

FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADB/AsDB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
CBO	Community–based Organization
CRMU	Compliance Review and Mediation Unit
CSO	Civil society organization
CSP	Country strategy paper
EITI	Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRM	Independent Review Mechanism
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
ORQR	Quality Assurance and Results Department
PBO	Policy–based operation
RMC	Regional Member Country
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The African Development Bank's (AfDB's) formal engagement with civil society began with the first AfDB/ NGO consultative meeting, held in Abidjan in 1990. Following that meeting, the Bank developed a policy paper and a set of procedures, mechanisms, and guidelines to orient its cooperation with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The Bank revised the policy in 2000 to reflect its enhanced commitment to this cooperation, focusing on civil society more broadly, rather than just NGOs. A joint committee was established in 2000 to guide and facilitate the Bank's collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs).

Over the past decade, the AfDB has become more transparent and accountable to its member countries and the broader public, developing and promoting new mechanisms and policies to better identify and integrate the aspirations of African citizens—a vision set out in the Long Term Strategy 2013-2022. In March 2010, a CSO Forum held in Tunis resulted in an agreement to enhance cooperation and collaboration between the Bank and the African civil society community, and to update the framework for that engagement. In line with the AfDB's vision, this Framework for Enhanced Engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSO Engagement Framework) is designed to strengthen and sustain the Bank's engagement with CSOs—an engagement that will enhance the Bank's programs and policy documents as well as mainstream and broaden the participation of CSOs in managing for development results in Regional Member Countries (RMCs).

The CSO Engagement Framework defines a vision which is perfectly in line with the Bank's Long-Term Strategy vision of inclusive growth on the continent and it identifies precise avenues how to achieve this in the framework of a strengthened cooperation with civil society. It aims to maximize opportunities for developing partnerships with CSOs at the corporate, country, and project levels. The overarching objective of the framework is to help the Bank achieve greater results and impacts through improving its collaboration with CSOs and strengthening the mechanisms for participation and coordination. The specific objectives of the framework are to (a) strengthen the Bank's capacity to build cooperative working modalities with CSOs, (b) promote staff interactions with CSOs in a way that enhances the Bank's work and contributes to the effectiveness of its support RMCs, and (c) provide operational guidance for the Bank's headquarters, regional resource centers, country offices, and project staff. The framework highlights broadened engagement with civil society and AfDB action to strengthen the capacity of CSOs. It also suggests four areas in which collaboration with CSOs could be particularly important: integrated environmental and social safeguards systems, the Independent Review Mechanism, and work in fragile RMCs.

The CSO Engagement Framework is designed to structure the AfDB's broader and deeper engagement with CSOs through three dimensions—outreach, dialogue, and partnership—carried out at the corporate, regional/country, and project levels (three-tier engagement). It sets out specific activities for each dimension at each level: for example, encouraging greater civil society participation in annual meetings, developing and disseminating guidelines to staff on selecting and working with CSOs, and establishing a CSO portal on the Bank's website.

Once the Board adopts the CSO Framework, the Bank will implement the framework in a progressive way, building on results achieved:

- Within the quarter following the adoption by the Board of the Enhanced Framework, internal dissemination sessions will be held and presentations will be made to sectoral departments and field offices to ensure the Bank's ownership of the CSO Framework ;

- From July to November 2012, the Bank will conduct a full assessment of its activities related to CSOs in order (i) to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current approach of collaborating with CSOs and (ii) to help better prioritize actions to be taken;
- During the first quarter of 2013, two activities will be carried out: (i) a benchmarking exercise to identify good practices, to highlight lessons learned, and to develop criteria for CSO involvement in the activities of the Bank; (ii) an action plan including a calendar to specify key intervention areas. The action plan will outline activities, indicators, and responsibilities at the corporate, regional/country, and project levels.

Finally, the Bank will develop a monitoring and evaluation system to record achievements under the Framework, including a schedule for regularly reporting to the Board and stakeholders.



INTRODUCTION

The African Development Bank's (AfDB's) engagement with civil society began in the early 1990s, when the Bank held its first consultative meeting with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Following the meeting, the Bank developed a policy paper and a Procedures, Mechanisms and Guidelines manual to orient its cooperation with NGOs. It revised the policy and the manual in 1999 to reflect its enhanced commitment to this cooperation, focusing on civil society more broadly, rather than just NGOs. A joint committee was established in 2000 to guide and facilitate the Bank's collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs).

AfDB's Medium-term Strategy 2008-2012 focuses on four key pillars: infrastructure, the private sector, good governance, and education. It stresses the use of results-based and client-oriented approaches that feature an enhanced role for stakeholders in the Bank's operations, and it envisions AfDB support for the involvement of CSOs in the design, implementation, and evaluation of projects and programs and the delivery of social services. In addition, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and the Busan partnership for effective development cooperation (2011) emphasize establishing strong relationships with CSOs, communities, and other beneficiaries. Thus, in the context of both the Bank's own mandate and its international commitments, partnerships with a range of non-state actors/institutions, including NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), and other CSOs, have become central for designing, planning, implementing, and evaluating the AfDB's operations. This guiding principle is perfectly in line with the Bank's Long Term Strategy (LTS) 2013-2022 which considers civil society as a key partner for significant progress on the continent.

In March 2010, a meeting involving the Bank and selected African CSOs resulted in an agreement to undertake a study on how to enhance cooperation and collaboration between the Bank and the African civil society community and to update the framework for that collaboration.¹ This note presents the results of the study. The Framework was developed in line with the LTS in order to define a structure adapted to an enhanced engagement which is more inclusive, extensive and coherent and which outlines the mechanisms for a reinforced cooperation with civil society organizations. Section II summarizes the Bank's history of engagement with CSOs. Section III sets out the objectives and major elements of the proposed new Framework for Enhanced Engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSO Engagement Framework), along with mechanisms to implement it. Section IV presents plans to operationalize the framework, and Section V offers conclusions. Annexes provide additional information about the process of creating the paper, about CSOs' comments on earlier drafts, and about other multilateral organizations' engagement with CSOs.

1 AfDB - Civil Society Forum Report, AfDB, March 2010.

THE AfDB'S HISTORY OF ENGAGEMENT WITH CSOS

Before discussing the Bank's engagement with CSOs, it is useful to understand what CSOs are. The Bank's official definition, set out in the 1999 policy document,² is as follows:

- Civil society encompasses a constellation of human and associational activities operating in the public sphere outside the state. It is a voluntary expression of the interests and aspirations of citizens organized and united by common interests, goals, values or traditions, and mobilized into collective action either as beneficiaries or stakeholders of the development process. Though civil society stands apart from the state, it is not necessarily in basic contradiction to it, and both ultimately influence each other.
- "Civil society" is the collective noun, while "civic groups" are the individual organizations that constitute the sector. The myriad of civic organizations in civil society include, but are not limited to, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), people's and professional organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, consumer and human rights groups, women's associations, youth clubs, independent radio, television, print and electronic media, neighborhood or community-based coalitions, religious groups, academic and research institutions, grassroots movements and organizations of indigenous peoples.

