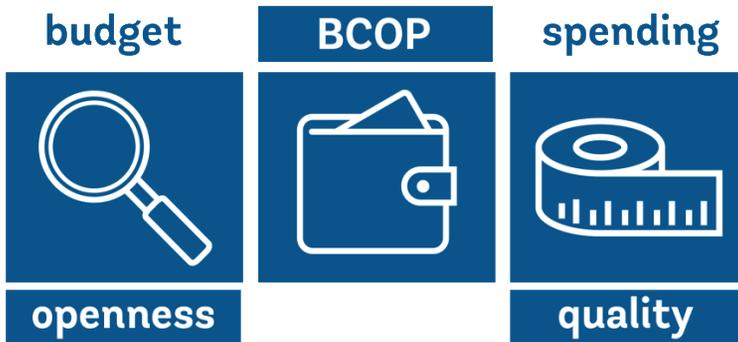


PEMOPAL

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



Budget Community of Practice (BCOP)
Budget Literacy and Transparency Working Group
May 13, 2020 Videoconference Discussion Summary

MAY 2020

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Budget Community of Practice (BCOP)

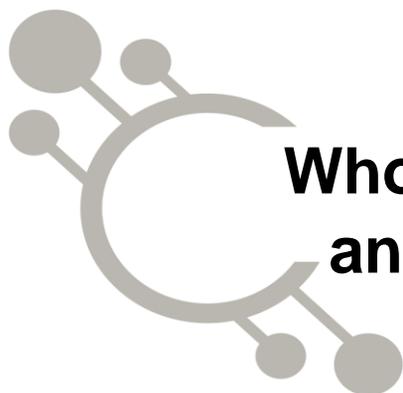
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Who are PEMPAL and BCOP?

Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning (PEMPAL) launched in 2006, is a network to facilitate exchange of professional experience and knowledge transfer among public financial management practitioners in countries across the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region. The network is organized around three thematic communities of practice: Budget Community of Practice (BCOP); Treasury Community of Practice (TCOP); and Internal Audit Community of Practice (IACOP). The key donors and development partners to PEMPAL are the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation, and the World Bank.

The main overall objective of the BCOP is to support member country Ministries of Finance (MOF) in reforms to improve budget effectiveness and accountability. BCOP's Budget Literacy and Transparency Working Group (BLTWG), formed in 2015, aims to study international experience in improving budget literacy, transparency, and public participation.

BLTWG's tasks include: reviewing advanced international practices in budget literacy and transparency and public participation; sharing experience between budget experts from BLTWG member countries for the purpose of designing standard approaches to implementing similar initiatives/reforms; and creating new BCOP knowledge products on the basis of the results of the group's work, including specific recommendations on how to carry out initiatives/reforms in PEMPAL countries. It currently has membership of 17 countries, from BCOP's total 21 member countries from the ECA region.

This document provides a summary of discussions from a BLTWG videoconference (VC) meeting held on 13 May 2020 to finalize a knowledge product on public participation that the BLTWG members have been working on.

Introductions

Ms Shcherbyna, the World Bank Senior Public Sector Specialist and BCOP Coordinator, welcomed participants noting representatives from 16 countries of the Budget Literacy and Transparency Working Group (BLTWG) were attending.¹ In addition, she noted that the meeting was supported by experts from the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT), the International Budget Partnership (IBP), and the World Bank and that simultaneous translation was provided in the PEMPAL network languages of English, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and Russian on the different channels of the platform.

Ms Shcherbyna shared the objectives of the meeting, which were to finalize the BLTWG knowledge product and to share the latest trends in public participation in fiscal policy and the budget process at the national government level. She provided an overview of the agenda and noted that Ms Deanna Aubrey, consultant and member of the BCOP Resource Team World Bank, will be providing an overview of the final draft of the knowledge product; Mr Alex Kreko, Program Officer of the Open Budget Survey (OBS), IBP will share the latest results in public participation and transparency from the OBS 2019; and Mr Juan Pablo Guerrero, Network Director, GIFT will share the latest country case studies and trends from around the world.

