

BCOP Working Group on BCOP Budget Literacy

Strengthening Budget Literacy - Learning from International Experiences

Workshop, May 20, 9.30 -14.00, Warsaw, Poland

Background and Context

This workshop is a part of the Working Group on Budget Literacy, established by the Budget Community of Practice (BCOP) under BCOP Action Plan for FY15. The Working Group is led by BCOP Executive Committee members from the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation. Its activities are supported by the World Bank resource team.

Lately, enhancing budget openness has been a priority for most PEMPAL countries. Findings of the Open Budget Index (OBI) survey in 2012 also demonstrate that in many cases the governments do not ensure their citizens and civil society organizations with sufficient opportunities to participate in the budget processes, and this is the first time this aspect was surveyed¹. A number of efforts undertaken by the Russian Federation Ministry of Finance to prepare citizens' budget led it to conclude that it was not enough to raise budget transparency in order to ensure efficient budget administration. For this purpose, it is necessary to improve citizens' budget literacy as well. In 2014, the Ministry of Finance initiated a joint effort together with the World Bank to implement a Program of measures aimed to improve budget literacy among the secondary school students. A number of representatives from PEMPAL countries showed interest in the development of budget literacy and learning about effective approaches within a thematic Work Group.

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 in order to generalize it and develop recommendations for PEMPAL countries and "new knowledge products" enabling dissemination of such practice across the ECA region.

The objectives of this Working Group can be expanded, and its members can be offered opportunity to develop and discuss with their colleagues situation in their own countries by filling in a quick online survey and later on doing an overview based on the offered analytical model.

Participants

The Working Group will function as a small group under the PEMPAL program. Though the Working Group has been launched for countries of members of the BCOP Executive Committee, at the BCOP plenary meeting in February 2015, many other countries expressed their interest to participate. Therefore, the following countries are invited to the Workshop in Warsaw: Albania, Russia, Armenia, Kyrgyz Republic, Croatia, Turkey, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Romania and Moldova.

World Bank Team:

Maya Gusarova, Public Sector Specialist, Governance Practice Group

Deanna Aubrey, Public Finance Management Consultant, PEMPAL Strategic Advisor

¹ Concept Paper for the PEMPAL Plenary "Fiscal Transparency and Accountability", May 2014, Annex A.

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AGENDA

- 10:00 -10:30 **Opening**
- Welcoming of the participants*
Emilia Skrok, Senior Economist, the World Bank in Poland
- Gelardina Prodani, BCOP Deputy Chair, Secretary General, Albania Ministry of Finance
- Introduction of the agenda*
Maya Gusarova, Coordinator of BCOP Resource Team, Public Sector Specialist, World Bank
- Participants introductions*
- 10:30 – 11:40 *Overview of the Working Group activities*
Elena Zyunina, Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation
- Budget Literacy and Accessibility of Budget Documents to Citizens in PEMPAL Countries*, Deanna Aubrey, Public Finance Management Consultant, PEMPAL Strategic Advisor
- Improving Budget Literacy in Russia: Approaches, Recent Developments and Early Lessons Learnt*, Andrey Blokhin, Deputy Director of Budget Policy Department, Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation
- Questions and Answers
- 11:40 - 12:00 Coffee break
- 12:00 – 13:30 *Budget Literacy Education in UK: Tax Facts Teaching Resource*, Maureen Pamplin, Head of Sustainability, HM Revenue & Customs, United Kingdom
- Student Budget Consultation Program in Canada*, Paul Anderson, Stakeholder Relations and Fundraising Manager, Civix, Canada
- Questions and Answers
- 13:30-14:00 Discussion: What are the lessons from international experience, that are relevant to use to address the key challenges for improving budget literacy in PEMPAL countries?
- 14:00 -14:10 Wrap-up

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| 14:10 – 15:30 | Lunch |
| 15:30 – 17:00 | BCOP Executive Committee meeting |