

# THE FUTURE OF PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NEW DEVELOPMENT AGENDA



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## Foreword

This paper was commissioned by the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP) and the National School of Government International (NSGI) following a peer-to-peer learning event hosted jointly by EIP and NSGI at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, in February 2018.

The initial research for the paper was drafted by Islam Jusufi with editorial inputs by Arndt Husar and Kelvin Chai from the UN Development Programme (UNDP); Lisa Williams from OECD; and Alan Whaites and Tania Mechlenborg from NSGI.

**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 is supported by a joint OECD-UNDP Secretariat.

**The National School of Government International (NSGI)** is part of the United Kingdom's support for countries to improve the effectiveness of government and public sector services. The NSGI provides advisory and capacity-building support for governance and centre-of-government reform in developing and fragile states. NSGI is a discrete cross-cutting British civil-service unit integrated within the United Kingdom's Stabilisation Unit. NSGI also acts as a centre of excellence, providing advice, assistance and practical delivery of civil service and wider public sector reform to international partners.

## Introduction

Can development challenges be overcome more effectively when practitioners help fellow practitioners? Ideas around sharing mutual experiences and expertise among peers who face (or have faced) similar problems have gained ground in recent years. The potential of peer-to-peer support has been presented as an alternative to traditional forms of international support. This paper provides an analysis on the role and future of peer-to-peer partnerships and learning in the new development agenda<sup>1</sup>. It takes stock of the current status and trends of peer learning, seeks to identify common principles and reflects on the relationship between peer learning and the new development agenda in the era of universality promoted by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The paper is guided by what has been achieved so far, specifically in the work of the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP), the National School of Government International (NSGI) and other key stakeholders. The paper therefore builds heavily on the summary

<sup>1</sup> The term 'new development agenda' refers to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

reports of peer-to-peer learning events in London, hosted by NSGI and UK partners Global Partners Governance and the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (NSGI, 2018); and Paris, hosted jointly by NSGI and EIP (EIP, 2018a) in February 2018. The discussion below also includes concrete illustrations of countries and institutions that have used peer-to-peer learning partnerships as a tool when implementing institutional reform and public sector management.

Peer-learning approaches offer an opportunity to ‘do development differently’ by strengthening ownership and departing from traditional donor-driven technical assistance models. From the discussions at the London and Paris events, it is clear that a broad consensus is developing on the importance of such good development principles as trust, humility, thinking and working politically, adaptive management and local ownership. However, it is also clear that many questions about peer-to-peer learning remain unresolved, such as the modality’s effectiveness and sustainability, how and when to use this aid modality and how peer-learning models can be formalised and scaled up in the international development sector.

By addressing some of these questions, the paper aims to strengthen and further energise peer-to-peer learning partnerships within the framework of the new development agenda, and to fill the evidence gap on how, when and why peer learning works.



## 1. What Are Peer-to-Peer Partnerships and Learning?

'Peer' is the noun, which according to the Cambridge Dictionary signifies "a person of the same age, the same social position, or having the same abilities as other people in a group." In the context of implementing the new development agenda and the promotion of effective institutions, a peer seeks shared principles for learning, knowledge and experience exchange regarding public sector reform.

What do we mean by peer partnerships in the new development agenda? Drawing on the EIP definition, this paper suggests that peer-to-peer learning means peers exchanging knowledge and experience with one another and taking this learning back to their organisations (Andrews & Manning, 2016). The basic tenets of peer learning are first hand experience and sharing of development challenges.

However, peer partnerships are possible not only at the country level; they can also develop among peers within a single country and among different stakeholders. Put simply, there are as many different ways to bring peers together as there are groups of practitioners willing to engage and support one another on a shared challenge, problem or issue that they face. As a result, attempts to confine the idea of peer learning to narrow definitions risk inhibiting the creativity and flexibility that should be inherent to the approach. This paper therefore tries to capture the diversity and dynamism of the idea, while recognising that it is probably scratching the surface.



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*Our recognition of the importance of public service was the reason why in 2012 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) established the UNDP Global Centre on Public Service Excellence (GCPSE) in Singapore. The aim of the Centre was to promote awareness of the importance of using the highest standards in public service to achieve development. The success of the Centre in doing that -- including through P2P -- has assisted developing countries realise the importance of public service excellence for development.*

**Max Everest-Phillips, UNDP, Singapore.**



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The idea of peer learning is used in many disciplines, such as in business administration, behavioural science and politics, but the focus of this paper is public sector reform. In this context, the principle of partnerships built on shared experience - people working together as peers - sits naturally with the ideas of a recent school of thinking that better development cooperation should be referred to as 'doing development differently' (DDD). DDD has advocated more flexible and adaptive approaches that take into account

the human and contextual realities of development, and move away from traditional formulas. It is people working together as colleagues and collaborators who will help drive the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030. The emergence of a greater emphasis on peer partnerships offers a significant contribution to the SDGs.

More institutions, such as EIP, NSGI and other practitioners and academics are exploring the potential of peer learning and testing it in a diverse range of reform areas. For example, EIP has researched and proposed peer learning as its main approach in building effective institutions via its international multistakeholder platform (Andrews & Manning, 2015). Similarly, NSGI has explored how practitioner-to-practitioner support may provide a useful framework for improving aid effectiveness (Alari & Thomas, 2016).

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More broadly, EIP and NSGI have developed peer-to-peer partnerships in response to current demand. The approach aims to move from pre-defined and externally driven solutions delivered by expert communities of practice (such as technical assistance or service contracts) to more applied methods. This represents a more organic learning process which pairs practitioners who are directly involved in change processes within public organisations and in service delivery (NSGI, 2018).

This work is showing that peer learning brings tangible advantages to the reformers and practitioners involved, among others:

- Increasing the options for support: Peer-to-peer support is an alternative and complementary to traditional forms of support, such as technical assistance. Arguably, the development community continues to rely predominantly on external experts to deliver technical inputs;
- Shared approaches: No one knows the challenges facing development practitioners better than the practitioners themselves. Each practitioner is privy to a wealth of knowledge and experience, but his or her experiences are rarely transferred to others. By passing this expertise on to other practitioners, they build on experience of others;
- Mutual learning: Peer learning fosters the transfer of deep, relevant tacit knowledge and promotes the diffusion of this knowledge back into countries and organisations where it can create impact at scale; and

- Diversity and flexibility: Every country is different and every public sector reform or change initiative is different. Peer learning allows for this diversity as peers themselves take the driving seat and adapt the approach to their particular needs and context (EIP, 2015).

With the different initiatives undertaken in recent years, the peer-to-peer learning approach has started to contribute to a rich and diverse pool of knowledge and experiences. The February 2018 peer-learning conferences in London and Paris demonstrated growing interest, energy and investment by countries and institutions in exploring this approach, given its clear potential to deliver more inclusive, effective and sustainable development cooperation (EIP, 2018a).

## 2. Peer Partnerships in Practice

This section provides an overview of different approaches to peer-to-peer learning partnerships.

### ***Effective Institutions Platform (EIP)***

EIP is a multistakeholder platform in which members include both country government officials and civil society organisations, and its member states include a broad group of low- middle-and high-income contexts. EIP is a platform that has begun promoting peer learning at the global level with on-the-ground initiatives in various sectors in countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia and the Pacific. EIP has made a valuable contribution to the field of peer learning in the public sector by studying experiences and issuing a guide for organisations facilitating it.

EIP's approach demonstrates peer learning and how to develop evidence on ways to help solve problems that supply-side technical development practices have struggled to address (Emilie & Burton, 2016). EIP can be described as a global platform that provides a safe space for practitioners to engage in through policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and peer learning across traditional policy and geographical divides (EIP, 2015). According to EIP, the added-value of peer learning comes from its strength in appreciating the political dimension of change and acknowledging the context in which an experience has demonstrated results. For EIP, the peer alliances can be structured through a four-step process: (a) foundational peer group engagement, (b) achievement of sustained contact between individuals, (c) achievement of learning outcomes, and (d) learning applied at scale (Emilie & Burton, 2016).

To institutionalise the peer-learning approach, EIP developed a **Peer-to-Peer Learning Guide** (EIP, 2015) as a tool for practitioners. The guide promotes the establishment of peer-to-peer learning alliances and offers a step-by-step approach to prepare and



implement peer learning. Learning alliances are collaborative groups of organisations that are willing to actively share experiences with and approaches to public sector reforms and learn from one another's successes, challenges, strengths and weaknesses to achieve better results.

Recognising the growing interest in using the peer-learning process, EIP has seeded initiatives in different sectors in several countries through its small grant scheme called *SPARKS!*, using the Learning Guide (EIP, 2018a). In 2017, the EIP provided short-term funding of \$20,000 each to three peer-learning initiatives to implement activities in the latter half of 2017 and early 2018 through the guide. The three initiatives, including the Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance (case 3), the Evidence in African Parliaments Learning Alliance (case 4) and the Fiscal Decentralisation Learning Alliance in Kenya (case 5) aimed to enhance learning in national, regional and global contexts and across multiple branches and levels of government.



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*The challenges we face as countries and civil servants are increasingly global in nature. When addressing, for instance, corruption, tax reform or energy policy, international cooperation is inevitable. By forming peer-to-peer partnerships around joint challenges, people learn from one another and build good solutions, trust and commitment.*

**Charlotte Petrigornitzka, OECD, France.**



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All grantees were non-governmental organisations (EIP members) who used their funding to convene groups of public institutions in peer-learning activities. The funding provided by EIP supported foundational engagement stages of the peer-learning process model of EIP (EIP, 2018b). EIP's overall approach has been to establish peer learning as a structured mode of capacity development where the Learning Guide provides practical guidance to those wishing to initiate and facilitate a partnership.

