ORTS is pleased to bring you the second issue of its newsletter. It has been a highly productive quarter in which we held our annual retreat to review progress made in the implementation of the 2015 Work Program to date. In addition, the department successfully organized three events during this year’s Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank Group. This issue also features a roundup of the department’s support and interventions in CAR, South Sudan, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, as well the ‘Voices’ from the Zimbabwe Field Office.

Sibry Tapsoba
Director, Transition Support Department

From 29-30 April 2015 ORTS held a retreat to review its 2015 Work Program. This involved assessing the department’s approach to strengthening the capacity of Regional Member Countries (RMCs) and regional institutions to address fragility and build resilience; as well as how it provides support to other departments in the Bank. In this respect, discussions focused on Fragility Assessments and tools that ORTS is developing for the application of the fragility lens at all levels of the Bank’s strategic, programming and project documents. These included how to reflect fragility and resilience into the Bank’s Readiness Review Process, as well as specific fragility indicators in the Results Based Framework for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating Bank projects. In addition, options on how to enhance strategic partnerships for the purposes of mobilizing technical knowledge and financial resources were also reviewed.
States of Fragility 2015

On 8 April ORTS jointly hosted with the OECD the launching of the report, “States of Fragility 2015: Meeting Post-2015 Ambitions”. The report is an annual publication of the OECD, and highlights trends, in addition to ODA to fragile and conflict-affected countries. This year the report presents a new understanding of fragility “as an issue of universal character that can affect all countries”, in line with the Bank’s own recently revised approach to fragility. On the eve of the deadline of the MDGs, the theme of this year’s report is particularly relevant, highlighting the nexus between poverty and fragility. Indeed, as noted in the report, the countries lagging behind in the implementation of the MDGs are the ones facing fragility. Moreover, conflict can reverse national development gains by 20 years. The report, thus makes a compelling argument in favor of SDG 16 – “promoting peaceful and inclusive societies”.

ORTS at the 2015 Annual Meetings of the AfDB

On 25 May ORTS hosted the launching of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) New Deal (ND) Monitoring Report 2014. The report is the first attempt to monitor progress made in terms of the ND, since its adoption in 2011. Specifically, the report aims to evaluate behavioral changes by countries and partners. The high-level panel discussion was led by the two co-chairs of IDPS, Isabella Lövin, Minister of the Swedish International Development Cooperation; and Kaifala Marah, Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Sierra Leone. The other panelists were Emilia Pires, the Special Envoy of the g7+, an association of 20 fragile and conflict afflicted countries; Denise Ionete, Head of the Fragility and Crisis Management Division of the European Commission’s Directorate General for Development Cooperation; Paul Okumu, the Head of the Secretariat of Civil Society Forum, Africa Platform; and Sibry Tapsoba, Director of ORTS. The meeting provided an opportunity for stakeholders to exchange experiences about the challenges, gaps and lessons learnt; and also served as a platform to create awareness about the ND to a wider audience present at the event, beyond the core ID stakeholders. An important area of discussion revolved around how to improve on the approach to ND implementation in the context of post 2015-agenda, particularly with regards to the achievement of Goal 16 of the SDGs.

Development and Security: Managing New Threats

On day two of the Annual Meetings, 26 May, ORTS organized a high-level debate on the theme of “Development and Security: Managing New Threats”. Panelists comprised H.E. Filipe Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique; H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Founder, Olusegun Obasanjo Foundation; and Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission. The main objectives of the event were to (i) enhance the Bank’s understanding of the root causes, dynamics and operations of extremists in Africa, particularly in the Sahel, North and East African regions; (ii) provide a forum to discuss the security and development nexus, exploring both the responses and long-term preventive mechanisms that various actors, both within and outside Africa can put in place to counter extremism, given that it is a global concern. Some of the priority issues to address that were raised included promoting inclusive growth, creating employment opportunities, increasing access to education, and reducing regional disparities.

Joint African Development Bank-World Bank Post-Ebola Recovery Program in the Mano River Union (MRU)

On 27 May ORTS held its third side-event, the launching the Joint AIDB-WBG Post-Ebola Economic Recovery Program in the MRU. The panelists were: Mr. Makhtar Diop, Vice President of the Africa Region-World Bank; Ms. Saran Daraba Kabo, Secretary General of the MRU; Ms. Raymonde Goudou Coffie, Minister of Health of Côte d’Ivoire; Dr. Donald Kaberuka, President of the AIDB; and Mr. Janvier K. Litse, Vice President of the AIDB. The main objectives of the event were to attract other partners in the post-Ebola recovery phase, as well as discuss the importance of effective partnership and harmonized responses in other fragile situations. In this context it was highlighted that the two institutions joined forces to pool their financial and technical resources in a coordinated manner. The solidarity of African countries was praised, in particular the sharing of knowledge and experiences. The epidemic demonstrated the necessity of joining efforts at the international, regional, country and community levels, in particular the need to have a regional mechanism to finance the control of diseases. Indeed, President Kaberuka noted that “the bigger disease is fragility” and that it was essential to treat the causes such as sanitation/hygiene, primary health care and education, and not the symptom.
Upcoming Elections to Watch

