

USTAWI VISITS THE WORLD BANK



Ustawi at the Second African Diaspora Meeting at the World Bank

The day after Memorial Day, Ustawi International Incorporated (Ustawi) participated in the 27 May 2008 meeting of the African Diaspora hosted by the World Bank in its headquarters in Washington DC.

Ustawi principals Dr Dodgson and Dr Macharia Waruingi took this event seriously and got all dressed up. Drs Dodgson and Waruingi showed up before 9am, and were told the number of seats was limited and access was only promised to Dr Waruingi. After 15 minutes or so the way was cleared for Dr Dodgson and that was when Ustawi took seats in the bowels of the World Bank, surrounded on all sides by posters proclaiming the World Bank's interest in global health.

The purpose of the day-long World Bank-African Diaspora meeting was to tell the Diaspora what was going on at the World Bank (they fund large projects), who they fund (only governments), what the World Bank Group organizations are (MIGA, IFC, IBRD, IDA, ICSID) and what data are on the World Bank website (lots).

Ustawi listened all morning, leaving for a meeting with MIGA for a hospital project they are working on, and returned to a lunch that was insufficient for all the invited guests. They then took their seats again and listened politely all afternoon, with Dr

Waruingi asking questions about accountability that seemed to bring out the deafness in the speakers.

Ustawi determined that the World Bank is achingly slow, and even though the organizers assured us they are interested in Diaspora meetings to discuss development and global health, Ustawi believes they are not. Ustawi made a special trip to Washington to meet with World Bank officials 2 weeks after the African Diaspora event to talk about organizing meetings with the African Diaspora. The World Bank blew off Ustawi. Which Ustawi had expected after years of listening to the World Bank. God bless them, the World Bank is stuck with their mandate which has caused untold misery in sub-Saharan Africa.

Undeterred, Ustawi is organizing World Cafe conferences anyway. The first is July 26 at 2pm at Newton Friends Meeting (Quaker Meeting) on Haddon Avenue (at Cooper St) New Jersey, just 1 block from the Ben Franklin Bridge and across the street from Rowan University, Camden County and Rutgers University buildings. The World Bank is invited, and will be welcomed joyously, as will be anyone else interested (contact e-mail: ustawi@kdnc.org).

These pictures were taken at the World Bank meeting. After the meeting was over the World Bank rolled up the posters, which Ustawi hopes is not a metaphor for their interest in global health.

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