

World Bank Civil Society Engagement Newsletter - September 2007

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1. COMMENTS WELCOME: Volcker Panel Review of the World Bank's Institutional Integrity Department and World Bank Proposals - A report of the panel led by Paul Volcker, which reviewed the work of the Institutional Integrity Department (INT) was released on September 13. World Bank Group President, Robert B. Zoellick, has expressed his appreciation for the report, and noted that the panel's detailed recommendations will be carefully and promptly considered by the World Bank Group. The Bank produced its own proposal of how to improve INT's effectiveness in a number of areas. The World Bank is seeking comments through October 31st on the Volcker Panel Review, as well as the Bank's proposed actions. [More](#) [Comment](#)

2. World Bank Group Directs \$34.3 Billion in 2007 to Boost Growth and Overcome Poverty - During fiscal year 2007, ending June 30, the World Bank Group (WBG) committed US \$34.3 billion in loans, grants, equity investments, and guarantees to its members and to private business in its member countries – up \$2.7 billion (7.8 percent) from fiscal year 2006. IDA commitments were \$11.9 billion, 25 percent higher than the previous year, and the highest in IDA's history. Financial commitments provided by the WBG to the countries of sub-Saharan Africa increased by \$1.8 billion in FY07 to \$7.5 billion and included a record \$5.8 billion in IDA credits, grants, and guarantees to sub-Saharan Africa, (up by \$1 billion from the previous year); \$1.4 billion from IFC for private sector development projects, (double last year's effort); and \$311 million in MIGA guarantees for projects in the region, up \$131 million from 2006. [More](#)

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3. World Bank and UNODC to Pursue Stolen Asset Recovery Through StAR Initiative - On September 17, the World Bank, in partnership with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), launched an initiative to help developing countries recover assets stolen by corrupt leaders, help invest them in effective development programs and combat safe havens internationally. In order to prevent and resolve the problem of stolen assets, StAR operates on the premise that both developed and developing countries must work in partnership. While developing countries need to improve governance and accountability, developed nations should also stop providing a safe haven for stolen proceeds. StAR calls for the ratification by all countries of the UN Convention against corruption (UNCAC) – something that only half of the OECD and G-8 countries have done. In addition, the initiative calls for a collective effort with multilateral and bilateral agencies, as well as with civil society and the private sector, is essential. [More](#)

4. Doing Business 2008 - The Doing Business Project provides objective measures of business regulations and their enforcement across over 175 countries. Doing Business 2008 ranks countries on their overall ease of doing business, and analyzes reforms to business regulation - identifying which countries are improving their business environment the most and which ones slipped. The indicators are used to analyze economic outcomes and identify what reforms have worked, where and why. The upcoming report, which will be released on September 26, 2007, focuses on how complex business regulations dampen investment, growth and job creation in all businesses, and especially opportunities for women entrepreneurs. The report can be pre-ordered. [More](#)

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5. World Bank Inspection Panel: New Head and Panel Member - Mr. Werner Kiene, an Austrian national, became the new Chairperson of the Inspection Panel (IP), effective September 1, 2007. He has been a Member of the Panel since November 1, 2004. Prior to joining the Panel, he worked with the Ford Foundation, both in New York and in Africa. He also served in senior positions with German Development Assistance (GTZ). He became the first Director of the Office of Evaluation of the UN World Food Program (WFP), and represented WFP in Bangladesh. As of September 1, the IP also has a new member. Mr. Roberto Lenton, a national of Argentina, most recently the Chair of the Technical Committee of the Global Water Partnership and Chair of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council. Mr. Lenton has worked in development for over thirty years and has considerable experience in Asia, Latin America and Africa. [More](#)

6. Consultation on the Use of Country Systems for Procurement - Civil society organizations, as well as companies,

academic institutions, and individuals from member countries of the World Bank are eligible to compete for business opportunities within the projects supported by World Bank loans to these countries. The Bank is moving forward in defining a methodology for piloting the use of country systems for procurement. A multi-stakeholder consultation process is underway between September and November, 2007. The purpose of the consultation is to improve the quality of the new methodology for piloting the use of country systems in procurement; to tap the knowledge of a diverse range of stakeholders; to listen to issues raised and address them to the maximum extent in new methodology; and finally to focus on future actions. [More](#)

