

The Civil Society Programme at the EBRD's 2018 Annual Meeting



The 2018 Civil Society Programme (CSP) featured multi-stakeholder panels on the role of civil society in supporting youth economic and financial inclusion and on increasing resilience to climate change and water scarcity in the southern and eastern Mediterranean (SEMED) region. As in previous years, the CSP was also an opportunity for CSOs to discuss strategic issues and investment projects with EBRD staff, senior management, the President and Board of Directors.

How civil society can increase resilience to climate change and water scarcity

The first event of the CSP brought together representatives from the EBRD, business community and civil society to discuss the role of CSOs and community engagement with municipalities as well as ways to improve stakeholder involvement in water governance. Panellists agreed that many countries in SEMED face significant water scarcity. They debated effective outreach measures and wastewater management practices that could increase access to safe drinking water and make water supply systems more sustainable. In Jordan, the world's fourth-driest country, the projected impacts of climate change will put additional strain on water resources and

could increase the frequency, duration and intensity of droughts, among other adverse effects on communities and the environment.

The discussion also touched on how – at the municipal level – civil society and communities can help meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

According to Khaled Al-Irani, President of [Jordan's Royal Scientific Society for the Conservation of Nature](#) and former Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources and of the Environment, CSOs can make a difference in how responsible practices (for example in terms of water use and waste management) are shared, and people can become aware of how to change their behaviour in order to have a positive impact.

Basim Al Saleh, Managing Partner at GreenTech, stressed the importance of the business community in advancing technology and innovation, which can provide concrete solutions and seize the opportunities that arise from climate challenges. One such example is the introduction of crops that do not need much water, or the use of solar power to lower the cost of pumping water. However, these advancements will not have an impact if public institutions, the private sector and CSOs do not combine their

April - June 2018

Welcome to the CSO Newsletter

In this issue we report back from the Civil Society Programme 2018, which was held on 9-10 May at the Dead Sea, Jordan, as part of the 27th EBRD Annual Meeting and Business Forum. We also give you a snapshot of the new small business accelerator programme and report back from discussions with civil society in Tunisia and Ukraine on new country strategies. And as always, we bring you the latest news about the Bank's dialogue with CSOs on strategies, recent projects and initiatives.

52

➔ For more information visit:
www.ebrd.com/who-we-are/civil-society/news-and-events

efforts in a common course of action. Dureid Mahasneh, Chairman of [EDAMA Energy, Water and Environment](#) (a Jordanian business association focused on green economy transition), proposed to create a common strategy for tackling water scarcity, as a way to cooperate regionally.

The EBRD is also working in this area to improve climate resilience through its investments and build the capacity of local CSOs, with the aim of spreading awareness. Susan Goeransson, Head of the Bank's Municipal and Environmental Infrastructure team, presented the Saïss water conservation project in Morocco. This transformative water transfer scheme will deliver more than 100 million m³ of irrigation water to the Saïss plain each year. It will enable a switch from unsustainable groundwater to the use of sustainable surface water resources. The scheme will also bolster community involvement in water governance by scaling up technical skills and institutional capacity and by promoting the adoption of modern irrigation infrastructure and equipment.



How CSOs support youth economic and financial inclusion

The second discussion panel in the CSP was organised and led by the [International Youth Foundation](#), represented by Hafez Neeno, Regional Director for the Middle East. The session focused on how to foster the economic inclusion of young people through practical training, job placements and other activities. The panellists discussed the main challenges and strategies for engaging young people in shaping their own futures and the economic futures of their countries.

They agreed that, despite the rigidity of labour markets, the provision of life skills and employability through training can make the difference in giving young people more opportunities. For example, Mays Sharari, Senior Capacity Development Specialist at [Development Transformations](#), stressed the importance of developing human capital more broadly among young people, giving them skills that are attractive to employers.

The panel also stressed the role of CSOs

in providing networks and linking young people with businesses and funding opportunities. Access to finance and know-how is crucial, especially for the professional future of self-starters and young entrepreneurs, and civil society could bridge the information gaps on how to access these services. Rakan Al-Rwad, a young Jordanian entrepreneur, started the Al-Qantar Center when he was 25 years old, seeking to provide a platform for youth empowerment in the town of Ma'an, where there is no work continuity and young job-seekers need a focal point that can bring them opportunities.

