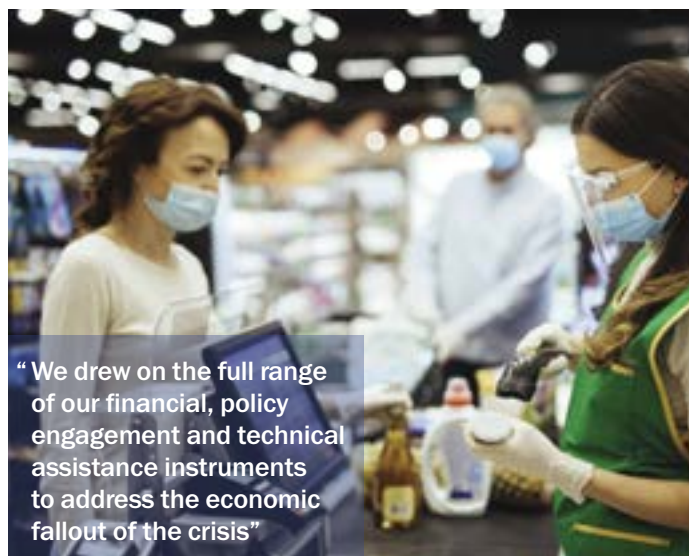


## Our work in 2020: Responding to Covid-19 and preparing for recovery

In March 2020, the EBRD became the first MDB to develop a support package aimed at helping economies respond to the Covid-19 crisis and prepare for the post-pandemic recovery. We drew on the full range of our financial, policy engagement and technical assistance instruments to address the economic fallout of the crisis. Donors contributed generously to these efforts.

Under our Solidarity Package, we prioritised a series of interventions. We established a Resilience Framework to meet the short-term liquidity and working capital needs of existing clients; expanded financing under our Trade Facilitation Programme; provided fast-track restructuring for distressed clients; enhanced frameworks for SMEs and larger companies that are not existing clients; and created a Vital Infrastructure Support Programme to finance essential public investment in infrastructure. We also increased our delivery of advice to policymakers and intensified policy cooperation with other international financial institutions.

Our interventions paid particular attention to those most affected by the downturn. These included SMEs, which are extremely vulnerable to disruption caused by the virus, and women, who are more likely to work in sectors worst hit by the pandemic, such as services, tourism and trade. Furthermore, the Solidarity Package saw the Bank expedite its procedures, while maintaining high standards of banking and accountability, to ensure that clients received the timely assistance they needed. Disbursements reached €7.6 billion, the second-highest level in EBRD history.



“We drew on the full range of our financial, policy engagement and technical assistance instruments to address the economic fallout of the crisis”

As well as responding to immediate effects of the crisis, we helped lay the groundwork for a post-pandemic recovery. Numerous investments and policy engagements made in 2020 are expected to contribute to the regeneration of economies, for example through important infrastructure projects, solar power installations or new tourism facilities.

The SCF for 2021-25 builds on this work while also addressing deep-rooted, broader challenges in our regions. It envisages a green, low-carbon recovery: under the updated Green Economy Transition approach (see page 8), investments in projects that have an environmental benefit are expected to represent more than 50 per cent of EBRD financing by 2025. Over the next five years, the Bank will also increase efforts to promote equality of opportunity for women, young people and under-served communities and to unleash the power of technology to broaden digital transition.

The year 2020 marked the last stage of our previous SCF, which sought to re-energise transition against a backdrop of slowing reform momentum and political and economic uncertainty. The six transition qualities (see page 11 onwards) have only been measured since 2017, but our assessment over that period indicates that, overall, improvements substantially exceeded deteriorations. There were particularly widespread improvements in the green and resilient qualities of economies in which we operate. However, deteriorations outweighed improvements in terms of inclusion. All of these movements were influenced by factors beyond the EBRD's own actions.

Last year we continued to promote the six transition qualities that guide our work. As a result of the pandemic, a large proportion of projects signed in 2020 promoted the transition quality of resilience and this is reflected in the case studies that the *Annual Review* presents.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Projects signed under the Resilience Framework are considered to promote the transition qualities associated with the original signing.