The team has also been tracking the impact of the crisis on health and related health output indicators in focus countries and has compiled a database of countries that have had macroeconomic shocks (defined as GDP declines of 2% or greater) post crisis. Several members of the team were co-actively engaged in related work on the impact of the ongoing global financial crisis. In addition to the case studies and summary paper, the fiscal space team has been doing work on several priority countries. As part of this work program, on December 2009. The Strategy is expected to be reviewed and finalized by December 2009. The Strategy emphasizes improvements in financial sustainability and enhancing the sector's contributions to sound macroeconomic and fiscal policies. The strategy called for fiscal space specifically for the health sector focusing on questions such as:

- What is the impact of broader macroeconomic factors on government expenditures for health?
- How can generalized fiscal space assessments be adapted to take a more sector specific perspective?
- Are there country possible options for generating fiscal space for health?
- Are there sector specific considerations that might expand the set of possible options for generating fiscal space for health?
- How can fiscal space assessments be adapted to take a more medium term, and do so in a way that is consistent with a country's macroeconomic fundamentals.

Fiscal space is usually defined as "the availability of budgetary room that allows a government to provide resources for a given desired purpose without any prejudice to the sustainability of a government's financial position." Any assessment of fiscal space typically entails an examination of whether and how a government can be expected to pay for a given health policy initiative in the medium term, and do so in a way that is consistent with a country's macroeconomic fundamentals. Fiscal space assessments are typically conducted with policy makers and stakeholders, and usually are part of broader fiscal space work. Many of the fiscal space assessments are being done as part of Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs), some as one aspect of broader regional Bank staff and government counterparts. Some of these assessments were conducted in several countries and in active collaboration with the development of guidelines and fiscal space assessments to be conducted in several priority countries. As part of this work program, on December 2009.

For additional information please contact Ajay Tandon (atandon@worldbank.org) or Geir Lie (glie@worldbank.org). To date, six case studies have been completed (see insert).

For more information, please visit http://go.worldbank.org/7SYESY2DX0

A Public Finance Review

Poor Services During Financial Crises: Lessons from Experience

A Fiscal Space Assessment for Planning Health: Assessing Fiscal Space for Health in Indonesia, India, Uganda, and Rwanda.

Finance in Developing and Transitional Economies which has been issued as part of a book entitled "Protecting Pov..." (see insert).

The fiscal space team currently consists of two staff: Ajay Tandon (Sr. Economist) and Geir Lie (JPA). To date, six case studies have been completed as part of this work program as well as two others (in Cambodia and Tonga). The study has been completed and reviewed. These include a stand-alone analytical pieces. The concept of fiscal space specifically for the health sector focusing on questions such as:

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