

EIP Annual Update 2019-2020





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The year at a glance



Knowledge sharing at P2P learning events. In May 2019, the EIP organised a donor learning event bringing together 14 organisations to discuss P2P approaches and the optimum ways to design and leverage them to support institutional development. The EIP learning series – focused on monitoring, evaluation and learning in P2P contexts – kicked off with a virtual event in December 2020.

“Future proofing” the EIP. As a final stage in the EIP visioning process and as a follow-up to the 5th Annual Meeting, the Secretariat produced a Strategic Focus Note and updated the governance arrangements of the partnership.



Mapping P2P initiatives for effective institutions. As agreed at the 5th Annual Meeting, the Secretariat completed a mapping of existing P2P initiatives. Reviewing 78 active initiatives, the mapping identified ample opportunity for the EIP to broker new partnerships.

Stocktaking of MEL approaches to P2P learning. This new report outlines observations and lessons for identifying good practices in monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) for P2P partnerships. The report will inform continued work to develop a full MEL framework for P2P learning, analysing how institutional change and learning is understood and recorded as part of P2P approaches.



Revamping the website. Redevelopment of the EIP website has begun and will include a fresh look for the platform as well as new features to facilitate knowledge sharing among members and partners.

New leadership for novel futures. The EIP appointed new joint Co-Chairs and reconstituted the Advisory Group to reflect the diversity of its members and steer the platform towards new achievements.



About the EIP

The *Effective Institutions Platform (EIP)* is an alliance of more than 70 countries and organisations that support country-led and evidence-based policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and peer learning on public sector management and institutional reform. EIP supports its members in their development of accountable, inclusive and transparent public sector institutions capable of delivering responsive policies, effective resource management and sustainable public services for poverty reduction and inclusive growth. The EIP Secretariat is hosted by the Development-Cooperation-Directorate of the OECD.

1. OVERVIEW

The 5th Annual Meeting of the EIP, held in Paris in April 2019, marked the formal end of a period of introspection for the partnership. The conclusion of the revision process initiated in late 2018 saw members agree on a new strategic focus, revised methods of work and updated governance arrangements. This consensus took the form of a number of activities and outputs delivered throughout the period 2019-20.

The new strategic focus reasserts the unique value added of the EIP in terms of its function as (i) a knowledge hub for peer-to-peer (P2P) learning approaches; and (ii) a platform facilitating incubation and learning from alternative and innovative approaches to public sector reform and institutional development, beyond P2P methods.

This defined focus, operationalised in the 2020-2021 Work Plan, capitalises on the EIP's key strength as a multi-stakeholder platform with a diverse membership, as well as growing interest in peer learning as an approach to institutional reform – in the Global North and South alike. It also positions the EIP as “fit for the future” and able to deliver on its overall purpose of contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably Goal 16, and the aid effectiveness agenda.

The Advisory Group and Co-Chairs continue to lead the work, guiding the Secretariat in the implementation of the Work Plan. Both governing bodies were selected for two-year terms in 2019, their composition appropriately reflecting the diversity of the membership.

EIP activities in 2020 were understandably influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the crisis notwithstanding, the past year has been punctuated by a number of important events. The Advisory Group met virtually in May to discuss the EIP's role in the response to the crisis. Work to develop a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework to guide P2P initiatives was re-gearred and adapted to the new circumstances. An initial stocktaking of experiences was completed in August, following a virtual data collation exercise with interested Advisory Group members (Astana, CABRI, LOGIN and GPI). The activity yielded several insights relating to the function of trust and mutuality, ways to enable systemic change and approaches to localise the diffusion of knowledge. The EIP has initiated a series of virtual learning events to discuss and further explore these insights. These learning events are expected to yield a series of learning notes for publication.

In the context of COVID-19, a donor learning event held in May explored the value of P2P partnerships, with participants observing that the crisis has forced official development assistance (ODA) providers to collaborate and partner in different ways. Participants further noted the need for flexible approaches that are able to adapt to the new challenges facing development practitioners and institutional reformers.

