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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships

Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships

Seventh session

Geneva, 30 November-1 December 2023

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda¹ for the seventh session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on 30 November 2023.²

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Policy discussion: Accelerating digital and green transformations and promoting women's empowerment and stakeholder engagement in Public-Private Partnerships and infrastructure projects in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Review of the work since the sixth session of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on 1-2 December 2022.
4. Implementation plan for 2023-2024.
5. Evaluation of the Economic Commission for Europe Subprogramme 4, and Subprogramme 6 by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services.
6. Election of officers.
7. Other business.

¹ Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations should register online and complete an electronic registration form available at <https://www.unece.org/ppp/wppp7.html>. Prior to the session, delegates (with the exception of delegates from the Geneva-based Missions) are requested to present themselves with a valid identification card/passport at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, Avenue de la Paix 8-14, for the issuance of an identification badge. Additional information for delegates is available on the ECE website at <https://www.ungeneva.org/en/about/practical-information>.

² Two 2-hour sessions will be organised from 10:00 to 12:00 and 15:00 to 17:00 on 30 November, and two 3-hour sessions will be organised from 10:00 to 13:00 and 15:00 to 18:00 on 1 December 2023.



8. Adoption of the report of the seventh session.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda

| <i>Title of document</i> | <i>Document symbol</i> | <i>For information/decision</i> |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Annotated provisional agenda | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/1 | Decision |

1. The Working Party will adopt the agenda of its seventh session.

Item 2. Policy discussion: Accelerating digital and green transformations and promoting women’s empowerment and stakeholder engagement in Public-Private Partnerships and infrastructure projects in support of the Sustainable Development Goals

2. Under this agenda item, member States will have the opportunity to explore how the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) approach to Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can catalyse sustainable development by harnessing digital and green technologies, empowering women and engaging stakeholders in the planning, design and implementation of projects. The policy discussion will explore best practices and strategies for integrating digital transformation, promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment, and optimising stakeholder engagement in PPP and infrastructure projects to achieve the SDGs.

3. The policy discussion will build on the cross-cutting theme of the 70th session of the Economic Commission for Europe (April 2023), which focused on “Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the ECE region”.

4. The agenda item will be structured in separate policy sessions as follows:

A. Session 1: Harnessing digital and green technologies for sustainable recovery and reconstruction projects using the ECE PPP and Infrastructure Evaluation and Rating System (PIERS)

5. Digital technologies can be leveraged to accelerate sustainable recovery and reconstruction projects in post-war and post-disaster contexts. Since the frequency of natural and man-made disasters increases worldwide, it is crucial to harness the opportunities for integrating digital technologies in recovery and reconstruction projects within the ECE region and beyond. The recovery and reconstruction process requires prompt coordination, communication, and action plans through various means, including digital technology applications. This session will focus on ways to integrate digital transformation in economic recovery and reconstruction and discuss the use of the PIERS methodology as a tool to attract finance in sustainable PPP and infrastructure projects, taking into account other multilateral platforms for sustainable infrastructure, including SOURCE.³

³ SOURCE is the multilateral platform for sustainable infrastructure.

B. Session 2: The contribution of the ECE PPPs for the SDGs approach to empower women and improve gender equality

6. The ECE PPPs for the SDGs approach strongly advocates for gender equality and women's empowerment in PPP and infrastructure projects, in particular through its five desirable outcomes, the ten guiding principles and the PIERS methodology. These tools provide a solid basis to mainstream a gender approach in PPP projects that contribute to the SDGs. However, gender equality and women's empowerment in PPP and infrastructure projects continue to lag behind globally. The session will address how the public sector can deliver PPP for the SDGs projects that promote gender equality, women's empowerment and help close gender gaps. The discussion will also contribute towards a proposed ECE practical guide on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through the ECE PPPs for the SDGs approach.

C. Session 3: Optimising stakeholder engagement in projects through the ECE PPP for the SDGs approach to catalyse sustainable development

7. Stakeholder engagement is one of the five desirable outcomes of the ECE PPPs for the SDGs approach. The importance of stakeholder engagement in PPPs for the SDGs is further elaborated in the PIERS methodology, where a number of criteria and indicators ensure that stakeholder engagement is present throughout the PPP lifecycle. This session aims to foster dialogue on optimising stakeholder participation in PPP projects to ensure wider social participation, leaving no one behind and addressing social impacts from project identification through to implementation. The discussion will also contribute towards a proposed ECE practical guide on enhancing stakeholder engagement in PPPs for the SDGs.

