



The World Bank Group

A Dialogue on Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Washington, DC- May 12, 2014

- The World Bank Group held dialogue on mainstreaming citizen engagement in World Bank Group (WBG) Operations, convened via videoconferencing with Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan (audio) and Washington DC.
- The meeting brought together participants from some 30 organizations representing academia, civil society, government, foundations, and the private sector (See list of participating organizations).
- Astrid Manroth, Advisor, Openness and Aid Effectiveness, outlined how the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in WBG Operations is being approached.
- Moderators: Lara Saade, Senior Communications Officer, in Washington, D.C; Donia Jemail, Communications Associate, in Tunisia; and Zeina El-Khalil, Communications Officer, in Lebanon.
- This summary focuses on the feedback received from the participants.

Main Issues Raised by Category

General Comments

- Closing the feedback loop is an important part of citizen engagement.
- WBG citizen engagement should be broader, deeper and more systematic than ad hoc consultations. The question is how to move from existing examples of citizen engagement in WB projects to real systematic policy that is committed to community participation. Citizen engagement needs a clear process and real commitment.
- Ensuring that citizens receive relevant information in a timely manner prior to consultation is important, as citizens need time to prepare their recommendations.

- The reform of social protection in Tunisia is an example of how citizens can participate.
- CE should be integrated at the conception of the project and not just in its implementation or evaluation.
- Is CE going to be integrated in WB safeguards procedures and how? Will there be a procedure to hold WBG accountable for citizen engagement?
- In reference to mines and energy matters, there is an international norm integrating CE which the 2nd Tunisian government (post revolution) promised to sign but did not. The government that came after did not follow up.
- Decentralization is an essential factor in CE that will require capacity building of stakeholders and local actors who will in turn network locally.
- Notion of Corporate Social Responsibility: Need to make the public and private sector accountable by working with them in partnership and not be in a “counter” position systematically: work with public sector, make private sector accountable and have an impact on social peace.
- WBG should consider a rights-based approach to citizen engagement.
- It was suggested that the private sector can be more transparent and accountable.
- WBG should take a comprehensive framework approach to mainstreaming citizen engagement. A results based assessment, such as proposed in the strategic framework, will not lead to a comprehensive approach. For instance, there are core issues in the post 2015 agenda that are not results based.
- Most CSOs are recent and “young”, there is good will, however lack in experience and know-how, even just in expressing their needs correctly.
- CE is automatically integrated in projects in rural areas because local populations are directly involved, however this is different in urban areas. One example was a project on education reform – there were some consultations but the main components of the project happen between the administration and the donor, therefore there should be systematic polls for beneficiaries and people impacted by the project.
- There is a consultation fatigue among CSOs especially when the organizations consulted are not informed of the next steps after consultations happen. The Bank is not very good in closing the loop and reporting back to parties consulted on the decisions taken.
- Need to adopt a different approach in relaying the concerns of citizens and civil society. There should be a more binding mechanism to reflect the views and opinion of the citizens and CSOs. This is especially valid in the case of the discussion and consultations on safeguards for example.
- A WB-funded Community Development Project was highlighted as one of the only instances where the Bank worked directly with/through NGOs in Lebanon for the delivery of services at the community level. Participants praised the advantages of this approach and highlighted the value of involving NGOs in the design and implementation

of projects. NGOs can better reflect the priorities and needs of communities through their local knowledge, networks and ownership of the projects.

- It was suggested that citizen engagement should be institutionalized within national systems.
- The WBG citizen engagement process should be careful not to replace established democratic institutions, such as parliaments.
- Decentralization efforts are an important issue in Tunisia. Civil society organizations should play a role particularly regarding budget allocation and execution.
- International actors should not reform national systems; it should be left to the country to resolve. However, some CSOs felt that international actors, such as the WBG, could empower CSOs to help improve national systems.
- Citizen engagement should be included throughout the project cycle from concept to implementation to completion.
- Results are improved by building a large stakeholder network that is able to contribute to citizen engagement mechanisms.
- Citizen engagement, as opposed to engagement with CSOs is important, as often citizens feel that CSOs are not representative of their concerns.
- Participants in citizen engagement are easier to identify in the context of a local or regional level project, but can be difficult at a national level project. At the national level, it is important to ensure that not just one region or group captures the process.

Research/Methodology

- Two good WBG case studies are Lebanon Social Promotion and Protection Project (P124761) and Lebanon Community Development Project (P071113).
- Another interesting initiative is Marsoum41 by Touensa and OpenGov Associations, whereby it is possible for citizens to request feedback and ask for information from the administration on a variety of topics. <http://marsoum41.org/fr>
- The WB in Tunis implemented the “Suivi Evaluation Participative” through its projects¹ (TTL Heba El Gazzar) to ensure CE and feedback.

Definitions

¹ [Participatory Service Delivery for Reintegration Project](#)
[Community Health Collaborative JSDF](#)
[Participatory Service Delivery for Reintegration Project](#)

- Civic engagement tends to be more institutionalized within national systems, while citizen engagement seems to be more individualized. How civil society and civic engagement are part of citizen engagement should be more clearly defined.
- The WBG should be consistent with the UN's definitions, such as using the word 'partner,' which implies greater ownership than the word beneficiary.

Context

- Trust between citizens and government is important to establish buy-in for national programs on citizen engagement.
- The problem of the transition period is that on the one hand CSOs need to take advantage and be proactive, but it's difficult to build trust with a transitional government. Things are initiated, but there is no follow up and there is a lack of results. Therefore, evaluation is not possible.
- Even within a country, different regions often require the use of different kinds of citizen engagement mechanisms.
- Inefficiency and corruption within national systems can impact citizen engagement.
- Depending on levels of education and other factors, it may be necessary to provide citizens with training and capacity building so that they can clearly communicate needs.

Process

- Documents should be made available in the local language.

Please contact citizenengagement@worldbankgroup.org with any questions or comments.

Participating Organizations:

- 1) Bank Information Center (BIC)
- 2) Arab NGO Network for Development/ANND
- 3) Lebanese Transparency Association
- 4) Physically Handicapped Union
- 5) Na'am
- 6) Maharat
- 7) Rassemblement démocratique de la femme Libanaise
- 8) Democratic forum for women in societies in transition-Lebanon
- 9) Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy
- 10) AUB/Lebanese Economic Association
- 11) Lebanese Observatory for the Rights of Workers and Employees
- 12) Phoenix Center
- 13) Al Moultqa
- 14) Association 'Integrity& transparency Tunisie
- 15) I watch

- 16) Open Gov
- 17) Yezid Skandrani, Hajer Trabelsi, Touensa
- 18) SAWTY
- 19) Association Tunisienne pour la liberte numerique
- 20) ACT
- 21) Doustourna
- 22) Engagement Citoyen
- 23) IFEDA
- 24) Kolna Tounes
- 25) Club Unesco Alecso bardo
- 26) UGTT
- 27) Association Tunisienne de la Transparence dans l'Energie et les Mines (ATEM)
- 28) Forum Tunisian pour les Droits Economiques and Sociaux (FTDES)
- 29) Office for High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- 30) L'Association Tunisienne des Auditeurs Internes (ATAI)
- 31) Programme d'Appui a la Societe Civile (PASC)
- 32) Promotion et Appui au Developpment d'Initiatives Locales(PADIL)
- 33) Association Tunisienne des Controleurs Publics (ATCP)