

## **WORLD FAITHS DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE**

*Occasional Paper no. 3*

**"A New Direction for World Development?"  
Comment on the first full version of the  
*World Development Report 2000/1***

"A New Direction for World Development?" is based on a very similar paper entitled "Understanding Poverty", which makes a critique of the *WDR* with fairly detailed references to the text. If anyone would like a copy of "Understanding Poverty", please ask us for it. It is also available from our web-site. We are producing this version for a more general public, who may not have the text of the first draft of the *WDR* to hand.

## ***Introduction***

"Poverty is about people, the human beings behind the statistics". It is not just an economic issue. "It is vulnerability. It is powerlessness". Furthermore, it is a moral problem: "Poverty amidst plenty is an affront to universal values". With these opening statements, the first draft of the World Bank's *World Development Report 2000/1* seems to set the scene for a new direction for world development.

This impression is reinforced by much that is to be found further on in the Report. It is recognised that the causes and nature of poverty vary greatly, not only from country to country, but within single countries, and that the unevenness of the success of past poverty eradication policies "warns us against simplistic universal policies and interventions". Current global trends are seen to present not only opportunities for the poor, but also risks, especially the risk of growing inequality. There is a strong call for changes to be made in state institutions, so that they will act in favour of the poor. Reliable methods of decentralisation are recommended, and the need to ensure the participation of the poor in national decision-making bodies is courageously addressed. Moreover, this is the first *World Development Report* ever, which has dared to make a clear denunciation of corruption, as a significant cause of poverty.

However, perhaps the most potentially ground-breaking admission in the *WDR* is that deregulation and the opening up of markets is not necessarily good for the poor. This turns the spotlight onto the way in which policies at a macro-level have often undermined efforts being made to eradicate poverty at a national or local level. The beam of the spotlight may be as yet somewhat faint and flickering, but it is at least casting shadows around theories which, for too long, have been considered unassailable.

There is no doubt that this *WDR* opens many doors and is making strides towards changes which would never have been thought of for the World Bank even a decade ago. The work of the team and their honest attempts to include different view points must be fully acknowledged, as well as the enormous effort which has been put into consulting so widely.

Nevertheless, the WFDD regrets that some of the main issues raised by the religious communities, such as the importance of values and moral education, cultural diversity and the responsibility of the rich towards the poor have only been very marginally addressed, if, indeed, at all. With "A New Direction for World Development?", we are attempting to present our critique of the *WDR 2000/1* in a positive way, which makes clear the need for a holistic view of development.

### **1. Values**

The success of any new design of policies and practices for the eradication of poverty, will depend on attention being paid to the dominant values which have been the driving force behind the actions and systems which have led to the poverty of most people in the world around us. We need to hold a debate in different parts of the world, from the point of view of different religions and cultures, about what kinds of shifts we need to make in the value system which underlies the current mainstream "development" process. As the *WDR* rightly says, poverty is the "outcome of economic, social and political processes that interact with each other, but until "cultural processes, values and beliefs" are added to this list, the analysis will never be complete and recommendations for change will lack essential ingredients.

The reluctance on the part of many institutions involved in development work to address the issue of values may arise, on one hand, because the staff feel more at ease when thinking in economic rather than socio-philosophical terms. The danger is that this may lead to a lack of understanding of the need for a holistic view of development, a failure to see that, unless the process of development incorporates all aspects of life, it will remain fragmented, incomplete and therefore unsuccessful.

However, it must be said that such reluctance arises, on the other hand, because of the lack of tools available readily to incorporate this kind of analysis into the paradigms of the natural and social sciences. It is a matter of urgency that more resources should be given to researchers who are working in this area.

A further reason for avoiding any debate on values may be the fear that no consensus would be reached even within a single institution. In this case, there is all the more reason to begin a rich discussion!

In the eyes of the religious groups who work with the poor, no particularly complicated analysis is needed to show that until the acceptance of corruption, for instance, has been replaced by a generalised repudiation of dishonest practices and until exclusive and discriminatory attitudes have been replaced by a vision of the equal worth of everyone, the marginalisation and impoverishment of the majority of the world's people will continue.

These changes are perhaps most clearly necessary when one looks at the behaviour of the rich towards the poor, but they are needed, too, in poor communities, and, in many cases within the religious communities themselves. We suggest two practical ways of contributing to bringing these changes about.

