

***Partnership for Development:
From Vision to Action***

***Briefing to the Board of the Executive Directors
September 24, 1998***

Following the informal Board meeting on June 9, 1998 on the Partnership for Development: Proposed Actions for the World Bank (SecM98-421), a series of consultations was conducted in the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa (Annex 1).¹ This is to brief the Board of the Executive Directors on the outcome of these consultations, and on next steps the World Bank intends to take in implementing the partnership approach to development.

Four Roundtables were held in Washington, London, Hanoi and Abidjan, with participants including representatives from governments, bilateral donor agencies, multilateral financial institutions, civil society organizations, as well as the private sector. Each session was organized and chaired by a partner institution, which has also prepared an independent Report highlighting the main messages emerging from the discussions (Annexes 2 to 5).²

In addition, consultations were held with key government officials from relevant ministries (Finance, Foreign Affairs, Development Cooperation) and from bilateral aid agencies in the US, the UK, France, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Japan. Special focus sessions were also held with representatives from the civil society at large (including NGOs, Foundations, mass organizations, trade unions, faiths, academics, and the private sector) in Washington, London, Paris, Hanoi, and Abidjan. Consultations were also held with the UNDP (in New York, and Hanoi), the OECD (in Paris), the African Development Bank (in Abidjan), the Asian Development Bank (in Manila), and the European Commission (in Brussels). The IMF was represented at all the Roundtables, and the Inter-American Development Bank at the session held in Washington.

We wish to thank all participants for their active engagement, as well as their helpful comments. These have enriched our thinking, and challenged some of our initial views. They have also shaped the next steps in implementing the partnership approach to development. We would also like to thank representatives of the Board of Executive Directors who have participated in the Roundtables: Mr. Bourhane, Mr. Cariaga, Ms. Piercy, Mr. Kamitamai, Mr. Fofana and Mr. Sinclair.

¹ The partnership approach to development emphasizes the need to put committed governments, and their people, at the center of their development process. It calls for the design of a new approach to development assistance, which convenes all major stakeholders around the country's development strategy, programs, and projects.

² The partner institutions chairing the Roundtables were: the Overseas Development Council (Washington); the Overseas Development Institute (London); the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Hanoi); and the Africa Economic Research Consortium (Abidjan).

This briefing note could not pay justice to the richness of the discussions held around the world. It rather focuses on the recommendations that have consistently emerged in all of these discussions, and spells out the action to be undertaken by the World Bank as part of the effort to move from vision to action. It will be made available to all participants to the consultations through a Web Page, which would also allow them to provide comments.

Overwhelming Support for the approach ... but questions about its implementation

The partnership approach to development received overwhelming support from all audiences. The support was accompanied by a sense of relief, that the World Bank was finally joining many other stakeholders who have expressed these views before (Americas, Europe). It was also accompanied by a sense of disbelief, as to the degree of commitment within the World Bank to this approach (Asia, Africa), often tainted by a dose of mistrust as to its motivation in doing so (Africa).³ A commentator hailed the move as the “Perestroika of development assistance” (Europe). All audiences recommended proceeding with implementation, and dealing with challenges on a country-specific basis. All agreed that it will be a difficult task, but one that must be done.

Call for the Bank to consider country-specific development strategies

All audiences agreed that, at the heart of the implementation of the partnership agenda, is the need for partners, including the Bank, to accept country-specific development strategies.¹ This opened up a set of questions as to the basis upon which assessment of these alternative approaches would be conducted. Some participants viewed this as the outcome of a dialogue between the government, and development stakeholders (Americas). Others called for the need to identify basic “principles” that would serve as a basis for this judgement – with internationally agreed development goals serving as model (Europe). And others argued that, while expert advice from the Bank on development strategies would be much valued, the ultimate decision should be left to the country. There was more tolerance for a stronger Bank role at the sector level, where agreement on what constitutes an appropriate development approach is easier to reach (Asia, Africa).

Call for the development community to consider “reciprocity”: the *Fair Deal*

All audiences called for broadening the dialogue between the country and its donors beyond aid. Some put forward the principle of “reciprocity” – with developing countries

³ Questions focused on the extent to which the Bank had drawn the full implications on the way it currently conducts its business (Americas, Europe)

⁴ This core question, raised in the four Roundtables, was referred to as the “acid test” (Americas), or the “iron fist inside the velvet glove” (Europe). Several audiences also linked it to the discussion on the “nature of conditionality” (Asia, Africa, session with the EC).

implementing the partnership approach, and donors engaging in development cooperation through a broader range of instruments, such as debt relief, market access, favorable trade policies (Europe). Such reciprocity would extend to the need for joint evaluation of outcomes, with an appropriate mechanism to address complaints (Europe). Some added that such reciprocity should also be extended to accountability for results (Africa, Asia). Others argued that such reciprocity would help break the conundrum of aid dependency, and allow for egalitarian partnership (Africa). The Prime Minister of Cote D'Ivoire referred to this as the "fair deal" between donors and recipients.

Call for open access to information

All audiences underscored the importance of access to information at the level of international donors; at the level of governments (national and local); and at the level of the civil society at large. Without access to information, the civil society could not participate meaningfully in the design and implementation of the development strategy (Americas, Africa and Asia). Access to information would also allow for improved coordination, both within the country, and across stakeholders (Asia). Finally, it would provide an excellent basis for continuing dialogue at the country level, among all stakeholders (Asia).

Call for greater involvement of the civil society

All audiences recognized the importance of participation of the civil society, but raised issues regarding representation and accountability. Several called for the need to develop a set of internationally agreed principles that would allow for an orderly participation (Americas). Some referred to this as a basic "bill of rights" for the civil society, akin to internationally agreed rules about trade unions (Africa). Others warned against any approach that would hamper the "pluralism" inherent to the nature of civil society organizations (Europe). Some argued that involvement of the civil society is best defined on a sector basis, where their role is often key to the design and implementation of the development strategy (Asia).

Call for greater cohesiveness in delivering development assistance

All audiences recognized the need for greater cohesiveness in delivering development assistance. The case was made for improved coordination within recipient governments, within donor countries, as well as within development institutions (Africa, Asia). Some made the case for greater support to country capacity and institution building, and argued for greater reliance on national resources (rather than external consultants) (Africa, Asia). All underscored the importance of coordination across stakeholders, and of bringing the IMF and the UN into the partnership approach. In this regard, they called for closer alignment of institutional instruments across donors (e.g., country strategy documents, analytical work), and for harmonization of procedures. Some warned against "partnership frameworks" becoming too rigid, and recommended a flexible, pragmatic country-based approach to enhancing collaboration between stakeholders (Europe, Asia).

Action within the next twelve months

We expect early implementation of the approach in the following countries: Tanzania, Uganda (Jim Adams); Ghana (Peter Harrold); Cote d'Ivoire (Shigeo Katsu); Ethiopia (Oey Meesook); Vietnam (Andrew Steer); Bolivia (Isabel Guerrero); Dominican Republic, and the East Caribbean States, (Orsalia Kalantzopoulos). Discussions are also ongoing in Central America (Donna Dowsett-Coirolo) for early implementation of the approach.

The World Bank would develop a cross-country knowledge base on partnerships, capturing partnership experiences across countries, and allowing for partners' feed-back. In addition, the World Bank would support development of a country-based knowledge system in some of the lead countries, as a tool for stakeholders to provide information and share knowledge. It would aim at (a) highlighting country development priorities; (b) providing a country-map of all development activities, identifying projects and stakeholders involved; and (c) allowing for interactive assessment of results by stakeholders.

In order to support early implementation of the approach, management is considering providing some transitional financial support to Country Directors, to fund initial costs of activities conducted in this framework.

Implementation of the approach will undoubtedly require changes in the way the World Bank conducts its business. In particular, there are implications on the need to change Bank's culture; on the nature of the CAS; on the choice and delivery of non-lending services; on the willingness to support projects developed by partner institutions; on the ability to adapt operational procedures to those of partners; and on the acceptance of time tables that reflect partners' institutional constraints and capacity.

Implementation of the approach will also require changes in the way other partners conduct their business. Assistance will be needed from members of the Board of the Executive Directors towards securing support for the approach in their constituencies, and in other multilateral development institutions.

**Consultations on Partnership for Development
In the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa - Summer 1998**

I. Consultations Held in the United States

A. Americas Roundtable – Washington, D.C., June 19, 1998

The Roundtable was organized by the Overseas Development Council (ODC), and chaired by Ms. Catherine Gwin of ODC. Executive Directors Mr. Juan Cariaga (for Argentina/Bolivia/Chile/Paraguay/Peru/Uruguay), and Ms. Jan Piercy (for the United States) reported on the Board seminar and shared their views.

Twenty-three participants represented the following organizations: four international organizations (IDB, IMF, UNDP and the World Bank); two Executive Directors' offices of the World Bank; five academic institutions (in the US, Canada, and Argentina); seven NGOs (four from the US and three from South America, including those from El Salvador and Colombia as well as one Latin American region-wide NGO based in Ecuador); two bilateral development agencies (USAID, CIDA); and ODC.

B. Other Consultation Meetings in the United States

In addition to the Roundtable the following consultation meetings were held in Washington, D.C. with:

- participants of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Caribbean Group for Cooperation in Economic Development (CGCED). Attendees included Prime Ministers and government officials such as those from Ministries of Finance/Economic affairs, Foreign Affairs, Environment, Trade/ Industry, those representing central Banks, and ambassadors, of about 18 Latin American and Caribbean countries. Others included government representatives from Europe (the Netherlands, UK, France) and the US, (June 11);
- fifteen NGOs (including those specializing in development, women's issues, and children), civil society groups and foundations based in the United States (July 16); and
- seven foundations from around the world, as well as the Council on Foundations (September 15).