Similarly, the need for innovation and new thinking necessitates the building of new alliances – to ensure and leverage the impact and broad perspectives of EIP members and partners. The EIP's mapping of 78 existing P2P initiatives highlights the many opportunities that exist to support new and different forms of partnerships in ODA. This mapping will serve to guide the EIP's strategic outreach going forward.

Table 1: EIP 5th Annual Meeting action points and corresponding activities to date

Action points	Activities undertaken
The EIP's strategic focus, methods of work and partnerships	
Define the EIP's strategic focus, outline the value add of having the EIP situated within the OECD, and seek to consolidate the EIP within the context of broader OECD-DAC partnerships and networks.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EIP Strategic Focus Note (Dec 2019) 2. Initial engagement of DAF and GOV Directorates to broaden the EIP's reach among other OECD policy communities
Map existing P2P networks for a clearer sense of what activities are being undertaken and by whom in peer-to-peer support, and work to identify prospective partners.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mapping of P2P Initiatives for Accountable, Effective & Inclusive Institutions (Oct 2019) 2. "Shortlist of potential EIP partners" – Excel file accompanying the report.
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)	
Conclude the process to engage expert support to design an MEL framework able to record P2P results in a way that facilitates learning on approaches on building effective institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultant contracted 2. Empirical data collected from self-selected P2P partnerships among AG members. 3. Lessons Harvesting Report (Sept 2020) 4. Learning events and resulting learning notes (in progress)
Governance Arrangements	
Propose <i>Terms of Reference</i> (ToRs) detailing the roles and functions of designated EIP governance bodies and the criteria for EIP membership.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Updated Governance Arrangements (Nov 2019)
Issue a call for expressions of interest in the role of EIP joint Co-Chair and membership of the <i>EIP Advisory Group</i> .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call for Expressions of Interest issued and new Co-Chairs selected (July 2019) 2. Call for expressions of interest to join AG issued (Aug 2019) and new AG confirmed (Oct 2019)
Website and communications	
Continue work to update and improve the EIP website in ways that reflect the current state of play and the results of the revisioning process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Website redesign commissioned (Sept 2020) 2. Updates in progress, and new functionalities under development 3. Website regularly updated

A brief history of the EIP

During its relatively short history, the EIP has developed through a process of continuous evolution and adaptation, adjusting its priorities and objectives along the way. The EIP's evolution has been shaped and influenced by changes in the overriding strategic policy environment in which the platform operates (from the Busan “New Consensus” to SDG 16), as well as by funding priorities and new ways of thinking on how best to deliver development cooperation.

The EIP was created in 2012 in the wake of the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, with the aim of operationalising the newly adopted “New Consensus on More Effective Institutions for Development” and supporting the creation of accountable, inclusive and transparent public sector institutions.

With the advent of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, and the explicit reference to effective institutions under Goal 16, the EIP established itself as a “new mechanism for innovation and peer learning on effective and inclusive institutions” tasked with developing and disseminating methods and knowledge on peer-to-peer (P2P) learning.

Through this process, the EIP established a credible reputation as a multi-stakeholder platform that contributes to and influences debate on various reform processes. Nevertheless, by early 2018, members agreed that a revisioning process was needed to sharpen the EIP's focus, enhance results, and renew membership and participation. The process involved a comprehensive review of the EIP's strategy, work plans, activities and operations, and resulted in the production of an EIP Visioning Report (July 2018) and Member Survey Analysis (February 2019).

The revisioning process was concluded at the 2019 Annual Meeting in Paris where members agreed on a revised strategic focus, updated governance arrangements and a new work plan.

2. HIGHLIGHTS 2019-2020

2.1 EIP “fit for the future”

In 2018, in response to a changing development landscape, the EIP undertook a revisioning process to take stock of its accomplishments, re-ascertain its value add and adapt to the evolving discourse on public sector reform and institutional development. The findings and recommendations of the revisioning process were detailed in a final report, which was discussed at the April 2019 Annual Meeting in Paris. To capture the consensus emerging from the meeting, the Secretariat produced a Strategic Focus Note and updated Governance Arrangements, guiding the current and future work of the EIP.