CSOs are diverse in their constituencies, functions, size, resource levels, organizational forms, geographical scopes, historical experiences, cultural contexts, agendas, ideologies, strategies, and approaches. They have created civil spaces and have provided opportunities to bring communities together for collective action, mobilizing the society to articulate demands and voice concerns at local, national, regional, and international levels. They occupy important positions in the development dialogue and act on a number of national, regional, and global issues.

Existing Framework and Activities

Briefly stated, the AfDB's policy is to improve development impact on the ground through systematic collaboration with CSOs in the formulation of Country Lending Strategies and in Bank-supported projects. Under this policy, the following activities have been part of the Bank's work over the past two decades:

- **Projects.** CSOs have been directly involved in the Bank's country programs and have participated in project implementation, in sectors such as water and sanitation, microfinance, rural development, and human development. CSOs' involvement of this kind has increased significantly—they participated in 19% of Bank-supported projects in 1996 and 78% in 2008. The Bank recently developed and disseminated a new Checklist on Participation, with specific examples, to help Bank staff in the field engage NGOs, CBOs, and other non-state actors in the delivery of project services.³
- **Strategies.** The Bank has encouraged CSOs to participate in consultations related to the preparation of poverty reduction strategy papers, country strategy papers, governance and country gender profiles, the AfDB's post-evaluation exercise, and national social and economic development plans.
- **Capacity building.** The Bank has organized various workshops and trainings with CSO participation, including regional workshops and national training sessions on topics such as fraud and corruption, democratic governance, microfinance, gender-based violence, and social reinsertion in post-conflict countries.
- **Fragile states.** Under its Fragile States Facility, the Bank has channeled resources to provide service delivery through non-sovereign funds, including contracting CSOs and private sector firms to undertake critical public sector functions, such as accounting, auditing, and procurement.

2 Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations: Policy and Guidelines, AfDB, 1999

3 Partnering with CSOs for Sustainable Poverty Reduction, AfDB, February 2010.

- **Natural resources.** As part of supporting the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), the Bank has engaged multiple stakeholders, including CSOs, to promote the principles of the EITI.
- **Safeguard issues.** The AfDB's environmental and social impact safeguards policy requires a thorough consultation process and country ownership in defining the possible environmental and social impact of Bank-funded projects. In this connection, the Bank has worked with a number of CSOs on environment and social safeguard issues.
- **Gender equality.** The Bank's gender-equality promotion, including gender sectoral assessments and revision of gender policies, requires a thorough consultation process with CSOs, including women's organizations working on promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment and agency in Regional Member Countries (RMCs).
- **Stakeholder consultations.** As part of the Readiness Review of public sector investment projects and policy-based lending operations, the Bank undertakes wide consultations with stakeholders, including CSOs and beneficiary groups.
- **Compliance review.** The Compliance Review and Mediation Unit uses the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) to monitor the compliance of Bank-financed projects with Bank policies and procedures. The unit works extensively with CSOs in investigating complaints and resolving the issues underlying them. In some instances, CSOs serve as intermediaries to transfer information about the IRM to communities with the aim of raising awareness about opportunities for dialogue and consultation with the Bank.
- **Information exchange and networking.** Members of a network of national and regional NGOs/CSOs regularly exchange ideas and experiences with the Bank on such topics as the financial crisis, Millennium Development Goals, building peace and security in fragile states, and democratic and financial governance. Since 2000, the Bank has facilitated the participation of CSOs in its annual meetings and major international and regional African development forums.⁴
- **Database.** Since 2002 the Bank has maintained the AfDB/CSO database, which assists Bank staff, RMCs, and others to identify CSOs that could help implement projects and programs. Accessible through the Bank's intranet, the database allows CSOs to register and update their information online.

AfDB actions to strengthen engagement with CSOs

Over the past decade, the AfDB has instituted reforms to become more transparent and accountable to governments and the public. This has led to a more active involvement with CSOs and other non-state actors. As the AfDB's policies have evolved to focus increasingly on promoting poverty reduction through a participatory approach emphasizing accountability, transparency, good governance, and outreach and communication, CSOs have become a part of the AfDB's country operations and regional policies and programs. The following reforms are expected to have significant implications for the Bank's engagement with CSOs.

- Under the Roadmap for Decentralization of Operations, approved in April 2011 by the Board, the Bank has established two pilot regional resource centers through which it can expand its cooperation with CSOs and strengthen partnerships on the ground.
- The Bank revised its Operational Manual to emphasize the change from a process- to a results-oriented approach. The revised manual allows the Bank to better reflect the importance of cross-cutting issues, such as citizen participation and civil society engagement, and to institutionalize CSO participation in the Bank's operations and policies.

4 CSO participation numbers grew from 10 delegates in 2000 to 83 in 2009. Some 60 CSOs participated in the Bank's 2011 Annual Meeting.

- The Bank's Guidelines on Support to Emergency Relief Operations specifically mention working with qualified and experienced CSOs for prompt and effective service delivery in times of crisis. The Bank's Guidelines on Procurement under Community-based Investments (2000) provide for CSOs to play an active part in the procurement process for small, community-based socioeconomic infrastructure rehabilitation and development projects.
- Under a recent revision, the Bank's policy-based operations (PBOs) can provide financing in support of policy as well as institutional reforms for helping RMCs achieve their medium- and long-term development goals. When appropriate, the Bank will consult with CSOs and other stakeholders on the design and management of PBOs, making available relevant analytic work, particularly on poverty and social and environmental impacts, as part of the consultation process.⁵
- Under the revised Policy on Disclosure and Access to Information, the Bank affirms its commitment to the principles of openness, transparency, accountability, and sharing of information. By mandating that many Bank documents be freely available electronically, the policy allows CSOs and other stakeholders to access Bank information in real time, learn about details of policies and operations, consult with the Bank, and make comments and recommendations.

Challenges

This range of activities and reforms attests to the Bank's significant efforts to promote participation and forge closer links with the civil society community.⁶ However, although CSO participation in policy development and project implementation has increased, the Bank has no mechanisms to ensure systematic CSO engagement, and many of the Bank's field offices still face challenges in engaging CSOs in a meaningful way. This CSO Engagement Framework has been developed to provide the structure for a broader, deeper, and more consistent engagement with African CSOs.