#### ***1.a) Moral education***

The availability of education for everyone has now been recognised by all development agencies as vital for the economic progress of a country. However, the focus on the economic aspects of development has led to education still being evaluated largely in terms of the numbers of children enrolled in schools and the number of years they stay there. If there is any mention of what they might learn, the emphasis is on basic skills, such as numeracy and literacy.

These skills are vital to provide the poor with the necessary tools to be able to take control over their own lives and to avoid being exploited by others, but unless even basic skills of reading and writing are imparted within the framework of some moral teaching, those who acquire them can turn into oppressors themselves. Scribes who write letters for the non-literate, accountants who deal with the figures of small farmers' co-operatives etc. may see nothing against continuing to create inequality and impoverish others to their own advantage. (Let it here be said that we are not, of course, condoning the use of "moral education" as a vehicle for manipulation and propaganda, but are referring to the transmission of values such as honesty and compassion which must be the bedrock of all harmonious societies.)

The moral content of education is surely even more important when we consider training and education on higher levels. Politicians, for instance, who have the highest intellectual grasp politics, sociology or economics, but lack an understanding of the fundamental importance for the well-being of any society of respect, compassion, fairness and honesty, will never bring about long-lasting changes for the poor. WFDD calls for the World Bank to address this issue, in

partnership with other organisations, such as UNESCO, and with the world's religions themselves.

### ***1.b) The media***

Another important means of conveying a different set of messages to the general public is the media, whose potential for awareness-raising has been amply demonstrated in recent years through the campaigns of environmentalists. Again, WFDD sees no reason for which the World Bank should not open up spaces to help to widen current debates about the moral content of media messages.

Television and radio programmes are probably the most powerful instruments to get people thinking about what should be judged as success, for instance, and what kinds of people should be esteemed. Are those who amass huge amounts of wealth necessarily to receive most social prestige, or should this be awarded to those who share and those who work in a spirit of service? As pointed out above, one of the principle differences in this *WDR* compared with former ones, is the boldness with which the moral question of corruption is tackled head on as a major cause of the continuation of poverty and powerlessness. However, it will only be possible to wipe out corruption at all levels of society if dishonest dealings and the taking of bribes begin to be regarded by the public at large as abhorrent ways of behaving.

## **2. Cultural Diversity**

The question of values is closely related to that of cultural identity, since, although there is a great deal of universal common ground, different values are given different priorities in different cultures. It is not a question merely of adding a cultural dimension onto one's analysis, but of taking account of the fact that the perceptions and actions of human beings in every sphere of life are embedded in their culture. Thus we can rightly speak of an "economic culture", a "political culture" and a "social culture" etc. In the light of this, the WFDD suggests that the single, technical, and economic rational approach reflected in the contents and presentation of the *WDR* is surely unfortunate for a "World" Bank, whose 158 members come from a huge diversity of cultural traditions.

As the WFDD has pointed out many times in the past, unless due attention is paid to the different ways in which people give meaning to the world and their existence in it, and to the ways in which they order their societies and run their economies, even narrowly focused poverty eradication projects will fail. There are too many examples of how "development" interventions have been unsuccessful or even caused damage, precisely because the culture of the "beneficiaries" has been disregarded.

In some cases, intervention from outside has caused social fragmentation, for instance when micro-credit has been given to individual families instead of to the whole community, with the result that a few have become richer than the rest. In other cases people have abandoned a project because it does not accord with their beliefs about sowing and reaping, terracing or irrigating their land. And in yet other cases, people have become uprooted and lost some of the most important elements of their identity, by going along routes to "success", which have alienated them from their cultural origins. Although the *WDR* stresses that the poor are not a homogenous group, even within one country, let alone world wide, there is little indication of cultural diversity in the solutions it offers to poverty. We hope that this is due to lack of space.

In some countries, such as Guatemala, the World Bank has recognised that justice may be inaccessible to a lot of people, not only because their own languages are not used in the courts, or because the laws are difficult to understand, but also because the whole philosophy behind an adversarial system of justice might be alien to them. The Bank has thus supported space being given within the national legal system to traditional justice as practised in many rural communities. This kind of openness towards other legal frameworks should be actively promoted in the *WDR*.

The same applies to political systems. There seems to be a growing general supposition that democracy based on the election of individuals and political parties in competition with each other is the only acceptable governance model. This supposition ignores the fact that formation of political parties is outside the tradition of many cultures. In many indigenous communities, for instance, the choice of leaders through the consensus of a community, reached on an assessment of the quality of previous service rendered by the candidates, has withstood the test of centuries.

