

**Visit of Heads of Academic Networks to World Bank Headquarters
June 11-12, 2007
Washington D.C.**



[\(more pictures\)](#)

SUMMARY and LIST of RESOURCES

Opening Session

The opening session, chaired by Jean-Christophe Bas, Manager, Development Policy Dialogue, World Bank, allowed the participants to briefly present themselves and the organizations they represent, as well as discuss the objectives of the two-day meeting and the expectations of attendees.

Sharing their expectations, the participants raised issues such as the need for academic organizations for a roadmap in their work with international organizations; building a common front towards greater funding of research; broadening the discussions beyond research to include students and university curricula.

World Bank Overview

Maya Brahmam, Head, Speaker's Bureau, World Bank, presented the general history, structure and modus operandi of the World Bank.

[Presentation](#)

[More information about the World Bank](#)

As an example of mainstreaming development in university curricula, the speaker mentioned the [Global Issues Seminar Series](#) and the newly published [book "Global Issues for Global Citizens"](#) that can be used in teaching development to undergraduates.

Research at the World Bank: Meeting with DEC – main research-producing unit of the Bank.

The objective of the session was to explain how research at the World Bank is organized; and what are the methods, priorities and ways of disseminating research findings at the World Bank.

Part 1: Organization of World Bank research

Jean-Jacques Dethier, Research Manager, Development Economics (DEC), World Bank, introduced the organization of research at the World Bank, as well as methods, topics and nature of Bank research. Dethier presented results of the external evaluation of the Bank's research (years 1998-2005), that revealed some strengths and weaknesses of Bank-led and produced research. [More about the evaluation](#), including full report of the Evaluation Panel and response from the Chief Economist.

[Presentation](#)

During the discussion, some of the questions raised included: Is the Bank's research inclusive? Is collaborative research possible? How to draw the line between research and advocacy?

Part 2: Dissemination of World Bank research and engaging with stakeholders

Merrell Tuck-Primdahl, Senior Communications Officer, Development Economics, World Bank, presented major flagship reports of the Development Economics Unit: [World Development Report](#), [Global Development Finance](#), [Global Monitoring Report](#), [World Development Indicators](#), [Global Economic Prospects](#); and the [Knowledge for Change Program](#). Discussion: How can networks contribute to the new World Development Report 2009 (on geography)? Consultations will soon start on the WDR website. [WDR 2008 draft](#) is already online (release scheduled for September 2007).

It was suggested that Annual Meetings of networks could be an occasion for consultations or presentation of findings from Bank reports.

[More information about research at the World Bank](#) and the [Development Economics Vice Presidency](#)

Presentation of the Independent Evaluation Group

Vinod Thomas, Director-General, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank; and Patrick G. Grasso, Adviser, IEG, presented the mandate and work of the IEG. The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) is an independent unit within the World Bank; it reports directly to the Bank's Board of Executive Directors. IEG assesses what works, and what does not; how a borrower plans to run and maintain a project; and the lasting contribution of the Bank to a country's overall development.

[More information](#) about IEG

Presentation of the World Bank Institute (WBI)

The objective of the session was to familiarize the participants with capacity building programs of the WBI: seminars, trainings, distance learning, consultations, publications etc.

Presenters:

Rakesh Nangia, Acting Vice President, WBI

Kenneth King, Manager, Partnerships, WBI

Chair: Sunetra Puri, Communications Adviser, WBI

[More information about WBI](#)

New research at the World Bank (Post-Conflict, Access to Finance, Climate Change)

The purpose of this session was to hear from researchers from the Development Economics Research Group about their recent work on post-conflict countries, access to finance and impacts of climate change on developing countries.

Presenters:

Gershon Feder, Senior Research Manager, DECRG, World Bank

Gary Milante, Consultant, DECRG, World Bank

Thorsten Beck, Senior Financial Economist, DECRG, World Bank

Presentations [Conflict](#), [Climate](#), [Finance](#)

Meeting with representatives of thematic networks (Poverty Reduction)

The session served to explain to the participants how Networks operate, and how they work together with other units (research, operations etc.). In particular, work of the Poverty Reduction network was presented.