5 The Bank Group's Policy on Program-based Operations (PBOs), AfDB, June 2011.

6 A full assessment of Bank engagement with CSOs is planned for 2012.



DEFINING THE ELEMENTS OF THE NEW CSO ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The CSO Engagement Framework was developed in a participatory and inclusive process. The preliminary concept note was presented and discussed at the CSO Forum organized during the Bank Group's annual meeting, in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2011. Development of the framework has been informed by the following consultations:

- Two sub regional consultation meetings with CSOs: one with CSOs from Central Africa, West Africa, and North Africa in Libreville, 21-22 February 2012, and the other with CSOs of Southern and East Africa in Nairobi, 12-13 March 2012. (See Annex 2 for a summary of the comments received in these consultations.)
- Virtual consultation through the Bank's website: the paper was placed on the website in mid-March 2012 to allow public comments.

Objectives

The overarching objective of the CSO Engagement Framework is to help the Bank achieve greater results and impacts by strengthening its mechanisms for participation and coordination with CSOs. The specific objectives of the framework are to (a) strengthen the Bank's capacity to build cooperative working modalities with CSOs; (b) promote staff interactions with CSOs in a way that enhances the Bank's work and contributes to the effectiveness of support to RMCs; and (c) provide operational guidance for the Bank's headquarters, Regional Resource Centres, country offices, and project staff.

The CSO Engagement Framework is expected to bring the following benefits:

- **Development impact.** Broad-based engagement with CSOs is an essential element of sustainable development and can enhance the impact of Bank-financed interventions.
- **Public outreach/partnership.** As a public institution, the AfDB is committed to be transparent about its work and to engage with the people affected by its work. Dialogue with CSOs often allows the Bank to engage more systematically with stakeholders, conveying information about the Bank and its operations to them and receiving input from them.
- **Results and effectiveness.** Qualified and experienced CSOs working in the area of development can be effective and efficient in implementing social projects, with comparative advantages in terms of cost, timeliness, flexibility, local knowledge, and proximity to the beneficiary population. Partnerships with such CSOs could facilitate the achievement of Africa's development goals.
- **Policy dialogue.** CSOs can highlight important issues for the formulation, implementation, and review of AfDB-supported policies and programs, offering helpful information and insights that may differ from perspectives in official circles. They can challenge the Bank to sharpen its thinking and improve its policy advice.
- **Political viability.** Discussions with CSOs can help the Bank determine the level of local support for its policies. Constructive dialogue with CSOs can help build mutual understanding and increase support for Bank-backed measures.
- **Ownership.** Dialogue with CSOs can enhance "ownership" of the policies that the AfDB advances and the projects it funds among beneficiaries and the general public.

Guiding Principle: Enhanced Engagement

The title of the new framework clearly indicates the Bank's desire and intention to enhance its engagement with CSOs. Two mechanisms are particularly important to this effort: expanding the range of CSOs with which the Bank works, and promoting two-way communication.

Range of CSOs. To broaden the range of CSOs with which it works, the Bank should take the following steps:

- **Engage with diverse civil society sectors.** To be more effective, the Bank's engagement with CSOs needs to be more inclusive, engaging traditional associations as well as emerging actors like social media networks or informal youth organizations. It should also encourage partnerships with organizations that work for gender equality.
- **Adopt a rigorous and prudent approach in the selection of CSOs.** The Bank needs to adopt a prudent and rigorous approach for the selection of NGOs in order to ensure their objectivity and their independence with regards to all economic and political powers and other lobbies. This can be achieved through defining neutral criteria of objectivity and competency.
- **Alternate contacts among different CSOs.** Rather than partnering with the same organizations and individuals, the Bank should extend the dialogue to include new actors and voices. The Bank's engagement should also be balanced in terms of gender, geographical representation, sectoral concentration, and organizational forms.
- **Contact locally-based associations.** The AfDB should expand its reach to local NGOs in Africa.
- **Work with umbrella or apex bodies.** Business federations, labor confederations, NGO forums, and interfaith councils are well placed to be the Bank's interlocutors.

Outreach and communication. Despite the Bank's extensive efforts to communicate with CSOs through its public information strategies and instruments—through its website, publications, press releases, network of depository libraries, videos, and other awareness-raising vehicles—many Africans still lack awareness and understanding of the Bank's policies, country-level programs and operations, and decision-making processes and structures. Similarly, the Bank has limited knowledge of CSOs, including the scope of their work, their involvement in development issues, and their capacity and specialization. Therefore, when the AfDB is launching specific development activities, it may not be in a position to identify the most appropriate potential partners, so it risks compromising overall project results. Although the Bank has worked with CSOs for two decades, its capacity to manage and exchange information on CSO involvement in the Bank's operations and on lessons learned from previous projects and programs remains underdeveloped. Moreover, the lack of a good institutional memory with respect to CSO cooperation limits the Bank's ability to learn from and build on past experience.

Expanding CSO engagement with the Bank will require meaningful communication between the two parties. CSOs need to be kept abreast of Bank activities and the Bank, in turn, needs to have basic information about the CSO landscape on the continent. To encourage dialogue, the Bank needs to strengthen communication with CSOs, guided by its Policy on Disclosure and Access to Information.

The CSO Engagement Framework

The CSO Engagement Framework is designed to structure the AfDB's broader and deeper engagement with CSOs through three dimensions—outreach, dialogue, and partnership—carried out at the corporate, regional/country, and project levels (see Table 1). This section describes the need for work at each of these levels and sets out mechanisms through which the Bank can accomplish these goals; the matrix is presented in greater detail in Table 2. The next section describes two important areas through which the Bank will intensify its engagement with CSOs under the framework: support to CSOs/capacity building, and strengthened efforts to involve CSOs in specific areas of the Bank's work.

Table 1. CSO Engagement Matrix

Level	Outreach and communications	Dialogue and consultation	Partnerships
Corporate			
Region/Country			
Project			

Corporate level

AfDB–civil society policy dialogue at the headquarters level has expanded in recent years: for example, a growing number of CSOs attend the Bank’s annual meetings, and the number of policy dialogue forums involving CSOs has increased. In addition, the Bank’s president and senior management have convened a series of policy roundtables with civil society leaders to discuss some of the emerging issues on the continent—consultations that are increasingly frank, substantive, and constructive. The Bank needs to take the following steps to further strengthen engagement at this level:

- Encourage greater civil society participation at the Bank’s annual meetings and other annual events, and organize regular policy discussions and dialogues.
- Define criteria and establish formal guidelines for selecting and involving CSOs in the policy area; in the preparation of such documents as country strategy papers, country gender profiles, and governance profile; and in Bank-supported projects. Guidelines and checklists should indicate clear and simple legal frameworks agreed to and known by all parties, minimum standards for engagement, and various modalities of engagement.
- Institute a learning program for Bank staff and RMCs on how to engage CSOs effectively in policy dialogue and consultation.
- Organize and convene consultations between Bank senior management and CSOs on emerging regional issues such as governance, climate change, debt, fragile states, information disclosure, and gender mainstreaming.

