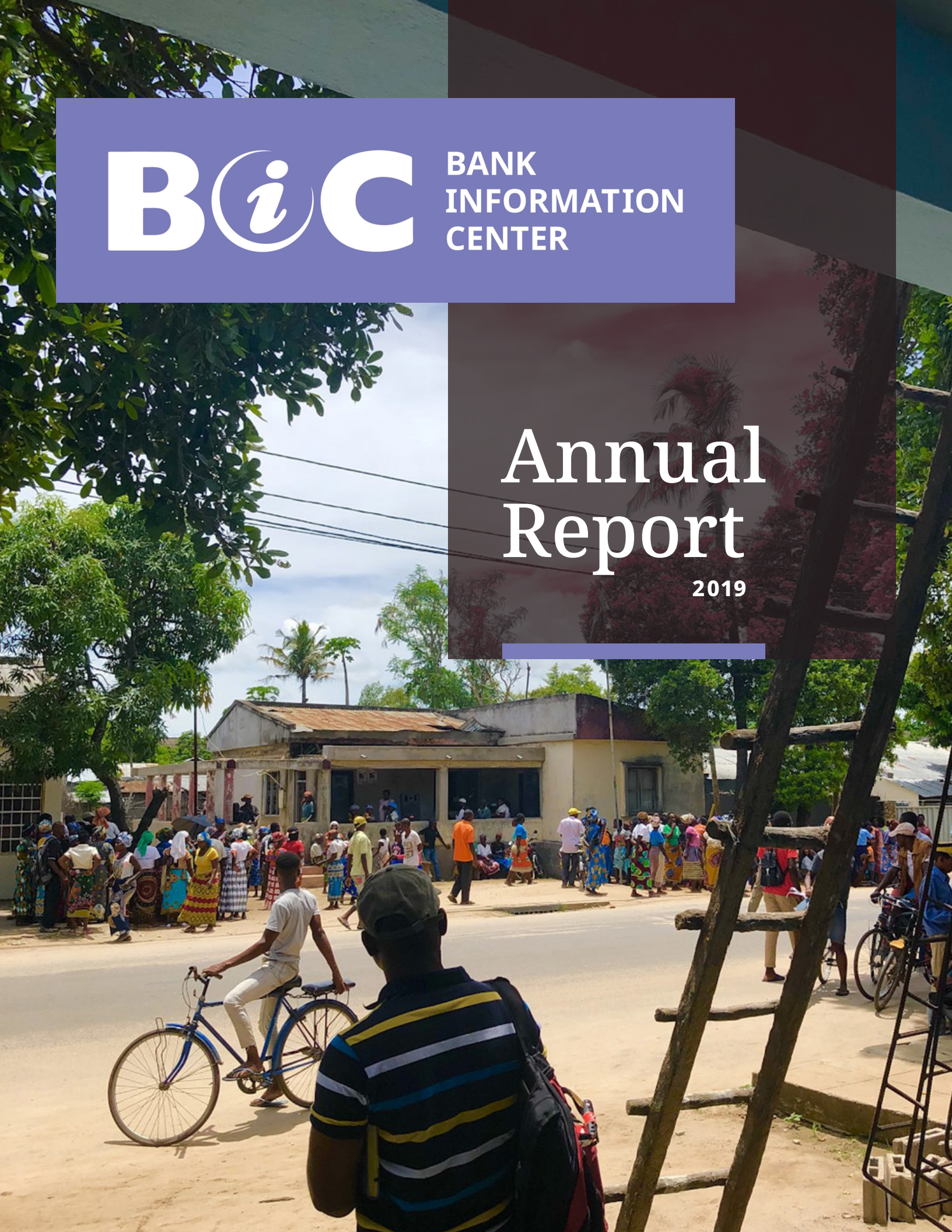




**BANK
INFORMATION
CENTER**

Annual Report

2019



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DEAR PARTNERS,

Over the course of 2019 the Bank Information Center (BIC) continued work towards our vision of a world where development is driven by communities, reduces poverty and inequality, sustains the environment, and fulfills human rights. This was a year of expansion for BIC, both geographically and thematically. While the World Bank continued to be our primary focus, we brought on new staff and increased our engagement with the Inter-American Development Bank and the African Development Bank.