Ms Shcherbyna also noted a roundtable was part of the agenda to determine what additional resources are required by members to support reforms in public participation and to decide on the focus and scope of future work of the BLTWG.

1. Knowledge Product Overview

The first session of the meeting discussed the draft BLTWG knowledge product on public participation that was nearing finalization. Ms Aubrey gave a brief background on how the knowledge product was developed. This began back in late 2017, when BLTWG members discussed and agreed the outline and scope of the knowledge product to ensure it would be a useful technical resource to support their reforms. Thus, Ms Aubrey noted that the

¹ 22 people from 16 countries attended including Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

product includes key subjects identified by BLTWG members and she gave a brief overview of each (i.e. global definitions, international framework and assessment tools, benefits of public participation to justify investments, types of supply and demand mechanisms, risks and how to manage them, and a road map for future reforms). Ms Aubrey also thanked the 6 member countries which participated in a survey, and provided comprehensive information on their approaches (i.e. Belarus, Croatia, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Serbia and Uzbekistan). She also outlined the meetings the BLTWG had held to examine different aspects of public participation, including joint meetings and study visits with GIFT to identify global good practices. Ms Aubrey also noted that the current draft had been circulated and reviewed by BLTWG members, and that the only input required now was comments from GIFT and IBP provided during this meeting. The results of the 2019 Open Budget Survey in particular had to be included in the document, which was not formally released until the end of April 2020.

Ms Aubrey noted there is no internationally agreed definition of public participation with international organizations defining the concept in different ways. However, she noted that common in most definitions is the requirement for two-way communication. Ms Aubrey outlined the World Bank's definition that public participation involves a two way interaction between citizens and government which requires closing the feedback loop by providing a response to citizens on how their feedback was used.

A tool was presented that would help Governments to identify and manage citizen expectations which Ms Aubrey noted has been translated and attached to the knowledge product. She gave an overview of this tool from the International Association for Public Participation noting it outlines a spectrum ranging from inform-consult-involve-collaborate-empower. At each stage, the objectives are defined in this spectrum ranging from providing information on the very left of the spectrum ('inform' with no expectation of receiving citizen feedback) to the very right hand of the spectrum 'empower' where citizens are given power in decision-making.

The benefits of public participation reforms were also presented highlighting that they far outweigh the costs as advised by the international community, and through academic studies, and country case studies. Ms Aubrey shared the advice from the Budget Transparency Toolkit that strengthening the involvement and participation of citizens and civil society can: increase responsiveness, efficiency and impact, trust, reduce opportunities for corruption, and strengthen the culture of open democracy.

Ms Aubrey advised that the knowledge product included a collation of guidance from available international assessment tools, frameworks, and advice. This includes comprehensive advice from IBP on what is required to score high marks in the Open Budget Survey for public participation. From this advice, she noted that in the 2017 survey, PEMPAL countries only scored an average of 12 out of a maximum of 100, in public participation, the same as the global average at the time. Further there had only been some improvement of PEMPAL countries with an average score of 13 out of 100 in the 2019 survey (compared to the global average of 14), although several individual countries have experienced greater improvements. However, she stressed that this was a different part of the survey than that which measured transparency through the Open Budget Index and several countries had experienced significant improvements in that area. She congratulated the following PEMPAL countries for performing so well, including sharing their mark and international ranking (i.e Georgia 81/100 ranked 5th out of the 117 countries surveyed; Russia 74/100 ranked 14th; Bulgaria 71/100 ranked 16th; and Croatia 68/100 ranked 21st). However, Ms Aubrey noted that public participation requires more than just transparency reforms as it requires working within both government and with citizens and civil society organizations. This involves establishing mechanisms for citizens to engage with government (supply mechanisms) and also providing incentives for citizens to want to get involved with budget information (demand mechanisms).

