

WORLD BANK CONSULTATIONS ON THE EVOLUTION PROCESS
SOUTH ASIA REGION
SUMMARY OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER MEETING (IN-PERSON)
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM (DHAKA TIME)
WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 2023

World Bank Representatives:

- **Ed Mountfield**, Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services
- **Abdoulaye Seck**, Country Director for Bangladesh and Bhutan
- **Martin Holtmann**, IFC Country Manager for Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal

Moderator:

Dr. Ahsan H. Mansur, Executive Director, Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh

Context: The World Bank has been engaging in global consultations on the Evolution Process. The parameters of these consultations are outlined on this website [here](#) in an outreach plan. The first Evolution Roadmap Forum, held on April 11, 2023, at the Spring Meetings, kicked off the official consultations in parallel with the online multi-stakeholder consultation process. While participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage in the Forum in Washington, they underlined *the importance of taking the consultation on the road to global south stakeholders*.

Building on the Evolution Forum, this second phase of the World Bank’s public consultation period consists of **regional consultations** that will take place in all seven regions of the Bank’s work during the month of July 2023 (see full schedule in Annex 2).

Dhaka, Bangladesh and **New Delhi, India** served as consultation hubs for the South Asia region. The consultations in Bangladesh, which took place on July 5, launched the in-country consultation process with two sessions: one “in-person” consultation with Bangladesh specific stakeholders and another virtual consultation that connected most of the other countries in the South Asia region. Separately, there was a consultation meeting in India for country specific stakeholders on July 27, 2023.

Bangladesh Consultations

This in-person event targeting Dhaka-based stakeholders hosted a diverse group of organizations, including civil society, foundations, think tanks, academics, development partners and the private sector.

The moderator opened the discussion by welcoming the participants to the World Bank’s office in Dhaka and encouraged the participants to really engage and provide their views on the Evolution process. The World Bank’s Country Director of Bangladesh and Bhutan, Abdoulaye Seck, also welcomed participants to the consultations hosted in Dhaka, providing a global overview on the consultations, and acknowledging IFC’s Manager, Martin Holtmann. In his presentation, Ed Mountfield, Vice President of Operations Policy and Country Services, indicated that the World Bank is committed to a collaborative and inclusive process informed by the Bank’s stakeholders,

and then provided an overview of the three main pillars of the Development Committee paper, which was shared with participants ahead of the consultations. The moderator then opened the floor for questions (see Annex for detailed comments and questions from participants).

Participants: A total of 48 people attended the meeting. (See full list of participants in separate file).

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS

The discussion was substantive with active engagement, and the main themes resonated around:

- The importance of keeping **poverty reduction as the key priority** came out strongly, recognizing that reduction in *extreme poverty* should be the primary goal.
- Emphasis on inclusion of **women, children, youth, and disadvantaged groups** and importance of keeping a focus on inequality, especially in MICs.
- **Climate change, particularly as it relates to climate justice** was raised widely. LICs share an undue burden, and it must be recognized that shared prosperity needs shared responsibility. Fairer burden sharing should be prioritized going forward. A lot of potential exists for renewable energy and greening economies.
- **Domestic resource mobilization needed**, as public goods require public action. GPGs need global public investment as well, and the private sector has a clear role to play in areas like climate mitigation. Support for stronger regulatory frameworks, de-risking, better use of guarantee instruments is needed.
- **Stronger public/private partnership** to bring in more private finance to support areas like renewable energy.
- A continued **need to focus on responding quickly to the client**, including planning of disaster risk management, use of our environment and social standards, as well as the increasing the speed and implementation of World Bank projects.
- The critical importance of continuing access to **concessional financing**. While IDA has heavily frontloaded its resources, a case needs to be made for supplemental contributions to a crisis facility to ensure quick support, especially during the current global uncertainty.

Annexes

Annex 1: Detailed Comments from Participants

Annex 2: Full Regional Consultation Schedule

Annex 1: Detailed Comments from Participants

Climate and Global Challenges		
Climate and Global Challenges	Leading Development Business Initiative	<p>The World Bank has focused on infrastructure development, but climate change is an important issue that should not be ignored. In particular, the World Bank should work to increase women's participation in infrastructure projects, as this would help to reduce logistical costs.</p> <p>The Bank needs to focus more on climate finance. All of these issues require working at the community level. It has to be a partnership, not just giving money to the government. It is important to work as a team.</p>
	YPF	Climate change and development are interconnected. The World Bank must work alongside governments and civil society to address these challenges. The World Bank has a strong focus in South Asia, but it must do more to work with countries in the region to address the challenges of climate change and development.
	International Center for Climate Change and Development	On the issue of climate change, the private sector cannot do anything about adaptation. It has to be financed from domestic resources. The World Bank will need to find some innovative sources to finance local adaptation. We need to go to the local communities to teach technical skills and wisdom so that all the people in the country do their part in helping cope with climate change.
	Dhaka University	<p>Climate adaptation is a global public good and need huge resources. Countries like Bangladesh are clear victims of climate change. We will need 230 billion dollars to deal with the adaptation. The Bank needs to prioritize resources to fund the climate challenge.</p> <p>Renewable energy must be a priority. Bangladesh has great potential in areas like solar energy, Solar irrigation can be a good start. There is a clear link between climate and poverty.</p>
	PricewaterhouseCoopers Bangladesh Private Limited	The usual national skill development framework should be revised to increase the focus on service exports and the common use of renewable and sustainable energy. Fossil fuels should be phased out and replaced with alternative sustainable development policies. Incentives should be given for private development projects, such as hydropower.
	UNICEF	There is also a lot of focus on climate finance. All of these issues require working at the community level. And to do that, it is not enough to just lend money to the government. It is very important that we are working as a team.
	Infrastructure Development Company Ltd. (IDCOL)	The environment, property, and sustainable development of society are essentially being funded and resourced by the poor. Their sacrifice makes the commercial world work. We need to understand the relationship between poverty and the environment and how to work together to address these challenges.

