

Executive Director Advocacy Toolkit

*A guide to influencing the
World Bank Board of Directors*

The Bank Information Center partners with civil society in developing and transition countries to influence the World Bank and other international financial institutions to promote social and economic justice and ecological sustainability.



**Sarah Bedy
Bank Information Center
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With gratitude to all of the civil society champions inside and outside the World Bank who contributed their experiences to this guide.

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I. Introduction

The Role of the World Bank Executive Directors

The twenty-five Executive Directors (EDs) of the World Bank Group make policy decisions and are supposed to represent the interests of regions of the world. They are selected by the governments of the constituencies they represent, and tend to be people from finance ministries or central banks. Each country has a voting share on the Board based on the size of its economy, but decisions are made by consensus. **This means that any ED or country that takes a minority stance on an issue can have powerful leverage if willing to speak up.**

The Board approves loans, investments and guarantees. The United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, China, Saudi Arabia, Russia and China all have their own EDs, whereas other countries elect representatives every two years by region. Below you can see which ED represents your country.

Why should you develop a relationship with your World Bank Executive Director?

The World Bank spends billions of dollars in your region on development to reduce poverty. If you would like to have a voice in how this money is directed, you must develop a strong relationship with your ED. The Board of Directors meets twice a week to approve or reject potential projects. Their calendar is available here: <http://bit.ly/bivbKC>

By explaining the concerns and development needs of your country, you can influence the types of projects that are approved. This allows you as a CSO to ask for the appropriate safeguards and terms for these projects so that the positive impact of World Bank loans are amplified through your valuable input.

Executive Directors also vote on the policies of the World Bank. These policies guide both what projects are developed for which countries, and how projects are executed, including whether environmental and social safeguards are applied. So, if you wish to influence whether the World Bank funds renewable energies as opposed to fossil fuel projects, makes information about mining contracts available to the public, or translates critical information into your country's local language, building a working relationship and lobbying your ED is critical.

What valuable information do Executive Directors want from you?

Many EDs have little or no contact with representatives of civil society organizations, and get almost all of their information from World Bank (WB), government sources or the press. Civil society organizations can offer an ED a different viewpoint from World Bank staff:

- How affected communities feel about projects
- What type of interaction they are having with project contractors, WB staff members, and with the local government
- The anticipated needs of the country's poor
- What types of projects are likely to be successful, which others less so, and which methodologies can increase the chances of project success
- What national reform processes are really moving forward, which are not, and the priorities of civil society

This information is critical to ensuring that the World Bank is fulfilling its mandate and complying with social and environmental safeguards. As the people who are closest to targeted communities, CSOs can usually gather first-hand data on where WB investments can have an impact.

Committee on Development Effectiveness (CODE)

This subcommittee of the Board may be of special interest to you because it “monitors and assesses the Bank Group's effectiveness in fulfilling its development mandate.” The Bank Information Center website includes a list of current CODE members: <http://www.bicusa.org/WBEDs>



II. Building Bridges

Best Opportunities for Contact with Your ED

Many CSOs contact their EDs only during times of crisis; particularly when a project is about to be voted on or is negatively impacting a community. Your ED has a responsibility to represent you, but for the best results you must build and nurture this relationship when there is not a crisis. **You will be more successful if your ED looks to you as a regular source of useful information and as a representative of people and causes they care about.**

CSOs engage in building the relationship with their ED in many different ways. In addition to formal meetings in Washington, D.C., you can also meet with your ED in Washington or your home country over coffee, lunch, or at cocktail parties. Some CSOs report that these more casual meetings help build the relationship because the ED is able to relax and get to know you. However, they are contingent on requesting that your EDs office keep you updated about when he or she is traveling to your region, and also on being creative in your engagement of your ED.

Once the relationship has been established, some organizations work with friendly EDs to hold “brown bag” informational sessions at the World Bank around their topics of expertise. This is a great way to advocate for new policies. You must ask an ED to sponsor your presentation, but the benefit is that you can make your point to the entire Board at once. Check the Board calendar on the Bank website and propose appropriate events to fit your mutual purposes.