### ***National School of Government International (NSGI)***

Another stakeholder in the field of peer partnerships is NSGI, which is a cross-cutting British civil service unit that provides advice and assistance on public sector reform to the United Kingdom's international partners, particularly through peer-to-peer approaches. NSGI also has a mandate to promote lesson learning on peer partnerships and to build the wider evidence base that can help facilitate best-fit approaches (Alari & Thomas, 2016).

NSGI recognises that civil service reform is complex, nonlinear and political. Therefore, NSGI looks for entry points in partners' institutions and works to build relations of trust and mutual respect, helping to identify quality peer relationships. Through this process, it works with partners to identify the root causes of problems and to find relevant and appropriate partners who can work with a counterpart government. To do this, NSGI seeks to broker relations between different constituencies in government, facilitate dialogue among different parties and find opportunities to support the delivery of genuine local priorities. Typically, NSGI supports mutual problem solving, with peer colleagues working together on issues using new tools, skills, processes and work habits in a practical setting, supported by practitioners (Alari & Thomas, 2016).



NSGI's peer-learning approach has three categories:

- Entry, context, ownership and iteration: Establish the relationships and trust; take time to understand and adapt to the context; ensure local ownership; facilitate an iterative problem-solving process;
- People, learning and capability building: Make careful and well-supported use of expert civil servants and consultants; learn by doing with respected peers; build capability by changing patterns of work and behaviour;
- Design: Design of the change and implementation (Alari & Thomas, 2016).

In 2016, NSGI developed a study on increasing the impact of aid interventions to support government reforms that explored how NSGI's emerging approach and practitioner-to-practitioner support may provide a useful framework for improving the effectiveness of the design, delivery and monitoring of aid interventions. For the framework, it has funded initiatives on peer learning in Kyrgyzstan (case 1) and Zambia (case 2) (NSGI, 2018).

The NSGI approach involves looking at peer-learning partnerships as an open-ended model focused on individuals rather than on institutions, and where the peer partnerships are designed without pre-defined ideas and solutions. This model is increasingly being used by other public sector bodies in the UK to develop international partnerships with counterparts in developing countries in areas as diverse as tax, statistics and extractives regulation. NSGI have started playing a key role in facilitating lesson learning across the UK's public sector to expand and deepen these partnerships.

### ***Other peer-learning approaches***

Other development actors have relied on different approaches to build on peer-to-peer learning and partnerships. One has been 'peer review.' Several inter-governmental organisations and international programmes have used this technique. Within UN bodies and specialised agencies, states use peer review to monitor and assess national policies in various sectors. The IMF Country Surveillance Mechanism shares aspects with peer review. Peer review has also been developed within WTO under the Trade Policy Review Mechanism. Within the European Union framework, peer review is used in several areas. The EU, for example, has conducted peer reviews in different sectors in order to foster open discussion and mutual learning.

The peer review approach used by the EU consisted of a peer review meeting hosted by a country that presents a good practice and is attended by experts from the EU Commission, peer countries and relevant stakeholders that provide feedback. The OECD has also used this method extensively, and peer review has, over the years, characterised the work of the OECD in most of its policy areas (Pagani, 2002). Nevertheless, the recent approaches promoted by EIP and NSGI remain key elements on peer-to-peer partnerships and learning in public sector reforms around the world.

## **3. Building Partnerships for Impact**

What role has peer-to-peer partnerships played in public sector reforms? What has been the impact on the ground, and what are key elements of success of peer partnerships and how do you measure them? In this section, we address these questions.

So far, EIP and NSGI have been key players in supporting and documenting peer learning in public sector reforms. Given that this modality is still young, peer-to-peer partnerships

are still part of a larger learning process about approaches, methods and tools in reform agendas. Identifying not only what works but also those aspects that work less well in facilitating peer-to-peer processes are important for ensuring the success and sustainability of this practice.

Although information on what works in peer partnerships is nascent and embryonic (NSGI, 2018), evidence suggests that peer learning, in principle, is more effective than traditional adult-learning approaches. Between 2016-2018, a series of initiatives were launched that have become laboratories for peer-to-peer partnerships and learning. Box 1 provides an overview of these initiatives, the countries involved and the implementing agencies. Detailed information on each initiative is provided in Annex 1.

*Box 1: Brief overview on the peer-learning initiatives covered in this paper.*

|   | Cases  | Countries involved                                 | Implementing or supporting agency              |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Better Government Kyrgyzstan   | Kyrgyzstan and United Kingdom                      | NSGI/DFID                                      |
| 2 | Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ): Human Resource Management (HRM) Reform | Zambia and United Kingdom                          | NSGI/DFID                                      |
| 3 | Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance  | EU, UK, Nepal, Morocco, Uganda, Viet Nam and India | Transparency International / EIP SPARKS!       |
| 4 | Evidence in African Parliaments Learning Alliance                                  | Ghana, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Malawi          | INASP / EIP SPARKS!                            |
| 5 | Fiscal Decentralisation Learning Alliance in Kenya                                 | Kenya  | CEG / EIP                                      |
| 6 | ELLA - Evidence and Lessons from Latin America                                     | Global (Latin America, Africa)                     | Practical Action Latin America/UK Aid          |
| 7 | Astana Hub   | Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan                    | Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana / UNDP |
| 8 | Open Government Partnership  | Global   | Open Government Partnership                    |

The peer-learning events in London and Paris in February 2018 contributed to documenting the evidence on the impact of peer-to-peer learning. Both conferences helped to build a broad consensus among stakeholders on the important role peer learning can play in achieving public sector reforms, as well as contributing to the achievement of the SDGs.

As the cases included in this report show, peer partnerships and learning alliances have been formed in many ways around the world. There have been diversity and strength in the content, messages and methods employed by individuals in the public sector/ government agencies, civil society and parliamentary organisations in peer-learning activities. Particularly, the EIP and NSGI initiatives have helped to conceptualise peer learning, which as a result has reached a particular juncture today.

EIP has sought to bring countries together in their demand for effective institutions since 2012. Its adoption of peer learning as a method of work and the production of a Learning Guide in 2013 systematised for the first time a comprehensive conceptual and operational framework for promoting peer learning and formulating guiding principles and recommendations for strengthening and supporting this modality of cooperation. Peer learning has now become an important dimension of international development cooperation as it facilitates eye-level exchanges and discovering common approaches to challenges.



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*It's the new ways of thinking and working that come from learning from those who have muddled through and found solutions to common problems. As civil servants, we can share what has worked and what hasn't worked openly and honestly, to help partners navigate their way through their own problems.*

**Nicola Smith, National School of Government International, UK.**



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The EIP *SPARKS!* grant has enabled testing the guide in areas such as public procurement, climate finance, fiscal decentralisation and local revenue mobilisation and the use of evidence in parliamentary deliberation. There is now a growing body of evidence that peer learning can successfully address the multidimensional nature of public sector reforms, making peer learning a vital approach in carrying out such changes.

Peers from developed to middle- and low-income countries have participated in peer-learning initiatives under EIP, NSGI and other mechanisms on issues related to public sector reform. In particular, developing-country institutions have benefited from the transfer of knowledge that comes from working with counterparts who have experience

addressing similar problems (NSGI, 2018). These peer partnerships have provided opportunities for organisations embarking on reforms to learn from peers who are also going through or have experienced similar reforms (Andrews & Manning, 2016: 5). Initiatives and exercises have also included opportunities for discussion with a range of partners and stakeholders, including those engaged as technical experts, user/beneficiary, political decision-makers and funding agencies.

These discussions suggest that peer-learning initiatives and exchanges on public sector reform are growing. This growth is not, however, uniform in approaches and techniques, but a range of tools have been used for exchange and learning, including: workshops and conferences, practical training, video conferencing, roundtable discussions, research, study tours and exchange events, mutual consultancies, exchange of experts and officials, internships, short- and medium-terms missions and more. The EIP Peer Learning Guide proposes a phased approach without prescribing tools, noting that process design needs to take into account the specific needs of the peers and their context.

In this regard, these types of peer learning have been implemented:

- Type I peer learning: This approach has largely used the transfer of knowledge and resources from countries to other countries. Examples include supporting the Government of Kyrgyzstan (case 1) and supporting the Cabinet Office in Zambia (case 2).
- Type II peer learning: This approach refers to exchanges based on common challenges in development. Examples include the Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance (case 3), the Evidence in African Parliaments Learning Alliance (case 4), the Evidence and Lessons from Latin America, or ELLA network (case 6), the Astana Hub – Peer Learning Alliance on Public Service Delivery (case 7) and the Open Government Partnership (case 8).

The growth of peer approaches seems to owe a great deal to the sense that they offer better quality relationships among actors by fostering a collaborative style of working. However, there are indications that within these relationships there is a natural desire to maintain the respect of peers, demonstrated particularly through tools such as peer reviews. This desire might be seen as ‘peer pressure,’ and it may not be intentional but an indirect persuasion to deliver results. Hence, the effectiveness of peer learning can rely on the influence and persuasion exercised by the peers during the learning process. The practitioners interviewed for this paper argued that this pressure propelled participants forward and helped to ensure that peer pressure stimulates practitioners to change, achieve goals and meet standards.

Similarly, peer relationships can help practitioners to work through what is called ‘adjustment pressure.’ Peer-learning processes can help the participants realise the

differences or 'misfit' between policies on the ground. Where there is 'misfit' between good practices in other countries and domestic circumstances, 'adjustment pressure' builds in the peer country. 'Adjustment pressure' has varied from one peer country to another. Variations in adjustment pressure can be explained by different situations at domestic levels, such as the readiness of actors to implement public sector changes. Thus, peer learning has become an innovative approach to understanding the challenges faced by public sector change agents, allowing them to tap the experience of other practitioners. Other aspects, such as 'joint problem solving' and 'continuous feedback,' have also helped provide effective impact of peer-learning partnerships (NSGI, 2018).

