

3

Summary of Views from Civil Society Organizations

The IEO surveyed a sample of 32 civil society organizations (CSOs) from around the world to obtain their views on aspects of the IMF's internal governance.³⁹ Responses were received from nine organizations and individuals. To ensure candid responses, their identities have been kept confidential.

There was a general consensus among respondents that current channels of communication between the IMF (including the Board) and CSOs are inadequate and that formal consultation is lacking.⁴⁰ Several respondents called for a formal process for external stakeholders to consult with the IMF *before* policies are enacted. A common complaint was a lack of transparency in Board processes, which makes it difficult for CSOs to gauge whether their views are considered in Board deliberations. Many called for earlier release of Board minutes⁴¹ and for the release

of transcripts of Board meetings. Several CSOs viewed the IMF's approach to CSO relations as one-sided and, at times, "patronizing," rather than one of partnership. The accreditation process and involvement of the IMF's External Relations Department were also viewed as problematic, with some CSOs noting that their inquiries are sometimes regarded with suspicion.

Many respondents expressed the view that the IMF's governance structure is inadequate to hold the institution accountable for its decisions to stakeholders. They considered the selection process for the Managing Director to be fundamentally flawed and called for a more transparent and merit-based process. They also called for a process that allows Management to be held responsible by the Board and member countries for the operations of the Fund. Some respondents expressed the view that the Managing Director should not chair the Board.

Several CSOs argued that the Board of Governors, directly or through the IMFC, should evaluate the performance of the Board based on objective criteria. Some CSOs argued that the Executive Board should include more senior-level figures, and that the dual role of Executive Directors as both officers of the Fund and representatives of their governments compromised accountability. Many argued that weighted voting and the constituency system is anachronistic and should be replaced with a system of double-majority voting.

³⁹The questionnaire sent to CSOs appears in the background material to this evaluation, available on the IEO website at www.ieo-imf.org.

⁴⁰This was consistent with the findings of an IEO survey of member country authorities, which found that almost two-thirds of respondents "rarely or never" meet with representatives of civil society. Members of the Fund's Executive Board were somewhat more open, with 18 percent indicating that they meet with or consult representatives of civil society "regularly" and 43 percent indicating that they do so "on an *ad hoc* basis." Respondents to a survey of senior IMF staff reported being similarly engaged.

⁴¹Currently, minutes of Board meetings are made available to the public after 10 years.