



## 1.3 Billion Youth: Is the Research and Policy Community Prepared?

A round table co-hosted by:  
Chronic Poverty Research Centre ([www.chronicpoverty.org](http://www.chronicpoverty.org)),  
Overseas Development Institute ([www.odi.org.uk](http://www.odi.org.uk))  
Peace Child International ([www.peacechild.org](http://www.peacechild.org))

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November, 10.30am – 12pm, Overseas Development Institute

*Notes prepared by Karen Moore, CPRC and University of Manchester*

---

<a href="#">Information on chair and speakers</a>	1
<a href="#">Presentations from the panel</a>	2
<a href="#">Caroline Harper</a>	
<a href="#">David Woolcombe</a>	
<a href="#">Mattias Lundberg</a>	
<a href="#">Tom Burke</a>	
<a href="#">Alpha Barry Bacar</a>	
<a href="#">Richard Jolly</a>	
<a href="#">Comments from the floor</a>	8
<a href="#">Responses from the panel</a>	9
<a href="#">Comments submitted after the event</a>	10

---

### **Information on chair and speakers**

**Chair:** **Caroline Harper**, Associate Director, CPRC; Research Fellow, and leader of the Poverty, Growth and Inequality Cluster of the Poverty and Public Policy Group, ODI.

Previously Caroline Harper was director of the Childhood Poverty Policy and Research Centre (CHIP) and Co-Director of Young Lives. She worked for Save the Children in several roles in the UK and overseas in East and South-East Asia, focussing on issues of poverty, economic adjustment, participation, research, evaluation and policy processes, and for the UN in China on anti-poverty programmes. She has worked extensively at the interface between researchers, governments and civil actors.

[http://www.odi.org.uk/PPPG/who\\_we\\_are/caroline\\_harper.html](http://www.odi.org.uk/PPPG/who_we_are/caroline_harper.html)

---

**Co-organiser:** **David Woolcombe**, Peace Child International Founder and President

David is widely regarded as a world leader in the field of 'education for sustainability', and a prime mover in the global effort to seek an effective role for young people in the achievement of sustainable development. Peace Child International, celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, is an educational charity registered in the United Kingdom. With a network of more than 500 youth eco-groups in 120 countries around the world, it

works closely with the United Nations and its agencies to empower young people to write, design, and illustrate children's editions of important United Nations reports. Its most successful production to date was a children's edition of "Agenda 21, Rescue Mission: Planet Earth," which has sold more than 320,000 copies around the world in 18 languages. Peace Child International empowers young people to take responsibility for peace, human rights and the environment through education, leadership development and direct participation in the events that shape our world community. This it does through producing publications, musicals, conferences and encouraging its affiliate youth groups throughout the world.

---

**Speakers:** **Mattias Lundberg**, Development Economics Research Group, World Bank.

In addition to being co-author of the *World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation*, Mattias Lundberg was a principal authors of the World Bank's Poverty and Social Impact Assessment guidebook, and has recently completed a toolkit for the analysis of public expenditures in the social sectors. His published research includes papers on the impact on households of crises such as HIV/AIDS and flood exposure, and on the relationship among trade, income distribution and growth. He has worked for many agencies including SIDA, ADB and USAID, and has taught and researched at UC San Francisco, Michigan State University, Cornell and the University of East Anglia.

<http://www.worldbank.org/wdr2007/>

---

**Tom Burke**, Member, International Advisory Board, Peace Child International; Policy and Development Officer, Carnegie Young People's Initiative

Director, Young People Change the World Ltd. Tom Burke is an activist with interests related to young people and international development, and extensive experience in research, consultancy, training, advocacy, community development and youth participation, both in the UK and overseas.

<http://www.change-the-world.net/people/tom.burke>

---

**Alpha Barry Bacar**, youth development activist, Conakry, Guinea.

Founder, Guinean Young University Association (AJUG) and NGO Forum for Good Governance; Member, Executive Committee of the National Program on Governance; Vice-President, African Youth Forum. He has also been a journalist for the national television station, and editor of the first university newspaper.