The most important thing to remember when beginning a relationship is that you should make it clear you are not going to surprise or attack the ED, but want to have a constructive dialogue. This means that you need to go beyond rhetorical positions and criticisms of the Bank to share evidence for your view and propose solutions to problems. While it will be essential to stay in touch with them when urgent problems arise, this should not be your only contact with your ED. They should look to you as a resource in helping them to better do their jobs.

Reaching Out

Identifying Your ED's Self-Interest

Before you meet with your ED you should know more about what interests him or her. For official information and biographies, you can find your ED's website here: <http://bit.ly/a8Dwt3>, or visit the BIC guide to World Bank Executive Directors here: <http://www.bicusa.org/WBEDs>.

The easiest way to conduct additional research is to search for your ED on Google. Searching the internet or asking colleagues for the ED's past and current affiliations will tell you more about why they serve at the World Bank. Here are some questions to answer about your ED:

- Do they hold a position within their country's government? What will their background tell you about their current priorities?
- How long have they been at the Bank? (are they a reformer with new ideas, an old hand with a lot of experience, or someone who sees this as a stepping stone to other objectives?)
- What are their priorities and objectives as ED?
- What are the public positions on issues of concern to you by countries in the constituency?
- Who is the ED's Alternate and does he/she have a strong influence?

Understanding where your ED's primary focus lies, whether it is in increasing their home country's global influence, ensuring that their region receives more aid, or in improving global social and environmental standards, is important to understanding how to best advocate for your stance.

Demonstrating your relevance to the ED's goals

If possible, it is best to get an in-person introduction to your ED before requesting a meeting. Ask colleagues if they can facilitate this introduction. However, if not, an email request is fine.



A CSO has two immediate objectives when being introduced to an ED.

- **Demonstrating legitimacy as the ED’s constituent.** When you speak with or email the ED, state your organization’s association with their region and the regional affiliations of other constituents you work with.
- **Identifying additional valuable expertise or connections.** Share any useful information such as policy or project analyses that your organization has done. Brainstorm beforehand about who you know (such as other CSOs, academics, policy makers, etc) that they might know, consider influential, or legitimate.

How to Schedule Your Meeting

You can find contact email addresses for both your ED and their assistant on the ED’s webpage. Your email should include a brief introduction of yourself and partners (see first bullet above), what topics you would like to discuss (see second bullet above), and a suggested time for the meeting. It may be important to copy the e-mail to the ED’s secretary, and follow up with the secretary by e-mail and phone to schedule the meeting

Planning Ahead

If you present your ED with well-documented facts, you will enhance trust in your relationship. If you present facts with a questionable basis, or only include rhetorical stances and political positions, your ability to influence your ED in the future will likely be diminished.

Some research to do before meeting with your ED:

1. Gather facts and documentation about your problem project or policy (The World Bank InfoShop website is a good resource for official project documents: <http://bit.ly/1RN2sG>)
2. Look into the role of the World Bank. In what way is the local government responsible for addressing the problem or policy? Who at the Bank is responsible, and how?
 - a. If you are expressing a problem with country office staff, **be specific** and gather emails or details of phone communications
3. What has been done so far by the Bank on the policy or problem? Try to know the management’s argument before they make it.

Facilitate Dialogue Before the Meeting

- Send your agenda and questions ahead of time. This allows the ED and his or her advisors to prepare before your meeting. That way the meeting conversation can focus on the constructive solutions.
- As additional preparation, you may want to call the ED's advisors and have a 15-20 minute conversation to update yourself on the technical details of what you'll be discussing.