8. The detailed programme of the policy discussion will be developed in consultation with the Bureau and will be made available to participants on the ECE's website.⁴

Item 3. Review of the work since the sixth session of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on 1-2 December 2022

| <i>Title of document</i> | <i>Document symbol</i> | <i>For information/decision</i> |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Standard on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/3 | Information |
| Declaration on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/4 | Information |
| Putting the Guiding Principles on Public-Private Partnerships in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals into practice | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/5 | Information |
| Standard on Public-Private Partnerships in Railways | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/6 | Information |
| Standard on Public-Private Partnerships in Renewable Energy | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/7 | Information |
| Standard on Public-Private Partnerships in Roads | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/8 | Information |
| Involving reliable and independent experts to develop Public-Private Partnerships in support of the Sustainable Development Goals in low and middle- income countries | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/9 | Information |

⁴ The programme will be available at: <https://unece.org/ppp/wpppp7>

Guide on the pros and cons of simplifying and accelerating the delivery of PPP projects for the SDGs for sustainable economic recovery and reconstruction ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/10 Decision

Annual summary report of Bureau decisions since the sixth session of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on 1-2 December 2022 ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/INF.Information 1

9. The Working Party will review the PPP work since its last session in December 2022 on:

(a) Development of normative and policy documents: International PPP Standards, Guidelines, Guiding Principles, Declarations, and Recommendations; and

(b) Implementation of normative and policy documents: capacity-building activities and policy advisory services.

A. Development of normative and policy documents: International PPP Standards, Guidelines, Guiding Principles, Declarations, and Recommendations

10. The following document is being presented for consideration and endorsement by the Working Party:

(a) Guide on the pros and cons of simplifying and accelerating the delivery of PPP projects for the SDGs for sustainable economic recovery and reconstruction (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/10).

11. The following documents prioritised by the Bureau are submitted for information to the Working Party in line with the decision (Decision2022 – 4b.2)⁵ of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (the Committee) at its fifteenth session in May 2022 to change the name to “PPPs for the SDGs” and to progressively reissue a number of documents to reflect this change:

(a) Standard on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/3);

(b) Declaration on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/4);

(c) Putting the Guiding Principles on Public-Private Partnerships in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals into practice (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/5);

(d) Standard on Public-Private Partnerships in Railways (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/6);

(e) Standard on Public-Private Partnerships in Renewable Energy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/7);

⁵ The Committee Decision 2022 – 4b.2 - Regarding the continued use of the name “People-first PPPs for the SDGs”, the Committee took note of the results of the informal consultations conducted with interested delegations on this matter since the fifth session of the Working Party in November 2021, and decided to (a) change the name to “PPPs for the SDGs” and (b) progressively reissue the documents endorsed and adopted by the Committee and the Working Party on PPPs to reflect (a) above within the document quota allocated to the ECI subprogramme and without incurring additional costs. The Committee requested the secretariat to reissue three core documents within twelve months, and the rest of the documents within three years. The Committee requested the Bureau of the Working Party on PPPs to decide on which non-core documents should be prioritised during this period.

(f) Standard on Public-Private Partnerships in Roads (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/8); and

(g) Involving reliable and independent experts to develop Public-Private Partnerships in support of the Sustainable Development Goals in low and middle- income countries (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/9).

12. The Working Party will receive a progress report on the draft best practice guides at various stages of preparation and on the use of existing PPP standards, tools and best practice guides.

13. In line with Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2021/5/Rev.1), an annual summary report of the Bureau decisions (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/INF.1) will be submitted to and presented at the Working Party for information.

B. Implementation of normative and policy documents: capacity-building activities and policy advisory services

14. The Working Party will review the capacity-building activities and the policy advisory services undertaken since the last session.

