



2011 Annual Meetings Assessment

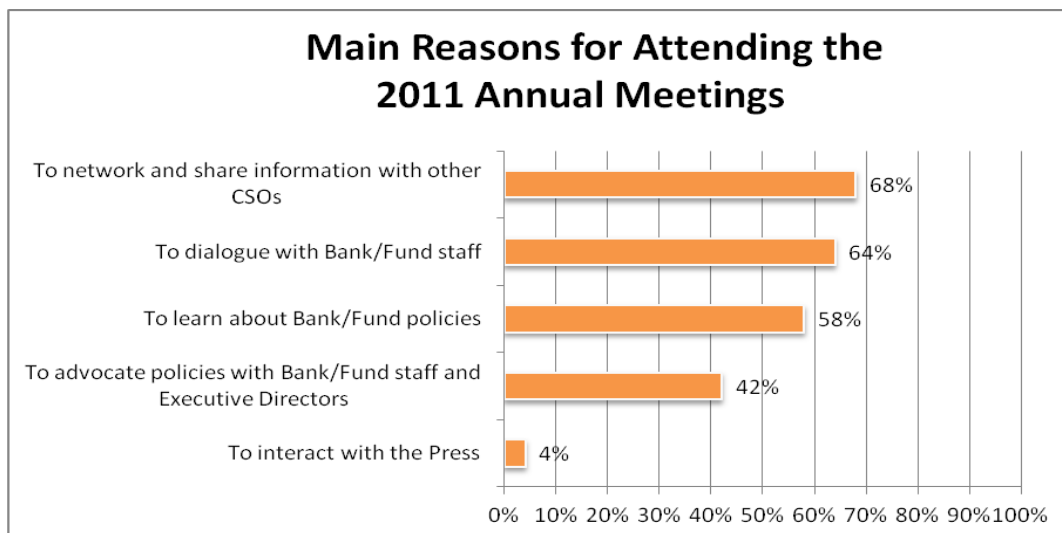
Feedback from CSO Representatives

The World Bank and IMF Civil Society Teams solicited feedback from CSO representatives who attended the 2011 Annual Meetings in Washington DC from September 19 to 24. A short 7-question survey was distributed during the Civil Society Policy Forum (CS Forum) and also sent to 520 arrived participants of the Forum via email to be filled online. The survey solicited the views of participants regarding logistics, the quality of key events, and the overall usefulness of the CS Forum. Responses were received from 92 participants (17 % of all participants), which is the highest response rate in recent years. The findings will help guide the planning process for the 2012 Spring and Annual Meetings. In general, respondents gave high marks for the logistics, policy sessions, and special events, as well as for the overall usefulness of the Civil Society Policy Forum. They also provided useful critique and specific suggestions on how to improve the CS Forum in the future.

Summary of Responses

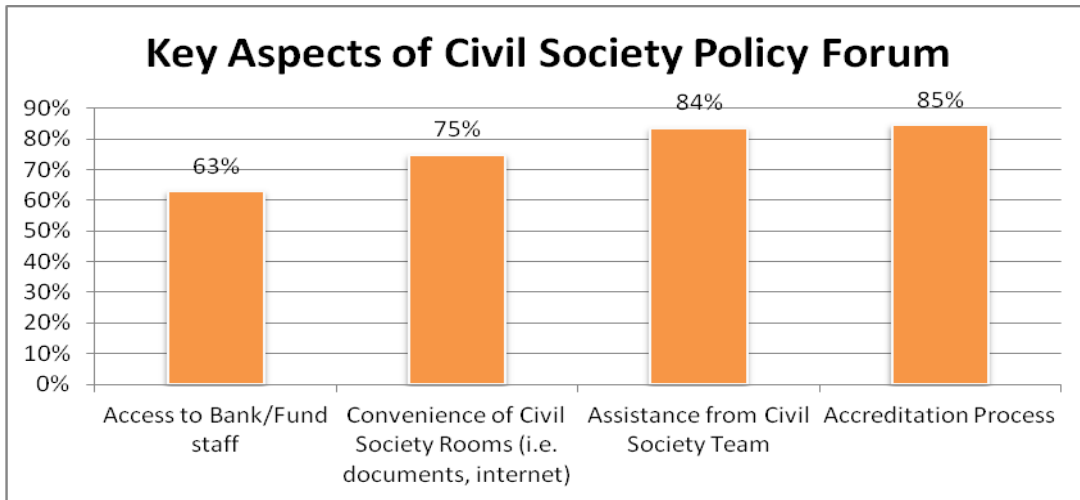
1. Main Reasons for Attending the 2011 Annual Meetings