In the Meeting

Topics to cover in the relationship-building stage

- Each attendee's relevance to the meeting
 - a. Country of residency
 - b. Expertise
 - c. Affiliations (professional and with CSOs)
 - d. Very brief issue concerns
- Something positive the ED or the Bank has done
 - a. European EDs are typically "progressive" on environmental issues
 - b. Rapidly developing countries such as China and Brazil are looking for opportunities to be pioneers in development (and have more secure financial systems than developed countries)
 - c. Mexico and India have strong national laws on access to information
- Ask how your ED sees the World Bank's role in their country/the region

Sample Meeting Agenda

- I. Introductions (10:00-10:05)—facilitated by Shirley Smith
- II. Update from ED on how Energy Policy is being implemented in the region (10:05-10:10)—ED Yamaguchi
- III. Questions and Discussion (10:10-10:20)—Ahmed Hussein
- IV. CSO solutions to project-specific Energy Policy concerns (10:20-10:40)—Jose Villagomez
- V. CSO request for Sustainable Energy Trust Fund (10:40-10:45)—Yuliya Sobaszko
- VI. Questions and Discussion (10:45-10:55)
- VII. Next Steps (for ED Yamaguchi and CSO delegation) (10:55-11:00)
- VIII. Conclusion of Meeting—including follow up or next steps/meeting (11:00)



- Ask the ED what their priorities are and what they hope to accomplish in the coming period
- Ask them if there are country positions, briefing papers or annual plans and reports they can share

Tips for discussing your concerns

Now that you have gotten to know your ED better and demonstrated your legitimacy as a constituent and expert, you should introduce your concerns and recommendations.

If you are discussing a specific problem project:

- a. Explain or specify how the projects or actions you mention violate the Bank's policies (<http://bit.ly/cR0BOw>) or mandate (<http://bit.ly/bLBpO2>) (if this is the case)
- b. Ask the ED about their opinion on the project, and what is already being done
- c. Suggest solutions based on analysis and numbers, agreed on a date by which you will send your data and information
- d. Include testimony of affected people
- e. Share information about your interactions with the local office
- f. Summarize all next steps

If you are advocating for a change of policy:

- a. Use problem projects to link to systemic change suggestions

(E.g., greater contract disclosure between governments and private contractors for energy or extractive projects, or the need for the consent of indigenous people in projects that affect them)

- b. Arrange and agree upon next steps, such as a meeting in the region or with technical experts you recommend

Influencing “Problem Projects” of the World Bank

Overwhelmingly, CSOs and Bank staff say it is difficult to convince an ED to deny project approval right before a Board meeting. The typical “win” by CSOs is working with EDs to apply appropriate safeguards and enhance civil society participation in the planning process. However, in extreme cases projects are decided against in the Board based on technical and social objections. While the ED is the final decision-maker on a project, it also is important to engage country office staff and project staff as early as possible to ensure that day-to-day project planning takes into account the needs of civil society and the country’s government.

- The best opportunity for CSOs to prevent undesirable projects is to influence the Bank’s policies and country and sector strategies each time they are up for review. This is a long-term approach to guiding the Bank’s activities in your country.
- Many CSOs and Bank staff argue that it is good to have the Bank involved in risky projects such as those in the energy or extractive industries. WB involvement ensures that stronger environmental and social safeguard policies are in place than exist for private companies. After high risk projects are approved, CSOs must ensure the safeguards are enforced.

Follow-up: Building the Relationship

The following is a to-do list for after you have met your ED. Remember, **relationships are built as you demonstrate that you will follow through with your commitments and are a reliable source of useful information.** Regard for your professionalism and commitment grows from how you follow-up. Here are steps to take to build the relationship after the meeting:

- Follow-up email confirming action items from the meeting
- Add your ED to your e-newsletter list (if it’s about World Bank-related issues)
- Check in with their assistants to see when they will be visiting your country
- Invite your ED to a range of opportunities such as dinners and meetings with other constituents in Washington, D.C. and in your country
- Send your ED’s advisors technical information and reports that you discussed in the meeting
- Let the ED know when you have completed action items such as following up with their advisors or country office staff, and touch base with them about their commitments



III. Taking Action

Planning an ED Advocacy Campaign

Power-mapping

If you know you will be approaching your ED about a controversial topic, you should increase your understanding of their position and their arguments to sustain it. You need to know who most influences the ED. If these people are potential allies, you must brainstorm about how to engage them. If they are potential opponents, you must brainstorm about how to neutralize them or their arguments.

