**MINUTES OF BCOP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, December 21, 2017, 15.00**

**Videoconference**

**Participated:**

1. Anna Belenchuk (Chair – Russian Federation)
2. Ruzanna Gabrielyan (Armenia)
3. Marina Tikhonovich (Belarus)
4. Emil Nurgaliev (Bulgaria)
5. Mladenka Karacic (Croatia)
6. Kanat Asangulov (Kyrgyz Republic)
7. Maya Gusarova (Resource Team)
8. Naida Carsimamovic (Resource Team)

**Observers:**

1. Ksenia Galantsova (Secretariat)

**Agenda items:**

1. **Welcome and update on key decisions/discussions from November Steering Committee meeting** (BCOP Chair, Anna Belenchuk)
2. **Acceptance of the minutes to the previous meetings** held in July 2017 in Paris
3. **Update on Working Groups:**
   1. **Program and Performance Budgeting Working Group** – update on the work (including knowledge product), feedback from BCOP’s participation at the meeting of OECD Performance and Results Network in November 2017, and future plans (Naida Carsimamovic)
   2. **Budget Literacy and Transparency Working Group** – update on the work (including knowledge product) and future plans (Anna Belenchuk/ Maya Gusarova)
4. **BCOP 2018 Annual Plenary meeting** – discussion and agreement on the Concept Note (Naida Carsimamovic)
5. **BCOP Action Plan 2017-18 –** update on July-December budget execution**,** discussion of coming events and decision on update of the Plan to be submitted to Steering Committee (Ksenia Galantsova/Maya Gusarova)

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**Minutes:**

1. **Welcome and update on key decisions/discussions from November Steering Committee meeting**

Ms Anna Belenchuk welcomed all participants and thanked the Executive Committee members for her re-election as a Chair of the PEMPAL Budget COP. She reported on discussions and outcomes of the last Steering Committee meeting that was held on November 1, 2017. She informed the Executive Committee members that she explained to the Steering Committee (SC) that the main priority for the future work BCOP are knowledge products, in order to demonstrate the results of the thematic working groups work. Ms Belenchuk reported to the SC on BCOP participation at the meeting of the OECD’s Senior Budget Officials’ Network on Performance and Results in November 2017 and the two working group videoconferences – meeting of the Program and Performance Budgeting Working Group in September and meeting of the Budget Transparency and Literacy Working Group in October.

1. **Acceptance of the minutes to the previous meetings held in July 2017 in Paris (to be circulated with agenda)**

The Executive Committee accepted the minutes of the previous meeting that was held on July 7 in Paris, France.

1. **Update on Working Groups:**
   1. **Program and Performance Budgeting Working Group**

Ms Naida Carsimamovic updated the Executive Committee on work of the Program and Performance Budgeting Working Group (PPBWG). Within its objectives (to identify key trends in program budgeting implementation and spending reviews and to learn from specific PEMPAL and international country examples in these areas), PPBWG has decided in Spring 2017 to focus its future work on program budgeting performance indicators, as PEMPAL countries have a common challenge in defining and tracking performance indicators. Consequently, the PPBWG collected examples or whole sets of performance indicators from eleven PPBWG countries in Summer 2017 and held a video-conference in September 2017 in which each member country presented on PPWG’s predefined criteria for assessing the performance indicators. In October 2017, PPBW further collected indicators from PPBWG countries in the area of health and education. Based on this, the PPBWG has drafted knowledge product on Performance Indicators in PEMPAL Countries: Trends and Challenges, which has been prepared and circulated to the members in the format of 50-slide presentation, while a shorter summary version was presented at the OECD’s Senior Budget Officials’ Network on Performance and Results.

She also explained to the Executive Committee that the PPBWG will plan a face-to-face workshop as a back-to-back event to the 2018 plenary meeting, given that the BCOP’s participation at the OECD event in November included only representatives from two members countries (Russian Federation and Turkey) based on OECD’s invitations. The Executive Committee was informed that the Resource Team has been in contact with the Austrian Ministry of Finance and the Federal Chancellery to organize the workshop for the PPBWG on March 13. Ms Gusarova noted that the materials from the OECD’s Senior Budget Officials’ Network on Performance and Results could be found following the most recent BCOP PEMPAL event link.

The knowledge product will be developed into a more formal document in Word format, to be ready for the plenary meeting. The next Program and Performance Budgeting Working Group meeting is planned as a back to back event to the 2018 BCOP plenary meeting in March 2018 in Vienna, Austria, to examine performance budgeting in Austria.

* 1. **Budget Literacy and Transparency Working Group**

Ms Belenchuk announced that Ms Deanna Aubrey left PEMPAL and thanked for her contribution on past work of the Budget Literacy and Transparency Working Group, including on most recent background paper developed to support discussions of the working group to conceptualize a knowledge product to assist in future reforms in public participation. This background paper was discussed during the September 2017 videoconference meeting of the BLTWG, along with the Information on new interesting international country cases provided by IBP from preliminary results of the latest Open Budget Survey currently underway and from GIFT. Next steps are for the BLTWG to review 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 late Spring 2018, while in meantime, the BLTWG is collected information on public participation from member countries based on a template prepared by the group. Ms Gusarova reminded that this information will be used as specific country cases for the knowledge product on public participation and urged members countries that have not sent their information to do so in the next period. She also informed the Executiev Committee that Ms Harika Masud from the World Bank agreed to comment and provide her feedback on the current draft of the knowledge product.

