



Economic Commission for Europe**Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships****Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships****Third session**

Geneva, 3-4 December 2019

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Review of the work since the second session of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on 20-21 November 2018**Review of the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe-affiliated International Public-Private Partnerships Specialist Centres of Excellence****Note by the Secretariat***Background*

This document contains a review of the main work undertaken by the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to UNECE since the second session of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships in November 2018.

The Working Party is requested to take note of the main activities. These activities and others will be presented at the third session of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships by a member of the Bureau, under item 4 of the provisional agenda. The power-point presentation will be made available to delegates online.

I. Meetings of the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to the UNECE

First meeting of the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to the UNECE (3-4 December 2018, Beijing, China)

The first meeting of the PPP Specialist Centre of Excellence (Centres) affiliated to the UNECE International PPP Centre of Excellence (ICoE) took place in Beijing, China on 3-4

December 2018. Representatives of the Centres in China, France, Japan, Lebanon, Portugal, Spain and the United States were present.

The discussion (see Annex I) focused on the impact of the Centres, their role in the implementation of the evaluation methodology, capacity building and training, as well as some important governance issues. The outcome document produced is attached as Annex II.

Second meeting of the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to the UNECE (2 April 2019, Paris, France)

The second meeting of the Centres affiliated to the ICoE took place on 2 April 2019 in Paris, France under the rotating Chairmanship of Mr. Marc Frilet (Centre in Policies, Laws and Institutions). Representatives of the Centres in China (Tsinghua University and City University of Hong Kong), France, Japan, Lebanon, Portugal, Spain and the United States were present.

The discussion focused on the impact of the Centres, the evaluation methodology to score projects, the capacity building and training activities, governance issues and on the follow-up on the Beijing Statement of Intent.

Third meeting of the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to the UNECE

The third meeting of the UNECE-affiliated International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence was scheduled to take place in October 2019 in Louisiana under the rotating Chairmanship of Mr. David Dodd (Centre in Recovery and Resilience) but due to force majeure reasons, the meeting was postponed to 2-6 March 2020.

II. Mainstreaming the People-first approach to PPPs

Events on People-first PPP

- High Level Workshop “People-first PPP in practice: the new UNECE inclusive PPP delivery form and its multiplier impact on effective delivery of essential Public services” (1 April 2019, Paris, France): This meeting was organized by the Centre in France with the Paris Bar Association and was attended by representatives from the Centres, the Confederation of International Contractors’ Associations (CICA), World Association of PPP Units and experts (WAPPP) and other international experts. It focussed on discussing the distinctive features of the People-first approach to PPPs, exploring the needs for developing a toolkit for the implementation of People-first PPPs.
- 4th UNECE International PPP Forum (Geneva, 7 - 9 May 2019): The Centres organized and participated in a number of activities:
 - (i.) The Centre in France organized a masterclass on the fundamentals of People-first PPPs and their impact on improving access to essential services;
 - (ii.) The Centre in France organized a session on encouraging private operators to help countries deliver smaller-scale projects;
 - (iii.) The Centre in France organized a session on policy, law and institutions in PPPs;
 - (iv.) The Centre in Portugal organized a session on water and sanitation; and

- (v.) Representatives of the Centres in France, Japan, Portugal, Spain and the United States participated in the Policy Debate: A New “Social Contract” for People-first PPP Stakeholder Engagement.

Evaluation methodologies

- The Centre in China (Tsinghua University) developed a methodology to score PPP enabling environments in Chinese cities; and
- The Centre in Spain (IESE Business School) developed an evaluation methodology to score PPP projects against the People-first outcomes and the SDGs.

III. Capacity building and training

Translation of UNECE PPP standards and Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs

The Centres in Beijing (Tsinghua University) and in Barcelona (IESE Business School) took a leadership role to translate into Chinese and Spanish respectively, the UNECE PPP Standards and Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs, bringing the work of UNECE on PPPs to 500 million Spanish-speaking people and over 1 billion Chinese-speaking people.

Study tours

The Centre in France organized a study tour in Marseille in May 2019 for a high-level Government delegation from China.

The Centre in Portugal organized a visit in Lisbon for the senior representatives from the National Development and Reform Commission of China (NDRC) to promote and explain the People-first approach to PPPs in the water sector (13-14 May 2019).

Annex I

Main points and follow up action agreed at the first meeting of the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence

“Delivering ‘as One’ for Sustainable Development through People-first PPPs” (3-4 December 2018, Beijing, China)

The first meeting of the PPP Specialist Centre of Excellence (Centres) affiliated to the UNECE International PPP Centre of Excellence (ICoE) took place in Beijing, China on 3-4 December 2018. Representatives of the Centres in China, France, Japan, Lebanon, Portugal, Spain and the United States were present. The coordinator of the proposed Centre in Germany attended as an observer.

The discussion focused on the impact of the Centres, their role in the implementation of the evaluation methodology, capacity building and training, as well as some important governance issues. An outcome document (Annex I), with a number of commitments and tasks to be undertaken in 2019, was also agreed by the Centres. A draft code of conduct for the Centres was also discussed (Annex II). Below are the main points discussed and the corresponding agreed follow-up action:

I. Impact of the Centres

Main points:

- There is a growing expectation to see more evidence of the impact by the Centres;
- More coordination is needed among the Centres and the small hub in Geneva;
- Centres are a vehicle to promote the UNECE People-first PPP coordinating approach;
- Need to move away from bilateral exchanges between individual Centres and the hub;
- Need for regular meetings of the Centres and a rotating Chairmanship to enhance cooperation and coordination, ultimately leading to more visibility and impact;
- Explore the creation of a common platform to exchange information; and
- A marketing expert might be engaged to better package the Centres' outputs. Suggestions on this will be welcome.