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NEWS FROM THE WORLD BANK'S REGIONAL DEPARTMENTS

Africa

Development Marketplace (DM) Competition for Off-Grid Lighting Products and Services for the Poor in Africa - The World Bank Group (WBG) launched a competition for the design and delivery of innovative, low cost, high quality, non-fossil lighting products targeting low income consumers in Sub-Saharan Africa. The DM is part of the broader Lighting Africa program managed by the WBG which seeks to reach 250 million customers with modern, affordable lighting by 2030. Grant competition is open to all interested, including CSOs. A total of US\$2.5 million will be awarded, with grants up to \$200,000. A broad base of activities will be supported, including: improving technology/product innovation for low income consumers; demonstrating business models which strengthen manufacturing, marketing, and distribution supply chains; reducing product cost and increasing access to financing (supply and demand); and reducing transaction costs. Deadline for accepting proposals is October 31, 2007. [More](#)

World Bank and Partners Launch Initiative to Support African Diaspora in Europe - the World Bank Group, in partnership with the Belgian Development Cooperation, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Development Agency, is launching an initiative to support investments by Sub-Saharan diaspora across Europe that are geared toward achieving economic and social benefits in their countries of origin. The initiative, called the Development Marketplace for African Diaspora in Europe (or D-MADE), hopes to generate momentum around innovative ways to mobilize the diasporas' ideas and activities that lead to development in their countries of origin. It will support diaspora business entrepreneurs with a social mission by generating employment, business support, training and incomes for the poor and disadvantaged. [More](#)

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East Asia and the Pacific (EAP)

World Bank Group Increases its Support to East Asia - The World Bank Group committed loans, grants and credits worth \$US4.3 billion for development projects and operations in 10 countries in the EAP region during fiscal year 2007. This was more than \$600 million over the previous year, reflecting the stronger economic performance of most countries in the region. China continues to be the largest borrower in the Bank's EAP region, accounting for loans worth \$1.6 billion during FY2007 – or 41 percent of the total. The major proportion of these funds (around 60 percent) went into improving urban infrastructure – including roads, water and sanitation – rehabilitating river and forest environments and building better transport systems. This commitment extends across the World Bank Group. [More](#)

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Europe and Central Asia (ECA)

World Bank Group Directs US\$6 Billion In 2007 to Boost Growth, Increase Living Standards In ECA - During Fiscal Year 2007, the World Bank Group (WBG) committed some US\$6 billion in loans, credits, equity investments and guarantees to its members and to private business in the ECA region. The recipients are using these funds in more than 130 projects designed to overcome poverty and enhance growth—for example, by improving education and health services, promoting private sector development, building infrastructure, and strengthening governance and institutions. Lending was provided across all sectors, with the largest areas of assistance in law, justice, and public administration; water, sanitation, and flood protection; and transportation. The top borrowers in FY07 by volume were Turkey, Croatia, Romania, and Bulgaria. [More](#)

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Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

WBG: Economic growth, inequality and opportunity creation in Latin America and the Caribbean with close to US \$8 billion - The World Bank Group (WBG) mobilized close to US \$8 billion financing to public and private sector projects and programs in LAC, aimed to address the persistent inequality in the region and foster sustainable growth during fiscal year 2007, ending June 30. LAC became the largest beneficiary of lending services provided through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). IBRD committed US \$4.35 billion, over 40% of total IBRD lending, and International Development Association (IDA) committed US \$200 -US \$132 million in credits and US \$68 million in grants-totaling US \$4.5 billion. Argentina, Colombia, Brazil and Peru were the largest borrowers, receiving World Bank lending in areas such as public health, infrastructure, education and rural development. [More](#)