Strategic Focus Note

Informed by the revisioning process, members at the 5th Annual Meeting agreed on a new dual focus for the EIP and the principal methods by which the organisation will undertake its mission and deliver results. Both are elaborated in the Strategic Focus Note finalised in December 2019.

The strategic focus of the EIP is to (i) act as a global knowledge hub on peer-to-peer learning approaches; and (ii) provide a platform to facilitate incubation and learning from alternative and innovative approaches to public sector reform and institutional development, going beyond P2P methods.

The EIP will deliver on its mission by, among other things, maintaining a register of P2P initiatives; gathering evidence of good practices – “what works and what does not” – in different types of P2P arrangements; sharing knowledge and learning; brokering support for EIP members to enhance their P2P practices, if needed; and convening annual EIP events and forums to keep EIP members updated.

The dual focus and the methods of work recognise the need for a global repository of tools, success stories and good practices reflecting innovative approaches to institutional development – including but not limited to P2P methodologies. The focus also capitalises on the key strengths and assets of the EIP: its function as a multi-stakeholder platform and its focus on peer learning. While peer partnerships, alliances and approaches are growing in number and variety, there still exists no single entity that acts as a hub for learning and knowledge on the relative merits of different P2P approaches. The EIP would be well positioned to fill this role, given its ability to leverage the convening power of the OECD, and in particular OECD-DAC, and its credible reputation and growing insights into P2P implementation practices.

Updated governance arrangements

As an outcome of the 5th Annual Meeting, the EIP Secretariat was tasked with updating the EIP’s governance arrangements. These updates included the development of Terms of Reference for EIP members, which detailed membership criteria, roles and responsibilities, and procedures. These updates were developed in consultation with the Co-Chairs and finalised in November 2019.

In addition, new representatives were selected for the key governing bodies of the organisation, the Advisory Group and Co-Chairs. Following calls for expressions of interest, new Co-Chairs and Advisory Group members were appointed in July 2019 and October 2019, respectively. Both Advisory Group members and Co-Chairs serve two-year terms. The new governing bodies reflect the diversity of the

EIP in terms of thematic focus, geographic scope and organisational characteristics. The first meeting of the newly constituted Advisory Group was held in November 2019 to discuss and approve the Strategic Focus Note and the 2020-2021 Work Plan. Subsequent meetings were held in June and September 2020, and were dedicated, respectively, to the COVID-19 crisis and the EIP's role in supporting knowledge exchange and learning from member responses, and to planning the upcoming learning event series.

The EIP Advisory Group 2019-2021

Ms Karin Metell-Cueva (Co-Chair)

Head of Capacity Development Unit, Department for Partnerships and Innovation, Sida

Mr Neil Cole (Co-Chair)

Executive Secretary, CABRI, South Africa

Ms Diana Sharipova

Learning and Innovation Specialist, Astana Civil Service Hub, Astana, Kazakhstan

Mr Mark Montgomery

Policy Lead, Governance and Fragile States Policy Unit, Irish Aid

Ms Preeta Lall

Team Leader, Local Governance Initiative and Network (LOGIN), India

Mr Farid Aziz

Joint Secretary and Wing Chief, Development Effectiveness Wing, Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance, Government of Bangladesh

Ms Leila Brosnan

International Adviser – Learning, Global Learning Government Partnerships International (GPI), United Kingdom

Ms Rose Wanjiru

Executive Director Centre for Economic Governance (CEG), Kenya

Mr Steffen Soulejman Janus

Program Lead, Knowledge Sharing & Learning, World Bank

Ms Jennifer Lewis

Senior Governance and Anti-Corruption Advisor, USAID Democracy Rights and Governance Center

2.2 P2P Donor Learning Event

On 4 May 2019, 34 participants representing 14 organisations and donor agencies from the Global North and South came together for a donor learning event on P2P approaches to support institutional development. The event was organised jointly by Government Partnerships International (GPI), the EIP and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The objective of the event was to provide an opportunity for knowledge exchange and learning principally among donors on how best to support P2P and institutional twinning initiatives. Participants discussed commonalities and differences in approach, strategies for effectively measuring results, and opportunities and constraints in terms of scaling up existing approaches and initiatives. The event also provided an opportunity for the P2P community to identify common interests and raise the profile of P2P as an effective working method.