Provisional dates

Burkina Faso: Presidential and National Assembly – 11 October 2015 (confirmed)

Guinea: Presidential – 15 October 2015

CAR: Presidential and National Assembly – 18 October 2015

Tanzania: Presidential and National Assembly - 25 October 2015


Egypt: People’s Assembly – 31 December 2015

Source: International Foundation for Electoral Systems
http://www.electionguide.org/elections/upscoming/ and the National Democratic Institute
https://www.ndi.org/elections/calendar

Bangui National Forum on Dialogue and Reconciliation

A Bank mission took part in the Bangui National Forum on Dialogue and Reconciliation from 4-11 May 2015. The Bank contributed 50 million FCFA to the financing of the forum, from resources from Pillar III of the Transition Support Facility (TSF). The mission was composed of the Resident Representative of the Bank in the Central African Republic (CAR), in addition to representatives from the Central African Regional Department (ORCE) and ORTS. The AfDB party took advantage of their participation in the forum to discuss with the main technical and financial partners as well as other participants of the forum about the transition process and the security situation. The mission prepared a report outlining the main resolutions of the forum, an analysis of the issues and challenges linked to these resolutions, as well as recommendations for Bank assistance. This report has allowed the Bank to deepen its understanding about the main factors of fragility in CAR. Among the main resolutions of the forum were: (i) a disarmament agreement signed by the main structured political-military movements, the government and civil society; (ii) a republican pact for peace, national reconciliation and reconstruction also agreed by all the parties present.

Strengthening Economic Governance and Management in South Sudan

An AfDB mission visited Juba, South Sudan from 25 May to 5 June to supervise the implementation of the Public Finance Management and Aid Coordination Project (PFAID). The mission consisted of representatives from the Governance Department, the Office of the Special Envoy on Gender, the East Africa Regional Resource Centre, the African Natural Resources Center, and ORTS. PFAID aims to enhance transparency and accountability in the use of public resources through capacity building. It additionally seeks to facilitate skills transfers, improve aid coordination, and the operational effectiveness of beneficiary institutions. These are seven entities under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, namely the Directorates of Economic Planning, South Sudan Customs Service, Internal Audit, Treasury, Budget, Taxation, as well as the National Audit Chamber.

In addition to the USD 7.34 million grant from the TSF to support PFAID, the AfDB has also agreed to allocate an additional USD 2.78 million grant from the TSF to support a Natural Resources Management and Gender Economic Empowerment Project. The objectives of this second project are i) to provide support to the development of policies for the sustainable management of renewable natural resources with specific focus on land and forestry; ii) to strengthen efforts to mainstream gender in natural resource management. [Read more]...

Bank representatives with customs officials in South Sudan
On 21 May an AfDB-supported project to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) and Member States was launched in Nairobi. RECSA is an intergovernmental body comprising 15 Member States in East and Central Africa, with a mandate of coordinating interventions against arms proliferation and promote stability in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa. The meeting was opened by a representative of the Ministry of Interior of Kenya, along with Gabriel Negatu, Director of the Bank’s East Africa Regional Resource Center. Other participants included development agencies, embassies and civil society. The Technical Assistance and Capacity Building to RECSA (TCB-RECSA) project is funded from the TSF managed by ORTS. The USD 1.5 million grant will support several strategic activities aimed at addressing a number of drivers of fragility within these regions. The meeting concluded with recommendations to RECSA on ways in which the reduction in the proliferation of small arms could help to address fragility and spur development in its member countries.

Read more ...

Supporting Arms Reduction in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa

Zimbabwe is slowly emerging from a decade of socio-economic and political crises. Following the end of a coalition government, the country conducted violent-free elections in 2013 that were precipitated by the adoption of a new Constitution, regarded as people-driven. Subsequently, the country adopted a five-year development strategy and is making inroads to normalize relations with the international financial community as evidenced by the successful implementation of an International Monetary Fund sponsored Staff Monitored Program (SMP).

The Bank is capacitating the government to monitor the effective results delivery of its national development strategy. It is also assisting the country rehabilitate key energy, water supply and sanitation infrastructure key to the delivery of basic services.

The African Development Bank, as a trusted advisor and broker has been at the forefront of leading the country’s re-engagement process with the international community. The Bank, through the Zimbabwe Field Office, is engaged in high level policy dialogue with the authorities on policy development issues and is often consulted to provide input into the preparation of fiscal policy and budget statements, and participates in various fora. Through the Transition Support Facility and resources from the Performance Based Allocation, the Bank has been providing considerable financial and technical support to resolve the country’s debt and arrears situation, regarded as one of the biggest impediments to re-engagement, economic recovery and growth. Other key priority areas being supported include capacity building in revenue management, statistics, public-private-partnerships, regional integration, procurement reform, as well as strengthening the IT systems of the central bank, among others.