



July - September 2019

Welcome to the CSO Newsletter

In this issue we will take you through the recently drafted country and sector strategies, consultation

periods and the feedback received this quarter. We bring you the latest news about several country consultation visits made by the EBRD President and the Board of Directors, a joint mission by the Civil Society Engagement Unit (CSEU) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to the Western Balkans as well as an interesting new initiative in Ukraine.

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Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) consult civil society on climate action at EBRD HQ

On 4 November the EBRD will host the CIF stakeholder dialogue meeting on climate action, in collaboration with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Practical Action-UK and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

The CIFs are a global financing instrument designed to promote and sustain the transition towards low-carbon and climate-resilient development with investments channelled through multilateral development banks (MDBs), such as the EBRD. MDB climate finance hit a record high of US\$ 43.1 billion in 2018; this is a 60 per cent increase since the adoption of the Paris agreement in 2015, in response to the ever more pressing challenge of climate change, which disproportionately affects the poorest and most vulnerable.

The objective of the workshop is to have an interactive dialogue about the status and future outlook of the CIFs, as well as the role of the CIFs and implementing agencies (such as the EBRD) in the multilateral climate finance architecture and agenda setting. It aims to share lessons learnt from CIFs from 10 years in operation and to generate ideas for new programming areas. It will also provide an opportunity to discuss ways to strengthen the participation of civil society and other non-state stakeholders in climate action, and specifically within the CIFs, governance structure and operations. This event is part of a worldwide effort by the CIFs to engage with civil society and private-sector stakeholders.

EBRD Board of Directors meets with civil society in Egypt

On 11 September a delegation of the EBRD Board of Directors met with representatives from CSOs and academia. The meeting took place at the Resident Office in Cairo and was hosted by Janet Heckman, EBRD Managing Director for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEMED) region. The Board of Directors exchanged views with civil society on Egypt's shift in focus from reducing poverty to cultivating more comprehensive development programmes, with job creation, especially for women and young people, as a key challenge. The EBRD Board of Directors regularly visits the economies in which the EBRD invests, and the meeting with civil society is a regular feature of the official visits.

Working together towards the Paris Alignment

On 23 September, on the margins of the UN Climate Summit in New York City, multilateral development banks (MDBs) and CSOs came together for a dialogue event, with the goal of an open discussion about the progress of MDBs in their joint approach towards alignment with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. MDBs have been at the forefront of climate action and have been working together for over a decade to develop harmonised tools and methodologies to scale up climate investments. At the same time, there is the urgency and scale of change needed to develop effective climate action, which requires a coherent approach based on strong partnerships, networks and alliances that promote coordinated action. During the event, MDB representatives outlined the proposed CSO-MDB engagement schedule for the Paris Alignment, gathered CSOs' feedback and explored opportunities to improve cooperation between MDBs and CSOs as a crucial element in tackling climate change. The next dialogue opportunity on this topic will be the COP25 in Chile in November or December 2019.



EBRD-UNODC partnership on good governance in the Western Balkans

What does the EBRD have to do with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)? The simple answer is that they both want to put an end to corruption. The UNODC is a United Nations agency, headquartered in Vienna, which serves as a Secretariat to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), to which all economies in which the EBRD invests are a signatory. The Convention makes a specific reference to the importance of civil society and the private sector in taking an active role in monitoring and implementing this unique international instrument that seeks to collectivise the response of the international community to anti-corruption.

The EBRD collaboration with UNODC aims to improve the capacity of civil society and the private sector in the UNCAC Review Mechanisms and represent a participatory process for assessing the country's implementation of the Convention. The collaboration was successfully piloted between 2016 and 2018 in the Western Balkans and the findings of the evaluation were made available in May 2019. Over 16 local initiatives on good governance were derived from the project. The EBRD and the UNODC are currently exploring the possibility of replicating and adapting similar joint initiatives in Central Asia.

EBRD President meets with civil society in Istanbul



On 12 September EBRD President Suma Chakrabarti met with representatives from CSOs as part of his official visit to the country, hosted by the Resident Office in Istanbul. Representatives from six local and international CSOs attended the meeting. The meeting with the EBRD President provided an opportunity to discuss economic inclusion challenges and the EBRD's response to these. Turkey was the first country where the EBRD rolled out the Women in Business programme in 2014, with more than 18,000 women across Turkey having benefited from the programme. To achieve this, the EBRD partnered with local organisations to provide training on entrepreneurial skills to women as well as networking and mentoring opportunities. The EBRD is also supporting the expansion of Turkey's training and testing centres in refugee-hosting regions in collaboration with the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, which has led to the establishment of the first vocational centre in the Gaziantep Industrial Zone. The partnership between the Bank and CSOs supports the economic empowerment of vulnerable segments, including women, young people and refugees.