<http://alphapourlaguinee.blogspot.com/>

---

**Sir Richard Jolly**, Senior Research Fellow at The CUNY Graduate Center; Co-director of the UN Intellectual History Project; Honorary Professor and Research Associate, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex

Former Administrator, Human Development Report Office; former Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF.

[http://www.unhistory.org/iac\\_res/jolly.htm](http://www.unhistory.org/iac_res/jolly.htm)

---

---

### **Presentations from the panel**

#### **Caroline Harper**

CH first briefly introduced the Chronic Poverty Research Centre and its focus on poverty dynamics and life-course and intergenerational poverty. She then welcomed the 2007 World Development Report (WDR2007) and its focus on poverty transfers, the potential demographic dividend that can be reaped by investing in young people, and the life-long and intergenerational losses that can occur if those investments aren't made.

She noted that the roundtable is made up of a mixture of researchers, policy activists and young people, all with a passionate concern about young lives lived well.

CH suggested three questions to frame the roundtable discussion on whether the research and policy community is prepared for the 1.3 billion youth in developing countries:

1. Are the analytical frameworks employed by WDR2007 adequate? Do they capture all the key issues (e.g. survival, dynamism and power/powerlessness, as well as human development)?
2. What are the key research gaps (and strengths)? (Relatedly, is there a need for a more coherent community of researchers looking at broad issues of youth and development, rather only than on particular aspects?)
3. How is the understanding of youth presented in WDR2007 translatable into policy?

CH then introduced the panel.

---

#### **David Woollcombe**

As an introduction to Mattias Lundberg, DW thanked Mattias for all the time spent on this landmark report and for making time to join this panel, as well as all to the other panel members for participating in the roundtable. It's not often we get the chance to discuss the role of young people in development, and this report gives a good excuse to do so.

The answer to the question posed – 'Is the policy community ready?' – is, DW suggests, a resounding 'no', and he hoped this would emerge from the roundtable. There's a lot of work to be done: in his fifteen years of involvement in this field he has found very little in the way of university departments and academics with youth really 'on the radar'. This is reflected in the WDR2007 which continuously points to thin evidence.

During his presidency, James Wolfensohn championed youth and supported the writing of WDR2007. The report's premise is based on research that suggests that in growth in the Asian Tiger economies was brought about by a confluence of two factors: an open, fair, supportive judiciary and trade system; and a large, healthy, well-educated and well-motivated cohort of young people. Wolfensohn's excuse for doing the report was to see whether the same confluence could be generated in other developing countries – an interesting question to explore in the context of youth and development.

But for DW and the young people he meets in the developing world, it all comes down to money: there is no money available for youth and development work. He hopes that Wolfowitz's preface to the report that there has never been a better time to invest in young people is heard. DW hopes that at the second ODI-CPRC-Peace Child event, involving Secretary of State for International Development Hilary Benn and Andrew Mitchell at the House of Commons on 5 December 2006, some political engagement can be raised.

DW has been 'pestering' Mattias about youth-led development and engaging youth in development for a long time, and it has actually appeared in WDR2007, which is good. There are many good reasons for young people leading and engaging with development processes – they're eager, it can be a cost effective agent of change, and the experiential learning youth gain now is worth it even if it were to be more expensive. So they hammer on DFID and other donors doors to get them to let young people

help Make Poverty History and meet their other goals, but at the moment they remain fairly deaf to these arguments – your help is needed to make the intellectual arguments that young people have a role to play. Mattias is the best spokesperson for this argument.