II. Consultations Held in Europe

A. Europe Roundtable – London, July 2, 1998

The Roundtable was organized by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), and chaired by Mr. Simon Maxwell of ODI.

Thirty-one participants represented the following organizations: six donor governments (Norway, Sweden, U.K., Switzerland, Austria, Germany); five international organizations (OECD, IMF, Commonwealth Secretariat, UNDP, the World Bank); seven NGOs (those representing the three major European NGO networks for development, and those specializing in environment and transparency); two foundations (based in the UK); four academic institutions (the UK, Spain, and the Netherlands); ODI; and one individual expert.

B. Other Consultation Meetings in Europe

In addition to the Roundtable the following consultation meetings were held in Europe with:

- DFID in London (July 1);
- four NGOs and two academics (from the UK and India), in London (July 1);
- British private sector representatives in London (July 3);
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (International Development Banks Section) of the Netherlands in the Hague (July 6);
- GTZ of Germany in Eschborn (July 7);
- Swedish Ministries of Foreign Affairs (Division for International Development Cooperation, Division for Africa) and Finance (Division for International Organizations), as well as SIDA, in Stockholm (July 8);
- Ministere Delege a la Cooperation et a la Francophonie (Multilateral Relations Department) in Paris (July 9);
- Agence Francaise de Developpement (Policies and Studies Department) in Paris (July 9);
- Commission Cooperation et Developpement in Paris (July 9);

- Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et de l'Industrie (Bureau of Development Aid) in Paris (July 9); and
- European Commission (DG8 and various regional DGs) in Brussels (September 11).

III. Consultations Held in Asia

A. Asia Roundtable – Hanoi, September 3, 1998

The Roundtable was opened by the Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam, His Excellency Nguyen Manh Cam. The Roundtable was organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) of the United Nations, and chaired by Mr. Azizul Islam of ESCAP. The Alternate Executive Director for Japan, Mr. Akira Kamitomi, reported on the discussions at the board seminar.

Thirty-eight participants represented the following organizations: ten governments (Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam); five international/regional organizations (ASEAN, the Asian Development Bank, IMF, the United Nations and the World Bank); one Executive Director's offices of the World Bank; five NGOs (a network of South Asian NGOs based in Sri Lanka; community development NGOs from India and Indonesia; an NGO focused on education in Bangladesh, and a women's union in Vietnam); four academic institutions (all with expertise on development issues, from Bangladesh, India, the Philippines and Thailand); three foundations (from the Philippines, India and Japan); and three private sector organizations (based in Japan, the United Kingdom and Vietnam).

B. Other Consultation Meetings in Asia

In addition to the Roundtable the following consultation meetings were held in Asia with:

- Ministry of Finance, Japan (Development Institutions Division) in Tokyo (August 27);
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan (Multilateral Cooperation Division) in Tokyo (August 27);
- Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) of Japan (directors of the Coordination Department and the Operations Departments) in Tokyo (August 27);
- Asian Development Bank (Region West, Strategy and Policy Office) in Milan (August 28);

- UNDP staff in Hanoi (September 2);
- sixteen NGOs/mass organization groups based in Hanoi (including groups representing women, farmers and the youth, and NGOs specializing in environment, community development and health) in Hanoi (September 4); and
- ten international development organizations, bilateral donors, NGOs and foundations in Hanoi (September 4).

IV. Consultations Held in Africa

A. Africa Roundtable – Abidjan, September 8, 1998

The Roundtable was opened by the Honorable Theophile N'Doli Ahoua, Minister of Industrial Development and Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises, of Cote d'Ivoire. It was organized by the Africa Economic Research Consortium and chaired by Mr. Delphin G. Rwegasira. Mr. Ali Bourhane, the Executive Director of the World Bank for twenty-five African countries, reported on the discussions at the board seminar.

Thirty-three participants represented the following organizations: six governments (Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Uganda); seven international/regional organizations (the African Development Bank, the Global Coalition for Africa, IMF, OAU, UNDP, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the World Bank); two Executive Directors' offices of the World Bank; four NGOs (Cameroon, Kenya and Tanzania); three academic institutions (Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Kenya); two foundations (Nigeria and Senegal); and three private sector organizations (Ghana, South Africa and Zambia).

B. Other Consultation Meetings in Africa

In addition the following consultation meetings were held in Abidjan with:

- African Development Bank (senior managers), (September 7); and
- Twenty-one NGOs/civil society groups (including NGOs specializing in education, economic development and health, as well as trade unions, and Christian and Islamic groups), (September 9).

PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

**Report of a Roundtable
held at the Overseas Development Council
Washington, D.C.
June 19, 1998**

Overseas Development Council

June 1998

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. A one-day meeting was held on June 19, 1998, at the Overseas Development Council, in Washington to review the World Bank discussion paper, "Partnership for Development: Proposed Actions for the World Bank." This first of four consultations was a Western Hemisphere meeting, involving participants from throughout North and South America. There were some 23 participants, representing donor agencies (5), NGOs (10), and the academic community (4) as well as the World Bank management and board. The World Bank's paper was introduced by Nawal Kamel, Director, Partnership Group/Strategy and Resource Management. The remainder of the day was devoted to plenary discussion. A list of participants and an agenda for the day's proceedings are provided in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

2. Following a common format agreed for the four regional consultations, the meeting included: 1) general discussion of the partnership concept and proposed strategy; and 2) consideration of major challenges that would face recipient countries, bilateral donors, and international institutions in translating strategy into action.

3. Overall, participants welcomed the World Bank paper, which they saw as "timely and constructive." There was unanimous support for the idea of partnership as a needed response to weaknesses in donor-recipient relations. There was also broad agreement with the paper's diagnosis of existing problems. And there was endorsement, at a general level, of the proposed strategy, which participants viewed as consistent with lessons from experience and recent analyses on how to improve development cooperation.

4. In particular, participants applauded the paper for:

- *presenting a frank assessment and an ambitious vision;

- *anchoring the partnership strategy at the country level;

- *putting recipient countries' ownership of their development strategies at the center of the partnership agenda;

- *emphasizing the role of civil society in that agenda;

- *offering specific suggestions on how to meet the now-frequent call for greater donor coordination and a clearer division of labor among agencies; and

*indicating changes that would be required by the World Bank to make possible its role in development partnerships.

5. Nonetheless, the discussion pointed to a number of major issues in need of attention in both the design and implementation of the proposed partnership strategy. Overarching the points of discussion summarized below, were three main sets of concerns:

*** The scope of the partnership strategy**

6. For Latin America, it was said, trade and investment are the "big issues" for development cooperation, not aid. Yet missing from the paper are two essential actors -- the IMF and the private sector. It is difficult to envision a partnership agenda for Latin America which does not encompass them.

*** Commitments to partnership**

7. "Putting the recipient in the driver's seat" will involve new responsibilities and commitments on the part of both donors and recipients. The nature of those commitments should be made explicit in the strategy paper and in the development of new partnership arrangements.

*** Capacities for partnership**

8. In many Latin American countries, effective partnerships will require that the capacities of both governments and civil society organizations be enhanced and their structures of transparency and accountability strengthened. Greater attention to building those capacities is needed in the partnership paper.

*** The way ahead**

9. The proposed strategy should not be seen as a "blueprint." Diversity and choice are important features to maintain in the system of international development cooperation.

10. The "development partners coalition" proposal, in particular, will need to be nuanced. In some cases, out-of-country consultative groups will foster more honest discussion and better dialogue with external investors. Moreover, the term "coalition" is too strong, because it implies a permanent agenda.

11. In short, "incrementalism not revolution" is the recommended way ahead, with the main focus on building partnerships at the country level.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS ON DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

The Partnership Concept

12. There is need to define and better sort out the relationship between ownership ("a precondition") and partnership ("a coming together of actors in a new process of engagement").

Ownership is essential to successful development efforts, in principle, but it involves complicated processes of "social buy-in, governmental accountability, and political legitimacy." As one participant stated: "We are talking here about an attempt to empower recipients to get their acts together prior to interaction with donors; otherwise, we are talking about intrusion."

13. Discussion also indicated that a clear distinction should be made among the three levels of partnership entailed in the proposed strategy: (I) within countries, between the government and civil society; (ii) between countries and their aid donors; and (iii) among donors. Explicit account needs to be taken of how efforts to advance the partnership agenda at one level would impact on efforts at the other levels. Or the strategy will appear primarily to meet a donors' agenda.

14. The bottom line, it was suggested, is how the partnership strategy would deal with what was called "the acid test" -- i.e., a situation in which a recipient engaged in a process of national dialogue on its development strategy but donors disliked the policy outcome. Donors do not and cannot just buy into a country's plan. They have mandates and standards to maintain. Therefore, it was said, it is necessary to be candid and explicit about the fact that "partnership" entails "negotiation," and to be open about the criteria and rules.

15. A more open flow of information by all actors was seen as a sine qua non of successful partnership.

SELECTIVITY IN THE CHOICE OF PARTNERS

16. While acknowledging the need for selectivity in the implementation of a partnership strategy, participants worried about how the choice of partners is to be made. The concern was expressed on two different levels.

17. Within countries, the critical issue is who decides (and how) which civil society groups participate in the dialogue on the national development strategy and whether the involvement is sufficient. In particular, how, if at all, are donors to be involved in that process? And, what happens if the government view on the involvement of civil society does not match that of the donors?

18. Among countries, the question is by what criteria and by what process it is decided that a country has defined an appropriate national strategy and adequately met its other partnership commitments. Participants emphasized that the process of defining and implementing national strategies, including incorporating civil society in that process, is far more difficult and complex than implied by the paper.

