

**Report of the World Bank – Civil Society Joint Facilitation Committee Meeting  
October 28, 2003**

**Executive Summary (from Co-Chair’s Communiqué)**

1. The new World Bank-Civil Society Joint Facilitation Committee (JFC) convened on October 28, 2003 in Washington, DC, with participants from 14 networks of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and senior managers from the World Bank (WB) including President James Wolfensohn, Managing Director Mamphela Ramphele and regional and thematic vice presidents. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Ramphele and Kumi Naidoo (Secretary-General, CIVICUS).
2. Ms. Ramphele welcomed the participants and said the meeting was occurring at an important time in international development and an important time for the WB, shortly after the Annual Bank/IMF Meetings in Dubai. Ms. Ramphele outlined the key messages included in Mr. Wolfensohn’s speech to the Ministers attending the Annual Meetings, particularly the need for “a new equilibrium” between rich and poor countries.
3. Mr. Naidoo noted that the CSOs involved in the JFC saw the meeting as part of a process with significant challenges ahead, one needing much more dialogue and consultation on the part of civil society. He stressed the diverse nature of civil society around the globe, and emphasized that the CSOs at the meeting did not make the claim to represent global civil society, but rather they see their role as facilitators working to create more effective and relevant ways in which the Bank engages with civil society. He outlined the process to date in establishing the JFC, and the role, which CIVICUS assumed as secretariat in late 2002. He acknowledged that although CIVICUS had attempted to get diverse voices from civil society involved in the process, there were many groups not present at the meeting which may have deeper knowledge of the WB than those present. He said that it would be important to put mechanisms in place to consult more widely in civil society. He also reiterated that there is a range of efforts where civil society engages with the WB, and thus the JFC initiative should be seen as complementary to those existing venues.
4. It was noted that, as a transitional body, the JFC would extend its reach and include participation of additional civil society networks, and expand its consultation mechanisms. The CSO participants and the WB both emphasized the need, in particular, to reach out to more Southern-based civil society networks and invite them to join the process.
5. Ian Goldin, WB Vice President for External Affairs, Communications and UN Affairs, outlined the main messages contained in the draft WB paper entitled “*Issues and Options for Improving Engagement Between the World Bank and CSOs.*” He said the paper analyzes why the WB values civic engagement, how civic engagement is being mainstreamed in the WB, and the key issues and

challenges the WB faces in improving the quality of its engagement with civil society. He agreed to post the paper on the WB website, and invited CSO comments before the paper is finalized and presented to the WB Board.

6. David Reed of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) presented a draft proposal on the need for the WB to learn from past experiences in engaging civil society, and to develop stronger guidelines and new mechanisms for engagement. He outlined a possible work program for the JFC which would focus on strengthening CSO engagement with national governments and with the WB. The proposal centered around in-country assessments of past CSO engagements in Bank core business areas, to be accompanied by capacity building activities and public dialogues, leading to adoption of a new WB policy on engagement. There was significant discussion among the participants of the pros and cons of this approach.
7. The participants also devoted some time to the discussion of the structure of the JFC itself. The participants agreed that the JFC is a consultative and transitional body to facilitate greater space for dialogue and engagement between the WB and civil society. The participants also discussed how the JFC could add value to existing mechanisms for engagement by 1) improving the quality of WB-CSO engagement; and 2) providing space to address global development challenges.
8. The World Bank and civil society participants agreed that the JFC should *facilitate* the following areas of activity:
  - a. An assessment of current and recent WB performance in respect to how effectively Bank-civil society interactions have impacted Bank development work, in order to produce forward-looking recommendations for improving Bank policy and practice by learning from both successful and ineffective experiences. The selection of focus areas will be determined after wider consultation within civil society. The assessment would be an independent, CSO-managed study, with the WB providing access to its information. The WB and CSO participants agreed to jointly review, and consider how to operationalize, the outcomes of the assessment.
  - b. Capacity-building of CSOs, particularly CSOs in developing and transition countries, for more effective engagement and advocacy vis-à-vis the WB and national governments to promote sustainable development. There will be further discussion on what skills, tools, and methodologies may be needed to support this goal.
  - c. A series of public policy dialogues linked to other CSO-WB engagement and review processes. These public forums should encompass contested development issues as well as areas of common interest (such as recent challenges to multilateralism and the need for increasing Official

Development Assistance flows). Specific themes will be identified after wider consultation.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The new World Bank – Civil Society Joint Facilitation Committee (JFC) convened on October 28, 2003, at Bank headquarters in Washington, DC with participants from 14 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs – mostly networks with a global reach) and senior World Bank managers including President James Wolfensohn, Managing Director Mamphela Ramphele, and regional and thematic vice presidents. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Ramphele, and Kumi Naidoo, Secretary General of CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, the CSO Secretariat of the JFC. At this meeting a proposal put forward by the CSO members of the JFC was discussed and debated as well as proposals contained in a World Bank draft paper “*Issues and Options for Improving Engagement Between the World Bank and CSOs*”.