Participants were asked about their reasons for attending the 2011 Annual Meetings (question #1). As the graph below shows, the reasons given in order of preference, were to: “network and share information with other CSOs” (68%); and “to dialogue with Bank/Fund staff” (64%); followed by “to learn about Bank/Fund policies” (58%); “to advocate policies with Bank/Fund staff and Executive Directors” (42%); and finally “to interact with the Press” (4%). This shows that CSOs participants primarily considered the CS Forum as a space to interact with each other and with Bank/Fund staff.



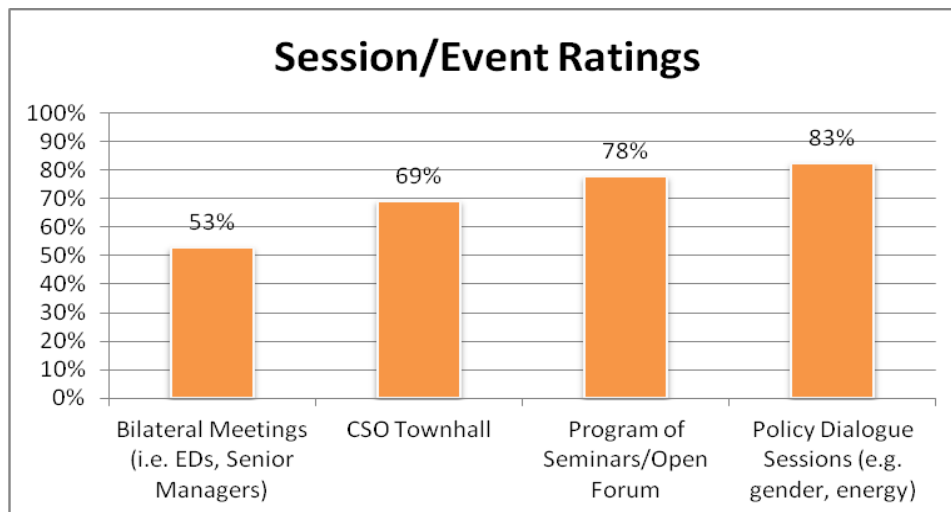
2. Logistics of Civil Society Policy Forum

Participants were also asked to assess the logistics of the CS Forum (question # 2). The bars below represent the percentage of participants who rated the various aspects as “good” or “very good”. The “accreditation process” and “assistance from the Civil Society Team” each received the highest marks with 85% and 84% respectively; “the convenience of Civil Society rooms (i.e. documents, internet)” came next with a rate of 75%; and “access to Bank/Fund staff” was ranked last with a relatively low score of 63%. As in previous years, it demonstrates that although CSO representatives were satisfied with the general logistics of the CS Forum, they would have liked more access to and presence of Bank/Fund staff in the Forum.