1. **BCOP 2018 Annual Plenary meeting**

Ms Carsimamovic gave an overview of the proposed Concept Note and Draft Agenda for the Plenary meeting (March 14-16). 2 days will be dedicated to two working groups’ topics, while the first day (half day) will be devoted to a new topic selected based on country priorities collected from the 2017 BCOP plenary meeting - intergovernmental fiscal relations. As mentioned above, prior to plenary meeting, on March 13, PPBWG will hold workshop, with one representative from each working group member country being invited to participate.

In terms of the overall topic of the plenary meeting, it encompasses all three subtopics (two working group topics and new topic on intergovernmental fiscal relations) into the broader topic of Improving Effectiveness and Accountability of Public Expenditure: Trends in Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations, Performance Budgeting, and Budget Participation.

After reviewing the planned presentations for each day of the plenary meeting, including presentations from working groups, from member countries, and from international organizations, the Executive Committee agreed with planned Agenda. The Committee also agreed that Mr Kanat Asangulov will deliver a presentation on update of BCOP activities, while Ms Belenchuk and Mr Begchin will present the activities of the working groups they lead. In addition, Ms. Belenchuk will moderate the third day of plenary meeting along with Maya Gusarova and/or Ms Harika Masud from the World Bank, while Mr Begchin and Ms Carsimamovic will moderate the second day. The first day will be moderated by Mr Alija Aljovic and Ms Iryna Scherbyna from the World Bank.

Ms Ruzanna Gabrielyan suggested to include the fiscal rules topic to the agenda. Ms Gusarova noted that the draft agenda was prepared based on the preferences and priorities of all country members that were announced at the previous meeting in Bishkek. The fiscal rules topic was discussed recently, at the Plenary meeting in Belarus (2016). Ms Gusarova noted that the fiscal rules topic is still relevant and the team will collect priorities during the Vienna meeting and it could be added to BCOP’s topics of interest for the next year, if sufficient interest from member countries exists.

The Executive Committee also discussed specific country cases that will be presented during the plenary meeting, as per Draft Concept Note and Agenda, and also confirmed that the potential topics for group discussions for Day 2 and 3 should be collected from member countries prior to the meeting in pre-event survey.

Ms Gusarova noted that the cultural program in Vienna will not be planned. She also asked Ms Belenchuk to plan to announce her deputies (BCOP Executive Committee Deputy Chairs) for the upcoming period during the plenary meeting.

1. **BCOP Action Plan 2017-18**

Ms Ksenia Galantsova reported on execution of BCOP’s budget for current year. Since the beginning of the new FY19 BCOP participated in 2 OECD events. 45K USD was spent for the July OECD CESEE SBO meeting and 18.5K USD for the November meeting of the OECD Network on Performance and Results.

She drew attention of the Executive Committee on the higher than planned costs of videoconference meetings and translations. On the day of the meeting, translation cost for PPBWG were about 12K USD, which were spent on translation of collected performance indicators from member countries and translation of the draft knowledge product. Thus, when preparing budget for the next year, BCOP should plan higher translation costs.

As for the budget for the 2018 plenary meeting in Vienna, details have not been confirmed yet, but Ms Gusarova informed the Executive Committee that the TCOP’s event costed around 130K USD for the same city and type of the event.

Ms Gusarova reminded that around 20K USD was saved from the last OECD meeting and can bey spent to the additional working group day in Austria.

Ms Gusarova presented an overview of the Action Plan for 2017-2018. Plenary in Vienna is confirmed for March 14-16, where a back to back meeting, on March 13, on Program Budgeting will be held. Budget literacy working group preliminary discussed the possibility to organize a Study visit to Portugal. The joint OECD SBO meeting scheduled for May 2018 in Croatia, with a possibility to perhaps organize a back to back meeting at the Deputy Minister level prior to that even. Ms Gusarova noted that BCOP could potentially share results of two working groups with Deputies. The Resource Team has asked the Executive Committee members to check initial interest of their Deputy Ministers for such an event and its potential topics so that the Executive Committee can further the discuss and make the final decision on this event during the Executive Committee meeting in March in Vienna.

Invitations for the Plenary meeting will be circulated in the middle of January (after the 10th).

Ms Gusarova also informed the Executive Committee on progress in terms of overall PEMPAL program budgets and plans for the next year. Budget was fully confirmed and everything planned for this year can be realized. The further budget is still being t discussed and tentatively COPs will have the same level of bufget available in 2018/2019 as in 2017/2018. The additional information will be coming during this year.

Meeting was concluded with shared well wishes for upcoming holidays.