## **2. Background on World Bank – CSO Engagement**

2.1 The JFC is a consultative and transitional body intended to facilitate a new space for dialogue and engagement between the World Bank and civil society. At the time of its creation in December, 2001, the goals of the JFC were determined to be two-fold: to produce a guiding framework for World Bank – civil society engagement and to establish transparent, accountable and democratic mechanisms for further engagement. The JFC was created in December 2001, following the dissolution of the World Bank – NGO Committee. The World Bank – NGO Committee, the oldest institutional mechanism for Bank-civil society dialogue, was created in 1982 and until it was phased out in December 2000, played an instrumental role in strengthening CSO participation in Bank projects and policy dialogue. Because the Bank had broadened its engagement with CSOs in different sectors during the previous 10 years, the Bank and CSO members of the Committee decided that it was time to create a new platform for engagement at the global level which would be more broad-based. The CSO participation in the JFC goes beyond NGOs to include networks of trade unionists, faith-based organizations and human rights organizations with constituencies in developed and developing and transitioning countries. At present, its membership is comprised primarily of networks with a global reach.

2.2 The JFC participants acknowledge and welcome the great diversity of contact between the World Bank and civil society at a variety of levels and do not seek to be the only channel for interaction between civil society and the World Bank. Thus the JFC will seek to complement existing consultative bodies and processes working with the World Bank.

## **3. Goals of the October 28, 2003 Meeting**

3.1 The goals of the October 28<sup>th</sup> meeting were to discuss the current state of World Bank-civil society engagement, explore a joint institutional engagement process, and explore how the Bank and civil society can address shared global development concerns through examination of specific proposals put forth by both the CSOs and the WB. In

her welcoming remarks, Mamphela Ramphela spoke of the importance of the Bank and CSOs working together effectively and noted the need for greater synergies among development actors in attacking poverty. Recalling President Wolfensohn's speech at the World Bank's recent Annual Meetings in Dubai in which he spoke of the pressing need to redress the balance between rich and poor, she spoke of the need for innovative approaches to poverty reduction work and the need to scale up the dimensions of development interventions. She said the Bank welcomes guidance from CSOs as to how the Bank might work differently where needed and the importance of capacity building of CSOs to engage more effectively with the Bank and borrower governments.

3.2 In his opening remarks on behalf of the CSO participants, Kumi Naidoo acknowledged the Bank for its willingness to search for ways to add value to its relationship with CSOs and noted that it is now widely understood that engaging CSOs at all levels of development is critical to successful outcomes. For their part, CSOs have learned that it is not enough to work operationally with communities at the micro-level, but that civil society must also engage at local, national, regional and global levels on issues of policy and governance in order to bring the full force of their knowledge and expertise to bear on development. Nevertheless, the diversity of the CSO universe and the divergent views contained therein make participation in this JFC process challenging.

3.3 Naidoo went on to give a brief background of the JFC process since its creation in late 2001. He noted efforts that had been made to get broad CSO participation across themes, sectors and geography and the process of selection that went on among various CSOs and the hope that more Southern-based CS networks might join the committee in the future. He indicated that the CSOs had hoped to produce an assessment paper which analyzed CSO/Bank engagement in past years which would serve as a mirror document to the Bank's draft paper. He noted that this proved to be too complicated an undertaking to accomplish in a limited time, and an alternative proposal would be discussed at this meeting. He acknowledged the challenges of creating legitimacy and developing ownership by a wide spectrum of the civil society community of such a process of engagement with the Bank and emphasized the facilitative role of the current CSOs involved in the JFC.

#### **4. Presentation of World Bank Paper**

4.1 In the beginning of his summary presentation of the Bank's draft paper *Issues and Options for Improving Engagement Between the World Bank and CSOs*, Ian Goldin, WB Vice President for External Affairs, said that just as civil society organizations have a diversity of views regarding engagement with the Bank, there are divergent views among Bank staff regarding engagement with civil society. Having said that, he noted that the Bank is committed to a common vision with CSOs, a world free from poverty. He acknowledged, however, that in order to move forward together to tackle the challenges of meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), achieving Education for All, and overcoming HIV/AIDS, the Bank must look back, together with CSOs, to see what problems have impeded success in the past and how we might be more effective

in the future. He hoped for a frank exchange which would lead to a positive way forward, what he termed ‘a third generation’ of Bank-CSO engagement.

4.2 The Bank’s paper reviews the long history of engagement with CSOs starting in the 1970s up till the present. Over this time, there has been much progress in the Bank’s efforts to engage effectively with CSOs on issues of development although there is much that can be improved. The Bank works on many dimensions with CSOs and recognizes that effective engagement brings huge rewards, especially for poor people. Working with CSOs gives the Bank – and governments – a way to engage with primary stakeholders, the poor, themselves. Such engagement can lead to a sense of ownership of development interventions. By giving greater attention to CSOs, the Bank now understands that innovative ways of working can be discovered and scaling up efforts can be undertaken. The most recent *World Development Report (WDR)* reflects this new thinking. Civil society roles in increasing public transparency and strengthening accountability are additional reasons why the Bank now works to engage with CSOs in every borrower country.

4.3 Goldin then presented four issues to consider in regard to Bank-CSO engagement:

**Issue 1:** There is a need for the Bank to provide improved and more consistent guidelines to staff on engagement with CSOs and on facilitating civic engagement. Inadequacy of such guidelines has sometimes resulted in dissatisfaction among Bank staff, member governments, and CSOs alike about the quality of engagement and outcomes. It has also resulted in inconsistencies across the Bank in how staffers engage with CSOs, due partly to their own experiences and attitudes, partly to the societies in which they are working, and to the situation of CSOs in these countries. Finding better ways of enhancing and sharing good practice and exploring ways of efficiently getting feed-back from civil society on the Bank's roles on civic engagement can be an important way to address this need.

