



Statement on Major Gaps in World Bank Country Engagement in Kenya

To: Keith E. Hansen, World Bank Country Director for Kenya

Cc: David Malpass, President, World Bank Group

The Okoa Uchumi Campaign is a civil society platform committed towards working with stakeholders to redress Kenya's public debt crisis. The coalition seeks to push for political accountability and bolster constitutional safeguards in public debt management as a means to attain debt sustainability through a balanced and equitable budget.

1. This statement is prepared by the Okoa Uchumi Campaign¹ addressed to the World Bank Group President and the Country Director for Kenya, prompted by our concern that there are major governance gaps in the implementation of World Bank projects in Kenya.²
2. **Role of World Bank in Kenya's Development Agenda:** The World Bank group plays a key role in promoting the development agenda across member countries. Between 2015 to 2018 the World Bank Group provided development financing of over \$4 billion in a broad range of sectors.
3. **World Bank violating its own regulations in Kenya:** Whereas World Bank policies recognize the importance of engaging key stakeholders, an in-depth review of the 2014 – 2018 World Bank Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Kenya and the Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) 2020 reports, reveals that CSOs and other stakeholders in Kenya are not adequately engaged in World Bank processes in Kenya. CSOs are only engaged at consultations stage in Kenya, and there was no evidence of their engagement with the Bank beyond consultation level.
4. **More effective engagement of key stakeholders in other countries in Africa and globally:** This contrasts to our findings on consultations in countries such as Mexico, Bhutan, Mongolia, Timor-Leste, Benin, Guinea, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Madagascar, South Africa, and Nigeria which revealed that the World Bank had a clear schedule and allocated sufficient time for consultation with various key stakeholders including CSOs in the preparation of their respective Country Partnership Frameworks. Further, the final Country Partnership Frameworks documents acknowledged the involvement of stakeholders and even highlighted their contributions.
5. **Call for CSO and citizen engagement in World Bank projects and processes in Kenya.**

¹ <https://resources.tisa.co.ke/2021/06/30/list-of-participants-in-the-virtual-csos-and-citizen-engagement-in-world-bank-country-partnership-framework-for-kenya/>

² <https://resources.tisa.co.ke/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/REPORT-ON-WORLD-BANK-COUNTRY-PARTNERSHIP-FRAMEWORK-FOR-KENYA.pdf>

It can only be concluded that the level of involvement of CSOs and citizenry in the country's development projects by the World Bank in Kenya needs to be reconsidered. They should be involved right from the development of SCD to CPF, as well as during the project implementation, and finally appraisal of completed projects. **We therefore call upon the World Bank to take urgent measures to ensure the meaningful engagement of CSO and the public in the forthcoming Country Partnership Framework 2021 – 2026 and its processes as follows;**

Our Demands

- a. **Capacity Building:** World Bank processes including the project cycle are clearly technical. Capacity building will enable CSOs to effectively analyze World Bank development projects and policies to ensure the country and the citizenry benefit optimally. **Recommendation: World Bank should prioritize capacity building of CSOs in Kenya, to ensure CSO's have the right skills to engage effectively in the SCD and CPF process currently underway.**
- b. **Corruption** is still a major obstacle to economic development in Kenya despite all the measures already in place to combat it. World Bank can work closely with CSOs to enhance transparency and accountability, not only in World Bank funded projects, but also across the country and across all the sectors. **Recommendation: World Bank should invest in CSO, and citizen led social accountability engagement in all its projects.**
- c. **Unemployment** remains a major challenge in Kenya both at the national and county level. World Bank should channel its funding in areas that have a greater potential for creating more employment opportunities in the country. Close and regular discussions between the CSOs and the Bank can help identify such areas. **Recommendation: World Bank should support CSO efforts in the auditing of Kenya's investments to enhance employment.**
- d. Inequality in distribution of resources in Kenya is yet to be solved. World Bank should work closely with CSOs to ensure that the projects they fund address the issue of inequality. **Recommendation: World Bank should support CSO efforts in the auditing of Kenya's investments to enhance equality and inclusion.**
- e. **Civic education** is necessary for citizens on a variety of issues such as the right of access to information on utilization of public resources. This can help to promote transparency and accountability across the country and reduce the level of corruption. **Recommendation: World Bank should establish a robust civic education and citizen engagement framework in the CPF process to ensure meaningful citizen engagement in line with constitutional requirements.**
- f. Kenyans are to larger extent divided along ethnic, religious, and wealth line. The bank can focus its attention on funding CSOs spearheaded activities that promote national cohesion. **Recommendation: World Bank should support CSO efforts in auditing Kenya's investments to enhance employment, inclusion, and national cohesion.**

For more information, please contact: TISA on 0757129700 or email info@tisa.or.ke