Ms Aubrey noted that given the low scores of national governments globally in public participation, it is evident that there is a lot more to learn. She also noted that sub-national governments are more experienced in using these types of mechanisms, but there have been encouraging trends at the national government level, globally as well as in the PEMPAL region that will be outlined in more detail by IBP and GIFT. She also noted that the knowledge product included in-depth information on the 6 PEMPAL country case studies, and also on several international cases that the BLTWG thought were of most interest to their reforms. Ms Aubrey reminded BLTWG members that Russia had shared the links to its school curricula courses developed as part of their budget literacy reforms, which may provide a useful resource to other countries thinking of implementing similar demand side mechanisms. She also briefly provided an overview of other demand side mechanisms as well as supply mechanisms used by PEMPAL countries. Ms Aubrey also briefly presenting the three risks that BLTWG members requested to be included in the knowledge product noting that strategies were included on how to manage them (risks include poorly designed mechanisms; lack of culture for sharing information and

poor government coordination; and privacy and conflict of interest issues).

To finish, Ms Aubrey presented a roadmap to future reforms for PEMPAL countries included in the knowledge product that was drawn from international and regional country case studies and advice. She also thanked all the member countries for their work on public participation over the last two years, and also for their contributions to the draft knowledge product. She noted the product could now be finalized, once comments from GIFT and IBP were included, and the final will be posted on the PEMPAL website in the network languages of English, Russian, and Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian as a technical research paper to support future reforms.

2. IBP's 2019 Open Budget Survey Results

This second session of the meeting was delivered by Mr Kreko, Program Officer of the Open Budget Survey (OBS) of the IBP who shared the latest results from the recently released 2019 OBS. Mr Kreko advised that the OBS is held every two years and includes the assessment of 117 countries around the world. The survey involves an 18-month research period, and has a strong review process, including consistency checks. For the 2019 OBS, Mr Kreko noted that 94 out of the 117 governments reviewed the draft results and provided their input.

Mr Kreko emphasized that budgets are key to the implementation of a government's stated policies, and open budgets are critical particularly in times of crisis. Especially during a crisis such as COVID-19, transparency, public engagement, and strong oversight are essential for earning and maintaining public trust.

Mr Kreko thanked the BLTWG for its work on public participation and for using the OBS as a tool to support reforms. He noted the information currently in the draft knowledge product related to IBP's requirements to score well in the public participation part of the OBS, is still relevant as the methodology has not changed between the 2017 and 2019 surveys.

Mr Kreko noted that the OBS measures three aspects of open budgets: transparency of how public resources are raised and spent; opportunities for participation in budget policy decisions; and oversight by independent legislatures and audit institutions. He noted that 18 of the 21 PEMPAL member countries were included in the 2019 OBS, and the region scored better than the

global average in the three key areas assessed.²

Budget Transparency

Mr Kreko shared the performance of PEMPAL countries in the budget transparency part of the survey. The average budget transparency score for PEMPAL was 54/100 (compared to the global average of 45). With a global average score of 45, Mr Kreko noted that global levels of budget transparency remain insufficient and that countries that score 61 and above tend to have stronger democracies, lower perceived corruption, higher development levels, and lower levels of inequality.

He noted only 1 in 6 key budget documents in PEMPAL countries are not available to the public (compared to 1 in 3 on average globally). Despite the 18 PEMPAL countries performing better than the global average, Mr Kreko noted that of the 8 key budget documents a government should publish, 120 out of the possible total 144 key budget documents were available across the region, thus 24 documents were missing. Further, 61 percent of PEMPAL countries failed to provide 'sufficient' levels of budget information (compared to 74 percent on average globally).

According to Mr Kreko, countries can progress quickly with budget transparency reforms but volatility can be an issue. He noted that Guatemala, Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic and Ukraine, all were able to reach the threshold of 61/100 within the last two OBS rounds by responding to public demands for greater information. However, he noted that many countries show erratic performance on budget transparency, both in terms of the publication of budget documents and the comprehensiveness of the information they contain. Some of this change is due to volatility, where countries start and stop publication multiple times over several OBS rounds; or it is a sign of regression, where country performance drops and fails to recover. Mr Kreko noted that this volatility and regression in performance shows a persistent lack of institutionalization of budget transparency practices and reforms.