The agency of young people is another important factor when looking at how to strengthen their engagement in the labour force. Undoubtedly, policy-makers and local communities must work together to create an environment conducive to helping young people enter the job market, with CSOs bridging the supply-and-demand side for a new workforce. However, young people should also be confident in finding potential in their ideas and shaping their futures. Rasha Barakat, Chief Innovation and Human Capital Officer at [Zain](#), stressed the

importance of ambition. She noted how, in settings such as innovation campuses, new ideas spread quickly if their promoters are passionate and follow their intuition.

The informal economy also plays a crucial role in new economic opportunities in developing countries. Eman Alaraj, Project Coordinator at the [International Labour Organization](#) in Jordan, talked about the importance of enhancing the role of informal apprenticeships (for example, in car repair shops), and how they can be a viable avenue into the labour market and a useful way to gain first-hand experience.

Speakers also discussed the most recent challenges in SEMED job markets, including in sectors such as tourism and retail, which are the most promising in terms of employment for refugees. Barbara Rambousek, Acting Director for Gender and Economic Inclusion at the EBRD, illustrated how the Abdali Mall Training Centre in Amman offers opportunities (pre-employment courses and continued learning for career progression) and job-matching services in retail and hospitality.

DIALOGUE

Country strategy consultations and Board consultation visits



Consultation with national CSOs on Tunisia Country Strategy

For the review of the Tunisia Country Strategy, a consultation meeting was held in Tunis on 13 June to gather input from national CSOs about the EBRD's planned activities in the country and the operational priorities for the period 2018-23. Six CSOs active in civil society development, transitional justice, youth employment and environmental issues attended the meeting. Civil society participants raised concerns but also welcomed the Bank's strengthened engagement in Tunisia. In their view, the EBRD has an important role to play in policy dialogue and in setting standards through its projects, particularly in terms of the economic and financial inclusion of youth as well as the introduction of new technology.

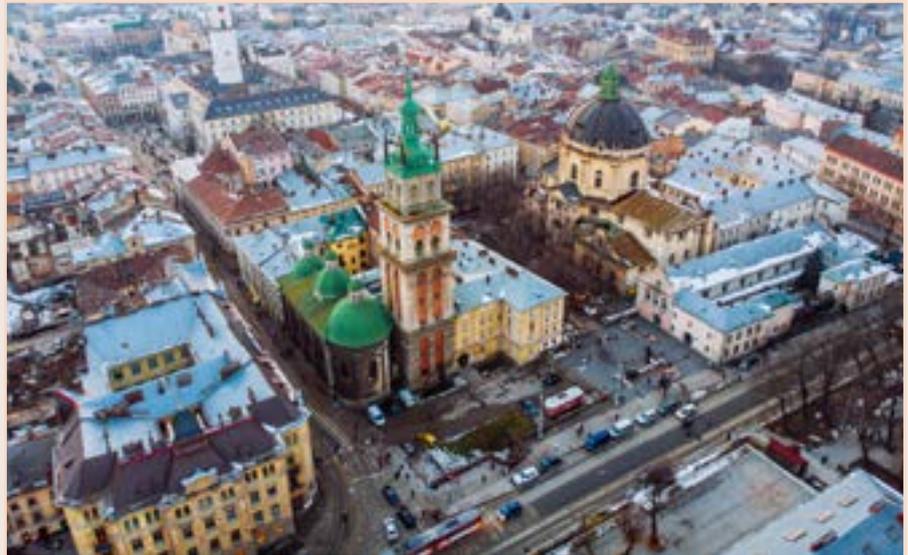
EBRD Board Advisers and EBRD management meet with civil society in Ukraine

On 12 June, EBRD management and Board Advisers met civil society representatives in two separate meetings in Kiev. During the meeting with management, preliminary priorities for the forthcoming country strategy period were presented. The topics covered during the meeting with Board Advisers were broader; they included the impact of economic reforms on the private sector, successes and areas for improvement in the fight against corruption, and sustainability challenges in the energy and agribusiness sectors. Representatives of 11 CSOs took part in the meetings.

