

PEM PAL BERN MEETING Survey

On July 5-8, 2011 the PEM PAL Executive Committee and Steering Committee met in Bern, Switzerland to discuss the future strategy of PEMPAL and how to improve the network's effectiveness and sustainability.

After the event the on-line survey in three languages was created. The aim of the survey was to receive event feedback.

Link to the survey – <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PS8KSC7>

The survey started to collect responses in July 18 and finished in July 29, 2011.

Invitations to take part in the survey were sent to all participants of the meeting.

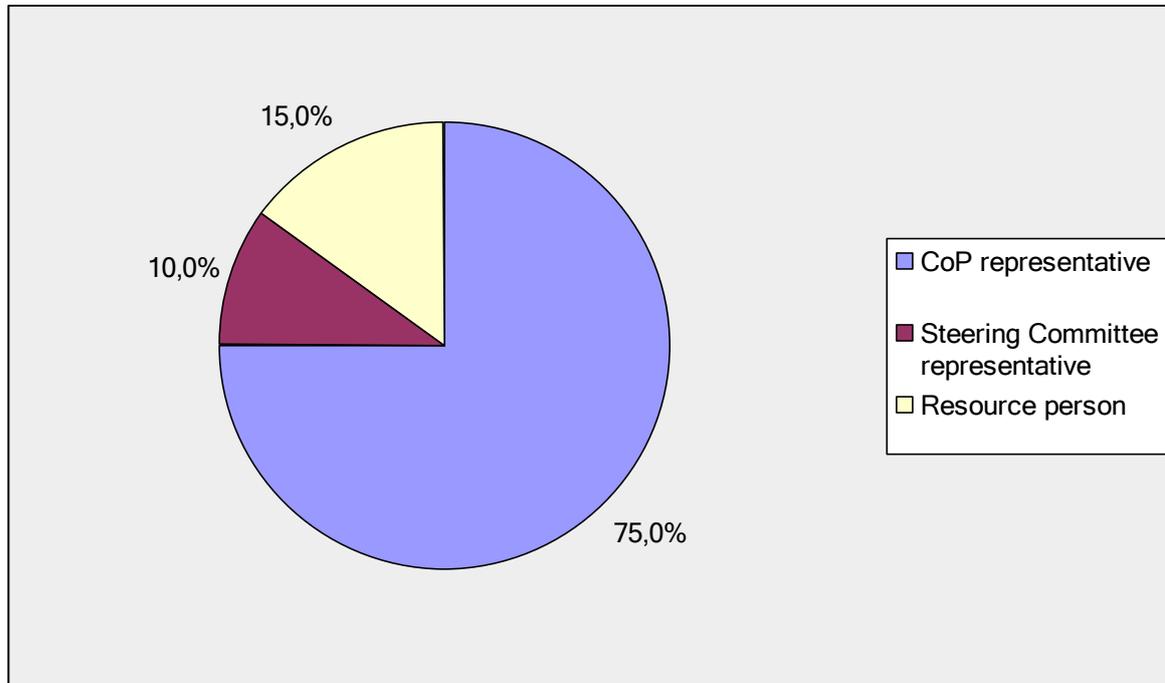
20 persons started to response to the survey. 17 responses were fully completed. In this report we analyze all 20 responses. For further calculation we take this quantity as 100%.

The questionnaire comprises five parts: Meeting Delivery, Meeting Administration, Overall Impression, Specific Impressions, and Future Initiatives. There are total 25 questions in it.

INFORMATION

Q1 Please specify your role in the meeting.

100% of respondents gave answers. Among them: 15 CoP representatives, 2 Steering Committee representatives, and 3 Resource persons.



PART I MEETING DELIVERY

Q2. How do you rate Bern meeting duration?

18 respondents (90%) answered this question. And 88.9% of them rated the workshop duration in a positive way.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Too short	5.6%	1
About right	88.9%	16
Too long	5.6%	1

10 comments were left.

“Very well balanced agenda. Having the Thursday agenda on the Swiss system and the city tour in between WED and FRI was a great idea!!!!”(3¹)

“The third day morning session was a bit too much. To be attractive to this level of participants and other donors, one day of discussion on strategy and Steering Committee meeting plus one day of learning / cultural program is enough.” (9)

¹ See the list of all comments enclosed to this report

Q3. How do you rate your participation in this meeting?

18 (90%) answers were given. 11 respondents think that their participation in the event was 'Active'. 7 respondents think that their participation was 'Average'. Nobody chose the option "Passive".