Mechanisms: Outreach and communication. The Bank will establish a CSO portal as part of its external website. Robust and targeted dissemination of results of its operations and policies through this portal will improve the Bank’s visibility, and the portal will support the institution’s outreach to its constituents and the public at large. The web application will be interactive and will highlight the Bank’s development impacts. The web page can also be used as a knowledge- and resource-sharing platform, cataloging and disseminating information of benefit to CSOs. The portal will seek to support CSO consultation on Bank policies and operations by giving an opportunity to citizens in Africa to comment on Bank activities. In addition, an online library will make available research, books, journals, newsletters, publications, films, and other information that is pertinent to CSOs.

Mechanisms: Dialogue and consultation. The same web portal will be the basis for virtual dialogue and consultation with CSOs, enabling the Bank to consult with CSOs on policy documents, with a link for providing comments. Virtual consultation will be supplemented by face-to-face consultations at the annual meetings of the Bank and during specific CSO meetings. Dialogue and consultation between Bank senior management and CSOs will also be undertaken on emerging regional issues. In addition, a CSO window in the Bank’s intranet will support CSO consultation and dialogue with the Bank by offering staff members at headquarters and in field offices advice and information on activities related to CSOs. A newsletter, to be available on both the external and internal CSO portals, will provide information about forthcoming events, offer summaries of workshops, provide links to country-level web pages, and list partner institutions and professional groups.

Mechanisms: Partnerships. The Bank will build strong partnerships with CSOs by using CSOs as peer reviewers of important policy documents. The Bank will update the CSO database and make it available in a reader-friendly format on the Bank's website. With specialized NGOs/CSOs, the Bank will establish a memorandum of understanding to partner in their specialized areas. The Bank will also partner with CSOs to implement, monitor, and evaluate the CSO Engagement Framework; this will involve regular consultations, meetings, reviews, and assessments.

Regional/country level

Increasing CSO participation can provide insight into local knowledge and help ensure citizen support of Bank-financed projects. The Bank should make further efforts to institutionalize CSO participation in AfDB country-level operations:

- Country offices should regularly convene CSO consultations to improve country strategy papers, poverty reduction strategy papers, progress in achieving poverty-reduction targets, and challenges and problems in the implementation of Bank-supported programs and projects. These discussions will also increase civil society knowledge about the Bank's operations.
- The Bank's regional departments and country offices should invite the participation of appropriate CSOs in developing, monitoring, and evaluating country strategy papers and PBOs. They need to document and report CSOs' participation and contribution.
- The Bank should develop and implement tools to map the CSOs that can assist country offices and task teams, to determine which ones should be invited to participate in a given issue, project, or strategy.

Mechanisms: Dialogue and consultation. Country offices will organize regular consultations with CSOs on country strategy papers and other country programming documents.

Mechanisms: Outreach and communication. Regional Resource Centres and country offices will communicate regularly with media to inform citizens about the Bank's activities. To build strong partnerships, the Bank will be part of the CSO donors' thematic group.

Project/operational level

Civil society participation in projects has been shown to improve project design, quality of service, and public support; increase transparency and accountability and improve relationships between citizens and their public agencies. Overall, such participation leads to better outcomes, lower risks, and increased development effectiveness. Although CSO participation in Bank-supported projects has grown substantially over the years, the Bank should take the following steps to continue the trend and consolidate the gains:

- Develop and institutionalize feedback mechanisms on CSOs' participation, and templates to guide and document the monitoring and evaluation of key CSO tasks and functions.
- Adapt the Bank's centrally developed guidelines on CSO involvement to the requirements of particular projects.
- Encourage greater CSO and beneficiary involvement in monitoring and evaluating AfDB-supported projects, particularly community-oriented poverty reduction projects with wide-ranging potential impacts.

Mechanisms: Dialogue and consultation. The Bank will involve CSOs in all stages of the project cycle by inviting them to comment on the design of projects. They will have opportunities to collaborate on specific projects. They will also be invited to project launchings of Bank investments and to loan- and grant-signing ceremonies.

Table 2. Mechanisms of Engagement with CSOs

Level of engagement	Outreach and communication	Dialogue and consultation	Partnership
Corporate level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portal in the intranet for internal consultation • Online library catalogue and publishing e-newsletters • Media releases • Television interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular consultation on policies • Consultations between Bank senior management and CSOs on emerging issues • Institutionalization of the participation of CSOs at Annual Meetings • Bank-CSO forum • Participation of CSOs in African Economic Conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use CSO as peer reviewers of Bank policy documents • Mapping of CSOs in Africa for the Bank’s CSOs Database • Criteria for CSO selection • MoU with specialized CSOs/NGOs
Regional/ country level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portal in the Bank’s website • Project launching • Loan and grant signing agreements • Media releases • Television interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular convening of CSO consultation for country • Policy and project reviews and assessment • Guidelines for CSO participation in policy dialogue, CSP, RIPS elaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank participation in the CSO donors thematic group • CSO involvement in elaborating CSPs and other country programming documents • CSOs involvement in Bank-funded operations in fragile states
Operational/ project level	<p>CSO involvement in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project preparation • project launching • field visits • project reviews • monitoring and evaluation of Bank-financed projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSO involvement in monitoring and evaluating AfDB-supported projects • Guidelines for Bank staff for CSOs’ participation in project design • CSO implementation of Bank-sponsored initiatives • CSOs to help sensitise target populations on the activities of the Bank • CSOs consultations on the ISS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs involvement in project results monitoring • Engaging CSOs/NGOs in project implementation • Partnership between CSO and the Bank Independent Review Mechanism (IRM)

Areas of Strengthened Engagement

Under the new framework, the Bank will focus particular attention on two areas of work: support to CSOs/ capacity building, and involving CSOs more in several important Bank activities.

- Bank support to CSOs: Capacity building

In general, African CSOs lack capacity to engage in the policy process or effectively participate in project implementation at the operational level. In addition, a lack of funding and institutional support to the CSO community has hampered their full engagement. To increase its effective involvement with CSOs, the AfDB will help address these capacity deficits through the following steps:

Regional and project levels: Conduct training and capacity-building activities for CSOs involved in its programs/projects in such areas as policy processes, project cycles, rules and procedures of safeguarding and compliance mechanisms, problem-solving techniques, and grievance-redress practices.