**Issue 2:** The existing gap between the Bank’s messages and corresponding expectations, policies and practices suggests a number of constraints to effective Bank-CSO engagement. He recognized the disparity between the commitments made versus actual practice of the Bank in borrower countries. Further steps to close this gap can promote more constructive and effective relations in the future.

**Issue 3:** Significant changes in global and national civil society have occurred over the last several years which warrant adjustments in the ways the Bank engages with CSOs institutionally. He noted the huge civil society campaigns under way and the number of full-time ‘Bank watchers’ among other changes. He acknowledged that the Bank is not providing the kind of information such CSOs need and want.

**Issue 4:** The organizational arrangements in the Bank for managing civil society relations, and the related risks and opportunities, call for greater Bank-wide coherence, coordination, and accountability.

4.4 He noted that the paper was an effort to consider a variety of coordination options in the future and that the Bank would post the paper on its website and invite feedback on the ideas contained therein. He emphasized that the Bank sees the JFC mechanism at the global level as a complement to the other engagement mechanisms already in place at country and regional level.

4.5 Goldin also indicated the Bank's interest in conducting public policy dialogues together with CSOs on issues of common concern. At such a critical juncture in the world with multilateralism under threat, the great imbalance of rich and poor, and declining public resources for development, the Bank and other development actors need to band together to inform and educate citizens in countries around the world to take action on such issues.

Lastly, Goldin indicated the need to discuss the JFC itself, and clarify its specific goals, implementation, and ways to measure our achievements.

## **5. Discussion of World Bank Paper**

5.1 First, participants asked for clarification as to the status of priority actions contained in the paper. In response, Carolyn Reynolds of the External Affairs Department said that after wide discussion of the paper within the Bank and growing consensus around issues to prioritize, the Bank's Management Committee (the managing directors and President Wolfensohn) discussed the paper in June, 2003, reviewed options and agreed to implement the following actions in Fiscal Year 2004:

- Establish a new global mechanism for Bank – CSO engagement to help promote mutual understanding and cooperation. The JFC is being established to help the Bank shape this new global level of engagement.
- Establish a Bank-wide focal point to provide advisory services for consultations and a framework for consultation management. The focal point is to be housed in External Affairs and work closely with the Bank's regional departments, ESSD and Operations Policy and Country Services networks (OPCS) and others.
- Pilot a new Bank-wide monitoring and evaluation system for civic engagement.
- Conduct a review of Bank funds dedicated to civil society engagement in operations and policy dialogue, and explore possible realignment or restructuring.
- Review the Bank's procurement framework for changes that would facilitate improved collaboration with CSOs.

- Institute a structured and integrated learning program for Bank staff and clients on the changing role and nature of civil society, and on how to engage CSOs more effectively.
- Hold regular meetings of senior management, and annually with the Board, to review Bank – civil society relations.

A number of important issues were raised during the discussion of the Bank’s paper.

5.2 Rights-Based Development: Several comments made related to the rationale given by the Bank for engagement with civil society and participatory methodologies. The Bank’s view is a functional or instrumental one, i.e. engagement and participation are important because they result in more effective development interventions whereas many CSOs view people’s participation in influencing decisions that affect them as their right as citizens. Related to this was a call to the Bank and borrower governments to engage in wider debate with affected stakeholders at national levels. The example was given of Malian cotton farmers not being engaged in the debates underway in their country about cotton marketing issues. Also connected to this was a call to promote a rights-based approach to development as a way to move away from the tendency of the Bank and CSOs to relate to people and their problems in ‘silos’ (e.g. labor, gender, health) and to work more effectively on the multiplicity of reasons for discrimination against the poor and marginalized. Another call was made for the Bank to work to improve the enabling environment for engagement by CSOs with their governments and to raise the issue of the need for protection of CSOs who speak out for the rights of citizens.

5.3 Rhetoric/Reality Gap: A number of participants called attention to the gap between the Bank’s stated commitments as contrasted with actual practice by Bank staff in Washington or in particular countries. Behavior by Bank staff ranges from total ignorance of stated commitments to resistance to carrying them out or carrying them out in a perfunctory way. A participant gave the example of labor standards, contrasting a recent substantive dialogue with the Bank on the need for labor standards -- which Bank representatives had supported -- to the publication of a recent document by the International Finance Corporation promoting reduction in wages, negotiation of ‘contracts at will’ and minimizing the importance of social protection as ways to manage economically difficult times.

5.4 Public Policy Dialogues: Participants noted that topics for the public policy dialogues of the kind Ian Goldin mentioned needed to be jointly agreed upon by CSOs and the Bank, and that such dialogues needed to be carried out as a part of an ongoing process and not on an ad hoc basis. Participants also called attention to the importance of having a different sort of public policy dialogue between CSOs and the Bank on some of the most contentious issues before the international development community -- issues on which CSOs and the Bank may not agree.

