



READOUT: REGIONAL IDA FORUM – East Asia and Pacific (EAP)
May 20, 2024

IDA21 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND UPDATES ON BETTER BANK

The second regional IDA Forum on IDA21 Strategic Directions and Updates on the Better Bank took place on May 20, hosted by the Republic of Korea in a hybrid format with roughly 130 participants. About 30 attendees joined in-person in Seoul, with over 100 connected online from the following countries: Myanmar, China, Malaysia, Vietnam, Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, Lao PDR, Philippines, Pacific Islands (Fiji, Tuvalu, Vanuatu). The forum discussion was also translated in Indonesian, Vietnamese and Korean.

The aim of the forum was to inform civil societies about the proposed IDA21 strategic directions and obtain feedback and any input from them to feed into IDA’s policy dialogue, as well as update them on the progress the Bank is making in its evolution towards a better bank. To this end, Development Finance (DFi) Vice President Akihiko Nishio made a presentation on the proposed [IDA21 Strategic Directions](#), while OPCS Director Paloma Anos Casero presented on the Better Bank. These were the basis for discussion.

Jason Allford, EAP Korea’s Special Representative, provided opening remarks to the session, while DFi Vice President Aki Nishio provided closing remarks. The event was moderated by Kyung Ryul Park, Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Science and Technology Policy, KAIST.

After the two presentations, participants shared their views and suggestions of areas IDA21 could include, broken into the proposed focus areas and lenses. Following are the inputs made:

FOCUS AREAS

PEOPLE: Skilling youth for the job market and empowering them to lead development initiatives. Priorities include health, education, food security, and social protection, with a focus on social inclusion and support for people with disabilities.

PLANET: Building resilience through climate adaptation is crucial, particularly in regions affected by flooding, droughts, and rising sea levels. Land rights are vital for economic development and sustainable growth, as is the issue of forced displacement due to climate change.

PROSPERITY: Coordinated efforts and support from partners will be needed to tackle the debt crisis effectively. Need for strong governance and public sector capabilities to manage land administration, which contribute to sustainable development and local economic stability.

INFRASTRUCTURE: The Pacific Women in Power Program is a great example of increased female participation in a traditionally male-dominated field, providing training and creating sustainable

management models for renewable energy. Investments in public infrastructure are necessary to keep communities connected to essential services like health and education.

DIGITALIZATION: Promoting digital connectivity and inclusion. In Fiji, an automated manifest system streamlines trade processes, reducing times and improving efficiency. Infrastructure development supports digital growth, fostering economic growth and job creation.

LENSES

More and Better Jobs: Job creation is interconnected with investment in areas like infrastructure, prosperity, and digitalization. Investing in youth and equipping them with skills for jobs is crucial. Youth employability and career readiness are priorities.

Gender: A commitment to make sure at least 55% of recipients of access to financial services are women, and pushing forth initiatives that address unique challenges of those with diverse sexual orientations.

Fragility: Provide better support for people in FCV situations and communities emerging from conflict for successful transitions. Be bolder and more ambitious, and flexible vis-à-vis humanitarian and development needs in FCV situations Bank cannot formally/directly engage.

Private investments: Leverage private sector window (PSW) to secure investments and more jobs, and mobilize private capital to support development goals.

BETTER BANK

Scorecard – several points on indicators:

- Must specify or expand Scorecard indicators, such as not just increasing access to education but looking at whether children complete their education.
- How will IDA measure outcomes in sectors that are interconnected, such as digital connectivity and infrastructure?
- How is the Scorecard developed? Can we make it more inclusive?
- How are Scorecards used?
- Is there collaboration within the bank to facilitate projects as well data collection and other areas to create synergy?

OTHER ISSUES RAISED

- **Questions around support for Myanmar**, in the context of victims of conflict and war, health, education, humanitarian assistance, and inclusion of people with disabilities in the strategic directions.
- Overall emphasis and **comprehensive support for vulnerable populations** (smallholder farmers, youth, women, people with disabilities). Targeted investments and support mechanisms are needed to ensure these groups benefit, especially in areas of land tenure, employability, gender equality and social inclusion.

Bank management provided overall management response to various issues raised.