Participants clearly signalled their demand for a forum in which P2P practitioners could regularly exchange knowledge and share practical experiences on effective working methods. It was suggested that the EIP serve as a co-ordinating mechanism for such knowledge sharing, and act to collect and disseminate evidence, success stories, new methods and policy discourse on prospective challenges and strategies to overcome these difficulties. Participants recognised that the event itself suggests that P2P is an effective tool for knowledge sharing and an opportunity for mutual learning – an idea captured in the catchphrase “we share experiences, we don’t share solutions”.

The event also highlighted the value of P2P approaches as a mechanism for co-ordinating the COVID-19 response. Many participants spoke of having to either repurpose or reprioritise their work in response to the emerging crisis, and noted that the COVID-19 crisis represents an opportunity to test the P2P model in a new context – one that requires increased adaptation and flexibility. The event demonstrated the existence of a growing community of practice among donors and partner countries on P2P approaches, and the value of such a community exchanging ideas and inspiring new and better ways of working.

Snapshot: Key takeaways and questions from the P2P donor learning event

- ▶ P2P learning can enable development actors in going beyond technical assistance to build trust, transfer knowledge (the “what”) and transfer practical insights (the “how to”).
- ▶ P2P approaches can enhance aid effectiveness and thus contribute directly towards the attainment of Agenda 2030 and the delivery of development through a whole-of-government approach.
- ▶ P2P is a long-term relationship-building process. It is most successful where it is problem-driven, agile/flexible and adaptive.
- ▶ As a long-term change management process, measurement and attribution of P2P results can be a problem.
- ▶ How do we create a P2P learning community?
- ▶ How can P2P contribute to the COVID-19 response?

What is peer-to-peer learning?

Peer learning is a potentially powerful way of sharing knowledge about enacting public sector reform. This learning process involves individuals exchanging knowledge and experience with each other, and diffusing this learning back to their organisations to ensure impact at scale on reform initiatives.

Although peer learning entails complex organisational logistics, it ultimately recognises that learning takes place between individuals. Accordingly, it facilitates interpersonal interchanges that are well-matched and based on trust and commitment, and avoids the risks linked to focusing on process over product or [productivity].

Peer learning can be evaluated based on whether peer engagements and sustained individual contacts produce the right learning outcomes for individuals to achieve changes that matter.

Source: EIP Peer Learning Guide 2015.

