

**STRENGTHENING WORLD BANK GROUP
ENGAGEMENT ON GOVERNANCE AND ANTICORRUPTION
CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**



CAMEROON

(JANUARY 15-16 & 25, 2007)

Three separate consultations were held: the first with representatives from the Private Sector (employers' associations, trade unions and liberal professions) and civil society (NGOs and the print media), the second with representatives from the Cameroonian administration (ministries, public agencies) and the third with donor partners.

Participants: 26 participants were present at the first meeting with civil society groups and private sector, 25 at the second meeting with government officials, and 6 at the third meeting with donors (see attached list).

How did the process fit into ongoing country dialogue?

Improving governance and anticorruption and promoting partnerships are two guiding principles of the World Bank Group Interim Strategy Note (ISN) recently reviewed by the Board (December 7, 2006). In that context, the GAC consultations are complementing ongoing dialogue with government, civil society and development partners on the issue of governance and anticorruption. Few illustrations follow:

- During ISN consultations with the Government of Cameroon, other national stakeholders, and international partners, the Bank has exchanged on ways to directly support governance and anticorruption programs, in close collaboration with other international partners, while developing and implementing explicit governance and anticorruption action plans for every IDA financing operation.
- The Bank initiated and joined an exploratory anticorruption mission to Cameroon by international development partners in July 2006, bringing together – under the leadership of the OECD-DAC Secretariat - experts from seven countries. The mission helped bringing global best practice on anticorruption efforts to Cameroon. It also tested the nascent OECD-DAC anticorruption approach.
- The Bank has initiated, together with the EC, a donor platform to fully coordinate international partners' support on strengthening public financial management. Through a joint dialogue it is intended to support the development and implementation of a prioritized Government action plan that accelerates public financial management reforms and demonstrates measurable progress. The platform is underpinned by an analysis of key public financial management and procurement issues summarizing collective knowledge.
- The Bank is co-financing a multi-donor initiative under the leadership of UNDP with the objective of assisting the Government of Cameroon in the implementation of its Good

Governance Program, by conducting corruption assessments in key sectors and developing a common anticorruption policy, and strengthening civil society groups in the fight against corruption,

What were the key issues/themes raised by participants?

Participants laid particular emphasis on the negative impact of corruption and the need to apply existing laws, and reinforce controls.

Participants indicated the need to embark on prevention before suppression, and the benefit of educating people on this ill as early as in primary school.

Participants stressed administrative bottlenecks and the inefficiency of the administration, impunity, embezzlement of public funds, the issue of transparency in information and finances.

Participants particularly pointed out that with regard to Cameroon, what is lacking are not structures and people to manage them, but rather a real political will to tackle the ill from the roots, to pinpoint the acts and mete out sanctions in a diligent and severe manner that is devoid of discrimination.

Participants (few donors) considered corruption as part and parcel of Cameroon's political and social system and that the entire structure may be shaken if corruption is seriously tackled.

Participants expressed the wish to see a better qualitative action from the World Bank, a better targeting of interventions in compliance with the Bank's statutory missions and its expertise, and a better coordination of donors' actions.

Participants lauded the World Bank's initiative as coming at the appropriate time when Cameroon is at the crossroads, grappling with the issue of good governance and the reduction of corruption whereas all the means are found in the legal framework (that has procedures and structures for investigations, legal proceedings and judgment).

Respondent Type	Consultation Reply
1. Top governance challenges in country -	
[Representatives from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption, embezzlement of public funds, impunity, money laundry, trans-national corruption; • Inefficiency of the Administration, accumulation of posts; • Lack of transparency in public finance management, tax evasion in collusion with commercial banks.
[Representatives from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transparency in public finance management, embezzlement of public funds, inertia on the part of the Administration, impunity; • Non-functioning of structures in charge of the fight against corruption; • Appropriation of reforms, visibility of the actions carried out; • Lack of vision and weak planning of development policies and programs.
[Representatives from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main problem resides in the political system: the presidential system confers the main power to the Executive branch, and makes parliament and the judiciary fictitious bodies. The principle of separation of powers is ineffective, causing impunity and inertia. All reforms require long approval process because they should be vetted by the highest authorities. • Citizens are powerless. • The feudal social system makes all heads ultra-powerful even when a citizen wants to exercise their most elementary rights. • The inability of the system to make managers accountable. Managers do not know their responsibilities vis-à-vis the management of public property. • Check and balance mechanisms (opposition, civil society, NGOs etc) do not function efficiently. • Lack of political will in the implementation of reforms. Unclear if capacity is also an issue. • Conflict of interests with State employees operating businesses (insiders trading).

