

**ECA PEMPAL Budget Community of Practice (BCOP)
Budget Literacy and Transparency Working Group (BLTWG) Workshop
BUDGET OPENNESS MEASURES TARGETTING DIFFERENT EXTERNAL
STAKEHOLDERS**

December 7-8, 2023, Zagreb, Croatia, The Westin Zagreb Hotel

BACKGROUND:

Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning (PEMPAL) is a peer-learning platform that facilitates knowledge exchange among public finance practitioners from the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region. The platform allows members to develop solutions to common public financial management (PFM) problems in the areas of budget, treasury, and internal audit. 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 main overall objective of BCOP is to strengthen budget methodology, planning, and transparency in member countries. Members are typically mid- to high-level officials in budget planning or budget methodology/policy units in the budget departments/sectors in Ministries of Finance. BCOP's strategic priorities are i) sharpening tools for effective fiscal management, ii) strengthening fiscal transparency and accountability, and iii) expanding internationally available fiscal data on PEMPAL countries. BCOP operates two working groups: the Budget Literacy and Transparency Working Group (BLTWG) and the Program and Performance Budgeting Working Group (PPBWG).

This workshop on budget openness measures targeting different external stakeholders is organized within the BLTWG, in partnership with the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT). Earlier this year, BCOP members selected the topic of budget openness measures targeting different categories of the public (including citizen budget material, budget literacy measures, and public participation measures) as the most common top-priority topic for BLTWG. After having mostly implemented general citizens' budgets and other initial budget openness measures, PEMPAL member countries recognize the need to address diverse informational requirements and encourage active participation of various segments of the public. In this 1.5-day workshop, the GIFT team will facilitate discussions on the topic introduced above. This note outlines the objectives, structure, and the agenda.

MEETING OBJECTIVES:

The general objective of this workshop is to examine ways to tailor budget openness measures to identify and engage diverse external stakeholders in the budgeting process.

Specific objectives are to:

- briefly revisit the benefits derived from fiscal transparency and public participation, and the role that diverse stakeholders play as producers/suppliers, stewards, and users of information;
- explore how budget openness measures can be tailored to identify and engage diverse stakeholders;
- learn about establishing effective public participation mechanisms throughout the budget cycle taking key audiences into account;
- explore how digital tools assist in reaching different audiences;
- share experiences and good practices from countries across the globe that have implemented such approaches; and
- reflect on public participation initiatives introduced/planned in PEMPAL countries to see how they can be refined towards further motivating the engagement of target external stakeholders.

MEETING MATERIALS:

Presentations from this meeting will be available at the PEMPAL [event website](#) prior to the workshop so that the participants can familiarize themselves with the workshop content.

WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY AND SESSION THEMES:

The workshop will include presentations, interactive discussions, and exercises. During the workshop, each session will start with an interactive presentation by the GIFT Coordination Team providing theoretical and practical examples. This will be coupled with/ followed by interactive sessions, where participants share relevant country experiences. Participants will then undertake different forms of exercises to brainstorm how the information relayed could be practically applied to current/planned initiatives. **There will be three workshop sessions focusing on different themes.**

Session 1: Setting the scene - Meaningful fiscal openness and why it is important

Fiscal transparency reveals information about the government's activities across the various stages of the budget cycle. This information, when effectively utilized by diverse key stakeholders, holds the potential to significantly enhance government policy formulation and catalyze reform initiatives. To achieve this, it is important to identify these different stakeholders and recognize each of their key roles as users and suppliers of fiscal information. Their roles are fundamental for development with their effectiveness largely depending on the fiscal openness ecosystem, including the level of fiscal transparency within it and how key stakeholders interoperate with each other, including whether information is demanded and public participation spaces available and used effectively to effect improvements. Key areas to be addressed in this session include:

- Briefly revisiting the fiscal openness theory of change: From fiscal transparency to enhanced development outcomes
- A brief introduction to the array of external stakeholders and their roles:
 - Oversight institutions, including parliament & supreme audit institutions
 - Civil society – civil society organizations, academic institutions, think tanks, non-profit organizations, etc.
 - The general public, including significant funding recipient groups (e.g. agriculture subsidies, welfare transfers)
 - Private sector organizations managed by individuals and companies for profit
 - Media
 - International financial institutions & donors
- Benefits of fiscal openness through country examples illustrating the role of a multi-stakeholder approach.

