



The World Bank Group

Dialogue on Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Washington, DC- April 10, 2014

- The World Bank group held a face-to-face dialogue on mainstreaming citizen engagement in World Bank Group (WBG) Operations. The dialogue was part of the World Bank/IMF 2014 Spring Meetings Civil Society Policy Forum.
- The dialogue brought together 25 – 30 participants from civil society organizations, mainly from developing countries (see list of organizations)
- Astrid Manroth (Advisor, Aid Effectiveness and Openness) presented the approach to the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in WBG Operations.
- A panel discussion was moderated by Lindsay Coates, Executive Vice President of Interaction. Panelists included: Anabel Cruz, President of Communication and Development Institute (ICD); John Coonrod, Executive Vice President of The Hunger Project; and Mirza Jahnai, CEO of Aga Khan Foundation US.
- This summary focuses on the feedback received from the panelists and participants.

Main Issues Raised by Category

General Comments

- Enthusiasm over the development of the strategic framework on mainstreaming citizen engagement in World Bank Group Operations.
- Gender-related aspects should be considered within the strategic framework.
- The World Bank has been successful at facilitating and empowering local level government.

- The strategic framework suggests taking a gradual approach to mainstreaming citizen engagement, however this will only work if countries have a vision for scaling up systematically and nationwide.
- It is vital for citizens to be part of the design. Project evaluation should include local knowledge.
- Challenges to the citizen engagement feedback loop include, Are we paying attention to what people say? How can citizens express themselves candidly without fear of reprisal?
- Within the new framework, there is no clarity as to how the World Bank Group will help host governments improve citizen engagement within national systems.
- More adequate tools for gathering feedback should be developed, including online tools, for a more systematic response.
- A rights-based approach to citizen engagement should be included in the strategic framework.
- To enhance citizen engagement activities, tap into the knowledge of local civil society organizations
- There is a greater window of opportunity for citizen engagement in service delivery than ever before.
- The strategic framework should include a discussion of how the concept of citizen engagement has evolved as a result of the Washington Consensus during the 1990s.
- Private institutions can be much better at engaging their clients than those in the public sector.
- The strategic framework would be enhanced if it addressed fragile and conflict –affected situations, and the media.

Research/Methodology

- There should be a stronger connection between the analytical work and proposed solutions.
- Local democracy.net has developed participatory local democracy indicators and identified globally emerging trends.
- Anwar Shah has conducted a number of studies on citizen engagement.
- The strategic framework should propose measurable targets for citizen engagement, particularly in context of post-2015.
- The strategic framework should try to establish how processes such as Open Government can be measured.
- The strategic framework should look at how citizen engagement can be developed over the long-term, beyond the project timeframe, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected

situations where citizen engagement takes longer to develop.

- The contextual factors, including the enabling environment, are crucial and the strategic framework can address them in terms of knowledge, research and action.

Definitions

- Citizens should be defined as the primary owners and actors of development within the strategic framework.
- ‘Citizen’ is an amorphous word, and does not precisely encompass who the Bank wants to engage. For example, there is no distinction between an individual and an organization.
- Eliminate the word ‘beneficiary’ from the strategic framework.

Process

- Documents related to the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations should be translated into local languages such as Arabic.

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

Participating Organizations*:

- Bank Information Center
- Cekan Consulting
- Change Management Solutions
- Citizens Climate Lobby
- Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights
- ODECO-DC
- Resonate! Yemen
- Transparency Center for Democratic Dev. For Human Rights, Yemen
- Oxfam
- Change Management and Solutions

**This list doesn't reflect all organizations that participated. It's based on those who signed in.*