The WFDD does not advocate that all aspects of all cultures should be preserved at all costs, but nor should cultural differences be considered of value merely in the light of whether they contribute to or put obstacles in the way of the type of economic development promoted by institutions such as the World Bank. There are very different opinions to be found in different cultures about what, for instance, might be termed as "wasting time". There are also very different views on what should be the prime indicators of "good management". Whereas some would give absolute priority to achieving targeted outputs, others might make their prime aim the active involvement of a committed workforce.

WFDD is aware of the problems faced by the World Bank and other development agencies concerning interventions in cultural spheres, especially in areas, such as gender relations, in which they would like to bring about changes in existing cultural practices. It may be because of this sensitivity that the *WDR* proposes practical measures to achieve more gender equality, such as ensuring that women have more access to education and markets, whilst the cultural framework is left untouched.

With our intimate knowledge of the gender discrimination which goes on within the religious institution themselves, we suggest that, unless legal and other measures undertaken are accompanied by awareness-raising about culturally-based attitudes to women they will be unable to produce real changes in gender relationships. To provide women with greater access to education, markets and the services of the state institutions are very important steps, but it is also necessary to deal with gender discrimination within the markets themselves, as within many education systems and state institutions.

With its exercise of listening to the views on poverty of thousands of poor people ("Voices of the Poor", published by the World Bank as an anthology of statements made), the World Bank has taken an important step forward. WFDD is aware of the dangers of taking the "voice of the poor" as the only guideline for development strategies, but we suggest that a practical way forward on the question of cultural awareness might be for the Bank now to go beyond merely recording what the poor say about poverty. It is necessary to make an analysis of how the poor themselves understand not only poverty but true development. The way this analysis is made will be all important, as listening to other people must involve being fully aware of how the listener's own cultural framework can lead to a distortion of the meaning of what is said.

There will be no consensus, but the debate will be rich, creative and radical and will almost surely run the risk of the World Bank being led into realms of different visions of understanding the world, different value systems and different ways of relating to other people and to the planet. WFDD predicts that genuinely to take the views of the poor into practical account, would lead to as many different development models as there are cultures in our world. It would also reveal that many elements of these models are already being put into practice by both religious and other organisations in the developing countries.

### **3. The relationship between the rich and the poor**

The above sections on values and cultural diversity provide the backdrop for all our other observations.

#### **3.a) *The responsibility of the rich***

The WFDD has frequently expressed the conviction that the causal relationship between the amassing of wealth by a few and the increasing impoverishment of many must be addressed as a matter of priority by all those genuinely concerned with the reduction of poverty. We are thus disappointed by the way in which the *WDR* seems to downplay or even overlook the power of the rich countries and large international institutions, especially of multinational corporations. If, as the Report emphasises, the powerlessness of the poor is to be addressed, then the issue of international power relations must also be brought in. There is a need to monitor and analyse how such power is exercised in dealing with poor countries and regions.

It is true that the Report states that global inequality has risen, and it recognises the role of macro-economic global forces in the context of poverty reduction. The international community is called upon, for example, to help in relationship to the provision of public goods and debt relief, but the overall impression gained is that no-one in particular is responsible for the present crisis of poverty in the world. We would like more emphasis on the need for co-responsibility between rich and poor countries, borrowers and lenders, international agencies who give the wrong advice, or no advice and those who take it.

The *WDR* does recognise that, if economic growth is to be pursued as the overall strategy, the patterns of growth must be linked to reforms of global institutions such as markets, so that the benefits brought about are shared out as an integral part of the growth process. This is, says the Report, to be hastened and ensured by more regulation through institutions at the national level. It is, however, strange, to say the least, that one of the key instruments of wealth distribution, taxation, is nowhere discussed. WFDD would have liked to have seen at least the beginnings of a debate about international as well as national taxation.

Implicit in the overall thesis of this report is the notion that richer countries will help poorer ones to strengthen and build up their economic infrastructures and capacities, so that they can fully engage in the global competitive free-market system. But no serious questions are raised about the morality, or even suitability, of this system, even though analyses have shown us that its focus on the short-run may cause irreparable damage to people and the environment, and that in the long term it is unlikely to be sustainable, whether for reasons of social justice or sound ecology.