5.5 The World Bank’s Role in Capacity Building of Southern CSOs: Participants discussed whether or not the WB could play a meaningful role in facilitating capacity

building of Southern CSOs. Capacity building could be an activity led by CSOs, and the Bank could play a participatory role by engaging in three-way dialogues with CSOs and national governments. When done properly, capacity building can empower CSOs, particularly Southern CSOs, to engage effectively with their governments and participate in the decision-making of national policies and programs. This is especially important in countries where Northern CSOs have greater access to dialogue with borrower governments than do local CSOs. Participants noted instances where the Bank was not adequately prepared to play the role of facilitator or where the Bank did not have the necessary credibility with CSOs to be able to play that role.

5.6 In response to the comments, Goldin noted that the Bank was fully committed to participation as both as a right and a desired methodology that it was embodied in the Bank's concept of empowerment. In regard to rights-based development, he noted that a rich discussion is presently underway in the Bank on that topic and that – as a recent paper by World Vision has advocated – the Bank should design projects in such as way as to lead to greater human rights.

5.7 On the rhetoric/reality issue, Goldin acknowledged that it is true that sometimes papers are written by Bank staff which don't represent policy and that it creates problems. Such experiences reflect the diversity of views and the debate within the Bank on how best to do things but it is not reflective of how policies are carried out through Bank operations.

5.8 On the issue of public policy dialogues, he confirmed that the Bank and CSOs would choose together the topics of such debates. He also agreed that both kinds of debates should be held, the first, to educate and mobilize citizens to take action on important issues of common concern – where CSOs have the power to reach people which the Bank doesn't have --and the second, to discuss contentious issues related to the way the Bank does business in areas such as privatization or trade liberalization.

5.9 Lastly, he acknowledged the need to facilitate more effective engagement of CSOs, particularly Southern CSOs, with their governments.

## **6 Presentation of CSO Proposal for the JFC**

6.1 On behalf of the CSOs, David Reed of the World Wildlife Fund presented a draft proposal. He began by thanking Ian Goldin for noting the points of convergence between the Bank and CSOs: what has been achieved in the past, the current challenges in the Bank and, most importantly, the threats to multilateralism and the practice of development assistance that we all recognize. He went on to say that discussions in recent weeks with Bank staff revealed that there is a significant difference of views regarding current challenges facing the organization, with many Bank staff not recognizing the problems the organization has related to its practices and policies in its core areas, and perceiving those CSOs who criticize the Bank as simply ideologues. Reed then gave a brief case study of his organization's experience in advocating for change in the Bank's policies in forestry over a 14-year period. Based on this experience, he said

that it is not possible to achieve change in Bank policies by only working with Bank staff; and that the only effective way to create change is through the Bank's donors, especially its Northern donors. A proposal is currently pending which was brought forward through the North American donors and which focuses on the Bank board's Committee on Development Effectiveness (CODE) as the avenue to change at the Bank.

6.2 Bearing these experiences in mind, the proposal is intended to learn lessons from the past, use those lessons to inform and influence the future, and to have a multi-dimensional and multi-faceted engagement between CSOs and the Bank. The overarching purpose of the proposal is to increase the capacity of Southern CSOs to engage and influence their respective governments in the design and implementation of national development strategies and World Bank programs. Through strengthened CSO engagement, the work program seeks to increase the equity, sustainability and democratic features of specific Bank operations in areas of direct and enduring concern to civil society organizations around the globe. The proposal consisted of three components:

- Derive necessary lessons from assessments of past CSO-World Bank experiences in developing countries to ensure high-quality, substantive engagements between the parties in the future. Retrospective analysis must address key development issues, potentially including PRSPs, privatization, trade liberalization, or others, that are currently and will remain at the center of CSO and World Bank concerns.
- Establish a set of operational standards, derived from assessments of past experiences, which will ensure substantive engagement of CSOs in the design and implementation of future Bank operations.
- Create a public forum for addressing broader but equally controversial development issues facing the international community.

6.3 Reed emphasized that the aim was to examine the actual engagement of CSOs in the design and implementation of selected Bank-funded activities and to assess the impact of CSO-Bank interactions on the quality of outputs resulting from these Bank-financed programs. What is central to this phase of work is analyzing how World Bank operations created, or failed to create, opportunities for CSOs in the recipient country to engage their respective governments in constructive, substantive discussions. To ensure a strong capacity-building dimension to this work program, each assessment process would be accompanied by a series of training activities involving local and national CSOs at the country level. These training activities would seek to increase understanding of government functions and responsibilities, scope and purpose of World Bank programs, and opportunities for CSO input.

6.4 In addition to the assessments, in order to raise the level of public understanding about the future of development assistance, particularly in the present-day climate where militarism and unilateralism prevail, the proposal includes formation of a jointly managed program of policy forums during the 18-month duration of the work program. The

purpose of this organized series of discussions is to bring into focus the most contentious issues before the international development community. Such issues may include trade, labor, human rights, the financial crisis, and a host of other themes to be chosen by the World Bank and CSO participants.

## **7 Discussion of the CSO Proposal**

7.1 Discussion of this proposal focused primarily on capacity building and assessments and on the issue of establishing guidelines for Bank – CSO engagement. Proposed public debates, included as part of the proposal, had been discussed following the presentation of the Bank’s paper.