Corporate and regional levels: Provide training sessions on emerging issues of mutual interest, such as governance, post-conflict reconstruction, climate change, resettlement and compensation of project-affected persons, and gender equality.

- Involving CSOs in Bank activities

In applying the new framework, the Bank will consolidate its operations with CSOs in traditional areas and give particular attention to engaging in areas that not only are important to the Bank's work, but are also areas in which CSOs may be uniquely able to contribute.

Integrated Environmental and Social Safeguards Systems. Many CSOs are well situated to identify possible adverse effects on the physical and social environment of communities in which the Bank implements major projects and programs, and they can be a critical ally of the Bank in its effort to enforce the integrated safeguard system.⁷

Project level: The Bank will engage with CSOs to help ensure community involvement in and acceptance of projects by (a) identifying impacts on host communities; (b) verifying whether those negatively affected are compensated, and (c) ascertaining whether RMCs or other borrowers are fully complying with the Bank's environmental and social safeguard policies and procedures.

Corporate level: To enhance cooperation in these areas, the Bank will first increase consultation with CSOs in the integrated safeguard system, with the aim of operationalizing it in a way that reflects global changes in social and environmental safeguards.

Independent Review Mechanism. Another area that could benefit from an expanded CSO role is the Bank's IRM.

Project level: The Bank will engage CSOs as intermediaries in transferring information to and from communities. They can help the IRM understand the nature and scope of complaints about projects, and the local social and economic circumstances that led to the complaints. In addition, they can provide information to the IRM's compliance review panels to help determine whether any harm has been inflicted on affected communities. CSOs can raise community awareness on the functions of the IRM and the requirements necessary for submitting complaints. They can also help communities acquire skills to engage in dialogue and negotiation with the Bank and can offer suggestions to the IRM on how to improve its outreach activities in RMCs. To enhance cooperation in these areas, the Bank should raise awareness about the IRM's mandate, functions, and procedures among CSOs and local communities.

Corporate, regional, and project levels: The Bank will organize and convene CSO seminars, workshops, and community sessions to disseminate information about the safeguard policy, the compliance review process, and the IRM as a recourse mechanism.

Work in fragile RMCs. A number of RMCs face particularly difficult political, social, and economic conditions. They have weak institutions and governance systems, have extreme and growing levels of poverty, and lack the ability and resources to meet basic social welfare expectations. Most of these fragile states have had or are experiencing civil conflict. Even after the conflict ends, they face challenges in rehabilitating and constructing infrastructure and strengthening government institutions. In this context of weak public sectors, CSOs can play a key role in service delivery in fragile states. In many cases, CSO services are more firmly established and institutionalized than government services, and CSOs may be able to deliver services that the government cannot deliver. The Bank will tap the experience of CSOs in fragile states through the following activities:

Corporate level: The Bank will work through its Fragile State Unit to foster cooperation with local and international CSOs on promotion of human rights, stabilization, and provision of services as well as conflict prevention, reconstruction, and reconciliation. Promoting and supporting CSO work

7 Integrated Safeguard System, AfDB, 2011.

in fragile states will help the Bank achieve its objectives of assisting eligible states to consolidate peace, stabilize their economies, and lay the foundations for sustainable poverty reduction and long-term economic growth.

Corporate level: The Bank will provide support to the EITI in fragile states in the context of natural resources management.

Corporate, country, and project levels: The Bank will help CSOs develop fiduciary, management, and technical skills, as well as capacity in participatory methodologies and specializations, to enhance their work in fragile states.

Country level: Strengthen the forums for government-CSO communication in fragile states, as countries emerging from conflict or prolonged periods of poor governance face particular difficulties in engaging with civil society and supporting participatory processes.



OPERATIONALIZING THE CSO ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

In operationalizing the new CSO Engagement Framework, the Bank's approach will be to work step by step, building on results as they are achieved. Once the Board adopts the Framework, the first actions to be conducted in 2012 will be the following:

- Within the quarter following the adoption by the Board of the Enhanced Framework, internal dissemination sessions will be held and presentations will be made to sectoral departments and field offices to ensure the Bank's ownership of the CSO Framework ;
- From July to November 2012, the Bank will conduct a full assessment of its activities related to CSOs in order (i) to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current approach of collaborating with CSOs and (ii) to help better prioritize actions to be taken;
- During the first quarter of 2013, two activities will be carried out: (i) a benchmarking exercise to identify good practices, to highlight lessons learned, and to develop criteria for CSO involvement in the activities of the Bank; (ii) an action plan including a calendar to specify key intervention areas. The action plan will outline activities, indicators, and responsibilities at the corporate, regional/country, and project levels.

To enhance the Bank's engagement and cooperation with CSOs, the following activities will be launched:

- The institutional anchor in charge of civil society within the Bank will be consolidated after the adoption of the Enhanced Framework by the Board. A network of CSO focal points will be established across the organization: in regional departments and the two pilot Regional Resource Centers, sector department, and regional and country offices. These focal points will serve as a key link between the departments and country offices and their CSO partners.
- The AfDB/CSO Committee will be revived, with a clear specification of the committee's role and of the main principles that guide its operations.

Communication

Communication activities will be undertaken to inform about the approval and the content of the Framework. These activities will include:

- A strategy to disseminate the Framework within the Bank to promote internal ownership;
- A wide dissemination in the PMR;
- The promotion of the Framework among civil society and other stakeholders in Africa.

A communication strategy will be developed and implemented later on to support the operationalization of the framework. This strategy will be aligned to the Bank's Policy on Disclosure and Access to Information and the Roadmap for Decentralization.

Monitoring-evaluation

As part of the work plan, the CSO Engagement Office will develop an annual monitoring and evaluation plan. The office will have the primary responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the framework and monitoring its progress, both internally and externally.

An annual mechanism/report will be elaborated for feedback from regional departments, country offices, sectoral departments, and other pertinent units, such as the Fragile States Unit and the Compliance and Safeguards Division. The annual report of the IRM will provide input on the evaluation of progress in implementing the framework. This feedback should be provided in a structured manner, with meetings arranged with each department and division to review their respective activities. The CSO Engagement

Office will prepare an annual report summarizing institution wide accomplishments on AfDB-CSO cooperation. This annual report will be the primary reporting mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the Framework, and it should identify and propose needed changes.

Periodic review

Periodic reviews and assessments will be undertaken to examine the level to which CSO engagement has been mainstreamed into the Bank's operations and policy work and to determine whether activities proposed in this framework are being implemented. The assessment will also review the monitoring process and measures to determine how to track civil society participation more clearly. In line with the Bank's measurement framework, the assessment and review will investigate indicators that will provide a more meaningful measure of the nature, depth, and distribution of participation at the project level across countries, sectors and core thematic areas in which the AfDB operates. It will identify key challenges and opportunities and provide new strategic actions and directions accordingly. It is proposed that the first assessment be undertaken after two years of implementation of the framework.

