



7TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONS PLATFORM (EIP)

13-14 December 2021

SUMMARY RECORD

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DAY I

Opening of Day 1

1. The EIP joint Co-Chairs opened the Annual Meeting. The main objectives of this meeting are to take stock of achievements during the past year, present and discuss planned work in 2022 and launch the workstream to pilot test MEL tools with members and source partners. Neil Cole highlighted the EIP's ongoing work and the value of becoming an online platform as this has facilitated greater engagement with members and partners. He also announced his upcoming departure as EIP Co-Chair. Mark Montgomery emphasised that future EIP work will focus on operationalising insights to ensure that past learning is implemented and engages partners. The importance of consolidating the EIP as a platform, notably by employing a sectoral approach and reaching out to new partners, was highlighted. Mark subsequently presented the meeting agenda.

Session I: EIP Update and Achievements in 2021

2. The Moderator, Rose Wanjiru, from the Centre for Economic Governance (CEG), invited Catherine Anderson from the EIP Secretariat to present the achievements and work done by the EIP in 2021.
3. Catherine started by discussing the EIP's history including its origins in the Busan consensus for development effectiveness. At the time, the EIP was envisaged as a knowledge hub to exchange experiences and share knowledge to support development outcomes with a focus on country dialogues and the launch of learning alliances. From 2016 onwards, amidst shifting policy priorities moving from the Busan consensus to the SDG16 environment of universalism, the EIP adopted P2P learning as a brand with two major lines of activity: (i) hosting multi-stakeholder dialogues and (ii) supporting learning alliances, based on the P2P learning guide developed in 2016. Achievements during this time included the development of methodological guidance on P2P learning and the deployment of seed funding to support three P2P learning alliances.
4. More recently, the EIP has undergone a process of reinvigoration, noting in particular the need to better document and record results of P2P partnerships as an area of focus. As a result, [a stocktaking report](#) was published in January 2021 identifying key attributes of effective partnerships. A learning series to develop a compendium of good practices was subsequently

organised around a set of three attributes: (i) trust and mutuality, (ii) learning through interconnected systems and (iii) unleashing local capabilities. [The three Learning Notes](#) expanding on the same themes were published in December 2021. Going forward, the Secretariat is looking to develop good practices, tools and approaches to track and measure these attributes. The Secretariat is also seeking to further develop its outreach to identify and engage a range of P2P networks and alliances to diversify its knowledge and learning. Finally, the new EIP website was launched in November 2021, further consolidating the governing structure and knowledge management of the EIP.

5. The moderator opened the floor for questions and comments. Several participants expressed their interest and appreciation of the work undertaken by the EIP, especially with regard to the learning notes. Participants also expressed interest in the upcoming testing of MEL tools and approaches arguing that they need to be responsive and community-led when implemented with developing country partners. Another participant observed that these new MEL tools will be critical to show the limitations of a change management framework and those of classical output and outcome indicators. Several contributors also highlighted the importance of soft skills as the EIP has brought back the emphasis on people and soft skills via the learning notes. The EIP could further document latent practices and positive deviances which constitute key ingredients in the creation of effective institutions. In addition, the contribution of the EIP towards institutional development discourse was emphasised: one participant noted that EIP material was used for their institutional engagement with regard to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development while another participant noted that unpacking the meaning and important ingredients of institutional change and success are key. Finally, many participants, including from the UNDP and the Movement for Community-led Development, expressed interest in exploring synergies in respective workstreams.
6. Fredrik Bruhn presented an update on the workplan, which was approved at the Advisory Group meeting in November. Recently, the EIP has gone through a period of revitalisation in terms of its focus and membership, with a stronger focus on demonstrating results from P2P partnerships. The Secretariat has enhanced the evidence base (e.g. through the lessons harvesting report, learning series and learning notes) while the revitalised membership has led to a diversification of insights and experiences. The updated workplan aims to consolidate this focus on results and catalyse a shift to operationalise and test the insights on the attributes of effective P2P partnerships for institutional reform. This will notably be done through practical engagement around critical policy agendas. As result, the main priorities of this workplan are to:
 - i. Enhance the focus on engagement and outreach throughout workstreams including around specific sectors (e.g. DRM, climate finance etc...). The outreach and sector engagement strategy is the main guide to this work;
 - ii. Bring the EIP closer to the development effectiveness architecture (including the GPEDC);
 - iii. Pilot test MEL tools and approaches in P2P partnerships with members and partners. The MEL Roadmap is the main guide to this work.
7. Emile Boral Rolland presented the Outreach and Sector Engagement Strategy (OASES). This strategy was adopted to ensure the EIP keeps apace to help deliver critical policy agendas, to continue developing learning and knowledge around effective partnerships on institutional