7.2 Capacity Building: While many Bank participants noted the need for capacity building of Southern CSOs, they questioned the role the JFC could usefully play in this area, given its location in the global arena rather than at national level. In particular, the comparative advantage of the JFC was questioned in regard to Southern CSO capacity building. The question was raised as to how the JFC, as a facilitating mechanism, not an operational mechanism, could involve itself in capacity building. They noted that the Bank is already involved in many efforts at capacity building including the capacity of Southern CSOs to influence their own governments, capacities to monitor their governments, and capacities to implement projects and programs. The exact mechanism for identifying and implementing the capacity building of CSOs will be determined after extensive consultations with a wider network of CSOs.

7.3 Assessments of current and recent WB policies and practice in core Bank areas: There was extensive discussion of this issue, with several Bank participants expressing some reluctance to carry out such assessments and CSO participants generally expressing the critical importance of doing so. Bank representatives expressed some concern that some staff may feel that they have been the subject of extensive reviews, and would prefer a more forward-looking approach. CSO participants noted that it was not wise to discuss the future without first looking at and learning from the past. CSO participants also noted that the assessments were intended to be of recent experiences in engagement, because it is here where the gap between rhetoric and reality may be most apparent. For example, although the Bank in Washington has said that privatization is no longer imposed, while in certain African and Latin American countries, Bank staffers continue to use this approach.

7.4 Jim Adams, Bank Vice President for Operational Policy and Country Services, suggested that the best approach to such assessments would be to choose a set of experiences with both positive and negative aspects, ones in which the focus would be on what has worked and what has not in relations among the Bank, CSOs and specific governments. With an emphasis on learning lessons to apply to future engagement, he stressed, both Bank staff and governments would likely be interested. Moreover, if the approach were to compile the lessons learned about good practice into a sourcebook, as was done during the effort to mainstream participation into the Bank, this would provide guidance and elicit a positive response from Bank operations staff on this topic. Advice

from Steen Jorgensen, the Social Development Director, was that CSOs carry out these assessments independently of the Bank, with the Bank providing information. The value that could be added by this effort would be to focus on the gaps in engagement between and among the Bank, CSOs and governments.

7.5 Establishing a Standardized Set of Internal Bank Guidelines Regarding Bank – CSO Engagement: Initially Bank participants appeared to be opposed to the possibility of establishing new policies regarding Bank – CSO engagement. However, after a discussion of the assessments, the prevailing attitude seemed to be that the results of the assessments would lead to the strengthening of existing guidelines.

## **8. Session with Bank President Wolfensohn**

8.1 Although Mr. Wolfensohn was unable to participate in the entire JFC meeting because of a Bank board meeting and another important meeting with representatives of the Economic Commission for Africa, he joined the participants for a 2-hour working lunch. After Kumi Naidoo outlined the status of discussions on the Bank’s paper and the CSO proposal, Mr. Wolfensohn made the following comments.

8.1.1 He appreciated the recommendation to put the Bank’s paper on the website and seek feedback. He said that would happen right away and the paper would be kept as a draft while seeking input.

8.1.2 He endorsed the idea of public policy dialogues. He noted that while the Bank would be willing to have such debates on any basis, the Bank is only one part of the story, and it would be useful to have representatives of receptive governments participate as well. He said the Bank would be prepared to provide funding for such dialogues. One or two could be held and then evaluated to decide whether to proceed with more. The important issue is the choice of topics.

8.1.3 On the issue of assessments he noted that its usefulness will depend on how it is structured. He observed that if one approaches such assessments to be critical, then they would find something critical in any organization including the Bank as well as CSOs. He went on to say that he supported the proposal for assessments so long as they were not set up as ‘judicial inquiries’. He noted that the Bank’s draft paper was an attempt to be honest about shortcomings. He said he does not mind a basis of inquiry, which is critical, as long as it is also constructive and forward looking.

8.2 Beyond his comments about the proposals under discussion, Mr. Wolfensohn presented two other issues for discussion. The first was the need to scale up development interventions in order to have an effective impact on reducing poverty. The challenge is to go beyond these projects and have impact on a much larger scale. He noted the scores of good projects which only affect hundreds or a few thousand people when there are millions of people living in poverty. Saying that the Bank and governments can’t address

this problem alone, he invited CSO participants to a conference to be held in Shanghai, China in May, 2004 where many case studies of scaling up will be discussed. China was chosen as the site of the conference given their successful efforts to scale up development interventions. He also made reference to the work carried out to eliminate river blindness in Africa as a successful example of many development actors, including CSOs and the Bank, working together to attack a problem on the proper scale.

8.3 The second topic Mr. Wolfensohn talked about was the need for the Bank, civil society and other development actors to band together to inform and educate citizens in countries around the world to speak out on the critical issues facing development efforts today, in particular, the continuing decline in funding for development assistance at a time when the numbers of poor people are increasing, and the attacks on multilateralism, and increased emphasis on military solutions. He pointed out the huge imbalances and inequalities in the global economy, where 80% of the world's assets are in the hands of 20% of the globe's population. He said the time for advocating by one's and two's is over, and all of us who work in development must advocate together. If CSOs with their large constituencies, the Bank, other donors and development actors all advocated together, we could begin to reverse the tide.

## **9. The Structure and Role of the JFC**

9.1 This was the final plenary section to discuss the pending proposals and structure and role of the JFC.

Throughout the discussion of the CSO proposal, the issue of the JFC's comparative advantage was raised repeatedly and questions posed regarding what a transitional group such as the JFC could most usefully do to facilitate the creation of a new space for dialogue and engagement between the Bank and CS.

