

**Background Note on Consultations**  
**World Development Report 2007**  
**Development and the Next Generation**  
**December 2005**

***Introduction***

The World Development Report (WDR), 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 through a process of consultations with a range of organizations and individuals about the content and main ideas contained in the WDR. The consultation 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, invariably leading to much debate and discussion on some of the leading issues of the day. While the Bank's experience is drawn upon, the report is not intended to focus on the Bank and its specific operations. 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 2007, the focus is captured in the statement, "Development and the Next Generation." There will be specific linkages with operations in areas related to youth, with on-going research on the needs of youth, and with the international initiatives related to human development goals. In addressing them, the report will focus on the crucial transitions to adulthood: progressing through school, entering the labor market, forming families and becoming citizens. For each, there are opportunities and risks; for all, policies and institutions matter.

## WDR Consultations Background Note

Development thinking and practice over the past couple of decades has focused on younger children, due to the high payoffs of attaining basic health and education, or more recently, the elderly, because of concerns about the financial health of their pension systems. But relatively less attention has been paid to the generation beyond primary-school age. This generation constitutes either a demographic ‘bulge’ or the leading edge of a wave of young that will persist for several decades before waning. How they manage their transition to adulthood has profound effects, not only on their own welfare, but also on the well-being of the other generations. Ultimately, the decisions that they make today will shape the societies they will live in tomorrow

Supporting the young’s transition to adulthood poses huge opportunities and risky challenges for development policy. How can economic policies enable expectant young graduates to be gainfully employed? What programs are available if their expectations are not met? Are education systems – from early childhood onwards- preparing young people to cope with the demands of changing economies? Can educational systems cope with the demands of those who are leaving primary schools in unprecedented numbers? What kind of support can the young get to help them as they enter the labor market? Will they be able to move freely to where the jobs are, be they in cities or rural areas, or even across international borders? What can be done to help them avoid the direst consequences of their risky behavior, such as death from HIV/AIDS, now the deadliest killer of girls in many countries, and drug abuse? Can the creative and impulsive energy of the young be directed productively to support development thinking positively? Or will it lead to a frustration and despair that will destabilize society?

### ***Target Audience***

The target audience for the World Development Report is the youth themselves, 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.

## WDR Consultations Background Note

### ***Importance of the Consultation***

Given the focus of the upcoming report on youth, it is especially important to devise a consultative process that fosters a dialogue not only *about* youth but also *with* young people themselves.

It is also equally important to bring partner organizations with an expertise in youth issues into the consultative process. Ministries concerned with youth issues, intergovernmental organizations, bilateral agencies, youth-focused nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector can contribute to the process and should be involved through appropriate channels.

### ***Objectives of the Consultation***

These consultations have three main objectives:

- A. **Traction:** Foster political traction with global youth organizations, governmental agencies, and development partners.
- B. **Validation:** Generate a productive dialogue with young people in developing countries on key issues.
- C. **Information:** Get the WDR Team itself thinking from the perspective of this cohort of people.

### ***Stakeholders***

#### **Youth**

Not surprisingly, given the sheer number of people that can be considered “youth”, this age group is extremely heterogeneous. Any consultative process with youth has to take this into account when choosing the means to approach them. Constituencies which have to be included in the consultative process are:

- Youth civil society or “youth organizations”
  - o Global membership-based groups
  - o Global advocacy platforms
  - o Regional groups and platforms
  - o National Youth Councils
  - o Country Youth Voices groups
  - o Youth organizations active on local level
- Individuals and especially disadvantaged groups
  - o Youth with access to the world wide web
  - o Youth with no access to the world wide web

Special emphasis will be given to *disabled youth, young women, rural youth* and other young people that may face exceptional difficulties to tap into the global discourse. Also, the consultations will give *special attention to the opinions of adolescents*, as experience

## WDR Consultations Background Note

shows they tend to be less vocal than older youth. Further, consultations will be held in *languages other than English* in order to be able to reach a broader constituency and reflect the diversity of experiences.

### **Partner Organizations Working with Youth**

Complementing the consultations with youth constituencies, other youth-focused institutions from civil society and the private and public sectors should be consulted:

- Youth-focused NGO's
  - o NGO's dedicated to youth issues will be consulted with a specifically designed approach to maximize their networks effectively given the time bound nature of the process. Special emphasis must be given to include Southern civil society organizations.
- Youth-focused public institutions
  - o Youth ministries and/or ministries/public institutions with an impact on youth issues
  - o Regional development banks, UN agencies, donor agencies and the WB's parliamentary network are counterparts that have to be consulted throughout the process
- Corporate social responsibility networks, foundations and corporations with a large youth portfolio

### ***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 document. 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.

Two aspects of these consultations are of note:

1. 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.
2. 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

## WDR Consultations Background Note

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 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. The youth groups will connect to this website from YDP Network site as well.

Due to time constraints, the WDR team is not able to review papers or comments submitted in languages other than English, French and Spanish. However, during the in-country consultations, other languages will be used to drive the consultation.

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