

Context-specific methods, best fit for purpose, room for innovation

- The Bank should move from one size fits all, adding flexibility. The same policy for all of the Bank's borrowers no longer corresponds to today's reality.
- Participants proposed that there should be less recourse to ICB. At the same time, there should be standards or specific criteria beyond the value of the contract for determining which method to use.

Use of country systems

- The Bank should engage with countries that are revising and strengthening their domestic procurement systems and reposition itself and renew its efforts after the lack of success of the Piloting Program for the Use of Country Systems.
- The policy differences between the Bank and national systems need to be narrowed. The time is right for this, given that many countries are now engaged in revising their systems. One of the main differences is the inclusion of domestic preferences as a way to develop local industries.

E-procurement

- Greater use of e-procurement was seen by participants as a way to improve efficiency and to simplify procedures.

Capacity building and strengthening public sector administration

- Capacity building has to be the priority, seen from the optic of overall public sector management: procurement cannot be divorced from civil service reform and improved public administration and legal systems. It is also the sine qua non for moving towards greater use of country systems.
- There should be focus on building a cadre of professional procurement specialists. The Bank should take the lead in doing this on a regional basis.

Transparency, access to information, civil society, audits, dispute resolution

- Concomitantly, while the Bank builds trust in the use of country systems, countries have to adopt greater transparency.

- Performance on public procurement, in turn, needs to be reflected in key government accountability and accountability measures at the country level.

Fraud and corruption

- Participants recognized that proposed changes to the Bank's policies would have to entail better risk management on the part of the Bank. It also has to factor in the pressures on procurement officials and staff and the continuing concern about corruption while addressing capacity building and public sector management.

Harmonization

- Now that many countries in this region are Bank borrowers and signatories to bilateral trade agreements, and/or are aspirants to benefit from association with the EU, efforts at harmonization need to go beyond the current work with the MDBs and extend to all international actors, including the Bank and UN agencies, to work towards unification and an agreement on international procurement standards.

Bank's role (internal organization, roles and responsibilities, staffing, professionalization, efficiency, fiduciary, reviews, value-added, processes and disputes)

- In addition to the need for the World Bank to intensify its efforts on capacity building, public sector management reform, etc., the World Bank should reduce its number of prior reviews.