Presenters:

Carlos Alberto Braga, Senior Adviser, PRMVP, World Bank

Vikram Nehru, Director, PREMED, World Bank

[Presentation](#)

More information about the [Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Vice Presidency](#), [Financial and Private Sector Development](#), [Sustainable Development](#)

Parallel meetings with Regional Economists (Africa, South Asia)

2 parallel sessions were offered to participants of the visit, each with a different regional focus. The sessions served to explain how World Bank Regions operate, what the work of the Regional Chief Economist entails, and how the Regions work with Country Offices in the field.

Meeting 1:

Shantayanan Devarajan, Chief Economist, South Asia Region, World Bank,

Meeting 2:

Sudhir Shetty, Sector Director, Africa Region, World Bank

Harry Broadman, Economic Adviser, Africa Region, World Bank

More information on: [Sub-Saharan Africa](#), [Middle East and North Africa](#), [South Asia](#), [East Asia and Pacific](#), [Latin America and Caribbean](#), [Europe and Central Asia](#), [Western Europe](#)

Foundations as new development actors

The objective of the session was to present latest World Bank research on foundations and discuss how the rising role of foundations as donors will affect the development environment.

Presenter: Olga Sulla, Senior Economist, Development Economics, World Bank

[Presentation](#)

[Backgrounder](#)

[More information](#) on World Bank's work with foundations

Roundtable discussion “Role of higher education in development”

The session began with a short presentation of World Bank's work in tertiary education, and developed into a general discussion of the role of higher education in development. Presenter: Richard Hopper, Senior Education Specialist, World Bank

Chair: Steve Morgan, Associate Director, Economic and Social Research Council, United Kingdom

[Presentation](#)

[More information on World Bank and tertiary education](#)

World Bank's image and strategy

The group met with Marwan Muasher, Senior Vice President, External Affairs, World Bank, for a lunch discussion. The speaker raised the following issues that are of most relevance to the World Bank in the recent months and near future:

- Image of the World Bank following the recent crisis;
- Aid effectiveness and harmonization as a major challenge for the Bank as a donor;
- Where will the Bank be in 10-15 years? DEC is currently working on a long-term strategy (Towards a Knowledge Bank? Towards Global Public Goods?).

The participants raised the following issues in discussion: 1. Need for an action agenda on higher education, in partnership with the Bank; 2. Need to give more credibility to development in university curricula; 3. The Bank needs to work together with other actors, such as UNESCO.

World Bank and the development community

The group met with Johannes Linn, Wolfensohn Center Executive Director, [Brookings Institution](#) to discuss the links between the World Bank and the development community in Washington D.C.

Chair: Diane Stone, Professor, Warwick University, UK; Central European University, Hungary; Chair, [Researchers Alliance for Development \(RAD\)](#).

Public Information Services at the World Bank, focus on field work

The Public Information Centers (PICs) are located at World Bank country offices or at universities and depository libraries all over the world, providing access to data, publications and general information on the World Bank, as well as undertaking outreach services to various groups, such as academia and youth. The objective of the session was to concretely illustrate the opportunities offered by PICs in the field to the academic and student community.

Presenter: Ida Mori, Public Information Officer, Public Information Services, World Bank

[Presentation](#)

[More information](#) about PICs

Wrap-up Session and Way Forward

The session served to conclude two days of meetings, identify main messages, emerging questions, and outline the way forward – concrete follow-up activities to be undertaken after the visit.

FOLLOW-UP:

During the wrap-up session the participants came up with proposals for future collaboration, with the following objectives:

1) Disseminating results of the Visit of Academic Networks to the World Bank 2007

Representatives of academic networks who visited the World Bank in June 2007 committed to informing their membership about the event via websites or newsletters, as well as to disseminating information about the World Bank that could be useful for their members (i.e. using World Bank data and statistics etc.).

2) Facilitating regular interaction between academic networks and the World Bank

- Most academic networks hold annual meetings of their governing bodies or general assemblies at least once a year. The participants expressed interest in inviting World Bank speakers to their annual meetings, to present the Bank's perspective in discussions of development topics.