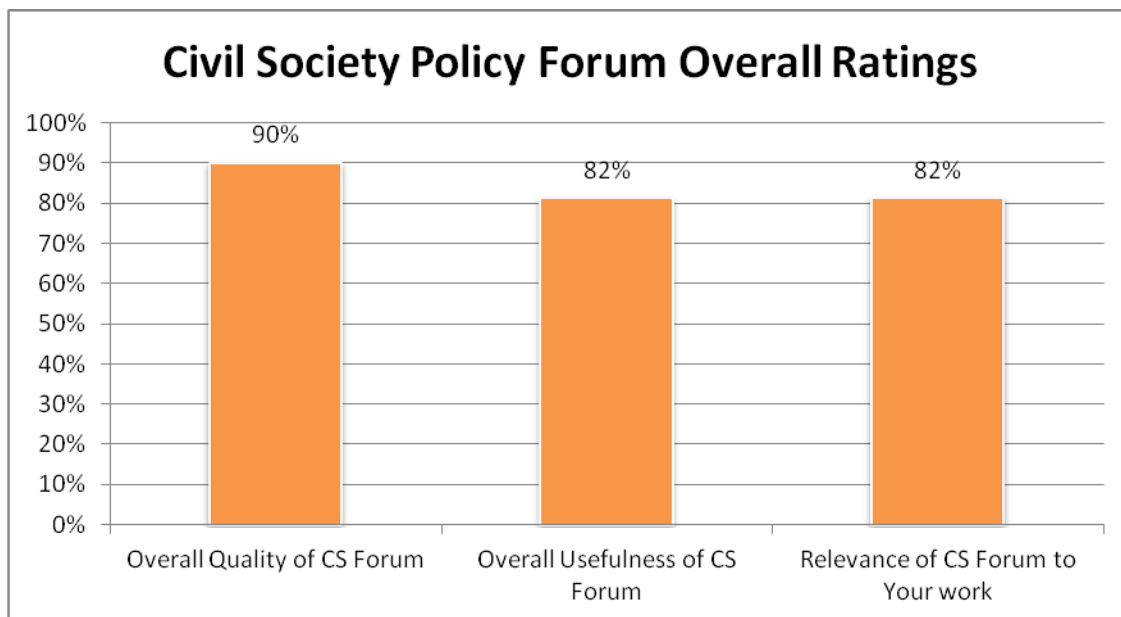
3. Session/Event Ratings

When asked to rate various sessions and events they attended during the CS Forum and Annual Meetings in general, respondents gave the highest marks to the “Policy Dialogue Sessions”, with a rating of 83%; followed by the “Program of Seminars/Open Forum” with a score of 78%; the “CSO Townhall” and the “Bilateral Meetings” received relatively lower scores with a 69% and 53% satisfaction rate respectively. Two basic conclusions can be drawn from these scores. First, that CSOs valued most their own policy space and sessions, since the majority of the 50 policy sessions held were organized by CSOs themselves. Second, that we should consider improving the format and content of the CSO Townhall and the bilateral meetings with senior Bank and Fund senior managers.



4. Civil Society Policy Forum Overall Ratings

As in previous years, participants gave high scores to the CS Forum’s overall quality, usefulness, and relevance to their work (Question #4). The graph below shows that the “overall quality of CS Forum” received a 90% percent rating (good or very good); and the “usefulness and the “relevance” are both rated as 82%. This positive overall score is also reflected in the fact that the number of CSOs attending the Annual and Spring Meetings continue to grow and the breadth of policy sessions continues to expand year after year.



5. Comments on “What Worked Best”

Responses to the open question “What worked best in the Civil Society Policy Forum” (Question #5), can generally be grouped around some key aspects of the CS Policy Forum: openness of World Bank/IMF; policy dialogue sessions; and dialogue/networking opportunities.

- Openness – Many respondents appreciated the open space provided by the CS Forum for CSOs and Bank/Fund staff to exchange ideas and present their views. As one respondent stated: “The overall engagement of CSOs by Bank and Fund staff has been improved during the past years.” CSO representatives specifically appreciated the presence of Bank/Fund staff and their willingness to engage in policy dialogue. One respondent mentioned their appreciation to Fund and Bank staff willing to “share concerns and provide real time attentiveness and positive responses to requests, concerns, and comments.”
- Policy Dialogue Sessions – Most respondents found the dialogue sessions to be informative and interactive and mentioned specifically the wide range of topics, and the diversity and quality of discussions during the sessions. As one respondent noted that: “The dialogue and perspectives were enlightening and broadened my personal viewpoints.” Similarly, another respondent stated that: “by putting Fund and Bank officials in sessions with people having rather different perspectives brought up extremely interesting exchanges and debates.”
- Dialogue/Networking Opportunities – Most respondents highly valued the interaction between CSOs and Bank/Fund staff and among CSOs themselves during the CS Forum. One respondent specifically highlighted the usefulness of “the areas near the conference rooms where people could network”. Specifically, respondents considered the interaction with Bank and Fund staff was very useful. As one

respondent stated: “The interaction with the Bank and Fund staff helped in creating linkages (...) with the country managers.”

- Bank/Fund Civil Society Team – The majority of respondents expressed their appreciation for the pre-meeting arrangements and timely assistance provided by the Bank/Fund Civil Society Team. Some respondents noted the “effective coordination of the various sessions by the WB CS Team.”