DIALOGUE

Dialogue on country strategies and more



Board consultation visit to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic

A delegation of Board Directors representing the EBRD's shareholders visited Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic at the beginning of September. The Board representatives met with local civil society organisations (CSOs) in both Almaty and Bishkek. The meetings provided an opportunity for Directors to hear from civil society experts, according to their respective fields of expertise, about issues the Bank should take into consideration in terms of operations. The meeting in the Kyrgyz Republic focused on political reform developments, the rule of law as well as challenges relating to inclusion and sustainable development. In Kazakhstan, CSO representatives shared their views on issues, such as green economy transition, employability and inclusion challenges, regional decentralisation as well as the recent political situation and the changing landscape of civil society.



Consultation with civil society on new strategy for Albania

On 11 September the Resident Office in Albania organised a workshop with selected representatives of civil society to discuss the implementation of the previous country strategy and to brainstorm the strategic objectives of the new strategy. Representatives from four local organisations participated in the event. Civil society encouraged the Bank to consider

sustainability and good governance to be key drivers for future EBRD investments. Civil society also discussed with EBRD management the main operational challenges related to the implementation of the regulatory framework for banking and businesses. The draft strategy for Albania is expected to be published in November and will be open for public consultation for 45 calendar days.



Consultation with civil society on new strategy for Jordan

On 5 September the Resident Office in Amman hosted a roundtable with CSOs to discuss the key areas of operations for the new country strategy for Jordan. Nine representatives from local and international CSOs attended the event. CSOs broadly endorsed the suggested priority areas, in particular the Bank's envisaged work in support of small businesses and energy sector reform. Economic inclusion was highlighted as a priority area, with enhancements in vocational skills and training urgently needed to boost job creation. The Bank's ongoing support for renewable energy and green finance was appreciated, with CSOs querying whether the GEF model could be replicated in other sectors. The Bank was also encouraged to work closely with the authorities and community based organisations (CBOs) to help shape relevant programmes.

The draft strategy for Jordan is expected to be published in early November and will be open for public consultation for 45 calendar days.



EBRD consults civil society in Armenia

On 25 July the Resident Office in Yerevan hosted a consultation meeting with local civil society representatives to gather feedback on the upcoming country strategy for Armenia. CSO representatives were supportive of the suggested priorities and encouraged the Bank to do more in some of the priority areas, namely regarding the development of renewable energy opportunities and the strengthening of the investment climate. Other areas of discussion revolved around recent political developments and remaining challenges concerning accountability and transparency, as well as inclusion and responsible mining. Furthermore, CSOs emphasised the importance of strong environmental and social safeguards as well as well functioning grievance mechanisms to carry out sustainable projects with positive community impacts. The draft strategy has been released for public consultation until 9 November and the Bank is looking forward to receiving comments from civil society.

IN BRIEF



EBRD consults with civil society on draft Strategy for Property and Tourism

On 9 September the EBRD organised a consultation meeting with civil society on the draft Property and Tourism Strategy for the period 2019-24. At the consultation workshop representatives from civil society organisations (CSOs) and business associations discussed with EBRD staff the role of the property and tourism sector in the functioning of economies and in supporting economic growth. Civil society and partner organisations also expressed interest in the sector's contribution to social inclusion and cultural preservation, as well as mutual understanding of the concerns of CSOs and industry. The event was hosted in downtown Cairo at a venue that was provided by one of the EBRD's clients, Al-Ismaelia. The draft Property and Tourism Sector Strategy was open for public consultation from 16 July - 9 September. The strategy will be discussed for the Board's approval in early October and, once approved, the final text will be published alongside the Report on the Invitation to the Public to Comment.

EBRD consults on draft Transport Sector Strategy

The EBRD conducted extensive consultation meetings to seek feedback on its draft Transport Sector Strategy 2019-24, having organised three consultations in July in Belgrade, Cairo and Istanbul. In the draft Strategy, the Bank underlined the importance of promoting sustainable transport systems that embody the principles of a market economy, balance economic, environmental and social needs and respond to the needs of people, industry and trade. Civil society and EBRD staff discussed the role of transport as a catalyst for economic and inclusive growth. Civil society encouraged the EBRD to support a greener and more resilient transport sector to ensure economic sustainability. The four key challenges discussed related to: the widening of the infrastructure gap; the rise in state ownership, governance issues and stimulating sector reform; increasing private-sector participation to promote competition and innovation, including new technologies; and encouraging a low-carbon approach. The draft Transport Sector Strategy was open for public consultation from 13 July - 6 September. The strategy will be discussed for the Board's approval in early November and, once approved, the final text will be disclosed alongside the Report on the Invitation to the Public to Comment.

Civil Society Consultation Hub

We encourage you to browse the recently opened EBRD [Civil Society Consultation Hub](#), a platform for feedback on upcoming CSO consultations for EBRD country and sector strategies and institutional policies.

Key dates and contacts

Country and sectoral strategies: public comment periods

Information and communications technology (ICT)	Sept - Nov 2019
Armenia	Sept - Nov 2019
Jordan	Oct - Nov 2019
Bulgaria	Oct- Dec 2019
Tajikistan	Nov 2019
Albania	Nov - Dec 2019

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

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