9.2 Strengthening Southern CSO representation: One of the most important issues concerned the representation in the JFC of Southern-based CSO organizations and networks and the need for several to be brought into the JFC. Specifically, it was noted that CSO organizations and networks from Latin America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East and North Africa, as well as indigenous and environmental organizations should be invited to participate in the JFC. Some of the participants (such as the ICFTU) noted that their networks consisted of a large number of Southern organizations whom they are representing in the JFC (in the case of the ICFTU, about two-thirds are Southern partners).

9.3 Facilitative Role of the JFC: Although many people noted the need for greater Southern CSO participation in the JFC, a number also said that the credibility of the JFC will come from the purpose and function of the group. JFC's role could be to facilitate a process through which a wide variety of CSO networks from South and North can participate.

9.4 There was a brief discussion of alternative structures for the JFC, such as a consultative group with CSO representatives being appointed by the Bank president, or an accreditation process. However, the consensus of the group was to keep the structure of the JFC as it is now, with the understanding that efforts will be made to invite several Southern Civil Society organizations and networks drawing upon the recommendations/suggestions from the Bank and CSO members and subject to much wider consultation within civil society.

## **10. Decisions Taken**

10.1 The World Bank and civil society participants agreed on the following:

- 1) The World Bank's paper "*Issues and Options for Improving Engagement Between the World Bank and CSOs*" will be posted on the Bank website and will be available for CSO comments and recommendations. The JFC CSO participants will circulate the document widely among their networks and encourage feedback to the Bank.
- 2) An assessment of current and recent WB performance in respect to how effectively Bank-civil society interactions have impacted Bank development work, in order to produce forward-looking recommendations for improving Bank policy and practice by learning from both successful and ineffective experiences. The selection of focus areas will be determined after wider consultation within civil society. The assessment would be an independent, CSO-managed study, with the WB providing access to its information. The WB and CSO participants agreed to jointly review, and consider how to operationalize, the outcomes of the assessment. This proposal will also be subject to broader consultation within civil society.
- 3) Capacity-building of CSOs, particularly CSOs in developing and transition countries, for more effective engagement and advocacy vis-à-vis the WB and national governments to promote sustainable development. There will be further discussion and consultation on what skills, tools, and methodologies may be needed to support this goal.
- 4) A series of public policy dialogues linked to other CSO-WB engagement and review processes. These public forums should encompass contested development issues as well as areas of common interest (such as recent challenges to multilateralism and the need for increasing Official Development Assistance flows). Specific themes will be identified after wider consultation.
- 5) In his concluding remarks, Kumi Naidoo reiterated that the broad agreements reached would need a greater consultation and endorsement both within civil society and the World Bank.

10.2 Mr. Wolfensohn was present for the final session at which decisions taken were enumerated. He expressed his satisfaction with the progress made during the day, said he was much encouraged, and looked forward to the next meeting. Finally, he reiterated his hope that CSO participants and the Bank could find a way to interface on the subject of scaling up development initiatives which he had discussed earlier in the day.

## **11. Next Steps**

11.1 As the meeting ended, Bank and CSO participants agreed that a small joint group would meet the following day to decide on next steps including the JFC structure, follow-up activities, and issues of transparency and inclusiveness of the JFC, and dissemination of information regarding the process now underway.

## Summary of October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting

### *CSO Planning Session (8-8:30am)*

1. The purpose of this planning session was to generally reflect on the meeting of 28 October and to specifically prepare for the meeting with the World Bank staff headed by Operations Vice President, Jim Adams at 8:30am. The CSO participants committed themselves to holding open discussions/brainstorming with the Bank staff on details for the way forward, but have decided not to commit to any specific action plan, until further consultations could be held with a broader spectrum of civil society.

2. During this session, the participants agreed that success of the JFC is contingent on sustaining and building credibility and legitimacy among the civil society sector. The priority action for the JFC was determined to be consultation with and outreach to Southern and Northern CSOs including those who have previous experience engaging with the WB. This consultation process should take place in the next three-four months and should involve both the IFI 'watchers' as well as CSOs from the South and transitional countries who directly represent poor communities. Rory Mungoven (HRW) emphasized the need for the JFC to refocus on its facilitative role and to set forth modest, but realistic and achievable goals for the following areas of work agreed in principle by WB and CSO participants the previous day: assessment, policy debates, and training/capacity building activities. Joanna Kerr (AWID) clarified that a capacity building exercise should be driven not by the WB, but by the CSOs, and that the terms of engagement need to be determined by the CSOs who need and want the training or capacity-building. Rosa Ines Ospina (Transparency International) mentioned that capacity building goes both ways and that WB staff also needs to be trained to properly engage with the WB.

### *World Bank – Civil Society Post-JFC Planning Meeting (8:30-11:30am)*

CSO participants' meeting with Jim Adams (8:30-9:30am) and World Bank staff (EXT, ESSD)

#### *Assessment:*

3. Kumi Naidoo briefed Jim Adams that the CSO participants have agreed on the following:
- Assessment of best and worst practices would be an independent activity to be carried out by CSOs (involving CSOs who are not part of the JFC)
  - Focus areas for the assessment will be determined after thorough consultation with wider groups of CSOs
  - CSO participants would like to have WB's commitment to assist in accessing WB resources such as information, documents, contacts with national governments, etc. Contact person within the WB to support day-to-day liaison on assessment will need to be identified.