Q4-6 Respondents were asked to read the following statements, and tell if they agree or disagree with each of them.

Q4. The meeting and its materials were useful in terms of facilitating and conducting discussions on strategy development and how to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the network

18 (90%) answers were given. There are no negative responses. See results in the consolidated Table 1 below.

9 comments were left. Among them:

"The Background strategy paper was a useful resource for understanding of how PEM PAL works, its strengths and weaknesses. It would be more useful and better received by Russian speaking audience if the document in Russian was fully translated properly edited." (8)

"Strategy format was not developed, as well main mission and vision for the next 5 years." (9)

Q5. The Swiss study tour day presentations were useful in terms of providing information on the approach of the Swiss Government to public finance.

18 (90%) answers were given. All responses are positive. See results in the consolidated table 1 below.

10 comments were left. Among them:

"We got a lot of information about Swiss approach. It was very useful and appropriate" (2)

"There were no information about how the Swiss Treasury functioned" (6)

Q6. The discussions/responses to questions during and after the presentations on the Swiss study tour day were of use to you in regards to your current reform challenges.

18 (90%) answers were given. There are no non-positive responses. See the consolidated table 1 below.

11 comments were left. Among them:

"For future presentations on Swiss Government to the countries with different organization of state, I would recommend to be focused more on the functioning of Cantons, instead of the federation." (9)

"The information was of most use to internal audit and budget COPs. Treasury representatives less so." (11)

Table 1

Answer Options	1 strongly disagree	2	3	4	5 strongly agree	Response Count	Average
Q4	0	0	1	8	<u>9</u>	18	4,4
Q5	0	0	0	2	<u>16</u>	18	<u>4,9</u>
Q6	0	0	4	5	<u>9</u>	18	4,3

PART 2 MEETING ADMINISTRATION

Q7. Please rate the quality of organization (pre-event administration and logistics, etc.) and administration (staff responsiveness, etc.) of the meeting:

Answered question – 18 (90%)

Answer Options	1 low	2	3	4	5 high	Response Count	Average
Quality of event organization	0	1	2	7	<u>8</u>	18	4.2
Quality of workshops administration	0	1	1	2	<u>11</u>	15	<u>4.5</u>

There were left 14 comments:

“Everything was in right place and at the right time.” (3)

“There needs to be better guidelines on what is the responsibility of the host country compared to that of the Secretariat. More administrative support during the meeting was also needed (eg one morning we were not aware of an earlier start and arrived late). Translations of Russian key materials were not ready in time and significantly disadvantaged many people.” (11)

“One of the issues with preparation was the issue with flights, purchased by CEF for some participants. At least I got involved into a situation, when a person with no English or German had to travel on her own, separately from her colleagues, and she was at a loss. ... The second issue, which was noticed by Russian speaking participants, was the quality of Russian version of the Background Strategy Paper - it was half translated and went to printer without editing and proper formatting. ...” (12)

“Everything was very good organized.” (13)

Q8 Did you receive agenda and event information in sufficient time before the event for them to be useful?

18 (90%) answers were given. 2 respondents have not received Background Materials in time.

Answer Options	yes	no	Response Count
Agenda	18	0	18
Background Material	15	<u>2</u>	17
Logistical information	18	0	18

There were left 10 comments:

“It was very useful to have all materials before the event. I had time to look at them and be aware of what we were going to discuss. I think that was very effective” (3)

“Key Russian materials were not provided however and significant proportion of meeting were Russian speaking.” (9)

“I’ve seen most of the documents in drafts in advance as well as I don’t need to wait for translation into English, so I had no problems.” (10)

Q9 Did you receive practical information (about the accommodation and other facilities, etc.) prior to the meeting?

Answered question – 18 (90%). 100% of respondents confirmed that they had received practical information prior to the meeting.