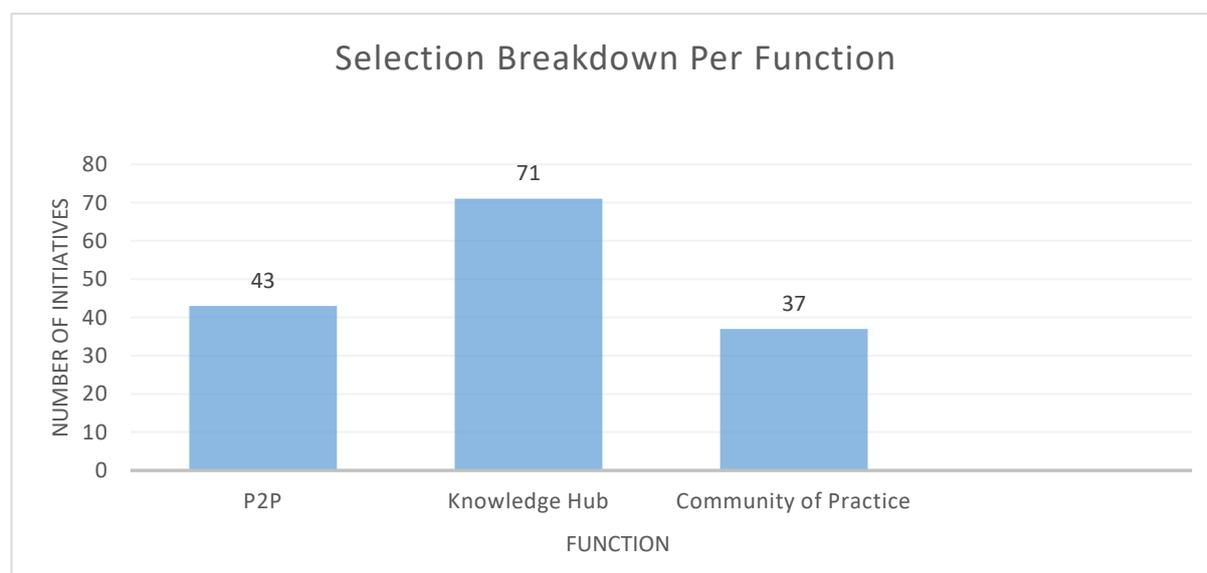
2.3 Mapping P2P initiatives

During the 5th Annual Meeting it was agreed that the EIP Secretariat would map existing P2P initiatives to determine who is doing what, and to identify opportunities for the EIP to broaden its membership and establish strategic partnerships. Strategic partnerships and revamped membership are key parts of positioning the EIP as a global knowledge hub on P2P learning and a platform that facilitates the incubation of – and learning from – alternative and innovative approaches to institutional development.

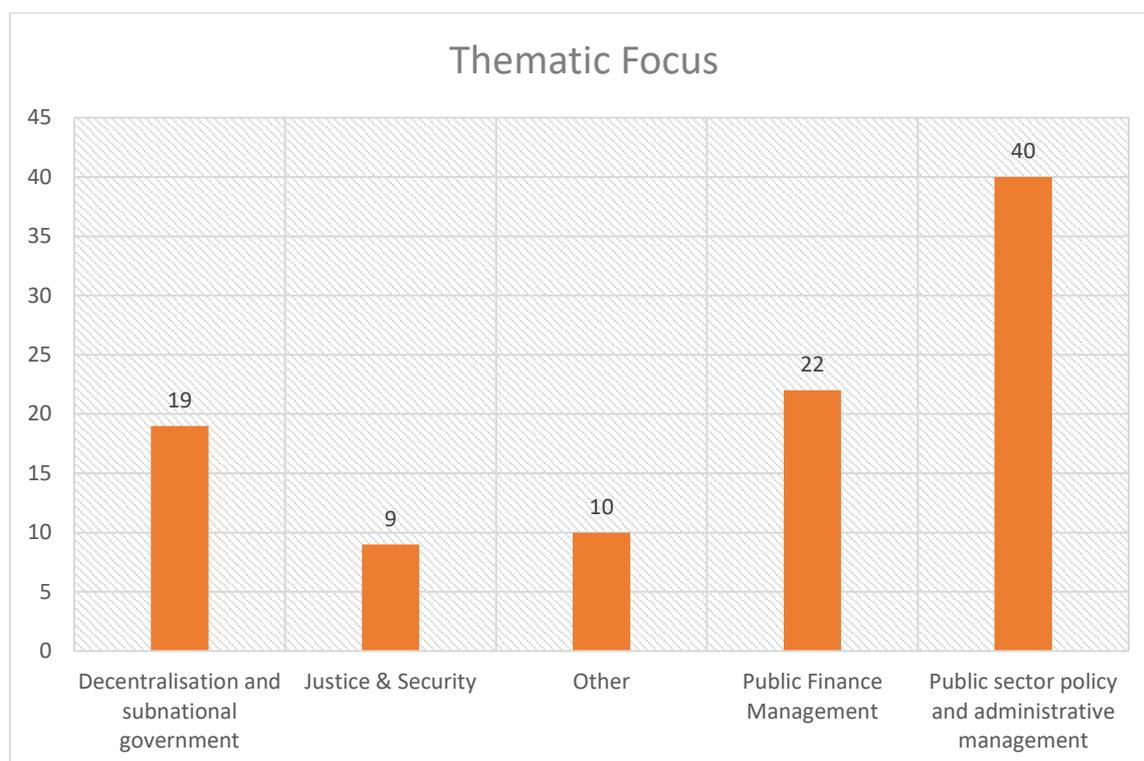
The Secretariat conducted a survey and identified initiatives with an active online presence that use P2P methodologies or provide resources for reform practitioners. The results were reflected in a final mapping report. The Secretariat considers the mapping report a living document that will be regularly updated as new or other existing initiatives are identified and added.

