



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development

Business Environment Working Group Meeting

Monday, 24 February 2020

Minutes of Meeting (Teleconference)

Approved by email on Friday 13 March 2020.

PRESENT

Andreja Marusic (World Bank Group, BEWG Chair)	Toru Homma (JICA)
Kåre Johard (SIDA)	Siobhan Kelly (FAO)
Michelle McKenna Stewart (DFID)	Martin Weidner (GIZ)
Anastasia de Santos (USAID)	Brigitte Bruhin (SECO)
Moussa Traore (USAID)	Laura Atenza (EU)
Peter Stoffelen (Netherlands)	Goran Vranic (World Bank)
Severine Deboos (ILO)	Jim Tanburn (DCED Secretariat)
Anna Schrenk (UNIDO)	Amy Rice (DCED Secretariat)
Bernardo Calzadilla-Sarmiento (UNIDO)	Simon White (Consultant to BEWG)

APOLOGIES

Matthias Altmann (EU)

Andreja Marusic (Chairperson) opened the meeting at 15:00 CET.

The Minutes of Last Meeting (21 October 2019, previously approved) were confirmed. There was no business arising.

The meeting agenda was confirmed.

Promoting structural and economic transformation through BER

Kåre Johard (SIDA) and Michelle McKenna (DFID) provided an introduction and update on this work item, reminding the meeting that the technical report on this topic had been approved in August 2019. A policy brief is currently being prepared in collaboration with the Market Systems Development Working Group, which had also previously produced a technical report. The draft brief has been through a few versions and a penultimate draft will soon be shared with the BEWG for a final round of comments.

It is anticipated that a webinar will be organised to coincide with the publication of the policy brief. A provisional date of 12 May 2020 has been set.

The World Bank Group is also finalising work on jobs and economic transformation. Similarly, USAID is finalising a new economic growth policy that focuses on economic transformation. Both of these products could be referenced (possibly with a speaker) in the proposed webinar.

There was much discussion on the webinar. Indeed, it appeared that there may be a demand for more than one webinar focusing on different topics or themes associated with economic transformation.

AGREEMENT

It was agreed that the draft policy brief would be circulated to the BEWG members for comment. The task team will then organise the proposed webinar or webinars.

Use of new technologies in regulatory delivery

Andreja provided an introduction and update on this work item. The technical report has been completed and approved. Simon White and Goran Vranic (World Bank) had produced a draft policy brief, which had been circulated for comment. Andreja described how the digital economy is a new area of practice in the World Bank.

Simon White spoke to the draft policy brief.

Siobhan Kelly (FAO) recommended:

- The good practice for donors should include a reference to capacity building and literacy.
- If possible, cases should include private sector examples. Goran indicated that there are examples of registration functions, such as land and business registration, being outsourced to the private sector. Indeed, the World Bank is planning more work on this.
- Figures from the technical report on data analysis could be included, if there is room.
- Access to data and data analysis could be drawn out more in the brief.

Goran indicated the World Bank Group is preparing a database of cases using new digital technologies.

Andreja described some recent work in Croatia where the government is facing challenges in the application of new technologies. The government gazette is quite restrictive in terms of how it can be used. Croatia is planning to use machine learning for business registration. Andreja will keep the group posted on this.

Bernardo Calzadilla-Sarmiento (UNIDO) suggested this work explore the link to standards; ensuring standards are used as a basis for business registration.

Anastasia de Santos (USAID) asked if there was any overlap in this work with the World Bank's work on good regulation. It was noted that the current policy brief is focused on regulatory delivery and not regulation making.

BER in fragile contexts

Martin Weidner (GIZ) provided an introduction and update on this work item. The TOR had been used in a search for a consultant and the appointment of a consultant would be made in the coming days.

BEWG members would be approached soon to provide their advice on:

- Documents to be reviewed;
- Experts to be interviewed;
- Any programmes or project in operation that could be reviewed.

Anastasia introduced Moussa Traore (USAID) who is working on this topic in USAID—particularly in promoting ‘long-term resilience’ and drawing on USAID’s experience in Afghanistan and Haiti.

Laura Atenza (EU) introduced herself. It is her first time at a BEWG meeting. She is happy to connect with this work item. The EU is currently drafting BER guidelines. The first version of this is almost completed and the topic FCAS could be included in a later, second version.

Michelle indicated was is happy to facilitate introductions to DFID colleagues and partners working on BER in fragile states.

Siobhan expressed an interest in being involved in this work item.

NEXT STEPS

The BEWG will be informed about the selection of the consultant and asked to provide the information identified above.

The aim is to present a first draft report at the meeting in June 2020.

New and emerging trends in PPD

Andreja provided an update on this topic, which is somewhat connected to the new technologies topic and is looking at the use of new technologies for public-private dialogue (PPD).

The TOR for a consultant has been produced and a consultant commissioned. A first draft report structure has been produced and Andreja will circulate this in the coming days. The work will be accelerated in order to ensure a completed draft can be discussed in June 2020.

NEXT STEPS

Members are asked to respond to the draft report structure when it is circulated.

Business and Investment climate conference

Andreja described how the notion of a ‘conference’ has been downsized to a ‘seminar’, which will be structured around two or three key speakers drawn from senior agency representatives, academics, programme partners, etc.

Brigitte Bruhin (SECO) has written to Martin Godel (SECO) regarding his availability to speak and is awaiting a reply. She indicated that SECO is happy to assist in the development of the seminar’s programme.

Siobhan indicated that the FAO has commissioned work on private sector involvement in food production.

Michelle and Kåre asked whether the seminar was only looking backwards (i.e., last 15 years) as well as the future (i.e., future trends). **There was general agreement that the seminar should do both.**

There was discussion on the value of inviting experts from developing economies and getting an ‘on the ground’ perspective. Ethiopia was cited as a good example.

Is there a budget for the seminar? Yes, funds were allocated, but this was for a larger event. GIZ had also promised funds to the larger conference. This issue would be explored once possible speakers are identified.

NEXT STEPS

BEWG members are encouraged to consider the identification of speakers as a brainstorm. Please send any ideas or proposal for speakers ASAP.

Webinar series

Anastasia spoke on the recent gender and BER webinar, which was very successful.

Other webinar topics and plans include:

- Promoting structural and economic transformation through BER (provisional date: 12 May 2020) — may involve more than one webinar;
- Use of new technologies in regulatory delivery (date to be set to coincide with release of policy draft)
- BER and Investment Promotion (date still to be set with JICA);
- Results measurement for BER (Anastasia offered to help organise this; Michelle expressed an interest in the topic).

Work planning for 2020-21

Simon describe past work planning processes and indicated the first step is to brainstorm on possible work items. These might include a continuation of existing work items or the identification of new work items.

AGREED

Simon will circulate information for a brainstorming of work items for 2020-21.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be a physical meeting in Vienna, hosted by the World Bank Group and coinciding with the World Bank global competitiveness report.

The meeting would be in the afternoon of Monday, 23 March 2020, while the report launch will be on the morning of Tuesday, 24 March 2020.

If you are planning to attend this, please let Simon know as well as Dalia Shehata Ali from the IFC: dali2@ifc.org

The agenda for the meeting will be circulated soon.

Other business

Anastasia described the recent release of USAID's evidence review on SMEs. This is available here: marketlinks.org/event/growing-small-and-medium-enterprises-what-works

Closure

Andreja closed the meeting at 16:45, thanking all participants.