- Work together to jointly review the results of the assessment and the mechanisms of implementing CSOs' recommendations to come out of the assessment(s).

4. Jim Adams stated the following:

- Access to WB's information and other resources will be provided, and general support will be given to facilitate the undertaking of the assessment. WB will appoint contact person.
- WB would like to have input in selection of themes for the assessment and afterwards would look seriously at how to operationalize/implementing findings of the assessment
- Planning process for carrying out the assessment will need to happen soon.
- As soon as we know more details about the assessment, the WB will develop an internal advisory/briefing note explaining the process to its regional and thematic departments

5. CSO Participants reiterated that possible thematic areas are privatization, trade liberalization, PRSPs and infrastructure. Jim Adams encouraged the group to consider other areas such as Community Driven Development, Good Governance and MDGs. He also called the group's attention to the World Bank Participation Sourcebook as a possible model, whose findings have been widely operationalized within the WB even though it did not lead to an operational policy. Its success is attributable to the following factors: (i) broad forum of experts sharing their experiences; (ii) existence of information dissemination mechanisms to widely circulate the findings of the participation exercise; (iii) rigorous, systematic analysis of what has been accomplished to date both within and outside of the Bank with examples of effective practices and lessons learned; and (iv) operational departments were encouraged to consider the following question when designing/implementing projects: "Is there a role for participation in the projects?" In this way, the concept of participation has received much more traction and use than if it were simply translated to yet another operational policy.

6. The CSO participants clarified the following:

- Assessment(s) will focus on the quality of WB-CSO engagement and its impact on overall outcomes and outputs of WB projects/programs
- Assessment(s) will focus on effective and ineffective practices of WB

7. The following points were agreed as next steps:

- WB will prepare an Advisory Note to managers on the parameters of the assessment
- WB will appoint a focal point for the assessment to work with CSOs and Bank staff
- Both CSOs and WB will appoint a small task team to oversee the assessment process
- CSOs will hold a thorough consultation with a broader range of CSOs, especially CSOs from the South and transitional countries and continue to reach out to involve more Southern CSOs in the JFC process.

*Public Policy Dialogues*

8. After Jim Adams left at 9:30am Vinay Bhargava, Operations Director for External Affairs headed the WB delegation and led the discussion on choosing possible topics for the public policy dialogues. He cited James Wolfensohn's talk the day before on 28 October 2003 in which he elicited civil society/JFC participation in efforts to scale up poverty reduction and advocacy on development financing issues. Mr. Wolfensohn had encouraged participants to seriously consider the ways of collaborating on *Scaling up Poverty Reduction* conference to be held in Shanghai in May of 2004 and campaigning for improved allocation of resources for development (ODA). On the latter, Vinay proposed that CSOs consider the following activities: i) complementary advocacy activities in the areas of mutual agreement (e.g. need for increased funding to achieve the MDGs and greater equity, increased market access by poor countries to rich country markets); and ii) reporting back at the next JFC meeting on the specific but complementary advocacy activities undertaken by the Bank and the CSOs, including members of the JFC. Regarding the proposed global dialogues on development issues, Vinay proposed that CSOs may want to consider having the first such dialogue geared to the Bank's *Infrastructure Action Plan* which is publicly available and was highlighted in yesterday's plenary discussion. He pointed out that this topic is directly related to several issues mentioned by CSOs for debate (e.g. privatization, private provision of infrastructure services, etc.)

9. CSOs participants (Peter Bakvis/ Kumi Naidoo) pointed out that any activity in the area of policy dialogue that the JFC would agree to undertake needs to be linked and harmonized with existing activities and efforts around the world. Thus, participation on scaling up poverty reduction and campaigning for ODA resources will need to be linked to other processes and activities. The JFC participants would be reluctant to engage in stand-alone or symbolic activities- the JFC process in the coming 18 months should not become an ad-hoc, event-driven process. Bank participants at the meeting indicated their agreement with this approach.

10. Both the WB and JFC CSOs reached a consensus that the three tracks -- assessment, public policy dialogues and capacity building/training -- will need to interlinked and harmonized. The goal is not just engagement for the sake of engagement- we need to ask who is being empowered by the process?

11. David Reed proposed the following points for next steps for the JFC:

- Consultation and Reorganization Phase
- Agree on the work plan and identify main areas of activity/focus
- Develop budget and fundraising strategy

12. Kumi summed up the following areas of agreement on this topic:

- Three tracks are agreed in principle
- They will be linked organically
- Need to link JFC's activities with present and ongoing processes, dialogues and activities to ensure that JFC is adding value to existing efforts
- CSO participants will go back to their respective constituencies on topics for public dialogues

Vinay also proposed that the CSOs report back to the Bank on civil society efforts' geared to achieving the MDGs, and on advocating for more development aid.

The discussion at this point moved from assessment to *capacity building*.

### *Capacity Building*

13. Steen Jorgensen (WB Social Development Department) proposed the following:

- Expand the JFC to harness the existing capacity of CSOs who have much knowledge and experience with WB- he used the term 'capacity releasing'
- Practice "Action Learning" i.e. learning by doing by involving southern partners in the assessments
- Complement CSO capacity building initiatives with present WB efforts in this regard (there are ongoing activities in Social Protection Unit, Poverty Social Impact Analysis (PSIA), Social Accountability, etc
- Establish a system of exchanging information and knowledge between WB and CSOs
- Training of WB staff to work more effectively with CSOs, and vice-versa
- There is little appetite from WB on implementing additional Operational Policies

14. Rory Mungoven pointed out that capacity building needs to be 'learning-by-doing' and that there needs to be an organic link to assessment. Capacity building is about participation and consultation.

