ANNUAL AFDB CSO FORUM

26-27 May, 2016—Lusaka, Zambia

Concept Note

The African Development Bank is organizing a special Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Forum at its Annual meetings in Lusaka. Its purpose is to engage a high-level dialogue between CSOs and AfDB's senior management on the Bank's strategic focus in three priority areas: energy, agriculture and jobs for youth. Through the CSO Forum, the Bank reaffirms its commitment to supporting and working with civil society and civil society organizations in pursuing the continent's development, and hopes to identify appropriate tools for effective engagement. This is consistent with the objectives of the CSO Engagement Framework which was developed with full collaboration of CSOs at three consultations, in Tunis in 2010, in February and March 2012 in Libreville and Nairobi, respectively. The AfDB is looking forward to CSOs playing a key role in helping the Bank achieve greater results by strengthening its mechanism for participation and coordination. The outcomes of these deliberations shall reaffirm renewed commitments to implement a program of pragmatic actions reflecting, among others, the Bank priority areas (High 5s). This concept note provides additional information on the purpose, format and organization of the CSO Forum at the Annual Meetings of the Bank.

INTRODUCTION

Africa's civil society is at the heart of vibrant, dynamic and accountable societies. Through Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) — such as community groups, nongovernmental organizations, labor unions, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations — citizens come together to express their concerns, offer their opinions, hold their leaders accountable and address challenges that governments cannot tackle alone.

Members of civil society are often the beneficiaries of development assistance— households, consumers, workers, teachers, students, travelers whose lives our development efforts are designed to improve. Over the years, the African Development Bank has learnt that by engaging with civil society, it can improve the development outcomes of its investments. Moreover, the Bank takes advantage of the technical expertise and institutional support of CSOs, which play many important roles in humanitarian relief, social development, and good governance, including:

- Ensuring that governments hear the voices of poor and marginalized people, and factor their views into policy decisions;
- Partnering with governments to provide social services, particularly in areas of fragile governance and post-conflict settings;
- Providing technical expertise and offering innovative, participatory, and cost-effective solutions to local problems;
- Increasing public sector accountability and transparency through strong support for good governance; and
- Given the ever-increasing demand for donor funds, it is strategic for civil society organizations to form coalitions to ease up access to funding and address overlaps in areas of intervention.

PURPOSE OF THE EVENT

The purpose of the CSO Forum is to engage a high-level dialogue between CSOs and AfDB's senior management on the Bank's strategic focus in three of the five priority areas: energy, agriculture and jobs for youth. Through the CSO Forum, the Bank reaffirms its commitment to supporting and working with civil society and civil society organizations in pursuing the continent's development.

More specifically the Forum aims to:

- Strengthen the partnership between the Bank and CSOs across Africa by providing a platform for dialogue and information exchange around the High 5s.
- Promote closer cooperation and engagement among CSOs, the Bank, and Member Countries with the aim to optimize development results and sustain development impact.
- Foster participation of CSOs in contributing towards the Bank's strategic thinking, planning and operations.

FOCUS OF THE CSO FORUM

The CSO Forum will focus on three priority areas of the High 5s—energy, agriculture and jobs for the youth.

- *The Bottom of the Pyramid Energy Access Program*—Lack of access to both electricity services and clean cooking solutions is a major constraint in Sub-Saharan Africa. Over 645 million Africans have no access to electricity services and approximately 730 million people rely on traditional biomass for cooking and heating. Energy-poverty has major detrimental effects on the quality of life and economic opportunities. The concerted effort of all stakeholders, including CSOs and Community Based Organizations (CBO) is needed to scale up access to energy services. Additionally, a holistic and inclusive approach based on promoting the use of modern energy services is necessary and should be positioned as a life-changing opportunity for households and communities; the majority of whom are at the bottom of the pyramid. As part of the New Deal on Energy, the Bank is scaling up the support to achieve the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) and Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7) goals of universal access to both electricity services and clean cooking solutions, promote inclusive and holistic approaches through the development of SE4All Action Agendas, and intends to strengthen the collaboration with the major partners and local and international CSOs.

