**BCOP Working Group on Budget Literacy and Transparency**

**Public Participation – Background and Next Steps**

**October 27, 2017**

**Videoconference**

**Background and Context**

**This videoconference is a part of the Working Group on Budget Literacy and Transparency, established by PEMPAL[[1]](#footnote-1)** Budget Community of Practice (BCOP) under its Action Plan for FY18. The Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation leads the Working Group and the World Bank resource team supports the working group’s activities. The objective of the Working Group is to learn from international experience on approaches to raise budget literacy among citizens and to enhance budget openness and accessibility.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**A background paper has been developed to support discussions of the working group to conceptualize a knowledge product to assist in future reforms in public participation**. Such a knowledge product will build on the working group’s previous knowledge product developed in 2016-17 on breaking challenges to constructing citizens’ budgets which led to a significant improvement in the availability of such documents in the region, as evidenced by the preliminary results of the IBP’s 2017 Open Budget Survey.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Discussions were initiated in a meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic on 13 April, 2017** where international trends were presented by the International Budget Partnership (IBP) and Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT), and country case studies from Kyrgyz Republic and Brazil were reviewed. Roundtable discussions were then conducted in Moscow, Russia on June 23, 2017, between member countries including the Institute of Public Finance of Croatia who presented reforms at the state and local level jointly with the Croatian Ministry of Finance. Lessons learnt from a pilot project in implementing budget literacy in Russia were also reviewed.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**The objective of this videoconference meeting is to discuss next steps including identifying PEMPAL country cases to be collected for inclusion in the planned knowledge product**, and what reforms would be feasible for member countries to consider. Information on interesting international country cases will also be provided by IBP from preliminary results from the latest Open Budget Survey currently underway, and these will be reviewed by the working group to determine which country would be best suited to conduct a study visit as planned in the BCOP Action Plan for April 2018.

**It is a pre-requisite of participation in the videoconference meeting to have read the background paper**, which presents international definitions and assessment mechanisms for public participation and provides several reform options for member countries to consider as possible next steps. A roundtable will form part of the meeting and each country will be asked to present their feedback on the paper, including the framework for country case studies, reflected in the paper (see paragraph 48); suggest options and ideas for next steps specific to the context of their own countries and for the development of the knowledge product.

**Participants**

**Fifteen member countries of the working group will be invited to the workshop**: Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova Romania Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. **The IPF from Croatia will also be invited.** The core World Bank Team supporting the workshop includes: Maya Gusarova with Deanna Aubrey who provided research and technical support before her departure from PEMPAL in September.

**AGENDA**

16.00-16.10 ***Welcoming of the participants including participant introductions***

Anna Belenchuk, Chair of BCOP, and Lead of Working Group, Ministry of Finance of Russian Federation

16.10-16.15 ***Introduction of the agenda***

Maya Gusarova, Lead Coordinator of BCOP Resource Team, Public Sector Specialist, World Bank

16.15-16.40 ***Overview of Background Paper and Possible Next Steps*** *– Maya Gusarova/Anna Belenchuk* (20-30 minutes)

16.40-17.00 **Examples of Interesting Participation Mechanisms emerging from the 2017 Open Budget Survey**. - International Budget Partnership

17.00-17.15 ***GIFT activities around the Guide on Public Participation and new cases recently identified.*** - Juan Pablo Guerrero, GIFT Network Director

17.15-18.00 ***Roundtable Discussions***: Selection of PEMPAL and international country case studies (for inclusion in future knowledge product and for study visit 2018). Possible next steps and reform options for each member country, and what form a knowledge product could take to assist.

Background documents to be circulated:

* *Public Participation in Fiscal Policy and the Budget Process – How to establish and/or strengthen mechanisms in PEMPAL countries, Draft Background Paper*
* *Powerpoint presentation: Public participation: Background and Next Steps*
1. Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning network established 2006 by the World Bank and other donors. Currently has 21 countries participating with members from budget areas of Ministries of Finance. Supported by World Bank, Ministry of Finance of Russian Federation, and SECO. See [www.pempal.org](http://www.pempal.org) for more information. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Source: Budget Literacy Work Group Concept Note <http://www.pempal.org/event/eventitem/read/140/389> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. A copy of the knowledge product on Breaking Challenges to Constructing Citizens Budgets in PEMPAL countries can be found at <https://www.pempal.org/events/budget-literacy-and-transparency-working-group> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. A joint project between the World Bank and MoF Russian Federation piloted budget literacy initiatives in Russia based on lessons learnt from 35 case studies from 34 countries in the World Bank’s study on ‘International Practices to Promote Budget Literacy’. Refer <https://www.pempal.org/events/budget-literacy-and-transparency-working-group> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)