Exercise 1: Participants to select a public participation mechanism implemented or that they are planning to implement in their country. In groups they are to reflect on this mechanism, discussing the mechanism's target stakeholders, and their level of engagement. This culminates in them writing down the main challenges they would like to address during the workshop using a "How might we" approach. For example: How might we engage agricultural subsidy beneficiaries from marginalized groups providing for the gathering of their inputs on agricultural budgets so that the full sector's views are considered in the allocation of subsidies towards attaining value for money?

Session 2: A focus on public participation

Fiscal transparency and public participation are mutually reinforcing. Access to quality information is essential for informed, effective public participation. Simultaneously, opportunities for participation create incentives for the public to request and utilize available information. Public participation by non-state actors is a critical democratic mechanism through which the government's decision-making process and public policies can be made more legitimate, efficient, equitable, accountable, and sustainable. Public participation should take place across the fiscal/budget policy cycle. Public participation principles as well as practical insights extracted from countries that have implemented public participation mechanisms provide guidance on developing, implementing, and refining effective public participation mechanisms that engage diverse audiences. Key areas to be addressed in this session include:

- Using public participation principles to assess the effectiveness of current/planned mechanisms

- Using an example from an Egyptian public participation initiative recently studied to see whether it is reaching its target audience (children and the youth) and discussing recommendations where this could be enhanced
- Public participation across the budget policy cycle: Importance of engaging diverse actors at different stages:
 - Stage 1: Fiscal policy and budget formulation
 - Ensuring engagement by line ministries
 - Insights from GIFT Fiscal Openness Accelerator project (Benin, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa)
 - Stage 2: Legislative approval and amendment
 - Examples from Georgia, Kenya and Canada
 - Stage 3: Fiscal policy and budget implementation
 - Example from Philippines
 - Stage 4: Audit and oversight
 - Examples from India, Georgia, United States of America and Peru
- Designing and implementing impactful public participation mechanisms
 - Step 1: Why and for what? Defining objectives
 - Example from South Africa
 - Step 2: Who? Target audience identification
 - Setting the stage (political economy considerations)
 - Examples: Brazilian public councils and Chilean independent commissions

Exercise 2: Stakeholder mapping: Reflecting on exercise 1, participants are asked to use the knowledge gained to discuss whether the target stakeholders have been adequately included in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the public participation initiative, including what their roles have/should be and whether they have been effectively reached. They also reflect on whether there are other external stakeholders that should have been/be included.

- Step 3: When? Appropriate timing
- Step 4: How? Public participation mechanisms
- Step 5: So what? Closing the feedback loop
 - Examples from the Philippines and South Africa
- Step 6: Did it make a difference? Measuring results

Exercise 3: Based on the discussion on designing and implementing impactful participation mechanisms, participants will be asked to reflect on their public participation mechanism and devise a simple strategy to address the issues identified in Exercise 1. Those contemplating new initiatives will be provided with a template and example and asked to draft a simple public participation work plan/strategy.