---

## Mattias Lundberg

**\*\*Note that the Power Point presentation – which touches on issues that ML didn't have time to cover in his presentation – will be made available.**

After noting the early, useful consultation the WDR2007 team had with DW and Peace Child, ML turned to a brief review of the report, focussing on its motivation, framework, and key examples to illustrate:

### **Motivation:** – why focus on this age group?

- Numbers: 1.3 billion youth in developing countries, 1.5 billion worldwide. Enormous numbers of young people in countries like Nigeria, India, China.
- After a generation or more of investments in early childhood issues – primary education and basic health care – we have a large population of relatively well-educated and comparatively healthy young people. So there's a higher base on which to build – despite the fact that many countries are still not reaching the child-related MDGs.
- Youth today face different needs and challenges, e.g. need for secondary education, HIV/AIDS.
- Potential *demographic dividend* – probably largest global cohort of youth ever, during fall in dependency ratio, so more resources freed for investment in human capital. In some countries, this 'demographic window of opportunity' is already closed; in much of sub-Saharan Africa and other countries it is yet to open.
- How do we know that this matters? Evidence suggest that about one-quarter of Asian Tiger growth was due to this demographic dividend. Latin America experienced similar window at about the same time but was unable to reap the benefits from the large cohort of relatively well-educated and healthy young people, due to a combination of policies and other factors. Which 'model' – East Asian or Latin American – does sub-Saharan Africa want to follow?

### **Framework**

- Youth (12-24) is temporary, and very dynamic, period of enormous upheaval in people's lives ... what happens in youth largely determines what kind of adult you'll become, what kind of life you'll lead, and what you can provide for your children ... inadequate environment, choices, opportunities during **five transitions** have long-term consequences:
  1. **learning**
  2. **health**
  3. **working**
  4. **family**
  5. **civic life**
- Evidence suggests that habits formed in each of these, even civic participation, tend to persist over one's lifetime.
- Given that all these things happen at the same time it's amazing that we all survived adolescence and made it to adulthood.
- WDR2007 looks at each of these transitions in three ways – each has three fundamental characteristics and qualities: **three necessities** – **youth lenses** determining whether these transitions can be negotiated successfully, which can be determined by policy:
  1. **opportunities** (environment in which young people act and make decisions – e.g. schools, health systems)
  2. **capabilities** (internal capacity to weigh evidence and choose wisely from alternatives – e.g. family support, psychological factors, economic resources, power)
  3. **second chances** (for those denied opportunities, or without the capacity to choose correctly; interrupt paths leading to further misfortune)

### Examples include:

- Educational opportunities have expanded greatly, but quality remains low and requires focus.
- Opportunities for work – youth are more likely to be unemployed, but regulations like minimum wages and restrictions on mobility intended to protect older workers can have higher unintended

negative effects on younger people. (Note that the recommendation that young people should be facilitated to migrate has been the most controversial among policymakers.)

- Young people are making decisions, but may not have information. But information isn't enough (e.g. gap between condom knowledge and use) – incentives and preferences also matter. So programmes such as conditional cash transfers, and involving youth in programmes to change ideas, can be useful.
- Second chances in education – in countries like Malawi, many young people in their late teens are enrolled in primary school and have different needs to young children
- Second chances in justice – some countries (particularly in the US and transitional countries) have disproportionately very high numbers of youth in prison, given income, secondary school enrolments and population.

**Key messages** – three things donors can do:

- Coordination – what happens in one transition affects what happens in another. Multi-sectoral approaches are best for challenges youth face.
- Voice matters – weak, but potentially powerful constituency.
- Evaluation – at present, evidence remains very limited (e.g. of 300+ HIV/AIDS intervention studies reviewed, 92% had no biologically-measured outcomes, 6% had these but showed no impact, 2% had these and showed impact). Imagine what we could do if we knew what we were doing! Impact of new youth-specific initiatives must be carefully evaluated – donors must play a role.

---

## Tom Burke

Peace Child warmly welcomes this report, as the first major analysis of young people in a developing world. The report poses an enormous opportunity and challenge of how to transform 'development' to work in the interests of the world's young. TB identified three 'rising star' ideas from WDR2007 that should be tended, developed and implemented, and two major 'dead ducks' that should be problematised and discontinued.

