any case study material related to a particular loan to your country, this would be ideal to use.*

**Relevant readings:**

- Bank Information Center, “Examining the African Development Bank: A Primer for NGOs”, May 2007. Available in French and English.
- Bank Information Center, “Unpacking the ADB: Understanding the Asian Development Bank”, Parts 1 and 2, June 2006. [www.bicusa.org](http://www.bicusa.org). Available in 10 languages.
- Center for Global Development, “Building Africa’s Development Bank: 6 Recommendations for the AfDB and its Shareholders”, 2006.
- Center for Global Development, “A New Era at the Inter-American Development Bank: 6 Recommendations for the New President”, 2006.
- GAP, “Executive Summary: Challenging the Culture of Secrecy A Status Report on the Freedom of Speech at the Asian Development Bank”, 2004.
- GAP, “Executive Summary: Challenging the Culture of Secrecy. A Status Report on the Freedom of Speech at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development”, 2004.
- GAP, “Executive Summary: Challenging the Culture of Secrecy. A Status Report on the Freedom of Speech at the Inter-American Development Bank”, 2004.
- Heinrich Böll Foundation, Gender Action, CIEL, “Gender Justice: A Citizen’s Guide to Gender Accountability at International Financial Institutions” 2007.
- Indian Law Resource Center, “Comments on the IDB’s profile of its Operational Policy on Indigenous Peoples”, August 12, 2004.
- Indian Law Resource Center, Position Paper on “Indigenous Peoples’ Right to Free and Informed Prior Consent...”, 2003.
- Inter-American Development Bank, Operational Policy on Indigenous Peoples (draft), June 29, 2005.

***To read about possible alternative regional institutions:***

- Hankyoreh, “ASEA +3 Agrees on Asian Monetary Fund”, May 2007. (compilation of news reports)
- Christian Science Monitor, “Latin America’s Answer to the World Bank and IMF”, July 11, 2006.
- McElhinny, Vince, “Bank of the South”, BIC Info Brief, November 2007.
- Zibechi, Raul, “Bank of the South: Toward Financial Autonomy”, Americas Program Report, July 6, 2007.

### **Preparation and supplies needed:**

- Newsprint pad/flip chart paper and markers to record certain parts of the discussion
- Review suggested reading material.
- Review the relevant regional development bank, BIC, and GenderAction websites to determine whether there are any new developments with respect to the accountability policies and procedures that should be incorporated into this module. Check if there have been any articles written about a project or complaints filed by a group in your country. This would make ideal case study material.
- Duplicate relevant copies of articles to distribute.
- Duplicate copies of the relevant accountability mechanism analysis and comparative charts in the Appendices of “Gender Justice” (OR acquire enough copies of the entire manual for participants.)
- On flipchart/newsprint paper, write out the questions you want the small groups to consider. If the groups will be in different rooms, make enough copies of the questions for each group to have one. Note: if there is a lot of reading material, consider a division of labor among the groups concerning which documents and policies to analyze. Divide up the reading to make it manageable in a limited time.
- Research whether there are any active groups and efforts geared to holding your regional development bank more accountable in your country. Be prepared to share this information during the session.

### **Suggested content to be covered:**

- Accountability policies and procedures (formal and informal) at the relevant regional development bank.
- Evaluation of these policies and procedures, with a focus on how effective they have been and could be in promoting gender equity.
- Discussion of how to improve accountability with respect to gender equity in the relevant regional development bank.
- Discussion of any groups doing work to reform your regional development bank and whether they have taken on gender as part of the reform.

### **Description of how to conduct the session:**

1. Welcome by host group(s) and introduction of facilitator(s); provide any needed logistical information; outline goals for session.
2. Depending on size of group, invite participants to introduce themselves, share an expectation or question they bring. (Record expectations or questions on newsprint, if you are doing this step, and refer to them

- throughout the session.) If this is part of a larger economic literacy effort and the group has already met, this step may be shortened or eliminated.
3. **BRAINSTORM.** Warm up the group by asking them to talk about whom they think the regional development bank is accountable to and how. Take notes on newsprint/flip chart paper.
  4. **REVIEW** quickly, if necessary, the decision-making structure of the regional development bank, and key points in the loan cycle. Prepare participants to work in small groups. Distribute reading material, if it was not done in advance of the workshop. Review the questions you want small groups to discuss.
  5. **Small group DISCUSSION.** Break into smaller working groups of about 5-7 people. Be sure to allow enough time for them to read the material, if it was not distributed in advance. If there is too much material, assign different portions to different groups to read and assess. Formulate questions for the groups along the lines of the content points suggested in the section above.
  6. **Large group DISCUSSION.** De-brief the small group work, going through each question and asking for comments from the audience. If the groups all read and discussed the same documents, one way to ensure more equal participation is to invite a different group each time to begin talking about their answer to a particular question. Track the salient points re: strengths and weaknesses of accountability mechanisms.
  7. Help the group synthesize what they learned by first asking them what ideas they have to improve the regional bank's accountability mechanisms. If there are groups in your country working to reform the regional development bank, talk about the extent they are integrated gender as part of their work. Supply information about their efforts and contact data.
  8. If this is part of a larger economic literacy effort, link this session to the next one. Provide logistical details related to the next session, as appropriate. Thank the audience for their participation.

**Ideas for alternative methodologies/modification of the level of discussion:**

- **For a more basic audience:** Instead of reading and small group discussion, consider inviting one or more speakers to talk about these issues or share the information in a lecture format.
- **For a more advanced audience:** In addition to the analysis and small group work, consider inviting a representative of the regional development bank (if possible) to speak to the group.

**Some useful organizations or websites related to this topic:**

- [www.adb.org](http://www.adb.org) Official website of the Asian Development Bank
- [www.afdb.org](http://www.afdb.org) Official website of the African Development Bank

- [www.bicusa.org](http://www.bicusa.org)
- [www.bankwatch.org](http://www.bankwatch.org) Website of CEE Bankwatch Network, a coalition of Eastern and Central European IFI watchers, with a focus on the EBRD and the EIB
- [www.ciel.org](http://www.ciel.org)
- [www.dawnnet.org](http://www.dawnnet.org)
- [www.ebrd.org](http://www.ebrd.org) Official website of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- [www.eib.org](http://www.eib.org) Official website of the European Investment Bank
- [www.forum-adb.org](http://www.forum-adb.org) Website of the NGO Forum on the ADB
- [www.genderaction.org](http://www.genderaction.org)
- [www.iadb.org](http://www.iadb.org) Official website of the Inter-American Development Bank
- [www.jubileesouth.org](http://www.jubileesouth.org)
- [www.oneworldtrust.org](http://www.oneworldtrust.org)
- [www.socialwatch.org](http://www.socialwatch.org)
- [www.whistleblower.org](http://www.whistleblower.org) Government Accountability Project, look under “International Reform” and “Multilateral Development Banks”