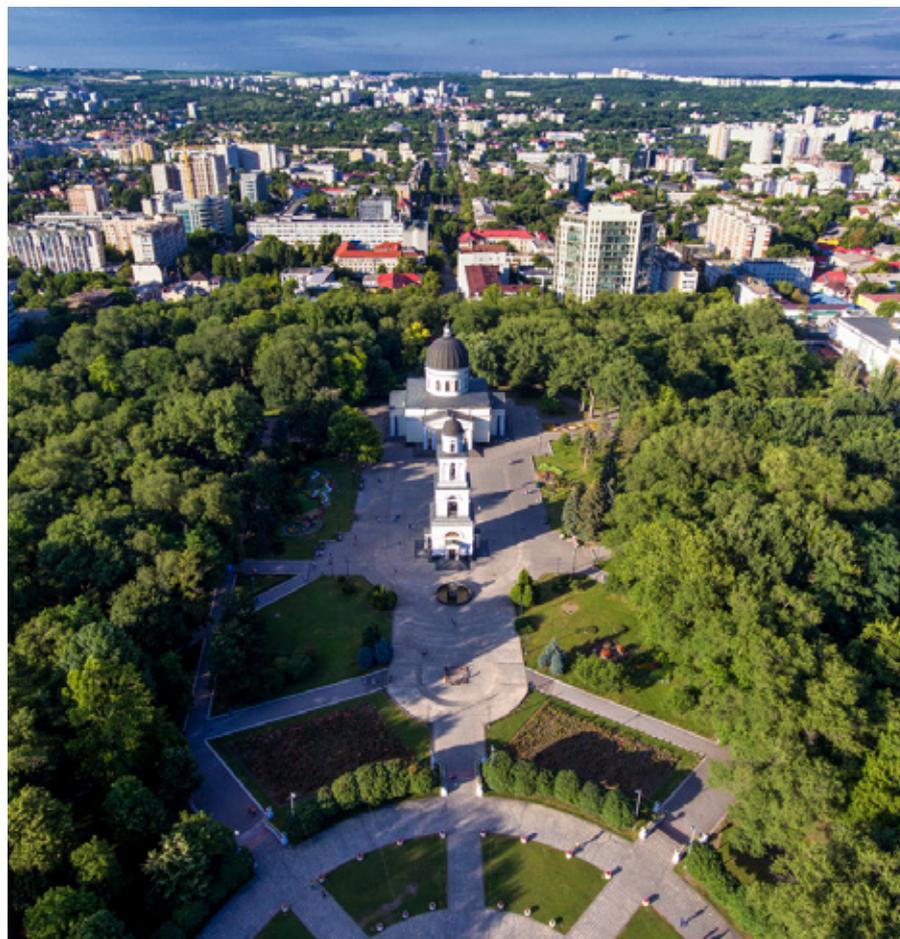


EBRD supports capacity-building of business associations in Moldova



From September 2016 to September 2018, the EBRD Civil Society Engagement Unit partnered with the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) to promote a better investment climate and improved governance in Moldova's private sector. The project aimed to increase the performance of Moldovan business associations and their capacity to support and represent their members. In addition, it aimed to enhance the associations' role in promoting good governance in the country.

Business associations are vital for supporting the development of Moldovan companies. Although associations have the potential to be effective champions for a better investment climate and good governance, at times they may not be fully equipped for this role. The feasibility study for the project in Moldova showed that

they struggled with internal governance and membership retention and did not recognise their potential in the areas of anti-corruption and business integrity.

Through this project the EBRD has supported participating associations as they strengthened performance and capacity in core aspects of their organisations, including internal governance, membership structure and advocacy. Making improvements in these priority areas – with the support of CIPE experts – allowed the associations to move towards financial stability, reduce risk, and focus on their primary mission: supporting Moldovan firms and improving the business climate.

The project involved more than half of Moldova's business associations and chambers of commerce in training

July - September 2018

Welcome to the CSO Newsletter

In this issue we reflect on a recently completed project to promote good governance in Moldova. We also report back from consultations on the EBRD's Agribusiness Strategy, and the Board of Directors' meetings with civil society in Belarus, Armenia and Georgia. And, as always, we bring you the latest news about the Bank's dialogue with CSOs on strategies, recent projects and initiatives.

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activities. Capacity-building workshops took place in Chisinau, Vadul-lui Voda, Hincesti and Cahul to ensure broad geographical coverage. According to post-training evaluation questionnaires, 82 per cent of participants increased their knowledge of association management and governance, while 60 per cent learned more about advocacy, value-added services and membership structures.