### 'Rising stars':

1. That WDR2007 has been written at all! Finally 'the white elephant in the room' – the largest youth population ever – acknowledged by mainstream institution.
2. WDR2007 on the whole takes a balanced and rigorously analytical approach to youth policy – a compendium of the evidence available, useful for advocacy.
3. It commits to youth participation, action and voice in policy-making, and goes further than many reports in calling for reform to ensure children and young people's voices are heard in school management (e.g. in Russia, leading to enhanced educational quality). However, principal of co-management can be applied across public services.

### 'Dead ducks':

1. Shouldn't be framed as 'next generation', but '**generation NOW**'. The tragedy of this report is its failure to recognise that development is about THIS generation. WDR2007 consistently sees young people as something for tomorrow – that an investment in young people today will result in better adults of tomorrow. But today's youth are today's workers, entrepreneurs, parents, active citizens, and leaders, not just tomorrow's. Youth and development must concern itself with the lived experiences of young people today for what they are today, not for what they could become. The investments should have a tangible impact on wellbeing and opportunity for them today as well as developing their best options for the future.
2. Why is the World Bank so afraid of **rights**? The WDR2007 barely highlights rights violations (e.g. those protected by CRC, the most ratified human rights treaty), reinforcing the view that young people haven't got rights and aren't active creators of their lives. Also, WDR2007's positive commitment to participation is based on the argument that this make public services more efficient at meeting young people's needs, and makes governments more accountable. But unless all children and young people's rights to participate are secured, the most marginalised voices won't

be heard, inequalities in voice reinforced, and service delivery not changed.

When challenged on the lack of a rights-based approach in the report, WDR2007 Director Emmanuel Jimenez said: "Our entry point into the topic is more on the investment and investing in young people because it has economic return because the World Bank audience is primarily the economic and finance policy makers who make decisions about the allocation of resources, and these decisions may have implications for human values." But economics and rights can't be divorced – you achieve human rights through investments – and World Bank investments will fail without a rights-based approach to youth development.

**The way forward is youth-led development and youth-led research.** The best way to engage young people in tackling poverty is by giving them the opportunity to lead the process of development. At the moment, young people leading development is 'unproven' and therefore not supported. But this is a misconception – if forty years ago women had been prevented from leading development processes because it was 'unproven' we would not have made the development strides we have. Or is it actually because we value people as individuals, and their right to influence decisions, that we think they should have that opportunity. We don't need proof to say that something is right and just.

But evidence base, particularly on the most effective use of resources by young people, must indeed be built. The issue for the research and evaluation community, particularly donors, is to recognise youth as a discrete area in need of research and evaluation, and to actually involve young people in the research – young people as co-researchers has worked in the UK and elsewhere with excellent results and needs to be developed in developing contexts. This is about working with development beneficiaries in local communities, including children and young people, to ensure they help design and deliver evaluations and research ... not about engaging European gap year students! WDR 2007 makes good recommendations about how to improve on the current lack of comparable indicators, but more work needs to be done, particularly on which questions are asked, and which indicators collected. Finally, it is crucial to disseminate youth and development related research to youth leaders in development. Knowledge in a form that is accessible to young people is needed.

---

### Alpha Barry Bacar

On behalf of young people in Africa and other developing countries, ABB thanked the World Bank for introducing this focus on the 'next generation'. An important process which recognises youth as powerful contributors to world development has been launched. Not only has it never been a better time to invest in youth, as the WDR2007 says, but it also has never been a better time to **include youth** in the process of world development.

Speaking on behalf of African youth, ABB is hopeful that the World Bank's definition of youth will change in years to come – in Africa, it's not defined by numbers – it's someone without a job, a person who has not yet started their family, a person without income or significant education. A youth is someone who is "poor in both head and pocket" – the unemployed and uneducated. As an African youth, ABB can assert that he is lucky to be alive at all – many of his generation are already dead from HIV/AIDS, malaria, death in childbirth... and the dead can't contribute to their country's development.