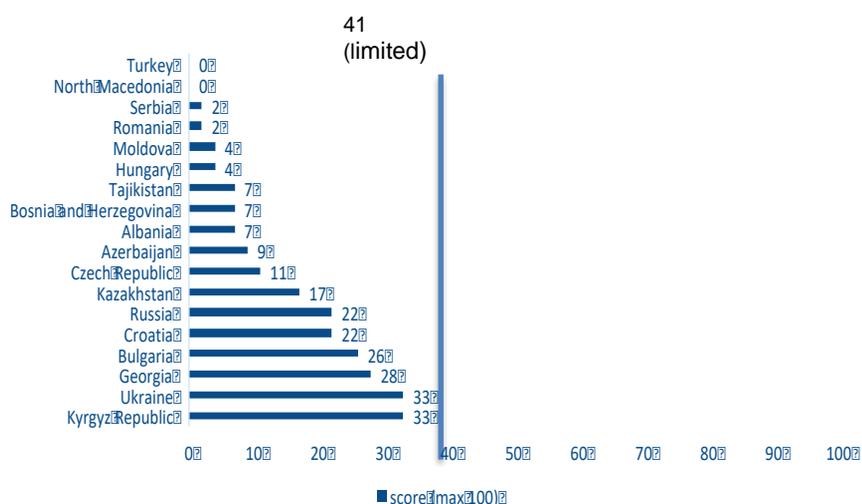
Public Participation

Mr Kreko shared the figure below showing performance of PEMPAL countries in the public participation part of the survey. He noted that despite poor overall performance globally in public participation, emerging and

² The 18 PEMPAL member countries include IACOP members Hungary and Czech Republic. Thus only 16 out of 21 BCOP members are covered by the OBS. Those BCOP members that are not included by IBP are Armenia, Belarus, Kosovo, Montenegro and Uzbekistan. Armenia has been approved by IBP to be included in the 2021 survey.

innovative practices are evident including in some PEMPAL countries. Global examples from South Korea and Portugal were shared where participatory budgeting has been launched at the national government level. From the PEMPAL region, Mr Kreko noted that Ukraine has established a 'public expertise' mechanism within the Ministry of Economy and Trade that allows members of civil society to provide feedback to, and exchange views with, ministry officials and that Kyrgyz Republic MoF publishes materials in advance of open public hearings.

Figure: 2019 Open Budget Survey results for PEMPAL member countries – Public Participation



Mr Kreko noted that for the first time since the introduction of the current participation questions in the 2017 OBS, two countries provide **adequate (>61/100) opportunities** for participation throughout the budget cycle: [South Korea](#) and the [United Kingdom](#). He urged all countries to at least aim for a minimum or limited amount of public participation at >41/100.

Globally and in PEMPAL, Mr Kreko shared that IBP found more participation mechanisms used during budget formulation and approval than other stages of the budget cycle such as execution and audit. Further the majority used no more than two mechanisms. Globally countries averaged 2.2 mechanisms whereas PEMPAL countries averaged 2.3.

Mr Kreko recommended that PEMPAL members continue to institutionalize newly introduced mechanisms to avoid volatility and

regression. Also, to ensure a focus on implementing more opportunities to participate in the legislature’s review of the Audit Report, and to contribute to investigations by the Supreme Audit Institution. Mr Kreko also recommended to make greater outreach efforts to include vulnerable and/or under-represented members of the public which could include individuals living in poverty, and religious or ethnic minorities. He also urged PEMPAL countries to continue to document new and innovative practices emerging from the Europe and Central Asia region through tools such as the BLTWG knowledge product.

Mr Kreko also advised IBP has launched its ‘Call to Action’, which is a five-year, four goal campaign to ratchet up the transition to open budget practices around the world. He outlined the four goals as follows:

- ❖ Provide sufficient levels of budget transparency (achieve a score of 61 and above in the OBS).
- ❖ Increase public participation in the budget (achieve a score of 41 and above in the OBS).
- ❖ Strengthen monitoring and oversight of budget execution.
- ❖ Sustain and institutionalize improvements in open budgeting.