PART 3 OVERALL IMPRESSION

Q10. Suggestions to improve the content, approach and other aspects of future meetings related to strategy development:

13 comments were left, but only 7 of them consists suggestions. Here are some quotations:

“To be able to attract senior level participants and donors, the meetings of this kind should be shorter and resource team should be briefed in advance to be able to help in guiding the discussion...” (11)

“More time than 1.5 days is required. Ensure scheduling of any difficult agenda items (eg performance measurement) are not scheduled on the last day of a meeting given participants are tired by then.” (10)

“Range of questions and a corresponding questionnaire should be sent out 2 months prior to a meeting. During meeting it needs to discuss problems as well as to demonstrate necessarily proven experience of a single country.” (6)

Q11. Suggestions to improve the content, approach and other aspects of future study tours by the Swiss Government for other visiting countries:

14 comments were left, the most of them (11) consists suggestions. Here are some quotations:

“Conduct research/survey among country representatives prior to study tour to design the program which involve the specific issues that countries are interested in most.” (2)

“...If possible, a tour of Parliament and/or Ministry of Finance would add to the tour. More content for this specific study tour on treasury systems, reporting and consolidation would have been beneficial to the TCOP representatives...” (11)

“Swiss general info should be only on the first presentation, and there should be more time for Q&A session. All the session should be tailored for the government officials present that there is more interaction between Swiss presenters and officials.” (14)

Q12. Overall, my satisfaction with the event was...

Answered question – 17 (85%). There were no non-positive answers. And most of the respondents considered themselves as ‘satisfied’.

1 not satisfied	2	3	4	5 satisfied	Response Count	Average
0	0	0	5	<u>12</u>	17	4.7

9 comments were left.

“I give “4” only because there were not discussion about how Swiss Treasury functioned”. (4)

“well-thought-out logistics” (6)

“It was very beneficial to gather the executive of PEMPAL together to reflect and discuss past and possible future directions.” (9)

Q13. What did you like best about the meeting?

17 comments were left.

Participants liked best:

1) ‘Presentations from the Swiss representatives’ – mentioned about 7 times. For example: “Presentation of the government of Switzerland was the most interesting experience for me as a government representative. ...” (2)

2) ‘Strategy’ –mentioned about 5 times. “The Strategy is also good, it is a long term document.” (8)

3) ‘Participation of all three CoPs’ – mentioned about 4 times. For example: “...Because all three CoPs have to work in a coordinated fashion. ...” (1);

and more other things. For example: “The social program organized by SECO was also excellent and allowed valuable time for networking and building relationships in a beautiful and interesting environment.” (13)

Q14. Which elements of the workshops you did not like?

9 informative comments were left. 3 of them are comments: “there were no such elements.”

It means that we have only 6 comments about elements which were not like by participants.

Workshop participants did not like different elements of the event. For example: “Poor quality of handouts in Russian was a drawback.” (8) or “Slightly short of time for all discussions.” (2)

PART 5 SPECIFIC IMPRESSIONS

For each of the individual sessions of the meeting, respondents were asked to indicate if their expectations were not met, met or exceeded.

15. Welcome and Introductions

Opening by hosts and sponsors of the event and explanation of the key outputs expected.
To ensure the network executive read the supporting documentation for the meeting, an exercise was conducted that involved participants summarizing key parts of the background material.

Expected output: Participants share a common understanding of expected outputs of the meeting and the current characteristics of PEMPAL to enable full participation in the discussions.

17 (85%) answers were given. All responses are positive.
See results in the consolidated table 2 below.

5 comments were left. Among them: “The first part of the agenda had to be redesigned to accommodate the fact that the Russian translation was not ready which precluded the Russian only speakers to fully participate. However, this was managed by a redesign of the agenda although it was still a significant disadvantage to those people.” (5)

16. Session One

Attributes of an Effective and Sustainable Network.

World Café approach conducting three discussions on how to establish a sense of ownership and committed membership; how to improve the effectiveness of the network; and how to strengthen sustainability.

Expected output: stimulate thinking on a vision of a sustainable and effective network while identifying any gaps, obstacles, and issues related to achieving that vision.

16 (80%) answers were given. Most of responses (15) are positive.
See results in the consolidated table 2 below.

7 comments were left. Among them:

“Session One went normal and World café approach is normal in principle.” (4)

“Separate meetings by CoPs are more effective.” (3)

”I do not favor an idea of network development along the lines of IACOP which has partitioned participants into gold, green etc. IACoP experience is not applicable for other COPs.” (5)

17. Session Two

Identification of current communication and work approaches.

Expected output: identification of good practices within the network and identification of challenges and issues to be addressed. Presentation by each CoP chair of current approach.

17 (85%) answers were given. All responses are positive.
See results in the consolidated table 2 below.

6 comments were left. Among them:

“ It was very beneficial to hear the different approaches used by each COP and it paved the way for more cross-CoP communication with discussions being held between COP chairs during rest of meeting regarding plans for future cooperation. “ (5)

“ Probably all COPs should have the same approach in presentation.” (6)

18. Session Three

Strategies for improvement.

