

## **Global Youth Consultations - Discussion Guidelines**

Welcome once again to the global youth consultations on the draft youth component of the World Bank's draft Children and Youth Strategy.

We would like to keep access to this e-discussion open and beneficial for all.

However, the degree to which this can happen in reality will be a function of how closely you follow the guidelines of this discussion. With this in mind, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- \* Identify yourself in 1-2 lines in your first message. Please let others know your full name and country of origin or residence. Including your organizational affiliation and specialization is recommended.

- \* Refer to the moderator's message at the start of each week as the basis of your contribution -- focus on that week's themes and questions. Incorporate into your message, whenever possible, specific cases, examples, and stories from your country or region.

- \* Keep your comments clear and succinct so as to keep the dialogue focused and productive. Given the very nature of an e-mail discussion, it is necessary to be fairly short and to the point. Overly long messages are skipped over by most participants, so please select 1 or 2 key points that you would like to make, and make them as concisely as possible. The longer your post the less likely it is that you will communicate your ideas to others.

- \* Follow the basic principles of any productive dialogue: communicate your perspective, ask questions, make comments and suggestions, and share knowledge, but do all this in a positive and collegial manner. Critique and disagree, but avoid indulging in destructive criticism regarding the contributions of others. And, of course, profanity is not acceptable.

- \* Try to avoid quoting someone else's entire message and insert your personal comments after each point. Such messages are often hard to read and tend to create a 'ME versus YOU' atmosphere.

- \* Do not send messages with attachments. Instead, if you think the entire group will benefit from a document or other resources, provide a short description and either send the link to a website or mention that you would be willing to send a copy to interested participants.

- \* Remember that there are hundreds of participants from over 100 countries signed up to the discussion. If you have something specific to say to an individual, please send a message to that person and not to the entire group.

\*\*\* General policy for posting messages \*\*\*

Since October 1998 we have organized and hosted over 120 public e-discussions, which have attracted over 80,000 participants from about 200 countries, in the Development Forum, the World Bank's online discussion facility. During that time we have learned a lot about what works and what does not work using this form of consultation. E-discussions are most effective when contributions are focused on a particular topic citing

specific examples and when contributions reflect a wide range of perspectives and come from many different countries. To that end, the following policies were developed:

1) On average, 10 messages per day will be posted. While this is not a concrete policy, we have learned, largely through feedback from previous participants, that posting more than 10 messages a day tends to be counterproductive and people end up feeling overwhelmed or stop reading messages altogether. A large number of messages also poses a hardship for many participants who must pay for their email access in developing countries.

2) Messages will be selected according to how much they focus on a particular week's topic and their overall coherence and conciseness. Priority will be given to first-time contributors. Also, we highly encourage messages from youth in developing countries due to their unique experiences and perspectives. After all, debates on international development should not and can not include only voices from the North.

3) No message longer than 2 pages (approximately 500 words) will be posted in its entirety. We reserve the right to edit and shorten messages.

4) Messages containing one-liners such as "great idea" or "I agree with you" will not be posted since they do not contribute substantively to the discussion.

On a final note, we apologize in advance if you receive an occasional message containing text that may be difficult to read. The mailing list platform we use is reliable but, given the hundreds of email programs in use (leading to variations in fonts, graphics, etc.), it encounters a problem once in a while.

If a problem occurs with any particular message, we will resend it.

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to an interesting and lively discussion.