The BCOP resource team asked Mr Kreko in what languages the survey results were available. He advised that the 2019 Open Budget Survey report is available in several languages including Russian. Some of the individual country reports are also available in local language, if the CSO that has conducted the assessment provides IBP the translation (e.g. North Macedonia). The link to the summary report in various languages can be found here <https://www.internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey/reports>. The link to the Russian and English reports are provided below.

Russian: https://www.internationalbudget.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/2019_Report_RU.pdf

English: https://www.internationalbudget.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/2019_Report_EN.pdf

3. GIFT’S Trends and Good Practices

This third session of the meeting covered trends and good practices as presented by the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT), Network Director Mr Juan Pablo Guerrero. GIFT is a global network that facilitates dialogue between its stewards and partners from governments, civil society organizations, international financial institutions and other stakeholders to find

and share solutions to challenges in fiscal transparency and participation.

Mr Guerrero noted PEMPAL is leading the world in putting together reforms in an innovative and informed way, and he provided positive comments and suggestions for the draft knowledge product as follows:

- ❖ The BCOP knowledge product provides a comprehensive review of literature, international discussion, norms and practices.
- ❖ The product includes recommendations and a roadmap for implementation, which provides a valuable guide for BLTWG countries wanting to establish or strengthen public participation mechanisms.
- ❖ GIFT suggests to emphasize the complementary principle of public participation i.e. public participation can be a valuable resource for policy effectiveness.
- ❖ From the supply side, public participation needs a strategy that identifies the policy objectives and the adequate mechanisms to reach them.

Mr Guerrero emphasized that a participation process must be driven by a shared purpose, with the nature and scope of the participation task clearly defined. He outlined key questions that a Government could ask itself to assist in this task:

- ❖ Is there a problem that can be solved through public participation?
- ❖ How will citizens/people/communities inputs be used?
- ❖ Is there room for public influence over the decision?
- ❖ Are their constraints around the decision that limit the ability to engage the public?
- ❖ What will a “successful” decision look like?

Mr Guerrero also stressed that the objective must be clearly identified as to what governments want to achieve when they inform-consult-empower citizens (i.e. for what?). He gave examples such as to improve resource allocation or service delivery; ensure there is a greater impact of the planned policies on the intended beneficiaries or development sectors being targeted; or to ensure opportunities for marginalized groups to exert influence on decisions that affect them.

Mr Guerrero shared his views on the OBS 2019 findings including the good practice examples found noting new promising forms of public participation have been piloted around the world and much innovation and progress can be seen in Sierra Leone, New Zealand, and Portugal for example including in South Korea who has implemented participatory budgeting at the national level. He raised several caveats on the results of the 2019 OBS however, including that measures may overestimate the quality of participation

processes and undervalue informal participation mechanisms that are important in some countries. He also noted that the OBS covers only national practices involving the MoF and does not consider that in some countries with limited national opportunities, there are robust participation processes as part of local government budgets.

Mr Guerrero invited BLTWG members to become a part of GIFT's Fiscal Openness Accelerator (FOA) Project that aims to help Governments better use public resources. <http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/foaproject/> The project aims to deepen work in improving transparency and enhancing public participation in fiscal policies. Within this project, GIFT supports MoFs and CSOs to design public participation mechanisms together, including defining objectives, and designing mechanisms on both the demand and supply sides. Mr Guerrero stressed that CSOs are a very good resource for MoFs to use. They can also have a role in digital tools, in analyzing the information that is collected from these tools and/or in their design and implementation.

Particularly despite crisis times, Mr Guerrero urged governments to maintain transparency when needing to respond quickly. He noted that social distancing and home confinement should not mean budget opacity or lack of accountability. He stressed it is crucial to inform citizens about the measures, their rationale, the role of the public in their implementation, and the array of relief measures available including how they can be accessed.

