

AFRICA

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MARCH 2020

SPRING MEETINGS 2020

On March 3rd, 2020, the President of the WBG, David Malpass, announced that the Management of the World Bank Group and IMF together with their Executive Boards have agreed to adapt the 2020 World Bank Group-IMF Spring Meetings to a virtual format. The President advised that the reason behind the decision was the deep concern over the evolving situation regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the human tragedy surrounding it. The President was convinced that, given growing health considerations related to the virus and the increasing uncertainties relating to travel and logistics, Management had reached a reasonably prudent decision to hold virtual Spring Meetings. The WBG's goal remains to serve its membership effectively while ensuring the health and safety of its partners, member country representatives and staff.

In addition, the WBG would remain fully committed to maintaining a productive dialogue with all stakeholders and will leverage video conferencing and other IT-related capabilities to hold essential policy consultations with the membership. There was confidence that member countries would still be able to effectively engage on pressing global economic issues with this adapted format.

WORLD BANK GROUP SUPPORT TO COVID-19 INITIATIVES

The World Bank Group has announced the establishment of a World Bank Group Fast Track COVID-19 Facility which would make available, an initial fast track package of \$12 billion to support countries affected by the health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) global pandemic. This financing, to be drawn from across IDA, IBRD and IFC, is aimed at providing support to member countries in their efforts to combat threats posed by COVID-19. The WBG aims to actively engage with member countries to counter the economic and social threats posed by the Coronavirus. The plan is to offer robust solutions tailored around the WBG's practice and expertise that has been demonstrated with various initiatives in response to previous crisis. This vehicle will be backed with policy and technical advice to member countries.

The financing will be globally coordinated to support country-based responses and will channel resources towards strengthening health systems as well as supporting member countries to reduce the impact of the pandemic on growth and development. The intervention by the WB is anticipated to support beneficiaries in:



SPRING MEETINGS 2020

WORD BANK GROUP SUPPORT TO COVID-19 INITIATIVES

THE HORN OF AFRICA INITIATIVE: AN UPDATE

MEETING BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA'S DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTION (DPP) AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF THE WORLD BANK GROUP

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS ZIMBABWE

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

- Providing better access to health services to safeguard people from the epidemic;
- Strengthening disease surveillance;
- Bolstering public health interventions; and
- Engaging the private sector to reduce the impact on economies.

Eligible member countries will, upon submitting written request to the WBG, receive grants and low-interest loans from International Development Association (IDA) for low income countries and loans from International Bank of Reconstruction Development (IBRD) for middle income countries. Support will, however, be prioritized for the poorest countries and those at high risk but with low capacity. The WBG's private sector arm, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), will provide member countries with support to enable continuation of operations in the private sector and to sustain jobs. IFC is geared to expand its reach to commercial banks and their clients to bolster the expansion of trade finance and lines of credit for working capital.

Direct support will also be provided to member countries' strategic sectors, including those which impact medical equipment and pharmaceuticals. The World Bank support will also cover a range of interventions to strengthen health services and primary health care. It will bolster disease monitoring and reporting, train front line health workers, encourage community engagement to maintain public trust, and improve access to treatment for the poorest patients.

The WBG assures its member countries of its preparedness to adapt its approach, tools and resources to meet their varied needs, levels of risk as well as vulnerability to face the challenges of COVID-19.

THE HORN OF AFRICA INITIATIVE: AN UPDATE

In February 2020, Djibouti hosted a meeting of Finance Ministers under the Horn of Africa Initiative (HoAI) to discuss issues of interest to the grouping. The meeting also discussed Djibouti's request to take over the chairmanship of the HoAI's which had been tabled during the 2019 World Bank/ International Monetary Fund Annual Meetings. During the two days of deliberations, Ministers and senior officials from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya, discussed areas of common interest contained in the regional integration framework. The World Bank, the African Development Bank and the European Commission facilitated the discussions.

The HoAI meeting reviewed progress made as well as preparations for new projects and programs that the HoAI intends to implement. It laid the groundwork for measures to be taken to ensure that preparatory work for the upcoming financing workshop were advancing. The policy approaches for effective trade facilitation and HoAI governance dominated the meeting.

Ministers endorsed the agreed package of priority proposals recommended during the October 2019 ministerial meeting. The package is structured under four pillars, namely: regional infrastructure networks; trade and economic integration; building resilience and strengthening human capital.

The Regional infrastructure networks is composed of economic corridors which target the upgrading and construction of four road corridors covering close to 6000km at a cost estimated at \$9 billion dollars. Other elements of the regional infrastructure networks include creating an enabling environment for regional energy trade and creating a single digital market.

