

**The Compliance Advisor Ombudsman announces eligibility of complaint against International Finance Corporation's (IFC) investment in Bridge International Academies (BIA).**

---

**(Nairobi, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2018)**

After a thorough screening process, the [Compliance Advisor Ombudsman \(CAO\)](#), a complaint mechanism of the IFC, found the complaint against the World Bank's investment in Bridge International Academies (Bridge), [eligible](#). The [complaint](#), which was submitted by 9 Kenyan citizens on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018, raised concerns over the negative social impact of Bridge in Kenya, where the American-owned company runs over 400 schools.

Bridge is a for-profit, commercial chain of low cost private schools with institutions in Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Liberia and India. The company's operations have raised concerns over the threat they pose to the right to education at both the community and national level. These concerns have been documented and corroborated by various [independent sources](#), including both [journalists](#) and [academics](#), with evidence clearly showing Bridge's lack of respect of the rule of law, lack of compliance with education standards, and lack of transparency and accountability.

In a recent [blog post](#) published on UNESCO's World Education Blog, Linda Oduor-Noah, a project manager at EACHRights, provided an outline of the development of and submission of the complaint and the steps taken thus far to hold Bridge to account. These actions have included engaging with the IFC on more than one occasion, in addition to appraising them of the growing body of evidence and concerns around Bridge. To date, no adequate response has been received.

Dr Judith Oloo, the Regional Director at EACHRights stated "*Provision of Education requires transparency and accountability, especially for actors serving marginalised groups. The confirmation of eligibility marks the beginning of a process that we hope will result in investors being held accountable for the impact of their investments in fairness to the hundreds of children, parents and teachers who are daily affected by these violations. We look forward to working with the CAO throughout the whole process.*"

The CAO will now begin the process of conducting an assessment into the issues raised.

**END**

---

## **CONTACTS**

- The East African Centre for Human Rights (EACHRights): Linda Oduor-Noah, [linda@eachrights.or.ke](mailto:linda@eachrights.or.ke), +254 7 01 67 00 90

## **DOCUMENTS**

- CAO Complaint Eligibility Acceptance Letter <https://bit.ly/2LpXLmB>
- CAO Complaint <https://bit.ly/2JQNTBI>
- Blog: “Using international accountability mechanisms: A test case for private education in Kenya” <https://bit.ly/2KtcCeU>
- Open Letter to investors of Bridge International Academies <https://bit.ly/2F31CIU>
- Report on Bridge International Academies in Kenya: <http://bit.ly/2h1Rml9> and human rights analysis <http://bit.ly/2tm7JLs>