Respondent Type	Consultation Reply
2. Promising areas of governance and anticorruption reform and potential obstacles	
[Representatives from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translate into reality the political will of bringing administration closer to the administered through decentralization. • Make operational/effective the institutions set up to ensure good governance and the fight against corruption by providing means for their functioning. Redefine the objectives of these institutions with a view to achieving efficient results and not action plans only. • Get the civil society more involved in the various phases of providing and implementing aid to countries.
[Representatives from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the productive capacities of poor countries in order to reduce the great imbalance between countries of the North and those of the South, raise income and reduce poverty. • Support actions of existing structures in order to make them functional and efficient.
[Representatives from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the opposition's ways of expression. • Develop the culture of protest in the opposition and citizenry. Identify the champions of reforms and help them. Encourage the demand for good governance and anticorruption. • Identify sectors where there can be a more rapid intervention with the possibility of changing the situation with great ease. Recognize areas where donors could have an impact and focus energies on these areas. • Improve Public Finance Management and strengthen country systems in line with the Paris Declaration. • Develop the culture of control and especially sanctioning with a view to discouraging new fraud attempts.
3. How the Bank should engage where governance is weak, and circumstances under which to disengage	
[Representatives from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a genuine incursion into the economic policies of countries with a view to providing a coherent and efficient support to States and get the civil society involved especially in the design of strategies. • Compel States to set up dialogue institutions such as Planning Administration. • Incorporate a global programme of good governance and the fight against corruption like the UNAIDS for the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Respondent Type	Consultation Reply
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include transparency in the Bank's actions and dismantle international lobbying. • Review the Bank's intervention strategies by arousing a local counter-weight through World Bank support to Cameroon private capital instead of endless budgetary assistance. This would revive the economy, re-boost growth, alleviate poverty and implicitly tame corruption. • Ensure the adoption of the law on citizen's access to information. • Redefine the role and weight of political parties in decision-taking process. • Reduce capital flight and wage an efficient war against tax evasion.
[Representatives from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a global vision of the economy by resorting to rigorous, coordinated and decentralized planning process. • Partners should support national priorities expressed by grass root populations (encourage ownerships). • Strengthen its assistance because the Bank ought to avoid sanctioning innocent populations and give more assistance in the area of development through a coherent support • Assess the various structural adjustment programmes and encourage long-term prospects • Ensure abundant communication with a view to restoring a healthy relation with the population and adapt especially the instruments of appropriation of efforts noticed with the target population • Enhance the financial and human capacities of the State in the execution of development projects • Accelerate Civil service reform • Improve the efficiency of existing structures and support projects at all stages
[Representatives from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not to withdraw but target actions from which the populations can directly benefit. • However, for some bilateral partners, the Bank has to withdraw when there is obvious manifestation of Government's refusal to make necessary efforts. • A middle course is shown by the grading of the Bank's responses depending on the level of efforts or resistance to changes by Government.
4. How to ensure fair and consistent treatment across countries	
[Representatives]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect commitments taken with developing countries for a more serene working climate.

Respondent Type	Consultation Reply
from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up an international coalition of partners, a multilateral communication on interventions and ensure permanent consultation with development partners. • Commit groups of experts in charge of evaluating projects and writing reports of the evolution of economic and social policies in countries.
[Representatives from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put processes into perspective with a view to avoiding the destabilization of systems in countries where donors intervene and, in this connection, seek coherence between economic-growth and governance–corruption balance. • Set up an international coherent action plan to improve governance and anticorruption drive • Provide proximity support to the preparation of country-programmes in order to avoid incoherence
[Representatives from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a multilateral organization, the Bank is more immune to politically-based decision, and should take objective decisions. • In the face of a similar situation, the Bank’s response has to be the same in all countries.
5. How to strengthen the Bank’s work with champions of reform outside the executive branch of government – parliament, judiciary, civil society, media and the private sector	
[Representatives from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the capacity of the various stakeholders for better participation in negotiations and in the supervision of projects. • Reduce the impenetrability surrounding World Bank intervention procedures by getting the media and the population highly involved through the civil society. • Intensify its intervention and reinforce its control over the execution of projects through consultancy firms and independent observers.
[Rep. from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a global vision of the economy by resorting to rigorous, coordinated and decentralized planning processes
[Representatives from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen their ability to act on corruption-related issues. • Support private stakeholders so that they can have confidence in themselves.

