



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development
BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP

Meeting Minutes

20 June 2023, Geneva, Switzerland

PRESENT

Sylvia Solf (WBG, BEWG co-Chair)
Moussa Traore (USAID, BEWG co-Chair)
Toru Homma (JICA)
Takafumi Ueda (JICA)
Toshiaki Sakamoto (JICA)
Brigitte Bruhin (SECO)
Birte Rau (GIZ)

Judith van Doorn (ILO)
Sandra Yu (ILO)
Siobhan Kelly (FAO)
Andrew Nelson (USAID)
Nadia Ben-Ammar (ITC)
Jim Tanburn (DCED Secretariat)
Harald Bekkers (DCED Secretariat)
Simon White (Consultant to BEWG)

APOLOGIES

Camilla Valeur Nygaard (Danida)

1 Welcome

Moussa Traore (WBG, BEWG co-Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2 Minutes of the last meeting: matters arising

The Minutes of the last Meeting (22 February 2023) were previously approved by email. There were no matters arising from these minutes.

3 Introductions

Members then introduced themselves.

4 BEWG Work Plan and Budget

Simon White briefly presented the BEWG Work Plan and Budget for 2023/24. As these items were presented and discussed, members raised several issues for further consideration. These were put aside for discussion later, and included:

1. Should we update BEWG vision?
2. Consider doing webinars at a different stage in the task item life cycle?
3. How do we systemise the recruitment of quality consultants?
4. Should we have criteria for limiting the number of work items per year?

5. Should we refine our TOR development process?
6. Should we track who in the BEWG participates in other working groups and can be a liaison between BEWG and the other group?
7. Should we integrate blog publishing in our dissemination efforts?

AGREED: The meeting then approved the BEWG Work Plan and Budget for 2023/24, as submitted to the DCED ExCo.

5 Election of BEWG Chair

Sylvia Solf and Moussa Traore confirmed their preparedness to continue as co-chairs of the BEWG for 2023/24.

AGREED: The meeting confirmed the continuation of Sylvia Solf and Moussa Traore as co-chairs, with warm appreciation for their efforts.

6 Donor Guidance for Business Environment Reform

Simon White gave a presentation on the Donor Guidance for Business Environment Reform published by the DCED in 2008 and the annexes and policy notes that have been published since. The review of the Donor Guidance has been included in the BEWG Work Plan and Budget for 2023/24. It is anticipated that this will be a two-year activity requiring strong engagement with all DCED Members and working groups.

Several issues related to the review of the Donor Guidance were discussed. These included:

- Now, 15 years since the publication of the Donor Guidance, appears to be a suitable time to conduct a review of this nature.
- It was suggested to keep the organising principle of the role of the business environment along the firm lifecycle
- Additional issues to consider including in the revisions may be:
 - New approaches to the business environment to support sustainability and inclusion.
 - The implementation gap (i.e., the gap between policy, legal and regulatory reform and its full implementation).
- The complementary roles of development finance and industrial policy when supporting business environment reform.

It was agreed that as a first step, it would be helpful to map donor and development agency support for BER, including BER domains, functional areas, modalities, interests, and instruments. This would help to understand common approaches, new developments and gaps, and allow us to focus on the update of the Donor Guidance.

The review process will provide an opportunity to explore further how the other DCED working groups can benefit from the Donor Guidance.

AGREED: No Task Team will be established for this work item. Instead, the BEWG will oversee this work directly.

7 BER and Environmental Compliance

The BEWG welcomed members of the Green Growth Working Group (GGWG) who joined the meeting to discuss the 2023/24 work item on the Implications of New Environmental Regulations.

As new environmental regulations are becoming increasingly common at regional and global levels (e.g., EU), donor and development agencies are concerned with how governments and firms will be able to respond to these changes. This work item will explore the effects of new regional and global environmental regulations on the data requirements of governments and businesses and the business regulatory environment more broadly.

There was a general discussion on this item and the evolving nature of the collaboration between the BEWG and GGWG. It was acknowledged that there are areas where business environment reform and green growth intersect. While this work item may not provide a direct opportunity for collaboration, there was strong interest in ongoing engagement between the two working groups and agreement to share information, TORs and reports.

8 Meeting closure

Sylvia Solf and Moussa Traore closed the meeting at 1:00 PM.