19. The problems, it was said, lie not so much with the technical complexities, which are being increasingly well handled in Latin America, but with the politics. Developing national strategies is by definition conflictual. As one participant stated: it is a messy, but legitimately messy, process. Moreover, there are very different "political configurations" in Latin America; and this leads to distinctly different strategy outcomes. What does a partnership strategy imply about the role of donors in this highly political process of national strategy design and dialogue? And how accepting will the donor community be of "diverse paths to development?"

20. A number of participants in the meeting worried that there were "hidden conditions" in the partnership strategy (i.e., "new criteria that were not being made explicit"). Selectivity it was said should not simply be a new code word for conditionality. The "new rules" of partnership, one participant stated, must be spelled out so recipients were not left to guess what donors were prepared to accept and so that recipients' "room for maneuver" will be sufficiently broad and clear.

Assisting weak states

21. A related issue that was raised is how to advance the partnership agenda in countries with weak states or states reluctant to engage with organizations of civil society.

22. Participants recognized that there would inevitably be an element of selectivity among countries in which the partnership agenda could advance most quickly. But, it was asked, what would be done in countries where governments simply did not have the capacity or the will to carry out their side of a partnership?

23. There was recognition and concern that different countries are at different stages of preparedness to enter into a development partnerships that would be empowering. Not all governments have structures and processes in place that can cope effectively with the "responsibilities" of defining national development strategies and program, ensuring the participation of civil society, and being open and accountable.

24. One participant went further and expressed doubt that donors could "partner" with governments that are not democratic.

25. What aspects of partnership would apply in countries less prepared and how would the World Bank propose to help move countries toward a more full-scope partnership arrangement. The question, several participants said, needs to be addressed in the strategy paper.

Coordination and division of labor among donors

26. Participants generally agreed that there is need for far better coordination among donors -- to reduce the burdens on recipients that flow from having to cope with a plethora of donor programs and procedures, increase results on the ground, and achieve greater cost efficiencies in aid. They also agreed that improved coordination should be an important feature of a development partnership strategy. There was much to be gained from more intense dialogue among agencies and a sorting out of roles among them, spokespersons from the international institutions said.

27. However, a number of participants strongly emphasized the value of maintaining diversity and choice within the international development system. In this regard, several stated that development partnerships -- both those between countries and their donors and those among donor agencies -- should mainly be worked out at the country level.

28. Countries, it was said, know the comparative advantages of the different donor agencies (both bilateral and multilateral) and have revealed preferences. They should be able to choose which agency takes the lead in partnerships in specific sectors. As one donor agency participant said, recipients "should be helped to know how to make better use of us."

III. FROM VISION TO REALITY:

Who Has to Do What?

29. After the initial discussion of the concept of partnership, the meeting explored the challenges of implementing the partnership agenda from three perspectives: developing countries, bilateral donors, and international institutions.

The Developing Countries

30. Comments in this part of the discussion came largely from the several developing country participants.

31. Bolivia was discussed as a good example of a country which, in the course of undertaking major "second generation reforms," moved from little ownership and public involvement to a broad-based national dialogue.

32. Participants noted that it is difficult to discuss donor partnership in Latin America as donor presence has dwindled. To be relevant to the region, the paper should say more about the private sector.

33. Discussants welcomed the fact that partnerships could empower developing countries, but they saw major implications and challenges for the countries in three main areas:

*** Developing national strategies**

34. There was strong emphasis on the need to improve the capacity of weaker governments to do development planning. In fact, in some weaker countries, it was said, the World Bank should do more capacity-building than lending. The paper ought to say more about this.

35. There is equal need for countries to develop ways "to "institutionalize the conflict that is an inherent part of any policy-making process;" and to find ways to compensate losers.

36. The process of a national strategy design and dialogue has to happen in a timely way, it was further noted. The current CAS process takes too long.

***Engaging civil society**

37. The process of engaging civil society in a dialogue on the national development strategy, around which development partnerships would be built, was thought to be both potentially the most significant and, in many cases, the most difficult aspect of the partnership agenda.

38. There is not consensus within all recipient societies on whether (or how) this should occur.

39. Even where there is agreement in principle, many civil society organizations face the challenge of organizing themselves and building their capacity to participate and interact in national policy-making. Most are in a stage of transition throughout Latin America having only recently shifted from an opposition to an engagement mode of operation. Particular concern was expressed about how to ensure the engagement of those representing the poor.

40. It was also noted that if civil society organizations become partners with government they will have to become accountable for carrying out policies. Many groups are, therefore, unsure of what happens to their advocacy role if they engage more directly with government. As one ngo representative pondered: "is the ngo advocacy culture compatible with the partnership strategy?"

41. At the same time, some participants expressed concern that an emphasis on the participation of civil society organizations could undermine new and fragile democratic governments, and in that sense prove to be "anti-democratic."

*** Transparency and Accountability**

42. Both governments and civil society organizations, it was said, will need to strengthen structures of accountability and considerably enhance the transparency of their operations if there are to be successful partnerships between them and with donors.

The Bilateral Agencies

43. Discussion here focussed on "constraints" within which bilateral agencies operate and steps that might be taken under existing conditions to advance the partnership agenda.

*** Constraints**

44. Several participants noted that bilateral donors are aware that changes are needed in the delivery of aid and that they are looking for increased "relevance" and impact. This has made the agencies receptive to new initiatives and arrangements in recent years.

45. Nonetheless, there are constraints under which each agency operates. And there are differences in priorities among bilateral donors (some being especially interested in creating markets, some in eradicating poverty, etc.). There are limits, therefore, to "turning control over to others."

46. USAID was expressly supportive of the partnership paper. Its spokesperson explained that the agency was already engaged in many activities consistent with the partnership approach advanced in the paper. However, it was also noted that USAID faces directives from the U.S. Congress which limit its flexibility.

47. This latter point was repeated by others, who noted that bilateral agencies in general are accountable to their own parliaments. They need to demonstrate results, move money, and prove something is happening. Indeed, as one participant said a new emphasis on results management makes partnership even more of a challenge. Also, traditionally, agencies have not wanted to specialize, which will make difficult any push toward a sharper division of labor among donors (both bilateral and multilateral).

48. There is fear, one participant said, "that partnership could compromise each agency's identity and sovereignty." Therefore, there is need to "leave open space for the bilaterals," who want to see themselves as performing "bridging relations." Besides, one speaker stated, the current fragmentation among donors has a positive side to it, namely it brings a diversity of opinion.

***Steps to be taken**

49. While recognizing these constraints, participants suggested that bilateral donors take the following steps to advance the partnership agenda:

* Develop a better base to start from by supporting research on ownership, coordination, and what works in making these improvements. This should include a compendium of experiences where

ownership has been transferred and innovation taken place, and the reasons for success or failure of specific efforts.

- * Isolate portions of aid programs that would be susceptible to a partnership approach. Sector initiatives, it was said, are likely to be easier than national ones.

- * Start pilot partnership activities on a small scale and create momentum, making links with ongoing partnership efforts.

- * Commit to much greater standardization of procedures in areas of financial accounting, audits, etc.

- * Accept that technical assistance badly needs redoing; and that there is no area more annoying to recipients.

- * Recognize that development targets are only realistic at a country level.

- * Increase the credibility of monitoring and evaluation processes, including the monitoring of donors. As one participant urged: "make assessments more honest and more transparent, for instance, through greater use of third party inputs."

- * Support development research programs with an emphasis on ownership in recipient countries.

- * Build constituencies within donor countries for a partnership agenda.

- * Overall, take an incremental approach, focussing on specific portions (e.g. sectors) of aid programs, leaving sufficient room for diversity among bilateral program priorities, and looking to recipient countries to take the lead in drawing bilateral donors into partnership arrangements.

The International Institutions

50. Here, too, discussion focussed on both constraints and steps that should be taken.

51. Spokespersons for both the IADB and UNDP embraced the paper "wholeheartedly." The UNDP, it was said, would welcome greater cooperation with the World Bank, particularly now that the Bank is doing more technical assistance. It would also like the paper to discuss the UN more. The IADB sees partnership as essential ("a must") to the increased effectiveness of the international agencies.

52. Some other participants stressed the importance of involving the IMF in any partnership strategy. However, they worried that the IMF would have difficulty in buying into the strategy because "the Fund sees its mandate as one that requires it to keep countries on a short leash." In response, the representative from the IMF pointed out that the institution is not a development agency; it sees

ownership as necessary but not sufficient; and often has to act quickly without knowing how much internal consultation has taken place.

*** Constraints**

53. The international institutions, in their interactions with recipient countries, were seen to face challenges similar to those confronting bilateral donors. A key issue, participants indicated, is how much diversity in development strategies agencies could accept given the explicit mandates, goals and objectives under which each operates.

54. A second major set of challenges for the institutions, participants agreed, is to identify and better utilize their comparative advantages. This, it was said, could strengthen aid effectiveness. But as one participant stated: "it may be increasingly difficult to work out a division of labor as agencies get better at development."

55. Participants also questioned how the "strong disbursement imperative" of agencies would affect the implementation of the partnership agenda. Would agencies accept that disbursement might slow down in initial stages of building new development partnerships, one participant queried.

56. Moreover, participants worried that while international institutions work mainly with governments, the governments are less and less the key actor in all sectors.

57. As large bureaucracies, the institutions are bound to be slow to change, participants stated.

*** Steps to be taken**

58. Given both the challenges that the institutions face and the value in maintaining diversity and choice in the system, participants suggested that the following steps be taken:

* Ensure that partnerships not become "unfunded mandates."

* Make a serious assessment of the experience of Consultative Groups and Roundtables.

* Get a buy-in to the partnership agenda from the IMF and the regional development banks.

* Emphasize that the reason for partnership is to eradicate poverty and achieve greater equity; and ensure that the poor are main actors in the process.