### **3.b) Trade**

One of the most vital ingredients for the eradication poverty is the institution of fairer terms of trade and particularly fairer prices for the commodities exported by poor countries. Nevertheless, global trading relations barely get a mention in the *WDR* and, in striking contrast to the way the need for state-level institutional reform is tackled, international institutions which play a major role in perpetuating the inequity of the present system, such as the World Trade Organisation, are ignored. Voicelessness and powerlessness, dealt with so extensively locally and nationally, are not brought up at a global level at all. This might be because the role of the *WDR* has never been seen as an evaluative one with regard to the World Bank's own work, which might make it difficult to bring other multilateral organisations into the debate, but the avoidance of the issue leaves a glaring gap in the analysis.

The role of the transnational corporations is lost in this same glaring gap. Given that the power wielded by these companies and the amount of wealth they own is far more than that of many of the poorest countries put together, their potential for contributing to the eradication of poverty must also be far greater than that of most of these countries' governments. Why then is the focus not directed towards those who could make the most difference most quickly, especially in the current climate of partnerships between the state and the private sector?

The *WDR* team even gives examples of how poor countries are victims of the transnational companies' pursuit of profit, regardless of the social cost. It points out, for instance, that the priority given by internationally based research to the issues of most importance to the rich countries can mean that vital issues for the poorer ones are disregarded. It also shows how the poorer countries are unable to afford to buy essential items such as vaccines.

However, the remedy offered for this situation is merely that international aid should cover the costs which the transnational corporations do not want to bear. There is no hint that it might be the moral obligation of the private international sector to take steps which go beyond the accumulation of their own profit to bring more equity to the world. The question is not raised as to whether social and sustainable development are core concerns of the global market and economic sectors, or merely side-issues, for which people at the policy, market, private and research and development decision-making levels are not to be held accountable. WFDD would like more work to be done on the introduction of mechanisms which would give strong incentives to independent actors to become accountable for broader social responsibilities.

We cannot close this section on trade without a strong call to the World Bank to highlight the arms trade as a major cause of poverty. It is not sufficient merely to view the negative effects of military spending in the light of less money being made available for health and education. The world must surely be asked to scrutinise as well, the part that the rich countries play in selling arms to governments or movements involved in armed conflicts in impoverished countries. Not only do the profits made by arms manufacturers and dealers take money away from essential services for the poor, they cause untold suffering for those who are maimed, killed and forced to flee. The victims of armed conflict are among the very poorest people in the world. The arms trade is one of the most glaring examples of the irresponsibility shown by the rich towards the poor.

### **3.c) Risk sharing**

The *WDR* talks a lot about the risks faced by the poor and how these risks (such as natural disasters or globally-caused financial crises) might be managed. WFDD would like more analysis

of how far the rich countries – which in some cases are involved in causing these risks - are affected by them and suggestions as to how the burden of globally-caused risks might be more equally shared.

With their systems of avoiding charging interest on loans, the Muslims have come up with some practical pointers towards how this might be done. Could not the principle of the money lender sharing in the loss or profits which result from the loan be the basis for the way the rich make not only money but also knowledge and technology available to the poor? If those who gave loans to poor countries in past decades had shared the responsibility for the recuperation of the money, there is no doubt that the present debt crisis would never have loomed so large

### **3.d) *Motivation of the rich to share***

In promoting dialogue rather than a confrontational approach, in order to achieve more equity in the world, WFDD is not underestimating the depths of the conflicts of interests which exist within individual societies and globally. We are under no illusion that it will be easier in the present than it has been in the past to persuade the rich and the powerful, whether on a global, national or even village level, to give up some of their privileges in favour of more equity for the majority. But we know that, unless this happens, particularly in our globalised context, poverty eradication will not happen either.

We recommend the road of dialogue, particularly as history has shown that confrontations of a violent nature usually end in power merely being transferred to another small group, rather than being more equally shared out. However, it is clear that harmony will not arise from the refusal to recognise the existence of conflicts of interest between different social groups and between different nations. Thus the "empowerment" of the poor, largely through education and, as the *WDR* suggests, through building and strengthening their own institutions, must lead to their being able to have a genuinely equal place at the table to set the agenda and to exert pressure on those with power. In this context, the *WDR*'s "attack on poverty" must be understood in the framework of the rights of the poor and not in the framework of the rich deciding how much charity they will hand out.