They'd have had a better chance of contributing if certain preconditions were in place. ABB's impression is that these preconditions aren't given enough emphasis in the WDR2007. The World Bank's failure to identify the **necessary preconditions for development** renders the report less valuable for Africa.

We know what these preconditions are – as recently as April 2006, World Bank President Wolfowitz highlighted two principles of good governance: respect for the rule of law, the fight against corruption, and observing human rights. The WDR2007 notes that this cohort of youth is the healthiest and best educated ever, and offers the greatest chances to accelerate growth and reduce poverty. But for African youth it is first necessary to live in a free, democratic state, and to be safe from wars, in which they are often the first to be enrolled, killed and wounded. They must be relieved from the lack of basic human rights, from disease. When given the chance, youth can play a big role in the political and economic integration of African regions, offering the best opportunity for successful development for the 'next generation'.

The Mano River region of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia has seen more conflict over the past decade than perhaps anywhere else in Africa. Imagine if you were able to put in place harmonised cross-border structures supported by young people in the fields of education, health and employment, three of the priority areas identified in WDR2007. ABB suffered the lack of such structures growing up, and knows the potential for growth and social improvements that they could provide.

Imagine that the youth policies were harmonised and best practices shared between all governments, local and national. Imagine that political mechanisms like NEPAD really worked, and embraced investment in youth. Imagine if in Africa young people were instruments in the delivery of aid and social improvements, rather than conscripts or mercenaries. Imagine that young people were recruited to counsel other young people about important challenges like family planning and that little by little, these youth become the tax-paying middle class, land owners, and directors. Imagine if more and more young people were encouraged and enabled to participate fully in the political life of the country, the main message of Chapter Seven of WDR2007. Imagine if local authorities reinforced the capacities of young people, strengthening civil society and supporting youth organisations. Imagine, very simply, if young people were seen as a resource for Africa, not a problem. Imagine that in the conflict zones of Africa, it was recognised that it is in the industry of war one loses more than half the hands of workers.

At the moment millions of Africans are just beginning to know what it is to live in peace, with a minimum of prosperity. At last African youth have the preconditions to show society what they can do, what they can deliver. ABB trusts that there will be investments in youth like him, as the WDR2007 recommends.

---

## Richard Jolly

RJ reiterated how good it is to see the World Bank producing such a pioneering report, in terms of an issue that it had been ignoring, following on from last years' pioneering approach to equity, on which the World Bank has been largely silent.

### How good is the frame of analysis?

- The idea of *second chances* is a very powerful one, and critical for policymakers around the world, including in the UK and US, in general and in particular with respect to poor and marginalised groups.
- RJ expressed his concern regarding the WDR2007's use of '**capabilities**', however. It shows that the World Bank still doesn't really take human development seriously, in terms of (Nobel Prize winner) Amartya Sen's (and HDCA's) framework or language. Human development is not just investments in education and health.
- **Five transitions** – This seems to work, but only as way of producing a rather detached framework. It does not seem very well-related to the messy realities of all our lives, perhaps particularly those of vulnerable young people like street children or AIDS orphans. It's analytically helpful, but RJ is unsure as to whether it strengthens or distorts analysis.
- WDR2007 has been written by economists, with all the authority of the World Bank. Therefore, the topic gets noticed, but this comes with baggage. The report is operational, but in focussing on 'capital' misses critical issues, particularly '**rights**'. This focus is 'wicked, distorting, misleading'. This isn't unexpected – World Bank lawyers are known to 'cross out' references to human rights, and individuals in the World Bank have asked UNICEF, when RJ was there, to speak up on issues that they can't. All of us must really press the World Bank to recognise human rights.
- The section on '**rational behaviour**' seems problematic – while economists focus on it, other disciplines dispute its use, and it doesn't always seem to be apparent in 'real lives'.

### Priorities for action

- **Giving young people voice** is a strong and excellent message of the whole report. But one wonders what this means for World Bank projects in country? More pressure on this issue, and greater coordination across governments and UN agencies, at the country-level is required.
- Providing modest amounts of money for **youth councils**; child and gender budgeting operates in 30-40 countries – perhaps **youth budgeting** process should be initiated. People may be surprised at how seriously young people looked at proposed government expenditures.