The mapping initially identified 109 initiatives out of which 78 proved still active. The initiatives were selected on the basis of one or a combination of three core functions: P2P alliance, knowledge hubs or community of practice. The analysis indicates that the EIP has ample opportunity to broker new partnerships, particularly given the number of identified P2P facilitating organisations that are not yet EIP members. With a view to facilitate such partnership-building, the mapping report sets out a number of key considerations to inform engagement, including types of partnership strategies and potential selection criteria. The report is accompanied by a live list of initiatives with which mutually beneficial partnerships could be explored. These resources will serve to guide the EIP’s strategic outreach and engagement, with the aim of supporting new types of partnerships and linkages between institutions that would not otherwise easily connect.

Snapshot: Sample findings from the P2P mapping



Of the 78 active partnerships examined, 43 explicitly identified P2P learning as their core method of work. Almost all (71 out of 78) function as knowledge hubs and 37 as communities of practice. 17 initiatives perform all three functions: P2P learning, knowledge hubs and community of practice.



Public sector policy and administrative management, public finance management and decentralised governance are the main foci of the selected P2P initiatives.

2.4. P2P MEL framework

As part of its efforts to support P2P approaches to facilitate institutional reform, and as recommended by the revisioning process, the EIP is developing a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework that could be used to guide P2P initiatives.

The Secretariat has commissioned an MEL expert to support the work, which aims to help P2P practitioners systematically track and monitor progress towards institutional change and development, and to capture the specific contribution of P2P partnerships towards those objectives. The results of the EIP member survey indicated that a majority of EIP members value P2P learning alliances as a core attribute of the EIP. Developing a comprehensive MEL architecture will allow the EIP to enhance this function by demonstrating that the P2P approach to institutional change and development can produce effective and sustainable results or outcomes.

The work stream includes the production of a MEL stocktaking report to capture experiences among EIP members, and the delivery of a series of learning notes and events to distil insights about the necessary ingredients of effective P2P partnerships and prospective MEL methods to capture results. The assignment is expected to be finalised by mid 2021.

P2P Lessons Harvesting Report

As a first step towards developing a MEL framework, the EIP produced a discussion paper ‘harvesting’ lessons from among its membership. Drawing on consultations with self-selected EIP Advisory Group

members with direct experience of facilitating and supporting P2P learning, the report highlights a number of key lessons that are fundamental to improving our understanding of the way in which institutional change and learning is currently understood and tracked as an outcome of P2P approaches.

The lessons identified in the report (see the box below) can be considered useful working principals to guide monitoring, evaluation and learning approaches in P2P contexts. They are also intended to support a broader conversation on how to conduct monitoring, learning and evaluation of P2P initiatives in order to ensure that the associated methods effectively facilitate institutional reform. Given the rich depth and breadth of initial insights observed, the EIP is organising a series of learning events and discussion notes based on major themes emerging from this work (see the section below).