Provision of facilitators at international and country levels to engage with and support peer-learning partnerships is another key aspect of the approach. It is difficult to identify a successful peer-learning case that did not require facilitation either by an institution, an individual in the form of a government expert, an international organisation or an NGO. The facilitator plays a fundamental part in the success of the peer partnerships. Tasks of the facilitator range from design, management and coordination to relationship-building, convening and networking (EIP, 2018b).

Hence, peer-learning initiatives need strong facilitation to support meaningful learning among peers. Quality peer learning does not happen by itself but requires thoughtful design. For example, experiences from EIP's three *SPARKS!* grants have confirmed the importance both of a facilitator and a management/administrative vehicle to support the peer-learning process (EIP, 2018a and EIP, 2018b).

**Practical steps to build partnerships:** The summary above points to the diversity of approaches that collectively make up the peer-learning approach, as a result of the creative evolution of peer-to-peer practices. During the 2018 Paris learning event, speakers suggested that not one rigid model exists but a wide range of peer partnerships exists, which have an important point in common: they are built on relational attributes. The case studies in Annex 1 support this view, and some important principles below offer ideas for a relational approach.

However, we can also suggest that the types of peer learning outlined above point to practical steps in building productive relationships that can be incorporated into programmes as they develop. These steps complement the higher-level principles outlined in section 4 below. The steps are:

- Practice **mutual responsibility**
- Ensure that **relationships are equitable**
- Encourage **open discussions**
- Don't teach but encourage **active collaboration**
- Make sure that all **planning is shared**

It is the peer partnerships' **mutual responsibility**, through joint engagement and a joint agenda, that makes peer learning work. The longer-term effects of mutual responsibility have led to situations where peer partners would not refer to cooperation in terms of 'donor' and 'recipient' or 'beneficiary,' but as a peer partner, or '**equitable relationships.**'

The peer-learning approach represents an opportunity to overcome 'donor' and 'recipient' labels and to focus on peer experience. At this stage, the peer partnership becomes a process, institution or community that establishes the conditions for a new type of cooperation. When the longer-term mutual responsibility of the peers emerges, then the peers turn from parties into partners. In effect, the peers become mutual supporters, partners in the real sense of the word. That allows the partners to work jointly on public sector reform, as evidenced in the African Parliaments Learning Alliance (case 4).





Peer partnerships provide a safe space that enable **'open discussions'** about public sector reforms and contribute to forming a structure that shapes the behaviour of the peers, as seen in the Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance (case 3) or the Open Government Partnership (case 8). The peer partnerships have also been characterised as being **'actively collaborative,'** where participants discover matching peers through engagements with each other, as seen in the fiscal Decentralisation Learning Alliance in Kenya (case 5). A further principle has been **'inclusive planning,'** where peers feel comfortable sharing ideas and thinking through future approaches, as seen in the NSGI-supported projects in Zambia and Kyrgyzstan (cases 1 and 2).



*In my field – government procurement reform – peer-to-peer learning can be utilised as a sort of 'common issue identification,' which occurs in most of developing countries, such as: political disturbance, corruption, lack of regulation and span of control. Based on those common problems, NSGI and EIP (or other institutions) could initiate a series of conferences or country visits where South-South countries could share their experiences on how to tackle those issues.*

**Agus Prabowo, National Public Procurement Agency, Indonesia.**



Within peer-partnership arrangements, peer organisations become aware that these relationships require trust to achieve better outcomes. Thus, the EIP Peer Learning Guide proposes that the true value of peer learning should be seen in the results from all five stages. This makes it an approach that could transform development cooperation from a hierarchical relationship into more equitable partnerships. Hence, this approach has the potential to give space to every country to contribute to aid effectiveness in contrast to traditional aid delivery, which has been donor-centric and often lacked inclusivity.

All five features of peer partnerships – as evidenced in the eight cases – suggest that we are witnessing the beginning of a stimulating debate over the value of peer partnerships in the new development agenda.

**Challenges to peer working.** Nevertheless, the challenges of peer learning should not be underestimated. Most frequently encountered challenges include (NSGI, 2018):

- identifying the right peers to engage with;
- ensuring peers are rightly matched;
- managing cultural/organisational differences among peers;
- building trust among peers; and
- identifying the right activities for peer learning.

Peer learning has faced obstacles in numerous situations, including when no common agenda is identified, when the objectives and expected results have not been set in advance or when there has been no system to measure, monitor and evaluate results.



A significant obstacle to the effectiveness of peer learning has been situations where the process has not considered the context in which each peer operates. It is important to consider each context separately. In particular for Type 1 Peer Learning (see above), such considerations should include an ex-ante political economy analysis to help structure the engagements. In Type 2 Peer Learning settings (see above), the challenge-based matching of peers will allow for a contextualisation of the issues through dialogue between peers.

Another obstacle has been situations when individual participants in peer-learning processes have not been empowered to engage effectively in the partnership. It is therefore important to involve local leadership in the process and respectfully push for useful engagement.

Another important lesson from case analysis is the need for balancing supply and demand. While the number of peer-learning initiatives is increasing, the demand for partnerships should not be taken for granted. Still, the cases covered in this paper offer relevant lessons on balancing supply and demand. While there has been high demand for participation in the African Parliaments Learning Alliance, the demand for participation in the Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance was initially not evident.

While the cases are relatively recent and their mid- to long-term impact has yet to be measured, the role that peer partnerships can play in reform/change processes represents an important step in emerging peer-to-peer partnerships as an aid modality,

thereby complementing or supplementing current modes. It is clear from the cases that peer learning is valued particularly by developing countries, and that they have provided opportunities for sharing experiential and tacit learning that are difficult to gain from other capacity-building initiatives (EIP, 2018b).

In order to avoid losing momentum, the cases suggest a need for continued support to existing or new initiatives. This provides a chance to test other aspects of peer learning, including phases of the EIP's Learning Guide, since so far only initial phases of the guide have been tested.

## 4. The Principles of Peer-to-Peer Partnerships

At the conferences held in February 2018 hosted by NSGI and EIP, stakeholders discussed the key principles that guide effective peer-to-peer partnership and learning. In addition to the five steps above, it became clear that successful peer relationships are based on principles rather than rigid systems or ideas.

The participants identified ways of working together as a precondition for effective peer learning. As a result, a set of principles emerged that could help guide the design and evaluate the performance of peer partnerships. While these principles have been identified from experience (drawn from both the learning events and case studies), they are not exclusive. Peer working continues to evolve; as a result, these should be seen as a starting point and not a definitive conclusion. Even so, the experience of those who came together in Paris and London suggests the following principles:

### ***Horizontal and non-conditional partnerships***

Careful attention should be paid to match appropriately the peers at individual, institutional or country level. In this regard, partners can be in different places developmentally but should always be open to working equally, respecting each other as colleagues and peers. Horizontal and non-conditional partnerships help to develop an honest, trusting environment for tacit learning and exchange (EIP, 2017). The imposition of off-the-shelf models is ineffective (NSGI, 2018). All countries, developed as well as developing, are encouraged to participate in the peer-learning initiatives (Reddy & Heuty, 2015).

The example of the African Parliaments Learning Alliance (case 4), which brings together countries to share their experiences and highlight commendable and innovative practices, is a promising development approach. Nevertheless, as with most current learning practices, there is a need to avoid the danger of hierarchical ('teacher-student') or dependency relationships ('provider-receiver') among actors. Therefore, it is important to establish eye-level platforms in order to prevent such relationships among peers.

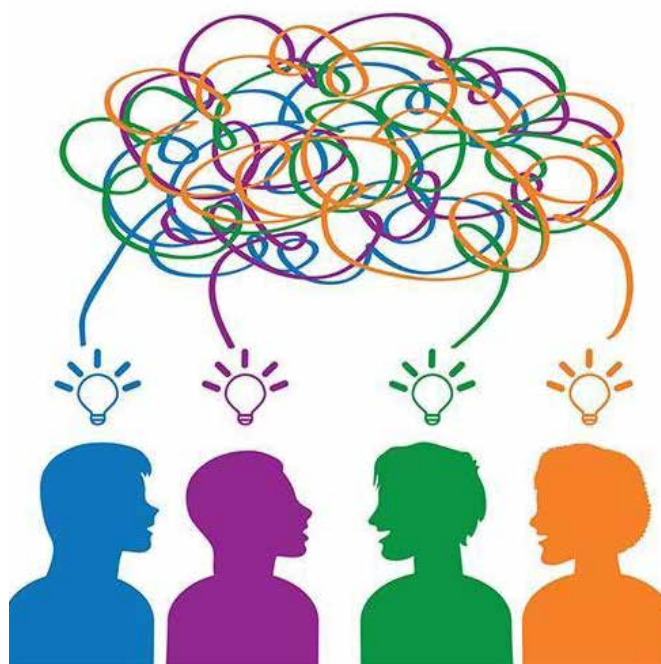
### ***Allow sufficient time***

Peers institutions/countries should expect to engage over a medium- to long-term period as peer-learning partnerships may require several years to build trust and reach maturity. It typically requires several years of sustained engagement and commitment to build genuine and meaningful partnerships (EIP, 2017). The use of short-term inputs in an isolated and ad-hoc manner detracts from the partnership nature of the intervention and should be avoided (NSGI, 2018). In order to move beyond one-off peer learning events or study visits towards a thorough, long-term and carefully facilitated process as envisaged in the EIP's Learning Guide, multiyear initiatives are needed (EIP, 2018b). At the individual level, peer-learning activities may last for shorter periods, but should entail repeat engagements.