- Bringing youth into the **PRSP process**, the main means, in theory, through which donors, the World Bank and UN agencies engage, and as such is a very good place to strengthen youth participation.
- 

### **Comments from the floor**

**Pram Unia**, Young Lives and Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University

- Appreciate World Bank's engagement with these issues.
- Will there be youth input into the preparation of all future WDRs?

**Jo Boyden**, Young Lives and Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University

- Appreciate World Bank's engagement with these issues.
- Researchers and policy-makers need to be mindful of a very worrying trend of the problematisation of youth to the extent that discussions of youth and the so-called 'youth bulge' is dominated by discourses on security, violence, destabilisation, political upheaval etc. There has been a huge growth in research work on these issues, and it is crucial that we as researchers and policy-makers engage with different sets of constructs to counteract the emerging moral panic on youth. WDR2007 takes us in an important and different direction.

**Simon Maxwell**, ODI

- The cohort approach is very powerful, and is increasingly seen in UK context, but also has risks. One problem is that the range employed by WDR2007 is very large - 12/15-24 years old. This includes 'very different animals'. There is need for greater disaggregation, as well as a focus on how this group got into and will emerge from this cohort, e.g. through social exclusion approaches, looking at intergenerational transfers, and at multiple deprivations through the life cycle.
- Framework – what is the counterfactual to the 'five transitions and three sets of policies' approach? SM would like to see a table that relates multi-dimensional definitions of poverty, human security, human development to WDR2007 framework. Similarly, livelihoods approaches – the 'five capitals' overlap with the WDR2007 framework but do not match it, which opens up some new issues. Livelihood approaches particularly open up issues around livelihood security and how to build assets (e.g. UK baby bonds).
- Useful to disaggregate particular types of young people within different contexts to see how they are affected by global economic changes; for example, how many of the 1.3 billion are now rural and will be urban, or will be working in certain sectors?

**Kate Bird**, CPRC and ODI

- WDR2007 is very welcome.
- KB also attended the report pre-launch, where the point about labour market regulation being 'bad for youth' was headlined as well. For youth in many low income countries this is a red herring – it may be relevant in transitional countries and Europe, perhaps even Latin America, but not in sub-Saharan Africa where most young people work in the informal sector if they have a job at all, and might benefit from more regulation in order to escape dangerous, risky, poorly paid work, in which they're adversely incorporated. Here, middle income country and developed country narratives has distorted this policy point.
- How can we consider both hear the voices of youth and involve them in decision-making, and retain a poverty focus? Involving youth in policy-making debates means that those who are least poor, marginalised, excluded etc. have their voices heard much more, and do not necessarily represent the majority of youth.

**Anokhee Shah**, One World Forum, University of Warwick

- Focus on 'second chances' excellent.
- Clear that there is a need to develop cost effective education reforms, because quality is so poor, and the number of years in school doesn't translate into literacy.
- The human rights agenda is excluded from the WDR2007, but so is environment and its links to poverty. In the same way that education for youth can foster their employment in the future, parents must pass on knowledge about the environment and how to live in it, particularly in developing countries, in order to deal with future environmental stress.

- To what extent, and how, can institutions like the World Bank make 'the government' listen to and take seriously voices of youth, fund needed research, and include youth as researchers? Youth can be drawn upon to run surveys etc. because they understand issues best.

**Caroline Harper**, CPRC and ODI

- Many recognising that second chances important. This is also apparent in evidence from OECD countries, e.g. if pre-25 year old transitions unsuccessful, then effects still felt after 33 years old.
- Implementation – will the recommendations of the report see light of day within the World Bank?

