Banking Supervision

METAC continued to support the Central Bank of Iraq’s (CBI) efforts to enhance their prudential regulatory framework. The Center organized an off-site mission in Beirut, Lebanon during the period of February 05-09, 2018 to facilitate the implementation of four draft prudential regulations on Licensing and Change of Control Requirements; Market Risk Management; Operational Risk Management; and Interest Rate Risk in the Banking Book, which were drafted with METAC’s assistance in June 2017. The mission also reviewed the comments provided by operating banks in Iraq on other draft prudential regulations that were circulated by the CBI for comments.

Statistics

METAC assisted the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) in finalizing the 2014/15 Supply and Use Tables. The updated 2014/15 SUT framework helped CAPMAS staff in ensuring full consistency between non-market output and government consumption expenditure. The mission reviewed the balancing procedures and provided recommendations to finalize the tables by end March 2018.

Regional Workshops

Public Corporations and Fiscal Risk

While public corporations play a major role in all METAC member-countries, they often lag behind private firms in terms of financial, economic, and operational performance. In addition, many state-owned banks show signs of vulnerabilities, such as weak balance sheets and low capitalization, poor underlying profitability, and high levels of non-performing loans compared to private banks. As a result, public corporations create large and persistent fiscal risks. Against this background, METAC gathered 20 officials who oversee public corporations and manage the related financial and fiscal risks, to share international and regional experiences and discuss
methodological guidance to monitor and mitigate fiscal risks related to public corporations. The discussions illustrated countries’ exposure to a wide-range of fiscal risks related to public corporations, the challenges to identify and mitigate them, and the need to improve fiscal transparency practices within the region. Participants expressed strong interest in follow-up technical assistance from METAC to strengthen their fiscal risk management framework and in further peer-to-peer experience sharing.

**Budget Transparency**

Launched in 2006 by the International Budget Partnership (IBP), the Open Budget Survey (OBS) measures whether central governments provide adequate public access to national budget information and opportunities to participate in the budget process. It also examines the role and effectiveness of legislators and auditors in the budget process. Released on January 31, 2018, the OBS 2017 shows that since the 2015 survey progress has been limited in the MENA region. On 10 countries assessed, only Jordan is above the score of 61, which is considered by the IBP as the benchmark for sufficient budget transparency.

In this context, METAC and the IBP co-organized a workshop and gathered representatives of finance ministries and civil society from Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, West Bank and Gaza, Oman and Somalia attended the workshop.

Given the comprehensive nature of TADAT, a series of three workshops have been planned during 2017-18. This workshop was the last in the series. It provided participants with an initial awareness session on the TADAT process, followed by detailed discussions on the internationally recognized good practices espoused in the TADAT methodology on the effective tax dispute resolution, efficient revenue management, as well as accountability and transparency. The workshop included country presentations on the achievements and main challenges that country authorities are facing. Participants provided very favorable feedback. Comments focused on the good practices that they would like to see in their own tax administrations. Accordingly, discussions covered the practical implementation aspects of the presented good practices. METAC will continue to provide support on TADAT assessments throughout the region, in partnership with other development partners.
The following TA report was uploaded on METAC’s website during February 2018. Steering Committee members of countries and donors who have signed a confidentiality agreement with the IMF may access the reports @ www.imfmetac.org

Revenue Administration

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<tr>
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<th>Short-Term Expert</th>
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<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Approaching Roll-Out of the On-Time Filing and Payment Improvement Project</td>
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IMF Online Courses

Available to government officials and, in some cases, to the general public through www.imf.org/institute-online and https://www.edx.org/school/imfx. Current and forthcoming online courses include:

- **Energy Subsidy Reform (ESRx)**
  Language: English, March 28 – April 25, 2018 (4 Weeks)
  Course Conducted Online
  **Apply online by March 21, 2018**

- **Macroeconomic Management in Resource-Rich Countries (MRCx)**
  Language: English, April 4 – May 23, 2018 (7 Weeks)
  Course Conducted online
  **Apply online by March 28, 2018**

- **Financial Programming and Policies, Part 1: Macroeconomic Accounts & Analysis (FPP.1x)**
  Language: Arabic, April 11 – May 23, 2018 (6 Weeks)
  Course Conducted Online
  **Apply online by April 4, 2018**

- **Macroeconomic Diagnostics (MDSx)**
  Language: English, May 2 – June 13, 2018 (6 Weeks)
  Course Conducted Online
  **Apply online by April 25, 2018**

- **Financial Programming and Policies, Part 1: Macroeconomic Accounts & Analysis (FPP.1x)**
  Language: English, May 9 – June 20, 2018
  Course Conducted Online
  **Apply online by May 2, 2018**

- **Public Financial Management (PFMx)**
  Language: English, May 9 – July 4, 2018
  Course Conducted Online
  **Apply online by May 2, 2018**

**METAC planned missions for March 2018 are:**

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<td>Djibouti</td>
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<td>Raymond Bernard Shehzad Tarique</td>
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<td>Ahmad El Radi</td>
<td>Michael Lau Marijn Otte</td>
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| Bank | Public Financial Management | - | - | |
| Iraq | Treasury Single Account and Cash Management | Xavier Rame | Mike Williams | 06-09 |

| Bank | Statistics | - | - | |
| Afghanistan | External Sector Statistics | - | Tamara Razin Renato Perez | 12-22 |
| Algeria | National Accounts | - | Francien Berry | 18-22 |
| Djbouti | National Accounts | - | Ibrahima Sory | 18-29 |
| Egypt | Price Statistics | - | Brian Graf | 04-15 |
| Iraq | External Sector Statistics | - | Emanuel Kumah | 18-29 |
| Regional Workshop | National Accounts | Todor Todorov | Artashes Shaboyan | 05-08 |