### ***Focus on mutual results***

Peer partnerships can be effective when goals are clear in advance and peer learning is used to achieve these goals (Andrews & Manning, 2016). Thus, peer institutions/countries should be clear from the start about the results they expect from the partnership and how they expect these to impact home organisations (EIP, 2017). The objectives should be explicit and jointly owned. The very meaning of partnership entails a collaborative endeavour, so that the terms of reference for an intervention have been discussed and agreed with local counterparts (NSGI, 2018). Hence, effective peer-learning initiatives are obvious about the broad contours of what the peers are expected to learn from one another (Andrews & Manning, 2016). Selecting the right topic for the initiative is fundamental.

For example, both the Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance (case 3) and the Fiscal Decentralisation Learning Alliance in Kenya (case 5) focus on the application of a set of standards. This is arguably more of a top-down approach in which participants are involved in a reform process that has already been defined and approved. However, the peer-learning alliances allowed the participants to hear from authorities about the required reform, then explored the right way to implement it in their contexts and finally supported one another putting it into practice.



In the case of the Evidence in African Parliaments Learning Alliance (case 4), the topic was more open-ended. There is no set reform or international standard of best practice for research in parliaments; part of the purpose of the learning exchange was for participants to be exposed to different models used by their peers and enable them to bring home ideas. This provided more flexibility for collaborative problem definition among African parliaments, but discouraged a clear common action (EIP, 2018b).

Neither of these two initiatives made it completely clear whether participants were expected to gain knowledge and practical skills or change attitudes and behaviours and develop corresponding learning objectives. This resulted in the development of a loose two-tiered learning model in which peer learners chose their own subtopics to work on in addition to the overarching learning topics. Shared areas of group learning were complemented by specific topics identified by each individual learner or institution (EIP, 2018b).

### ***Understand the political context of the partner***

Peer partnerships can facilitate experience-sharing among peers who are engaged in complex and highly politicised institutional reform processes. This approach might entail working with officials to manage political resistance to reform, supporting ‘softer’ skills to lead and inspire teams or brokering and convening reform coalitions (NSGI, 2018). Practitioners often have experience in overcoming an inflexible organisational culture or have discovered ways to navigate change by ‘working with the grain.’ This process is situational and highly context-dependent, rendering best practice approaches insufficient. Therefore, peer partnerships enable learning that goes well beyond technical knowledge.



*Peer-to-peer learning suggests that partners play a (more) equal role in identifying, implementing and measuring learning outcomes. This is the next step from the participatory approaches used in more traditional training and mentoring schemes. It is important that while the responsibilities are shared more equally among peer-learning partners, the accountability for making learning work is not washed out.*



**Tendik Tynystanov, Thomson Reuters Foundation, UK.**



As an approach, peer learning arises from the recognition that political barriers to reform processes often hamper initiatives. Public sector management is not separate from politics; political influences and interest-group preferences pervade every system, every relationship and every transaction. Institutional reform initiatives have to address political,

cultural and behavioural challenges. This may require that a partnership engages with the political process while maintaining its focus on supporting the performance of change agents within.

The challenge of thinking and working politically requires the facilitators to address the implicit and the unseen, the pressures that maintain the status quo or that support or distort formal institutions (Andrews & Manning, 2016). It is important when designing the peer initiatives to draw on the insights and knowledge of individuals with extensive experience in managing changes from the inside of institutions, such as senior ministers, civil servants, political or parliamentary officials (NSGI, 2018). Policy and political dialogue can generate a better understanding of national specificities and facilitate appropriate and mutually compatible choices of policies (Reddy & Heuty, 2015).

### ***Starting small***

It is best to start on a small scale. This logic contrasts with how much of international development assistance has been implemented – and to a large extent is still implemented – on big projects. By engaging primarily with individuals, peer partnerships work with the building blocks of institutional effectiveness, such as job descriptions for staff, internal communication systems, clear lines of accountability and strategic planning. Change tends to happen often as the aggregated effect of many small-scale changes, which ripple through the organisation (NSGI, 2018). Starting small and delivering quickly is an essential component in this context (EIP, 2018a). Another advantage of starting small is that one does not get bogged down in lengthy procurement processes, which is an issue that often holds back large-scale initiatives.

### ***Focus on the individual***

It is important to focus on individuals in relevant institutions and their professional relationships. Peer learning occurs and should occur at individual levels, where change happens. Peer learning can become a tool that enables, encourages and helps individuals to manage a process of change. This is where peer engagements add value by working with individuals to find that space for strategic reflection while improving their ability to cope with immediate priorities (NSGI, 2018).



When individual peers are matched appropriately, peer learning is optimised (Andrews & Manning, 2016). Nevertheless, identifying and planning to match peers is a complex task (EIP, 2018b). Peer learning should focus on the people inside the institutions. Thus, there is a need to engage with the incentives and interests of the people for whom such reforms are meant to help. A change has to emanate from the individuals within an

institution. The individual peers are to be selected and matched using a set of selection criteria (EIP, 2017). Many different methods of matching peer learners can be used:

- matching individuals from different institutions that are at the same stage of the reform cycle;
- matching institutions that have different experiences; or
- a problem-focused approach in which the reform hindrance is the central basis for the matching, and the teams assembled around it would bring together whichever agencies were involved in tackling a problem in a particular country.

There is not a set template; that also means that peer learning is often a complex and nonlinear complex process. In order to detect and respond to changes in multiple political contexts, to remain relevant and locally led and to meet learning needs across diverse groups of people, peer-learning initiatives need to be both flexible and adaptable. Nevertheless, this can be a challenge in the international development sector, where donor-funded programmes are often subject to rigid criteria and plans (EIP, 2018a).



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*Peer-to-peer partnerships reflect a preferential view for bottom-up processes, particularly those that are community based. They give equal importance to different forms of knowledge – from expert to experiential – which inform and generate both processes and results that are democratic and bottom-up. Peer-to-peer partnerships also integrate experiential knowledge into their systems, not solely relying on <traditional> expert knowledge.*

**Amy Padilla, Ibon International, Philippines.**



### ***Empowerment and gender mainstreaming***

The participating organisations should explicitly authorise and empower members to engage in peer learning throughout the life cycle of the learning alliance (EIP, 2017). It is important that the learning gains of individual peers are communicated to those authorising the engagement to ensure continued support for the process. This is possible when the home organisations of each peer allows them to communicate the peer's learning back into the organisations, and structure a strategy to ensure this is done regularly (Andrews & Manning, 2016).

The question of how to ensure that individuals have the necessary authority and empowerment is a challenge when establishing peer partnerships. While the initiatives supported by the EIP *SPARKS!* grant (cases 3, 4 and 5) showed that people and individuals with those tools had been chosen, it also showed a need to further consider gender mainstreaming in peer partnerships (EIP, 2018b).

### ***Professional and personal humility***

Peers participating in the process should never presume that they have the answers. True humility is to recognise others' value and to serve others; to have a realistic appreciation of one's strengths and weaknesses. Peer learning is an iterative process with counterparts discussing, trying, failing and refining. It means taking more responsibility for the quality of support but ultimately exercising less control over how it is implemented (NSGI, 2018).

### ***Importance of trust***

Since peer learning is, by its nature, a cooperative, non-adversarial process, mutual trust is key. Trust is needed to undergird the relationship with counterparts, so that peer partnerships can be relevant to their goals (NSGI, 2018). Partners should take the time to build genuine trust among themselves with a view to sharing problems and jointly find solutions. Establishing trust is a hugely challenging task and often takes a long time (Andrews & Manning, 2016).



### ***Visibility of the learning***

Progress made by the peers (from expertise shared through insights to action) should be made visible within the sending organisation/institution. This is important because peer learning can best be facilitated when peers reflect regularly on what they are learning and share their insights with others. This process turns tacit knowledge into sharable insights. If feasible, changes effected by peers should be documented and disseminated. Press events and dissemination seminars should also be held to publicise the results of peer learning (Reddy & Heuty, 2015). Visibility contributes to its sustainability.

Yet, there are practitioner insights and experiences that do not lend themselves to sharing or that are shared in confidence. These may be important ingredients to the experiences shared among peers but should not be given visibility. They are the 'secret sauce' of a peer partnership, which makes this type of learning superior to traditional capacity-development approaches. As such, they will be missing from process/results documentation, but can be read between the lines in case studies and change narratives.





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*USAID supports the House Democracy Partnership, which is a peer-to-peer exchange that brings together members of the U.S. Congress and parliamentarians from around the world to discuss and learn from each other on how to be more effective elected representatives. The success of these types of peer-learning programmes is based on mutual respect and trust among participants who come from their shared experiences in a highly specialized and demanding profession.*

**Keith Schulz, USAID, USA.**



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### **Focus on impact and real change**

Measurement or monitoring and evaluation of the peer partnerships is important. Peer learning can be better tailored if it is measured (NSGI, 2018). Throughout the learning process, feedback to and communication among partners need to happen continuously. A mechanism to take stock of peer learning and application should acknowledge the golden rule of 'what gets measured gets done' (EIP, 2017). Monitoring and evaluation activities should not be seen as separate from programme design or implementation, but as an integral component (NSGI, 2018). Information systems need to be boosted in order to generate quantitative and qualitative data for measuring. In recent years, flexible and adaptive measurement approaches have gained prominence.

Noting the need to provide evidence for the claim that peer learning is more effective than other modes of capacity development, EIP has proposed a monitoring framework that takes into account three areas:

- A process cycle showing the link between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes;
  - A facilitation support system adapted to individual context; and
  - An appropriate measurement system for the process, suited to the capacity of the peers themselves, to assess progress and outcomes (EIP, 2017).
- NSGI emphasises experimentation and learning, with feedback loops between delivery and planning to ensure interventions respond to changes in the political context (NSGI, 2018). The NSGI approach includes:
- Understanding and recording what is happening in the wider political context;
  - Reflecting on interventions that have worked or not; and
  - Discussing changes in the needs and demands of counterparts (NSGI, 2018).

