



MINUTES OF BCOP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, February 2, 2022
Videoconference

Participated:

1. Aynura Bakaybayeva (Chair, Uzbekistan)
2. Mladenka Karacic (Deputy Chair, Croatia)
3. Marina Tikhonovich (Belarus)
4. Alija Aljovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
5. Emil Nurgaliev (Bulgaria)
6. Ivan Rakovskiy (Russia)
7. Iryna Shcherbyna (BCOP Resource Team)
8. Naida Carsimamovic (BCOP Resource Team)

Observers:

9. Tatiana Vinogradova (BCOP Resource Team)
10. Ksenia Malafeeva (Secretariat)

Minutes:

1. Welcome, overview of the Agenda, and key outcomes of the Steering Committee meeting held in December 2021

Ms. Aynura Bakaybayeva welcomed participants and gave an overview of the agenda for this meeting. She reported on the Steering Committee meeting, held on December 14, noting that Mr. Thomas Stauffer from SECO was reelected as a Chair for another year and that she and other COP Chairs reported on COP activities. She also highlighted that all COPs are working on planned knowledge products this year and that the cross-COP leadership meeting is tentatively planned for June 2022.

2. Progress on BCOP FY22 Action Plan implementation and update on BCSOP's Working Group activities and plans

Ms. Naida Carsimamovic reported on the implementation progress of the Action Plan FY22. Since the beginning of the FY, BCOP organized or participated in four events in total and have worked on three knowledge products. On October 13, 2021, the BLTWG organized and held a virtual workshop on increasing budget understanding within the budget planning process, with presentations from Uzbekistan, Ukraine, and a globally renowned journalist and communications expert from the USA with specific PFM expertise. Based on the roundtable discussion held after the presentations in this event, BLTWG leadership and Resource Team developed concept and outline for our BLTWG KP on ways for Ministries of Finance to Improve Clarity and Accessibility of Budget Documentation, which was sent to the BLTWG leadership for review. The first draft of this KP is currently being developed.

On December 2, 2021, a thematic workshop on a new topic for BCOP – preparing expenditure baselines. Experts from the IMF, Ministry of Finance of France, and Ministry of Finance of Slovak Republic delivered presentations in this workshop. As agreed in this event, the Resource Team conducted an internal survey



of member countries to see whether BCOP membership wants to explore this topic further and on what specific subtopics.

PPBWG continued its cooperation with the OECD's Senior Budget Officials' Working Party on Performance and Results. Based on invitations from OECD, leadership attended their annual meeting on November 23. This year's meeting sessions were devoted to (i) policy evaluation, ii) delivering results across agencies, and (ii) newest information on spending reviews.

Finally, on December 7, 2021, BCOP contributed to IACOP's virtual event on impact of program and performance budgeting reforms on internal control. The Resource Team delivered a presentation on Trends in PPB and Linkages with Managerial Accountability. In addition, the PPBWG leadership from Russia and Bulgaria delivered remarks on reforms in Russia and Bulgaria during the panel discussion in this event. Mr. Ivan Rakovskiy added that the Child Support Scheme was picked up jointly as a specific spending review example to be reviewed in this KP, as it is relevant all PEMPAL countries.

In this past period, the PPBWG has also been working on two KPs. The first one is on Trends in Spending Reviews in PEMPAL Countries Benchmarked to Trends in OECD Countries. The outline for this KP was agreed in FY21 and this short KP is currently being developed, given that the OECD has recently provided its database to BCOP. The second is on Step-by-Step Analysis of the Spending Review in the Netherlands. For this KP, the outline was sent to PPBWG leadership for review, and the first draft of the KP is currently under development.

Conclusions:

- The Executive Committee took note of progress in all BCOP activities.
- The drafts of all three of BCOP's KPs for FY22 will be presented in the BCOP FY22 plenary meeting.

3. Planning for the approach to further examination of the topic of expenditure baseline

Ms. Carsimamovic reported that, as per the conclusions of the December 2 event, the Resource Team conducted an internal survey of member countries to see whether BCOP membership wants to explore the topic of expenditure baselines and on what specific subtopics. Representatives of 15 member countries responded to this survey: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. 13 out of 15 countries responded that BCOP should further examine the topic of expenditure baselines in more details. 8 countries responded that a separate WG should not be formed, and 5 countries responded that a separate WG should be formed. In terms of subtopics, the most commonly selected subtopics was preparing baselines for specific sectors (selected by 13 countries) and institutional roles in preparing baselines (selected by 11 countries). The Executive Committee held a discussion on these survey results, while the discussion on when to start examining this topic was held within the meeting agenda item on plenary meeting.

Conclusion:

- The topic of expenditure baseline will be examined as a general BCOP topic; not within a WG.

4. Planning for the BCOP FY22 Annual Plenary meeting: Deciding on date, format, and thematic content

Mr. Iryna Shcherbyna reported that the decisions on timing and content of the BCOP 2022 plenary meeting need to be made. In terms of timing and format, she reminded that the BCOP Resource Team earlier circulated to the Executive Committee two options – holding a virtual plenary meeting for March 2022 or postponing the plenary meeting to May to provide more time to revisit the decision on the format, depending on the development with the travelling restrictions. However, in meantime, due to pandemic situation, TCOP and IACOP decided to hold their plenary meetings in virtual format.

In terms of the 2022 BCOP plenary meeting content, Ms. Shcherbyna reminded that all three FY22 BCOP KPs will be presented. Additional topics of the PPBWG and BLTWG could potentially also be discussed, and external experts can be invited. Also, PEMPAL country cases can be presented, for overall budgeting reform updates, PPBWG and BLTWG subtopics, or other topics outside of the WG areas. Ms. Shcherbyna noted that the new topic of expenditure baselines can be potentially included in the plenary meeting if the plenary meeting is held in late Spring, provided that a good external speaker can be sourced soon.

Ms. Bakaybayeva proposed that the plenary meeting includes some less-formal parts in which members can bond.

Conclusions:

- The BCOP 2022 plenary meeting will be held end of April or after May 10th in virtual format. Final decision to be taken by Excom in March.
- A session on the topic of baseline expenditures will be included in the plenary meeting if a good external speaker can be sourced soon by the Resource Team; otherwise, this topic will be further addressed in FY23.
- PEMPAL country cases will be included in the plenary meeting agenda; Executive Committee members from Russian Federation, Bulgaria, and Uzbekistan noted in this meeting that they provide presentations on various topics, and BCOP Chair and WG leads will reach out to potential other countries. The final decision on PEMPAL country cases will be made once agenda content is finalized.
- PEMPAL country presenters will be asked to include a couple of slides after the thematic part of their presentation to present any interesting facts or cultural information about their country.



5. Update on BCOP's Facebook group

Ms. Bakaybayeva reported that a BCOP Group was created on Facebook. She encouraged members to join and post any interesting materials related to country reforms and budgeting in general.

6. Other business

Ms. Mladenka Karacic informed the Executive Committee that she retired from the Ministry of Finance. All the members of the Executive Committee and the Resource Team thanked Ms. Karacic for all hard work and the contributions she made for the Budget Community and PEMPAL in general, serving both as the member and the BCOP Deputy Chair. Ms. Karacic will be always very welcomed at every event BCOP will have in future.