* Formulate strategies for the resolution of conflicts between recipient countries and donors in the process of developing new partnerships to deal with disagreements that will inevitably arise during consultations; and be more willing to use third party interlocutors.

* Simplify and make more flexible cumbersome procedures.

* Development new assistance instruments and apply instruments more flexibly.

The Role of World Bank

59. Consistent with the emphasis given to diversity and incrementalism, participants suggested that the World Bank should "concentrate on what it can do itself." I.E., it should exemplify the principles of ownership and coordination in its own actions; move ahead initially with a few countries and a few donors where there was mutual interest; let other donors proceed as they choose; rather than try to codify an approach for the whole international community.

60. For this to work, participants said, the Bank "must listen to countries rather than be dogmatic about policy prescriptions."

61. It should also take care not to make the partnership strategy seem like a Bank-led initiative. It should recognize on-going activities and encourage them to develop.

Appendix II - Agenda

08:30 a.m.	<i>Breakfast</i>
09:00	Welcoming Remarks
09:10	"The World Bank's Partnership Agenda and Vision" Introduction Bank Board Member's Perspectives Discussion
11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:20	"From Vision to Reality: The Challenge for Developing Countries"
1:00 p.m.	Lunch
2:00	"From Vision to Reality: The Challenge for Bilateral Donors"
3:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
3:50	"From Vision to Reality: The Challenge for the International Development Organizations"
5:15	Summary and Conclusion
5:30 p.m.	<i>Adjourn</i>

PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

**Report of a Meeting
held at
the Overseas Development Institute, London
on
2 July 1998**

Overseas Development Institute
July 1998

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5. Conclusion

Appendix 1: List of Participants

Appendix 2: Agenda

Acronyms

CG	Consultative Group
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1. Introduction

1. A one-day meeting was held on 2 July 1998, at the Overseas Development Institute in London, to review the World Bank discussion paper '**Partnership for Development: Proposed Actions for the World Bank**'. This was a European consultation. There were some 35 participants, representing donor agencies (12), NGOs (9), and the academic community (9), as well as the World Bank. The report was introduced by Nawal Kamel, Head of the Partnerships Group at the Bank, but most of the day was given over to plenary discussion. A list of participants and an agenda for the day's proceedings are provided in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.
2. The World Bank paper consists of six chapters. The first three deal with general matters of definition and strategy. The next three deal with concrete short-term actions and steps needed to transform the Bank's partnership culture. The discussion covered both.
3. There was widespread support for the ideas underlying the discussion paper, which were welcomed as a very useful and timely contribution to policy development. The paper was commended for: showing commitment to an ambitious agenda for poverty eradication; placing the ownership of country development strategies with the country in question; emphasising the role of civil society; underlining the need for donor coordination; and suggesting the development of a partnership 'code of practice'. There was little dissent from the idea that partnership was a key idea in development cooperation, indeed an essential one if past failures were to be remedied. The process of introducing partnership ideas was likened to the process of perestroika in the former Soviet Union: difficult, time-consuming, subject to occasional reverses, but essential in the longer term.
4. At the same time, a robust and constructive discussion pointed to ten key areas requiring attention in the World Bank draft:
 - i. A more detailed and explicit discussion of the current state of the art. The document recognised the initiatives on partnership taken by other actors, but could do more. In particular, the DAC guidelines on partnership, the experience of the Lome Convention, the recent initiatives by UNDP, and new policies by bilateral donors like Sweden and the UK, could all usefully be treated to more prominent discussion. Since the document was mainly concerned with action by the World Bank, it might be appropriate to recognise that the Bank was a late arrival in the partnership debate, and could learn much from others. The current conventional wisdom could perhaps be summarised, and deviations or additional contributions resulting from World Bank analysis explicitly be noted.
 - ii. The scope of the document could usefully be reconsidered. At present, the focus is primarily on development cooperation, i.e. aid. Many participants emphasised the importance of trade and financial issues in contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction. Any general discussion of partnership should certainly refer to the role of developing countries in institutions like the WTO or the IMF. The role of the World Bank in these areas should also be considered.

- iii. The document should beware of putting too great an emphasis on national planning, or even a single, national development strategy. The document needed to recognise explicitly the current conventional wisdom about the limited role of the state, and avoid a formulation which seemed to hark back to central planning principles of the 1970s. Pluralism, diversity and choice were key themes of the 1990s. Had the World Bank document taken on board ideas about the 'fractal' or 'post-modern' state? Had it recognised sufficiently the role of the private and non-profit sectors?
- iv. By the same token, the authors of the document needed to think again about the idea of 'national consensus' underlying much of the analysis. In practice, it was extremely unlikely that an uncontested national consensus could be developed in any country on key issues of public policy; and even where it could, it was unlikely that such a consensus would favour the kind of substantial structural change that was implicit in most Bank-supported reform programmes. Indeed, radical change often required brave and unpopular decisions by the political leadership.
- v. This raised questions about the treatment of civil society in the paper. Here again, pluralism, diversity and choice were key themes. NGOs, in particular, were unlikely to be happy about the idea of being bound into a single planning framework. Disagreement or conflict could be a force for good. Were there lessons for the authors of the document in the wealth of material being accumulated - not least in the Bank itself - on pluralism and participation?
- vi. Policy was a key issue which deserved greater prominence. The paper did talk about selectivity, but perhaps did not do enough to recognise that partnership would only be considered with countries committed not just to the DAC targets (or goals), but also to the means of achieving them. The fears of developing countries that selectivity of this kind might be construed as a form of conditionality needed explicit acknowledgement and discussion. Was partnership a reward for compliance with the international development strategy? And, if so, what did this say about respect for in-country debate and ownership?
- vii. In this connection, the issue of reciprocity was raised. Other formulations of partnership, and much of the academic discussion, had been concerned with the mutuality of rights and obligations. Could the Bank document build, for example, on the DAC guidelines, to say more about what developing countries could expect in return for their commitment to a partnership bargain? Furthermore, there were interesting questions about the monitoring and evaluation of partnership agreements. Who decided whether a partnership was 'on-track'? Many participants felt that the aid relationship was inherently and inevitably one-sided. What could be done to counteract this?
- viii. The document needed to recognise that a genuine commitment to partnership would inevitably slow down disbursements, especially in the poorest countries with weak capacity. It would be good to explore this issue more, perhaps in the light of other donors' experience, and with examples. The difficulty of implementing a partnership agenda was repeatedly stressed.
- ix. More attention needed to be given to countries that would not qualify for partnership, especially because of weak planning capacity. Were the poorest countries to be penalised?

What special measures were needed to ensure that such countries could be drawn into the partnership process?

- x. Finally, it would be good to think more about the role of the World Bank itself in relation to other donors, bearing in mind the imbalance in resources, the different culture of different aid donors, and the role of donors as stake-holders in the IFIs and the UN. There were some important questions to answer about the governance structures of the Bank and the other IFIs. And more thought was needed on donor coordination, including in the process of finalising the present document.

5. These ideas, and others, are developed in more detail below. Section 2 deals with the philosophy of partnership. Section 3 deals with the role of the different actors: developing countries, aid agencies, and international organisations. Section 4 deals specifically with the role of the World Bank.

2. Ideas about Partnership

6. The Bank paper provides an operational definition of partnership, as a ‘collaborative relationship between entities to work toward shared objectives through a mutually agreed division of labour’. There was little dissent from this definition, but a number of points were made about the idea of partnership:
 - i. Build on ideas about partnership already contained in international texts, including the DAC guidelines, and the final resolutions of international conferences (e.g. Ch. 15 of the Cairo conference);
 - ii. Emphasise more "ownership" and less "donorship". Donors to be cast more in a supportive role, as catalysts to a country’s development strategy;
 - iii. See partnership as a two way street, with reciprocal rights and responsibilities;
 - iv. Recognise that many of the stakeholders in developing countries are wary of the partnership approach as a ‘wolf in sheep’s clothing’. There is a risk that for partners in developing countries the introduction of performance criteria, targets and contractualities in partnership agreements will burden them with more conditionalities, less flexibility and more centralisation in the management of aid – described as ‘donors ganging up.’ Is the ethos of partnership an ‘iron fist in a velvet glove’?
 - v. Is partnership a ‘Pandora’s Box,’ particularly with reference to civil society, where partnerships enter the political arena? What is the role of aid assistance in domestic politics? Are there unforeseen dangers here?
 - vi. The institutional capacity to be an effective partner takes a considerable time to evolve. Are we prepared to wait for these capacities and democratic institutions to be built in recipient countries? If so, are we willing to accept mixed results?
 - vii. Acknowledge that aid is still largely supply driven and that as donors and bilateral agencies nominate their preferred countries as partners there is a danger that some

countries will be 'flavour of the month' while others will never achieve this status. This also raises issues of donor competition and achieving a consensus on performance criteria to limit the demands made on all partners.

- viii. Build in reference to the DAC targets (the international development strategy) as a framework for all development relationships.

3. Who does What?

7. The meeting spent a good deal of time discussing the implications of a partnership agenda from different perspectives: those of the developing countries themselves, of bilateral aid agencies, and of international institutions.

(a) Developing Countries

8. The meeting recognised that the ideal of partnership empowered developing countries, but also placed heavy responsibilities on them - to define their own development path, to ensure the participation of civil society, and to underwrite structures of democratic accountability. There were real capacity problems in many countries, and real problems of political process in many others. The meeting did not wish to speak for developing countries, who were largely unrepresented. However, it recognised that developing countries faced many challenges in furthering the partnership agenda. They would need to:

- i. Think through their attitude to the DAC targets - either adopt them as they stood, or modify them;
- ii. Build the capacity to act as equal partners and to negotiate at a regional and sub-regional as well as national level on particular issues;
- iii. Stimulate pluralism and foster participation among all stakeholders at country level;
- iv. Set standards for international partnership in various sectors (not just aid), and devise ways to monitor these;
- v. Learn to say 'No' to certain partners or the demands expected from certain partnerships; and
- vi. Balance consensus *vs.* leadership in defining goals and when negotiating with donors.

