



AID DEVELOPMENTS

World Bank approves the Cultural Heritage and Urban Development Project additional financing

On 12 April 2012, the Board of the World Bank approved \$27 million additional financing for the Cultural Heritage and Urban Development project. The project has two key development objectives: (a) to create the conditions for local economic development and enhanced quality of life in historic centers of five main secondary cities; and (b) to improve the conservation and management of built cultural heritage in Lebanon. The additional financing agreement is awaiting the approval of the Council of Ministers, following which it will be sent to Parliament for ratification.

European Union supports the reform of the judiciary sector

On 9 May 2012, the European Union and the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) signed a Euro 5 million grant to improve the functioning of the judiciary in line with principles of democracy and good governance. The objective of the project is to contribute to a more independent and performing judiciary system in Lebanon, thus increasing its legitimacy and trust among the Lebanese public. The implementation period of the project is four years.

European Union supports municipal finance reform in Lebanon

On 27 May 2012, the Minister of Interior and Municipalities, the European Union and the Council for Development and Reconstruction signed a Euro 20 million grant to improve the municipal finance framework and to enhance the capacities of the municipal sector to assume its mandate. The implementation period of the project is four years.

European Union supports the reform of environmental governance

On 31 May 2012, the Minister of Environment, the European Union and the Council for Development and Reconstruction signed a Euro 8 million grant to support the reform of environmental governance. The program aims at improving the environmental performance of the Lebanese public sector through reforming environmental governance. Its specific objective is to create effective capacity, specifically at the Ministry of Environment, in order to plan and execute environmental policy, including enforcement and mainstreaming by coordinating with key line-ministries. The main expected results of the projects are: (i) the enforcement of environmental inspection; (ii) the improvement of the administrative capacity of the Ministry of Environment; (iii) the development of fiscal instrument to be submitted to the Council of Ministers by the Ministry of Environment in order to enhance environmental policy. The implementation period of the project is four years.



AID COORDINATION

Steering Committee meeting of the IMF Middle East Technical Assistance Center (METAC)

On 9 May 2012, the METAC annual Steering Committee meeting was held in Beirut, Lebanon. The work of METAC is guided by the Steering Committee composed of representatives of the authorities of the participating countries, donors and the IMF. The Steering Committee acts as an advisory body, providing guidance to develop the strategy of the Center and define its priorities, and overseeing programme implementation and results. The Steering Committee discussed the results of 2012 and on-going activities, the work plan for FY2013, and the funding situation and needs. An overview of the activities of the Center in FY2012 in the banking sector, public debt management and money market development, macroeconomic statistics, public financial management, and revenue administration was presented by the different regional advisors.

Third Session of the European Union and three Lebanese Government sub-committees

On 2-4 May 2012, the European Union and the Lebanese Government held the third session of the EU-Lebanon Sub-committees on: (1) Industry, Trade and Services, (2) Internal Market and (3) Research, Innovation, Information Society, Education and Culture. The Industry, Trade and Services Sub-committee tackled issues of trade development, enterprise policy, liberalization of trade in goods, services and establishment, dispute settlement mechanism, multilateral, regional, and other bilateral trade issues. The Internal Market Sub-committee centered on consumer protection, services and finance regulation, competition, establishment and company law, intellectual and property rights, statistics, and public procurement. The sub-committee on Research, Innovation, Information Society, Education and Culture discussed issues of science and technology, research and development, education training and youth, information society, audio-visual policy, and culture.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) Forum

On 22-23 May 2012, the Government of Lebanon, through the High Council for Privatization, in collaboration with International Finance Corporation, Islamic Development Bank, World Bank and Public Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility (under the Arab Financing Facility for Infrastructure), hosted the regional Public-Private Partnerships Forum to evaluate the needs of and discuss the market for PPPs in the MENA region after the Arab Spring, with particular focus on economic and social challenges.