Other stakeholders have argued for different monitoring and evaluation methodologies for peer learning, such as Nested Log Frames; Outcome Harvesting; Measures that Matter; Search Framework; Strategy Testing; Problem or Project Diaries; and Coalition Analysis and Action Maps (NSGI, 2018).

In sum, the above principles, around which the stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of peer-learning partnerships, have some consensus. These principles can be defined more thoroughly and adapted to a particular context, discussed and agreed politically and monitored periodically by peers. With each principle in place, peer learning can stimulate the establishment of effective institutions. Peer partnerships based on shared principles can help promote collaborative cooperation and implementation of shared goals.

## 5. Peer-to-Peer Partnerships and the Agenda 2030

Effective public sector institutions are vital to delivering long-term inclusive growth. The UN's Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which has committed the world to a new development agenda, calls for – among other things – the establishment of 'effective institutions' as Goal 16, and calls upon countries to consider peer-learning initiatives, such as voluntary reviews, sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets (United Nations, 2015). Thus, Goal 16 entails the development of effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. Goal 16 and its targets offer a good way to also conceptualise the aim of peer-to-peer partnerships (EIP, 2018c).

Countries aspiring to implement Agenda 2030 and the SDGs are increasingly recognising the importance of public sector and institutional reforms. Simultaneously, there is an increasing demand to change the delivery of development assistance using top-down or pre-defined approaches to more bottom-up and applied approaches, considering each context separately. By involving partners who face public sector reform challenges and by fostering capacity development taking local circumstances into account, peer learning has a promising value in contributing to the success of national frameworks for achieving the SDGs.



Moreover, as a partnership for sustainable development, peer partnerships can provide spaces capable of complementing traditional development to help take Agenda 2030 forward. However, a key challenge is to articulate a strategic framework that promotes the role of peer learning as an instrument that, based on its distinctive characteristics and principles, contributes to the achievement of the SDGs in the context of Agenda 2030. Also, there are no sufficient tools to yet measure and evaluate how exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical knowledge contribute to achieving Goal 16. Nevertheless, the cases included in this paper show that peer learning can play an important role in helping to achieve the SDGs.



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*Institutional reforms can lead to greater efficiency, but they also have distributional effects, with some groups benefiting more than others. Peer-to-peer learning about institutional reform must take into account the political economy of reform, and help to build the coalitions for change that are required for effective and sustainable reforms.*



**Alan Hudson, Global Integrity, USA.**

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Peer partnerships have included numerous activities to better cement reforms in various fields of institutional and public sector reforms. Peer learning has improved the integration of internationally agreed goals, including the SDGs, consistent with context-specific demands and levels of capacity. Peer partnerships have also helped mobilise new means of implementation and helped build communities of equals. Additionally, peer-learning initiatives have fostered individual and collective learning as to how institutional and public sector reform may be furthered, and have enabled periodic assessments of countries' capacity and need for resources in order to implement the SDGs.

Overall, the peer-to-peer learning approach offers huge potential for addressing challenging political and governance issues and provides an alternative model more appropriate for the countries that need public sector reforms regardless of their level of development.

Peer partnerships are a modality in the making and therefore the evidence case on results needs to be continuously built and strengthened. Nevertheless, the experience from real cases suggests that this evolving way of working has much to offer in achieving the SDGs. Peer learning has helped build and strengthen capacities within developing countries, and provided opportunities to countries to move beyond simply sharing to also advocate change. It has enabled incorporation of cross-country and cross-sectoral perspectives

into national policy debates. Hence, it has provided a space for professionals and policymakers to work and deliver together, within joint responsibilities.

It is evident from the cases that the aid-delivery landscape is undergoing significant change, affecting not only the scope of development cooperation but also the diversity of actors, and that part of this change is a continuing need to innovate and find new ways of working (Whaites et al 2015 and Whaites 2018). Even developing countries with very limited capacities and almost no voice at the international level have engaged in peer-learning processes. There has been growing demand from developing countries to undertake practical learning and to learn by doing. The peer-learning approach has revealed the possibilities for countries, especially developing countries, to generate their own responses and use their national capacities.

Peer learning also offers solutions to coordination problems in development cooperation. It has contributed to the global aid effectiveness agenda by boosting horizontal peer partnerships, making technical cooperation more useful, promoting expertise and contributing to capacities (EIP, 2017). Particularly, the horizontal partnerships have been important for mutual learning among diverse development actors.

Several mechanisms for promoting peer learning are available, offering an opportunity to build an architecture connecting national, regional and global platforms where innovation, lessons, experiences and forms of coordination can be captured and systematised. Regional networks are essential for success in generating peer perspectives. Despite resource shortages, the regional platforms (e.g. ASEAN, APEC and others) have mobilised peers and partners almost immediately, acted as brokers for regional perspectives and established an enabling environment for horizontal cooperation, a context in which developing countries feel more comfortable.



Regional processes have so far not been included extensively in the peer partnerships but constitute an important dimension for boosting aid and development effectiveness. These processes can be facilitated by regional organisations, regional development banks or bilateral donors working with several countries in certain regions or subregions. There is increasing recognition that regional cooperation can help address shared development challenges and facilitate joint management of regional public goods, as seen in the EIP SPARKS! pilots (cases 3, 4 and 5).

The cases studied in this paper include a rich menu of practices and processes of peer-to-peer partnerships and learning. It is clear that processes where both or several parties engage, manage and participate actively can help strengthen mutual competencies and improve national systems as well as establish mutual accountability with joint evaluations and results. Consequently, by taking a practice-oriented and evidence-based approach, peer partnerships can significantly help enrich the aid effectiveness agenda.

Several lessons can be drawn from the role of peer learning as a bridge to existing development cooperation modalities amid aid effectiveness. The cases show that peer learning is very much related to the concept of horizontal cooperation, in which all partners are learning. They also demonstrate that one of the greatest benefits of peer learning is to increase the ownership of the recipient country. Another benefit is the low transaction costs of setting up peer-learning initiatives and bringing together a larger and more diverse range of actors with different institutional settings and interests.

Nevertheless, a major challenge for the effectiveness and sustainability of the peer-learning approach will be how to turn it into a regular widespread practice that can help guide countries in their development agenda, particularly when undertaking public sector management and institutional reforms initiatives. For the concept to be accepted and transformed into a general practice, more time is required and increased efforts are needed. Hence, the active advocacy of the approach by EIP, NSGI and relevant stakeholders is essential.



*The Agenda 2030 is a game-changer. Many different experiences and perspectives are needed for successful reform and implementation of the SDGs. The agenda is global and all nations are facing similar development challenges. We all need to learn how to build truly inclusive governance structures and deliver development, rights and services to citizens. Peer-to-peer public service interaction is helpful for relevant and mutual learning, accountability and capacity-building for the implementation of the SDGs by fostering better policies and capabilities through more effective, inclusive and accountable institutions at all levels.*



**Alan Hudson, Global Integrity, USA.**



While it might take time, the potential for peer learning to become a general practice is realistic. As this paper has shown, the peer-learning modality should have its own common principles, but it can also be a modality open for continuous innovation, creativity and development. Hence, peer learning is a useful complement to existing development cooperation and capacity development modalities (EIP, 2018a).

Evidence suggests that the evidence gathering task is not finished. There will be a continuing need to map the creativity and diversity of the peer-to-peer space, identifying good practices and monitoring progress against peer-learning principles. Such a platform could bring together partner countries, especially middle-income countries, donors, developing countries, civil society, academia and regional and multilateral agencies, under a common objective of mapping, documenting, analysing and discussing evidence on the synergies between the principles of aid effectiveness and the practices and principles of peer-to-peer partnerships and learning.

## 6. Conclusions

The peer-learning approach has become an effective means to build capacity within public sectors, requiring relatively low budgets, compared with traditional donor-driven capacity-building initiatives that would employ numerous costly experts. The body of knowledge generated by peer-to-peer initiatives has become a powerful resource for the development of evidence-based policy within public sector reform. Hence, it offers an innovative approach to helping achieve Goal 16 in Agenda 2030. Being engaged in peer-to-peer partnerships and learning is regarded as an ethical approach to collaborative learning and evaluation of both development partners and developing countries.

The lessons from the cases in this paper show that peer learning is emerging as an important and unique aid modality that responds directly to countries' demands to learn from one another. However, it needs to be underpinned and supported by an effective facilitation mechanism or platform with sufficient political will, as well as necessary financial and human capital resources. Such a peer-learning platform could engage in coordination with other global and regional development actors and help broker demand and supply of peer-to-peer learning partnerships.

# ANNEX 1: OVERVIEW OF ILLUSTRATIVE CASES

Past and current illustrative cases of peer-to-peer partnerships and learning:

1. Better Government Kyrgyzstan
2. Government of the Republic of Zambia Human Resource Management Reform
3. Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance
4. Evidence in African Parliaments Learning Alliance
5. Fiscal Decentralisation Learning Alliance in Kenya
6. ELLA – Evidence and Lessons from Latin America
7. Astana Hub – Peer Learning Alliance on Public Service Delivery
8. Open Government Partnership

## 1. Better Government Kyrgyzstan

### Better Government Kyrgyzstan



Implemented by NSGI

Location: Kyrgyzstan

Funded by DFID

Civil service reform is part of the Better Government Kyrgyzstan programme funded by DFID and implemented by NSGI. The Kyrgyz prime minister is committed to open and transparent government. Being open to reform and to working with partners to achieve that reform is part of that openness. As part of the programme, the government of Kyrgyzstan is keen for its civil servants to look at problems in new ways and to learn problem analysis and problem-solving tools.