Trade and economic integration will enhance regional trade facilitation by, among others, promoting one-stop border posts, dry ports, studies and technical assistances. In addition, it focuses on regional value chain development, targeting private sector investments.

Building resilience will put in place a pastoralist livestock insurance system, which will focus on resilience to climate change of pastoralist production systems.

Strengthening human capital aims to support bolstering basic services delivery systems and network, building skills, empowering women and youth.

The HoAI priority list of projects and programs is estimated to cost US\$15.8 billion. The World Bank Group has committed US\$2 billion in contributions to the program. The European Union and the African Development Bank have indicated they will contribute to the needed financing.

There was Ministerial consensus on formulating a strategy that enables securing the bulk of the required financing and channeling such resources towards efficient implementation of the programs. In this regard, it was agreed that the next step would be to prepare forum to mobilize funding where development partners and private sector representatives will be invited to discuss the objectives, package and financing modalities. Accordingly, the WB/AfDB/EU were entrusted with undertaking outreach to potential development partners in the next few months.

In conclusion, Ministers agreed on terms of reference for the chairperson of the HoAI. On membership and participation, Ministers agreed to invite Sudan as an observer to join the discussions during the 2020 Spring Meetings.

MEETING BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA'S DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTION (DPP) AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF THE WORLD BANK GROUP

The Director of Public Prosecution for the Republic of Kenya, Mr. Noordin Haji, met members of the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank Group on February 24, 2020. The purpose of the meeting was to update the Board on the efforts Kenya was making to fight corruption.

The DPP updated the Board Officials on the mandate of the Directorate, emphasizing the constitutional provisions that had strengthened its independence to undertake impartial and efficient prosecutions. He highlighted that the Office had prioritized the following areas to strengthen its ability to deliver on its mandates: streamlining the prosecution of corruption, institutional strengthening and building the capacity of prosecutors, effective whistleblower protection, the establishment of an Internal affairs function and an inspectorate to strengthen integrity of compliance.

Mr. Haji who had been in office for two years had identified the following issues that needed to be addressed; first, he acknowledged that Kenya's corruption was systemic and therefore needed to be systematically addressed through appropriate policy strengthening that would enable investigators, prosecutors, and the judiciary to synergize efforts in addressing corruption. Second, he highlighted that his Office had introduced plea bargaining as a means to fast track the disposal of cases, where necessary, and as an incentive for information

that would support expeditious prosecution of corruption cases. Third, he also updated the Board Officials on the measures his Office was taking to improve the integrity and trial of corruption cases, the recovery and restitution of proceeds of crime through a Prosecution fund, and the capacity of prosecutors through the establishment of a Prosecution Training Institute.

The DPP also highlighted the following high-risk areas for corruption: the Public Procurement Processes, Infrastructure and Development Projects, and the Devolved Governments. As an example, he cited the Aror Kimwarer Dam scandal that had resulted in the arrest and prosecution of a sitting Cabinet Secretary and several senior officials of the National Treasury. Overall, he credited the achievements his Office had realized to the strong political support for his Office, the strengthened legal, institutional and constitutional frameworks, and the increased budget allocation. Lastly, he appealed for stronger collaboration with international partners and sovereigns in sharing information that would support the Country to fight corruption. He also called on the World Bank to assist Kenya to strengthen its debt management, enhance transparency, as well as improve its capacity to use best practices to guide the procurement, contracting and implementation of projects.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

The Executive Director, Ms. Anne Kabagambe, visited the Republic of Malawi on February 16–19, 2020. The purpose of the visit was to discuss the country's needs and priorities in the context of strengthening World Bank Group support.

The ED who was accompanied by her Advisor Ms. Lonkhululeko Magagula and Program Assistant, Ms. Lozi Sapele, had very fruitful discussions with the Honorable Joseph Mwanamvekha, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, the Honorable Kodwani Nankhuma, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Malawi, Dr. Dalitso Kabambe, and Senior officials from both Ministries as well as the Ministry of Information, Civic Education and Communications Technology.

The ED also had the opportunity to visit four sites of Bank-supported projects at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Mulewa Model Village and the Agriculture Productivity Program for Southern Africa.