**Comments submitted after the event**

**Nicolas Argenti**

(School of Social Sciences and Law, Brunel University)

From my perspective as an anthropologist, I would particularly endorse Tom Burke's comment that young people must be understood in a contemporary, synchronic manner rather than as an investment in the future. From the point of view of young people's own experience and world views, they are not living their lives as a form of apprenticeship for adulthood, but here and now, and it is the inequities and marginalisation to which they are vulnerable because of their present position as young people that make them worthy of policy focus. To say that they represent the future paradoxically bring us back to the de facto position that it is ultimately only upon adults that we need truly to focus policy.

It is worth noting that African heads of state have regularly used the view of youth as 'the promise of the future' as a loophole by means of which to seem to be dealing with the issue of representation and inclusion for young people while emphasising young people's status as social cadets. In a continent in which hierarchical and gerontocratic social patterns affect young people not only at the local level, but also inform policy and practice at the national level, autocratic heads of state who represent themselves as the 'fathers of the nation' are in fact infantilising their people as a means of emphasising the traditional obligation of youth unquestioningly to support their 'fathers'.

This leads to the more intractable question of how we define youth: while the report - in line with Western social science in general - defines youth as an age cohort neatly encapsulated within a set range of years, this will be meaningless in most of Africa, where people do not mark their birthday or know their exact age. As Jean-Francois Bayart has made clear, youth is defined in Africa not in terms of biological age, but rather in terms of political and economic power: people age to the extent that they accumulate power and prestige, and those who accumulate enough power become elders. On the other hand, those bereft of power, without homes, wives, children or work, can be stuck in a classificatory stage of 'youth' for their whole lives. This emic understanding of youth marks another reason why focusing on it as a form of 'promise' or 'potential' may be out of place when all it highlights is political exclusion and economic marginalisation.

The emic model of youth in Africa also brings Richard Jolly's statement into play regarding his reservations about the 'transitions' framework of the report. The issues marked as so-called transitions are undoubtedly important, but to see them as transitions again seems to miss the point that they are not lived on the ground as transitions, but as lived experience in the present - a present which for those stuck in the social category of youth can last for a good deal of one's life. Here again, a focus on practice and experience might be more use than one on process.

Young people in many cultures know that they do not have the right or the opportunity openly to criticise local or national authorities, and yet a focus on their performative practices (often dismissed as 'culture', 'folklore' or 'tradition') reveals a whole array of non-verbal means by which young people perpetually confront authority and gain a public platform, however fleetingly and subversively. A great deal could be learned from the practices by means of which young people already address their exclusion and marginalisation in all kinds practical, embodied and indirect ways that are often overlooked by researchers and policy makers looking for explicit, verbalised and formally organised forms of expression. And perhaps a great deal could be achieved by tapping these local initiatives from the bottom up rather than seeking to impose solutions from the top down?