Session 3: How digital tools assist in reaching different targeted audiences

Advances in information and communications technologies have revolutionized the role played by information systems and digital tools in fiscal openness. Governments can use digital tools to generate, store, and disseminate information quickly, internally and externally, in different formats. They can also use digital tools to engage with targeted audiences. Different audiences have different information content and format needs, largely depending on their interests and technological abilities. Key areas to be addressed in this session include:

- The importance of publishing fiscal data beyond documents
- Role of information systems and digital tools in fiscal policies
- Open data
 - Levels that cater to different audiences
 - Benefits
 - International standards and schemas
 - Uses - Rallies and dataquests
- Fiscal transparency portals
 - A platform for reaching diverse audiences
 - Engaging audiences to understand their needs – a user-centered design approach
 - Segmenting audiences, including the use of personas and scenarios technique

- Other digital tools for adoption/customization
 - Decidim, Your Priorities, Consul democracy
 - Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, etc.
- User-engagement strategies through digital tools: Mexican example

Exercise 4: Participants are asked to look at the current levels of ICT infrastructure in their countries towards identifying digital tools and platforms that could be leveraged to ensure that communication and outreach strategies engage the targeted stakeholders discussed in Exercises 1 to 3. Participants are to then update their country public participation strategy to include these considerations.

AGENDA:

Arrivals – Monday, December 4

Participation of the BCOP members in the meeting of the OECD Senior Budget Officials regional network for Central, Eastern, and South-Eastern European Countries (CESEE SBO) – Tuesday and Wednesday, December 5-6. Note that dinner will be served for the participants of the BCOP-GIFT workshop on December 6 from 19:00 to 21:00 in the hotel (restaurant Kaptol).

BLWTG Workshop – Thursday and Friday, December 7-8

Moderators: *Aynura Bakaybaeva*, Head of Division in the State Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance of Uzbekistan and BCOP Chair and *Naida Carsimamovic Vukotic*, Member of the Expert Resource Team of the World Bank for PEMPAL BCOP

Day 1 – Thursday, December 7

Time	Activity
8.30-9.00	<i>Registration</i>
9.00-9.10	Welcome and opening <i>Danijela Stepic, Chief State Treasurer, Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Croatia</i> <i>Jehan Arulpragasam, Country Manager, World Bank</i> <i>Juan Pablo Guerrero, Network Director, GIFT</i>
9.10-9.40	SESSION 1: Meaningful Fiscal Openness <i>Raquel Ferreira, Senior Technical Advisor, GIFT</i> Q&A
9:50-10:20	Group Exercise 1
10.20-10:40	<i>Group Family Photo, Coffee and Networking Break</i>
10.40-11.30	SESSION 2: A Focus on Public Participation <i>Marianne Fabian, Communications and Outreach Coordinator, GIFT</i> Q&A
11:30-12:00	Group Exercise 2
12.00-13.00	<i>Lunch</i>
13.00-13.30	SESSION 2 continued: A Focus on Public Participation <i>Marianne Fabian, Communications and Outreach Coordinator, GIFT</i> Q&A
13:30-15:00	Group Exercise 3
15.00-15:20	<i>Coffee and Networking Break</i>
15.20-15.45	RESOURCE OVERVIEW: Fiscal Transparency for Development Course <i>Raquel Ferreira, Senior Technical Advisor, GIFT</i>
15.45-16.00	Day Wrap-up and Closure <i>Juan Pablo Guerrero, Network Director, GIFT</i>
19.00	<i>Dinner Reception in the hotel</i>

Day 2 – Friday, December 8

Time	Activity
8.30-9.00	<i>Registration</i>
9.00-9.50	SESSION 3: Digital Tools <i>Aura Martínez, Coordinator for Knowledge, Technical Assistance and Collaboration, GIFT</i> Q&A
9:50-10:20	Group Exercise 4
10.20-10:40	<i>Coffee and Networking Break</i>
10.40-12.10	Group Exercise 4 continued <i>Finalization of simple public participation strategies</i> Reporting of the groups
12:10-12.30	Workshop Closure <i>Juan Pablo Guerrero, Network Director, GIFT</i>
12.30-13.30	<i>Lunch</i>
13.30-15.00	<i>Meeting of BCOP Executive Committee (only for Committee members)</i>

Departures on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Dinner served at 19.00-21.00 on Friday for those departing on Saturday.

Simultaneous interpretation in English / Russian / Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian will be provided during the event.