World Bank Group Launches First Operations for COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Emergency Health Support, Strengthening Developing Country Responses

The World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors approved a first set of emergency support operations for developing countries around the world, using a dedicated, fast-track facility for COVID-19 response. The first group of projects, amounting to $1.9 billion, will assist 25 countries, and new operations are moving forward in over 40 countries using the fast-track process. Click here to learn more. To see the project list, click here. Watch a video here.

World Bank Group’s Response to COVID-19 What CSOs Should Know

The World Bank Group has increased its package of fast-track financing to $14 billion to assist companies and countries in their efforts to prevent, detect and respond to the rapid spread of COVID-19. The package will strengthen national systems for public health preparedness, including for disease containment, diagnosis, and treatment, and support the private sector. See the press release, fact sheet, and COVID-19 news portal for more details.

IFC Readies Emergency Assistance for the Private Sector in Developing Economies

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is providing $8 billion in fast-track financing and other aid to help sustain economies and protect jobs during the disruption and uncertainty caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The emergency assistance is part of the World Bank Group’s $14-billion aid package and will be deployed globally. IFC’s contribution is designed to provide critical support to the private sector, which is the main driver of employment in developing economies. To learn more about IFC’s response, click here.
WBG – IMF Joint Statement: A Call to Action on the Debt of IDA Countries

The World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund issued a joint statement to the G20 concerning debt relief for the poorest countries. The coronavirus outbreak is likely to have severe economic and social consequences for IDA countries, home to a quarter of the world’s population and two-thirds of the world’s population living in extreme poverty. With immediate effect—and consistent with national laws of the creditor countries—the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) call on all official bilateral creditors to suspend debt payments from IDA countries that request forbearance. Learn more.

Global Public Procurement Database: Share, Compare, Improve!

The World Bank launched the Global Public Procurement Database (GPPD), a first-of-its-kind knowledge product that makes public procurement information from 218 countries and territories available to everyone. The GPPD is a one-stop-shop that aims to help improve transparency, accountability, and efficiency and to enable an environment conducive to global public procurement reform and the adoption of best practices. Read more.

BLOGS AND STORIES

Swift action can help developing countries limit economic harm of coronavirus
The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has already exacted a high cost in human life and has been recognized for what it is—a global health emergency. As the virus spreads around the globe, the question now is whether lives can be protected, and economic harm can be contained. We know from history that when the global economy faces a common threat, quick, coordinated, and decisive action makes all the difference. Continue reading.

Ensuring healthcare on the frontlines of conflict and crisis
Major crises stretch already weak health systems and often put vulnerable groups—particularly women, children, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, the elderly, and LGBTI populations—at risk of being excluded from receiving basic services like healthcare. For a development actor like the World Bank Group, the priority is preserving essential institutions and primary healthcare systems in situations of crisis and conflict so that all people can access the health services they need. Continue reading.

Coronavirus: Reflections of an epidemiologist and public health practitioner
Trained physician, epidemiologist, and global public health practitioner, Enis Baris, provides his reflections on the novel coronavirus and advice on how to sift through the deluge of information. Arming people with the right messaging and instructions for compliance with the science-based best practice is what counts most, he says. Continue reading.

Managing the impact of COVID-19 on education systems around the world: How countries are preparing, coping, and planning for recovery
At the end of February as alarm bells began to sound on the growing spread of the COVID-19 virus, the World Bank established a multi-sectoral global task force to support country response and coping measures. At the time, only China and a handful of schools in other affected countries were enforcing social distancing through school closures. A little over two weeks later, 120 countries have closed schools impacting almost a billion students across the globe that have seen their schools close for varied lengths of time. Continue reading.
Coronavirus and the 'Pangolin Effect': Increased exposure to wildlife poses health, biosafety and global security risks
Everything is connected. Using the theory of chaos, when a butterfly flaps its wings in New Mexico it has the power to cause a hurricane in China. But there’s hardly anything of the butterfly effect’s randomness in the dominos that keep falling after the emergence of COVID-19 (coronavirus). The explanation that is emerging is in fact more familiar: how human beings’ connected actions can result in dramatic consequences. Although the science is not yet conclusive, one thing seems beyond doubt: the SARS-CoV-2 originated in wildlife, from where the virus managed to break the species barrier into humans. Continue reading.

“Home Sane Home”
As the world struggles to fight the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, over 2 billion people still do not have access to a toilet, and hundreds of millions of people cannot even wash their hands at home. Meanwhile, disasters and climate change are destroying an increasing number of dwellings, leaving an estimated 14 million people homeless each year. Already, governments around the world are scrambling to fill the housing gap by building new houses in partnership with the private sector. In most developing countries, however, two out of three families simply need a better home, not a new one. Continue reading.

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