



## **Meeting of the members of PEM PAL Executive Committees**

*July 2, 2008*

*Participants made notes of their brainstorming on the following questions: How do members of the Executive Committees of Communities of Practice see the PEM PAL network? What are its advantages, obstacles, and how to overcome them?*

### A. REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN PEM PAL NETWORK

*The members of the Executive Committees of the PEM PAL CoPs listed arguments for participating in PEM PAL :*

1. To fill in the gap in professional networks in the region – there are few networks which officials at the ministries of finance can join. For this reason they see PEM PAL as an advantage.
2. To experience direct, personal, professional interaction. The participants get to know their peers from other countries.
3. To gain knowledge about their PFM discipline.
4. To have a tool to promote reforms. *(This advantage has been stressed by a representative of donors)*
5. To help individuals interested in reforms.
6. To compare where they are in their efforts. Participants can benchmark their work in PFM.
7. To generate new knowledge in each discipline.
8. To help them do their job.
9. To promote problem solving. In cases where the participants have had troubles executing reforms, they have stated that their peers have helped them solve them.
10. To better understand the legal framework of reforms.
11. To facilitate intergovernmental sharing.
12. To avoid problems. By learning from the mistakes of others they can avoid repeating mistakes.
13. To accelerate professional knowledge.
14. To make up for the lack of R&D in PFM.
15. To offset insufficient funding for professional development in PFM. *(Ministers are hesitant to send their officials to expensive workshops/seminars. Strong donor support gives PEM PAL an advantage.*

- 16.To have a website that offers a low cost way of communicating.
- 17.To create pressure for professional advancement. Participants get to learn what their peers have already achieved and this creates pressure as they do not want to lag behind.
- 18.To arrange professional certification.
- 19.To better define of their profession.
- 20.To build personal relationships.
- 21.To get professional recognition.
- 22.To learn how to use common professional tools.
- 23.To get the opportunity to do SWOT analyses.
- 24.To learn what works and what doesn't and why.
- 25.To learn what causes success in certain countries.

## B. OBSTACLES

*Members of ECs have recognized the following obstacles to participating in PEM PAL:*

1. Lack of permission to participate.
2. Lack of adequate time to prepare for activities. Members stressed that, in the past, events were not advertised well in advance for them to actively participate in the preparation of events.
3. Language. Three different languages: poor knowledge of English; and difficulties in communicating among each other without interpreters.
4. Ministers do not know enough about PEM PAL, which can prevent members from attending PEM PAL events.
5. Little has been done in order to sustain members in the network.
6. In addition to sustaining current membership, more must be done to bring new people into the network. Others need to feel invited.
7. Money limits.
8. There is no coordinated strategy to get the "right" people to join.
9. Inadequate follow-up after the events.
- 10.Lack of assignments. After the events people are not sure what their role is and what they must do/organize for the future.
- 11.E-mail communication is not working adequately. We need to rethink this way of communication.
- 12.Lack of a shared knowledge base.
- 13.Need for restricted access to certain parts of the web page, as there is information members do not want to share with "outsiders".
- 14.Lack of action plans within the CoPs.
- 15.Scheduling problems.
- 16.Lack of ownership of CoP activities by members.
- 17.Lack of political endorsement.
- 18.Insufficient support to CoPs on the substance of professional issues, as opposed to logistics.
- 19.The need for more research in PFM disciplines.
- 20.Unrealized potential in PEM PAL members who can make bigger contributions.
- 21.Lack of social interaction at PEM PAL meetings.

22. Insufficient participatory interaction.
23. Professional pressures, especially the time demands of PEM PAL activities.
24. The undefined relationship of PEM PAL to new EU member states and their ministries.
25. No agreed results indicators.

#### C. APPROACHES TO DEAL WITH OBSTACLES

*Members of ECs suggested the approaches to deal with the above mentioned obstacles:*

1. Need to define (short-term) CoPs strategies.
2. Need to prepare plans with well defined goals and objectives.
3. Need to identify indicators to measure results – to show donors what we are doing.
4. Greater usage of the web page.