reform, and to expand uptake and engagement around EIP activities. The benefits of the strategy are to expand knowledge and learning across P2P communities among EIP members and beyond, better tailor and adapt knowledge to different needs and priorities, contribute towards increased diversity through the greater participation of organisations from developing countries and improve the identification and sourcing of knowledge and experiences. The principle pillars of engagement for this strategy are to adopt a sector specific and thematically structured engagement to deepen uptake of EIP activities, engage a diversity of partnerships and localise partnerships and collaboration. The choice of sectors will be guided by several criteria, including SDG16 related challenges, existing demand, the level of priority within the DAC/development discourse, and building on the existing body of knowledge. The strategy will be implemented through several activities including but not limited to: workshopping prospective engagements, convening learning events, contributing to the review of the monitoring and effectiveness refresh of the GPEDC, by collaborative problem solving and through publications. The EIP Secretariat intends to review prospective sectors and undertake a light review of partnership strategies in 2022.

8. Rose Wanjiru subsequently opened the floor for questions and comments. The EIP Secretariat expressed the need for a diversity of experiences to better test these MEL tools. This learning would also need to be embedded in the development effectiveness architecture to better influence how the DAC and development partners are operating. Many participants agreed on the importance of engaging partners from the Global South including non-state actors as they play an important role in modernising governments and promoting reforms. One participant suggested including partners and organisations from the Global South in the EIP steering mechanisms and enhancing their ownership of activities. Others argued that outreach to partners in the Global South was already incorporated in the design of the learning events but could be further reinforced. Several participants also indicated that they could themselves reach out to their respective networks to make connections with partners in the Global South.
9. The EIP Secretariat emphasised that when thinking about sector-specific engagement, the most important criteria is to ensure demand around the institutional reform agenda. The EIP Secretariat also suggested that it can offer guidance and support by helping partners use some of the tools that it has collated to ensure greater impact. The EIP Co-Chair added that part of the original interest in this approach is to try to tackle our own system failures in terms of effective institutional development. Collaborating with the right partners and platforms in the Global South, mapping who can benefit from P2P approaches and reaching out to participant's respective networks is key. Finally, another participant suggested corruption as a sector of focus when operationalising the outreach and sector engagement strategy.
10. A participant from the joint OECD-UNDP team of the GPEDC shared some insights about their current activities. In return, the EIP Secretariat expressed its interest in further collaboration with the GPEDC.

Session II: Showcasing EIP partner experiences

11. EIP Co-Chair Mark Montgomery opened the session whose objective was to showcase EIP partner experiences in engaging in partnerships and networks with a focus on P2P learning, what they have learnt in their respective sector of engagement, any potential for more effective partnership

and learning approaches, and how they work with MEL to track results and impact. Presenters included Agne Skaistyte from the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA); Silvia Prada from the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIAPP); and Pritom Phookun, facilitator of the GIZ-led peer-to-peer alliance of Anti-Corruption Authorities.

12. Agne Skaistyte defined public sector expertise (PSE) in the context of development assistance as international technical cooperation that mobilises expertise in Member States' administrations to promote reform and sustainable development policies through P2P knowledge exchange and international institutional partnerships with partner countries. According to a recent EU PSE evaluation study, PSE is now recognised as an important tool in development cooperation. PSE has an important role in strengthening political dialogue in countries as public sector experts are mobilised and can support ongoing negotiations on public sector dialogue that EU delegations are conducting on the ground. This technical knowledge permits to engage partners in meaningful dialogue as equals and promotes trust to build further cooperation. Tools that are being used as part of PSE include (i) twinning arrangements – usually sector-related and mostly implemented in Latin American countries; (ii) twinning and TAEIX (technical assistance and information exchange) cooperation in European NEAR countries. Furthermore, the legal frameworks for twinning and other types of cooperation allow for the involvement of institutions rather than solely relying on individual experts. She also argued that public sector programmes should be implemented in synergy and cooperation with other development tools. The involvement of national authorities is crucial for effective cooperation on different public reforms (e.g. for legal adjustment and the capacity building of public sector institutions).
13. Silvia Prada from FIAPP (part of the Spanish development cooperation system) is fostering this workstream within the practitioners network for the EU external service (this network exchanges knowledge among EU partners). Common challenges and needs highlighted in the PSE Phase I and II study – mostly focused on the supply side – include challenges at the legal/administrative level (e.g. complexity in the regulatory frameworks), financial constraints including lack of resources and incentive alignment in terms of ensuring that staff from public administrations can get their P2P learning experience recognised for their careers. On the more strategic level, there is a need for more political and institutional support to ensure the involvement of staff from public administrations in these assignments. She then discussed some of the recommendations that the study made to overcome these challenges. These include focusing on mutuality and trust to show that the PSE approach has dividends for the home administration. The importance of matching supply and demand by providing the necessary support and ensuring policy and political dialogue were also mentioned. The way forward to put these recommendations into practice is defined through a joint road map. Policy-level recognitions of this are occurring through the European Council's conclusions on public sector expertise. The EC is also likely to work on a framework moving forward.
14. Pritom Phookun shared his experience as one of the facilitators of a P2P alliance of anti-corruption authorities (ACAs) in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. The alliance aimed to individually empower peers in the group to diffuse learning to their organisations, share good practices and improve the prevention and investigation capacities of ACAs with the long-term objective of reducing corruption. He observed that individual empowerment and the sharing of

