

## Strengthening Bank's Support to the Arab World

<b>Bank Contact:</b>	Mustapha K. Nabli / 202- 473-1784
<b>Responsible Sector and Bank Unit:</b>	DEC
<b>Recipient Agency:</b>	Economic Research Forum, Cairo
<b>Web Address:</b>	<a href="http://www.erf.org.eg/cms.php?id=home_page">http://www.erf.org.eg/cms.php?id=home_page</a>
<b>Financial Arrangements for FY09 (Amount in US \$ Million)</b>	
<b>Total Budget:</b>	4.95
<b>DGF Funding Request:</b>	0.80
<b>DGF Percentage:</b>	16 %
<b>Objectives and Expected Outcomes</b>	
<p>This project is part of President Zoellick's initiative to strengthen the Bank's engagement with the Arab World, and contributes to achieving the objectives of a second Bank strategic theme, the knowledge and learning agenda. The Arab World faces difficult and complex developmental challenges: achieving higher economic growth and employment growth with better jobs; developing a vibrant private sector, innovative and globally integrated; achieving economic growth and diversification in the presence of large oil rents in many countries; empowering and allowing women to harvest the benefits of decades of investments in education and health; and facing severe environmental problems such as water scarcity and climate change.</p> <p>The expected outcomes are a stronger and higher quality knowledge base which is policy relevant for a number of high priority themes, and the dissemination of this knowledge in view of achieving consensus building and better policies in the countries of the region. It is also expected that through this initiative a broader cadre of researchers from the region becomes actively involved in the policy debates in the region and strengthening the platform for better decision making.</p>	
<b>Main Components</b>	
<p>The initiative will support enhanced research in five areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Equity and inequality;</li> <li>(2) Regional integration;</li> <li>(3) Growth and Diversification in resource rich countries;</li> <li>(4) Environmental Degradation and Climate change; and</li> <li>(5) Conflict, institutional persistence and change.</li> </ol> <p>For each theme four types of activities will be implemented in the context of the initiative.</p> <p><i>Multi-year research projects:</i> the typical research project, identified within the research programme, would include various activities and outputs and its implementation would take 3 years for the completion of the research and a fourth year to complete the process of publication, synthesis and dissemination.</p> <p><i>Regional thematic reports:</i> this kind of project involves the production of a regional thematic report (flagship) on an important subject of high policy relevance, as well as background papers and dissemination activities.</p> <p><i>Quick response policy papers:</i> during the implementation of the initiative opportunities may arise where quick impact policy papers may be usefully produced upon request or proposed for presentation at major policy events or conferences. These quick response papers may be closely related to ongoing major projects or deal with other important issues.</p> <p><i>Dissemination and reaching out:</i> the dissemination activities will include: large conferences, focused events, publications using various media, policy seminars.</p>	

### Performance Indicators

The initiative has and will develop further performance indicators which relate to the volume and quality of knowledge and its dissemination on a number of highly relevant policy areas. The concrete performance indicators include: (i) Production of a stronger and higher quality knowledge base relevant to the issues at hand through the typical products and activities of any such project, i.e workshops, research papers, books, conferences and conference volumes, flagship reports, and policy briefs. (ii) Dissemination of knowledge and consensus building; and (iii) Strengthening of research capacity, to be achieved through: (a) the conduct of joint research; and (b) the exchange of researchers in both directions from the region to outside institutions (including the WB) and from outside towards the region. Over the first year of implementation of the initiative work will be undertaken to devise indicators of impact and results which are closer to outcomes which may include:

- Citations and reference to ERF outputs and research,
- Media coverage,
- Downloads and hits to web site,
- Participation in events where work is presented, and
- Number of researchers who become involved in direct policy making.

### Progress and Achievements

This is a new initiative.

### Partners

The main partner institution to implement the initiative is the Economic Research Forum (ERF), a regional research network based in Cairo. ERF, established in 1993, is a highly reputable and professional NGO, with a focus on building research capacity in the Arab World and Turkey. It is expected that other partners will contribute to the support the initiative from the region (Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development), and other donors (IDRC, DFID, CIDA).

### Governance and Management

The initiative will use the existing ERF governance structure which allows for significant stakeholder input and participation, clear lines of authorities and responsibilities between the Board of Trustees (BOT), the Managing Director (MD) and the ERF Research Fellows (RFs). These rules are detailed in the ERF charter. This structure having served ERF reasonably well up till now there is no apparent need to change it fundamentally to accommodate this initiative. In conformity with this governance structure the Managing Director and the Board of Trustees will be responsible for the implementation of the initiative in all of its dimensions. However, in view of the significant size of this initiative and the diversity of activities additional specific governance arrangements consistent with the above structure will be created to support the effective design and implementation of the initiative: (1) a Scientific Committee (SC) and (2) a Donor Committee (DC).

### Exit Strategy

ERF is currently well established and sustainable within its current work program. The survival of the institution itself does not depend on the DGF grant. But the grant will contribute to a significant impact in the capacity and scaling up of the research capacity work that is already ongoing. The Bank will be engaged for at least the first five years. The continuation of the support and its scale will depend on satisfactory implementation and the support by other donors.