



The World Bank Group

Dialogue on Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

London & Brussels (VC) - February 17, 2014

- The World Bank group held a face-to-face dialogue on mainstreaming citizen engagement in World Bank Group (WBG) Operations in London, with participants connecting by video conference in Brussels.
- The meeting brought together a total of 14 participants from civil society, the private sector, and academia. (See list of participating organizations).
- Mariam Sherman (Director, Results, Openness and Effectiveness) outlined how the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in WBG Operations is being approached. 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

- The importance of closing the feedback loop in citizen engagement, the World Bank Group should take care to not raise expectations that are not fulfilled.
- CSOs can play an important role in citizen engagement, in explaining processes to citizens.

Research/Methodology

- Important to define baselines for citizen engagement and conditions at country, regional and global level.
- Closing the feedback loop and achieving a government response to citizen concerns are important, as well as considering enabling factors such as information, capacity and tools in the respective context.

Definitions

- All relevant people should be engaged, particularly vulnerable citizens. There is some concern that vulnerable groups are able to be engaged within WBG operations, but not in independently-led government processes.
- Citizens should not be understood as 'clients' but as 'owners' of international institutions.

Context

- The legislative environment and guarantees, such as freedom of assembly and freedom of engagement, and government willingness to engage are important for successful citizen engagement.
- The importance of formal and informal institutions and tracking responses, possibly with the help of ICT, noting several examples including the National Solidarity Program in Afghanistan, ipaidabribe.com and developmentcheck.org.
- The need of citizens to be involved in the design of the project and government plans from the beginning, with some governments being more active in involving citizens than others.
- WBG should consider the role of the private sector in citizen engagement.

Process

- The need to consult academics, noting in particular the wealth of UK studies and experiences with European Union, European Commission, and European Parliament. CSOs should publish more research and evidence on citizen engagement activities.
- All citizen engagement activities, particularly the publication of documents, should be undertaken in the local language. This point should be addressed within the strategic framework.

- Ask citizens about how they would like to engage.

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

Participating Organizations:

1. Bretton Woods Project
2. CAFOD
3. Civil Society Contact Group – Act for Europe
4. DEEEP/ Concord
5. Eurodad
6. European Federation of Nurses
7. European Youth Forum
8. European Foundation Center
9. Global Youth Against Corruption
10. Integrity Action
11. Overseas Development Institute (2 representatives)
12. World Vision
13. World Vision UK