

EBRD-CSO Newsletter

Keeping you up to date with the EBRD

Welcome to the
CSO Newsletter

61

April 2022

Foreword

Dear Reader,

Welcome to another edition of the CSO newsletter!

As we write, the war on Ukraine continues and the world endeavours to support the embattled country and its people. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has announced an initial €2 billion package of resilience measures to help citizens, companies and countries affected by the conflict. The Bank has also pledged to do all it can to help with the reconstruction of Ukraine once conditions allow.

To address the challenges posed by the war, the EBRD Annual Meeting has amended its focus to “Responding to Challenges in a Turbulent World”.

The event, which opens on 10 May, will provide an opportunity to discuss the war on Ukraine and other global challenges, such as supporting economic growth, combating climate change and strengthening the business environment in the regions where we operate. The Civil Society Programme will focus on the role of civil society in the transition towards a sustainable and more peaceful world and will give civil-society organisations (CSOs) an opportunity to engage with senior Bank officials. Working with CSOs and supporting their capacity to operate on the ground is one of our priorities in tackling these challenges.

The role of CSOs in fostering an inclusive society was recently discussed at length by staff at a high-level workshop co-organised by four multilateral development banks (MDBs). We not only shared our strategic visions of how to make civil society an equal policymaking partner with government and the private sector, but also our experience of how to actively mainstream civil society into policy engagement and investments.

Happy reading!
The CSE team

MAIN ACTIVITY

EBRD support for Ukraine

Since the start of the war, the EBRD has been steadfast in its position, that it strongly condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine. With a relationship that dates back more than 30 years, the Bank has declared its unwavering support for Ukraine and endorsed an initial €2 billion package of resilience measures to support Ukrainian citizens, companies and neighbouring countries affected by the war. As a major institutional investor in Ukraine, the Bank will roll out a "reconstruction programme" once conditions allow, to rebuild livelihoods and businesses, restore vital infrastructure and enable access to services.

In **Ukraine**, our Resilience and Livelihoods Framework will focus on four main elements:

- payment deferrals, debt forbearance and restructuring
- trade finance (including for fuel imports)
- emergency liquidity finance (in coordination with partners)
- emergency reform support.

In **neighbouring countries** taking in refugees, we will be supporting:

- energy security
- municipal services and livelihoods for displaced persons
- trade finance
- the provision of liquidity for small and medium-sized enterprises.

The Civil Society Engagement (CSE) unit is coordinating our efforts and establishing communications channels to address specific aspects of the crisis and support the people of Ukraine. We stand with Ukraine and its people.



The Bank is also launching programmes to foster **economic opportunities** and support the **social inclusion** of Ukrainian war refugees in economies where we invest. The indicative list includes:

- Social inclusion for refugees, by facilitating access to the specialised services currently most in demand, such as banking services, legal services, psychological support, translation, administrative support and safeguarding. This is where we would like our CSO partners to focus and where we would like to strengthen NGO capacity.
- Economic inclusion for refugees, including enhanced activities in areas such as job-search and skills-matching platforms, collaborations, internship programmes, vocational and skills training and entrepreneurship.



The EBRD and the war on Ukraine



EBRD's response video on the Resilience Package



EBRD to close its offices in Moscow and Minsk



MAIN ACTIVITY

POLICY ACTIVITY

Civil Society Programme at the 2022 EBRD Annual Meeting

After two years of virtual Annual Meetings, we are looking forward to meeting you face to face at the EBRD shareholders' meeting in May. This year, the theme of the Business Forum is "Responding to Challenges in a Turbulent World". The event offers a dynamic programme of events and panel discussions, and is set to attract prominent participants from around the world, from leading government officials and financial and corporate executives to entrepreneurs, CSOs and representatives of the global media.

Join us for the Civil Society Programme at the 2022 EBRD Annual Meeting from 10 to 12 May in Marrakech, Morocco. The 2022 Civil Society Programme, which will take place in hybrid format, is designed to provide an opportunity for dialogue between civil-society stakeholders and the EBRD Board of Directors, the President, senior management and staff.

Civil Society Programme agenda

- Board of Directors meeting with CSOs
- EBRD President meeting with CSOs
- Open panel: Leaving no one behind - responding to challenges through partnerships with civil society, the private sector and governments
- Open panel: Civil society in sustainable energy transitions
- IPAM session: Human rights, remedy and accessibility



Access the detailed agenda



Annual Meeting initiatives

We are delighted to announce that on the occasion of the EBRD's 31st Annual Meeting in Marrakech (10-12 May 2022), the Community Initiative will provide a charitable donation to the Moroccan grassroots organisation, the Amal Centre.



