

## **Fighting Politics:**

The World Bank, the Integrated Development Model and  
Citizenship at a Cross Road

*Garnet Mobility*  
*Warwick University*

**Pascale Hatcher**

Doctoral student,  
Institute of Social Studies (ISS)  
The Hague, The Netherlands  
hatcher@iss.nl

## Research proposal

The research project *Fighting Politics: The World Bank, the Integrated Development Model and Citizenship at a Cross Road*, is about the World Bank, the new aid architecture and politics. It explores how the emergence of the Post Washington Consensus led to a wave of 'new' policies and practices in the development community. The World Bank has been at the forefront of the development reform with the introduction, in 1998, of the Comprehensive Development Framework, the first element of what was to become the Integrated Development Model (IDM). Recognizing the pivotal role that should be played by the state and civil society alike, this model was expected to put developing countries' governments back 'in the driver's seat'.

These changes bring us to a critical juncture where the World Bank is openly addressing the very nature and functions of the state and civil society. However, this appears to lead us to a paradox: it seems that, on the one hand, we are witnessing the birth of a social shift which calls for a greater role for civil society but, on the other hand, the same reform brings forth a set of institutional shifts that seek to bypass the political debates arising from a more involved civil society.

The research analyses this apparent paradox at the heart of the IDM. It explores how the World Bank has come to address the political balance between civil society and the state. Set into its historical background, the shift appears less like a paradox and more like a very complementary process. Indeed the Model should be viewed as an attempt by the Bank to manage the social and political contradictions inherent to the governance structures created by the structural adjustment era, rather than a genuine paradigmatic shift away from the Washington Consensus. These two paralleled, yet complementary trends at the core of the IDM, are defined as a new type of neo-liberalism that seeks to implement a new form of governance in order to lock-in market-enabling policies in countries undergoing political and economic reform. A parallel process echoes the call for 'participation and ownership' and brings forth new forms of development initiatives to the local level, which are specifically located outside the political realm-i.e. they promote individual capitalistic initiatives as a safety net for the acknowledged social impacts of the reforms.

The research looks at these changes within the World Bank by focusing on the IDM's main aid allocation mechanisms: the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS). In this view, PRS have two functions: while they assign new positions to the different actors within the international aid chain, they also assign new functions to these actors—the World Bank itself, multilateral and bilateral donors, Civil Society Organisations (CSO), and also the State under reform, including parliaments, executive office, judiciary branch and local government. Each development actor that could have vetoed the prescribed reforms in the past — i.e. actors seeking to establish market-inhibiting policies— is increasingly locked in specific apolitical functions. Of course, this raises serious concerns relating to the very notion of citizenship, the conceptual absentee of the IDM, as the model

fails to acknowledge the benefits of politics as a rational for societal deliberation.

The research explores this in seven distinct chapters:

The first chapter is dedicated to the research conceptual framework and methodology. It introduces the reader to the context in which the thesis is set and the problem that makes it an important and cohesive piece of work. Chapter two, which is the historical background, analyses the birth of the IDM at the World Bank. This analysis of the evolution of development thinking is pivotal in understanding how the political agenda embedded in the PWC, far from being a radical dissociation from the past development paradigm, has become possible precisely because of those past measures. Chapters three and four look at the changing political functions of the State and civil society as core concepts of the Bank's IDM. The State chapter thus suggests that the IDM emerged as an attempt to reconcile on the one hand NPI inspired Structural adjustment programs (SAP), which focused on state failure, and on the other hand, Neo-institutional ideas, which acknowledge the serious problems linked to state erosion in regards to market functions and economic growth. Closely linked to the State chapter, Chapter four also looks at how the changing functions of civil society within the Bank's IDM is rooted in Neo-institutional thoughts. It suggests that the Bank's take on civil society is depoliticising the concept while also challenging the very notion of citizenship in countries under reform. Chapters five and six concretely exemplify how the Bank's IDM and its given take on state and civil society have been applied into practice in countries under reform. For this, the research focuses on Poverty Reduction Strategies. Initiated in 1999, these strategies have been the Bank's main aid allocation mechanism to apply the core principles of the IDM and as such, are the best case study to test the thesis. Chapters five and six thus look at the changing functions of the state and civil society embedded in the PRS. This analysis is based on official Bank reports, PRS papers, international non-governmental organisations reports and interviews conducted at the World Bank headquarters in September-October 2006. The thesis' final chapter 'Redefining citizenship: the multilateralization of political power' exposes the research's main conclusions.

The above-described research is embedded within Garnets' Jointly Executed Research Project - *North South Development Issues and the Global Regulatory Framework*. The research explores key policy issues linked to this JERP's objectives, more importantly, its objectives of analysing current attempts to establish policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms at a global level to deal with issues of governance within developing economies, the ideas, forces and interests shaping the agendas for global governance and; the effectiveness of existing global efforts to deal with problems arising from state failure.