CoP discussions on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and actions to go forward.

Expected output: identification and documentation of strategies to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the network.

17 (85%) answers were given. Most of the responses (15) are positive. See results in the consolidated table 2 below.

8 comments were left. Among them:

“Generally it met my expectations but I think it is necessary to define strategy goals more properly.” (5)

“ To ambitious session for time dedicated, especially without overall mission set.” (8)

19. Session Four

Swiss Study Tour Day.

To learn best practice public finance approaches from the Swiss Government.

Expected output: Presentations and discussions to raised awareness of how budget, treasury, and internal audit functions can be delivered in a decentralized environment.

17 (85%) answers were given. Practically all responses (16) are positive. And more than third of respondents answered this question (6) decided that the session exceeded their expectations. See results in the consolidated table 2 below.

7 comments were left. Among them: “I learn a lot of interesting and useful things.” (4)

20. Session Five

Measuring the performance of the network.

An overview of how the network’s performance is currently measured and to come up with agreed indicators and monitoring process.

Expected output: Gain knowledge of current performance measurement and reporting processes used by network through presentations from CEF, IACOP, Mokoro evaluation expert, and PEFA Steering Committee representative. Discuss and agree indicators that would be useful to facilitate strategic decision making by the network’s executive at the network and COP level.

17 (85%) answers were given. The bigger part of responses (13) are positive. But 4 (23,5% of answers) respondents decided that this very session did not met their expectation. (see comments).

See results in the consolidated table 2 below.

7 comments were left. Among them:

“The expected output was too ambitious. However, the presentations were interesting and gave an overview of how performance is currently measured at different levels (secretariat, CoP level, PEFA links). Trying to come up with a small subset of indicators that would be useful to the executive to make decisions related to the performance and effectiveness of the network would need more time than the time allocated in the agenda. Timing of this session was also not the best as it was scheduled on the last day when participants were tired.” (5)

“There was much confusion on what needs to be discussed. The session would have benefited if resource people were briefed in advance on what it is expected from group discussions.” (6)

21. Session Six

Reflection and way forward.

Expected output: Shared understanding of the meeting outputs and the way forward.

16 (80%) answers were given. 13 responses are positive and 3 – negative. See results in the consolidated table 2 below.

6 comments were left. Among them:

“Generally everything was according to my expectations.” (1)

“Discussion went wrong..” (4)

“After confusion in session 5, session 6 was a bit lost. Or just the 3rd day was too much for the agenda.” (6)

Table 2

Answer Options	Not met	Met	Exceeded	Response Count
<u>Welcome and Introductions</u>	0	14	3	17
<u>Session One</u>	<u>1</u>	12	3	16
<u>Session Two</u>	0	<u>15</u>	2	17
<u>Session Three</u>	<u>2</u>	12	3	17
<u>Session Four</u>	<u>1</u>	10	<u>6</u>	17
<u>Session Five</u>	<u>4</u>	9	4	17
<u>Session Six</u>	<u>3</u>	12	1	16

22. If you participated or observed the Steering Committee meeting, please provide any suggestions for improvement in terms of its content and approach.

8 comments were left. But only two of them are suggestions. For example: “It will be better to devote more time for discussion about development of PEMPAL strategic plan. And to discuss Secretariat work if only there is a reason for that.” (5)

PART 5 FUTURE INITIATIVES

23. At the Cross COP meeting, there was an idea to ‘go green’ which was met with a mixed response. To determine the appropriate direction ahead, do you prefer your PEMPAL meeting and event materials:

17 (85%) answers were given. More than a half of respondents preferred the second option (“Hard copy only for agenda & presentations (i.e. powerpoint), all background material to be distributed beforehand in electronic form in all languages required”).

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Electronically only	35,3%	6
Hard copy only for agenda & presentations, all background material in electronic form	52,9%	<u>9</u>
All materials provided in both hard copy and electronically	11,8%	2

24. Over the last few years, please give an example of how your participation in PEMPAL has influenced your work. This will be used to capture ‘success stories’ to post on the website.