good practices were mostly successful, while improving prevention and investigation capacities of the ACAs was only successful to a small extent. There was a lack of data on the long-term objective of corruption reduction. He highlighted some of the critical factors that emerged from the project including the importance of empowering facilitation to allow peers to think for themselves, the building of trust among peers via a skilled facilitator, commitment by peers, a problem-solving focus, ownership by individual peers and their organisations, and the setting up of regular feedback loops. When scoring these critical factors he argued, based on the evaluation, that empowering facilitation and trust were highly successful. In the case of trust, several requirements are needed to ensure its presence including cultural ones, authenticity, empathy and unconditional positive regard. The level of peer commitment was high but the level of organisational commitment remained unclear. With regard to the problem-solving focus there was a focus on action plans rather than trust with objectives first reviewed and peers subsequently identifying activities. However, there were varying degrees of success around implementation. While individual ownership was high, more could have been done at the organisational level. A Memorandum of Understanding is now planned to move this peer alliance to the African Union's Advisory Board on Corruption in order to increase regional ownership. Feedback was satisfactory with action plans being monitored and an external evaluation being conducted. Finally, he outlined a number of key considerations for sustainability including the need to avoid individual peer focus, select peers through criteria-based selection to better enable them to be champions when they return to their organisations and developing internal competence in facilitation.

15. Mark Montgomery opened the floor for comments and questions. One participant argued that the benefits and disadvantages of any P2P partnership in terms of mutuality will depend on the type of partnership and peers. The association of P2P learning with innovation in the public sector was noted as a benefit, while the lack of investment in staff to ensure lifelong learning, with investments chosen mostly based on visibility, was highlighted as a common problem. Another participant argued that a hybrid approach that could pair specific individuals with specific institutions could be a solution to the dichotomy between individual and organisation-based P2P partnerships. The need for a neutral facilitator that can help build trust and mutuality was also emphasised by several participants. One participant argued that P2P is advantageous as it offers a light touch approach that facilitates conversation and presents an opportunity to ask questions rather than send advisors. One participant also asked how the EU does partner reviews and how to apply to participate in such partnerships. The response is that this can be done by approaching the EU delegation in-country.
16. Catherine from the EIP Secretariat asked the presenters how they created a sense of equality and trust, fostered networks among different actors, unleashed local capabilities and intrinsic motivation in their respective partnerships. Regina from the anti-corruption authority in Kenya argued that moving forward the emphasis should be on organisational rather than individual learning, although peers have managed to extend learning to their organisations to some extent, largely due to the exposure to new learning through outside expertise. Agne argued that P2P is about dialogue and the "how" rather than imposing certain solutions. In the PSE approach, mutual understanding between partners is promoted by requesting beneficiary support in partner selection. She argued that measuring mutuality is complicated but could be gauged by the extent to which the beneficiary institution wants to work further with partners. The benefits

of involving multiple stakeholders from different policy domains and ministries in PSE partnerships was also emphasised. Pritom offered some insights on how to unleash local capabilities. The lack of criteria-based selection was problematic as this could have led to choosing peers with greater capacities. Furthermore, he emphasised the importance of facilitation to unleash potential, the importance of a knowledge management system to record the occurrence of mutuality and the importance of acknowledgement of peers from their organisation. Finally, a hybrid model combining online and in-person meetings could favour the development of trust and mutuality among peers.