When we as BIC gathered to develop our new strategy in 2018 we asked the question, what would need to happen to put BIC out of business. What would a world where BIC was no longer needed look like? We came up with two answers. The first is a world in which the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) themselves prioritized communities at the heart of development and genuinely worked to achieve the highest standards of environmental sustainability, inclusion, and human rights in all their policies, projects, and programs. The second is a world in which communities and grassroots civil society organizations (CSOs) are fully equipped to hold the MDBs accountable for adherence to these high standards in all of the institutions' activities in their communities, countries, and regions. BIC's work in 2019 endeavored to move us closer to such a world along both of these tracks.

2019 brought both unique challenges for our work along with significant new opportunities for pushing the MDBs to themselves prioritize communities at the heart of development. Chief among these was the appointment of David Malpass, who had previously expressed skepticism about the existence of climate change, as World Bank President. In the face of his candidacy, BIC engaged in a concerted campaign aimed at World Bank shareholder governments designed to encourage them to hold Mr. Malpass accountable for continuing to implement the climate commitments made by the World Bank under President Kim. These efforts were successful, as we've seen no backsliding on climate commitments under President Malpass. While the World Bank has a long way to go to make its lending, especially its private sector lending, climate sensitive, it is critical that the gains of the best have cemented, so that we may build on this foundation going forward.

In order to better equip grassroots CSOs to hold MDBs accountable for the impacts of their projects and programs on communities, BIC focused on significant capacity building activities in 2019. This began with BIC creating materials on opportunities for engagement with the MDBs which were then used for advocacy trainings in Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. Each of these were several day workshops co-organized with regional partners. However, we recognize that simply providing training and information on how MDBs work is insufficient to enabling local CSOs to truly take the lead in holding MDBs accountable. Therefore, BIC also works with its partners to develop advocacy plans

As BIC looks forward, we are eager to build on many of the gains and achievements made in 2019. As we strengthen our engagement and advocacy efforts, we hope 2020 will present an opportunity to promote more inclusive, sustainable development.

We'd like to thank all of our partners and supporters for your continued engagement with our work. By building a global community, we can achieve a more socially, ecologically, and economically just world. We look forward to continuing our work with you in 2020.



Warm regards,

ELANA BERGER
Executive Director

Regional Work



In 2019, BIC was able to expand our regional work with a new focus on West Africa. In addition to our existing coordinator for East Africa, we hired a West Africa coordinator based in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. We also transitioned our Latin America coordinator to full time and increased our engagement with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). BIC supported our partners in

incubating the new Arab Watch Coalition, formalizing the network of partners in the MENA region that BIC has cultivated for the past ten years. BIC also maintained staff focal points for Asia and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECA) based in DC.

Campaigns



CHILD RIGHTS

BIC's Child Rights Campaign advocates for strengthening International Financial Institution (IFI) policies and programs to prevent negative impacts of projects on children. In particular, the campaign emphasizes the need for IFIs to put in place measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in IFI funded projects. The campaign also aims to open more space and opportunity for children and youth to participate in and influence the development process. As the World Bank and other IFIs have recognized, ending poverty must begin with children and ensuring their protection and inclusion in the development process is key to achieving their goals.

PROJECTS

In 2019, BIC worked with Kestra Nepal (BKN), a child rights organization, and the National Indigenous Disabled Women's Association Nepal (NIDWAN) to monitor the **Nepal Modernization of Rani-Jamara Kulariya Irrigation Scheme - Phase 2 (MoRJKIP)**, an irrigation project in the rural Terai region of the country. While the project documents did not envision a large labor influx due to the project, our partners on the ground reported migrant laborers moving in to perform work. This is concerning, as it suggests the Bank is either downplaying the level of migrant labor to avoid its own requirements or lacks the capacity to correctly assess the labor influx. Early reports from our partners monitoring the project indicate that there may be children working on the project when not attending school. BIC has identified an additional partner in Nepal with experience in addressing child sexual exploitation and will work with them to do a deeper analysis of the project going forward.

BIC continued to focus on the rights of children in the infrastructure projects, working with partners to monitor road projects that the Bank itself flagged as having high gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) risk. With partner Fundacion Tierra (FT), BIC examined the risks to Indigenous children in the **Santa Cruz Road Corridor Project in Bolivia**. With BIC and FT's advocacy, the Bank's task team leader demonstrated commitment to addressing issues related to child SEA and GBV in the project, including by supporting communities and CSOs in engaging in third party monitoring of project-related impacts.