16 comments were left. Here is the list of all comments:

1. Control of how state bodies getting results and assessment of efficiency of budget spending have very important role in result-oriented budget planning. Organization of the control is compulsory part of public financial assets management, because such management involves civil responsibility. In Kazakh Republic there is set a task of improvement of internal control system. Internal financial control bodies have to switch from control to appraisal of results and risk assessment.
2. PemPal meetings are good source to learn about the Public Finance Management Reforms experience in neighbor countries. More Specifically, we learned during the conference that Romania and UK are making good progress in IPSAS implementation and we arranged future meeting - study tours with them. In a past, our TSA model was recognized as a good solution and other countries were asking us about the project details. We also benefited from the PemPal meeting on GFS implementation projects. Knowing the best and worst practices in the region on the PFMS projects turned to be really interesting and useful, not to repeat the similar mistakes.
3. In fact Tajik Treasury applied experience of Russia in receiving payment issuance documents. Also PEMPAL (meeting?) in Dushanbe allows developing specific recommendations how to improve chart of accounts which is now elaborated. Also communication with colleagues from other countries allows to appreciate tasks, and to not repeat mistakes, which were made by these countries.
4. Considering that I represent Bosnia and Herzegovina (RS) in PEM PAL meetings for a relatively short period (I attended only two events), everything that I have learned so far is useful for my country and me. Until now, I only compared the experiences and practices of other countries with my country. This applies primarily to capital budgeting. Based on comparison, further steps can be identified in order to move to the next level of the reform. Comparison can also help identify what can be done differently or adjusted to our system.

5. In Albania we are going to adopt a new Training Strategy for Internal Auditors. Training and Certification Model discussed during IA CoP workshops is used by us as a base for developing the New Training Strategy.
6. Experience of the colleagues from other countries-PEMPAL members allowed me to prove in quality level that it is necessary to implement internal audit in public sector for persons in high positions in the Cabinet.
7. Acquired knowledge and material, possibility to communicate are using in realization of reforms of public finance system in whole and their component – reforms of financial accounting and reporting.
8. NA.....I am not a practitioner
9. I improved my knowledge, systematized some areas and become acquainted with the work of my peers, which is an enormous benefit.
10. My participation in PEMPAL allows me to improve legislative and methodological base.
11. the participation on the Pem pal meetings helped me a lot to create a vision for the future, clarify my mind on issues raised continuously in my country and taking better and careful decisions several times.
12. I have participated in such meetings from November, 2010. As a result of the first meeting I became a member of Leadership group. Information acquired in such meetings was brought into use in elaboration of legislative documents, in development of civil budget, and accrual method of financial accounting; and in providing to ministry executives the grounds for further development of internal audit system.
13. In a recent TCOP event, Kazakhstan highlighted that it had translated the IPSAS guidelines into Russian. This assisted some other countries who had identified that lack of technically skilled translation resources was an impediment to reform progress in this area.
14. Participation in working group discussions at several learning events gave me a good sense of what is the status of PFM in PEMPAL members countries. It is useful to understand ECA-wide picture and compare countries, I'm working on, with other countries in the region.
15. Studying other countries experience allows personal enrichment as well as to apply its positive aspects in my daily work.
16. We would answer this before Ohrid session.

25. As agreed in the meeting, the Community Facilitator will provide the Steering Committee with a template (ie outline of headings and proposed content) for the PEMPAL strategy 2012-17 by the end of July for comment. The Chairs of each COP will then seek feedback from the rest of the COP executive members on this template. Please provide any comments you would like the Community Facilitator to take into consideration when preparing this template.

9 comments were left. 2 respondents mentioned that “the proposals were made during the meeting”. Others gave their advices. Here is the list of all comments:

1. The most important thing is to define properly strategy goals and events. When goals and events are coordinated, after that it will be possible to discuss indicators and full text of the Strategy.
2. The Strategy should elaborate annual objectives, policies and guidelines for achieving the operational goals. Annual objectives should be also linked with long-term goals, in line with priorities and their implementation.
3. All managers (executives) opinions regardless of success of represented country.
4. Treasury development strategy. Reforms in Financial accounting and reporting. Control in Treasury operations. Development of treasury IT systems.
5. I have already shared some comments with her by EM
6. To take into account opinion of all PEMPAL members.
7. the proposals were made during the meeting
8. Questions of medium term strategy (nearest 2 years) and of long-term strategy (result in 2017) have to clearly separated. At the same time medium term tasks have to be included in long-term strategy, but they have to be differentiated by difficulty of their solving and fulfillment, taking into account international experience of the countries which already solved these problems.
9. Stakeholder analysis, Strategic vision and values, The current position (Where are we now?), Strategic objectives, Evaluation, learning and review, Communication plan, Link with current Strategies of COPs, References, Annexes: Year 1 and 2/3 action plan for PEM-PAL overall