



# World Bank Update

## PARLIAMENTARY NEWSLETTER

March 2011



Mariam Sherman, Country Director  
West Bank and Gaza

### MENA VC BRIEFING ON WORLD BANK OPERATIONS IN THE WEST BANK & GAZA

On March 2, Mariam J. Sherman, World Bank Country Director for the West Bank and Gaza briefed parliamentarians and participants in World Bank Country Offices in Amman, Beirut, Sana'a, Brussels and Paris, via direct video-link from Jerusalem. The meeting was moderated by Prof. Najeeb Ghanem, Member of the Yemeni Parliament and member on the Board of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank, who joined from Sana'a. The Country Director outlined the World Bank work in the region through analytical work and capacity building; assisting the development of the private sector as the main vehicle for growth in the country; and fostering donor coordination, partnerships and leveraging resources in the West Bank & Gaza. Following her presentation, participants (from Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon and France) engaged her in a very lively questions and answers session to which she contributed openly and candidly. PNoWB participants walked out of the meeting more knowledgeable about the World Bank operations in the very challenging and complex context of the West Bank & Gaza. Country Director Sherman encouraged participants to come to visit and witness the reality on ground, as well as to see the World Bank's work. A more detailed report from the meeting can be found at the website -[www.pnowb.org](http://www.pnowb.org)- of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank, which requested the briefing.

### STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING ON THE IDA16 DEPUTIES REPORT

On February 23, the World Bank's IDA team in a conference call briefed participating CSOs and Parliamentary Organizations on the finalization of the IDA 16 report. Several of the participating organizations had contributed comments to the report, which outlines the overall directions for the use of the resources from the IDA16 replenishment. The participating parliamentary organizations asked that the World Bank continues to strengthen its engagement with Parliamentarians and keep them informed about its processes and operations in client and donor countries. More information on IDA at [www.worldbank.org/ida](http://www.worldbank.org/ida)



IDA 16 Report

### FROM THE REGIONS

### PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENT AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

**Armenia** - On February 18, Jean-Michel Happi, World Bank Armenia Country Manager was hosted by Hovik Abrahamyan, Chairman of the National Assembly (NA) of Armenia. Mr. Happi underscored the necessity of working with the Parliament's standing committees in discussing Armenia's priorities, and current and future projects elaborated jointly by the World Bank and the Armenian Government. The NA Chairman stressed his readiness to support such discus-

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sions and meetings. As a successful example of Bank-Parliament collaboration, the parties mentioned the IDF Grant for Strengthening National Assembly's Capacity for Policy Formulation and Public Dialogue Project.

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**B**russels - On February 2, World Bank Deputy Director for Afghanistan Josephine Bassinette met with members of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with Afghanistan. The Delegation's Chair, Dutch MEP Thijs Berman, just back from a mission to the country, was eager to discuss the various ways in which the Afghan Parliament is helped to develop its oversight and scrutiny functions. MEPs were also interested in donor community consultations on the ground, the role of budget support in institutional capacity building and the involvement of local communities in development projects. MEP Thijs Berman underlined the EP Delegation's readiness to assist Ms Bassinette's Kabul-based team wherever possible.

For more information, please contact [glaryea@worldbank.org](mailto:glaryea@worldbank.org)

**B**russels - On February 17, the European Parliament (EP) Plenary adopted a resolution on the World Bank's Energy Strategy, which urges the World Bank to scale up investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency and expresses concern that the Bank is failing to reach the poor with its conventional

rural electrification programmes. The non-binding resolution does not constitute EU legislation and only serves as advice to the European Commission and EU Member States. For more information, please contact [glaryea@worldbank.org](mailto:glaryea@worldbank.org)

**B**russels - On February 21 in Brussels, World Bank Special Representative and Director for Europe, Carlos Braga addressed the Economics and Security Committee of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (chaired by UK MP Hugh Bayley, the former chair of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank) on the topic of "Aid in an Era of Fiscal Tightening"

**U**kkraine - Collaboration with the parliament has intensified, with the World Bank invited to several expert hearings. A good example is the discussion of pension reform. Bank experts assisted government in elaboration of the Law on Pension Reform, to be voted by the parliament of Ukraine this spring. World Bank Country Director for Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova Martin Raiser participated in the parliamentary hearings on pension reform and delivered an address to the parliament in its main session hall. By helping elaborate modern pension legislation the Bank supported fiscally responsible and socially balanced measures and laid the foundations for a pension system that guarantees a living pension not just to today's pensioners but also to tomorrow's.

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**G**ermany - On February 23, 2011, Arup Banerji, Director of Social Protection and Labor, met with members of the Parliamentary Committee for Economic Cooperation and Development (AWZ) in the German Parliament in Berlin. Mr. Banerji provided an overview of the activities of the Social Protection and Labor sector at the World Bank. In a subsequent Q&A session, Mr. Banerji more specifically addressed the challenges of youth (un)employment in the Middle East and North Africa region, the benefits of conditional and unconditional cash transfers and successful models of health insurance and social safety net programs in India and Ethiopia, respectively.

