

Civil Society’s Response to the Country Partnership Framework for Tunisia

In the fall of 2015 the World Bank Group (WBG) published the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Tunisia for the 2016-2020 period. We, a coalition of 14 Tunisian civil society organizations and country experts, have reviewed this document and have concluded that it does not address all the issues that need to be tackled to provide an inclusive economic framework for the current Tunisian context. Our main critique is that the CPF is based upon a strategic guideline proposed by the Tunisian government in September 2015 that relies heavily on public private partnerships as designed by the government. Not only do such partnerships exclude the three main demands of the 2011 revolution, i.e. employment, freedom and national dignity, but they also neglect disenfranchised populations in Tunisia that are predominantly young, rural and female. Thus, we have prepared a list of asks regarding each CPF objective for Tunisia. We believe that our proposal will result in the WBG achieving its overarching goal for the 2016-2020 period for Tunisia, i.e. “support Tunisia to renew its social contract by defining a fair economic model with opportunities for all”.

WBG CPF Objectives	CSO Asks
<i>Restoring an environment conducive to sustainable growth and job creation</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide support to the Tunisian government to implement step by step strategic structural reforms before decentralization to ensure the profitability of the World Bank’s support that result in significant improvements in the economic and social climate. 2. Influence Tunisian government to reform PPP for public services before structural reforms so that: 1) quality services to the poor are guaranteed, 2) the phenomenon of unemployment is not accentuated, 3) long-term debt ratios of state and / or public undertakings are not affected if an unsuitable PPP is not making profits and 4) governance policies and practices are in place to avoid corruption. 3. Consult CSOs and experts about the new projects pertaining to investment codes and tax reforms. 4. Initiate the reform of the customs system to improve the business climate and promote local investment (they shouldn’t favor foreign investment only).
<i>Reducing regional disparities</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a systemic approach and review the development model to consider the different geographic, social, economic and cultural components of a region to ensure fair distribution economic activities, sustainable development and integrated management. 2. Integrate ongoing projects in their territorial dimensions and break away from sectoral measures while making sure to include all stakeholders in the different life stages of projects to ensure their success by the mechanisms of governance and accountability. 3. Rehabilitate rail network between inland cities to reduce the costs for transport from the production for the local market and strengthen connections to ports and airports. 4. Prioritize education reform that combats high dropout rates in schools, especially for girls in rural areas. 5. Address imbalance in the quality of public services between the regions and overall diminishing quality of public health services.
<i>Promoting increased social inclusion and reducing fragility with an emphasis on youth</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include civil society members in campaigns focused on women’s issues such as: violence in the workplace, lack of career development opportunities. 2. Emphasize the mobilization of civil society, during the first post-revolution years, having helped to preserve the gains in women's rights. 3. Prioritize vocational training as an alternative that focuses on the needs of the local labor market and promotes entrepreneurial initiative. 4. Prioritize reforms that will reduce the unemployment rate among the youth particularly among graduates.