The peer-learning content focuses on skills development, organisational structures and working practices. Kyrgyz civil servants are working with United Kingdom civil servants and ex-civil servants who have held similar positions. The British civil servants share experiences for counterparts to consider, adapt and apply within the Kyrgyz context. This work has focused on dialogue around different organisational approaches to developing skills and capacity. NSGI has a permanent presence in the government apparatus, with two advisers and an interpreter. The programme is to run for another three years.

It initially focused on sharing approaches to problem analysis and problem solving. One activity was to work with the skills of a selected cohort of civil servants within the government. The process has been slightly challenging as a commitment to substantial amount of time was needed, and the Kyrgyz participants were all valuable staff who had to do the peer learning alongside their normal jobs.

The programme is generally regarded as successful in encouraging civil servants to think in new ways. This made the cohort even stronger, although it had limitations. Many found that they could not easily apply their new skills to their current roles as they were still working within the same structures as before. Hence, the programme has moved to a different approach in its second phase, focusing on helping the wider government apparatus think through its organisational culture and work practices. There will be three work streams: establishing a prime minister's monitoring unit, piloting competency-based human-resource practices and improving cross-government coordination.

The challenge is how to bring all these elements together, using the skills and training of the cohort. Civil service reform is a political endeavour, so another challenge is to maintain the political commitment and focus during the reform process. Peer learning



is a new concept in Kyrgyzstan, so it took a while to adjust expectations and become accustomed to the approach. Another challenge is meeting the time and resource requirements for peer reform. Because delivery tasks are not placed with a contracted technical expert, the tasks of policy development are still being done by the civil servants who are simultaneously working on reform.

A key lesson from Kyrgyzstan is to start with a small-scale peer-to-peer project to become comfortable with this way of working before scaling up to a larger reform project. Having a local political adviser was also useful in providing a bridge between the government apparatus and NSGI, helping to overcome practical and cultural hurdles. Another lesson was the need for not just linguistic translation but also cultural translation. Working methods will be different and cultural practices can mean that what works in one setting will need adjusting to another.

Web links: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/stabilisation-unit/about#the-national-school-of-government-international>.

Contact person e-mail: [nsgibusinessmgt@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:nsgibusinessmgt@dfid.gov.uk)



## 2. Government of the Republic of Zambia Human Resource Management Reform

### Government of the Republic of Zambia Human Resource Management Reform



Implemented by NSGI

Location: Zambia

Funded by DFID

NSGI is working in Zambia to support reform and decentralisation of human resource management in the Zambian government. It has an agreed policy of decentralising services away from a highly central provision towards service delivery by local government for most government services. To achieve this goal, the government first needs to replace the highly centralised human resource management policy and decentralise human resource management decision-making to the nearest employee's place of work. The main challenge is to overcome resistance to the proposed changes and the perceived resulting loss of power for some individuals and government institutions.

The peer partnership and learning focuses on two distinct areas of influence and capacity-building:

- Supporting the senior Zambian policymakers by developing a robust framework that backs transformational change, including a framework that revises primary and secondary legislation in regulations and processes and procedures.
- Supporting capacity-building within the government to implement the proposed changes and testing the new human resource management model in pilot institutions, so lessons learned can inform the wider implementation across the entire government apparatus.

Both areas have been addressed by NSGI sending former British civil servants to partner with Zambian officials to share their skills and experience in similar roles. Capacity-building and skills development have been most evident in the establishment of a Zambian Government Implementation Team, which received support and technical advice from the British civil servants. A long-term NSGI resident adviser has helped to coordinate inputs and provide continuity and local understanding. The programme is to run until April 2019.

The Zambian Secretary to Cabinet, the main programme counterpart, values the partnership with NSGI and the long-term relationship, which has endured several

challenging political cycles: “NSGI has helped me to see my blind spots, they have provided a frank and honest perspective that has led to an enduring partnership,” said the Secretary.

The human resource management reforms represent a long-term transformational change. The programme started in 2013 with remote support on policy development; over time it has led to increased input from the NSGI resident adviser, now in the implementation phase. The programme approach has been iterative and adaptive where the level and pace of activity is matched to the Zambian government’s ability. The programme has been agile, focusing on agreed milestones and regular review and change in response to lessons learned. The development of technical skills and programme and project management skills have also helped to define what the future culture, values and behaviours should look like.

Now that the programme has reached the implementation phase, resistance to change has increased, becoming a key challenge. NSGI has highlighted the resistance to the Secretary to Cabinet and helped him overcome it through targeted political intervention. NSGI, as an external partner, has developed a high level of trust with programme counterparts, which means Zambian government representatives feel comfortable holding difficult conversations with NSGI present.

Senior Zambian counterparts have demonstrated a willingness to tackle the challenges and their confidence has increased as the programme has progressed. A true partnership has emerged, with a deep mutual understanding of the programme’s challenges and risks. This has allowed NSGI to openly challenge the government to address blockages and to accept and implement advice.

Capacity-building has also led to renewed confidence among Zambian programme staff, particularly the implementation team that endured the active and passive resistance first hand. The team has recognized the need to model the desired behaviours and values and not to continue with business as usual if the programme is to be effective.

Overcoming resistance to change has been the major challenge. This has been met through adaptive programme management by being more proactive and less responsive. This has included developing a benefits-led approach so that all the gains and losses have been mapped against identified key strategic objectives and linked to individual stakeholders. This approach has been used to develop key communication messages that are modified for different stakeholders. The Zambian Government Implementation Team has pioneered this work and used it to great effect to influence key stakeholders and to overcome resistance by focusing on the positive benefits of the programme.

Another challenge has been to match NSGI resource input with the Zambian government delivery capacity so that programme input can be flexible. This approach requires an agility that responds quickly to the situation on the ground.

While the programme has been supported by NSGI and former British civil servants, it has also adapted to the local environment. Solutions have to be “made in Zambia” to take into account the local political and cultural environment. This has been perhaps easier in some locations than others because of a shared language and a common heritage in how the Zambian civil service operates.

The long-term nature of the programme has required resilience and continuity as well as a high degree of faith that the proposed model of human resource management will deliver positive results. The huge investment will only be fully realized in the longer term. There are some intermediate benefits and potential quick wins, but mostly the benefits will be realized when the changes are fully rolled out across the government.

Finally, the main lesson is that a multi-year, long-term programme of transformational change that spans several political cycles carries immense risk, so it is crucial to maintain support across the political spectrum and to ensure, as far as possible, continuity in programme delivery.

Web links: [https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/stabilisation-unit/about#the-national-school-of-government-international.](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/stabilisation-unit/about#the-national-school-of-government-international)

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### 3. Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance

#### Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance



Implemented by Transparency International

Funded by EIP SPARKS! grant

Locations: EU, UK, Nepal, Morocco,  
Uganda, Vietnam, India

The peer-to-peer Climate Finance Integrity Learning Alliance (CFI) aims to support institutions that are applying for accreditation from climate finance institutions when managing climate projects. The aim is to adopt and implement integrity and anti-corruption policies and stakeholder engagement through peer learning. Peer learning through this alliance can contribute to safeguarding climate money from abuse and ensure its effective and efficient allocation, delivery and use. The EIP Joint Secretariat, Transparency International EU and Transparency International UK have worked closely with GIZ and UNDP to identify potential peers who are applying for Green Climate Fund (GCF) accreditation or have received the accreditation to participate in this peer-to-peer learning initiative.

Participants were carefully selected, according to their stages in the GCF accreditation process or project implementation. Some are in the early stages of preparing for accreditation, some are about to complete the registration process and others have received accreditation and implemented the projects. All the participants working on GCF accreditation have not only shared their experiences of implementing GCF projects but have also learned from their peers. Six organisations expressed interest in joining the Alliance and attending the foundational engagement workshop:



- National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Nepal
- Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC), Nepal
- Agency for Agriculture Development, Morocco
- Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda
- Vietnam Development Bank, Viet Nam
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), India

The foundational engagement workshop, supported by the EIP Secretariat and Transparency International (EU), was held 17–19 December 2017 in Frankfurt, Germany. With the assistance of external facilitators, the workshop provided space for the peers to build trust and confidence. The discussions took place in an iterative manner, allowing peers to share their needs and challenges related to climate finance, what they have done successfully or less successfully and what they would do to address those needs and challenges. The core learning focused on the measures that need to be put in place to achieve GCF accreditation.



Overall, participants reported a positive learning experience at the workshop, with several remarking that the learning approach was new to them. The practical experiences of the peers were central throughout the workshop, beginning with country presentations on Day 1, roundtable discussions on Day 2 and the action planning sessions on the last day. The main learning points reported by participants related to technical aspects of financial

integrity systems. The head of the GCF Independent Integrity Unit (IIU) presented the GCF requirements on CFI. A GCF CFI technical expert provided elaborate presentations on the technicalities of CFI. In the end, the peers agreed to continue collaborating in person and through virtual avenues.

The Alliance is envisioned as a flexible network that can identify and respond to members' needs. Still, financial and technical support for the Alliance is necessary to implement their action plans and contribute to change at scale. Many of the lessons from this Alliance can help inform the updating of the ***EIP Peer-to-Peer Learning Guide***. Some suggestions include differentiating the key messages aimed at facilitators from those aimed at peer learners, explaining the relationship of peer-to-peer



learning methodology to other popular approaches, the need for a suite of practical tools that could be adapted to peer learning and highlighting the importance of different sizes and configurations of groups while engaging with different learning styles.