(b) Bilateral Donors

9. Participants recognised that past failures in the aid system were the catalyst for new thinking about partnership. However, they did not underestimate the challenge of working in a new way. In particular, bilateral donors needed to move forwards in restructuring the aid relationship, whilst maintaining a reasonable distance from the process. The governments of developing countries would need time and space to outline a national development strategy in a participatory manner. If commitment and ownership were deemed crucial to the success of partnership initiatives, then donor countries would need to 'step back and go back'.
10. New thinking would also be needed on accountability at home. The national and international pressures on bilateral donors to disburse funds effectively, show results, value for money etc., are manifested in the need to provide institutional incentives to this end – a debate which has been revisited many times. However, these pressures are potentially part of a healthy approach to partnerships that promote a greater degree of complementarity, task division and more effective aid distribution among donors and their partners.
11. Participants agreed strongly with the need for increased donor co-ordination and the implementation of common procedures, for example, in monitoring and evaluation (M&E). A great deal needed to be done in terms of defining the comparative advantage of different donors. However, this did not necessarily mean that 'partnership framework agreements', as proposed in the Bank paper, were a good idea: they could be time-consuming to prepare, and unnecessarily restrictive.
12. Donor countries faced many challenges, therefore:
 - i. Construct coherent partnerships across sectors and beyond aid, to include trade and finance - deal with these issues at CG and round-table meetings;
 - ii. Recognise the demands of reciprocal accountability and transparency as fundamental to the success of any partnership;
 - iii. Establish the comparative advantage of bilateral or multilateral donors in aid delivery or the ability to enhance partnerships – the allocation of funds should reflect performance;
 - iv. Increase the involvement of developing countries in the DAC and in reviewing and evaluating donors;
 - v. Move away from projects to long term country development strategies;
 - vi. Deal with regional and sub-regional issues e.g. climate change, AIDS, desertification;
 - vii. Increase the information flow to southern partners;
 - viii. Maintain a diverse and flexible range of aid delivery institutions and structures;
 - ix. Seek partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors; and

- x. Work together to seek bilateral leverage in multilateral institutions such as the World Bank.

(c) International Organisations

13. Participants stressed that international organisations such as the UN and the World Bank were ‘our’ creations, and as such not independent or unaccountable. There was, however, a specially important role for international organisations. For example, multilateral agencies might sometimes be better placed to deal with human rights abuses than bilateral agencies. They might also have a comparative advantage in policy analysis, and in donor coordination. The need was suggested for longer term commitment from fewer, more effective organisations.
14. It was obviously important for international organisations to learn from each other. For example, the World Bank could usefully learn from the UNDP’s experience of multi-agency development assistance frameworks (UNDAF), and from the model of partnership enacted by the EU under the Lomé agreement. Beyond that, there was a clear agenda for international organisations:
 - i. Reforming governance structures (especially within the UN, the IMF and the World Bank);
 - ii. Recognising where the comparative advantage of bilateral and multilateral agencies may lie;
 - iii. Reserving the right to say ‘no’ if the preconditions of a partnership agreement are not fulfilled;
 - iv. Developing ethical ‘codes of conduct’ in corporate accountability and social responsibility;
 - v. Involving developing countries in DAC peer reviews.

4. Implications for the World Bank

15. The paper signals moves within the Bank to become more consultative and participatory in its approach to development partnerships and assistance, and this was fully supported. Among the main measures recommended by the paper are: national conferences on development strategy; in-country consultative group (CG) meetings; private sector and civil society participation in CG meetings; partnership frameworks with key partners; the development of a partnership code of practice; and reform of World Bank incentives.
16. Many of these measures were thought to be desirable. However, concern was expressed that the Bank might be too populist in its approach, especially by focusing on national consensus around a single development plan. It might be more practical to focus on less ambitious measures at a sector level. At the same time, the Bank could usefully consider going further in terms of its own actions, for example by tackling governance issues, or by further building on the process of decentralisation.
17. Participants made a number of specific suggestions for further action by the Bank, ranging from the preparation of a review paper on partnership, through changes to the agenda and modus operandi of CG meetings, to reform of Bank governance structures and institutional incentives. Some specific suggestions are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Specific suggestions for further action by the World Bank

· Civil Society not only to participate in CG meetings, but also to receive feed-back from CG meetings

· Reducing the turnover of personnel within the World Bank

· CG agendas to be modified to include discussion of international trade and finance issues

· Further decentralisation of authority to country level

· More work within the World Bank to standardise best practice in partnerships, and to learn from parallel initiatives, for example, on participation

· Work with other donors to standardise and harmonise procedures

· Allow other donors to feed into the World Bank's Country Assistance Strategy (CAS)

· Develop reciprocal performance indicators for donors

Moving away from the mission culture
of the World Bank

World Bank staff to visit activities
which embody partnership, and which are not
funded by the Bank

18. There was general support for the idea of developing the partnership idea in a number of pilot countries. However, there was a risk that only the most favourable countries would be chosen. It would be good to have a mix of 'easy' and 'less easy' cases.

5. Conclusion

19. At the end of the meeting, participants agreed that the discussion had been constructive and useful. Indeed, in convening the meeting, the Bank had already demonstrated its own commitment to partnership. The fact that many comments had been made on the draft paper should not obscure the fact that participants very much welcomed its basic intent and thrust.
20. One or two participants hoped that the Bank would continue to follow partnership principles in finalising the paper. Given the importance of the paper, and the likely magnitude of changes that would follow the consultation process, it would be highly desirable to find further ways of involving potential partners before a final draft was produced.
21. The Bank staff present concluded by thanking participants for their contributions. Their comments would be taken into account in the next stage of the work.
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Appendix 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Svein Åge Dale	Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway
Mark Baird	World Bank
Jutta Blauert	Institute of Development Studies (IDS)
Marie-Gabrielle Bosshard	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
Richard Carey	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Robert Cassen	London School of Economics (LSE)
Jean le Dem	International Monetary Fund (IMF)
Elizabeth Drake	Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
Dag Ehrenpreis	Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA)
Hans Elshorst	Transparency International
Tony Faint	Department for International Development (DFID)
Rumman Faruqi	Commonwealth Secretariat
Christian Freres	Asociacion de Investigacion y Especializacion sobre Temas Iberoamericanos (AIETI)
Simon Hebditch	Charities Aid Foundation
Monica Huber	Protestant Association for Cooperation and Development (EZE) /Association of World Council of Churches Related Development Organisations in Europe (APRODEV)
Sarah Hughes	Christian Aid / APRODEV
Ruth Jacoby	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden

Nawal Kamel	World Bank
Rachel Kyte	International Union for the Protection of Nature - The World Conservation Union (IUCN)
Geert Laporte	European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)
Greetje Lubbi	Netherlands Organisation for International Development Cooperation (NOVIB) / European Solidarity Towards Equal Participation of People (EUROSTEP)
Simon Maxwell	Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
Nicholas McKinlay	Aga Khan Foundation
Fritz Meijndert	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Alain le Moal	Comite Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Developpment (CCFD)/International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE)
Peter Mountfield	
Erik de Mul	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Andrew Rogerson	World Bank
Marie Smith	Trocaire / CIDSE
Herman Spirik	Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Austria
Michaela Zintl	Bundesministerium fur Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)

Observers

Engilbert Gudmundsson	World Bank
Adrian Hewitt	ODI
Caz Marshall	ODI

John Mitchell

World Bank

Appendix 2

AGENDA

Thursday, 2nd July

- 8.30am **Breakfast and registration**
- 9.00am Welcome and Introduction
- 9.15am “The World Bank’s Proposed Partnership Agenda and Vision” *
- 10.45am **Coffee Break**
- 11.00am “From Vision to Reality: The Challenge for Developing Countries”
- 12.30pm **Lunch - Rubens Hotel**
- 2.00pm “From Vision to Reality: The Challenge for Bilateral Donors”
- 3.30pm **Coffee break**
- 3.45pm “From Vision to Reality: The Challenge for International Development Organisations”
- 5.15pm Summary and conclusions
- 5.30pm **Adjourn**
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REPORT OF THE ASIA PARTNERSHIPS ROUNDTABLE

Hanoi, 2-3 September 1998

Prepared by:

Azizul Islam, ESCAP
and
Marasri Prasitchaivanit, ESCAP

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

A. Objective

1. A one-day meeting was convened at the International Conference Center in Hanoi on 3 September 1998. The primary objective of the meeting was to review the World Bank discussion paper on "Partnership for Development: Proposed Actions for the World Bank" and to obtain an Asian perspective on how to strengthen interaction among many relevant actors, with a view to fostering a process of development that is equitable and sustainable.

B. Participation

2. Thirty eight participants attended the meeting, of whom 12 were government officials. The others comprised 7 representatives from the international organizations, 5 from the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 4 from the academic community, 3 from the private sector, 3 from the foundations, and 4 from the World Bank. Nine observers also attended. Mr Azizul Islam, Director, Development Research and Policy Analysis Division, ESCAP, chaired the meeting. The list of participants and the agenda are provided in annexes 1 and 2.

C. Opening statement

3. The opening statement was delivered by H.E. Mr Nguyen Manh Cam, Deputy Prime Minister of Viet Nam. He observed that the Roundtable reflected the keen interest and strong commitment on the part of the donor community to build an effective and sustainable development process for developing countries in Asia. He emphasized the need for a strategic re-orientation of the relationship among development partners in which governments and peoples of developing countries must be the masters of their own development process.

II. SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS

A. The World Bank's proposed partnership agenda and vision

4. The World Bank report entitled "Partnership for Development: Proposed Actions for the World Bank" was introduced by Ms Nawal Kamel, Director of the Partnerships Group, the World Bank.
5. The report was viewed as an interesting document, particularly because it reflected a fundamental reassessment of the past role of the Bank in development process. There was a wide measure of support for many of the ideas contained in the report. The need for country ownership of development agenda was seen as a crucial pre-condition for effective development cooperation. It was emphasized that all stakeholders such as governmental agencies, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the beneficiaries should be involved in the design, implementation as well as monitoring of the development agenda. The importance of coordination and coherence in policy approaches among the donor community was noted.
6. However, attention was drawn to a number of important issues. Those included the following:
 - (i) There should be an explicit recognition of the fact that the design of policy strategy cannot be uniform. The need for country-specific policy design is a pre-requisite for effective partnership.
 - (ii) The country should not be considered as synonymous with the government. There should be a clearer articulation of who the stakeholders are. Those include the donors, the governments of developing countries and their peoples. All of them need to be given the scope to participate in the formulation of national development strategies.
 - (iii) Many developing countries are not in a position to formulate a coherent national development strategy which can form the basis of partnership with the donor community. In many cases the research and analytical capacity of developing countries has been eroded by brain drain or alternatively the trained manpower has been coopted by some donor agencies to further their own agenda with the result that the indigenous capacity to formulate a development strategy that truly reflects national aspirations has become severely strained. Attention, therefore, needs to be paid to the urgency of creating national capacity for gathering data and undertaking research and analysis to facilitate the formulation of development strategies, taking into account the particular

circumstances in each country. The World Bank needs to develop its own capability to assist member countries in capacity building.

- (iv) In many instances, it may not be feasible to develop a national strategy which enjoys wide consensus among all groups of society. In such cases, it is worthwhile pursuing a sectoral approach. In formulating sectoral strategies, it would be easier to clearly identify the stakeholders and secure their participation. Also, it would be useful to concentrate on core issues that affect the lives of the majority in developing partnership.
- (v) Developing partnership with many different stakeholders is a painful and time consuming process. While efforts should be made to engage in this process as soon as possible, it should be recognized that these efforts may not yield immediate results in terms of enhanced effectiveness of development cooperation.
- (vi) While engaging in partnership with as many stakeholders as possible including the private sector and the NGOs, it should be ensured that the development agenda are not captured by large business houses or externally funded NGOs with a view to furthering their own vested interest. This was considered particularly likely in societies with undemocratic political structures.
- (vii) Some participants expressed doubt about the feasibility of establishing extensive direct contact between donor agencies and grassroots entities within countries. This may be a complex undertaking for the donor agencies and a cause of concern as well as embarrassment for the governments.

7. A number of speakers stated that they were not sure as to the degree of seriousness with which the World Bank intended to pursue the partnership initiative. In particular, there were concerns regarding the assimilation and acceptance of the ideas and principles underlying the initiative by the staff at different levels in the Bank. Mr Mark Baird, Vice President, Strategy and Resource Management, The World Bank, sought to allay these concerns by stating that the Bank was firmly committed as an institution to the concept of partnership for development. He also explained several initiatives the Bank had already implemented in pursuit of this concept.

B. The challenge of country ownership

8. The participants were of the view that the World Bank paper represented an important breakthrough in its frank appreciation that externally determined development agenda were inevitably prone to unsatisfactory implementation. It was therefore crucially important that developing countries themselves assume full responsibility for the formulation of their development strategies, programmes and projects. However, a number of challenges have to be met in developing genuine country ownership. These are highlighted below:

- (i) The country itself must develop a vision for the future which should provide the framework for supportive development strategies, programmes and projects. The vision must be backed up by a genuine commitment to implementation. Governments have to develop the political capacity to mobilize support for the vision from the various social segments. This may not be easy to achieve in countries with weak political institutions.
- (ii) The country ownership requires that governmental programmes reflect the priorities of the people. Where the objectives set to be achieved are not congruous with the needs of the majority, there will arise skepticism. The promotion of country ownership also demands that the management of programmes and projects be delegated as far as possible to the local levels of administration and that the process of implementation be transparent.
- (iii) The concept of country ownership needs to be extended beyond the macro level to encompass both sectoral programmes and specific projects. Similarly, it should include ownership not only by governments but also by the civil societies, NGOs and the beneficiaries.
- (iv) The means to promote such broad-based ownership is dialogues and consultations. The World Bank paper needs to specify clearly how such dialogues and consultations can be conducted at different levels. In this context, a particular mention was made of the fact that the World Bank does not typically engage in consultations for sectoral level programming.
- (v) A major constraint in initiating meaningful consultations is the inadequacy of relevant information or lack of availability of information in a user-friendly form. In particular, the civil society organizations, the business representatives and the NGOs usually have very little access to information. It was also important that all partners in the consultation processes be given adequate time to prepare themselves for meaningful participation.
- (vi) A number of other suggestions were offered to enhance national ownership. Among these were inclusion of host country representatives in all stages of a project including feasibility studies, the establishment of joint committees for monitoring the implementation of projects as well as their outcomes, and the stipulation that the recipient countries contribute resources of their own towards the implementation of projects.

C. The challenge of coordinated development assistance

9. The participants welcomed the emphasis on coordinated development assistance. This was seen to yield several benefits. In a world of shrinking aid resources and widening development agenda, coordinated assistance would help address the priority issues of the recipient countries. It would avoid duplication and ensure that the priority sectors or geographical areas within countries are not deprived.
10. Effective aid coordination required partnership among donor agencies including the bilateral donors and also within governments. Different ministries and agencies of governments do not necessarily have identical interests. The prior reconciliation of these interests is crucial to enable the governments to speak to the donors in one voice.
11. There are different levels of coordination - economy-wide, sectoral and project level. Coordination is needed at all these levels. However, the framework for coordination may have to be different at different levels. For example, the combination of international agencies and domestic actors who could perform economy-wide coordination would not be suitable to accomplish this task at the sectoral or project level. Typically, bilateral donors seem to demonstrate greater interest in coordination at the project level partly because they are directly accountable to their tax payers for successful outcome of projects funded by them. In contrast, the multi-lateral donors do not demonstrate a strong interest in project level coordination because their accountability is somewhat remote. In addition, coordination should not necessarily depend on formal structures. There can be informal modes of coordination in which the NGOs and the private sector can be actively involved. These considerations demand that the framework for coordination should be flexible.
12. Effective coordination required knowledge management. It was suggested that a data base be set up at national level. The data base should contain information as to what activities are being implemented by different parties (all donors, different government ministries/agencies, NGOs, private sector etc.). This would assist in identifying gaps and coordinated approach to donors to meet the gaps. The data base could also contain information on "best practices" known to exist within or outside the country and should be accessible to all. Such data bases should be iterative to permit addition of new information and deletion of obsolete ones. This would require establishment of requisite infrastructure such as internet facilities.
13. A view was expressed that coordination should be the primary responsibility of national governments in order to avoid the perception that aid donors were entering into a coalition to pressurize recipient governments.
14. Coordination is needed in all cycles of project implementation and should involve the members of the public as partners in the process. Quite frequently monitoring is done separately by donor agencies even in cases of jointly funded projects and there is a reluctance on the part of both governments and donor agencies to include beneficiary representatives in monitoring exercises. The World Bank together with all other donor agencies should take stock of the

effectiveness of aid-financed projects in meeting people's needs in close association with the stakeholders and ensure that coordination does not take place simply between governments and donor agencies.

15. As in the case of national ownership, coordination also requires domestic capacity building.
16. The participants identified a number of constraints and concerns relating to effective coordination:
 - (i) There are differences among donor agencies in institutional structure, project cycles, procedural requirements etc. In some cases the procedures of the donor agencies came in conflict with recipient countries' laws and regulations.
 - (ii) To an extent, there existed competitive relationship among donor agencies - both multilateral and bilateral. That complicates the task of coordination by national governments.
 - (iii) Coordination among aid donors should not lead to cross-conditionality.
 - (iv) Coordination should not bring about greater rigidity in aid approvals and disbursements.
 - (v) There was a concern that coordination among donors might lead to a reduction in the overall volume of development assistance.
 - (vi) Effective coordination required fundamental changes in the mind-sets of governments as well as donor agencies and it was not clear as to how soon such changes could come about.
 - (vii) Coordination must be flexible enough to accommodate multiplicity of views and approaches in order to avoid the possibility that developing country governments would be given uniformly wrong advice.
17. It was not easy to devise any perfect system of coordination. The beginnings that have already been made in a number of countries in the region should be built upon. What is important is to build an atmosphere of trust between donors and recipients as well as a willingness on both sides to appreciate the point of view of the other side.