- Traditionally, heads of academic networks are invited to participate in the Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics (ABCDE), organized by the World Bank every spring. In 2005 and 2006 leaders of 10 academic organizations met at the occasion of the ABCDE. Participants of the Academic Visit will be invited to participate in the ABCDE 2008, to be held in South Africa in early June 2008.

- Secretariats of the academic networks will work together to set up a shared calendar of events, that would offer early heads-up on big events and major opportunities.

- During a meeting with Shantayanan Devarajan, Chief Economist, South Asia region, a suggestion was made to use the networks to raise the profile of local researchers in the region, in areas of special interest to the World Bank: migration, infrastructure, agricultural reform, labor markets and employment. Academic networks have offered assistance in identifying prominent researchers working in those fields.

3) Establishing a Program of Visits to the World Bank for academic organizations

The participants of the Visit found the program interesting and useful as an introduction to the World Bank – its mission, organization, priorities, operation mechanism. It was suggested that heads of other academic organizations (global, regional or thematic) could also greatly profit from a similar program. It was proposed that an Annual Program of Academic Visits to the World Bank is established, bringing a small group of organizations to the headquarters in Washington, or to a selected field office.

4) Creation of a Working Group on Tertiary Education

During the Visit, participants met with Richard Hopper, Senior Education Economist, World Bank, for a short discussion of the Bank's work in the domain of higher

education. The group expressed interest in continuing the discussion in a separate program. Starting from Fall 2007, a videoconference series will be set up, to offer an opportunity to a diverse group of experts to discuss emerging issues in tertiary education and development. The Working Group will bring together representatives of academic networks, World Bank specialists on tertiary education working for the Human Development Unit, as well as based in field offices, representatives of other multilateral organizations, and policy makers in the field of education (Ministries of Education). The group will meet 3-5 times a year via videoconference.

The above mentioned set of objectives will be implemented thanks to a new mechanism set up during the visit: **‘Network of Academic Networks’**:

As a direct outcome of the Visit, an informal network will be set up, bringing together representatives of the organizations that participated in the program in June 2007, for regular interaction with the World Bank, and among one another. The group will be invited to participate in World Bank consultations and will be encouraged to share information on events, research findings, opportunities etc. The group will be working together towards mainstreaming development in academic curricula, engaging students in the development debate, and sharing information on research funding.

ANNEX

Contacts:

[LIST of PARTICIPANTS](#)

[Bios and contact details of participants](#)

[Bios and contact details of presenters](#)

LINKS

On the World Bank:

[World Bank](#)

[World Bank Institute](#)

[Independent Evaluation Group](#)

[World Bank Data and Research website](#)

[Evaluation of World Bank Research 1998-2005](#)

[Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Vice Presidency, Financial and Private Sector Development, Sustainable Development](#)

[Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, East Asia and Pacific, Latin America and Caribbean, Europe and Central Asia, Western Europe](#)

[More information on World Bank and tertiary education](#)

[Foundations](#)

[Public Information Centers](#)

[Publications](#) (online commerce. NB: all publications can also be downloaded for free in an electronic version)

World Bank Flagship Reports: [World Development Report](#), [Global Development Finance](#), [Global Monitoring Report](#), [World Development Indicators](#), [Global Economic Prospects](#), [Doing Business](#)

[World Bank Info Kiosk](#) (easy way to access publications and data sources)

Websites of organizations participating in the visit:

[Brookings Institute](#)

[Association of African Universities \(AAU\)](#)

[Economic and Social Research Council of the UK \(ESRC\)](#)

[European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes \(EADI\)](#)

[Global Union Research Network \(GURN\)](#)

[International Association of Universities \(IAU\)](#)

[International Association of University Presidents \(IAUP\)](#)

[International Political Science Association \(IPSA\)](#)

[Researchers Alliance for Development \(RAD\)](#)

[Worldwide Universities Network \(WUN\)](#)

Organizers of the Visit: Development Policy Dialogue Team

Selected academic products, implemented jointly with the RAD:

[Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics \(ABCDE\)](#)

[Share University Papers on the World Bank \(SUP\)](#)

[International Essay Competition](#)