EBRD approves new country strategy for Poland

The EBRD Board of Directors adopted the new country strategy for Poland for 2018-23. The main priorities will be to enhance competitiveness through innovation, commercialisation and stronger global

links, promote Green Economy Transition, and strengthen resilience by expanding and diversifying equity and debt capital markets. So far the Bank has invested €9.025 billion in Poland, of which 89 per cent is in the private sector.



Lviv has become the first Ukrainian city to join the EBRD's Green Cities Framework – a business model for green urban development, combining strategic planning with investment and technical assistance. Lviv will implement a Green City Action Plan to prioritise green municipal investments and the necessary policy reforms. Moreover, a financing package of up to €35 million from the EBRD, the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership and the Clean Technology Fund will be offered to Lviv to support the rehabilitation of the Hrybovychi landfill. The package will also support the construction of a mechanical biological treatment plant for municipal solid waste which will reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by approximately 141,500 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per year. The city will also adopt better recycling and waste management practices.

The Independent Accountability Mechanisms (IAMS) of five international financial institutions (IFIs) – the EBRD, European Investment Bank, World Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the Green Climate Fund – organised a workshop in Ulaanbaatar, supported by CEE Bankwatch Network and Oyu Tolgoi Watch. Fifty CSO representatives from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan participated. They learned how people who are affected by IFI-funded projects can use IAMS to raise environmental and social concerns and address grievances, what they can complain about, how to file a complaint and what the results might be. The workshop also served as a platform to exchange views on public and private development projects in Central Asia, ranging from a clean environment and safe drinking water to property rights and land use.

IN BRIEF

EBRD accelerator programme for SMEs

The EBRD has launched a pilot programme supporting start-ups in the SEMED region, mainly in Egypt and Jordan. The programme will provide customised advisory services to accelerators and start-ups. In addition, it will offer capacity-building by leveraging the experience of international and regional mentors and facilitating regular meetings with investors and networks. The programme will also target the inclusion of young people, women and refugees by partnering with organisations such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology that already have experience in delivering inclusion programmes.

Total EBRD finance/project value: €2 million



Largest solar plant in Mongolia

The EBRD, together with Triodos Investment Management and FMO (the Dutch Development Bank), will provide financing to Desert Solar Power One to support the construction and operation of a 30 MW photovoltaic power plant in Mongolia. The plant will become the first utility-scale solar photovoltaic facility in the country, and the first solar plant there to be project-financed. To date, the EBRD has invested more than US\$ 114 million in renewable energy in Mongolia.

Total EBRD finance/project value:
US\$ 10.5 million/US\$ 31.6 million

EBRD joins initiative to disclose climate-related financial information

The EBRD has become the first multilateral development bank to support the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure (TCFD) by committing to disclose climate-related financial information about its investment operations. The TCFD aims to develop voluntary and consistent disclosure of climate-related financial risk, for use by companies in providing information to investors, lenders, insurers and other stakeholders. The Task Force recommendations advise firms and financial institutions to disclose publicly how they identify and manage the climate-related financial risks and opportunities that are relevant to their business operations.

On 20 June in Kiev, the EBRD facilitated a civil society forum on climate investment in the eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) region. The event was an opportunity for dialogue on best practices and experience, to further engage civil society stakeholders in climate investment projects and initiatives and support action on climate change mitigation and adaptation at global, regional, national and local levels. The forum was organised jointly with the Climate Investment Funds, the Climate Action Network EECCA and the Stakeholder Advisory Network on Climate Finance.

Key dates and contacts

Country strategies: public comment periods

Uzbekistan	June – July 2018
Tunisia	July – August 2018
Ukraine	August – September 2018
Slovenia	October – November 2018
FYR Macedonia	November 2018
Turkmenistan	November – December 2018
Azerbaijan	to be confirmed



To have your say on strategies visit:
www.ebrd.com/strategies-and-policies/have-your-say.html

Contacts

Civil Society Engagement Unit

Tel: +44 20 7338 7982
Email: cs0@ebrd.com

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

One Exchange Square
London EC2A 2JN
United Kingdom
www.ebrd.com

Follow us on social media



www.youtube.com/ebrdvtv
www.facebook.com/ebrdhq
www.twitter.com/ebrd
www.linkedin.com/company/ebrd
www.instagram.com/ebrd_official
www.flickr.com/photos/ebrd