Resource implications

Operationalizing the CSO Engagement Framework is not expected to entail significant additional costs. Most of the activities in the framework—for example, developing and maintaining web portals, mapping CSOs, and issuing media releases—would be carried out as part of normal business, by reallocating budget from ongoing activities. Over time it is possible that additional consultations and increased CSO participation in meetings may have resource implications; management would assess them and explain these implications as part of the Bank's annual budget process.

CONCLUSION

Over the last decade, the development of the African region changed, as did the work of the Bank. CSOs have continued to strengthen their operational capacities and enhance their role, impact, and influence in the development process for a more inclusive growth. CSOs have mobilized societies and communities to articulate demands and concerns at local, national, regional, and international levels. They have created momentum and occupied important positions in development dialogue and action on a number of issues. As AfDB has evolved to focus increasingly on promoting poverty reduction through a participatory approach, with an emphasis on accountability, transparency, good governance, outreach and communication, CSOs should be an integral partner in the AfDB's work on policies, programs, and country operations.

The CSO Engagement Framework builds on the Bank's policy/guidelines and lessons from two decades of practice, to enhance the Bank's collaboration with CSOs. It will help the Bank improve its interface and collaboration with CSOs by strengthening participation and partnership mechanisms. In this way, it will help the Bank improve the results of its operations on the continent.

From the foregoing, the Board is invited to adopt the CSO Framework.



ANNEX 1. ROADMAP, TIMELINE, AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Task	Departement	Timeline
Process of finalization of CSO Framework		
• External Consultations with CSOs	ORQR.4	
Central, West and North Africa Region		21-23 February 2012
Southern and East Africa Region		12-13 March 2012
• Virtual Consultations from the Bank Website	ORQR.4 and ERCU	Mid-March-April 2012
• Presentation to OpsCom	ORQR	23 March 2012
• Presentation to CODE	ORQR	3 April 2012
• Submission to the Board	ORQR	3 October 2012
Operationalization of the CSO Engagement Framework		
• Internal dissemination sessions to ensure the Bank's ownership of the CSO Framework	ORQR4 and AfDB/CSO Committee	October-December 2012
• Assessment of Bank activities related to CSOs		July-November 2012
• Action Plan		First Quarter 2013
• Mapping and Benchmark study to develop criteria for partnership with CSO	ORQR4	First Quarter 2013
Strengthen the three-tier engagement modality		
• Corporate level	SM and ORQR	Continuous Engagement
• Country level	RD and FO	Continuous Engagement
• Project level	SD and RD	Continuous Engagement
CSO support to ongoing AfDB activities		
• Integrated Environmental and Social Safeguards Systems	ORQR3	Continuous Engagement
• Independent Review Mechanism	CRMU	Continuous Engagement
• Expanding the role of CSOs in fragile States	OSFU	Continuous Engagement
AfDB support to CSOs	ORQR	Continuous Engagement
Outreach and communication	ERCU and ORQR	Continuous Engagement
Monitoring	ORQR and CSO	Continuous Engagement
Periodic review and assessment	ORQR, SD, RD, CSO	Continuous Engagement

ANNEX 2. CSOS' COMMENTS ON THE FRAMEWORK DURING REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

Libreville Consultation

Subject	Comment
<p>Modalities and mechanisms of the CSO engagement</p>	<p>CSOs found that the proposed mechanisms are relevant. The suggestions for their improvement are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalize the participation of CSOs in the Bank Annual meetings Build the capacity of CSOs in areas such as advocacy, budget monitoring, voice and accountability and the knowledge of the Bank. • Regional/country level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation of the Bank in the thematic groups of donors on the OSC, Organize tripartite meetings at the level of the country between the Bank, the government and CSOs, Communicate better on the Bank's activities through TV, local radios, etc. • Project level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage CSOs' involvement in the process of monitoring and evaluating projects financed by the Bank, Partner with CSOs to better sensitize concerned local populations on the Bank's activities, Integrate new areas such as dimensions of governance and citizenship in AfDB projects.
<p>Plan of action</p>	<p>The CSO Framework must be implemented in a progressive manner, taking into account the resource constraints and the need to achieve sustainable results, in order to build the credibility of the Bank's enhanced engagement with CSOs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major actions defined by the OSC : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the capacity of CSOs involved in the Bank's operations so that they can achieve better results and support its missions. Organize periodic tripartite meetings (Bank FO-Government-CSO) to discuss the evolution of and results achieved by the Bank's projects in the country. Strengthen CSOs capacities by specific programs in fragile states. Develop project monitoring and evaluation tools. Produce case studies on problematic projects. Strengthen the capacity of CSOs on topics such as budget monitoring, communication, the fight against corruption, environmental safeguards and energy.
<p>AfDB/CSO Committee</p>	<p>CSOs recognized the importance of and the need for a joint permanent AfDB/CSO Committee at the Bank's corporate level. The CSOs agreed on the need to consolidate the existing Committee with clear criteria, taking into account their credibility, their diversity and their experience.</p> <p>CSOs also recognized the leading technical role played by the Coalition and its effective advocacy. The Coalition, while keeping its independent character, should be opened to other CSOs in the continent.</p>



Nairobi Consultation

Subject	Comment
Modalities and mechanisms of the CSO engagement	The CSOs agreed with the typology and mechanisms of engagement laid out in the matrix, which they found relevant. They made the following proposals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The split of engagements at the Corporate—Regional/Country—Operational/Project levels were found logical, but with a need to create a clear distinction between the levels. • The involvement of CSOs during the process of country strategy papers • CSO meetings should be formalized, e.g., quarterly. • Consultations with fragile states as they can be accommodated within the civic space available. • AfDB should participate in national CSO meetings in addition to participating in CS-donor thematic groups
Plan of action	Proposed actions that should be given priority in the short and medium term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate a mapping of CSOs in Africa. - Strengthen the institutional capacity of CSOs involved in the Bank's projects. • Set clear criteria for CSOs selection. • Tripartite engagements—Bank-CSO-State—at country and project levels. • Build capacity of CSO to engage with the Bank. • Begin publishing e-newsletters and media releases at least twice each year
AfDB/CSO Committee	A structure needs to be in place to reinforce the cooperation between AfDB and CSOs. This structure must define the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inclusive representation of CSOs, taking into account the following criteria: policy/thematic/pan-African/regional/country levels; ensuring the inclusion of underrepresented groups such as women and youth. • Clear roles and responsibilities: share and disseminate information; -create a space for constructive dialogue in which CSOs have a genuine opportunity to influence policy; share best practices.
Comments on the Bank's Long Term Strategy	Key topics to drive changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonne gouvernance, stabilité économique et politique • Intégration économique régionale • Responsabilité sociale et citoyenneté (coalitions et mouvements de la société civile) • Changement climatique et (in)sécurité alimentaire • Urbanisation • Intégration de la dimension du genre (situation des femmes dans l'agro-industrie) • Gestion des ressources naturelles • Enrichissement du capital humain • Amélioration de l'accès aux technologies de l'information • Intégration du secteur informel • Promotion de la coopération Sud-Sud Policy Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots-level groups should be able to participate in designing and implanting the Bank's strategies and policies. • More loans and grants to small and medium-size enterprises. • Green economy: focus should be on adaptation rather than mitigation. • State-led development, with the private sector playing a crucial role. Africa's Expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with the African people; engage with them directly. • Concrete guidelines to make Bank projects accountable to the people. • Increase knowledge within the Bank on social development issues. • Investment in agriculture—not just production, but human resources: agro-industries and low-end income-generating agriculture. • Increase investment in renewable energy,