DISABILITY RIGHTS

BIC's Disability Rights Campaign partners with disabled persons' organizations (DPOs) to advocate to the IFIs to ensure full access to project benefits for persons with disabilities. We work to systematically include disability in World Bank and other IFI operations so that the needs and rights of persons with disabilities are supported and fulfilled.



PROJECTS

In the **Metro Line 2 Project**, BIC, together with Peruvian organization Sociedad y Discapacidad (SODIS), has been working for many years advocating for the development of the PIISTA (accessibility) Plan. The Plan, as released to SODIS in March 2019, calls for universal access for persons with disabilities, but fails to provide details beyond physical accessibility for the trains and stations themselves. It also does not include information on easy to read signage, a significant problem in the inaccessible bus rapid transit system in Lima, which prevents many people with intellectual disabilities and people who are blind from navigating the metro system. BIC continues to work with SODIS to push for a more inclusive metro system.

BIC also supported SODIS in advocacy on the Bank's project to **modernize the Peruvian justice system**, encouraging the Bank to change the project design so that persons with disabilities would also benefit from improved access to justice after SODIS detailed the many barriers persons with disabilities face when accessing the justice system. By March 2019, the Bank changed the design of the project to include accessibility measures for court buildings.

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE

BIC's Environment and Climate Campaign promotes development finance that advances the highest international environmental standards. The campaign focuses primarily on forest conservation and the need for development finance projects to be climate smart. We do this by encouraging International Financial Institutions to meet the environmental commitments they have made publicly, to be transparent as to the environmental and human impacts of their projects, and to endeavor to minimize negative impacts on the climate as well as on communities and the ecosystems they depend on. We have a particular emphasis on supporting Indigenous People and forest peoples in their roles as forest stewards.



PROJECTS

In 2019, BIC started monitoring an IDB project in Bolivia, along with partner Fundacion Tierra. The **Rural Land Regularization and Titling** project operates in an area suffering from high rates of land clearing and forest fires. Project monitoring identified a lack of transparency and access to information to monitor how the executing agency has been implementing the project. BIC and FT also found that the main mitigation measures developed in the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) hadn't been implemented by the Borrower, especially around the lack of dialogue with project-affected communities. Through BIC and FT's advocacy, the IDB paused disbursement of funds until the borrower complies with the safeguards requirements.

We also engaged with long-standing partners to support the engagement of Indigenous Peoples in monitoring an **Emission Reduction (ER) program** financed by

the **Forest Carbon Partnership Framework (FCPF)** in Peru. BIC supported and co-sponsored a Workshop in Tarapoto, San Martín (Perú) where participants planned an advocacy strategy to elevate the concerns on the design and implementation of the Emission Reduction Program, particularly focusing on the benefit-sharing components of the plan.

Finally, we are working with Brazilian partner INESC to monitor an International Finance Corporation (IFC)-supported **transport project in the Amazon**, with major impacts on forests and forest peoples. Under this project, the IFC is funding Hidrovias do Brazil to expand its ports and river transportation platform in the Brazilian Amazon for export of commodities.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION & GENDER IDENTITY

BIC's Campaign on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity (SOGI) promotes stronger protections for sexual and gender minorities impacted by World Bank projects and works to achieve key institutional changes at the IFIs that ensure a more inclusive approach to gender as well as SOGI. Sexual and gender minorities face discrimination, human rights abuses and frequent exclusion from the benefits of economic development. Without strong policies and practices in place to ensure their protection and inclusion, IFIs risk excluding these individuals — often some of the poorest and most marginalized — from benefiting from development and may reinforce or exacerbate existing inequalities.

PROJECTS

Although BIC did not monitor any projects from a SOGI-specific perspective in 2019, we remain committed to assisting partners and advocating for the inclusion of SOGI consideration in all IFI projects.





STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

BIC's Stakeholder Engagement Campaign pushes for increased opportunities for civil society and communities to have a meaningful voice in the development process. We advocate for greater transparency and public access to information about development projects financed by International Financial Institutions, involvement of those who will be directly impacted by development projects in their design and implementation, and upstream opportunities for civil society to feed into development planning processes and institutional policies.