D. The critical next steps

18. This session was devoted to identification of concrete actions that should be taken in the near future with a view to promoting partnership for development and meeting the challenges

associated with country ownership and coordinated development assistance. The various suggestions offered by the participants included the following:

- (i) Early steps should be taken to establish information infrastructure required for knowledge management, as indicated in paragraph 12. Many developing countries would require technical assistance to put in place such infrastructure.
- (ii) Recipient country governments should be asked to prepare both aggregate and sectoral strategies which should form the basis of negotiations between the recipient countries and the donor community. This should mark a major departure from the present practice of donors formulating policy actions and asking the governments to comply. Compromises will have to be made by both sides in the course of negotiations. In some instances, governments and donors may have to agree to disagree with the clear understanding that partnership does not entail unscrutinizing acceptance by the donors of every position taken by governments or *vice-versa*.
- (iii) A mapping exercise should be initiated as early as possible. This exercise would involve identification of the stakeholders at all levels, ascertaining what they can deliver in the light of their comparative advantage, determination of gaps in development assistance and the scope for new activities that can add value to be implemented by various stakeholders.
- (iv) The donor community should consciously promote partnership for development and reinforce whatever practices that are being currently implemented either around themes (such as rural development) or space (such as national or provincial level).
- (v) The urgency of the donor community working together was highlighted. The various donors could put up unified proposals to recipient countries on partnership for development. They could also work together to harmonize and simplify their own internal procedures and formalities. Building on existing processes, the World Bank could bring together all donor agencies.
- (vi) The donor community usually provides some feedback to national governments regarding the implementation of projects financed by them. However, there is no organized system of reverse feedback from the recipient countries, including from civil society organizations and other stakeholders, regarding the impact of activities funded by the donors. It is necessary to establish systems of reverse feedback, including through assessment of impact by independent observers, in order to promote partnership on an equal footing.
- (vii) It is not infrequent that experts and consultants fielded by the donors do not possess adequate knowledge of country situations. Governments often find it difficult to accept their policy recommendations and this, in turn, creates tensions in relationship with the

donors. The donors should pay particular attention to the expertise and the experience of their advisers/consultants and draw, to the extent possible, on locally available experts or nationals working abroad, or experts from within the region.

- 19.** The division of responsibilities among donor agencies appears to be getting blurred. For example, macroeconomic management which has been traditionally the preserve of the International Monetary Fund is being increasingly dealt with by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and sometimes even bilateral donors. The ostensible justification is that enabling macroeconomic environment is a pre-condition for successful implementation of all projects. However, such confusion increases conditionalities, adds to the negotiating burden for developing countries and thereby complicates partnership. In this context, some participants suggested that the earlier division of labour between the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund should be restored. The Bank should focus on long-term development policies and the Fund should deal with short-term macroeconomic management issues.

III. CONCLUSION

- 20.** At the end of the day's proceedings, there was a consensus that the discussions were highly productive. The active participation and constructive comments offered by the participants demonstrated that they considered partnership as a crucial requirement for accelerating the process of sustainable and equitable development. The comments were intended primarily to give a sharper focus to the concept and indicate ways to operationalize it.
- 21.** The Bank staff who attended the meeting reaffirmed that the World Bank was genuinely committed to the concept of partnership. They thanked the participants for their valuable contribution to the discussions and assured that their comments would be duly taken into account in further work by the Bank.

ESCAP-WORLD BANK

ASIA PARTNERSHIPS ROUNDTABLE

Thursday, September 3, 1998

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER, HANOI, VIETNAM

AGENDA

- 8.30am Registration and refreshments
- 9.00am Opening remarks by Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam
- 9.15 am Departure of Deputy Prime Minister
- 9.20am “The World Bank’s Proposed Partnership Agenda and Vision”*
- 10.45am Coffee Break
- 11.00am “From Vision to Reality: The Challenge of Country Ownership”
- 12.30pm Lunch
- 1.30pm “From Vision to Reality: The Challenge of Coordinated Development Assistance”
- 3.15pm Coffee break
- 3.30pm “From Vision to Reality: The Critical Next Steps”
- 5.15pm Summary and conclusions
- 5.30pm Adjourn

* Background discussion paper: “*Partnership for Development: Proposed Actions for the World Bank.*”

REPORT OF THE AFRICA PARTNERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

Abidjan, 8 September 1998

**Chairman: Delphin G. Rwegasira
Executive Director
African Economic Research Consortium**

Rapporteurs:

Jeannine B. Scott, African Development Bank
Josue Dione, African Development Bank



REPORT OF THE AFRICA PARTNERSHIP ROUNDTABLE
Abidjan, 8 September 1998

1. INTRODUCTION

- I.1 The Africa Partnership Roundtable Meeting was held at the Golf Intercontinental Hotel in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, on 8 September 1998, to reflect on the ideas contained in the World Bank's discussion paper on "Partnership for Development: Proposed Actions for the World Bank". The meeting, was attended by approximately 35 participants, representing a cross section of government officials, international organizations, academia, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), foundations, the private sector and the World Bank. The primary objective of the Roundtable was to secure the views of African experts and policy makers on the Bank's proposed strategy for strengthening partnerships, as it pertains to the Africa Region.
- I.2 The meeting was opened by the Honourable Theophile N'Doli Ahoua, Minister of Industrial Development and Small & Medium-scale Enterprises. In his opening remarks, the Minister drew the participants' attention to the importance of the Roundtable, welcoming the shift of the Bank to take greater account of its clients, as well as to make increased efforts to associate them with the processes of defining assistance strategies in their respective countries. The Minister also noted with satisfaction that the approach being proposed by the Bank was based on the important elements of:
- finding improved ways for associating all of its partners (governments, donors, civil society and private sector) in defining development strategies, which they would then be responsible for implementing;
 - reorganizing its internal services with a view to increasing its operational efficiency; and
 - structuring improved partnerships with the donor community at-large, towards promoting more complementarity and efficiency in development efforts.
- I.3 He indicated that the partnership agenda is an important complement to on-going reform programmes in Africa, which are showing encouraging results, although the latter remain fragile. Partnership calls for good governance, democracy, participation of the civil society and improvements in public administration, factors which are also important to accelerating on-going reforms, rendering them sustainable over time. In addition, the Honourable Minister stressed, inter alia, that regional integration should be strengthened with a view to encouraging both economic growth and access to increased benefits stemming from the opening of African markets internationally.

- I.4 The meeting was structured around the following four topics: (i) the Partnership Agenda and Vision; (ii) the Challenge of Country Ownership; (iii) the Challenge of Coordinated Development Assistance; and (iv) Critical Next Steps. Each topic was introduced by two lead discussants. The remainder of this report is structured around the findings and recommendations under each of these topics.

2. OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSIONS

2.1 Partnership Agenda and Vision

- 2.1.1 As background to the discussions, Ms. Nawal Kamel, Director of the World Bank's Partnerships Group, presented the report on the "Partnership for Development...". In addition, Mr. A. Bourhane, Executive Director in the World Bank, briefed the Roundtable participants about the discussions held by the Bank's Board in June 1998, on this initiative. In her introductory remarks, Ms. Kamel stressed that the World Bank's primary objective is to strengthen its delivery of development assistance, with emphasis on poverty reduction. Furthermore, she highlighted the need to ensure that these efforts should entail coherence and consensus brought about by partnerships with all actors, including government, the donor community, the private sector and civil society at-large. Such efforts would enhance prospects for country ownership of development strategies, and would contribute to their sustainability.
- 2.1.2 Mr. Bourhane indicated that the Board welcomed the ideas contained in the paper, but stressed the need to examine these ideas from the vantage point of country-specificity. He felt there were problems of confidence and capacity, both within the countries and the World Bank. Accordingly, true partnership would be difficult to achieve where capacities between the recipients and donors are significantly different.
- 2.1.3 Following these brief presentations, general comments were solicited on the report and its recommendations. While the Bank was commended for its initiative, it was noted that the concept of "partnership" is not new. Furthermore, participants indicated that this initiative seems to be a long overdue response to shortcomings in existing aid delivery systems. Participants felt that this partnership strategy represents a major departure from the Bank's often "solo" approach and its "over confidence" in its relations with African countries. They were thus encouraged to see the Bank's move to become a more equal partner. A number of issues were raised, however, around defining the concept of partnership, its basic tenets and the primary actors. The meeting stressed that:

- partnership must be between equals, requiring mutual respect, and all actors should shoulder their responsibilities accordingly. This implies the need to ensure that aid recipient countries develop and utilize sufficient capacity in relevant areas, to work with the World Bank and other donors. The meeting noted that the issue of capacity building, including several related specific initiatives within the World Bank, were insufficiently addressed in the document; and
- partnership should entail having a shared consensus on objectives – which emanate from within a given country - and the strategy to achieve these objectives.

2.1.4 The meeting also indicated that because the concept of partnership is not new, there is need to review historically the problems which have impeded more equal partnerships from developing, with a view to developing rational responses to addressing these problems. Some of the issues identified included:

- aid dependency and political asymmetry [imbalances], which have impinged on countries' abilities to maintain commitment to their own development strategies, (i.e., governments have been powerless in the face of development aid providers and do not sit in the “driver’s seat”);
- institutional problems for aid coordination, whereby donors are better able to coordinate among themselves than with recipient countries, and they often have better outreach to civil society than do governments;
- a lack of required capacity – on both sides – particularly on the side of developing countries whose skilled human resources are often outside of the Continent, creating lacunae for strategic planning and implementation in aid recipient countries;
- cultural and attitudinal attributes which shape or impact negatively on promoting more equal approaches to building partnerships – also on both sides. As well, there were inadequacies in the “culture of listening”.

2.1.5 The challenges for moving the partnership agenda forward lie in tackling the above and enabling countries to take over the driver’s seat. Moreover, effective partnership and coordination would need to go beyond World Bank programmes to embrace those of other multilateral institutions. Complementary, long-term strategic planning could also be realized through the use of tools such as the National Long Term Perspective Studies (NLTPS). There is also the need to ensure that the transaction costs of partnership are taken into account, as partnership is not free. These issues should be addressed urgently and with rigour.

