



The World Bank Group

Engaging with Citizens for Improved Development Results - Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Washington, DC - March 27, 2014

- The World Bank group held a face-to-face dialogue on mainstreaming citizen engagement in World Bank Group (WBG) Operations coordinated by InterAction.
- The meeting brought together participants from 30 development organizations (See list of participating organizations).
- The meeting was moderated Lindsay Coates, Executive Vice President, InterAction. Lead discussants included Gregory Adams, Director of Aid Effectiveness, Oxfam; Laia Griñó, Senior Manager of Transparency, Accountability and Results, InterAction, and Randall Tift, Sr. Policy Advisor, World Vision.
- Mariam Sherman (Director, Results, Openness and Effectiveness) outlined the approach to mainstreaming citizen engagement in WBG Operations. Both she and Astrid Manroth (Operations Adviser, Openness and Aid Effectiveness) responded to technical questions.
- This summary focuses on the feedback received from the participants.

Main Issues Raised by Category

General Comments

- Exciting to see WBG play a leading role on this issue.
- Several participants argued for a review of the World Bank's attitude towards a rights-based approach to citizen engagement. The starting point is the right to participation

which needs to start by identifying the right partners in order to contribute to achieving outcomes and ensuring the sustainability of the engagement.

- The WBG can learn from existing models used by CSOs. Several were mentioned by participants in the meeting.
- The biggest constraint is the lack of willingness to engage. It is critical to start with an honest assessment of the environment and then look for entry points.
- One way to measure success is how much original plans change as a result of the engagement.
- The WBG should be cognizant of how citizen engagement in the context of a project impacts government-citizen relations at the country level, which is necessary for opportunities to scale and sustainability.
- The WBG can play a meaningful role in helping ‘supply meet demand’ and in assisting governments to create sustainable citizen engagement, including helping governments overcome capacity and resource constraints. Closing the feedback loop is important as it gets harder and harder for people to participate when they find out that their feedback doesn’t matter. Working with citizens is about building relationships and therefore, takes time and a gradual approach.
- Almost every aspect of poverty reduction requires some behavioral change, which can be catalyzed by positioning people as the primary actors of poverty eradication. One example are the health and agriculture “animators,” i.e. volunteer community members that help amplify the impact of health or extension services.
- Community engagement approaches have a proven track record in local infrastructure, schools, health clinics, etc. that meet community needs, and are particularly relevant in conflict situations.
- Flexibility is important as sometimes the most useful feedback is gathered informally. Finding ways to bring back and internalize that feedback is critical.
- The WBG should think about how to strengthen skills and incentives internally to make sure staff value citizen’s inputs. Facilitation skills are critical. The focus should be on citizen engagement during project implementation.
- Gender-related aspects should be considered in citizen engagement.
- Citizens should be asked how they want to be engaged.
- Experiences from GPSA should be taken into account.

Research/Methodology

- The international development community needs to do more research on the impact of citizen engagement on development outcomes, as well as on the quality of the engagement.

- There is the additional dimension of political space, and there is some field research as to what factors make citizen engagement effective.
- We need to develop baselines, so that we can measure citizen engagement over time.

Definitions

- General agreement with beneficiary feedback being defined as a subset of citizen engagement. Need more clarity whether this strategic framework is about the World Bank’s engaging with citizens or supporting Government engagement with citizens.

Process

- WBG should ensure that consultations are carried out with developing countries in time to inform the strategic framework.
- A subsequent discussion could be organized to go over different methodologies and approaches in more depth.

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

Participating Organizations:

1	American Friends Service Committee	16	International Rescue Committee
2	American Refugee Committee	17	Intl. Development and Exchange Prog/World Learning
3	Bank Information Center	18	ITUC/Global Unions - Washington Office
4	Bread for the World Institute	19	MercyCorps
5	CARE USA	20	MFAN
6	CDA-Practical Learning for Effective International Action	21	National Democratic Institute
7	Consultant/Hewlett	22	Oxfam America
8	CSR	23	Partnership for Transparency Fund
9	Friends of the Global Fight	24	Save the Children
10	Global Campaign for Education- US	25	Solidarity Center
11	Global Communities Partners for Good	26	The Global Fight
12	IESC	27	The Hunger Project
13	Institute for Sustainable Communities	28	UNICEF
14	InterAction	29	WaterAid America
15	International Relief and Development	30	World Resources Institute