## Responses from the panel

### Mattias Lundberg

- Moved by the interest in and appreciation shown for WDR2007. The World Bank is a lightning rod for much blame, but is much less influential than many would claim!
- Regarding the **rights-based approach**, he would 'plead guilty' to this being largely excluded from WDR2007. Initially they thought that the report team was talking about the same things, using different words. On reflection, this probably isn't true – the ideas are also different. But it's a sin of omission not commission. If WDR2007 team were to justify this focus, they would say that the people on whom this report can have the most influence, like ministers of finance, will be more convinced by narrow, more conventional economic arguments than rights. ML tried to determine, for example, how to determine economic rates of return on youth citizenship, but of course this isn't possible – so in WDR2007 there is a rather weak chain between citizenship habits in youth, to governance in adulthood, and corruption etc. – that's the approach they felt they had to take.
- But they did try. The citizenship chapter is really new for the World Bank, and some changes have resulted. His chapter co-author Varun Gauri is starting a large research project on rights and access to justice, and World Bank has hired lawyers who more involved in legal *policy* matters. But it's slow. Rights is the 'biggest elephant in the room'.
- To RJ, who asked whether there has been a whole scale conversion of the approach of the World Bank, or of individuals within it, to the rights-based approach, ML answered that this is only somewhat the case. He admits to timidity, as he is an econometrician and it is of course challenging to use econometrics to understand rights, but he is moving towards this different way of thinking. While he can't speak for the entire World Bank, it is clear that on the ground things are changing – e.g. second chance programmes in accessible and juvenile justice in over 100 countries worldwide (e.g. 'Justice on Wheels' in the Philippines). It will take time for these changes 'in the small' to be translated into changes 'in the large'
- To answer the '**so what**' question, ML pointed to several things that the World Bank is, and may be, focussing on:
  - o More evaluation (flavour of the month, but for good reason)
  - o Channel knowledge and experience (a World Bank strength)
  - o Encourage new finance (new trust funds, particularly from Scandinavians)
  - o Engage in new activities
  - o Open up to youth? Unsure about the extent to which this will happen, but it is possible that previous genuine and effective engagement with NGOs can be built on. ML remains unsure.
- Yes, **environment and agriculture** were both neglected in the report. Despite enormous rural to urban upheaval, today majority of poor youth are still rural; their needs were not done justice to in WDR2007.
- '**Second chances**' and '**capabilities**' (e.g. 'demand side') are both new to the World Bank; it (and other donors) have focussed so much on service provision ('supply side') in the past, but now realisation that providing, for example, schools, isn't enough, and demand-side issues are crucial.
- Regarding **consultations with youth**, ML was insistent on broad-based consultation. Early in the WDR2007 process, some youth leaders who happened to be in Washington came to see the team to discuss the report, and told them exactly what they wanted to hear, in the right jargon. So ML, frustrated with this, pushed for having a much broader consultation process, via NGOs and civil society organisations, in over 30 countries, with thousands of young people, away from the youth leaders – no disrespect to them – to those who aren't usually heard. ML was involved in the process in Sierra Leone. Thus, many quotes of voices of marginalised youth are found in the report, and he hopes WDR2007 in general reflects these concerns implicitly.
- Regarding **multi-sectoral** nature of youth's lives – Although he wanted to write in a more multi-sectoral way, WDR2007 is written sectorally, because that's the way people think.
- Regarding the issue of framing **youth as a problem** – ML did not wish to follow a conventional approach and write the citizenship chapter on why some young men join the Boy Scouts and others Al Qaeda. In fact, very few young people actually engage in political violence, but this is a common view. The question is dealt with in report because people (including those in authority) are concerned with this issue, and therefore may care about youth. In Sierra Leone, policy-makers expressed concern that if they 'didn't do something' about the large numbers of youth, they'd start another war; their answer was to provide satellite dishes and large screen TVs so that they could watch the World Cup – an infuriating response. Actually, in Sierra Leone, youth make up more

than half the overall population, and as such it is hard to distinguish youth needs from those of all Sierra Leoneans. The World Bank's answer is that a large cohort does not automatically have dire consequences for political violence.

- There are examples of **youth budgeting** (e.g. Brazil) and **youth's policy engagement** in the report.
- 

### Tom Burke

- TB agrees that the **voices of the most marginalised youth** are most excluded, but it is important not to vilify young leaders – not their fault that they have these opportunities! Whose responsibility is it to ensure a broad range of voices? Engage in research with communities themselves.
  - TB is more hesitant about '**second chances**', as these interventions sometimes can be diversionary tactics (e.g. getting young people off the street) and need to be led by young people.
  - Positive that the World Bank stood up to Huntington and Kaplan report (on political violence effects of large youth cohorts) which many people would not agree with.
- 

### Alpha Barry Bacar's responses

- It's important to consider the **politics of youth**. Often former youth leaders that were involved in party work are given the minister-ship of youth as a reward for support. Often the ministry is of youth and sport, because youth is perceived as play. One doesn't find young prime ministers ministers, or ministers of finance or planning. Young people, even with a PhD, can't get high level posts.
  - Youth budgeting and PRSP involvement are crucial, to change the culture of putting anything into PRSPs that will definitely ensure donor funds.
  - Often young people are only considered as important by political parties during elections. Good governance is crucial.
-