Respondent Type	Consultation Reply
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate their access to platforms of dialogue with the Government
6. How to mitigate fiduciary risk in Bank operations?	
[Representatives from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a real incursion into the economic policies of countries with a view to providing coherent and efficient support to States and involve especially the civil society in designing these strategies. • Ensure that the various financial management and control structures are operational. • Set up control and counter-control mechanisms with qualified authorities and stratify sanctions in the event of non-respect of stated indicators. • Promote the culture of denunciation and set up a legal framework to protect those who expose these crimes. • Subject the disbursement of funds to the attainment of objectives; instil a culture of audit and reporting, and self-evaluation, not only to donors but also to aid beneficiaries. • Select efficient communication channels and ensure extensive communication throughout the project cycle in order to reduce suspicion of corruption in the execution of projects. • Get the civil society fully involved as partner in the evaluation cycle.
[Representatives from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen existing control mechanisms and institutions, make them more credible. • Enhance audit culture and strengthen the management capacity of PIU managers.
[Representatives from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update diagnosis already made in Cameroon. • Fight against embezzlement of public funds and money laundering networks. • Dismantle transnational corruption.
[Representatives from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen national systems so as to ensure transparency and tractability of public expenditures. • Strengthen capacity and dialogue frameworks in order to ensure compliance with norms and rules. • Prefer programmatic approach to project approach in order to ensure a comprehensive monitoring of public

Respondent Type	Consultation Reply
	expenditures in all stages.
7. The Bank's role vis-à-vis other donors in supporting governance reform	
[Rep. from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize donors assistance to avoid any confusion and pejorative interpretation of their assistance • Sensitize and inform about projects
[Rep. from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize and streamline procedures. • Align aid delivery with the major national priorities expressed by grass root populations. • Uphold transparent and mutual respect in dialogue.
[Representatives from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up strong and large dialogue structures among donors so that they have the same voice when engaging with the Government. • Prepare an international charter on transnational corruption.
8. How to monitor progress in governance and anticorruption at the country level	
[Rep. from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up an Honorary court to punish offenders or encourage achievers. • Foster governance in the major sectors, stressing changes in the daily lives of populations when assessing reforms.
[Representatives from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account indicators like those of Transparency International and collect the view of the populations through surveys and opinion polls. • Carry out quo-ante and ex-post surveys of the population to determine their perception of trends and impact. • Set up self evaluation mechanism for own interventions. • Design a monitoring system for each project from start to finish. • Adopt a global vision of the economy by reverting to rigorous, coordinated and decentralized planning process.
[Representatives]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use also qualitative criteria to assess changes in the provision of services.

Respondent Type	Consultation Reply
[from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quantitative criteria, PEFA for example, to measure the management of public finances. • Use indications that are recognised internationally.
9. Areas for improvement in GAC strategy and country-level support	
[Representatives from Civil Society Organization and Media]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to and ratify international and African anti-corruption conventions. • Streamline administrative procedures, the bottlenecks of which increase areas of corruption. • Adapt to the culture of control, making operational all control organs. • Provide the national governance programs with operating resources. • Develop the education system by instituting courses on ethics, integrity and citizenship in school programs. • Reinforce counter-forces and check and balances by setting up pillars of integrity. • Promote the enforcement of laws. • Effectively fight against cross-border corruption by imposing on governments a good governance code, and by bringing social accountability in management practices. • Disseminate actual outcomes or promising results through efficient channels. • Raise the income level of civil servants in view of providing them with a decent purchasing power. • Improve the quality of public spending. • Suppress incoherence in government’s approach and promote participation of all stakeholders. • Bring situations of plurality of offices to the barest minimum, as they are notorious sources of interference and encourage corrupt practices. • Reinforce counter-forces by setting up pillars of integrity. • Ensure the respect of one of the fundamental principles of Human Rights and Public Freedoms which is equality of all before the law. • Build the capacity of the civil society by training its members at the local level and sponsor their participation in global forums. • Enhance NGO activities which have a greater impact at grassroots level through broad-based consultations with urban

Respondent Type	Consultation Reply
	and rural populations.
[Representatives from Government and Public Administration]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take full advantage of the new laws in the legal domain in order to better protect investments and strengthen its operational capacity with the aim of ensuring complete separation of powers. • Encourage and support corporate governance by dint of a good business practice code and ascertain such practices by way of internal and external audits, a moral code and compliance with a professional code of ethics. • Strengthen the operational capacity of supervisory bodies. • Expedite the implementation of reforms. • Enhance corporate governance. • Target sensitization campaigns against private businessmen and members of the civil society who are highly involved in international corruption. • Adopt preventive and repressive measures against international crime. • Denounce strong monopolies which only help to destabilize national economies. • Harmonize and improve cooperation ties with development partners through mutual dialogue as well as free and fair competition. • Implement United Nations' Convention Against corruption and ratify African Union's Convention Against corruption. • Take full advantage of existing instruments to promote good governance and the fight against corruption. • Provide adequate support for capacity building activities at the grassroots level through civic and moral education programs. Such programs should primarily target children and youths to inculcate the virtue of honesty even though the benefits of these investments will be reaped over time. • Encourage free dialogue within the three arms of power and involve local elites and group leaders.
[Representatives from Donors]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bank ought to be concerned with its own governance: investigate, find, sanction and publish crimes of its own employees. The Bank should set example in that area. <p>Scale up the contribution to the fight against cross-border corruption (from oil companies for instance)</p>