

Leadership team meeting - UNECE People-first Impact Assessment Tool

1 September 2020 – Videoconference (4.30 to 5.40pm, Geneva time)

Attendance:

Anand Chiplunkar, Doris Chevalier, James Stewart, Jean-Patrick Marquet, Joan Enric Ricart, Jordi Salvador, Melissa Peneycad, Pedro Neves, Tetiana Bessarab, Valéry Peltier.

Apologies: Amanda Loeffen, Pierre Sarrat.

Secretariat: Geoffrey Hamilton, Tony Bonnici, Claudio Meza, Antonin Menegaux.

Minutes:

- **James Stewart** thanked Melissa Peneycad for her work on improving the evaluation methodology and making it operational. He also thanked the participants for their comments and contributions in the last few weeks. He mentioned that the purpose of the meeting is to update the team about the work undertaken by Melissa and the secretariat over the summer months and get the last comments on board on the methodology and discuss ways for its implementation.
- **Geoffrey Hamilton** thanked the leadership group for its great contribution and commitment to this project as the methodology is now in a final version and of very good quality.
- **James Stewart** reminded the participants that the role of the Project Team was to develop the evaluation methodology and thus, as this task has been achieved, the Project Team is coming to an end.
- **Melissa Peneycad** presented a summary of the work realised by the Project Team until the Public Review period which ran from June to August 2020. She also mentioned the work of Pedro Neves to test and get feedback on the evaluation methodology. She further informed the participants about her work, together with the secretariat, to include the comments received during the Public Review period and from Bureau members, improve the consistency and quality of the benchmarks, and develop a scoring mechanism. The latter gives the same weight to each benchmark which are scored against three performance level (good, better and best practice). A linear point scale is then applied to each performance level with a parity factor based on the location of the project. Additional points are also given to project that have published a Statement of Intent. She then showcased the latest version of the self-assessment tool in Excel incorporating the latest benchmarks, indicators and scoring mechanism. Finally, she referred to the guidance document on the evaluation methodology that she developed, which is aimed at helping users of the self-assessment tool.
- **Jean-Patrick Marquet** suggested to also include into the Statement of Intent a firm commitment by the user to People-first and that furthermore the user intends to submit the project to be certified through a reputable third-party recognition scheme, such as that being proposed by UNECE. On the location criterion, he also stressed that it is unfair to disadvantage projects in developed countries. The methodology should rather assess all projects the same way, although an extra “award” could be given to projects developed in difficult markets. He further stressed that there are too many mandatory indicators in the current methodology (more than 30% of all the indicators) and that these are unevenly distributed amongst the five People-first outcomes. He proposed a more balanced distribution among the outcomes.
- **Joan Enric Ricart** expressed his agreement with the above issues, especially the imbalance of mandatory indicators amongst the People-first outcomes.
- **James Stewart** suggested to leave the decision on the above issues to the secretariat.

- **Pedro Neves** suggested that, considering the willingness of developers to use the tool, to start using the assessment tool as it is now and keep working on improving the methodology.
- **James Stewart** agreed with the above comment and suggested to start disseminating and use the tool as it is now, let it run for 12 months, review the progress and take the lessons learned to produce an improved version.
- **Melissa Peneycad** stressed that given the long lifecycle of infrastructure projects, project developers may want to use the same version of the evaluation methodology at different stages of a project. There might therefore be a need to maintain multiple versions of the tool in the future.
- **Geoffrey Hamilton** informed the group that a document on the evaluation methodology is being prepared by the secretariat based on the work of the Project Team, that will be submitted to the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships for endorsement by its member States in December 2020.
- **Tetiana Bessarab** mentioned the work being realised by the secretariat to develop legislative provisions on People-first PPPs and that it is important that this work is harmonised with the evaluation methodology.
- **James Stewart** suggested the secretariat to disseminate the self-assessment tool in an online platform in order to collect data on its use.
- **Geoffrey Hamilton** informed the participants about the ongoing collaboration with SIF to implement the self-assessment tool in the SOURCE online platform.
- **Valéry Peltier** informed that the SOURCE platform will allow for the collection of data on the use of the self-assessment tool.
- **Melissa Peneycad** stressed the importance of maintaining an Excel self-assessment tool in addition to the online self-assessment tool, for project teams
- **James Stewart** remarked that the life of the Project Team is soon coming to an end once the methodology is completed. He added that the purpose of the Project Team is to provide technical advice to the secretariat and that the methodology belonged to the UNECE. On its implementation, he suggested that the UNECE might want to involve some people in the Project Team for help and support, or set up a small expert group, but he argued that individuals participating in this group would be in a separate function. In summing up, he said that there is agreement in the team to get the methodology out now and review in 12 months. He added that we need one more meeting of the team and requested the secretariat to come up with a roll out plan for peer review by the team before winding down the project team.

Follow-up

- **The secretariat** will incorporate the comments received from the leadership group to finalise the evaluation methodology and continue working on the recognition scheme, self-assessment tool and guidance document.
- **The secretariat** will prepare a roll out plan for the evaluation methodology by the next meeting
- A last meeting of the leadership team will be held at a later date.