Nairobi Consultation

Subject	Comment
Comments on the Bank's Long Term Strategy	Way Forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bank has to come down to the level of the people and become an AFRICAN bank. • The Bank should develop its knowledge based on country realities, i.e.: (a) engage more with civil society; (b) promote policy dialogue and partnership between government, private sector, and civil society; and (c) focus on Africa's private sector development • The Bank should be more open and transparent in its operations and lending policies.

ANNEX 3. CSO VIEWS BEFORE THE ELABORATION OF THE CSO ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK.

A set of questions was prepared to gather the views of CSOs about their engagement with the AfDB. Some 40 CSOs from both Francophone and Anglophone countries were approached. The CSOs were essentially development NGOs or sectoral networks. Almost all had prior experience in working with the Bank. The areas of collaboration included policy formulation, annual consultations, policy documents and participation in workshops and meetings, project implementation, technical assistance, evaluation and consultation, capacity-building and training, and advocacy and safeguarding.

Most CSOs have worked in the areas of the environment, governance, poverty reduction and social justice. Their activities include water management; conflict resolution; improving government projects; research and analysis; helping institutions formulate better policies; informing, educating and sensitizing populations; providing financial support and capacity-building; mobilizing citizens for action and influencing public policies; serving as vehicles for political economic and social change; and enabling effective participation of communities, particularly women.

Almost all CSOs indicated that they had participated in AfDB-organized workshops and training sessions. The thematic areas included review of policies, biodiversity, the environment, water policy, anticorruption, and gender. The following sections present a summary of their responses.

CSOs indicated that their involvement in formulating and implementing policy could help safeguard the interests of society at the grassroots level. They suggested that this would also help to ensure transparency and good governance and would raise awareness about the social, political and economic issues essential for decision making. They also pointed out that this engagement would provide the AfDB with diverse expertise and would improve the legitimacy of policy documents.

Moreover, the CSOs indicated that collaboration with the Bank could involve analyzing Bank policies, formulating propositions, reinforcing dialogue space, and defending environmental and social values in policy reviews. The CSOs stressed that their engagement with the AfDB would improve policy making as the Bank would have access to information other than that gathered by its staff. Their knowledge of local circumstances and needs would assist the Bank in designing tailored, innovative strategies that would have a positive impact on local populations.

The comparative advantages of engaging CSOs in project implementation include the following:

- Better knowledge of local communities and situations at the grassroots level, thus better capacity to recognize promising, viable and credible projects.
- Avoiding the duplication of projects.
- Balancing government policies with Bank projects.
- Serving as an intermediary between the population and the government.
- Less bureaucracy.
- Channels for sensitization and information-sharing.

- Promoting transparency and accountability.
- Proximity to populations, independence, neutrality, know-how, and responsiveness, enabling greater participation.
- Diversified information and easy access to field resources.
- Participation in projects, which creates a sense of ownership.

Most CSOs indicated that there was an enabling environment where they were operating and that they had a good working relationship with the government. Although the CSOs pointed out numerous advantages of their engagement with the AfDB, they identified significant constraints to mainstreaming participation and broad-based engagement of civil society organizations in agencies like the AfDB. Major constraints include the following:

- Lack of information and little knowledge about the AfDB in civil society.
- Absence of a formal organization or focal point at the Bank in charge of CSO engagement, lack of a clear cooperation and collaboration framework, and frequent turnover of Bank staff in charge of CSO engagement.
- Lack of information and information-sharing.
- Rigidity of procedures and lack of facilitators to consider CSOs' views and concerns.
- Lack of funds for CSOs.

Most CSOs indicated that the AfDB's prevailing development paradigm and institutional configuration was not favorable to participation and CSO engagement. They made the following suggestions on what needs to change:

- Urgent need to formalize CSO relation with the AfDB by reducing Bank staff turnover and establishing a specialized unit at the Bank with an independent program for CSO engagement, with clear objectives.
- Create discussion forums: the Bank should listen more to CSOs and establish consultation mechanisms.
- Enable transparency in the procedures and reduce bureaucratic procedures by introducing a simple mechanism to facilitate CSOs' engagement with the Bank.
- Need for an improved mechanism to disseminate data and information to CSOs that want to collaborate with the Bank.
- Bank staff should be encouraged to respect CSOs' expertise and recognize their complementary role with the state.

Furthermore, the CSOs indicated that the AfDB could benefit significantly from their know-how in operationalizing participatory activities, project implementation and policy formulation. They also indicated that the primary forms of communication with agencies such as the Bank, was through the website and direct person-to-person contact.

The CSOs cited several major constraints to engagement with the Bank. Some respondents perceived a lack of a well-defined and coherent Bank-CSO dialogue policy/framework, which leads to poor communication, an inability to be open and an absence of real engagement in policy. Some considered the level of the Bank's information on and understanding of CSOs to be insufficient, which might translate to a lack of commitment and seriousness on the Bank's part. Inadequate operational and financial capacity is also viewed as a major obstacle to CSO-Bank engagement.

Based on their experience with the Bank, the respondents identified the following changes for an enhanced Engagement Framework:

- Implement a well-defined and functional institutional framework that includes CSOs in the Bank's program reviews.

- Allocate a specific annual budget for CSO activities with the Bank.
- Create an office that deals only with CSOs; put suggestion boxes in country offices.
- Work on building the capacity of field officers, and train field staff to engage with CSOs.
- Create an atmosphere of openness during annual meetings; develop an environment conducive to engagement among Bank managers and staff.
- Be open to learning from similar institutions that engage with CSOs.