Practical implementation of this newly acquired knowledge was illustrated by one participating business association, which is now looking into developing guidelines that would help its members to better protect themselves from corruption pressures.

This EBRD-supported project, implemented under the Bank's Civil Society Capacity Enhancement Framework and Investment Climate and Governance Initiative, was completed in September 2018, but there remains a need to continue making the business case for compliance. We have identified priority areas for action, including the development of training for trainers, mentorship, and a third-party registry which would acknowledge the self-regulation initiatives on compliance promoted by business associations and their members.

EBRD to adopt new agribusiness sector strategy



“A strong, sustainable and inclusive agribusiness sector needs to encompass farmers and companies of all sizes along the entire food value chain,” says Natalia Zhukova, Director of the EBRD’s Agribusiness team. Greater coordination between the public and private sectors – including through policy dialogue – can increase transparency and policy outcomes, thus advancing transition.

In its region of operations, the EBRD is the largest provider of finance to the agribusiness sector. Acknowledging the diversity of these markets and their stages of development, the strategy envisages activities spanning the whole value chain, from farming, processing and trading to food distribution, packaging and retail, with tailored approaches via different financing instruments.

The EBRD organised consultations with a wide range of stakeholders during the development of the Strategy, including in Rome on 7-11 May in collaboration with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, in Jordan on 9 May as part of the EBRD Civil Society Programme, and in Kiev on 6 September. The Strategy is due to be considered by the EBRD Board of Directors on 3 October.

Food is at the core of human existence. It also creates jobs and income for as many as 1.1 billion people worldwide. However, the sector faces growing challenges: by 2050, population growth and higher incomes are predicted to increase the demand for food by 50 per cent. Dietary patterns are changing, with rising levels of protein consumption. Meanwhile, the stock of finite natural resources needs to be better managed in order to lessen the impact on the environment, climate and communities that depend on agribusiness.

The EBRD Agribusiness Sector Strategy 2019-23 is our response to these challenges. It recognises that a responsible, innovative and sustainable approach is needed to manage food production in the future, and highlights the need for balance between three competing requirements: to efficiently close the food gap, providing all people with sufficient food for their needs; to preserve natural resources; and to improve the social and environmental impacts of the sector.

The Strategy recognises the structural vulnerabilities and remaining transition challenges in the economies where the EBRD invests. It is anchored to the EBRD’s

six transition qualities, focusing on: enhanced productivity and value addition (“competitive”); sustainable agribusiness (“green”); inclusive value chains (“inclusive”); strengthened market links (“integrated”); innovative and affordable financing (“resilient”); and better business conduct and standards (“well-governed”).

Review of EBRD energy sector strategy

The Bank is currently reviewing its energy sector strategy. Key drivers considered during the process include: (1) the challenge of climate change, which is driving an increase in the electrification of economies and decarbonisation of electricity; (2) concerns about air quality, leading to fuel switching and electrification; (3) the falling cost of renewable energy, which enables massive deployment of affordable low-carbon generation capacity; and (4) widely available natural gas, offering a potential alternative to more polluting energy sources. The EBRD will promote secure, affordable and sustainable energy through the transition to a market-oriented low-carbon energy sector. This work will be aligned with the Bank’s initiatives, policies, and other sector strategies, and with the specific characteristics of each economy in the EBRD regions.

The Bank invites civil society organisations, clients, partners and all interested stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft strategy, which was released on ebrd.com at the end of September. We will also organise six consultation meetings in EBRD countries of operations: Istanbul (3 October), Warsaw (9 October), Almaty (11 October), Belgrade (19 October), Kiev (25 October) and Casablanca (30 October). On 16 October, a consultation meeting with representatives of international CSOs will take place at the EBRD Headquarters in London. The EBRD Board Directors are currently scheduled to consider the final strategy at the end of 2018.

DIALOGUE

Country strategy consultations and Board consultation visits



Consultation on Country Strategy for FYR Macedonia

On 24 July, the EBRD Resident Office in Skopje hosted a consultation with civil society to discuss the review of the Bank's country strategy for FYR Macedonia. The CSOs' main recommendations related to: compliance with environmental standards in protected areas; the promotion of a green economy, including support for green

cities and energy efficiency; and better efforts to engage stakeholders and disclose information, in particular for sectors such as mining and the development of small hydropower projects through financial intermediaries. Eighteen representatives from local civil society organisations and business associations attended the event. Anca Ioana Ionescu, Head of the EBRD in Skopje, represented the Bank along with staff from the EBRD's Country Strategy

and Results Management team, the Civil Society Engagement Unit and country and regional economists. The consultation took place during the pre-drafting stage of the strategy. The draft Strategy for FYR Macedonia is due to be published for public consultation by the end of 2018.

