



The World Bank Group

A Dialogue on Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Washington, DC- May 14, 2014

- The World Bank Group held a dialogue on mainstreaming citizen engagement in World Bank Group (WBG) Operations, convened via videoconferencing with Cairo, Egypt and Washington, DC.
- The meeting brought together participants from eleven organizations (See list of participating organizations).
- Mariam Sherman (Director, Results, Openness and Effectiveness) and Astrid Manroth (Advisor, Openness and Aid Effectiveness) outlined how the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in WBG Operations was being approached.
- Lara Saade, Senior Communications Officer, and Najat Yamouri, Senior Social Development Specialist, moderated in Washington, D.C, with the support of Nehal Hassan El Kouesny, Communications Associate, in Egypt.
- This summary focuses on the feedback received from the participants.

Main Issues Raised by Category

General Comments

- Inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized people in citizen engagement mechanisms can be costly.
- Consultations for WBG projects should be more inclusive, advertised in a timely manner, and conducted at times when citizens are able to participate.
- Several participants noted successful examples where children had been incorporated into citizen engagement processes in the areas of child labor, health and education.

- One participant noted that announcing the budget of the government at the local level had a positive impact on development results at the community level.
- Another participant noted that the engagement of and training of youth who had migrated from rural to urban areas, led to successful reintegration and employment of these individuals in their home communities.
- There are often higher participation rates when children and women are included.
- WBG should consider a rights-based approach. Rights-holders should be the ones to identify development needs.
- Regions outside of the capital city, such as Upper Egypt, should be better engaged. There are successful examples of working with communities in Upper Egypt.
- It was suggested that the private sector, particularly in agriculture, should engage more with citizens.
- In the area of service delivery, WBG should focus more on how projects affect communities and social justice, rather than focus on private sector development.
- There were questions on how to create incentives to make the private sector more socially accountable.
- Citizen engagement should occur throughout the project cycle, from design to implementation to completion.

Research/methodology

- CIDA Canada, New Horizon Association, USAID and the Ford Foundation have some useful examples of local participation in Egypt.
- One participant asked to what extent the framework will be monitored.
- Citizen engagement should also be included in country strategies and development policy lending, where beneficiaries are difficult to identify.

Definitions

- The difference between project beneficiaries and people affected by the project, or those who are placed at risk, should be better developed within the strategic framework.
- The concept of stakeholders is more commonly used in Egypt than beneficiaries.

Context

- The World Bank needs to be aware of existing avenues for citizen participation in Egypt. For example, there are local level councils where members are appointed, but have a consultative role. There are also tools for citizen engagement that have been developed by civil society, which could be adapted to the local level.

- Given that each country has a different context and existing mechanisms for citizen engagement, the Bank should undertake a careful needs assessment to develop a context-specific citizen engagement strategy in each of the countries in which it operates.
- Need to consider gaps related to laws and policies and how much they affect participation.
- Depending on the context, it may be necessary to provide citizens with training and capacity building so that they can clearly identify and communicate needs.
- Freedom of information, and how this information is disseminated, is an important part of citizen engagement.
- Citizen engagement is strongly affected by the degree of trust not just with the government, but in general with each other and the private sector.
- Cooperatives and trade unions should be considered as they also represent citizens.
- The role of elite-capture should be strongly considered.

Process

- Translated documents should be received in time to prepare and the feedback loop should be closed with participants.
- Feedback summaries of consultations should be made available.

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

Participating Organizations:

- Egyptian Association for Collective Rights
- Bank Information Center
- Association of Upper Egypt For Education and Development (AUEED)
- Bashayer Helwan Society
- Al Korra Foundation for Sustainable Development
- Association of Upper Egypt For Education and Development (AUEED)
- New Horizon Association for Social Development
- HIC-Housing and Land Rights Network (HIC-HLRN)
- Forum of Dialogue and Partnership for Development (FDPD)
- Egyptian Center for Economic & Social Rights
- Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights