



Business Environment Working Group

Meeting Wednesday, 19 January 2022

Meeting Minutes

Minutes adopted by email circulation 2 February 2022.

PRESENT

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| Moussa Traore (USAID, BEWG co-Chair) | Toru Homma (JICA) |
| Sylvia Solf (WBG, BEWG co-Chair) | Brigitte Bruhin (SECO) |
| Anastasia de Santos (USAID) | Nathalie Staker (FCDO) |
| Severine Deboos (ILO) | Steffen Felix (BMZ/GIZ) |
| Judith van Doorn (ILO) | Jonas Bolzen (GIZ) |
| Anna Schrenk (UNIDO) | Beata Plonka (EU) |
| Stefan Kratzsch (UNIDO) | Arjan de Haan (IDRC) |
| Siobhan Kelly (FAO) | Hitomi Ho |
| Ilena Grandellis (FAO) | Jim Tanburn (DCED Secretariat) |
| Tania Ghossein (WBG) | Ella Duffy (DCED Secretariat) |
| | Simon White (Consultant to BEWG) |

APOLOGIES

Julian Sievers (Sida), Peter Stoffelen (Netherlands)

Welcome, introductions and confirmation of the agenda

Sylvia Solf (WBG) welcomed all members, wishing everyone a happy new year. Noting the minutes of the previous meeting (21 September 2021, which had been approved by email), the meeting agenda was confirmed.

Work Item Updates

1. Green business environments

Siobhan Kelly (FAO) provided a short background and update on this work item before handing over to the consultants (BSR) to present their findings.

Erin Leitheiser (BSR), with support from Eileen Gallagher and Solene Heredia, presented the study findings.

Following this there was Q&A and discussion on the research and its findings. Many members expressed appreciation to the consultants for the work done. There were a number of specific comments concerning the implications of the research findings on the role of developing country governments and donor and development agencies.

The consultants responded to questions and the issues raised and encouraged BEWG members to submit any comments on the draft report as soon as possible. Siobhan also encouraged this.

It is anticipated that a webinar on this topic will be undertaken in sometime in February 2022.

AGREED

It was agreed that anyone with further comments on the draft should submit them in ten days, by COB Friday, 28 January 2022.

2. Enhancing the Use of Evidence, Results Measurement in BER Programming

Sylvia welcomed Nathalie Straker (FCDO). While Nathalie dealt with technical problems, Simon White (BEWG) provided a brief update on the work item, handing over to Lara Goldmark (Just Results) to present the draft findings.

This presentation included a discussion on the theory of change, mapping evidence, the use of indicators and the use of baseline data. There was also some discussion regarding the case studies prepared for report.

Having dealt with her technical problems, Nathalie introduced herself as the new FCDO representative to the BEWG (replacing Andrew Griffiths) and highlighted FCDO's interest in this work item.

Several members expressed their interest in this work and the relevance of the findings. It was agreed to be particularly important work.

The final report will be submitted next week, thereby requiring comments from members before finalisation. This topic would also be included in the coming webinar series (see further below).

Finally, there will be a need to consider next steps in this important topic.

AGREED

It was agreed that Lara would send her report to Simon who will circulate it to BEWG members, providing two weeks for comment. Thus, comments will be due by Tuesday, 8 February 2022.

Later in February, the Task Team will meet to consider the next steps in this topic.

At this point, Sylvia passed on chairing the meeting to Moussa Traore (USAID, BEWG co-Chair).

3. BER and Informality

Tania Ghossein (WBG) provided a brief update on the work item, which included the finalisation of a research report: [Dealing with Firm Informality](#)

The Task Team has considered the need for further research that builds on this report and responds to interests of the donor community. To this end, three topics were considered:

1. Dealing with informality in a fragile context (national and global)
2. Incentives and alternative options for the formalization of small, informal units, including women and youth-led businesses (including young 'agri-preneurs' in the food sector).
3. Benefits and impact of formalization—experiences from recently-formalized SMEs.

Of these, the most pressing topic was the first: Dealing with Informality in a Fragile Context (National and Global). A draft TOR was circulated on this and Tania spoke to this.

Judith van Doorn (ILO) asked if this research can include the effectiveness of policies as well as looking at the Interdependence or relationship between informality and fragility. She also indicated that the title suggests a focus on firms, but wondered if it would be possible to look broader (e.g., labour). Bridgette asked whether the WBG has literature on this topic that can be summarised in the forthcoming knowledge product. Tania Indicated these were helpful comments and could be accommodated.

AGREED

It was agreed that members will comment on the TOR by Wednesday, 26 January 2022. Following this, a Call for Consultants will be issued.

4. Role of business environment in GVCs

Tania provided a brief update. A call for consultants was published and 15 applications received. The final selection process is underway and the Task Team is considering whether there is a need to interview the shortlisted candidates.

AGREED

It was agreed that Simon and Tania will liaise regarding the possible need for candidate interviews.

5. New Work Item: Legal identification for women

Anastasia de Santos (USAID) provided an overview on the scope of work for the coming assignment. This work item will help to answer the following key questions:

- Among birth and death certificates, domestic identity cards and licenses, international passports, and equivalents, what is magnitude of the problem for women in low-income and lower- middle-income countries by region? What is the relative economic importance of each document? What are the channels for these to hinder women's economic activity and agency (for example as employees and entrepreneurs), and for land tenure and access?
- How can donor agencies address these issues, including digital solutions? Especially via integration into a larger private sector development activity?
- What have been past examples of successes in developing countries, with significant economic impact?

Call for consultants going out soon. Please feel free to share with colleagues.

AGREED

It was agreed that members will comment on the TOR by Friday, 21 January 2022. Following this, a Call for Consultants will be issued.

6. New Work Item: Role of social dialogue

Severine Deboos (ILO) provided an update on this item. A consultant has been selected (Alexandre Kateb) and there have been meetings on the methodology that will be used.

Examples of Potential Case Studies that could be considered were to be drawn from:

- East Africa: Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya
- West Africa: Ghana
- South Asia: Bangladesh
- South-Eastern Europe: Northern Macedonia

A Methodological Note had been prepared and members are invited to comment on this.

AGREED

It was agreed that Simon will share the Methodology Note with members, offering the opportunity to comment.

7. Business Environment Responses to Covid-19

As time was running out, Tania Ghossein (WBG) spoke briefly on this topic. The Task Team was interested to hear from members if they had any ideas (i.e., topics) that could be pursued in the coming months.

AGREED

It was agreed that Simon would canvass members by email.

8. Webinars

Simon spoke briefly on three webinar topics.

AGREED

It was agreed that three webinars will be held in the coming months:

Webinar 1: Business Environment Reform and Green Growth

Webinar 2: Dealing with Firm Informality

Webinar 3: Measuring Results in Business Environment Reform

Simon will liaise with the relevant Task Teams on the speakers and content of the webinars, as well as with the DCED Secretariat.

Any other business

Having run out of time, there was no other business.

Next meeting

AGREED

It was agreed that the next meeting would be in April sometime, based on the future work planning (2022-23) requirements and to discuss the products of the relevant work items.

Simon will inform members of the meeting date.

Close of Meeting

Moussa closed the meeting at 16:15 (CET), summarising the main action points and thanking everyone for their perseverance over a long, but interesting series of discussions.