Loan To Empower Over 200,000 Poor In Brazil's Drought-Prone Northeast - The World Bank Board of Directors approved on September 18 a loan of US\$22.5 million to expand the successful Rio Grande do Norte Rural Poverty Reduction Project. The additional funding will benefit some 230,000 rural poor people in Rio Grande do Norte through the implementation of approximately 1,600 small-scale, basic, socio-economic infrastructure and productive subprojects. The loan will also continue to give priority to ethnic minorities, women and youth. Specifically, the project supports job and income generation for the rural poor through better access to basic social and economic infrastructure and services, as well as help for productive activities. The loan will also increase the capacity of rural communities to organize collectively to meet their own needs; enhance local governance by strengthening of community associations and Municipal Councils; and foster closer integration of development policies, programs and projects in rural areas at the local level. [More](#)

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Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

The World Bank Group Augmented Its Support Programs in the Middle East and North Africa Region during 2006-2007 - During fiscal year 2007, the World Bank Group (WBG) committed US \$2.6 billion in loans, credits, grants, and guarantees to governments and the private sector in countries across the MENA region. The recipients are using these funds in more than 40 projects/programs designed to enhance the business and investment environment and to empower the poor. In middle income countries across the region, the WBG focused its technical and financial assistance on promoting private sector development while enhancing women's economic opportunities, strengthening governance and institutions and supporting the management of new infrastructure projects. In Lebanon, Iraq, West Bank and Gaza, the WBG's strategy is to address priority needs of vulnerable communities and those at risk while contributing to solid foundations for government and market institutions. [More](#)

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South Asia Region (SAR)

World Bank Supports India in Developing Hydropower - The World Bank approved on September 13 a US\$400 million loan for developing a run-of-river hydropower plant on the river Satluj that will provide renewable, low carbon energy to India's over-stretched Northern Electricity Grid. The 412 MegaWatt (MW) Rampur Hydropower Project in the state of Himachal Pradesh will produce electricity sufficient to electrify a million additional households. The project requires no dam or reservoir to be built and so will not involve any inundation of land; nor will the scheme extract any additional water from the river, as it will reuse the water used by the existing upstream Nathpa Jhakri power plant. Effort has been made not just to mitigate any social and environmental impacts of the Rampur Project but to also look for opportunities to improve the lives of people in the project's vicinity. Innovative benefit-sharing measures have been launched, including the setting up of a fund for building community infrastructure in project-affected villages, and education support and healthcare for the local people. [More](#)

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NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM THE WORLD BANK

Development Results in Middle-Income Countries. An IEG Evaluation of the World Bank's Support - World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group's (IEG) evaluation finds that the Bank's support in fostering growth and reducing poverty has contributed to the considerable economic success of MIC countries. But to produce greater development benefits, it has to become more agile and draw upon MICs' own capacity much more systematically, connecting such capabilities to help low-income countries and to tackle global challenges. The Bank's work has to more clearly demonstrate best practice to deliver impact beyond its limited direct role, says the review. [More](#)

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GLOBAL EVENTS/DISCUSSIONS

World Bank, European Commission and CSOs Discuss Work in Africa - World Bank Vice President for Africa Ms. Obiageli Ezekwesili along with her counterpart from the European Commission (EC) met with civil society groups to discuss EC-World Bank collaboration on African development, ahead of the annual EC-World Bank high level meeting on Africa in Brussels on September 19, 2007. The meeting brought together a wide range of European, international and African CSOs including Eurodad, CONCORD, CIDSE, Eurostep, ITUC and African Axis. Discussion focussed on improving governance and scaling up aid for Africa. Amongst the concerns raised by civil society actors were for the EC and the World Bank to give greater focus to gender equality and health in their cooperation with African, and to harmonize their approaches to conditionality and performance indicators. In 2003 the Bank and the EC launched a formal process for annual consultations on Africa, to intensify WB-EC cooperation on the ground and promote policy and procedural harmonization.

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The Newsletter is produced by the Civil Society Team of the World Bank (WB) in collaboration with other WB units. This newsletter highlights some of the many policies, programs, and initiatives of the WB which may involve or be of interest to CSOs. We welcome your comments and feedback to make this newsletter as useful as possible. You can subscribe to the Newsletter using a new registration page: <http://www.worldbank.org/civilsocietyengagementnewsletter/>. Please share your comments on the Newsletter with us: civilsociety@worldbank.org. All past issues of the Newsletter can be found on the WB site on Civil Society Engagement at: <http://www.worldbank.org/civilsociety>.