Visit the Amal Centre website



Making public procurement more effective: the role of CSOs

In an attempt to fight the global pandemic, governments around the world adopted policies and measures that often had negative effects on citizens and the business community. At the same time, they mobilised the latter to purchase the supplies and services needed to fight Covid-19. With public procurement already the No. 1 government corruption risk, the EBRD and the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP) launched a project to build the capacity of CSOs to monitor public procurement processes.

Along with the OCP, the EBRD has been instrumental in developing new e-procurement systems in Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Ukraine and many other countries. We have helped to rethink and reshape the entire process of procuring goods and services and creating open, accessible and timely data on public contracts to improve monitoring and engage citizens and businesses in identifying and fixing problems with public procurement. Thus, the EBRD is bringing global standards to its regions in the form of the rule of law, a robust legal framework and the digitalisation of public procurement.

The CSE team will continue to engage and support CSOs in creating more robust monitoring systems that will serve as a long-term platform for overseeing public procurement in our regions.

MAIN ACTIVITY

POLICY ACTIVITY

Capacity-building workshop for MDB staff on civil-society engagement for development effectiveness

In February, 150-plus MDB staff came together for a two-day workshop on civil-society mainstreaming in the operations of four MDBs. The workshop, organised jointly by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the EBRD, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), focused on how MDBs could work more proactively with CSOs and the local communities they serve, and strengthen staff capacity to mainstream civil-society engagement in their work.

The workshop: (1) raised awareness of and provided useful information and knowledge on the work of MDBs in engaging and mainstreaming CSOs in their institutions, both at the strategic and operational level; (2) served as an opportunity to share experience and lessons learned on approaches, mechanisms and best practices for promoting the participation and effectiveness of CSOs in development initiatives; and (3) aimed to strengthen the capacity of MDB staff with regard to effective project design and implementation through stakeholder engagement.

Key takeaways from the workshop:

- **The civic space and citizens are extremely important partners for MDBs**, especially in transitional societies, providing societal buy-in to our policies. To mainstream civil society across our policies, we need to start thinking differently about how we engage with local communities to make a bigger impact. We need to recognise and build a sense of common purpose to promote more resilient economies by bringing in civil society as an equal partner.
- **Open communication with civil society enhances the effectiveness and impact of our operations** wherever we work. Building deeper partnerships with civil society is important in order to achieve broader societal buy-in to reforms and increased local ownership of the transition and development process.
- **CSOs should be seen as an “implementing agency”** in MDB operations and as a way for MDBs to strengthen their institutional capacity.
- **Operational partnerships and collaboration between MDBs are essential to elevate civil society** as an equal partner in policy and to highlight the importance of including civil society as a third partner in decision-making, along with the state and the private sector.

The role of civil society in EBRD policies and a project in Turkey

Improving CSO understanding of their role in EBRD development policy and the projects it finances

A good understanding of the EBRD’s policies and project cycle will give CSOs an opportunity to engage earlier and better with the Bank and to provide practical, citizen-centric insights into adopting good governance principles, from the preparation of country strategies to the post-evaluation of financed projects. Thus, the Bank will become more sensitive to and inclusive of the environmental and social aspects of the sustainable development projects it finances in Turkish cities.

With this in mind, the EBRD, the Istanbul Citizens’ Assembly (ICA) and the Arguden Governance Academy met with national and local CSOs and metropolitan citizens’ assemblies in Turkey. The Bank informed the CSOs about the EBRD’s Environmental and Social Policy, Access to Information Policy, country-level partnership frameworks, project cycle and Project Accountability Policy.



OVERVIEW OF CSE ACTIVITY

- In the first four months of the year, the EBRD President met with CSO representatives in Moldova, Uzbekistan, Albania and Kosovo.
- Earlier in the year, we held a closing event for the Digital Transformation for Civil Society pilot programme in Turkey. The CSE unit will be expanding the programme to additional countries in the coming months.

EBRD PUBLICATIONS



EGYPT

COUNTRY STRATEGY
APPROVAL



KOSOVO

COUNTRY STRATEGY
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BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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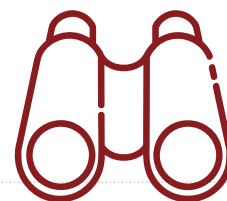
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LOOKING AHEAD



- Our upcoming **country and sector strategies** will be available on our dedicated consultation page below.

HAVE YOUR SAY



Review all our open consultations

ACCESS PROJECT INFORMATION



TELL US MORE

in the EBRD Civil Society
Engagement Survey



REGISTER NOW

for the EBRD's 2022
Annual Meeting in
Morocco



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