- **Traditional allies** include other CSOs (coalitions are powerful), affected communities, and some European EDs
- **Nontraditional allies** can include parliamentarians, employees of your country's ministries, and other international treaties brokered through organizations such as the UN

For each potential ally, brainstorm about:

1. How to get them involved. Do you have a mutual acquaintance that can reach out to them? Is there a particular issue, such as environmental impacts, that will draw them to your campaign?
2. What resources they have (including contacts, financial, and academic)

For each potential opponent, map out:

1. What are their interests?
2. What will their argument be?
 - a. Email the ED directly, or call their advisors and ask
 - b. Ask other CSOs what their experiences have been with this issue
 - c. Ask management and the Inspection Panel what potential obstacles might be
3. What resources do they have?
4. How can you counter their arguments or neutralize them?



Strategy Creation and Campaign Planning

Use your power-mapping results to create a strategy. Your knowledge of your ED's interests and who influences them should inform your message.

Examples of How to Craft Your Message:

- If your ED is from a BRIC country, you might encourage them to forge a new path to be a leader in the world. CSOs have found that discussions encouraging rapidly developing countries to be leaders, and not endangering vulnerable populations such as women and children as developed countries did in the past, are a successful tactic. Rapidly developing countries are interested in forging a new, better path than previous developed countries have done and are looking for alternative models to development
- If your ED is from a developed nation, you may demonstrate how the Bank's policies contradict progressive stances of their own government
- If your ED is from a country that is still heavily dependent on aid, you can use friendly EDs from developed countries to exert pressure

Planning Appropriate Benchmarks:

- **Map out how long you have to impact your ED's decision.** Then chart when you must meet with potential allies and opponents. Include strategic times for coalition meetings, and when you should engage in media activities.
- **Define goals with your partners.** Make sure you and your new partners agree on the basic mission of the campaign. Once your goal is defined, you can figure out how to approach EDs. They may be allies, opponents, or as yet neutral decision-makers.

Consider what resources you have at your disposal to gain their support or neutralize their opposition. Then, chart the actions you will have to take at various stages in your campaign to get your preferred outcome.

Navigating Difficult Relationships: Tactics

Your Relationship with ED Office Staff -- Thinking About What's Important to Them

To be effective, it is important that you establish a respectful relationship with the gatekeepers to your ED-- their assistants and secretaries. The most direct way to do this is to have polite conversation and correspondence, and to explain why your issue requires the ED's time.

There are also less direct ways of building trust and respect with office staff. Some CSOs make a point in mentioning other EDs or influential organizations they network with. They also sometimes check with assistants for "inside" information to confirm hunches, for example, "I was told the proper person to talk to about this is so-and-so. Is that right?" If the assistant trusts that you are someone who should have "access" to WB processes based on previously granted access, they'll be likely to help you in your efforts.

Public Accountability

The goal of lobbying your ED is to have a working relationship to accomplish goals. With this in mind, when successful CSOs turn up the pressure on EDs, it is a measured response, and partnered with reasonable requests.

For example, one CSO shared that they will talk to the media about problem projects to spread awareness, but do not name names about negative interactions they have had with World Bank employees. This typically happens when the country or project staff has failed to provide critical project information or engage civil society about project concerns. Their aim is to spread awareness and keep the dialogue open to find solutions. If they apply pressure without humiliation, there is a greater likelihood that resistant EDs will work with CSOs to find a mutually agreeable solution.