17. Mark closed the session and invited members to think about how best to disseminate the learning and seek traction against these lessons.

DAY II

Opening of Day 2

18. EIP Co-Chair Neil Cole welcomed participants to the second day of the meeting and provided an overview of the meeting agenda. He highlighted the general objective of the day: to move towards the operationalisation and testing of MEL tools and approaches in P2P partnerships, based on the three features of effective P2P partnerships identified through the Learning Series.

Session III: Co-creating and piloting MEL tools for P2P initiatives (Part I)

19. The moderator, Diana Sharipova from the Astana Civil Service Hub, introduced the objective of the session: to present the upcoming EIP work to pilot MEL tools with existing member-led P2P partnerships. Part I of the session aimed to outline the planned approach, guiding principles, timeframe and ways for members to get involved, building on the insights gathered from EIP members and P2P partners in the stocktaking report, the learning events and the learning notes.
20. Charlotte Örnemark, MEL specialist, presented an overview of the Roadmap, describing the forthcoming initiative to co-create and pilot test MEL tools and approaches for P2P learning. The aim is to put into practice the insights gathered through the Stocktaking Report and the subsequent Learning Series. This aims to assist peer partnerships to monitor and measure results and the added value of P2P learning. The aim is to collaborate with 2-3 existing peer partnerships. A call for expressions of interest to join the initiative was issued shortly after the Annual Meeting. The main stages of the process will include a problem identification and self-assessment stage, followed by the selection, development and iterative adjustment of tools suitable to the identified problem. The EIP Secretariat will offer guidance and support throughout the process, and will document, synthesise and share the key insights and lessons learned to assist the broader EIP and P2P learning communities to track and deliver results.
21. The Moderator opened the floor for questions and comments. Several participants expressed their appreciation of the initiative, while also highlighting the challenges of monitoring P2P learning projects in a flexible and adaptive way, for example due to rigorous donor reporting and results frameworks (e.g. logframes). Others, including donor representatives, encouraged participants to join the initiative, stressing that these type of initiatives are in high demand among many donors actively looking for systematized documentation of how MEL frameworks can be made more flexible and adaptive to better balance the learning and accountability functions of

MEL. Indicators need to be carefully crafted to capture the features, such as trust and mutuality, which describe not only learning outcomes but the relationship between partners and peers. Participants shared some of the tools and approaches used to monitor their own P2P initiatives, including compliance monitoring and continuous operational monitoring of agreed action plans, impact assessments, evaluations based on annual surveys, and knowledge management assistants that help facilitate the flow of knowledge between different organisational levels and partners.

22. Charlotte Örnemark and Catherine Anderson responded to some of the reactions, emphasising the potential benefits of the piloting initiative, including as an opportunity to provide donors with documentation and examples of the added value of peer learning, and the tools and approaches best suited to track that added value. By emphasising mutuality and local knowledge, this initiative and the P2P model more broadly offers an opportunity to operationalise and test some of the insights coming out of, for example of the Adaptive Management and Doing Development Differently communities of practice, which have often remained rather abstract and sometimes northern-led. It should also be noted that the project is envisaged to evolve in an iterative way, and that although the learning notes do not give a detailed sense of what specific indicators should look like, they do give an indication of what qualities and features to look for.

Session III: Co-creating and piloting MEL tools for P2P initiatives (Part II)

23. EIP Co-Chair Neil Cole introduced the objective of the session, to share experiences and generate interest in the initiative to pilot test MEL tools and approaches that are being developed and adapted by the EIP Secretariat.
24. Sara Hoeflich from the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) reflected on how UCLG designs and monitors peer learning, using examples from the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) project involving knowledge exchange between 14 cities. UCLG publishes peer learning notes based on rigorous project documentation to present the findings and outcomes of the peer learning exchanges. Peer learning activities are targeted towards different stakeholder groups, including politicians, practitioners, and project teams. The activities serve different functions and generate varying outcomes depending on the targeted stakeholder group. Peer learning among politicians for example can create empathy and provide a local vision, whereas exchanges between practitioners typically serves to foster relevant technical knowledge and ensure sustainability beyond shorter term political shifts. Results indicators are typically adapted to the different interests of the targeted peers and stakeholder groups, and complemented by impact indicators (e.g. poverty reduction, job creation) measured in the territory.
25. Elton Stafa from the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South East Europe (NALAS) presented an overview of the continuum of NALAS peer learning practices, ranging from informal to more formalised types of learning exchanges. The continuum includes informal one-on-one and individual exchanges, knowledge tandems, structured 2-week peer reviews among local government associations at senior management level, a quick response programme focused on policy issues, bench learning through comparative studies and reports, and sectoral peer exchanges based on specific country demand. Members are typically embedded in both project design and implementation, and engaged through continuous stakeholder feedback and post-

project follow-up, which facilitates learning and allows for continuous adjustments and adaptation.