15. Vinay added that the JFC could help expand the universe of available opportunities for CSO capacity building, e.g. by creating a new funding mechanism that supports bringing voices from the South and transitional countries into global policy dialogues, as well as supporting training of trainers.

16. Kumi stated that all CSOs present in the room have taken a calculated risk to participate in the October 27-29<sup>th</sup> meetings and the JFC. There is a pressing need to conduct a thorough consultation with CSOs on the JFC. Kumi identified the following action points:

- 1) In order for the JFC to succeed, we have to focus on our facilitative role and our goals need to be realistic, modest and pragmatic
- 2) We are committed to expanding JFC participants and reaching out to the Southern-based CSOs
- 3) Consolidation of effective practices as well as challenges

In terms of the consultation process, this needs to happen at two broad levels. Firstly, we have to consult about whether the political space opened up by this process can add value to civil society's advocacy and operational efforts. Secondly, in terms of the three streams of activities, we need to consult further about the appropriateness about these initiatives

17. Vinay, on behalf of Bank participants, thanked the CSO representatives for the time and efforts they invested in participating in the JFC meeting and their contribution to a very productive outcome. He assured the participants that the Bank is fully supportive of the JFC and hopes that it will be successful in implementing its action points.

*CSO Follow-up Meeting (11:30-1:00 pm)*

18. The agenda for this session is as follows:

- Reflections on the morning session
- Commitment of the JFC participants to the process
- Purpose, role and structure of the JFC

**19. Reflections:**

Manish Bapna (Bank Information Center) reiterated that there is a large community of organizations that are working on the issues raised during the meeting, such as CEE Bank Watch, NGO Forum, WRI, BWP, and Campaign to Reform the WB. A number of assessments have been already done on SAPs (SAPRI), indigenous peoples, extractive industries, dams (World Commission on Dams) and forestry (Forestry Review). Some of these organizations who engage with the Bank have consciously decided not to be present here.

20. These are some of the questions to consider:

- How do we build upon what has already been done? How do we strengthen the existing process/mechanism of WB-CSO engagement?
- How does the JFC engage with them?
- How does the JFC ensure its independence from WB?
- What is the value-added of the JFC process? What do we want to get out of the JFC?

20. JFC could serve as a hub for information sharing and could focus itself to capacity building, i.e. capacity release on specific issues. However, if capacity building will be funded by WB there is a danger of being co-opted by the WB. Assessment, if performed independently from WB, could be a useful exercise. JFC could also open up space for Southern CSOs to engage with WB. The JFC needs to make a serious effort to identify and consult with the CSOs who have been working on Bank issues and be very careful not to undermine existing efforts. There is a danger of CSO co-optation by the WB within the JFC framework.

21. The fact that most vice presidents and James Wolfensohn were present signals a very high level of commitment from WB's side. There is no doubt that the political space has been created for WB-CSO engagement. The question is, how we use this space.

22. (Alan Whaites, World Vision) The danger is that the JFC might become a surrogate for Southern CSO participation. (Manish) If the JFC is used to empower voices of the South and transitional countries, it could be useful.

*Commitment from CSO participants and JFC structure:*

23. Toktayim Umetalieva (ECA Working Group on the World Bank): Our colleagues would like to have a consultation with the JFC via videoconferencing. We will also hold an extensive consultation on the JFC meetings and we will decide how and whether we will further engage with the JFC. But in general, we are committed to the JFC process.

24. Peter Bakvis (ICFTU): We have most of our constituency in the South, some of whom have a principle of non-engagement. Need to reopen space for new/increased dialogues and broad consultations.

25. Alan Whaites: We have to see to our internal dynamics as well. We must avoid being co-opted into the role of signing on a dotted line. Coalitions don't survive this way.

26. Joanna Kerr: We are here because women's voices are not heard in the WB. There has to be legitimacy to the JFC process in terms of participation and representation.

27. Kumi Naidoo: CIVICUS has its board meeting in November, during which we will discuss our commitment as a secretariat for the JFC. We agree on the following:

- The political space that's created is primarily to facilitate engagement of CSOs from the South and transitional countries
- JFC must engage in rigorous consultative exercise. There are specific meetings and opportunities to engage with CSOs (eg. Penang meeting, World Social Forum in Mumbai, etc.). If we produce a consultative document that is honest and humble, we still stand a good chance of succeeding.
- We need to think of convening meetings with other CSOs to explain the JFC process
- Task team within JFC would need to be created

28. Rosa Ines Ospina: Recall that Peter Eigen and former WB people founded Transparency International. Any process that can empower people to effectively engage with WB is worthwhile. TI has been involved in monitoring procurement processes of the WB. Rosa will discuss the JFC at the board meeting, and will get back to us on her organization's decision whether or not to stay involved in the JFC.

29. Closing Remarks: Thank you very much for your active participation. CIVICUS will circulate minutes of the meeting and will plan information dissemination as well as consultation mechanisms.