Meeting for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on the Country Strategy Paper 2017-2021 Completion Report & CPPR and Country Strategy Paper 2022-2026 Zambia

22 March, 2021

The Zambia Office organized a virtual meeting with local civil society organisations to discuss the Country Strategy Paper Completion Report (2017-2021) and the upcoming Country Strategy Paper (2022-2026). Discussions with the African Development Bank Staff and civil society organization representatives in Zambia, centered on the operating context and current trends in the country; also taking into account the development and vulnerability challenges brought about by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and what CSOs have been doing in response to the pandemic.

Key points raised by Civil Society included:

- The rapid devaluation of the local currency has made planning and budgeting for Civil Society Organisations difficult to manage as there are a lot of unexpected/unprecedented changes.
- The country continues to experience very high levels of inequalities persisting including in the provision of key basic services such as access to clean/safe water, hygiene and sanitation services.
- There exists an improved relationship between government and CSOs which is critical for effective delivery of development programmes; e.g the World Wide Fund (WWF) appreciated the Government's Policy on several projects that have a high environmental returns as a key priority. Additionally, Civil Society Organisations are working closely with the Ministry of Health, using the District Wide Approach to ensure alignment of their programmes to the Government Development Plan and priorities; CSO have been actively involved in the development of the Land Policy in Zambia
- CSOs identified key opportunities for enhanced collaboration with the Bank; These included, Capacity support for enhanced CSO participation in the Bank's policy dialogue (including in the development of the CSPs and other policy instruments) and their contribution to the Bank's realization of its High 5 and Thematic priorities through the various Bank funded Projects; CSOs are keen to share their knowledge, evidence and experience to help the Bank deliver better quality programmes for the communities.

They identified the following areas as necessary for consideration in the new Country Strategy Paper:

- **Access to water and sanitation as well as promotion of hygienic practices.**
- **Climate Adaptation and community resilience building**
- **Clean Energy.**
- **Support to SMMEs**
- **Youth training and employment**
- **More transparent Budgeting and resource allocation.**

- **Improved Information Management Systems as this is necessary for good planning and monitoring impact.**
- **The need to have District-wide Implementation Plans that are developed and implemented in an inclusive manner, with the active participation of communities.**
- **The Bank should improve its engagement with CSOs, by holding regular dialogue and updates; and aim to be more inclusive by reaching out to the local level communities and CBOs and raise awareness about the Bank's Programme in the country**