

Preparatory Workshop on Peer-to-Peer Learning Alliances held in Singapore (24 April 2015)

Government officials from Bhutan, Maldives, and Vietnam attended a one-day Preparatory Workshop on Peer-to-Peer Learning Alliances (P2PLA). Hosted by the EIP Joint Secretariat on April 24 in Singapore, the workshop offered an opportunity to reflect and feedback on the draft paper, [‘Mapping peer learning initiatives in public sector reforms in development’](#) and the associated draft Toolkit. The preparatory workshop also provided an opportunity for participants to offer their views on design considerations for Learning Alliances. EIP consultant Nick Manning joined the workshop remotely to discuss key takeaways from the Mapping.



The workshop benefited from the active engagement of the government officials participating: the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission of the Maldives, a Commissioner of the Royal Civil Service Commission of Bhutan, and the Director of The Vietnam Institute of Leadership and Public Policy, a training institution for Vietnamese government officials.

The concept of P2PLA was a new one for participants, who had experience with other forms of peer learning. They reflected that defining and matching peers is a significant challenge, particularly given that public sector reform cuts across various sectors and is managed by different organizations in different countries. Further practical feedback included noting that positions within a community of practice may not mean the same thing across different contexts (even if they have the same title), and that relationships between divisions of government vary by context as well.

Participants affirmed the importance of investing in research and communication up-front, before the initiation of a Learning Alliance; this would be necessary to, among other things, identify appropriate peers, organizations, and a Learning Alliance focal point in various country contexts, as well as identify a source of political will. Forethought of the kind indicated corresponds to the approach envisioned in the draft Mapping and Toolkit, which includes a checklist of key considerations for potential peer learning facilitators, covering stages of peer learning beginning with establishing a foundational engagement.

Participants suggested that there should be a pre-foundational stage of the Peer-to-Peer learning process (preceding the foundational engagement stage), and commented on the importance of having political support for a potential Learning Alliance as well as the question of what the incentives may be for peers to participate. Participants were clear that the topic of a Learning Alliance should be driven by the interest of possible participants and

priorities of the government. The discussion on the potential challenges and success factors for a P2PLA included highlighting that effective communication mechanisms should be an integral part of a P2PLA, and the potential utility of P2PLA in focusing on implementation challenges in reform.

The EIP Joint Secretariat appreciates the valuable feedback of the Workshop participants, which will be taken into account as finalisation of the Toolkit progresses.