BUFF/21/11

June 29, 2021

**Statement by the Staff Representative on Jordan**
**Executive Board Meeting**
**June 30, 2021**

*This statement updates on the implementation of two structural benchmarks (SBs) that were due by end-June 2021, and which were met following the issuance of the Staff Report for the Second Review Under the Extended Fund Facility. The new information does not alter the thrust of the staff appraisal and reaffirms the authorities' strong commitment to the program.*

**Ex-post audit of COVID spending.** On June 24, the authorities met the SB related to undertaking and publishing ex-post audits of all crisis-mitigating spending directly related to efforts to prevent, detect, control, treat and/or contain the spread of COVID-19 (MEFP paragraph 31, Table 2, existing SB #6). This covers JD 100,123,837 of spending from the authorities' COVID Fund during 2020.[1] With regard to the procurement process, the audit noted that the bulk of the purchases happened exclusively through competitive tenders, with rare cases of direct awards due to the exceptional circumstances at that time. The audit also assessed the transparency of the procurement process and took stock of the publication of beneficial ownership information of entities awarded contracts since end-June 2020.

**Guidelines for Emergency Liquidity Assistance (ELA).** On June 29, the authorities met the SB related to approval by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Board of guidelines for implementation of the ELA framework provided for in the CBJ Law. The guidelines were prepared in consultation with Fund staff, and will serve to strengthen the lender of last resort function of the CBJ.

[1] The audit was conducted by PKF Jordan (who were selected through a competitive tender), and is available at https://www.mof.gov.jo/EBV4.0/Root_Storage/EN/CORONA/1454_001.pdf. The Government of Jordan maintains a dedicated webpage (https://www.mof.gov.jo/EN/Pages/PRIME_MINISTRY_ANNOUNCEMENTS_AND_CIRCULARS) where information on COVID spending is reported.