Mr Guerrero also provided information on good practice examples in emergency policy responses noting CSOs have been instrumental for broadening the discussion and policy options, improving the policy responses and implementation, raising awareness for inclusion, and addressing the challenge of inequality. He shared the details of GIFT's new publication that provides more than 30 examples of designing and implementing the support package in emergency policy responses - '*The Role of CSOs in Ensuring Transparency and Accountability in Emergency Policy Responses*' <http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/resourcesfiles/files/20200430162.pdf>

Mr Guerrero also urged Governments to develop practical guidelines outlining the data needs required during emergency responses to ensure fiscal transparency is maintained. The goal is to ensure that emergency responses, economic recovery packages, and financial rescue plans include transparency requirements and that the datasets are user-centered, and open by design. He advised GIFT is also currently working on the datasets that an MOF should disclose and will include these in a practical guide.

Mr Guerrero also shared the GIFT and IBP vision of public participation, which includes:

- ❖ **Citizens are actively engaged in the budget process** through both formal and informal processes.
- ❖ These processes are both **state-led and citizen-led** and they encourage to a maximum extent possible, inclusion of poor and marginalized communities acting individually and collectively in meaningful deliberations.
- ❖ These deliberations hold the **potential to influence the formulation and implementation of government budgets.**

Further Mr Guerrero stressed that public participation mechanisms should be inclusive, open, timely, have depth, and be sustainable. He also shared several useful questions that governments should consider when designing and implementing public participation mechanisms:

- ❖ Can everyone's voice be heard, with efforts to include vulnerable and underrepresented groups? **(Inclusiveness)**
- ❖ Can people find out about the purpose, scope, and intended outcomes for public engagement? **(Openness and Timeliness)**
- ❖ Does the government share the feedback they received and how has it been used? **(Depth)**
- ❖ Is participation embedded in the budget process to provide regular input into decision-making? **(Sustainability)**

4. BLTWG Roundtable Discussion

This final session of the meeting included roundtable discussions to enable member countries to pose questions to the speakers; update the BLTWG on their reform progress; and share their views on the next steps for the group's work. Countries were also asked if there were any other resources required to support public participation or whether the BLTWG can now move its efforts to the planned new knowledge product on participatory budgeting (or another topic if priorities for reform had changed).

Georgia shared its progress including the new portal it has established at the end of 2019 that allows all citizens to participate in the budget process. Two line ministries are piloting the new portal: Ministry of Education and Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure supported by a USAID funded project. Citizens have access to the budget calendar and have an opportunity to take part in the prioritization of proposals undertaken by the line ministries. The

portal also supports reporting on how many people participated, the feedback they provided, and the responses provided by government. MoF is also working with the line ministries to ensure they consult the public during the development of their budgets.

Turkey raised concern that their score in the OBS for public participation was zero despite Turkey's budget and fiscal policies taking into consideration the needs of society. Turkey noted that the government undertakes consultation of citizens, private sector, and academia including conducting surveys on the internet to ensure the interests of different groups are considered during the preparation of the main five year development plan which identifies the country's economic and social priorities. The annual budget law is then prepared in line with this medium term framework. Further, the Assembly's Budget and Planning Committee requests inputs by experts and all discussions are broadcast live.

- ❖ In response to these questions, IBP experts advised that mechanisms must be implemented as part of the annual budget process, not just during the medium term strategic planning processes.
- ❖ IBP also noted that the global average is 14/100 so most national governments are still grappling with how to develop and implement these mechanisms. The OBS results also capture a moment in time and the 2019 OBS is based on an assessment undertaken largely during 2018. Mechanisms implemented at the local government level are also not included.
- ❖ IBP experts offered to hold bilateral meetings with Turkey to provide more information on the mechanisms it could establish. (The knowledge product also outlines what is required to score well in the public participation part of the OBS, which could be used as a guide).

Albania shared that the Ministry of Finance and Economy has improved its performance since the 2017 OBS. Albania uses the Open Budget Index results as a key performance indicator of transparency in its public financial management strategy. IBP experts congratulated Albania on its strategies, noting it experienced the third highest increase in performance in transparency as measured by the Open Budget Index (scoring 38, and 50 in the 2015 and 2017 OBS respectively, and 55 in the 2019 OBS). Albania also has aims to improve public participation in the budget planning and monitoring process.

