



## Civil Society Engagement in the World Bank/International Monetary Fund 2006 Annual Meetings in Singapore

### Background

The 2006 Annual Meetings and related activities of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (Bank and Fund) will be held in Singapore from September 13-20, 2006 inclusive. Each year, the Annual Meetings bring together thousands of delegates from the Bank and Fund member governments, private sector businesses, civil society organizations (CSOs), academia and journalists along with Bank and Fund officials to review the work of these two multilateral institutions, and to discuss current topics of interest on the global development agenda.

As for previous Annual Meetings, the Bank and Fund welcome interested CSOs to request accreditation to attend the Meetings. Accredited CSOs may attend the Annual Meetings Program of Seminars and related meetings. Bank and Fund staff will also work with interested CSOs to organize a CSO Forum at the Meetings that address their specific areas of concern. Information about how CSOs can apply for accreditation will be posted on the Bank's website at [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org) by early May 2006.

### Bank-Fund Planning Meetings with Asian CSOs

With Singapore as the host city for the 2006 Bank/Fund Annual Meetings, CSOs from Asia and the Pacific have a unique opportunity to participate in a major global development policy event in their own region, and to interact with decision-makers from across the region and around the world. **The Bank and Fund are particularly interested in making sure that the perspectives and voices of leading development CSOs from the Asia and Pacific region are well represented at the 2006 Meetings** – in recognition of the important role of civil society in development policy and programs, and to enhance the quality of discussion and debate the Meetings.

In order to achieve this goal, in late February or early March several of the Bank's country offices in the Asia and Pacific region will invite CSO representatives to an in-country meeting. The objective of these country meetings will be to explore civil society interest in participating in the Annual Meetings in Singapore, and to brainstorm about possible topics CSOs would like to discuss at the Meetings. One participant from each of these country meetings will be selected to participate in a regional planning group, which will convene with a workshop March 28-29 in Singapore. The airfare, hotel and per diem costs for the Singapore workshop participants will be funded by the World Bank.

At the Singapore workshop in late March, participants will be asked to share the ideas raised in their country-level meetings, and then to reflect on the key development challenges facing the region. The goal of the March workshop will be to produce a priority list of topics that CSOs would like to discuss with the Bank, Fund and member governments at the Annual Meetings in September and possibly beyond.



In addition, the group participating in the Singapore workshop will form a **CSO coordinating committee** that will work with the Bank and Fund staff and the Singapore authorities on all aspects of CSO participation at the 2006 Annual Meetings, including organizing the CSO Forum. It is expected that the members of the CSO coordinating committee will be available to consult with Bank and Fund staff throughout the period of April-September through e:mail and videoconference communications in preparation for the Annual Meetings, and that they also will attend the Meetings in Singapore in September. Airfare, hotel and per diem costs for the travel to Singapore for the March workshop and to the Annual Meetings in September will be covered by the Bank for those participants on the CSO coordinating committee that may require financial assistance.

### **Outcomes**

*The specific expected outcomes of this process and the role of the CSO coordinating committee meeting in Singapore will include, but are not limited to:*

- 1) *Participants will identify a specific topic for a report to be presented and discussed with senior officials at the Annual Meetings.* Members of the CSO coordinating planning committee will take the lead in preparing the report and in consulting with civil society groups across the Asia and Pacific region. The Bank and Fund will provide some financial and research support to the CSOs engaged in this process, and the report will be presented and discussed with senior Bank, Fund and government officials at the Annual Meetings.
- 2) *Participants will identify a priority list of topics and speakers* to ensure that CSO Forum and Program of Seminars at the Annual Meetings represent the interests and voices of a diverse array of Asian and Pacific civil society groups.
- 3) *Participants will take the lead in organizing a town hall discussion* for civil society groups with the President of the World Bank, Managing Director of the Fund, and Chairmen of the International Monetary and Financial Committee and the Development Committee at the Annual Meetings.
- 4) *Participants will work with Bank and Fund staff to organize a virtual discussion space on the 2006 Meetings website* where CSO papers and ideas can be circulated to a wider audience in the development community.
- 5) *Participants will identify other topics on which CSOs may be interested in having a dialogue with Bank and Fund officials* during the course of the year, and will work with Bank and Fund staff to organize the appropriate forums.
- 6) *Participants will provide the Bank with inputs toward the drafting of updated guidelines for Bank staff on how to engage CSOs.*

### **Timetable for Activities:**



**February 20-March 10:** Bank country offices hold in-country meetings with CSOs. A CSO representative from each country will be nominated to attend the regional planning workshop in Singapore.

**March 28-29:** Regional CSO planning workshop will be held in Singapore; commission CSO study/seminar; establish CSO planning group

**May 29-31:** Regional CSO dialogue on infrastructure in Asia and the Pacific will be held alongside the ABCDE Conference, sponsored by World Bank in Tokyo.

**June-August:** Virtual consultations continue between the CSO coordinating committee and Bank and Fund staff on the drafting of the CSO report and the organization of the CSO Forum at the Annual Meetings.

**September 13-20:** CSOs attend the Annual Meetings and present their report to senior officials, and participate in Program of Seminars and CSO Forum.