

**Resilience, Equity, and Opportunity:
The World Bank's Social Protection and Labor Strategy 2012-2022**

**Report to the Board of Executive Directors from the
Committee on Development Effectiveness***

Meeting of March 14, 2012

The Committee on Development Effectiveness (CODE) considered the document entitled *Resilience, Equity, and Opportunity: The World Bank's Social Protection and Labor Strategy 2012-2022* (CODE2012-0008).

The Committee strongly supported and endorsed the Social Protection and Labor (SPL) strategy, in this third engagement point with Management, congratulating the team on its successful and comprehensive process of consultation and collaboration that has continued to inform the strategy moving forward. Members stressed the importance of moving beyond “protection” to “inclusion”, which makes sound economic sense and should be ingrained as the core work of the institution. Members agreed with the strategy's focus on reducing fragmentation of programs and moving toward systems, and, with the emphasis on capacity building for systems, strengthened statistics, and to enhance countries' ability to provide an appropriate crisis response. Members expressed support for the strategy's cross-cutting aspects, which creates solid ground for an enhanced and coherent Bank engagement built on lessons learned from experience. However, members cautioned that the strategy was ambitious and expressed concern about limited resources—both financial and human—particularly for implementation in low-income countries (LICs) and fragile and conflict states (FCS). Members raised questions on how to operationalize the strategy, specifically with respect to sustainably expanding coverage and mainstreaming the SPL strategy in the Bank. Several members requested a strengthened results framework including formulation of targets and highlighted the importance of tracking progress against the results framework. Members also acknowledged the difficult political economy issues around SPL matters and underlined the importance of the Bank's role in its dialogue with governments and policymakers, in order to share evidence and experience and support countries in placing SPL issues at the forefront of their development agendas. Several Members highlighted the critical need for continuity of social protection beyond social safety nets and the relevant links between social protection programs and job productivity.

Management explained that the new strategy is meant to fill the gaps of country-level fragmentation and to broaden the main focus beyond the MIC countries and the formal sectors. The main objective of the strategy is to help countries move from fragmented approaches to more coherent systems. The strategy's three pillars of resilience, equity and opportunity will move the social protection practice toward addressing existing gaps by (i) supporting inclusion notably with respect to LICs and the informal sector; (ii) developing country capacity to respond to crises as a complement to addressing chronic poverty; and, (iii) greater focus on productivity to propel low-income households out of poverty. It was pointed out that the P4R instrument would be of value in operationalizing the strategy. Management noted that the theme of social inclusion will be central during the upcoming Spring Meetings. Management committed to help build social protection systems that are country tailored, knowledge driven, gender-informed, collaborative and evidence-based. Because of the strategy's cross-cutting nature, partnerships within and outside the Bank will be a critical factor for success. Management noted that their close collaboration with sectors across the Bank played a pivotal role in the development of the strategy and will continue to do so in its implementation going forward. Management underlined that lessons from the WDR12 on Gender Equality and Development would inform the implementation of the strategy. Likewise they were in close contact with the WDR13 team on jobs to ensure cross-fertilization.

* This report is not an approved record.