At this juncture, it is apposite to point out that the religious institutions are challenged, too, concerning the empowerment of the poor. To hand over more power to the powerless, may sometimes seem like a threat to those who have hitherto exercised power and privilege. Perhaps for this reason, all too often, instead of empowering impoverished people with a feeling of self-worth and purpose, religions have delivered the kind of teaching which instils in them a feeling of powerlessness and resignation about their situation. The result of this is that power is maintained within the institution or in the hands of individual leaders . Of course there are countless cases to the contrary too, and these should be documented and held up as examples of the way forward.

There are, as the *WDR* says, many pragmatic reasons for which members of elite groups might want to join the poor in their efforts to improve their situation. The reduction of poverty would almost certainly lead to less crime and fewer contagious diseases, for instance. But WFDD believes that self-interest is too unstable a foundation for a long-lasting change for the poor and that, although there are many reasons for which the elite might want to reduce poverty (to ensure a stable political and social future for their children, for example), there are also many ways in which they have always tried to gain these advantages without relinquishing any of their power. The only imperatives for change which stand on firm ground are ethical ones.

In this task of winning the hearts and minds of the rich and the powerful, the religious institutions have an essential role to play. They will be challenged to look at their own patterns of behaviour and management of wealth and to demonstrate by example that true social contentment, peace and well-being can only be based on a view of the human race as one large family and thus on an ethic of sharing, compassion and respect for (thus inclusion of) every human being on our planet.

### **3.e) *International aid***

The *WDR* makes no pretence about the disappointing results of international aid as an instrument to combat poverty. As some of the reasons for these results, it highlights the self-interested motivation of donor governments in giving aid (e.g. geopolitical concerns); their divisive behaviour (each wanting their “own” projects); and the imposition of conditions for aid, which have led to the lack of “ownership” of projects by the recipients. WFDD would suggest that a further set of reasons should be added to the list. These might include the failure to understand local cultures, the false belief that economic projects on their own are the solution and the lack of political will to address the issue of corruption.

WFDD is concerned about the acceptance of the supposition that aid should be channelled only to countries which implement “good” development policies, especially in view of the fact that, as the *WDR* admits, no consensus is even to be found among the donors themselves on what the ingredients of these “good” policies should be. Of course we would be against aid being diverted to harmful ends, such as corruption or military escalation, and of course we agree that there should be guarantees that the resources provided should be used to maximum benefit for the poor. However, we would like to point to the risk, implicit in the demand for “good” policies, of a lack of willingness to open the debate to other points of view and to allow the supposedly superior knowledge of the donors to be challenged.

We reiterate the call we have made on other occasions that international aid must aim to give the poorest people in the world a chance to create situations which allow them to live in security and dignity, wherever they happen to have been born. Only once this principle is accepted should a rigorous analysis ensue of possible impediments to the good use of aid in a particular country. Where possible, strategies should then be worked out which will overcome

WFDD welcomes the World Bank’s initiative on the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF), as a way forward to try to overcome both the problems caused by the individualistic attitudes of donors and by the lack of participation of civil society and the private sector in planning and implementing national development strategies. If they are well-run, government-led discussions within the CDF could open the door to debates with donors on a more equal footing, as well as to a real opportunity for civil society (including religious groups) to share their experience and voice their opinions. WFDD will do its best to make sure that members of the religious communities participate in these processes.

We also welcome the agreement made by the IMF and the World Bank in September 1999 to work together with national governments, civil society and the private sector on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, in order to ensure that the benefits of debt relief will be used as effectively as possible to reduce poverty. The religious communities want to participate here, too, particularly to ensure that the aim of the plans embraces a culturally sensitive vision of development as well as poverty reduction.

We give wholehearted backing to the call by the *WDR* for further debt relief, without which international aid becomes little short of nonsense, but debt relief on its own is not enough. Free

trade access to northern markets for all of the Least Developed Countries is one example of how long-term stability can be built up, once the burden of debt has been reduced.

#### **4. The environment**

The decision to focus the *WDR 2002* on the topic of the environment could be the reason for this Report dedicating relatively little space to it. Nevertheless, there is a need to pay more attention to the theme, even if merely to register its crucial importance for future development. Nowhere, for instance in the section on “natural” disasters is there any reflection about how *unnatural* the causes of some of these disasters are.

The wasteful and destructive consumption patterns of the “North” are not debated. Unless there is the political will to open up the debate to include these, WFDD believes that very little will be done to stop the rapid deterioration of the environment, much of which is being carried out in the name of “progress”.