2.2 **The Challenge of Country Ownership**

- 2.2.1 Participants welcomed the concept of Country Ownership, but questioned why this ownership was not needed before. This shift of emphasis signals an attempt to redefine the development aid paradigm. Several important issues were raised with regard to increasing country ownership, including governance and capacity (the empowerment and ability of countries to define and implement their development strategies).
- 2.2.2 With regard to governance, it was agreed that governments have a central and defining role to play in elaborating development strategies and frameworks. Above all, political commitment is vital for promoting ownership. Civil society should have an active role in influencing the development agenda, as well as in implementing certain parts of that agenda. However, civil society cannot replace the state. The role of the state, therefore, is primordial. The state should be legitimate, accountable and transparent in its policies and practices.
- 2.2.3 In order for civil society to exercise its role effectively, and in order to engender consensus building within a country, there is need to promote a culture of dialogue. Consultation and participation are essential to ownership at all levels. Admittedly, these practices are time and resource consuming but the derived benefits make the investments worthwhile, as ownership also has a price.
- 2.2.4 It was recognized by the meeting that obtaining full consensus on development planning issues may be difficult in practice, in spite of carrying out processes of consultation or participation. In many instances, it should be accepted that societies are pluralistic, as are the views held within. Lack of full consensus should not, therefore, be a deterrent to moving forward. It is important first to try to build consensus within government itself, inclusive of executive and legislative bodies in the country. This is essential to bringing about consensus at other levels in the society. Furthermore, the practicality and feasibility of reaching down was raised, e.g., the level of decentralization that should be attempted in order to reach consensus.
- 2.2.5 The regional dimension of consensus was also raised in light of the realities of some countries (e.g. landlocked, small market bases, small populations, etc.). It was stated that for certain issues, regional consensus - which could be formed through regional and sub-regional bodies – may be more advantageous for many countries.
- 2.2.6 For ownership to be real and effective, participants indicated that governments must be in the driver's seat. There may be relative consensus in a country on the strategies to be undertaken; but these strategic objectives may not be fully shared by the financing and donor communities. In such cases, participants indicated that the country's priorities should prevail – even if eventual mistakes may be involved. Such experiences - referred to as an “acid test” for the World Bank and donor community - would help to legitimize the process of ownership. Moreover, in order to assist in sustaining ownership, donor initiatives and programmes should have staying power and avoid uncoordinated and frequent changes.

- 2.2.7 In addition, there is a need to shift from aid dependency and donor driven approaches, as well as to address the dearth of information sharing on aid coordination experiences in Africa, both which impede country ownership of development strategies. This shift requires the establishment of more knowledge-based development planning. The shift would entail the creation of mechanisms through which information on coordination as well as best practices could be disseminated.
- 2.2.8 On the issue of capacity, the meeting agreed that a country needs empowerment and possession of the necessary skills to define and implement its development strategies and programmes. Many participants saw an integral link between the issue of capacity building and the advancement of ownership under the partnership strategy. Reference was made to both the African Governors Partnership for Capacity Building Proposal and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). It was considered, however, that the problem of capacity can be exaggerated as there is a significant number of trained Africans, in all disciplines, who are currently not available for public service, due to a number of problems, including the terms and conditions of employment in their respective countries. There is therefore a need to find ways to attract and utilize this skilled labor force.
- 2.2.9 Distinctions should be made with regard to differences in country situations in Africa, and corresponding capacity needs. On the one hand some countries may need to mobilize and utilize existing resources by creating more enabling environments. By extension this means that the civil society should be integrated to provide inputs to and benefit from the development programming process. Others, however, may have to pour significant resources into building effective human and institutional resource bases. It was agreed that though lack of capacity, is a pressing problem in the Region in general, this should not be used as an excuse for countries to be less pro-active with regard to taking greater control of their development planning and coordination.

2.3 The Challenge of Coordinated Development Assistance

- 2.3.1 With regard to Coordination of Donor Assistance, the meeting agreed that government should take the lead role. This necessitates appropriate institutional arrangements, including clear focal points, and apparent government priorities, projects and programmes for donors to support. This also implies that a time-bound expenditure programme would be agreed upon between government and the donor community at-large, and that other “donor supported” projects and programmes would not be agreed to outside of this framework. Government priorities should be respected. Essentially it calls for a code of conduct to ensure mutual respect by all national development actors.
- 2.3.2 Participants wondered whether or not improved donor coordination would lead to increased aid flows, in addition to increased efficiency in the use of existing levels of resources. This was viewed as important in terms of the need for more resources to implement development programmes in the Region. It was also suggested that stronger partnerships and enhanced donor coordination should contribute to creating the necessary enabling

environment for increasing levels of foreign direct investment flows and mobilization of domestic resources in the countries.

2.3.3 Existing coordinating mechanisms should be evaluated to determine what could be improved or built upon. There is also a need to increase African participation or to include the African voice in fora such as the Consultative Groups (CGs), Round Tables (RTs), the Special Program of Assistance for Africa (SPA), etc. It was also suggested that perhaps full coordination may not be immediately possible, therefore, a phased approach should be tried, starting at the sectoral level and moving to the more macro level over time.

2.3.4 In light of the multiplicity of donor requirements, attention should be paid to reducing transaction costs, as well as the time and other resources required to manage aid programmes. It was noted that these requirements have a negative impact on the time that senior planners should utilize for more strategic thinking.

2.4 **From Vision to Reality: Critical Next Steps**

2.4.1 The discussion on next steps re-evoked many issues which had been covered in the earlier discussions of the day, as reflected above. Several potential next steps were identified with a view to advancing the partnership agenda. However, it was also recognized that time would be required to operationalize these steps; transitional mechanisms would, therefore, be helpful. The next steps include:

- making efforts to advance partnership and ownership initiatives with the World Bank, by including bilateral and other multilateral agencies, as well as governments and civil society at-large, in a spirit of multilateralism;
- engaging the IMF as an integral part of the partnership since its assessment will be essential for the credibility and acceptability of the partnership process;
- reviewing existing partnership practices at the national, regional and global levels, in order to draw lessons and best practices for fostering partnership;
- enhancing commitment to building greater human and institutional capacities, as well as mechanisms for promoting good governance, partly through constructive national dialogue;
- harmonizing aid coordination mechanisms - such as the CGs and RTs - to make them more effective, and broadening them to reflect the needs and concerns of the private sector and civil society;
- harmonizing existing aid programming and management procedures, and untying development aid so as to enhance its development effectiveness.

- finding ways for individual donors to avoid duplication in the development of country assistance strategies, and ensuring that the formulation of national development strategies is done by the countries themselves, and that the strategies provide a basis for individual donor assistance strategies;
- re-examining existing partnerships in a more concrete manner, so as to forge more strategic partnerships, building on comparative advantage; the World Bank/ADB Enhanced Collaboration Study, now in progress, is a good example of this; and
- recognizing the lead role of the state in promoting dialogue amongst the partners.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 It was recommended that the discussions ensuing from the Roundtable consultations should reflect as large a consensus as possible, comprising the views expressed in the other 3 Roundtable discussions. It was suggested that this approach would better enable the World Bank to form a coherent position on the policy objectives.
- 3.2 In concluding the meeting it was stated that this is a timely initiative, given that the issue of partnership is at the forefront of the agendas of many African leaders. Participants appreciated the fresh commitment of the World Bank to the much needed partnership in development cooperation, as well as the opportunity to work together with the institution in furthering this initiative. Participants did however emphasize the need for the World Bank' to demonstrate adequate commitment and seriousness to promoting this initiative.

Appendix 1

AFRICA PARTNERSHIPS ROUNDTABLE

Tuesday, September 8, 1998

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

NAME	ORGANIZATION
James Adams	World Bank
Ayodele Aderinwale	Africa Leadership Forum
Mereso E. Agina	FEMNET
Mark Baird	World Bank
Lalla Ben Barka	Economic Commission for Africa

Kwesi Botchwey	Harvard Institute for International Development
Ali Bourhane	World Bank Executive Director
Pierre Chekem	Partnership Management and Support Programme - Cameroun
Fadel Diame	West African Rural Foundation
Tesfaye Dinka	Global Coalition for Africa
Cyril Enweze	African Development Bank
Pierre Ewencyk	IMF
Mohamed Fofana	World Bank – Executive Director’s Office
Fatma Hassan	NGO Resource Center – Tanzania
Abdoulai Janneh	UN Resident Coordinator in Ghana
Nawal Kamel	World Bank
Shigeo Katsu	World Bank
Elene Makonnen	Economic Commission for Africa
Mekonnen Manyazewal	Government of Ethiopia
Dominic C. Mulaisho	Shanga Steel Ltd. – Zambia
Harris Mule	TIMS Ltd. - Kenya
Kouassi N’Guettia-René	Organization of African Unity

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Ted Nkodo	African Development Bank
Ken Ofori-Atta	The West African Enterprise Network
Delphin G. Rwegasira (CHAIRPERSON)	Africa Economic Research Consortium
Allioune Sall	UNDP
Nouhoum Sankare	Government of Mali
Bassiri Joseph Sirima	Government of Burkina Faso
N'Guessan Tchétché	CIRES
E. Tumusiime-Mutebile	Government of Uganda
Kerfalla Yansane	AERE Advisory Committee
Ginette Ursule Yoman	Government of Côte d'Ivoire

AFRICA PARTNERSHIPS ROUNDTABLE

Tuesday September 8, 1998

Salle Ebrié, Hôtel du Golf, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

AGENDA

- 08:30 a.m. **Registration**
- 08:50 a.m. **Opening remarks by H.E. Théophile N'Doli Ahoua
Minister of Industrial Development and
Small & Medium-Scale Enterprises**
- 09:15 a.m. **“Partnership Agenda and Vision”***
- 11:00 a.m. *Coffee Break*
- 11:20 a.m. **“From Vision to Reality: Challenge of Country
Ownership”**
- 1:00 p.m. **Lunch**
Venue: La Colline – Hôtel du Golf
- 2:00 p.m. **“From Vision to Reality: Challenge of
Coordinated Development Assistance”**
- 3:30 p.m. *Coffee Break*
- 3:50 p.m. **“From Vision to Reality: Critical Next Steps”**
- 5:30 p.m. **Summary and Conclusions**
- 6:00 p.m. **Adjourn/Cocktail**

*Background Discussion Paper: *“Partnership for Development: Proposed Actions for the World Bank.”*

