

Working with civil society to build climate-resilient communities in Tajikistan



Tajikistan is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Its mountains contain over half of Central Asia's water resources and the country depends heavily on hydropower, but precipitation patterns are changing and Tajikistan's glaciers are retreating. In order to identify ways to help the country adapt to climate change and build climate-resilient communities, the EBRD and the Secretariat of the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR) held a civil society consultation on 3 February in Dushanbe.

The workshop was attended by 45 representatives of 35 CSOs and by observers. Focusing on reliable access to water and energy as well as on access to finance at the community level, participants discussed the important role that CSOs can play in promoting climate-robust development that is also inclusive and supported by local stakeholders.

The consultation workshop was aimed at improving understanding of how communities are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including through effects on water and energy security. Another goal was to seek suggestions for addressing future challenges in the delivery of household water services and energy supply. The workshop explored how CSOs could cooperate with the PPCR Secretariat, the EBRD and other national and international development partners to build climate-resilient communities in Tajikistan.

CSO participants shared their experience of how climate change puts the country's ecosystems and prospects for sustainable development at greater risk. Changes in temperature, precipitation and glacier volumes are projected to increase pressure on

Tajikistan's resources – water above all – and on water infrastructure. Electricity supply is also likely to be affected due to the country's reliance on hydropower. Furthermore, climate change could accelerate soil erosion, thereby harming the economy which is dominated by the agricultural sector. Local communities are likely to be most affected, with effects on human health among the potential challenges. Many of Tajikistan's communities face severe constraints on affordability and lack awareness about their options for adaptation.

Consequently, workshop participants agreed that there is a great need to increase the climate resilience of local communities through concrete adaptation measures developed in cooperation with CSOs. CSOs are an important link between investors, national institutions, utility providers and technical experts on the one hand, and end-users in local communities on the other hand. CSOs can also play an important role in testing new energy- and water-efficient technologies. Enhanced CSO engagement can thus help to scale up innovation and propel society and the economy towards climate-resilient development.

The strengths of CSOs lie in community outreach, sharing information and raising awareness. Thanks to their familiarity with the local context and with the needs and constraints of communities, CSOs can help ensure that climate finance mechanisms benefit the Tajik population in an inclusive manner. They can help financial institutions understand community needs, better integrate them into project design and support stakeholder engagement programmes for transformative change.

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Welcome to the quarterly CSO Newsletter

In this issue we introduce an enhanced approach to consultations with local civil society organisations on climate finance, as illustrated by a recent workshop in Tajikistan. We update you on preparations for the 2016 EBRD Civil Society Programme, in which we have resumed the popular innovations introduced for last year's annual gathering. The Civil Society Programme will take place on 11 and 12 May 2016 in London, alongside the 25th EBRD Annual Meeting and Business Forum. You can also read about meetings between the acting EBRD Vice President for Policy and Partnerships and civil society representatives in Kiev and Minsk. As always, we bring you the latest news about the Bank's dialogue with CSOs on country strategies, recent projects and initiatives.



➔ For more information visit:
www.ebrd.com/who-we-are/civil-society-overview.html

ANNUAL MEETING

Civil Society Programme 2016



This year, the Civil Society Programme will be held on 11 and 12 May at the EBRD Headquarters in London. The event will consist of a series of thematic panels, sessions between civil society representatives and the Bank's staff and senior management, as well as two dedicated sessions with the Board of Directors and the EBRD President.

The Programme provides an opportunity for civil society participants to engage in dialogue with the Bank about its investment projects, policies and strategies, and to participate in multi-stakeholder discussions on a wide range of issues including transparency and good governance, economic inclusion, gender equality, and development finance.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the EBRD, the Civil Society Programme will reflect on the role of civil society in the transition process in central and eastern Europe and Central Asia, in a focused session with Sergei Guriev, Professor of Economics at Sciences Po in Paris and incoming EBRD Chief Economist. Civil society, operating in the space between the public and private sectors, has played an important role in socio-political and economic transition around the world, including in the EBRD's post-socialist countries of operations. The session will look at the key achievements and setbacks experienced by the civil society sector in contributing to transition since the Bank was established. It will also consider the challenges that lie ahead for civil society in building well-governed, sustainable and inclusive economies and societies.