Since January 2018, the peers from Nepal, NTNC and AEPC have initiated follow-up activities at the country level. With support from UNDP Nepal, NTNC and AEPC have begun to implement the activities at the country level and engaged the corresponding government agency.

The commitment to providing external facilitation to the Alliance has been signalled by GIZ, GCF, Transparency International (EU) and the EIP Secretariat. The Alliance has leveraged additional resources in time and funding, which were not part of the original EIP *SPARKS!* grant. The combined time investment of personnel from UNDP, GIZ, OECD, Transparency International and the GCF, which was provided free and not covered by the grant, ensured that the quality of design, logistics and facilitation of the exchange far exceeded the scope of the grant. Additional funding provided by UNDP further enabled the Alliance to include additional participants.

The learning from the Alliance is an issue of high national priority in all the participating countries, ensuring strong motivation and commitment from the peer learners to engage actively. With funding around £100 billion (about US\$132 billion) available globally through climate finance, many countries and agencies are seeking to complete the accreditation process quickly.

The workshop benefited from a professional facilitator from the UNDP Centre for Public Service Excellence (Singapore). This ensured that the activities were designed in adherence to adult learning principles; the workshop was participatory and peer learners self-directed their learning. This enabled the time spent face to face to be used to maximum effect.

## 4. Evidence in African Parliaments Learning Alliance

### Evidence in African Parliaments Learning Alliance



Implemented by INASP  
Funded by EIP *SPARKS!* grant

Locations: Ghana, Uganda,  
Zimbabwe, Kenya, Malawi

The *SPARKS!* grant provided to INASP allowed it to extend its work with a group of African parliaments in Ghana, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Malawi to strengthen capacity for evidence-informed policymaking. The *SPARKS!* initiative focused on collaboration between members of parliament (MPs) and parliament staff with three main strands: the project's continued engagement with the entire network via virtual and face-to-face meetings to discuss issues and experiences around parliament staff collaboration with MPs; INASP invited applications from participating parliaments to support a specific joint MP-staff initiative (after a careful selection process, the Parliament of Kenya's Evidence Informed Decision Making Caucus was chosen for funding to have promotional and material costs covered); and learning was shared with the larger sector through three blogs, a public webinar and a new resource portal that gathers expertise and evidence on parliament staff collaboration with MPs.

Overall, the EIP peer-to-peer demand-driven learning approach used in the *SPARKS!* proposal worked well. Many actionable ideas came from the parliamentarians. Using a demand-driven approach ensured that small, targeted champions among staff were identified and helped facilitate the sharing of information between peers and building strong peer relationships. INASP grew the Alliance from three parliaments to five with the addition of Kenya and Malawi through the *SPARKS!* grant.

Three main outcomes were achieved through the Alliance:

- First, the relationship between MPs and parliament staff was strengthened.
- Second, it helped MPs and parliament staff learn from peers in other parliaments.
- Finally, the Alliance helped MPs and parliament staff adapt current programmes and coordination activities by providing space to brainstorm and learn about innovative approaches.

Neither peer learning nor capacity-building is a short-term endeavour. Both require long-term multi-level engagement and trusting relationships. Some challenges have included a missed opportunity to hold a face-to-face meeting with all five parliaments



and cover staff time to help make the most of such initiatives. Fortunately, the Alliance did capitalize on pre-existing, long-term relationships and created a platform for further implementation and learning. Although the parliaments involved are willing to make long-term commitments to the initiative, human and logistical resources remain easier to secure than financial resources from participating parliaments. As such, multi-stakeholder support is needed to ensure efficient implementation moving forward.



At the time of the launch of the Alliance, two face-to-face peer-learning workshops were held in Accra and Kampala, followed by virtual engagements with MPs and parliament staff from the initial three parliament members. Workshops predominantly took a learning-from-each-other approach, consisting largely of presentations and facilitated discussions with the peer learners in response to priority topics identified at the inception stage, making minimal use of external resource persons.

The *SPARKS!* grant allowed INASP to send invitations to five parliaments to submit an idea for collaboration between MPs and parliament staff to enhance the use of evidence in policymaking. Six applications were received from four parliaments. The Parliament of Kenya's idea was chosen to receive support from the Alliance, thanks to its Evidence Informed Decision Making Caucus. First, it suggested establishing an online platform and holding a series of virtual meetings and a public webinar. These resources could help

MPs and parliament staff from the five participants to engage with one another. Insights and examples from each peer were gathered by INASP and shared with everyone via this new online platform, which now forms part of UNDP's AGORA Portal on Parliamentary Development.

The second suggestion focused on the Parliament of Kenya itself. A small face-to-face planning meeting was held with input from three other parliaments, to assist Kenya in planning for sustainability of its Caucus during the transition from the 11th to 12th parliament. Support was provided for the Caucus's engagement and awareness-raising activities, through which it has now successfully secured a new chair, vice-chair and members to continue its activities into the 12th Parliament. In this way, the Alliance experimented with leveraging the combined expertise of the group to help one member with a specific task.

The first phase of the learning exchange featured the development of a Learning Strategy that specified objectives for each participating parliament. This was produced through the first foundational workshop and laid the groundwork for the rest of the initiative, designating who was to learn what from whom and how. While the delivery team felt there was room for improvement in this strategy, it represents the only attempt to communicate the learning approach across the Alliance and so is a starting point.

Both phases of the learning exchange saw the transfer and sharing of key innovations around the use of evidence in parliaments in Africa. For example, the idea of a Research Week, designed and implemented by the Parliament of Uganda, was later replicated in Ghana. The participating parliaments remain interested in continuing peer-learning activities around research and evidence use; for instance, the Kenyan Parliament is hosting an upcoming regional conference on the role of parliamentary research, where it is hoped that Alliance members can agree on the establishment of a formal African parliamentary research peer-learning structure (similar to those for parliamentary libraries and budget offices). The parliaments are clearly committed to peer learning and willing to allocate their own resources to this capacity-building modality.

While the focus of the exchange was on learning between and among parliaments, their experiences were also gathered and shared with the wider sector by INASP via a communications component, which included co-authorship of a paper on evidence in African parliaments with ACEPA, production of a new online resource on evidence in parliaments and a public webinar. INASP also arranged joint presentations and workshops between the Alliance and institutions, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)'s Parliamentary Research Section, focusing on sharing their experiences. Peer learning has therefore enabled a stronger comparative understanding across the sector and for the parliaments concerned. Showcasing their innovations was a positive element of the process and led to new ideas for peers.

## 5. Fiscal Decentralisation Learning Alliance in Kenya

### Fiscal Decentralisation Learning Alliance in Kenya



Implemented by CEG

Locations: Kenya

Funded by EIP *SPARKS!* grant

The main focus of the Alliance was to enhance revenue generation and administration in seven counties in Kenya. Peer learners carried out a pre-assessment to help identify the key issues and reform priorities. The following knowledge gaps and operational problems were identified:

1. Inadequate policies and laws
2. Inadequate integrative stand-alone automation systems
3. Political interference in revenue collection and administration
4. Ineffective incentives and sanctions
5. Lack of performance-based contracting in most revenue collection departments
6. Low budget allocation to the revenue collection departments
7. Inadequate capacity of some revenue staff
8. Lack of public information and understanding of the importance of paying taxes.

Priority reform areas were identified and became the key motivation for the Alliance:

- Policy and legislative framework to create an enabling environment
- Structure and/or autonomy of the revenue collection department
- Performance-based contracting of revenue staff
- Capacity-building of revenue collection staff

The peer-to-peer learning process involved these activities:

- Peers articulated their challenges and learning needs during the pre-assessment phase, in accordance with the EIP Peer-to-Peer Learning Guide.
- The peers identified priorities through the facilitator and proposed a plan for how best to tackle them.
- The facilitator held meetings with relevant national government officials who were involved technically or politically, which helped develop support and buy-in. Hence, these officials became champions of the process.
- The learning process involved an initial meeting of the members of the Alliance to help build overall consensus on the key challenges and learning needs identified, followed by several smaller meetings where each issue was tackled in-depth. The meetings entailed:
  - Peer-to-peer experience sharing and learning
  - Safe space for the peer learning provided by the facilitator
  - Peer-to-peer visits or exchanges using coaching and mentoring
  - Exchange of information with other peers
  - Expert input into some technical aspects of the identified challenges and learning needs.

The Alliance achieved promising results:

- Three of the seven counties instituted performance-based contracts for the Directors of Revenue and cascaded down to other revenue officers, amending staff appraisal procedures. This was the first time performance-based contracts were used for Directors of Revenue. Before, counties did performance-based contracts for the Chief Officer only.
- Some counties experienced immediate results in some revenue streams when they adopted strategies developed and shared in the Alliance. For instance, one county implemented a “seasonal ticket” for the use of bus parks and immediately increased their parking revenue, compared with public service vehicles that charged day tickets. It also turned out that there had been revenue leakage as well as non-compliant public service vehicle operators. The seasonal ticket required the operators to pay for the members, and therefore collective responsibility enhanced accountability and compliance among the operators.

- Rotation of staff was important in reducing leakage and non-compliance since a number of revenue streams were cash-based, and human interface affects the level of collection. One county, which had previously not instituted staff rotation, did so following the Alliance meeting and saw immediate results in the daily and weekly collection reports.
- One newly appointed Director of Revenue received his induction through the peer-to-peer learning process. The director thanked CEG/EIP for providing him with such a great start to the job and by helping him to understand the main issues and how to address them and avoid the pitfalls.
- Lack of automation was a major concern, with a need to establish a more strategic and nationally led approach to achieving results in automation of revenue administration, i.e. automation of collection, recording, accounting and reporting.
- There were two main challenges for the Alliance. First, many counties were willing to join the process, but with limited funding the Alliance could include only seven counties as peers, albeit two more than the original number. The second key challenge was the time frame for implementation – six months – which turned out to be too short.