The Executive Director with the Honorable Joseph Mwanamvekha, Minister of Finance and Economic Development



The Executive Director with the Minister of Agriculture, Honorable Kodwani Nankhuma

During her visit, the ED appreciated the progress made by the Republic of Malawi in policy and legislative reform as well as in fast-tracking the implementation of the Bank-supported projects, particularly in agriculture, digital transformation and education. She further noted the priorities of the country and the urgent need for further collaboration between the Government and the Bank to address outstanding implementation constraints in infrastructure and the energy sector in order to effectively reduce poverty.



The Executive Director during a visit to the Mulewa Village

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

The Executive Director expressed optimism about the positive actions the Zambian Government is taking to restore fiscal health and stabilize the economy. She said this when she visited the Republic of Zambia from February 19–22. She was accompanied by her Senior Advisor for Zambia and Program Assistant, Mr. Allan Ncube and Ms. Lozi Sapele, respectively.

During the visit, Ms. Kabagambe met with the Vice President, Her Excellency, Inonge Mutukwa Wina; the Minister of Finance, Dr. Bwalya Ng'andu and other Senior Government Officials. Issues discussed included Zambia's public debt management approach, budget support, energy reforms and social sector investments.

The Executive Director also had the opportunity to visit one of the schools constructed under the IDA-funded Zambia Education Enhancement Project at Palabana Secondary School. The project was designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning in targeted schools to increase equitable access to secondary education in Zambia.

On her final day in Zambia, Ms. Kabagambe toured the Kariba Dam Rehabilitation Project. The work on this regional project serving both Zambia and Zimbabwe is funded by the World Bank, African Development Bank, European Union and the Swedish Government.



The ED with Students at the Palabana Secondary School constructed under the IDA-funded Zambia Education Enhancement Project



The Executive Director Meeting with Hon. Dr. Ng'andu, Minister of Finance



Kariba Dam Visit

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS ZIMBABWE

The Executive Director, Ms. Anne Kabagambe, on her visit to Zimbabwe, discussed progress on the country's policy reforms agenda, key priorities for 2020, namely; growth and productivity, food and energy security, currency stabilization, and improving the ease of doing business in the country. She also discussed the implementation of the IMF Staff Monitored Programme, the various development projects financed by the World Bank, including Cyclone Idai recovery programmes, as well as the need for more social protection programmes in Zimbabwe.



The ED with the President of Zimbabwe, H.E. Emmerson D. Mnangagwa



The ED with the Min. of Finance, Hon. Prof. Mthuli Ncube

Ms. Kabagambe visited the Republic of Zimbabwe from February 23–26. She was accompanied by her Senior Advisor for Zambia and Program Assistant, Mr. Allan Ncube and Ms. Lozi Sapele, respectively.

During the visit, Ms. Kabagambe met with the President, His Excellency, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa; the Minister of Finance & Economic Development, Prof. Mthuli Ncube and other Senior Government Officials. She was pleased with the assurances she received from Government on the implementation of the reforms.

The Executive Director was privileged to visit one of the World Bank Group funded Project at Hopley farm clinic to appreciate the challenges Zimbabwe faces in the health sector. During this visit, she was accompanied by the World Bank Country Manager, Ms. Mukami Kariuki.



The ED during her visit to Hopley Farm clinic on the outskirts of Harare

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISITS THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

The Executive Director, Ms. Anne Kabagambe, visited the Republic of Uganda from March 5-6, 2020. The purpose of the visit was to consult with the Government of Uganda on how the WBG would support its implementation of the National Development Plan II, private sector development program, as well as the readiness and response mechanisms to the locust invasion and the COVID-19 threat.

The Executive Director, accompanied by the Africa Vice President, Mr. Hafez Ghanem met with H. E. President Yoweri Museveni. During the meeting, H.E President Yoweri Museveni informed the meeting that Uganda's development priorities were investing on infrastructure, with greater focus on energy, railways, ICT, industrial parks and aerodromes. It was also shared that the Government of Uganda was working toward bringing down the cost of money; improving public services in health and education, provision of low-cost housing, and

broadening public sensitization works in the areas of health, hygiene, nutrition and related subjects. H. E. President Museveni welcomed the proposed support by the WBG to fight the locust invasion as well as the threat from COVID-19. In terms of approach, the President highlighted the need to focus on building local capacity within Uganda in parallel with the provision of critical inputs for the health system.

The mission also undertook several separate meetings, including with Hon. Matia Kasajja, Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and Minister of Health Ms. Ruth Acheng. The mission held discussions with representatives of Uganda's business community, and participated in panel discussions, including on women's empowerment and refugee hosting. The mission also visited several sites including a women entrepreneur project and the refugee hosting agency.



The Executive Director during a meeting with H.E Yoweri Museveni