6. Comments on “Ways to Improve the Forum”

Respondents provided a number of detailed and useful suggestions to improve the Civil Society Policy Forum (Question #6). These recommendations cover a wide range of aspects of the CS Forum, including preparation of the Forum, scheduling of sessions, accreditation process, conference rooms, CSO sponsorship program, and broader issues.

- Preparation of the Forum – Many respondents provided constructive suggestions to improve the preparation process of the CS Forum. One respondent suggested that “more opportunities for CSOs to shape the program”. Another respondent suggested that there is a need to better brief Bank staff on the civil society sector and issues before the meeting so that they can give substantive feedback and not just “defend Bank policies.” Respondents also suggested some preliminary consultations with each CSO or CSO groups on the type of meetings, themes, and topics they prefer, so meetings can be better grouped around topics and generate more substantive discussions. Several suggested that we increase the number of CSOs sponsored by the Bank and Fund to attend the Annual Meetings.
- Accreditation and Registration – Several respondents noted that the accreditation process needs to be improved in terms of the timeline and its online application platform. One respondent suggested that “the accreditation needs to be moved earlier” as this will avoid delays in obtaining the final accreditation. Another respondent requested that we correct the apparent glitch on the accreditation webpage which caused the screen to go blank once you ‘preview/submit’. Several participants also noted that they felt that the registration service desk and security staff were not always friendly to CSO representatives and did not provide clear instructions on how to find the CSO space.
- Policy Sessions – As in previous years, while some participants suggested holding fewer sessions to allow participants to attend every session, others highlighted the diversity and richness of sessions. A respondent mentioned the need for “keeping panels to the allocated time” as some moderators let panels run way over, which threw off the rest of the schedule. Another respondent suggested arranging topics according to major issues and scheduling topics by day, as this will allow for more in depth discussion of these topics. Several suggested that the Bank consider “convening regional meetings prior to the Annual Meetings” so CSOs come better prepared for the policy engagement. Regarding the CSO Townhall, once person suggested focusing on one or two topics as this would allow for a more in depth and centered discussion.
- CS Space/Facility – Reflecting views expressed in previous years, a number of participants urged more space and better facility for the CS Forum. Several respondents suggested that CSO be mainstreamed into the Annual/Spring Meetings. As one respondent noted: “Please do not confine the CSO Forum workshop meetings to the basement spaces. It creates an unnatural division/separation from the main Bank event.” Many respondents also mentioned that “some rooms were too small for the sessions” and Bank staff should do a better job of assessing the audience size before assigning the rooms.
- Communication Technology – Several recommended using more modern communication tools to make the sessions more interactive and attractive. One mentioned that how effective the use of short film viewings was for a particular session, and encouraged the Fund and Bank to put out a request calling for short film/documentary proposals that could be presented during the CS Forum. Another suggested that Bank speakers adopt more effective communication tools other than PowerPoint presentations. As

mentioned in previous meetings, several recommended using more social media tools and other modern networking technologies such as video conferencing or web streaming in order to reach a broader audience of local CSOs who are unable to attend the Annual Meetings. Several also mentioned the need for easier wireless internet access in the CSO space.

- Networking Opportunities – Many respondents mentioned they need more opportunities to interact with Bank/Fund staff who work on relevant issues and to network among themselves. Some suggested holding a formal networking session to facilitate information exchange among CSOs and/or to hold sessions to promote the “exchange of ideas and experience among participants from the same regions”. One respondent suggested that Bank country offices hold post-Annual meetings in order to brief local CSOs on their outcomes, as well as to hold similar policy Bank – CSO dialogue sessions at the country level.

7. General Comments

When asked for general comments (Question #7), the majority of respondents expressed their appreciation for the learning and dialogue opportunity afforded by the CS Policy Forum. Many specifically expressed their appreciation to the Bank and Fund Civil Society Teams for their coordination efforts and assistance during the Forum, while others called on the Bank and Fund to mainstream the Civil Society events into the Annual Meetings official agenda. As one respondent stated: “Things are much improved from a decade ago, and yet it still seems like we’re tucked away in the basement, far away from the actual conversations that guide Annual Meetings and Bank and Fund policies.” Finally, several respondents suggested that the interaction experienced during the Forum could be kept up after the Annual Meetings, especially at the country level.