

Background Note on Consultations  
World Development Report 2004  
Making Services Work for Poor People  
*Final draft, August 2002*

Introduction

The World Development Report, both as a published document, and as a process for discussion about a specific development area, draws wide attention from outside the World Bank. In the past few years, the Bank has sought to have greater engagement and a process of consultations with a range of organizations and individuals about the content and main ideas contained in the WDR. This has been rewarding in many instances, but has also shown that it is essential that the parameters of the consultations and the purpose of the WDR itself be clearly outlined. This note provides some basic information on the WDR, its goals and the processes around it. The note is not an official statement on the WDR, but is designed to create a common platform of understanding within the World Bank and with other stakeholders.

Overall objectives

The World Development Report is one of the important vehicles the Bank has for engaging in dialogue with the global development community. Each year, the chosen topic provides a lens through which to view and discuss different aspects of the development process. The report discusses the chosen issue from a global perspective. While the Bank's experience is drawn upon, the report is not intended to focus on the Bank and its specific operations. In the case of the WDR 2004, there will be specific linkages with operations in areas related to service delivery, with on-going research on service delivery, and with the international initiatives related to human development goals.

The WDR has the potential to serve as one of the Bank's critical instruments for dialogue with the international development community at large. The published reports invariably lead to much debate and discussion on some of the leading issues of the day. The focus on issues rather than the specifics of Bank operations is important since there are many other internal and external vehicles for evaluating the Bank's performance in specific projects. As a contribution to the critical analysis and public discussion of development issues, the WDR should not just be reciting generic answers but raising fundamental questions that have no easy answers.

Topic

Each WDR has a focused topic or thematic area, and for the WDR 2004, the focus is captured in the statement, "Making Services Work for Poor People".

This theme is based on the recognition that success in reaching the Millennium Development Goals will depend not just on faster economic growth and the flow of resources, but on the ability to translate those resources into basic services, especially in health, education, water, and sanitation. Too often, the delivery of services falls far short of what could be achieved, especially for the poor. The reasons include: weak incentives for performance, corruption, imperfect

monitoring (if at all), and administrative logjams. At the same time, when some countries have tried to address the problem, especially by involving poor people in service delivery, the results have been impressive. Giving parents voice over their children's education, patients a say over hospital management, making agency budgets transparent--all contribute to improving outcomes in human development.

The World Development Report 2004 will investigate how countries can accelerate progress towards the MDGs by **making services work for poor people**. Celebrating notable and successful innovations while taking a hard look at some of the failures, and learning from both, the Report will attempt to guide policymakers, donors, and citizens on improving the delivery of basic services. In this way we can also deepen our understanding of empowering and investing in poor people.

### Target audience

The target audience for the World Development Report is the global development community, including policy makers and government officials, representatives of civil society organizations, students, teachers, journalists, business leaders and other professionals in developing and developed countries.

### Research methodology and style

The World Development Report draws on a range of material, from inside and outside the Bank. It commissions some new work through background papers, and then synthesizes this and existing analyses into themes and sub-themes that the Report highlights. The background papers and the bibliography consulted are listed at the end of the Report.. In addition, for this WDR, the team plans to develop a process that will highlight some of the papers that represent the diverse viewpoints that are provided during the WDR consultation process.

### The roles and parameters of consultations

A range of different forms and types of consultations bring to the WDR process alternative perspectives on the topic under consideration, which will benefit the report. These include both information gathering on operational experiences and comments on the various stages of the WDR draft documents. Thus, Bank management encourages the WDR team to consult with a variety of relevant stakeholders and experts during the preparation of the report, including those inside and outside the Bank. . But it needs to be recognized that the report team receives a very wide range of comments, many of them reflecting divergent views and experiences, and thus the final output reflects the judgment of the report team. Inevitably, there will be disagreement with some aspects of any Bank staff report, even within the Bank, and the key is to continue the process of dialogue over time.

The processes leading up to and beyond the publication of the Report itself are seen as important vehicles for dialogue with the development community. The objective of internal and external consultations leading up to the report is to advance this dialogue and to exchange perspectives on

the topic under discussion. For the WDR 2004, the report team will seek feedback from relevant stakeholders, experts and interested parties in two phases. First, an initial phase of internal and external consultations for information gathering will take place in the latter months of 2002. During this initial phase, the report team will be seeking feedback on a draft outline of the report and inputs on critical issues and specific cases to be addressed in the report. After a first full framework is prepared by the WDR team, there will be a second phase of consultations during the first months of 2003, during which comments will be sought on the draft report.

Two aspects of these consultations are of note. First, although we are trying to expand consultation activities, this is subject to limitations of time and resources. The final report is published in late summer/early autumn each year on a tight production schedule in advance of the Bank's Annual Meetings, which sets limits on the time available for the consultation and review period. Second, although the consultations support the dialogue and enrich the perspectives present in the Report, eventually it is the report team that takes responsibility for integrating and synthesizing the many (and often conflicting) comments received. While a broad range of perspectives should be considered and analyzed in the preparation of the reports, the final output is that of a team and will reflect the judgments of that team.

As time permits, the WDR team will endeavor to engage with and provide feedback to contributors at different stages of the process. Some face-to-face and videoconference meetings will be organized during the two phases to encourage discussion and debate. The WDR website ([www.econ.worldbank.org/wdr](http://www.econ.worldbank.org/wdr)) will provide a regular update on the process, including the draft documents for consultation, new submissions and comments received, planned meetings and questions raised on specific issues. Due to time constraints, the WDR team is not able to review papers or comments submitted in languages other than English, French and Spanish.

Finally, the World Development Reports are staff reports and are not policy documents of the Bank's Executive Board.

### Timeline

September-November 2002: Initial consultations with external organizations and inclusion of information from web submissions.

November-December 2002: Development of first full framework and internal discussion draft of WDR

January-February 2003: Consultations on draft

March-April 2003: Dissemination of second draft and final reviews:

September 2003: Publication and dissemination of WDR and companion documents; final web summary of dialogue and consultations

For more information on the consultation process, contact Stephen Commins of the WDR team at [scommins@worldbank.org](mailto:scommins@worldbank.org) or Carolyn Reynolds in EXT at [creynolds@worldbank.org](mailto:creynolds@worldbank.org).