Ways CSOs use public accountability are:

1. Collaborating with the media to produce online and print articles
2. Issuing factual reports and analyses about current and projected problem projects
3. E-newsletters that go to the media, supporters and to EDs
4. Scorecards of how EDs vote on policy decisions (with the invitation to dialogue)
5. Citing the World Bank Access to Information Policy (<http://bit.ly/b6Fytn>)

Using international agreements

International treaties are useful when they have declared a certain standard on the issue or policy you'd like to address. For example, if there is an environmental standards treaty an ED's home country has signed, you can lobby them to raise the Bank's policy to that same standard. You can also network with CSOs in other signatory countries to put international pressure on EDs for Bank policy reform.

Here is a list of some international treaties that can be used to influence and improve WBG policies. Check to see if your ED's home country is a signatory:

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- Universal Declaration on Human Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- International Labor Organization Convention 169
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity
- Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
- Convention on the Rights of the Child

Inspection Panel: An Option for Oversight

The World Bank Inspection Panel is an independent body that provides oversight of the World Bank. Their website is located here: www.worldbank.org/inspectionpanel. If you feel that the World Bank is violating its policies during a project, your country office and project team should be your first point of contact. However, if you have corresponded with these institutions and the violation has not been remedied, you should contact the Inspection Panel.

The Inspection Panel will investigate your complaint and prescribe remedies if it finds a policy violation. Sometimes this remedy is an action plan for the country



office staff Bank staff to improve safeguard implementation and engagement of civil society. Complaints to the Inspection Panel can also draw media attention and outside criticism of World Bank projects. This outside pressure sometimes has the side effect of enhancing the responsiveness of EDs or Bank staff.

Evaluation and Lessons Learned

One of the most important components to advocacy is recording and sharing information with your organization and coalition. This increases institutional knowledge and productive collaboration.

After each significant interaction with an ED:

- Evaluate and record new information learned in a meeting or phone conversation
- Compare notes with your colleagues about communication approaches and tactics that got a good reaction (such as information sharing or action taken) from the ED and approaches that seemed to stall the relationship

After a specific campaign:

- Assess lessons learned at the end of a campaign (and record). For example, did media attention seem to motivate collaboration? Did the stories of affected communities or technical experts make a difference?
- Arrange a mechanism for continuing to stay in touch with the ED

Remember, in advocacy “there are no permanent allies and no permanent enemies.” Even if your ED has opposed your view on a project or policy, there are ample opportunities to work together positively in the future. You should assess ways in which to have a greater impact on their decisions in the future.

IV. Appendix - Case Studies

Case Study 1: Outcome of an Inspection Panel case.

Due to an insufficient response from their country office about project-related concerns, a CSO in the Middle East filed a complaint with the World Bank Inspection Panel. As one of the results of filing this complaint with the Inspection Panel, the Bank's management and executive board responded by engaging CSOs. The ED that represents Yemen flew to the region and met with CSOs soon thereafter.

CSOs have now met twice with this ED, and the World Bank has created a country action plan to enhance communication with civil society.

Positive outcome: The Inspection Panel case led to the creation of a CSO engagement plan for the region. An unintended but positive consequence was that the complaint got the ED's attention and cooperation.

Lesson learned: **It is important to be prepared for victory.** Partners weren't ready for the ED's first visit and didn't have specific "asks" for him.

Case Study 2: Working with an international coalition.

A coalition of South African CSOs wanted to prevent the World Bank Board of Directors from approving a coal power plant. They had only two months to organize before the project vote, but they reached out to partners in Washington, D.C. The South African CSOs used the media to promote the negative impacts of the project. They also flew to meetings with the advisors to several European and “environmentally progressive” EDs.

In the meantime, their Western partners mobilized international environmental groups to put pressure on EDs. They also lobbied the U.S. Congress, Treasury, and State Department. In the end, the combination of public accountability in the media, stories of affected people, and factual information convinced several EDs to abstain from the vote on the project. The power plant was approved, primarily because of the geopolitical status of South Africa.

Positive outcome: CSO advocacy persuaded several European EDs to abstain from voting on the project, and negative media attention might deter similar future projects.

