The Human Development Division of EDI (EDIHD), in collaboration with the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), conducted a workshop on reform of public pension systems, *The Global Social Security Crisis*, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, from July 6-17, 1998. This was the second offering jointly delivered by EDI-HIID, the same workshop being conducted in July, 1997. The objective of the workshop was to provide government officials and staff of multilateral institutions working on pension systems with both (i) the theoretical framework underlying pension reform and (ii) practical issues drawn from county case studies and experiences of policy experts from governments, academic institutions and the World Bank. The workshop covered various design and implementation aspects of pension systems, including alternative strategies for privatization. At the end of the two-week session, participants developed and presented their reform proposals for their own countries. A total of 77 participants representing 30 countries attended the workshop.

The workshop evaluation was a Level I (participants' reaction) evaluation designed solely by the course organizers, including the development of a participants' feedback questionnaire. The EDI Evaluation Unit (EDIES) was not consulted by the organizers in the process of designing the evaluation, and assisted with the evaluation only by processing the data. The participants' feedback questionnaire consisted of three types of questions. The first type of question was on the usefulness of 33 individual presentations by different presenters as well as participants' satisfaction on 8 social events. A 5-point Likert type scale that ranged from 1=minimum to 5=maximum was used for the questions. The second type of question was participants' self-assessment of their knowledge of four key issues before and after the workshop, also measured on a 5-point scale. The third type of question was a series of open-ended questions on specific aspects of the workshop, including participants' class participation, reading assignments, and general comments on the overall workshop.

The participants' feedback questionnaire was completed by 57 respondents, 74% of the total participants. Twelve respondents, or 21.1% of all respondents, were Finance Ministry officials, 26 respondents (45.6%) were Social Security officials, 12 respondents (21.1%) were staff of International Organizations, and 7 (12.3%) were from other institutions. Following is a summary of the evaluation findings.

- The overall usefulness of the workshop received a mean score of 4.13 on a 5-point scale. Respondents' satisfaction with the administration of the workshop also exceeded 4.0 (mean=4.17).

- All 33 presentations received a mean score exceeding 3.0 out of 5.0. The highest rating of 4.35 was awarded to two presentations. These were the sessions on *Critiquing the Privatization of Social Security* (week 2), and *Administrative Costs of Public and Private Pension Systems* (week 1). Respondents' ratings were among the lowest on 3 sessions of country-specific presentations. They were *Critiquing the Chilean Reform* (mean=3.16), *Country Case: Poland* (mean=3.23), and *Country Case:...*
Bolivia (mean=3.20). This suggested a possible weakness of the workshop in country study presentations. Respondents' satisfaction with 8 social events ranged between 3.29-4.39 out of 5.0.

- Comparison between the pre-/post-workshop ratings of respondents' self-assessed knowledge showed a positive gain in all 4 subject areas at least by 37%. Two items that had the largest gain were the status of pension reforms around the world and national experience with privatized system. Their pre-workshop mean scores were the lowest among the 4 items, 2.56 and 2.38, respectively, but the ratings increased by more than 50% at the end of the workshop.

- Sixty-three percent of the respondents reported that class participation could have been improved. When asked whether respondents spoke as often as they wished, 52% answered "yes," but 48% responded otherwise. In their written comments, respondents suggested that class discussion could be improved by 1) ensuring a discussion time allocated in each session (N=9); 2) having a smaller class or conducting small-group activities (N=7); and 3) concentrating more on country case studies or experiences by soliciting views from participants and allowing all final proposals by participants to be presented before class (N=5). Respondents also felt that instructors should facilitate the discussion by encouraging participants to ask questions (N=6), avoiding monopolization of class by some participants (N=2), and limiting the time of interventions by other participating instructors and organizers (N=4).

- Results showed that 57% of the respondents spent on average 1-2 hours per day reading and/or working on the case solutions or exercises during the workshop, 28% spent 3-4 hours, and 7% spent more than 5 hours. Nine percent of all respondents reported that they spent less than 1 hour per day.

- Respondents were also asked approximately what percentage of the required reading they completed by the end of the two-week workshop. While 20% of all respondents reported to have completed 75% or more of the required readings, more than half of the respondents said that they finished less than 50% of the required readings. This may be an area of weakness of the workshop. Course organizers may need to reconsider the reading demands they are making on participants as well as to encourage participants to read more for higher achievement in understanding the subject materials.

- The participants' feedback questionnaire of this workshop had three shortcomings in design. First, asking participants to rate all 33 individual presentations at the end of the two-week workshop may have had introduced bias, since participants may not have been able to recall the earlier presentations correctly. Second, there were no questions in the questionnaire measuring the overall achievement of workshop objectives, or content, design, and delivery of the workshop. Third, there were no questions that objectively measured learning, except participants' self-assessment of pre-/post-workshop knowledge of 4 general topics. The workshop organizers are encouraged to work with EDIES in developing the questionnaires for future workshops, in order to be able to measure these critical dimensions more accurately and completely.