Private Sector	UN	<p>More work on sustainable finance and the sustainable asset financing program in the agricultural business would be helpful. Partial credit guarantee schemes would support the private sector.</p> <p>Our research shows that sustainable finance in the agricultural business is a significant opportunity, with a potential market size of \$178 billion. In addition to this, we have formed a DB Sustainable Alliance with the private sector, and the World Bank has been working on this. To accelerate this process, we can benefit from our sustainable asset financing program. First, if we can get a partial credit guarantee scheme, we can actually support the private sector as well. This will be helpful in scaling up. Third, we can provide access to subsidized funds with this access to the private sector.</p>
	Bangladesh Nari ProgatiSangha (BNPS)	Caution needed in managing PPPs. Often see the public sector weak here. The World Bank needs to invest more in the public sector. If not addressed, this can cause harm to populations. We are still facing problems in power generation projects that are facing consequences that are economic, social, and politically. The World Bank should take care and should analyze the consequences before applying this sort of projects.
	Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)	Request World Bank support for private health insurance funding. All over the country, NGOs are working on this, and we have been working alone in this area since it was initiated by IFC. We are expanding our outreach to farmers and getting good results. We need more government support and funding. We know that the World Bank has helped the development authority, but unfortunately, we haven't seen much visible improvement in that area. Innovations are coming up from the private sector, NGOs, and development organizations to ensure health insurance. When we talk about technology adaptation, data is an issue. We work with related data, satellite usage, and outside usage. We can use less price and integrate smart ID. Insurance can also be integrated with health. Overall, the World Bank can provide us with education and reinsurance support. How can we help in that segment in other engaging products and make innovation a part of that?
	Leading Development Business Initiative	The World Bank should also encourage the private sector to participate in infrastructure projects, as this would help to achieve its goals more quickly.
Operating Model	ILO	<p>The new operating model of the World Bank will essentially affect and allow partners like UN agencies to come together and work together on certain issues. Two important issues concerning this:</p> <p>First, Bangladesh had its first national employment policy in 2022. A part of the employment policy is definitely dealing with the financing of the employment policy. As a technical agency of the UN, the ILO can support active labor market policies, public employment services, and technical work to support the employment policies. It is essentially important for organizations like the World Bank to go for creating lots of jobs in the country to support the financing of the employment policies. I think the ILO and the World Bank can work together on this.</p>

		<p>Second, on the face of the LDC graduation, it is very important to see the human rights due diligence as the country expects to grow into the new trade regime gradually after the LDC graduation. There are lots of issues on labor forms, labor rights, and labor rules in the country that need to be supported and also mentioned at certain standards in terms of the international labor standards. There is a big scope for the World Bank and the ILO to come together and see how we can take this common goal together at hand.</p> <p>Especially on the last footnote, on the analytical work on the diagnostics and the assessments of the employment creation and labor groups: There are big scopes for us to join hands and work hand in hand and listen to the key knowledge points in this area for learning.</p>
	UNICEF	The disbursement indicators, when reduced to mere tick marks, can significantly affect the overall effectiveness of a program.
	Leading Development Business Initiative	The World Bank's ideal program in its operational model is research-based financing. This type of financing is based on indicators that measure the actual impact of a program on the overall goal. This helps to identify what is working and what is not, and to make adjustments as needed.
Inclusion (Gender and Youth)	Bangladesh Nari ProgatiSangha (BNPS)	<p>Women are disproportionately discriminated against and are often victims. The World Bank should consider this and provide financial management and other practical support to women. World Bank support for inequality, which is vastly increasing, is also needed. More attention also needed for underprivileged children.</p> <p>We also need to check the use of our language to be sure we are not creating larger gaps with terms like “third world” or “poor countries.” This is a human rights issue.</p>
	Dhaka University	We need to focus on the aging population, including old age pensions, as well as the youth work force in terms of training and education.
	Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce & Industries (MCCI)	Going forward, one of the most critical issues is that young people need to be educated and trained. This requires effort from the international community to achieve gender equality and provide opportunities. We cannot make progress on this serious issue without significant funding so that the young population can address it.
	Manusher Jonyo Foundation	If rising inequality is not addressed, it will be difficult to achieve SDG goals.
Growth/Economic Development	PricewaterhouseCoopers Bangladesh Private Limited	Bangladesh's economic growth has slowed to 2.51%, and 85% of its exports are ready-made garments. We need to do something together to address this. The World Bank can support the development of new sectors and encourage diversification in the development of quality products. The World Bank should increase its focus on social development, infrastructure development, and transportation networks in order to further announce upgraded quality and products.
	Manusher Jonno Foundation	Financial and technical support are essential for further development and taking advantage of the government's five-year plans and vision. The World Bank has provided great support to our country, but our major concern is economic prosperity. In order to introduce courses related to the Fourth Industrial