Lessons learned: **CSOs should approach EDs from developing economies early and urge them to take a lead on social and environmental issues through analyses of how this benefits them.** This can be done by carefully watching the Bank’s potential project listings (<http://bit.ly/sP79N>). The CSOs ran into geopolitical issues when the South Africa government asserted its importance in the region to its Western colleagues.

Case Study 3: Using the WB's Country Assistance Strategy.

When CSOs attempt to sway their ED about a potential project, they typically use project-related documents such as the WB's "project information document" (PID) to identify potential project failures.

However, several years ago the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank's arm that lends to private corporations, had fast-tracked a project to fund a pulp mill in Indonesia. Civil society objected to the deforestation associated with this project, and found their recourse within the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS).

The CAS that had been written by the government of Indonesia and the WB explicitly stated that the Indonesian government did not want to expand deforestation because private industry already exceeded the legal licensing limits. When CSOs brought this to the attention of the U.S. Treasury Department and the U.S. ED, the project was promptly stopped.

Positive outcome: CSOs reminded the IFC and Indonesian government to take into account their own protective laws with regard to quality of life and the environment. This resulted in a project being cancelled.

Lesson learned: **CSOs should work to be included in CAS formulation; requesting specific safeguard language for potentially damaging industries, and offering proactive and forward-thinking goals for WB investment.** The CAS was very detailed in this case and worked to the benefit of advocates.

Case Study 4: The G-11: Influencing EDs from rapidly developing countries.

An environmental think tank wanted to influence the EDs of Brazil and India regarding their energy policies. In conversations about renewable energy and environmental safeguards, these EDs often argued that the developed world held their countries to a higher standard, and that all countries pollute while their economies are becoming industrialized. The environmental arguments of the think tank were initially dismissed as economically impractical.

The think tank shifted their approach. While they continued to send factual analysis to the EDs and hold brown bag informational briefings at Board meetings, they talked more about the vulnerability of women and children, and the opportunity for a new path. They gave examples such as China's leadership on renewable energy, and discussed how countries could grow and industrialize without making the mistakes of formerly industrialized nations. As their data backed up their argument, they noticed a softening of the positions of these EDs resulting in greater openness toward "clean" energy.

Positive Outcome: The environmental think tanks noted that the targeted EDs were less oppositional toward focusing on clean energy projects.

Lesson Learned: Before lobbying an ED, you must know what is important to them. Rapidly developing countries are typically interested in having a greater influence in global politics. Presenting them with ways to help their population and be global leaders is a better-received approach than chastising them about not meeting European or U.S.-led standards.

Case Study 5: Influencing EDs from rapidly developing countries, part 2.

A civil society organization in Peru shared how they lobby governments in their region. This organization, focused on the environment and indigenous peoples' rights, has kept their credibility by criticizing developed countries for hypocritical actions around social and environmental issues even as they push their own government to prioritize development safety and sustainability at the global standard.

The group has found that they have to be sensitive to their government's desire for investment and sometimes choose to advocate for enhanced safeguards rather than the denial of projects. They also have worked hard to make sure national demand is accounted for on energy projects before energy is exported.

Positive Outcome: Hazardous projects canceled or implemented with enhanced safeguards. Government and Bank now place stronger emphasis on the domestic needs that can be met by projects, especially in the energy sector.

Lessons Learned: Providing an accurate depiction of how affected communities are harmed or benefited by a project is often effective, especially in the media.

Case Study 6: Lobbying the World Bank when your ED is not easily influenced by civil society.

A CSO organization in Eastern Europe shared that they often have better success lobbying Western EDs than their own ED. They have specific ways for most effectively targeting Board members from developed countries.

- 1) They find the payoff from just one article in Western media, such as the Financial Times, can offer great leverage for their position amongst Board Members.
- 2) The use of visual media is highly effective. When a second phase of a controversial energy transmission line project was proposed by the World Bank, the group filmed the arguments between villagers who were negatively impacted by the first phase of the project and put it on www.youtube.com. This video persuaded Board Members not to fund a second phase of the project, since it was clear that the first phase was not completed according to plan.