



## GUIDELINES FOR THE PEM PAL STUDY VISITS

### 1. OBJECTIVES

Study visits, as an important part of PEM PAL activities, are aimed at improving the public finance management systems through peer learning and interaction. Discussing together challenging issues assists the problem-solving process both in the beneficiary and host institutions. Contacts established during the study visits bring important added value too.

**The objectives of a study visit** are to (i) examine how a specific aspect of the public finance management system has been dealt with successfully in another country; (ii) exchange ideas and lessons learned between the visitors and the hosts; and, (iii) assist the flow of information among the members of the PEM PAL community.

A study visit is a **learning opportunity** both for the visitors and the hosts. All participants are, therefore, encouraged to (i) play an active part throughout the program; (ii) present and share the experiences of their country; (iii) disseminate to their peers (across domestic and international networks) knowledge and information acquired during the visit; and (iv) establish professional contacts that would facilitate follow up activities and exchange of information. More time is allocated to discussion and exchange of information the better. Also important is to give enough time for informal talks and exchange of views.

The program of a study visit should be aligned with the needs of the visiting countries, and should ensure quality of discussions. Participants-beneficiaries are expected to **spell out objectives, disseminate information to their peers** and **evaluate the outcomes** of the study visit.

PEM PAL and donors may contribute to the travel and accommodation expenses of a study visit lasting **up to four working days** and including a group of **up to ten participants**. PEM PAL and donors may also cover the translation and moderation expenses.

### 2. TYPES OF VISITS AND BUDGET

Depending on the funding source, there are two types of study visits:

2.1. **Type A Study Visit** is part of the COP activities and planned within the COP budget.

Type A Study Visits are usually organized by the COP Executive Committee; focus on specific topic(s); and, involve participants-beneficiaries from several countries.

Participants-beneficiaries for the Type A Study Visit are nominated by their institutions based on their eligibility, relevance and expected impact.

The COP Executive Committee defines the objectives of a study visit and appoints a person, who will be, in consultation with the resource team (including the WB Task Team Leader, Community Facilitator, donors,

external experts and the PEM PAL Secretariat) in charge of coordination/preparation of the study visit (hereinafter: **Coordinator**).

- 2.2. **Type B Study Visit** is part of the Stand-alone study visit program, and planned through a special budget line within the PEM PAL budget.

Type B Study Visits are usually organized by institution(s) of the visiting country; focus on multiple topics; and, involve participants-beneficiaries from one country visiting the peers in another country(ies). Nevertheless, Type B Study Visits involving participants-beneficiaries from two or more countries can also be considered under the Stand-alone study visit program.

Participants-beneficiaries for the Type B Study Visit are selected by their institution(s) based on their eligibility, relevance and expected impact.

The institution(s) of the visiting country(ies) define(s) objectives of a study visit and appoint(s) a person, who will be, in consultation with the resource team (including the WB Task Team Leader, Community Facilitator, donors, external experts and the PEM PAL Secretariat) in charge of coordination/preparation of the study visit (hereinafter: **Coordinator**).

### **3. EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

#### **3.1. Information document**

Ahead of a study visit, the Coordinator prepares an Information document on the topic of the visit (1,000 – 1,500 words). It should include (i) objectives of the study visit; (ii) description of the institutional set up and regulation in the country(ies) of the beneficiary(ies) and that of the host (e.g., what are their similarities and how they differ; main challenges, plans/timing for adoption of new legislation / reform implementation); (iii) socio-economic context of the visiting country; (iv) any other development cooperation project in the same area currently planned or implemented; (v) intended follow-up activities; etc.

#### **3.2. Preliminary agenda**

Ahead of a study visit, the Coordinator prepares a Preliminary agenda of the study visit. He/she establishes contact, and discusses the agenda with the peers of the hosting institution.

#### **3.3. Report**

Coordinator prepares a report on the study visit. The report should (i) summarize the learning experience; (ii) evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the program and its outcomes; (iii) give an idea of how well the visit went and provide food for reflection on the issues addressed; and, (v) discuss options for follow-up activities.

Within two weeks following the completion of the study visit, the Coordinator sends the report to the PEM PAL Secretariat for posting on the PEM PAL website, and to the COP Executive Committee for endorsement at the next meeting.