A discussion panel on the role of civil society in promoting accountable and transparent public procurement will also be part of the Civil Society Programme. Evidence shows that effective civic oversight can help identify gaps in accountability mechanisms. It can also improve service delivery and even help increase cost efficiency in the purchase of goods.

In addition, the Programme will feature a roundtable discussion on economic inclusion through skills and innovation, and a panel on the role of civil society in relation to EBRD's Strategy for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

In order to continue the innovative approach launched by the EBRD Civil Society Engagement Unit (CSEU) in 2015, we invited CSOs to submit proposals for the organisation of a thematic panel on the contribution of civil society in development finance. CSOs will organise and facilitate this panel. We are pleased to announce that the proposal which scored highest on all the selection criteria was submitted by AIESEC International; the topic is 'The Role of Youth in Shaping the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'.

Most sessions of the Civil Society Programme, including facilitated discussion panels and the focused session with Sergei Guriev, are open to all Business Forum guests. Several project-specific sessions and meetings with the EBRD President and Board are reserved for civil society representatives only.

DIALOGUE

EBRD senior management meet with civil society representatives

EBRD consults with civil society on first strategy for Greece

On 4 March, the EBRD held a workshop with civil society to consult on the operational priorities of the Bank in Greece, where the EBRD will invest on a temporary basis until 2020.

16 participants attended the consultation from a wide range of civil society organisations and research centres dealing with transparency and good governance, corporate social responsibility and economic policy.

Civil society participants were interested to learn more about the sectors where the EBRD invests in Greece and about the Bank's business model, including the size of loans and the Bank's propensity for risk. Civil society representatives suggested that the Bank invest in information and communication technologies as well as local financial institutions and promote greater integration of Greece into the global economy.

The draft Strategy for Greece is expected to be released for public comments for 45 calendar days at the beginning of April; the final strategy document is due to be adopted in June 2016.



EBRD Vice President meets with CSOs in Ukraine

On 10 March, the acting EBRD Vice President for Policy and Partnerships met with five civil society representatives in Kiev. The meeting was part of his visit to the country and focused on anti-corruption, transparency and procurement reform, and progress on democratic reform, as well as energy sector developments, energy security and sustainability.

Transparency International Ukraine, the International Renaissance Foundation, the United Actions Centre (Centre UA), the Ukrainian Centre for Independent Political Research (UCIPR) and the National Ecological Centre of Ukraine (NECU) were represented at the meeting.



EBRD consults with local and international CSOs on its new reform-contingent approach in Belarus

The EBRD consulted 15 local and international CSO representatives on its upcoming draft strategy for Belarus in several consultation meetings on 15 March in Minsk with political and economic think-tanks and CSOs that focus on human rights, as well as with international CSOs on 22 March in London. The Bank solicited the views of civil society on the development of a new strategic approach in Belarus under which the Bank plans to gradually broaden its engagement by supporting well-defined reform initiatives of the government. It will achieve this through assistance for privatisation and financing for public infrastructure in the transport and power sectors where there is a clear reform commitment, in addition to the municipal sector where the Bank is already active.

CSOs were broadly supportive of the Bank's envisaged approach. However, they also pointed out human rights concerns and challenges in the legal and regulatory environment that governs the operations of CSOs. The draft Strategy for Belarus is expected to be released for public comments for 45 calendar days at the beginning of June; the final strategy document is due for adoption at the end of July 2016.



