

## PAF One-Pager

---

Dr. Annapoorna Ravichander, Executive Director, Public Affairs Foundation had a tête-à-tête with Jeff Thindwa, Program Manager, Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA), on COVID-19.

### Capsule of the tête-à-tête

“The World Bank Group is taking fast, broad action and working with close to 100 developing countries to help them mitigate the health, economic, and social impacts of COVID-19. The Bank aims to deploy as much as \$160 billion over the next 15 months to help countries implement emergency health operations (that use the Multiphase Programmatic Approach), protect the poorest households, save jobs and businesses, and get money to people who need it most. This includes \$50 billion of new concessional transfers from IDA, our fund for the poorest countries. IDA’s terms have built-in debt relief for countries at risk of debt distress. The WBG is working to ensure that COVID-19 assistance is transparent and gets to the people who need it most – women, children, disabled, health care workers – and who are being hit the hardest in this crisis. We are doing this through programs like: Social safety nets that include cash transfers for the poor; food security to protect people with lost or reduced income and compensate farmers for their production; and community driven development programs that CDD programs that provide targeted support for the most marginalized groups.



In addition, there has also been a big push for debt relief. May 1st marked the start of a new debt relief initiative for the world’s poorest countries to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was an agreement coming out of the 2020 Spring Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank Group.

The World Bank is also cognizant of the vital role of civil society in co-creating, implementing and monitoring COVID-19 response programs. It is conducting regular meetings with CSOs and is seeking to ensure that the World Bank’s responses include meaningful participation of citizens. A concerted effort is made to ensure effective partnerships with CSOs, particularly in relation to social protection and community engagement. For example, the Global Partnership for Social Accountability has reached out to all of its partners to assess how they have been affected by the crisis and what the World Bank can do to be flexible in order to allow the programs to move forward adaptively”.