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Arup Banerji in discussion with AwZ Chairwoman, Dagmar Wöhr

**L**ondon - The International Development Committee (IDC) of the House of Commons met with World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick in early November in Washington as part of their inquiry into the World Bank. In the recommendations from the inquiry, made public on March 1, IDC welcomed "moves that promote



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the Bank's engagement with Parliamentarians and civil society in developing countries and genuine ownership of the development strategy by developing countries" be it through greater transparency and/or better disclosure of information. The Committee also expressed hope that DFID alongside other donors will continue providing support to PNoWB in its work with Parliamentarians. For more information, please contact [afelton@worldbank.org](mailto:afelton@worldbank.org)

Teams will also be organizing a Civil Society Policy Forum from Thursday, April 14 through Sunday, April 17. Information on the CS Forum and the schedule of sessions will be posted by March 1. A special program is prepared for parliamentary participants on April 14 and 15, for more information, please contact [mtixeront@worldbank.org](mailto:mtixeront@worldbank.org). For online registration, please visit <http://go.worldbank.org/ZEL7JBJM90>

## *March to May 2011- The World Bank consults on a new lending instrument*



To respond to changing development needs and demand from client countries, the World Bank is proposing a new Program-for-Results (P4R) lending instrument. P4R is intended to focus Bank support directly on improvements in sectoral or other development programs and would place more direct emphasis on results by making them the basis for disbursement. In developing the P4R instrument, the Bank is carrying out broad-based consultations with its stakeholders from March through May. You can provide feedback at [www.worldbank.org/p4r](http://www.worldbank.org/p4r)

## *Ongoing through March 15-Justice Reform Consultation*

Stakeholder input will be considered in developing a paper that will take stock of the Bank's justice reform experience, make recommendations for future direction, and inform updates to the World Bank Group's evolving Governance and Anti-Corruption Strategy. You can provide feedback at <http://www.worldbank.org/justiceconsult>

## *March 11-13-GOPAC Conference in Mexico*

The Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC) will hold its Global Conference in Mexico City.

## *March 15-16-ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in Brussels*

The Joint Parliamentary Assembly of the EU and the ACP (Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific) will hold its meeting in Brussels on March 15-16. World Bank Special Representative and Director to Europe Carlos Braga will speak on the Impact of debt on Development Financing in ACP Countries

## *March 21-22- IPU-EP Conference on Trade in Geneva*

The Annual 2011 Session on the WTO (World Trade Organization) is organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the European Parliament (EP) in Geneva on March 21-22

## SELECTION OF UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

For more information on these activities, please contact [mtixeront@worldbank.org](mailto:mtixeront@worldbank.org), for E-courses you can consult [www.parliamentarystrengthening.org](http://www.parliamentarystrengthening.org)

## *March 1- Accreditation for 2011 Spring Meetings to Open*



The 2011 World Bank and International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings will be held on April 16 and 17 in Washington, DC. CSO representatives interested in attending are encouraged to apply for online accreditation which will open on Tuesday, March 1 and closes on Monday, April 4. The Bank and IMF Civil Society



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## *Ongoing through May 2011- Social Protection & Labor Strategy Consultation*



To respond more effectively to the emerging, fast-changing and challenging global demands expected in the next decade, the World Bank is preparing a new Social Protection & Labor strategy. It is consulting with a key range of stakeholders to discuss how it can use social protection to help reduce poverty and inequality, and build human potential. You can read the concept note and participate in the consultations at [www.worldbank.org/spstrategy](http://www.worldbank.org/spstrategy)

## *March 7 to April 15-Parliamentary VC Learning Course for the EAP region*

This course, by invitation only, is on the Parliamentary Budgeting Process and will reflect the importance of the budget process and parliamentary scrutiny of the executive's financial decisions and financial management, with an eye toward Mongolia and East Asia Pacific case studies

in the discussion forum. For more information please contact Brooke Larson at [parliamentarystrengthening@gmail.com](mailto:parliamentarystrengthening@gmail.com)

### NEWS & PUBLICATIONS

#### *Food Crisis and the Bank Response*

In response to the severity of the food crisis and the need for prompt action, the World Bank Group set up the Global Food Crisis Response Program (GFRP) in May 2008 to provide immediate relief to countries hard hit by food high prices. Costs for some basic foods are now nearing or beyond the peaks of 2008. The World Bank's Global Food Crisis Response Program (GFRP) is helping some 40 million people in need through \$1.5 billion in support.

More information at [www.worldbank.org/foodcrisis](http://www.worldbank.org/foodcrisis)

#### *The Arab World Initiative (AWI)*

AWI is a World Bank Group partnership with the countries of the Arab world designed to foster effective cooperation and collaboration in the interests of economic integration and knowledge sharing. This website offers access to the latest data, research, feature stories, briefs, multimedia presentations and project documentation about efforts in the Arab world to find opportunity and advantage in economic integration both across the region and with the wider world.

More information at [arabworld.worldbank.org](http://arabworld.worldbank.org)

## *Release of the renewed Africa Strategy*

The World Bank's new strategy for its work in Africa was endorsed by the Bank's Board of Executive Directors on March 1. The new strategy marks a significant shift in the way the organization views Africa and its own



role as a supporter of the continent's progress. Laid out in three main business lines, the program was crafted over more than a year through extensive research and international consultations, especially with the people of Africa. More information at [www.worldbank.org/afr](http://www.worldbank.org/afr)