		Revolution, technical and financial support are very important. The number of graduates in these fields is only 1.4%, so we need more technically qualified people. But the matter of concern is the economic disparity thus the government. The government needs to support the introduction of courses such as IT, AI, machine learning, and digital marketing. This support would ultimately result in a prosperous society and help to reduce poverty.
Financing	UNICEF	The World Bank finance is coming in without protecting public finance and domestic public views. The World Bank financing is not a top-up; it is replacing the existing financial structure. It is crucial to ensure that World Bank financing not only replaces existing financial structures but also safeguards public finances and takes into account the perspectives of domestic stakeholders.
	Infrastructure Development Company Ltd. (IDCOL)	The challenge for financing companies is how to secure investment in both local currency funding and dollar funding. Right now, we see more demand for local currency bonds. Insurance has been done, but how can we offshore TTaka bonds for many of these projects? According to our initiative, biogas and other energy-efficient projects have been very successful. How can we continue to spur more investment in these projects?
	YPF	During the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Bank has continued to be dynamic and responsive to the needs of people. It has increased concessional financing to help developing countries cope with the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. The war in Ukraine has further exacerbated the challenges facing developing countries, and the World Bank must continue to prioritize its support for these countries.
	Leading Development Business Initiative	The World Bank has been protecting domestic public finance in social sectors, but financing in education has been declining. All of these issues require working at the community level. It has to be a partnership, not just giving money to the government. It is important to work as a team.
Other	Delta Insurance Company	We need a longer initiative for shelter development and clustering houses to provide a long-term solution. We want the World Bank's initiative to add value by ensuring that the workforce is paid enough and is certified.
	Energypac Electronics Limited	Commitment for citizen engagement is a comparative advantage of the World Bank. over the years, the commitment to citizen engagement has not been so visible.
	Dhaka University	Thanks to the World Bank for supporting us in achieving digital banking. It has been possible for your support. Long term sustainable finance is key. The latest IMF support of 1.7B USD is a prime identifier of your capacity, and I urge other partners in the room to get the best use of the funds that we have to work for the partnership locally and globally.

Annex 2: Full Regional Consultation Schedule

Region and Country	Management Representative	Dates
South Asia (Dhaka, Bangladesh), regional, online multi-stakeholder	Ed Mountfield, Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services	July 5, 2023
South Asia (Dhaka, Bangladesh), country-focused in person multi-stakeholder	Ed Mountfield, Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services	July 5, 2023
Latin America and the Caribbean (Panama City, Panama), regional, hybrid multi-stakeholder	Axel van Trotsenburg, Senior Managing Director	July 10, 2023
Latin America and the Caribbean (Panama City, Panama), regional, private sector, in person	Axel van Trotsenburg, Senior Managing Director	July 10, 2023
Africa West (Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire), parliamentarians, hybrid	Anna Bjerde, Managing Director of Operations	July 10, 2023
Africa West (Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire), regional, hybrid multi-stakeholder	Anna Bjerde, Managing Director of Operations	July 11, 2023
Africa West (Accra, Ghana), regional, private sector, hybrid	Anna Bjerde, Managing Director of Operations	July 13, 2023
Europe and Central Asia (Tirana, Albania), regional, multi-stakeholder online	Ed Mountfield, Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services	July 17, 2023
Europe and Central Asia (Tirana, Albania), country-focused, in person multi-stakeholder	Ed Mountfield, Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services	July 17, 2023
East Asia Pacific (Indonesia, Jakarta), regional, hybrid multi-stakeholder	Aki Nishio, Vice President, Development Finance	July 17, 2023
East Asia Pacific (Indonesia, Jakarta), regional, private sector, hybrid	Aki Nishio, Vice President, Development Finance	July 17, 2023
Africa East (Washington, DC), regional, virtual*	Axel van Trotsenburg, Senior Managing Director	July 20, 2023
Middle East and North Africa (Rabat, Morocco), regional, hybrid multi-stakeholder	Anshula Kant, Managing Director & Chief Financial Officer	July 24, 2023
South Asia (Delhi, India), country-focused, hybrid multi-stakeholder	Aki Nishio, Vice President, Development Finance Auguste Tano Kouamé, Country Director of India	July 27, 2023

* The consultations were planned to be held hybrid out of Nairobi, but were relocated to Washington, DC, because mission travel was suspended, and staff asked to work from home at the advice of WBG Security.