PROJECTS

In Tanzania, BIC worked with the Foundation for Economic Management and Campaign Against Poverty (FEMAPO) to get involved in the stakeholder engagement components of the World Bank-funded **Productive Social Safety Net II (PSSN II) project**. Although the project had been approved, implementation had not yet begun, making this an optimal time to engage closely with project implementers and designers on their plans for engaging communities and civil society in the project. Through interviews and focus groups with communities, FEMAPO found that stakeholder engagement plans

and requirements were much better understood at the national levels, while local level implementers still did not have sufficient information on stakeholder engagement requirements for the project. In addition, FEMAPO identified gaps in how the project planned to include civil society organizations in addition to community stakeholders in the project, and they communicated their recommendations for how CSOs could better be engaged in the process with the World Bank and project implementers.

CLASII

BIC also hosts the China Latin America Sustainable Infrastructure Initiative (CLASII) run by Paulina Garzon. CLASII supports the protection of the environment and of local communities within the framework of Chinese investments in Latin America and the Caribbean. To achieve this, CLASII promotes a quality implementation of the commitments of Chinese entities aimed at protecting the environment and the rights of local communities.



PROJECTS

In 2019, CLASII joined efforts with Centro Amazónico de Antropología y Aplicación Práctica, Wildlife Conservation Society and Universidad de Tecnología e Ingeniería to develop an advocacy plan for the Amazon Waterway Project in Peru. The Amazon Waterway is a project meant to dredge the four most important rivers in the Peruvian Amazon to create deeper and faster-moving channels for cargo ships. The project will affect 424 native communities, and Peruvian organizations have been incredibly concerned because of the colossal environmental

impacts of the project over communities' livelihoods that fully depend on the rivers. CLASII mobilized a workshop and developed an advocacy plan. CLASII connected the Peruvian organizations with partners in Brazil and in Beijing to draw attention to the project and its potential transboundary impacts on Brazilian fisheries. Thanks to CLASII partners' advocacy, China implicitly recognized that it has extra-territorial responsibilities concerning the rights of local communities abroad.

Advocacy Highlights

BIC engaged in a large number of advocacy campaigns over the course of 2019. In addition to campaigns around disability, child rights, forests, climate change, and stakeholder engagement, described above, highlights of our advocacy included engagement in the safeguards review at the IDB Invest, the private sector arm of the Inter-American Development Bank and the review process around the World Bank Inspection Panel. BIC also continued its social inclusion advocacy with the Inclusive Education Checklist and engaged with the IFC on protecting the rights of environmental defenders.



IDB INVEST ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY REVIEW

BIC played an effective role bringing together a coalition of CSOs to engage in the IDB Invest's Environmental and Social (E&S) Sustainability Policy review. BIC coordinated advocacy planning amongst CSOs and arranged meetings with key decision makers to push policy recommendations. BIC organized the development of a letter to IDB and IDB Invest management to call for an effective, inclusive, and meaningful consultation during the safeguards review. As a result, IDB Invest reached out to BIC to request help in arranging the consultations and inviting CSOs. BIC played a major role disseminating campaign information to CSOs and allies to better enable them to participate in the review process.

BIC led in coordinating input from the broader CSO community on a **collective submission to the IDB Invest** on the proposed Environmental and Social Sustainability

Policy. This CSO submission, endorsed by 45 organizations, laid out strong and clear recommendations during the consultation phase. The submission represented the single most significant collective effort in the process and helped to craft key messages that would serve as the basis for continued advocacy.

In October BIC organized a meeting that included representatives from all the Chairs of the IDB Board to present CSOs' main recommendations on the E&S Sustainability Policy. We encouraged them to change the policy by adding a stakeholder and gender standard, strengthening safeguard supervision and implementation, guiding the policy by the do-good principle, including IFC's lessons learned regarding financial intermediaries, and establishing explicit learning and adaptations functions for IDB Invest.

ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW AT THE WORLD BANK

BIC continued to engage in the World Bank's review of the Inspection Panel's toolkit that began in 2017 and aimed to update and modernize the Panel. BIC welcomed the approval of measures to recognize the Panel's advisory role, clarify its jurisdiction over Bank-Executed Trust Funds, formalize its current practice of coordinating with Independent Accountability Mechanisms (IAMs) in co-financing situations, and update procedures for sharing information with requesters. While recognizing these victories, BIC continued to advocate for the Bank to include important functions of monitoring all non-compliance for remedy, a dispute resolution mechanism, and extending the time eligibility of requests. BIC urged the WB Board to approve those measures to empower the Panel with all of the tools necessary to provide meaningful redress and institutional accountability.