Croatia shared that the national government publishes a template on the website, where citizens can participate in the development of the budgets of line ministries, noting however that local governments do public participation much better in Croatia. For marginalized groups, there are specific initiatives and

mechanisms to ensure they are included. For example there are minority councils, Members of Parliament from national minorities, and ombudsmen available for the disabled. However, there are challenges on how to engage poor people in the budget process that may not have electricity or access to the Internet or television.

- ❖ GIFT and IBP experts provided advice including congratulating Croatia for its achievements as one of the active stewards in the GIFT network. Mr Guerrero offered to send to Croatia specific examples of how countries have ensured the voices of the poor are heard. He also suggested that CSOs and Public Councils be identified and used who already work and/or consult with poor communities where relationships and trust have already been established (e.g. agricultural CSOs).

Russia shared progress with public participation reforms. Russia has analyzed the results of the OBS as the basis for further reforms. By the end of the year, draft laws will be passed that provide a regulatory framework for public participation. Further, there are plans to improve budget hearings that will be piloted in the regions.

Ukraine shared progress that started in 2015 with reforms in open budgets, Citizen Budgets, budget literacy, and e-contracting. For these reforms they used a lot of advice from the BLTWG's knowledge product, and the shared work of the members of the BLTWG.

Belarus noted that the knowledge product was a valuable resource, and covers a broad range of issues. Belarus is not included in the Open Budget Survey, but through the World Bank and PEMPAL it has been promoting transparency and citizen engagement. Reforms have included publishing Citizen Budgets and increasing financial literacy in schools and universities. Regional Ministers are also used to deliver courses to school and university students. On MoF's website there is also a specific section for citizens on budget openness and transparency.

- ❖ Mr Kreko noted that IBP is making an effort to include more countries in its survey. It can only do this if the country meets two criteria: there are resources available to keep the country in the survey into the future; and if there is a CSO that can partner with IBP to conduct the survey.
- ❖ For the 2021 OBS, Mr Kreko noted that Armenia will take part in the survey, and IBP can consult with Belarus as to the feasibility of also being considered based on the criteria outlined.
- ❖ In response, Belarus noted that there was a local Non-Government Organization that has piloted the OBS methodology, so there is a partner

available.

Kazakhstan shared reforms including publishing a Citizens Budget. Kazakhstan noted it was important to continue this work.

Uzbekistan noted that the knowledge product covers a broad range of information, and Uzbekistan took an active part in its development. Although Uzbekistan is not covered by the OBS, it has been very active in the last several years in transparency, and after 2018 it has produced a Citizen Budgets and now publishes all 8 budget documents as recommended by IBP. Uzbekistan also has open budget information on its portal accessible to all citizens. Uzbekistan noted that it was agreed in BCOP's 2019 annual plenary meeting held in Tashkent that the next knowledge product would cover participatory budget mechanisms. Although these mechanisms are not very common at the national government level, they have become very relevant, and represent a potentially very valuable tool for national governments to engage with citizens. Thus looking forward, Uzbekistan confirms that participatory budgeting should be the subject of the next knowledge product.

Closing Remarks

Ms Aubrey shared the next steps at the close of the roundtable discussions thanking speakers and members for their input particularly the six member countries that contributed their detailed country case studies to the knowledge product. She reiterating that the knowledge product will now be finalized with GIFT and IBP input and will be posted on the PEMPAL's website under the event page, including the presentations (<https://www.pempal.org/events/budget-literacy-and-transparency-working-group-0>). She noted that the BCOP resource team will follow up via email about the scope and format of the new knowledge product on participatory budgeting.

Ms. Iryna Shcherbyna thanked BLTWG member countries, the speakers from IBP and GIFT, the translators, and the BCOP Resource Team, including Ms Ksenia Malafeeva for the meeting's administrative and logistical support and Ms Aubrey for leadership of the development of the knowledge product. She noted that the next face-to-face meeting of the BLTWG is tentatively planned in Brussels in November 2020 during BCOP's annual plenary meeting, although progress on the new knowledge product will proceed in the mean time over email.



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