

Ramanie Kunanayagam Becomes Inspection Panel Chair



Ramanie Kunanayagam became chair of the World Bank Inspection Panel on January 1, succeeding Imrana Jalal. Ms. Kunanayagam, a Sri Lankan-born Australian citizen with a master's degree in anthropology, began her five-year term on the Panel on December 16, 2018, following three decades of experience across diverse geopolitical and multicultural environments in the private and public sectors. Shortly before assuming her new duties, she answered questions about what brought her to the Panel and how the experience has been so far. [More](#)

William Romans Appointed DRS Head of Operations



William Romans has been appointed head of operations for the Dispute Resolution Service (DRS) and dispute resolution senior specialist. Mr. Romans joined the Accountability Mechanism Secretariat as a consultant in August 2021. As senior adviser, he played a key role in drafting the interim operating procedures for the DRS and has been centrally involved in its first case, which is related to the Request for Inspection of the Second Kampala Institutional and Infrastructure Development Project in Uganda. He brings to the job experience working in staff positions with international organizations over the course of more than 20 years. [More](#)

Birgit Kuba Appointed Inspection Panel Senior Investigations Officer



Birgit Kuba has been appointed to the position of senior investigations officer at the Inspection Panel. Ms. Kuba has worked at the Panel since January 2014, first as junior professional officer and, starting in January 2016, as an operations officer. In her new role, she will assist in researching, assessing, analyzing, investigating and preparing the required documents and case material through the different phases of the Panel's work and take the lead on behalf of the Secretariat for certain Panel cases. She will also offer expertise on social safeguards and policy and provide legal rigor on all documents and reports prepared by the Panel. [More](#)

CASE DEVELOPMENTS

INDIA: Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project – Inspection Panel Issues Notice of Receipt



The Inspection Panel on March 15 issued a Notice of Receipt of a Request for Inspection of the project from 34 community members living in the Chamoli District in Uttarakhand, India. The Requesters allege that project has caused harm related to physical cultural resources, involuntary resettlement, and inadequate consultation and disclosure of information. The Requesters also allege intimidation and reprisals that affect their ability to have their views heard. They have asked the Panel to keep their identities confidential and authorized three individuals to represent them. The Panel is currently reviewing the Request in accordance with its mandate and operating procedures. [More](#)

NEPAL: Nepal-India Electricity Transmission and Trade Project and Additional Financing – Board Approves Panel Recommendation to Investigate; Parties Offered DR



The World Bank Board of Executive Directors on March 3 approved an Inspection Panel recommendation to investigate the project and its additional financing in Nepal. Under the [updated Inspection Panel resolution](#) and the [resolution creating the World Bank Accountability Mechanism \(AM\)](#), now that the Board has approved the Panel's recommendation to investigate, the complainants and borrower will be offered the option of dispute resolution by the AM Secretary acting as head of the [Dispute Resolution Service](#). [More](#)

NEPAL: Nepal-India Regional Trade and Transport Project – Board Approves Inspection Panel Recommendation Not to Investigate



The Board on January 25 approved an Inspection Panel recommendation not to investigate the project. In its Report and Recommendation to the Board, the Panel noted the concerns of the Requesters and weaknesses in the project's consultation, disclosure and stakeholder engagement processes. But the Panel stated it did not find sufficient grounds to recommend an investigation. In making that decision, it considered (i) the lack of a plausible causal link between the project and the harm alleged regarding historical grievances and (ii) the application of Bank policies in relation to the assessment of project impact on cultural assets and indigenous people, as well as to the design and implementation of mitigation and enhancement measures. [More](#)

UGANDA: Second Kampala Institutional and Infrastructure Development Project – Dispute Resolution Process Underway



The parties to the case have begun the dispute resolution process to address the issues raised in the Request for Inspection of the project. World Bank Accountability Mechanism (AM) Secretary Orsolya Székely in December had informed the Board, the Panel and Bank management that the parties had agreed to engage in the process. The case marked the first time since the Board approved the AM and updated Panel resolutions in 2020 that the complainants and borrower involved in a Request to the Panel were offered the option of dispute resolution. [More](#)

TOGO: West Africa Coastal Areas Resilience Investment Project – Inspection Panel’s Eligibility Recommendation is Pending



A Panel recommendation on whether to investigate the project is pending. The Board in November 2021 had approved the Panel’s decision to defer the recommendation for six months. The Requesters allege that the project will adversely affect the fisherfolk, residents, and property owners along the Togolese coast. In recommending the deferral, the Panel noted that Bank management had agreed to a list of actions to respond to the concerns raised in the Request and that those commitments were defined, measurable and timebound. [More](#)

UGANDA: North-Eastern Road-corridor Asset Management Program – Panel Finalizing Investigation Report



The Inspection Panel is finalizing its Investigation Report. The Board approved a Panel recommendation to investigate the project in March 2021 and a Panel team conducted its investigation visit last November after the COVID-19-related travel restriction was lifted. The Request for Inspection was submitted on October 1, 2020, by 10 community members representing eight families from the project area. Among other things, they allege a large rock in their community that the project planned to use as a stone quarry was not properly valued and that the resulting compensation is insufficient. They also argue that the land acquisition process in the surrounding buffer zone did not comply with Bank policy. [More](#)

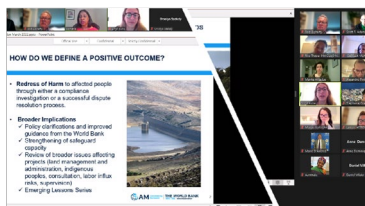
INDIA: Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project for Low Income States – Panel Investigation Report Remains with the Board



The Inspection Panel Investigation Report remains with the Board. The Panel submitted the report in January 2020 and shared it with Requesters in February 2020 so they could be involved in the development of the Management Action Plan (MAP). Preparation of the MAP continues to be delayed because travel restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have affected Bank management’s ability to conduct in-person consultations with the affected communities. [More](#)

OUTREACH

AM Hosts Columbia University Human Rights Advocates Program



The World Bank Accountability Mechanism (AM) on March 17 hosted a virtual information session for participants in the [Human Rights Advocates Program at Columbia University](#). AM Secretary Orsolya Székely, Inspection Panel Chair Ramanie Kunanayagam, Panel Senior Investigations Officer Birgit Kuba and Senior Dispute Resolution Officer Scott Adams spoke to the group about the work of the Panel and Dispute Resolution Service and answered questions on several issues. The Human Rights Advocates Program provides grassroots leaders the tools, knowledge, access and networks to strengthen their organizations and promote human rights. Participants in this year’s program are from Barbados, Cameroon, Colombia, Georgia, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Guatemala, Haiti, Mexico, Nepal, North Macedonia and Uganda. [More](#)

ABOUT THE WORLD BANK ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM

The World Bank Accountability Mechanism is an independent complaints mechanism for people and communities who believe that they have been, or are likely to be, adversely affected by a World Bank-funded project. It aims to promote accountability at the World Bank by ensuring that project-affected people have access to an independent body to which they can express their concerns and seek recourse. The World Bank Board of Executive Directors created the mechanism in 2020. It houses both the Inspection Panel, which was created in 1993 as the first independent accountability mechanism at an international financial institution and carries out impartial compliance reviews, and the Dispute Resolution Service, which facilitates a voluntary and independent dispute resolution option for complainants and borrowers in the context of Requests for Inspection to the Inspection Panel. The Accountability Mechanism Secretary and Inspection Panel Members report directly to the Board.