We need to delve deeper into the causes and effects as well as the very nature of the prevailing consumption patterns being promoted world-wide through globalisation. Within the religious communities, there is deep concern about their effects, not only on our planet but also on societies and individuals. Failing to satisfy individual and collective yearnings for inner peace and contentment, the consumer culture is giving rise to deep-level dissatisfaction, which is manifested in violent and discriminatory attitudes as well as in illnesses, such as drug addiction, all of which contribute to further poverty.

The *WDR*'s recognition that economic growth by itself will not overcome poverty is very welcome but the WFDD would like more debate on the sustainability of development in relation to economic growth. Even if we accept (and by no means all WFDD contributors do accept this), that economic growth is a pre-requisite for poverty eradication, the key questions we raised last year have still to be answered: what kind of growth, what kind of consumption and what mix of institutions are needed to protect the environment?

The *WDR* does recognise that the poor may suffer from economic growth processes which degrade the environment and many recommendations are given about the best management of natural assets. However, the Report under-emphasises that one of the most essential tasks of human beings – whether in the light of the belief that the world belongs to God, who has merely entrusted it to them as stewards, or on account of the intimate relationship of inter-dependence which exists between all living things - is to respect and care for the world in which they live. If we jeopardise the sustainability of our natural environment, we are also abandoning our responsibility towards future generations.

We can only conclude that any poverty reduction strategy which involves the destruction of our planet is both ethically and practically wrong. As we pointed out in our first Comment, “the notion of restraint and the acceptance of limits are a crucial part of what it means to be human.”

## 5. Work

Employment is frequently mentioned in the *WDR* as a way to combat poverty, but the WFDD is disappointed that the issue of work is not given a more central place. We would like to insist that to ensure meaningful work in dignified conditions, which include fair returns for the worker must be a key aim of any development strategy. The *WDR* recognises that not only is there is no proof that increased liberalisation has fulfilled the expectations that it would lead to low-skilled labour-intensive growth, but that, on the contrary, it looks as though it has resulted in a bias towards higher skilled workers. There is, however, no attempt to replace this by another central, coherent strategy to address the issue of full employment as a key way to overcome poverty.

If the World Bank is to enter into a real “partnership” with the private sector, it must, as a first priority, challenge the transnational companies to make a contribution in proportion to their turnover towards the provision of full and quality employment opportunities for all, by providing both jobs and capacity training. The question of work is linked, too, of course, to the issue of greater access to markets for the poor and the need for more support to be given to the diversification of sources of income for poor families.

Training and education are probably the most essential ingredients of any sustainable programme which aims at the provision of work for everyone. But we would like to remind the *WDR*, too, that unpaid and voluntary work should be given a high status in society and that women’s work in the home should be recognised as a vital contribution to a country’s economy.

## 6. Visions of Development

The title of the *WDR* "Attacking Poverty" is a positive statement about the political will of the World Bank to tackle this critical issue. However, the focus throughout the report on poverty rather than development leads the Report to concentrate too much on the powerlessness and material deficiencies of the poor. With the lack of attention paid to the positive contribution of the poor - their resourcefulness, spiritual groundedness and their awareness of the importance of community and personal relations - the *WDR* runs the risk of overlooking the types of wealth they possess, which should not be depleted by the development process.

The *WDR* also runs the risk of being understood to restrict the meaning of human well-being to the material, as though inequality and social exclusion might only be considered undesirable because of their negative effects on economic growth. Human well-being, security and empowerment must be rooted in all the dimensions of life. They emerge from a complex and dynamic interplay between the satisfaction of the material and social needs and the spiritual fulfilment of the individual. The recognition of this vital link between the practical and spiritual aspects of life would necessarily imply a basic reconceptualisation of the goals and methodologies of current development activities.

The World Bank's vision of development would almost certainly be different from a religious one, but a vision based on inclusive values and human rights and responsibilities, especially social and economic rights, would be very welcome. It would also provide the basis of hope for long-lasting changes in favour of the poor.

This paper was written by Wendy Tyndale, drawing from the ideas and viewpoints of hundreds of people who have contributed to the thinking of the WFDD over the two years of its existence.

Special thanks go to Dr. Kamla Chowdhry for her suggestions on the presentation of the paper and to Swami Amarananda, Lawrence Arturo, Irene Dankelman, Janet Dunnett, Sharon Harper, Elizabeth Harris, Mike McKeever, Wilson Mtebe, Vincent Peremans, John Perry, Andrew Rogerson, Réseau Cultures, SJ, William Ryan, SJ, David Stratton, Chansamone Voravong and Alex Wilks.