In addition, the Coordinator disseminates the information/report about the visit to interested peers, national authorities and other stakeholders.

#### **3.4. Evaluation**

The PEM PAL Secretariat carries out periodic surveys involving all stakeholders (visiting and host institutions) regarding logistics, distribution of time and other elements of the visit.

After the completion of each study visit, Coordinator collects participants' assessments of the importance of the study visit for their work and on the envisaged follow up activities, and submits them to the PEM PAL Secretariat.

Periodic surveys and participants' assessments collected after each study visit provide guidance on future organization of study visit program and information on its sustainability. The PEM PAL Secretariat prepares quarterly evaluation reports for the Steering Committee.

#### **4. PROCEDURE**

##### **4.1. Type A study visits**

At least 60 days prior to the planned study visit, the Coordinator submits a proposal for a Type A Study Visit on a Form A (Attachment 1) to the PEM PAL Secretariat, together with an Information document and Preliminary agenda.

PEM PAL Secretariat prepares an invitation and sends it to relevant institutions of all PEM PAL member countries, which then nominate participants-beneficiaries to join the study visit.

PEM PAL Secretariat prepares a cost estimate. The cost estimate should only include eligible costs as they are defined by the Rules of Operation of the PEM PAL network. Type A Study Visits are considered approved if included in the plan of COP activities, and if estimated cost does not exceed by more than 10 percent the budgeted amount. Any spending in excess of 10 percent of the budgeted amount must be approved by the Steering Committee.

Based on the Information document, Preliminary agenda and List of Participants (prepared by the PEM PAL Secretariat), the PEM PAL Secretariat, in consultation with the Coordinator and the hosting institution(s) undertakes logistical arrangements related to the Type A Study Visit.

##### **4.2. Type B study visits**

Coordinator submits a proposal for a Type B Study Visit on a Form B, which also includes a List of Participants (Attachment 2) to the PEM PAL Secretariat, together with the Information document (see 3.1.) and Preliminary agenda (see 3.2.). The participants-beneficiaries are selected by their institutions.

Before initiating further procedural steps, the Secretariat posts, for one month, the request for a study visit on a PEM PAL website and wiki to ensure transparency, efficiency and coordination between potential applicants.

PEM PAL Secretariat prepares a cost estimate. The cost estimate should only include eligible costs as they are defined by the Rules of Operation of the PEM PAL network.

At the end of March, June, September and December of each year, the PEM PAL Secretariat considers the proposals received during the last quarter against (i) the available funds in the Stand-alone study visit program budget line, and (ii) a set of indicators drawn from the Information document, such as importance for the reform agenda of the topic addressed in the study visit, planned timing of implementation, expected outcomes, cost per participant, and available co-financing from donors and/or visiting country.

Provided insufficient funding is available for all submitted requests, the PEM PAL Secretariat reviews a set of indicators for each individual request, identifies study visits with more favorable indicators, and prepares, in agreement with the COP Executive Committees, a short list of proposed study visits.

The PEM PAL Secretariat sends a notification on received proposals for study visits, together with the short list of study visits, as the case may be, to COPs Executive Committees for consideration, and to the Steering Committee members for consideration and approval on a non-objection basis.

A proposal for a study visit is deemed approved provided no objection notice has been received by the Secretariat within 10 working days following the submission of the proposal to the Steering Committee members. Within a 10 working days period, any Steering Committee member may request a formal discussion of the proposal in a regular Steering Committee meeting.

Based on the Information document, Preliminary agenda and List of Participants, the PEM PAL Secretariat, in consultation with the Coordinator and the hosting institution(s) undertakes logistical arrangements related to the Type B Study Visit.

#### **4.3. PEM PAL Secretariat Report to the Steering Committee**

By mid-April, mid-July, mid-October and mid-January of each year, the PEM PAL Secretariat reports to the Steering Committee on the (i) funds spent and still available for the Stand-alone study visit program, (ii) received proposals for the Type B Study Visits during the preceding quarter, (iii) Type B Study Visits approved by the PEM PAL Secretariat and, if the case may be, reasons for rejection of proposed Type B Study Visits (iv) study visits ( both Type A and Type B) and events, being currently undertaken, (iv) for each study visit, what are the topics and objectives and results of evaluation, as well as (v) evaluation findings and recommendations.