15. The members of the Working Party will have the opportunity to take stock of past PPP activities and discuss effective means for the promotion and dissemination of this work, in particular through the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

Item 4. Implementation plan for 2023-2024

| <i>Title of document</i> | <i>Document symbol</i> | <i>For information/decision</i> |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Report of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on its sixth session | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2022/2 | Information |
| Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2023-2024 | ECE/CECI/2023/INF.6 | Information |
| Proposals for future work of the Working Party in support of PPPs for the SDGs | ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2023/INF.2 | Decision |

16. The Working Party will discuss proposals for work to be undertaken in the remainder of 2023 and in 2024 in accordance with the Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2023-2024 approved by the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (ECE/CECI/2023/INF.6).⁶

17. Building on the document on future work prepared and presented by the Bureau at the last session (ECE/CECI/PPP/WP/2022/INF.2), the Working Party will have the opportunity to hear proposals to launch work in 2024 on new standards, guidelines and policy

⁶ In particular, paragraph 16: “The focus of the work on PPPs is supporting ECE member States' use of PPPs to address a range of issues in the context of relevant cross-cutting Commission themes, sustainable economic recovery and reconstruction, corruption in PPPs, pandemic preparedness and response, food security, women's empowerment, and accelerating achievement of the SDGs in the ECE region. The ECE Guiding Principles on PPPs for the SDGs provide the normative basis for the work on PPPs.”

recommendations to be developed where the Working Party has a mandate.⁷ New proposals are subject to interest by experts participating in drafting teams and the availability of resources.

18. The Working Party will also discuss and decide, as appropriate, on proposals from member States.

19. Participants are encouraged to communicate to the meeting any expressions of interest by member States or other stakeholders for receiving, delivering, or hosting capacity-building activities in the priority areas of the Working Party's work. Requests from member States for capacity-building activities and policy advisory services will be considered based on available capacity and resources.

20. At its last session in 2023, the Committee emphasized the critical importance of extrabudgetary funding for continuing its work on PPP policy advice and capacity-building and called on donors and development partners to consider providing additional funding. Member States and donors are encouraged to bring to the attention of the session any expression to provide extrabudgetary support towards the ECE PPP work in support of the SDGs (such as funding or in-kind contributions, including the organization of seminars and networking initiatives).

Item 5. Evaluation of the Economic Commission for Europe Subprogramme 4, and Subprogramme 6 by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services

| <i>Title of document</i> | <i>Document symbol</i> | <i>For information/decision</i> |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| Evaluation of ECE Subprogramme 4, Economic Cooperation and Integration, and Subprogramme 6, Trade | E/AC.51/2023/5 Informal Document No. 2023/21 | Information Information |

21. In 2022, the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) evaluated the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, sustainability and integration of cross-cutting issues in Subprogramme 4: Economic Cooperation and Integration, and Subprogramme 6: Trade of the United Nations Economic Cooperation and Trade Division (ECTD) for the period 2018-2021. The evaluation was part of the United Nations Secretariat's regular programme, which periodically evaluates selected aspects of its operations. The Working Party will be briefed on the key findings and recommendations of the evaluation as they pertain to Subprogramme 4, the associated management response, and plans on how to implement the relevant recommendations.

22. Participants will have an opportunity to clarify questions and provide comments on the topics raised as well as offer suggestions on implementing relevant recommendations.

Item 6. Election of officers

23. The term of office of Bureau members expires at the end of the session and a new Bureau shall be elected pursuant to the Working Party's Rules of Procedure. The Working Party will elect its Bureau members for a two-year term.

⁷ The list of approved topics for PPP standards and practical guides is contained in document ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2022/2, Annex II.

Item 7. Other business

Dates of the next session

24. The secretariat proposes that the eighth session of the Working Party takes place in Geneva in the last quarter of 2024, subject to conference room availability at the Palais des Nations. The Working Party will decide on the dates of the next session.

Item 8. Adoption of the report of the seventh session

25. The Working Party will adopt the report of its seventh session.

III. Tentative timetable

| <i>Time</i> | <i>Agenda Item</i> |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Thursday, 30 November 2023 | |
| 10:00-12:00 | Item 1. Adoption of the agenda Item 2. Policy discussion: Accelerating digital and green transformations and promoting women's empowerment and stakeholder engagement in Public-Private Partnerships and infrastructure projects in support of the Sustainable Development Goals |
| 12:00-15:00 | Lunch break |
| 15:00-17:00 | Item 2. Policy discussion (cont'd) |
| Friday, 1 December 2023 | |
| 10:00-13:00 | Item 3. Review of the work since the sixth session of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on 1-2 December 2022 Item 4: Implementation plan for 2023-2024 |
| 13:00-15:00 | Lunch break |
| 15:00-18:00 | Item 5: Evaluation of the Economic Commission for Europe Subprogramme 4, and Subprogramme 6 by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services Item 6: Election of officers Item 7. Other business Item 8. Adoption of the report of the seventh session |