

**World Bank Trade Strategy  
Information Sharing Meeting with Government Agencies  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
July 7, 2010**

Generally strong support for the proposed 5 pillars, but suggestion to add a separate capacity-building pillar. The need for WBG to do more to build capacity/provide training for private and public sector was stressed repeatedly. Also strong support for view that WBG should do more at regional level and use existing RECs and trade integration agreements as a focal point/hook for trade support activities. A country-specific approach was good in terms of meeting concrete demands but many of the issues confronting countries in the region were similar and were subject to regional disciplines/objectives (GCC). For example, there was scope for greater harmonization of regulatory policies that now impede trade and market integration – in area of standards, transport and other services. A number of people argued WBG should work more closely with the GCC and Arab League to help implement existing commitments.

Another reaction by many was that the WBG needed to continue/increase focus on the effects of policies and actions of OECD countries. Examples included antidumping and agricultural subsidies and other NTBs; also potential effects of trade policies in context of climate change legislation in EU/US.

Many also stressed the need to work more and more closely with the private sector especially SMEs. In addition to capacity-building, border management was seen as a priority for some sectors. The example of dairy exports to other GCC countries was noted. Transportation – soft and hard – was also mentioned as a priority for regional integration.

One suggestion was to use a questionnaire to accompany the draft strategy when we go out for feedback—ask specific questions especially if the aim is to get a sense of where people would like to see the WBG do more or less (e.g., enabling environment vs. sectoral support).

A number of participants noted the importance of implementation and follow-through on the strategy, and thus the importance of the results framework and tracking whatever indicators we decide to employ.

It was proposed that the WBG should provide guidance on how public procurement can be designed to promote diversification and local SMEs, and assess the implications for design of trade agreements that cover this activity.

The WBG was also requested to provide assistance on implementation/establishment of an Export Promotion Commission; the design of a Foreign Trade Policy; efforts to expand outward FDI in agricultural production; addressing the issue of overlapping trade agreements (differences in commitments across partner countries; moving towards greater harmonization); and assistance on the trade facilitation/logistics dimensions of a Strategic Grain Reserve aimed at improving food security.