EBRD SUPPORTS THE REDUCTION OF GAS FLARING IN EGYPT

The EBRD held a workshop on 15 March in Cairo with experts from state and private oil and gas companies to address problems related to gas flaring in Egypt's petroleum industry, in order to combat energy waste and pollution. Discussions focused on new technologies, business methods, regulations and policy approaches that can reduce gas flaring; these included the potential role of co-financing through international climate policy schemes.

The workshop also discussed the findings of the EBRD study on "Gas Flaring Reduction in Egypt". Based on the results of the study, the Bank has already financed over US\$ 200 million of projects during the past two years to reduce flaring in Egypt and is committed to looking into additional ventures.

The EBRD was one of the first international financial institutions to endorse the World Bank's "Zero Routine Flaring by 2030"

initiative. The Bank is supporting low-carbon sustainable development as part of its Green Economy Transition approach.

In order to help countries in the southern and eastern Mediterranean (SEMED) region develop clean, secure electricity supplies the EBRD has launched a US\$ 250 million financing framework for private sector renewable energy generation in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

IN BRIEF

→ For more information visit:
www.ebrd.com/who-we-are/civil-society-overview.html

EBRD launches Women in Business programme for Kazakhstan at Eurasian Women's Summit in Astana

The EBRD officially launched its Women in Business programme in Kazakhstan at the Eurasian Women's Business Summit in Astana. The programme, the first of its kind in Central Asia, assists women-led small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with access to finance and business advice.

Approximately 2,000 Kazakh SMEs led by women are expected to benefit. The programme, which is co-funded by the EBRD and the government of Kazakhstan, offers credit lines, risk-management support and technical assistance to local partner banks who work with women-led SMEs. The programme also offers business advisory services, training and mentoring to these SMEs directly. The services are now available in six EBRD offices in Kazakhstan – Aktobe, Almaty, Astana, Kostanai, Shymkent and Ust-Kamenogorsk, with Karaganda soon to follow. The Kazakh government has allocated US\$ 8.2 million for the programme. In September the EBRD signed the first credit line under the programme, providing 3.72 billion tenge (approximately US\$ 20 million) to Bank CenterCredit for on-lending to women-led SMEs.

Total project value: KZT 3.72 billion
EBRD finance: KZT 3.72 billion

At a glance

Two years after hosting the first successful Western Balkans Investment Forum, the EBRD organised a second high-level event for the region. The Western Balkans Investment Summit took place at the Bank's Headquarters in London on 22 February 2016.

www.ebrd.com/news/2016/ebrd-president-calls-on-investors-to-boost-western-balkans-economic-potential-.html

The event was attended by prime ministers, government representatives, political decision-makers, leading entrepreneurs from the region and hundreds of existing and potential foreign investors.

Regional prime ministers met with entrepreneurs and investors to discuss the development of transport links, cross-border electricity infrastructure, the potential for renewable energy and the privatisation agenda in the Western Balkans. The Summit aimed to highlight investment and business opportunities in the region and to promote the inflow of foreign direct investment and cross-border projects.

In the spirit of deepening and intensifying cooperation in the region the EBRD-backed SEE Link, an innovative regional platform for trading securities listed on the Bulgarian, Croatian and Macedonian stock exchanges, was launched during the Summit. At the event the Serbian and Slovenian stock exchanges signed documents confirming their intention to join SEE Link.

www.ebrd.com/news/2016/see-link-becomes-operational.html

At the margins of the Summit the EBRD also signed its first investment agreements related to the electricity transmission line project between FYR Macedonia and Albania. The project is part of wider efforts to establish an electricity corridor connecting Sofia, Skopje, Tirana, Podgorica and Italy. Agreements were signed with the European Commission and with the Macedonian electricity transmission company.

Key dates and contacts

Public comments period

Country strategies

Greece	April – June 2016
Slovak Republic	May – June 2016
Belarus	June – July 2016

Board consultation visits

Poland	April 2016
Kazakhstan and Tajikistan	June 2016
Serbia and Montenegro	June 2016

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