26. Participants were divided into three break-out groups focused on (i) trust and mutuality (ii) learning through interconnected systems and (iii) unleashing local capabilities through P2P learning. Discussions were guided by the following questions:
 - a. To what extent have you focused on [trust and mutual learning/interconnected systems/unleashing local capabilities] in your P2P initiatives?
 - b. How did you track and measure those qualities?
27. Participants were in broad agreement that trust is key to effective peer learning. In some partnerships, trust grows naturally without a specific effort, particularly when peers do not represent their countries and are therefore able to speak more freely, and when clearly defined exchange protocols are in place. Participants shared their own experience of measures that can be taken to increase trust, for example clarifying expectations, ensuring strong integrity among facilitators, using collaborative working methods to build team spirit, and fostering a private safe space that allows for candid conversations. On indicators used to track peer learning processes and outcomes, including trust and mutuality, participants mentioned elements such as relevance, knowledge gained, applicability, and additional learning needs.
28. Several participants stressed the importance of working to effect systems change in addition to individual learning. Current public sector change processes often focus on individual capacity building despite recognising the structural nature of the problem at hand. Tackling structural issues, such as corruption, requires working with both individuals and systems, especially pinpointing who mandates change and how individuals can assert influence within the organisation. One issue, raised by several participants, is how to connect various actors and stakeholder groups at national and local levels to build support for change. It was suggested that neutral experts and facilitators can play a role in this, and that a systems focus can help build more resilient relations among peers, including local actors rooted in and with extensive knowledge of the territory. To effect systemic change, suggestions included criteria-based peer selection to make sure at least some peers are in leadership positions or have some level of influence within their organisations, and a ‘hybrid model’ of peer learning where individuals represent their institutions for a set time period and are thus mandated to implement change within their organisation.
29. Participants shared examples of how to track local learning and impact, for example through regular field and study visits, check-in meetings to take stock and document learning, and evaluations. Documentation, which is key to replication, and buy-in from senior management were stressed as important means to localise learning. One participant mentioned the challenge of attributing change and novel practices to the peer learning process. New practices can be documented but it is often difficult to establish (and prove) that the new practice was a direct result of peer learning or exchange.
30. The Co-Chair encouraged participants to join the forthcoming initiative to co-create and pilot test MEL tools and approaches in 2-3 existing peer partnerships. A call for expressions of interest was launched shortly after the Annual Meeting with details on the required project documentation. In addition, participants were encouraged to engage with the EIP by sharing experiences that they

would like to have showcased through EIP communication channels, and by getting in touch to explore new tracks of learning for example by organising joint learning events.

Session IV: Outlook 2022 and Closing

31. The EIP Co-Chairs provided concluding reflections, thanking participants for dynamic and inspiring discussions, and highlighting the diversity of actors present. Special appreciation was expressed to outgoing Co-Chair Neil Cole for his invaluable contributions to the EIP. A call for expressions of interest in the role as new Co-Chair will be issued in January.
32. Jorge Moreira da Silva, OECD-DCD Director, provided closing remarks. The DCD Director stressed the achievements of the EIP in the last year, including the learning series and the work initiated to improve outreach and engagement with critical policy agendas. He highlighted that the Annual Meeting has also been an opportunity to look ahead and to set priorities for 2022, at a time when the EIP is at an important juncture. Building on the attributes of effective partnerships, the EIP will now consider how best to track and measure these attributes, in order to foster better partnerships that deliver real impact and results. The MEL pilots are an important part of that work. This is also an opportune moment to once again bring the EIP, and the insights that it generates, closer to the effective development cooperation agenda, especially as we look towards the GPEDC HLM in 2022. As the monitoring framework of the GPEDC is now being reformed, and the Global Partnership reinvigorated in the lead up to the Third High Level Meeting, members are encouraged to share insights so that the benefits and attributes of peer learning become a central part of effective development discourse. The DCD Director concluded by thanking the EIP Co-Chairs for their leadership and important contributions to the EIP.

ANNEXES

Annex A: Meeting agenda

Annex B: Revised Workplan 2022

Annex C: Outreach and Engagement Strategy

Annex D: Roadmap for MEL pilots