Importantly, the report underscores the importance of adapting MEL tools and approaches to different types of P2P arrangements. Common P2P arrangements include, for example:

- Peer-based knowledge platforms (knowledge hubs, online platforms) with face-to-face elements;
- Peer engagement on a particular topic or problem among a specific group of practitioners;
- Careful institution-matching, often one-on-one, with a facilitating intermediary.

These arrangements differ in essential characteristics, such as the types of practitioners involved, the modes of engagement and the problems being solved. This in turn has implications for the type of MEL approach applicable, the investment required, and the extent to which MEL can be used to facilitate the institutionalisation of insights and learning. The report includes examples across all three arrangements in order to highlight their respective implications for effective MEL approaches.

Key insights from the lessons harvesting report

- Monitor **core capabilities** at different levels of operation and how they interlink, applying a “systems filter” to monitoring, evaluation and learning.
- Decide on **who tracks what** and **who periodically compiles** information for collective learning across different actors.
- Partner **roles and constellations** differ depending on the type and purpose of the P2P engagement and may shift along the way. Periodically reassessing roles and functions could be part of the MEL framework.
- **Trust** between peers who share experiences regularly, over time, complements cognitive learning with **affective (emotional) learning**, potentially leading to a higher degree of internalization and ownership.
- Pinpoint **mechanisms for the institutionalisation** of new skills and practices and continuously assess assumptions around institutionalised patterns of behaviour.
- Monitor the **health of the peer-to-peer** partnership as well as what it produces.
- Regularly **assess and redraw** the navigational map of how to achieve change together.

Source: “Lessons Harvesting” for monitoring, evaluation and learning from peer-to-peer engagements, EIP 2020.

MEL Learning Series: events and notes

Building on the initial stocktaking of experiences, the EIP has initiated a series of virtual learning events to further discuss and explore the emerging insights. The series consists of three events and accompanying notes focused on the function of trust and mutuality, enabling systemic change and

localising the diffusion of knowledge, and will result in the production of dedicated learning notes on each topic.

The objective of the learning series is twofold: (i) to discuss good P2P practices revealed by the MEL review process with a view to soliciting further insights and experiences on these methods from participating members; and (ii) to explore the ways in which monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) can be used both to facilitate these ways of working and to track and measure results.

The first event was held on 9 December 2020. Initial draft learning notes were prepared in October 2020 and will be further developed based on insights from the virtual events.

Themes of the MEL learning series

1. Measures of mutuality and trust-based learning between peers

Explore how to use monitoring, evaluation and learning to promote mutual learning between peers by addressing power imbalances in the partnership, encourage two-way flows of information and learning, and create a sense of joint purpose between participating institutions.

2. Learning through interconnected systems

Explore how monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) can be used to track and illustrate how, and under what circumstances, connecting organisational systems via P2P learning contributes to problem-solving and institutional change (using a systems lens), in ways potentially not possible through direct Technical Assistance.

3. Localised learning – unleashing local strengths

Explore how monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) can be used to track how P2P approaches can help unleash local capabilities for adaptation and decision making in ongoing public sector reform or social change efforts, leading to stronger national or local institutions.

2.5 Website redevelopment

The EIP is in the process of revamping its communication and outreach efforts. Central to this effort is the redevelopment of the EIP website (effectiveinstitutions.org) which began in Q2 of 2020. The new website will serve as the central knowledge hub and repository of the platform. In addition to a fresh look, the new site will be more user friendly, making it easier for members and partners to find and share knowledge and resources. It will also include added features to enhance interaction and exchange. The prototype website will be showcased at the Annual Meeting in December 2020 to allow members to provide input and feedback. The website will be finalised in Q2 of 2021, and the launch will be supplemented by a broader set of communication activities, including regular blog and newsletter production, for which member contributions will be solicited.

3. BUDGET AND FUNDING

During the 2019-2020 biennium, the EIP received funding from Irish Aid, Sida, UK FCDO, USAID and the OECD. The funding was provided to cover core Secretariat functions and activities. The total budget for the biennium amounted to an estimated EUR 500 000.