Follow up:

- Prepare a press release on the resolve of the Centres to achieve impact and results as one collective body. Such a press release can be issued and communicated by the Centres in their respective countries;
- Hold regular meetings under a rotating chairmanship beginning in January 2019;
- Prepare regular reports of the Centres;
- Centres should keep their respective Permanent Missions in Geneva informed on their work by holding frequent meetings/calls with the diplomats;
- Centres should encourage their Missions to use all opportunities to underscore the important work carried out by the Centre in their respective country;

- By the next meeting, agree on a concrete strategy on how the Centres' activities should be more impactful.

II. Evaluation methodology to score projects

Main points:

- The Centre in China (TUPPP) presented its methodology to score PPP enabling environments in Chinese cities;
- Evaluation methodology to be developed by a UNECE multi-stakeholder Project Team, the purpose of which is to score/evaluate projects;
- A two-step approach proposed for the Centres to implement the methodology:
 - (i). **1st step** – Centres to test the methodology by evaluating projects. This would serve to fine tune the tool;
 - (ii). **2nd step** – Centres certificate the individuals/entities who would evaluate and score the projects.

Follow up:

- Invite interested Centres to join the Project Team developing the evaluation methodology; and
- At the next meeting, continue elaborating on the Centres' role in the implementation of the evaluation methodology.

III. Capacity building and training

Main points:

- Training by the Centres could focus on specific areas (e.g. train young female entrepreneurs);
- Provide joint training and capacity building activities (e.g. resilient transport infrastructure); and
- Look into the feasibility of developing a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) on People-first PPPs in various languages.

Follow up:

- The Centres in Beijing (TUPPP) and in Barcelona (IESE) take a leadership role to prepare a MOOC programme on People-first PPPs in Chinese, English and Spanish; and
- At the next meeting, a draft strategy on priority capacity building to be delivered by the Centres should be discussed and agreed.

IV. Governance issues

Main points:

- A code of conduct for the Centres is an important step to enhance the transparency and good governance of the ICoE;
- This Code could be supplemented by a more detailed users' guide;

- Periodic reporting by the Centres is very important to ensure transparency and show impact.

Follow up:

- The secretariat will finalise the code of conduct together with the Bureau for submission to the Working Party at its third session in December 2019;
- The secretariat will circulate a revised outline to be used by the Centres in its reporting.

V. Outcome document: Beijing Statement of Intent

Main points:

- A system of a rotating chairmanship among the Centres was agreed: France (Mr. Marc Frilet was designated as the first Chairperson for a period of six months);
- The Centres will prepare case studies and will select 20 case studies per year that comply with the People-first outcomes;
- The Centres will promote People-first projects in support of the SDGs; and
- The Centres agreed to address priority areas in their training and capacity building activities in countries.

Follow up:

- Post the outcome document on the UNECE and the Centres' websites;
- Inform the Bureau and the member States about the commitments undertaken by the Centres for 2019 (a presentation will be made by the Bureau to the Working Party with a focus on impact and results of the Centres); and
- At the next meeting, deadlines will be discussed and agreed on the programme of work/list of activities agreed by the Centres for 2019 in the outcome document and beyond.

Annex II

Beijing Statement of Intent by the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to the UNECE

1. *Recalling* Paragraph 48 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development which calls for the promulgation of guidelines for the use of PPPs;
2. *Stressing that* the achievement of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development involves designing and implementing a People-first approach to PPPs;
3. *Recognizing that* the People-first PPP model developed by UNECE is vital to make infrastructure and public service projects - whether at national or cross-border level - “fit for purpose” for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
4. *Mindful of* our duties to bring significant contribution to the advancement of the SDGs through People-first PPPs;
5. We, the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to the UNECE International PPP Centre of Excellence (ICoE) met in Beijing, China, on 3-4 December 2018 to discuss future directions for our work and agreed on the following lines of cooperation:
 - (i). We will continue to develop and promote together the concept of **People-first PPPs**;
 - (ii). We will support, in our respective areas of speciality, the promotion of **PPP projects that are aligned** with the UNECE Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs in support of the SDGs;
 - (iii). We will consult with our respective constituencies and networks on the **values of People-first PPPs**;
 - (iv). We will support the work of the UNECE project team developing the **UNECE evaluation methodology** and will make sure that this tool for scoring projects against the People-first criteria is widely promoted and implemented in our respective countries and regions;
 - (v). We will reach out to our networks to **prepare People-first PPP case studies** according to our respective templates. The latter would be put in a format that can be reproduced and incorporated into a database, with a view to showcase these projects and demonstrate how they meet the People-first outcomes and advance the SDGs;
 - (vi). We will select **twenty (20) PPP projects per annum** following the template mentioned above, complying with the five People-first outcomes;
 - (vii). We will address priority issues by undertaking for example **training and capacity building activities** in specific areas, targeting specific groups (e.g. young people including young female entrepreneurs, other vulnerable groups, etc.) to promote small scale, people-to-people projects that are directly beneficial to local communities;
 - (viii). We will design and **carry out other activities** that significantly contribute to promoting UNECE People-first PPP programme (cooperating more extensively on the Belt and Road Initiative, helping improve standards and international best practices, etc.);

- (ix). We agree to hold regular meetings of the Specialist Centres under a **rotating chairmanship** and will give media attention to this chairmanship in the pursuit of our objective to publicize the UNECE People-first PPP approach;
- (x). We will provide significant input to the UNECE secretariat for the **Annual Report** on our respective activities to demonstrate the impact of our work on the promotion of the People-first PPP approach and the advancement of the SDGs; and
- (xi). We pledge to adhere to the code of conduct, including equal rights for men and women in our activities.