Many of the respondents recognize that the Bank is working to improve its engagement with CSOs. They point out that AfDB-CSO engagement is a process that is ongoing. According to the respondents, the following areas need further improvement:

- A CSO department: A department solely dedicated to CSO issues needs to be established. This will help reduce the bureaucratic processes that can impede the engagement between the Bank and CSOs. Technical and financial capacity-building for CSOs must also be undertaken.
- Formalized relations: Development of terms of reference, periodic regional consultations and a legal framework for Bank-CSO engagement is essential if engagement is to be sustainable.
- Communication and outreach: Communicating with CSOs at the local level through information-sharing and sensitization on different Bank projects is crucial. Projects already under way can be used as examples of best practice.
- CSO role: The Bank should be able to select partner CSOs based on their added value, and fully eligible CSOs should play a role in the planning, needs-assessment and implementation processes. In addition, CSOs should be given an opportunity to act on policies to complement government actions.
- A CSO database should be developed and maintained.

ANNEX 4. EXAMPLES OF OTHER MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS' ENGAGEMENT WITH CSOS

Over the past decades, international organizations and institutions, including the UNDP, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Asian Development Bank have fostered a “fundamental shift in the relationship with CSOs and NGOs geared towards recognizing the evolving nature and growing influence of civil society, drawing on its strengths and capacities, and maximizing the potential of civic engagement for development.”⁸ The importance of dialogue and interaction with CSOs has been acknowledged and reflected not only in concrete actions, but also in the establishment of civil society advisory committees, departments, outreach strategies and policies within these institutions' organizational structures.

The following organizations have established civil society bodies within their institutional framework.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

In general, the UNDP's engagement with civil society focuses on six areas: democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, environment and energy, women's empowerment, and HIV and AIDS. Since 2000, the UNDP has been advised by its Civil Society Advisory Committee,⁹ which was created as a formal mechanism for dialogue between civil-society representatives and UNDP senior management. The committee, which brings together 14 civil-society leaders, serves as an advisory body and sounding board for UNDP senior management on key policy and programming issues. In August 2009, the Civil Society Division of UNDP published a Global Strategy to Strengthen Civil Society and Civic Engagement, proposing, among other things, to strengthen civic engagement in multilateralism, particularly in the context of the global financial crisis and other serious threats to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and to human development in vulnerable countries.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

In 1987, the ADB adopted a policy establishing a broad framework for cooperation between the bank and NGOs. This policy affirmed that the ADB could enhance the effectiveness of its operations by drawing upon the special capabilities and expertise of NGOs. Under this policy, the main objectives of ADB-NGO cooperation were to address the basic needs of disadvantaged groups in the Bank's developing member countries, and to support improved natural resource management and conservation. Among the mechanisms identified to facilitate broader cooperation were tripartite workshops in which the Bank, governments and NGOs exchange views on NGO involvement in ADB operations.

Over the following decade, the developmental circumstances of the Asia-Pacific region changed, as did the work of the ADB and NGOs. The ADB adopted an operational strategy that promoted integrated, growth-oriented development projects focusing on human and social development and environmental protection. NGOs, meanwhile, continued to strengthen their operational capacities and saw their role, impact and influence in the development process grow. These changes altered the relationship between the Bank and NGOs.

In addition, some NGOs and activist networks critical of the mainstream international development agenda began to emerge, choosing protest as a mode of engagement. The 1999 World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle was a watershed event in NGO activism at meetings of international organizations. This face of NGO activism was also seen at the Bank's May 2000 annual meeting, in Chiang Mai, Thailand. These developments highlighted the need for the ADB to prepare itself to interact not only with NGOs interested in collaborating on projects, but also with “anti-globalization” NGOs and social-justice movements seeking to alter the policies and practices of international financial institutions, including the ADB.

8 UNDP Global Strategy to Strengthen Civil Society and Civic Engagement, August 2009.

9 http://www.undp.org/partners/civil_society/civil_society_advisory_committee.shtml

World Bank

The World Bank has had extensive experience over the past few years in engaging CSOs in a broad range of development operations and in policy dialogue at the local, national and transnational levels. In its own words, the Bank has been taking deliberate steps to engage a wider and more complex spectrum of organizations and constituencies within global, national and local civil society. Its engagement with CSOs can be grouped into three categories of activity: facilitation, dialogue and consultation, and partnership. The Bank also manages an array of grant mechanisms and donor-supported trust funds that provide direct support for CSO-initiated projects.

Within its Social Development Department, the Participation and Civic Engagement Group promotes the participation of people and their organizations to influence institutions, policies and processes for equitable and sustainable development. The group assists World Bank units, client governments and civil society organizations in incorporating participatory approaches in the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of World Bank-supported operations. It works to enhance capacity for participatory processes and social accountability, and it develops analytic instruments to assess obstacles to the effective participation of civil society.

Recent World Bank/IMF annual and spring meetings, where substantive dialogue — and protests — have occurred, have shown the complexity of relations between CSOs and the Bank. Today, CSOs are appealing to the Bank to tackle a new generation of development challenges, such as ensuring debt sustainability after debt relief has been provided, applying safeguards thoroughly, protecting human rights, and fostering greater participation by the governments and citizens of developing countries in global decision-making processes.¹⁰

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Over the years, the IMF has sought to engage with CSOs through information-sharing, dialogue, and consultation at both global and national levels. This has led to a more active involvement with CSOs and legislatures.¹¹ In 2001, the IMF issued a policy discussion paper, *The IMF and Civil Society Organizations: Striking a Balance*, answering such questions as Which CSOs have been, and should be, engaged by the Fund? What questions should IMF-CSO engagement address? What are the limits to the dialogue?

As the IMF's policies have evolved—for instance, its increased focus on promoting poverty reduction in low-income countries through a participatory approach, and its emphasis on transparency and good governance—outreach and communication have become an integral part of IMF country work. At the global level, the IMF's engagement with CSOs takes a variety of forms:

- Contacts between IMF management and CSO representatives, in both small meetings and larger forums.
- Meetings, seminars, and consultations with IMF staff.
- Invitations extended by the IMF to help review its policies by attending seminars or by providing comments to papers posted on the fund's external website.
- A Civil Society Policy Forum, organized jointly with the World Bank, in parallel with the Annual and Spring Meetings of the IMF and World Bank that covers a wide range of topics, including many suggested by CSOs themselves.

In individual countries, engagement with CSOs takes several forms. In the context of program design and negotiations in low-income countries, IMF missions often meet CSOs that are preparing poverty-reduction strategies.¹²

10 Issues and Options for Improving Engagement Between the World Bank and Civil Society Organizations, The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, Washington, March 2005.

11 <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/civ.htm>

12 <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/civ.htm>



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