Board Directors meet with civil society in Belarus, Armenia and Georgia

On 12 September, EBRD Board Directors met with civil society representatives in Minsk as part of their consultation visit to Belarus. The topics covered during the meeting were: recent political developments, the CSO landscape, and freedom of expression and human rights, as well as questions around inclusive economic transition, the investment climate and engagement with the business community.

During their consultation visit to Armenia, on 24 September in Yerevan, Board Directors met with civil society representatives and discussed recent political developments, anti-corruption, media freedom and civil society development, as well as responsible mining and sustainability.

On 26 September, the EBRD Resident Office in Tbilisi, Georgia, hosted a meeting between EBRD Board Directors and Georgian CSOs. The discussion focused on transparency, inclusive growth, energy and adaptation to climate change.

EBRD President meets civil society in Uzbekistan

EBRD President Suma Chakrabarti met with CSOs in Tashkent on 7 August, a follow-up to his engagement with Uzbek CSOs in 2017 and ahead of the conclusion of the Bank's review of its country strategy for Uzbekistan, which was adopted by the Board of Directors on 19 September. CSOs provided their feedback on the EBRD's increased engagement in the country. Topics included the operating environment for civil society, and regulatory and judicial reform, as well as economic reform and sustainability.

Coming soon: Consultations on implementation of the EBRD's political mandate and on the strategy for the municipal and environmental infrastructure sector

On 30 October the EBRD will hold an information session on the implementation of the Bank's political mandate. The EBRD is the only multilateral development bank with an explicit mandate to support countries in our region that are committed to and applying the principles of multi-party democracy, pluralism and market economics. This mandate, set out right at the start of the EBRD's founding document, in Article 1, is a reflection of our distinct history and a vital part of our work. Email us at csos@ebrd.com to get involved in this discussion.

In addition, the EBRD is currently drafting its new strategy for the municipal and environmental infrastructure sector. The public consultation period for this strategy is likely to start in December 2018 or January 2019. Later this year we will provide more information about opportunities for you to comment.

IN BRIEF

Women in Business in Morocco

The EBRD's Women in Business programme is now available in Morocco. The programme offers credit lines through partner financial institutions for dedicated on-lending to small and medium-sized enterprises led by women. These credit lines are combined with business advice to help women-led firms become more competitive. In Morocco, the programme is generously supported by funding from the European Union under its EU Initiative for Financial Inclusion. Since launching the Women in Business programme in 2014, the EBRD has supported more than 35,000 women entrepreneurs, providing in excess of €400 million through 30 financial institutions across 17 countries.



Cooperating across international financial institutions

On 27-28 September, the EBRD's Civil Society Engagement Unit welcomed their colleagues from civil society liaison teams at the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank Group to the EBRD Headquarters in London. During this meeting, the representatives of these international financial institutions exchanged experiences and discussed new and effective ways to engage with CSOs.

Welcome to the CSEU

From 1 October, for six months, the head of the EBRD's Civil Society Engagement Unit (CSEU), Biljana Radonjic Ker-Lindsay, will be on a secondment to lead the EBRD's Economic Inclusion team. While she is away, Meltem Ankara of the EBRD's Equity team will head the CSEU. Meltem has extensive experience at the EBRD, with expertise in impact and responsible investment. Please join us in welcoming her!

EBRD Literature Prize

The EBRD, in partnership with the British Council, is calling for submissions for the EBRD Literature Prize 2019. The Prize recognises the extraordinary richness and variety of cultures, history and voices in the EBRD regions. It will be awarded to the year's best work of literary fiction translated into English and originally written in any language of the EBRD's countries of operations. Globally, it is one of only a few prizes which recognise both author and translator.

The first EBRD Literature Prize, awarded in April 2018 to the Turkish author Burhan Sönmez and his translator Ümit Hussein, for the novel "Istanbul, Istanbul", attracted a wide range of submissions from countries as diverse as Albania, Croatia, Morocco, Russia and Turkey.

Key dates and contacts

Country strategies: public comment periods

Tunisia	October-November 2018
FYR Macedonia	December 2018
Slovenia	December 2018
Turkmenistan	2019
Azerbaijan	to be confirmed

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

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