



Welcome to the
CSO Newsletter

April 2023

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Foreword

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter!

In this issue we reflect on our activities at the beginning of the year, which focused on two major global events – the first anniversary of the war on Ukraine and the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria.

It is important for us to stay informed and engaged with the world around us. The war on Ukraine has displaced millions of people and taken its toll on the region's infrastructure and economy.

The EBRD is working hard to support Ukraine, and the CSE team is trying to not only help Ukraine and other affected countries, but also give a voice to civil society organisations (CSOs) on the ground.

At the same time, the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria have caused widespread destruction and loss of life. It is critical that we come together to provide aid to those affected by the earthquakes.

We also look ahead to the Civil Society Programme at the EBRD Annual Meeting in May. The Programme will focus on building resilient economies and give CSOs an opportunity to engage with senior Bank officials.

Lastly we touch on the consultation process for the review of the Environmental and Social Policy and Access to Information Policy.

As always, we welcome your feedback on our work.

Happy reading!
The CSE team

MAIN ACTIVITY

A year of war on Ukraine: Insights from civil society



February 2023 marked one year since the start of the war on Ukraine. In this one year, nearly 8 million people fled Ukraine while an estimated 8 million were displaced within the country. CSOs sprang into action, teaming up to support refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). The nature of people's needs have evolved as the war has progressed but since day one Ukraine's people and civil society have worked tirelessly to respond to the needs of their communities.

To honour Ukrainian civil society and convey its message on the changing needs of those working the ground, we organised a panel discussion event. It was opened by Olena Koval, Head of the Civil Society Engagement and Private Sector Partnerships teams at the EBRD, and moderated by Mısra Özkuş. Members of the panel comprised Dmytro Kondratenko, Head of Monitoring and Evaluation at Caritas Ukraine, Olga Ivanova, Ukraine Programme Director at Stabilization Support Services (SSS), and Evren Aydogan, Executive Director of Needs Map.

Key takeaways from the panel were as follows

Civil society stakeholders care for both their employees and communities. Assisting war victims has not been easy for CSOs, as their employees are also affected, for example by enduring bombings, or operating in other traumatic environments.

Internally displaced people (IDPs) are another reality of the war on Ukraine. There are about 6 to 8 million IDPs due to this war. Mapping IDPs' needs is still an area that needs strengthening. Organisations such as SSS focus on different activities, ranging from providing aid (food, hygiene) to planning processes, strategising and working with local authorities for the social protection of IDPs.

The response should be coordinated and locally informed. Despite the high proportion of aid, CSOs still need a transparent, harmonised and equitable approach to meet their overhead costs and sustain local assistance. The needs are diverse and more complex than food and basic requirements. Therefore, aid providers should communicate better with communities and provide coordinated and locally informed responses. Political will to include local CSOs in the UN clusters is also important.

Civil society is an invaluable asset for the reconstruction of Ukraine. CSOs agree that the country's reconstruction must also be locally informed. Responsibility for ensuring that CSOs are present in the planning and reconstruction stages falls to the government and international and local organisations.



POLICY ACTIVITY

EBRD policy review

The EBRD's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Access to Information Policy (AIP) detail the Bank's commitments to promoting transparency and environmentally sound and sustainable development. To ensure the ongoing relevance of these policies, the EBRD reviews the ESP and AIP every five years – and has just begun its most recent review process.

Civil society offers invaluable insight into our work. To recognise this, and to give you the opportunity to voice your thoughts about this process, EBRD management has set up a consultation portal where you can access all key information and materials relating to the policy review, including the Bank's stakeholder engagement plans, details of past and upcoming events, and presentations outlining the overall approach to this review process, including identification of specific issues for consideration.

You will also be able to submit your thoughts and comments on the current ESP and AIP, as well as offer suggestions for the revised policies. Feedback can be provided anonymously if preferred.

Access the consultation portal



MAIN ACTIVITY

EBRD Türkiye earthquake response



In February 2023, a series of violent earthquakes struck southern and central Türkiye and northern and western Syria, resulting in widespread damage and more than 50,000 fatalities.

EBRD staff launched a community initiative to support CSOs working on the relief effort, with the Bank stepping up its contribution to help the affected areas by matching all donations to the community initiative on a 1:2 basis. All the funds, totalling more than €860,000, went to the trusted and impactful CSOs in the region that work with AFET Platformu (Disaster Platformu) and local municipalities. The Bank will monitor the use of the funds through regular reporting to ensure that donations are used for priority needs and can create a sustainable impact wherever possible.

Reconstruction efforts will be needed across several sectors in the country and work will need to occur in an inclusive, safe, open, fair and efficient way. To this end, the Bank aims to develop technical cooperation projects with municipalities, local community-based organisations and service providers.

These TC projects will cover three main areas:

- tackling the social and economic impacts of the crisis, and rebuilding the cities to become more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- creating open, transparent and competitive public procurement processes
- increasing community participation in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction.

The EBRD plans to invest up to €1.5 billion in Türkiye's south-eastern region over the next two years to address the impact of the devastating earthquakes.

OTHER ACTIVITY

Civil Society Programme at the 2023 Annual Meeting

Join us for the Civil Society Programme at the 2023 EBRD Annual Meeting from 16 to 18 May in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. This year, the theme of the Business Forum is "Investing in Resilience".

The 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.

Agenda

- The EBRD's strategic approach to civil society engagement for 2023-28
- Board of Directors' meeting with CSOs (closed session)
- EBRD President's meeting with CSOs (closed session)
- Open panel: Civil society in Ukraine: critical defence component, vital post-war recovery enabler
- Open panel: Promoting civil society resilience in Central Asia
- Pilot CSO Steering Committee launch
- Review of the EBRD's Environmental and Social Policy and Access to Information Policy
- IPAM panel: Remedy and sustainability through conflict resolution
- Evaluation Department session: Evaluation: improving resilience in times of crisis

[Access the detailed agenda](#)



OVERVIEW OF CSE ACTIVITY

The CSE team has held the following events as of 18 April 2023:

- 6** presidential CSO meetings
- 3** senior management CSO meetings
- 2** events/ external activities
- 1** Board meeting with CSOs

REGISTER NOW

For the EBRD's 2023 Annual Meeting in Uzbekistan



Contacts

Civil Society Engagement

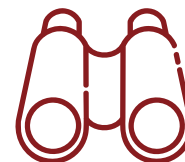
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LOOKING AHEAD



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

HAVE YOUR SAY



Review all our open consultations



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