Effective Institutions Platform

Briefing Note

Advisory Group Meeting 15 June 2021

1. Scope and objective

This briefing note is prepared for the meeting of the Advisory Group (AG) on 15 June 2021, to provide an overview of EIP activities during the January 2021 to June 2021 period, as against the current Work Plan (2020-2021).

The note updates AG members on progress since the 6th Annual Meeting held in December 2020, during which EIP members gathered to review work plan activities, set priorities and solicit ideas for future work. The documentation of the 6th Annual Meeting as well as the Annual Update can be accessed on the EIP website.

2. Overview of activities January 2021 – June 2021

Learning Events
In support of Objective 2 of the work plan, and as part of the EIP's efforts to distil the insights and lessons from existing peer-to-peer (P2P) approaches with a view to enhance monitoring, learning and evaluation approaches, the Secretariat organised a series of learning events to reflect on the key attributes of effective P2P partnerships, and to consider the role of monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) in tracking and supporting these approaches.

Based on the Harvest or Stocking Report 'Lessons Harvesting: Learning from P2P Engagements, and in the December 2020 to May 2021 period, these events covered the following three topics:

- The first event was held in December 2020 and focused on the importance of building **trust and mutuality in P2P partnerships**. A summary report and a draft learning note were published on the EIP website.
- The second event, held in February 2021, focused on the function of **learning through inter-connected systems.** A draft learning note was prepared ahead of the event, and Event resources, including presentations, and a summary report were published on the EIP website.
- The third event, held in May 2021, explored **localised learning and the conditions under which peer learning can help unleash local capabilities.** A draft learning note was prepared

ahead of the event, and the summary report will be published on the website shortly, along with other resources shared at the event.

With the completion of this initial learning series, the Secretariat is now preparing final (though organic) versions of the learning notes, which will be published on the EIP website and shared with key partners and stakeholders. These notes may be further elaborated or adjusted as members derive deeper and richer experiences from these practices.

MEL framework for P2P learning

The work on the development of an MEL Framework for P2P approaches to institutional development is progressing according to plan. The work stream, in support of work plan Objective 2, builds on and consolidates the evidence and experiences gathered from the Harvesting Report, learning events and learning notes. The work is delivered by an MEL Consultant, Charlotte Ornemark, who is currently preparing the next phase of the assignment which includes the development and curation of a set of MEL tools applicable to peer partnerships, a pilot testing phase (in collaboration with EIP members and partners), and the preparation of the final framework. The aim of the MEL framework is to set out both (i) how, when, and against what criteria, the partners in a P2P engagement can track how their learning is being applied, tested and adapted to build institutional capabilities; and (ii) how this in turn contributes to institutional performance.

Website revamp

Redevelopment of the EIP website continued, as part of work plan Objective 1**.** The contracted website developer, Helmes, finalised the design (look and feel) and functionalities of the new site, a partial model of which was presented at the Annual Meeting in December 2020. Work was also initiated on the administrative panel of the site, aiming to allow easy control, editing and publishing of content. In parallel, the Secretariat initiated a comprehensive overhaul and update of the site content, including restructured, updated and added information and resources to reflect the current focus, objectives and activities of the EIP. The aim is that the revamped website will be up and running in August 2021.

Outreach, membership and partner engagement

In line with Objectives 1 and 4 of the Work Plan, the Secretariat has reached out to and engaged with a number of new prospective partners championing P2P learning, to explore opportunities for closer collaboration, coordination and improved uptake of EIP's tools and approaches. This process has included engagements with institutions in OECD countries such as the Norad Knowledge Bank, regional and thematic networks such as United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and other emerging initiatives such as the Practitioners Circles initiative (currently hosted by the Johns Hopkins Agora institute).

The *EIP's learning series* has also provided opportunities to deepen engagements and learning with and among new and existing members and partners (including Advisory Group members), such as the Open Government Partnership, GPI, LOGIN Asia, Kenya's Council of Governors, DeLOG, CABRI, the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS), and the World Bank Group.

3.   Funding and other resources

The EIP Secretariat is currently in the process of concluding a grant agreement with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), to provide EUR 250.000 in funding to support EIP activities in the 2021-2022 biennium. Further steps will be taken to secure additional resources to finance core and dedicated EIP activities during the biennium.

The Secretariat, hosted by the OECD/DCD, currently consists of four staff members: three of which (an A3, and two A1s) dedicate 50% of their time to the EIP, while the Team Lead Catherine Anderson contributes 25% of her time to EIP activities. After August 2021, the Sida seconded staff member will conclude her assignment and return to Sida.