- *Transforming the Agriculture Sector: Africa feeding itself and beyond -* Africa is the continent with most of the remaining arable lands of the world (about 65%) and basic conditions for growing crops; Africa should hence be able to feed itself, create jobs for youth and women and enhance incomes from agriculture. CSOs and private sector engagement would be key to achieve this objective as they have the capacity to raise financing; bring innovation (technologies); enhance accountability; act as a conduit for citizen engagement; and contribute to knowledge. Throughout the production cycle and value chain, agriculture has to be seen as a business and the roles of the CSOs and private sector are indispensable in meeting the new *Africa's Agricultural Transformation Agenda*.
    - Which agriculture for social protection and vulnerable groups,
    - How to support agriculture resilience
    - How to allow farmers to access agricultural credit with favorable terms
    - CSOs role to achieve rapid agriculture transformation in Africa through increased production

- *Jobs for Youth in Africa: Youth - Africa's biggest Asset -* Africa has an estimated 60 percent of its population between the ages of 15 and 24, with 10 – 12 million youths entering the job market each year resulting in more than half of them unemployed, underemployed, or inactive. Jobs for Youth in Africa is a Bank-wide initiative to create 25 million jobs and positively impact 50 million Africans over the next decade. To accomplish this goal, the Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy 2016-2025 aims to increase inclusive employment and entrepreneurship, strengthen human capital, and create durable labor market linkages by making use of three strategic levers: Innovation, Investment, and Integration. Through Innovation, the Bank will create new programs and systems that enable it to scale promising solutions. Under the Investment lever, the Bank will undertake different types of interventions to catalyze private sector investment that fuels job creation for youth. Through Integration, the Bank will equip itself and Regional Member Countries (RMCs) to become engines of job creation for young Africans. The Bank working with CSOs and private sector intends to invest in the youth and create enabling environment for them not only to seek jobs but to be creators of

employment through innovative programs and conducive financing approaches. Four key areas for Bank and CSO involvement are: monitoring of intervention, providing adequate training for young entrepreneurs, supporting youth to develop businesses and identifying best practices to scale.

For each of these thematic areas, breakout sessions shall come up with issues to be addressed by each of the players (CSOs, Bank, private sector -- collaboratively) and prepare a road map stipulating specific tasks and outputs. Guidance notes for the break-out groups shall be distributed in advance to facilitate the discussions.

OUTCOME

Emerging from the Forum, shall be a set of identified general themes and points of agreement on areas of collaboration between the Bank and CSOs. Key issues will have been identified to be taken forward in pursuant of the Bank's evolving agenda focusing on the three focus areas among the High 5s. Groups or individual CSOs shall have been recognized with their comparative advantages in various ways such as technical and technological know-how, proximity and geographical location and factors that make them an appropriate and cost effective organ for delivering economic development.

INVITEES

The event will target a large range of CSOs participants coming from a cross section of the Umbrella CSOs, Non Governmental Organizations (NGO), CBO, media, academics, and others; selected by geographical representation, areas of interest focusing on the High 5s, and a sizeable number from Zambia.

For each of the three breakout sessions will be invited CSOs with expert knowledge in the respective thematic areas.

FORMAT OF EVENT

The CSO forum will take advantage of both physical and virtual media. Online video streaming will allow citizens to participate directly to the debate. Highlights of the event will simultaneously be reported through social media such as Twitter and Facebook. Pictures will be posted on Flickr and Instagram, and a podcast of the event, divided by session, will be available online after the event.

The virtual audience will be able to interact with the speakers and other guests by submitting their questions/remarks through these social media channels.

The opening session of the event shall be presided by the President of the African Development Bank Group and a representative Her Excellency Mrs. Mary Robinson shall make the keynote address. There will be three break out sessions focusing on the three thematic topics addressing priority areas of the Bank's High 5s, namely energy, agriculture and jobs for the youth. Summary reports of the group discussions shall be presented to a plenary session with concrete actionable items, a roadmap for achieving them, and a mechanism for follow-up and reporting back. Rapporteurs for the groups shall come from the CSO participants.

The agenda will be structured along the following lines:

- Welcoming Guests to Forum
- Keynote Speech
- Keynote Speech from the President of the African Development Bank Group
- Plenary Session 1
- Breakout sessions
- Plenary Session 2: Reporting and feedback