SOCIAL INCLUSION

BIC was pleased to see a greater focus on inclusive education both from advocates in DC as well as from the World Bank in 2019, but we continue to push for a systematic approach to education that truly supports the needs of all marginalized groups. In May 2019, the Bank released its **Equity and Inclusion in Education Report**, highlighting its progress in developing inclusive education projects, the lessons learned, and the framework for inclusive project design moving forward.

Driven by our findings that there is little internal oversight of Bank education projects, we worked with the United States Executive Director's (ED) office on a tool to put more of a focus on inclusive education. In October 2019, BIC, along with key partners, published the **Inclusive Education Checklist**, which highlights key elements of an inclusive World Bank education project. The Checklist is designed to spark conversation at the Board about what inclusive education projects look like, who could be left out if projects are not inclusive, and what needs to change to design inclusive projects moving forward. This can also serve as a tool for task team leaders to ensure fundamental aspects of inclusion are captured at the design stage.



Events

BIC hosted two major multi-day workshops, along with a large number of smaller events in 2019. Working with FEMAPO in Tanzania, BIC hosted a workshop titled “Using Entry Points in World Bank Policy to Monitor and Influence Development.” Civil society groups from Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi and Kenya joined the workshop, including both individuals new to engagement with the World Bank and longtime BIC partners who were able to share their experience engaging with the World Bank. BIC worked with the Inspection Panel to enable them to host a one hour outreach session during the workshop to share the role and work of the Panel, and to answer questions from participants about the process for filing an Inspection Panel complaint.

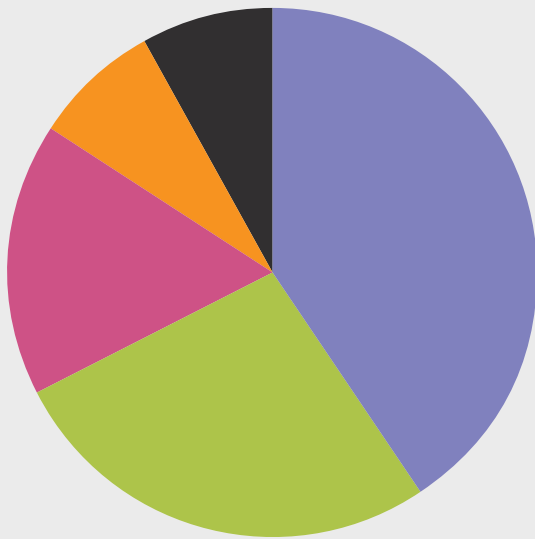
BIC also co-hosted, with CEE Bankwatch and Green Alternative, a workshop that looked at IFI engagement more broadly than just the World Bank. This workshop welcomed participants from Georgia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, and Armenia and included significant discussion around projects and engagement at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Both workshops took place over three days and concluded with sessions in which BIC and its co-hosts worked with participants to identify potentially problematic World Bank, and other IFI, funded projects in their countries. This was followed by discussion about how to identify potential paths for advocacy around these projects and next steps for follow up. In preparation for these workshops, BIC developed [a guide to the Environmental and Social Framework \(ESF\) and potential entry points for engagement in Environmental and Social Standard \(ESS\) 10](#).



BIC also led and co-hosted several shorter informational events. Together with the Bretton Woods Project, BIC hosted a **full day event examining the impact of the Bretton Woods Institutions as they turn 75**. The event, while held in DC, was live streamed and well-attended by a large number of partners from around the world, as well as many representatives from the Bretton Woods Institutions themselves.

In October 2019, BIC and Both Ends were invited to coordinate and lead a workshop in El Salvador on Introduction to International Financial Institutions focusing on the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. It was a great opportunity to share our case experiences and project monitoring work in the LAC region and learn from the inspiring work feminist organizations in Mesoamerica are doing to elevate women’s voices.

Finances



- Social Inclusion: \$825,963
- Policy: \$543,815
- Environment: \$336,374
- CLASII: \$155,477
- Admin: \$161,280

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