There were several key lessons from the Alliance:

- The learning was multidimensional, so issues that emerged during the process were addressed. Hence, the peers were not paired as had originally been anticipated. Instead, peer-to-peer sessions were held in which the various issues could be tackled. These sessions included the development of work plans on “change” to be implemented by individual counties. This facilitated interest among all participants. A multidimensional approach to learning (not linear) will bring better results.
- All core staff involved or staff having a role in revenue mobilisation and administration were invited to the peer-to-peer meetings, regardless of position. Therefore, the Alliance involved a multidisciplinary team, with some staff being more senior than others. However, in the safe space, it implied that those present were all peers and shared information and experience in that spirit. It emerged that county teams whose senior staff (above the Director of Revenue) were involved adopted the lessons faster as there was already a political or leadership buy-in by the time they left the meetings.
- Facilitators need adequate knowledge of the content area but should not present themselves as the expert; they must be credible and have legitimacy and should build on their social capital (to identify champions, co-facilitators).

- Improvements in timing or identifying definitive moments that may be helpful in moving the peer-to-peer learning process forward may help provide faster results. The Alliance was established immediately after the 2017 parliamentary elections, and most counties were keen to improve their performance whether the government was new or was a re-elected government. Therefore, initiating a peer-to-peer initiative in the beginning of a new electoral cycle, when politicians and technocrats are not in the usual mode of operation and perhaps readier for change and innovation may bring greater results.
- Identifying reform issues that are of concern to the peer will help ensure greater interest and better results.
- Multidepartment/levels engagement, i.e. staff from different departments involved and staff with different seniority, enables rich discussions and learning. It helps to break down silos and enhance teamwork.

## 6. ELLA – Evidence and Lessons from Latin America

### ELLA – Evidence and Lessons from Latin America



**Implemented by:**  
Practical Action Latin America  
**Funded by DFID**

**Location:**  
Global (Latin America and Africa)

As part of the inception phase of the ELLA programme, a scoping study was conducted in 2010 to determine thematic areas where African policymakers believed experiences from their counterparts in Latin America could provide relevant evidence and lessons for them. In 2014, when starting the second phase of the ELLA programme, think tanks from Latin America and Africa were invited to propose relevant themes for the policy context in their countries. Based on this consultation, the ELLA programme covered the following themes:

#### Sustainable economic development

- Extractive industries
- Rural livelihoods
- Labour markets

#### Environmental management

- Climate change adaptation in rural areas
- Urban environmental resilience
- Green growth

#### Governance and social issues

- Government accountability
- Gender and human rights
- Citizen security

ELLA, which is a learning alliance, adopted the peer-to-peer approach using online courses and establishing a community of practice. Peers attended a structured online course covering six topics, delivered over a three-month period. Through the private, interactive online platform, course moderators posted discussions and reference materials on each topic. Participants engaged in peer-group discussions, comparing Latin

American and African experiences, in order to support learning between the regions. Each discussion was summarized, and conclusions and lessons were identified. The main activities in the ELLA programme were:

- Establishing a strong learning alliance: It continues to bring together professional peers, typically 150-300 people, from developing countries, government institutions, civil society, the research community and the private sector; in short, structured exchange and learning programmes, via a private online interactive platform.
- Creating learning groups: Grouping of 10-12 people who track the online programmes. This is particularly important for peers who prefer face-to-face learning, often linked via video conference to those in other countries and regions.
- Arranging study tours: Making arrangements for 10-12 policymakers and practitioners to visit another region and learn first hand from their peers, often following from participation in the online community.
- Granting awards: Provision of small bursaries that support professionals and organisations to help put into practice the learning acquired.
- Organising peer-to-peer video conferences and webinars.
- Arranging dissemination events: conferences, workshops and individual meetings.

In Phase 1 of the ELLA programme (2010-2013) more than 100 examples of knowledge transfer to policy and practice debates in 16 countries were registered, and over 50 examples of ELLA knowledge transfer to policy and programmes in 12 countries. In Phase 2 of the ELLA programme (2014-2017), more than 400+ cases of knowledge transfer were used or are still being used to inform policy and practice debates.





The ELLA programme Lessons and Reflections Report clarified challenges with the peer-to-peer approach:

- Matching supply and demand: For successful peer-to-peer knowledge partnerships, an intimate knowledge and understanding of the context and issues in either countries or organisations is required.
- When considering a demand-led approach of knowledge production, a key decision will be how widely to draw the net: how varied is the 'demand group' with which you will work? This will influence the shape of the programme.
- Translating knowledge and ideas from one culture and language into another – and asking people to work in a foreign language – presents acute challenges that need to be adequately addressed and resourced if knowledge is not to be 'lost in translation.'

The Lessons and Reflections Report also presented general lessons related to the design of the programme:

- There is no shortage of practical literature and organisational knowledge to draw upon and select from when designing a knowledge management programme.
- One key design issue in a research or knowledge management project is the extent to which research falls within the project boundary, essentially a project-funder decision. At some point, a project will tip from being a research undertaking into being a broader development project, in which research knowledge is just one element.
- Knowledge sharing across continents raises considerable challenges regarding context. The best way to ensure that key contextual issues and underlying enabling factors are successfully examined is to involve both knowledge sharing parties in the dialogue to identify these. Ideally the knowledge would be co-produced.

Web links: <http://ella.practicalaction.org/>.

Video web links: <http://ella.practicalaction.org/ella-pubs/?kw=&etp%5B%5D=knowledge-multimedia>.

Documents web links: <http://ella.practicalaction.org/ella-pubs/>.

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## 7. Astana Hub: Peer Learning Alliance on Public Service Delivery

### Astana Hub: Peer Learning Alliance on Public Service Delivery



**Implemented by: Astana Hub**  
**Funded by Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana/UNDP**

**Location: Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan**

The peer-to-peer learning alliance of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan on public-service delivery was launched by the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana in May 2016. The aim was to promote learning during a series of peer-to-peer workshops within the Hub's capacity-building interventions. The peers of three countries, Azerbaijan (ASAN Service), Georgia (Public Service Halls) and Kazakhstan (state corporation "Government for Citizens"), were practitioners involved in public services delivery using a 'one-stop shop' approach.

The aim is to promote integrity and improve the quality of public services delivered through the Public Service Delivery Centres (the PSD centres), allowing citizens to receive all public services in one place. Representatives of the Canadian Institute for Citizen-Centred Service also attended to present the best practice of public service delivery in Canada, which has inspired many reforms on public service delivery.



During the first workshop, each peer presented his or her country's approach to promoting public-service delivery excellence. One key aim was to assess the interest in the establishment of a peer-to-peer learning alliance, and if deemed useful, to launch the Astana Hub as a network of peers that would improve the implementation of one-stop shop reforms and strengthen the partnership among the participating countries.

In the workshop, peers presented their experiences with reforming or modernising public service delivery, including the challenges they had experienced when implementing reform in their countries. Particularly, the peers shared their knowledge about various tools and methods to strengthen the prevention of corruption and to improve transparency and professionalism of staff regarding ethical behaviour and integrity guidelines to achieve better citizen satisfaction.

The peers agreed to establish the Astana Hub on Public Service Delivery and to share freely their country-level experiences and tangible learning results to be translated into improved practices at the country level. They also agreed to jointly develop a handbook on regional good practices of public service delivery to benefit the wider region. The handbook would be supported by case studies that in turn would inform learning activities. Overall, the intention for the Hub was to help produce learning tools and organise a series of virtual and face-to-face follow-up engagements.



The second stage of the Astana Hub initiative aimed at generating knowledge and building an experience-sharing culture among the peers. The activities included developing case studies from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan, reflecting the best practices in the field of public service delivery using the one-stop shop approach; running a peer-to-peer workshop discussing the results of the case studies on 9 November 2016 in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Following the next stages of the EIP Peer-to-Peer Learning Guide (stages 3 and 4), the Hub plans to develop an action plan for a detailed and comprehensive study of the one-stop-shop approach being implemented in the Hub's member countries and develop a handbook on reform of public service delivery, including how to best scale-up these practises

Web links: <http://www.regionalhub.org/peer-learning-alliance-on-public-service-delivery-2>.

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## 8. Open Government Partnership

### Open Government Partnership

Implemented and funded by Open Government Partnership

Locations: Ghana, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Malawi

Open Government Partnership (OGP) was launched in 2011 to provide an international platform for domestic reformers committed to making their governments more open, accountable and responsive to citizens. Since then, OGP has grown from 8 countries to over 70 countries and 15 sub-national governments. In all of the countries, government and civil society are working together to develop and implement ambitious open government reforms.



The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) is a key means by which all stakeholders can track OGP progress in participating countries. The IRM produces annual independent progress reports for each participating country. The reports assess governments on the development and implementation of OGP action plans; on progress in fulfilling open government principles;

and make technical recommendations for improvements. These reports are intended to stimulate dialogue and promote accountability among member governments and citizens. In addition to publishing reports, the IRM also releases all of its data in open data format.



Web links: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org>.

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## Acronyms

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| CEG:   | Centre for Economic Governance, Kenya                                 |
| CFI:   | Climate Finance Integrity   |
| GIZ:   | German Technical Cooperation Agency                                   |
| DFID:  | Department for International Development                              |
| EIP:   | The Effective Institutions Platform Joint Secretariat                 |
| ELLA:  | Evidence and Lessons from Latin America                               |
| GCF:   | Green Climate Fund  |
| INASP: | International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications |
| NSGI:  | National School of Government International                           |
| OECD:  | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development                |
| SDGs:  | Sustainable Development Goals   |
| UN:    | United Nations  |
| UNDP:  | United Nations Development Programme                                  |

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