Mapping peer learning initiatives in public sector reforms in development
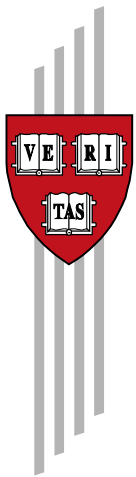
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Center for International Development
at Harvard University

Mapping peer learning initiatives in public sector reforms in development

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Glossary of terms and concepts

Acronyms

AADP	Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management Peer Assistance Network
ACN	OECD Anti-Corruption Network (Eastern Europe and Central Asia)
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfCoP	African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results
AfriTAC	IMF African Technical Assistance Centers
ANCPI	National Agency for Cadastre and Property Registration (Romania)
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AREC	Macedonia Agency for Real Estate Cadaster
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development (now DFAT)
BPSR	Bureau of Public Sector Reforms (Nigeria)
CABRI	Collaborative African Budget Reform Initiative
CAFRAD	African Training and Research Center in Administration for Development
CEF	Center for Excellence in Finance (Slovenia)
CHU	Central Harmonization Unit (Hungary)
CLEAR	Centers for Learning on Evaluation And Results
COP	Community of Practice
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DG	Director General
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIP	Effective Institutions Platform
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GoPemPal	Government Performance Management Peer Assisted Learning (India)
GoV	Government of Vietnam
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
HR	Human resources
IAACA	International Association of Anticorruption Authorities
IACOP	PEMPAL Internal Audit Community of Practice
IFC	International Financial Corporation
INROSAI	International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions
INTRAC	International NGO Training and Research Centre
IPAC	Institute of Public Administration of Canada
IPPIS	Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (Nigeria)
IT	Information Technology
LEND	Club de Madrid network for "Leaders Engaged in New Democracies"
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (South Africa)
M of LGRD&C	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (Bangladesh)
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoLISA	Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs (Vietnam)
NANA	Gambia's National Nutrition Agency
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NQI	National Quality Infrastructure (Uzbekistan)
OBB	Outcome-based Budgeting
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PALS	World Vision Project Model Accelerated Learning and Support
PATH II	Land Administration Program Second Phase (Honduras)
PEMNA	Public Expenditure Management Network in Asia
PEMPAL	Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning network
PFM	Public financial management

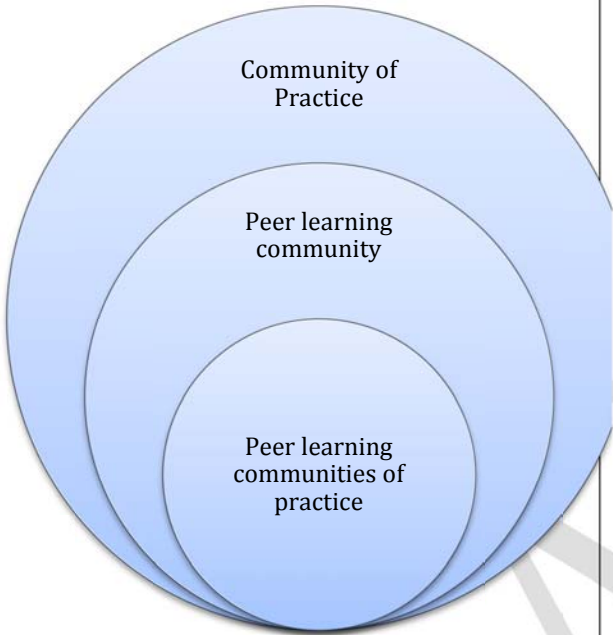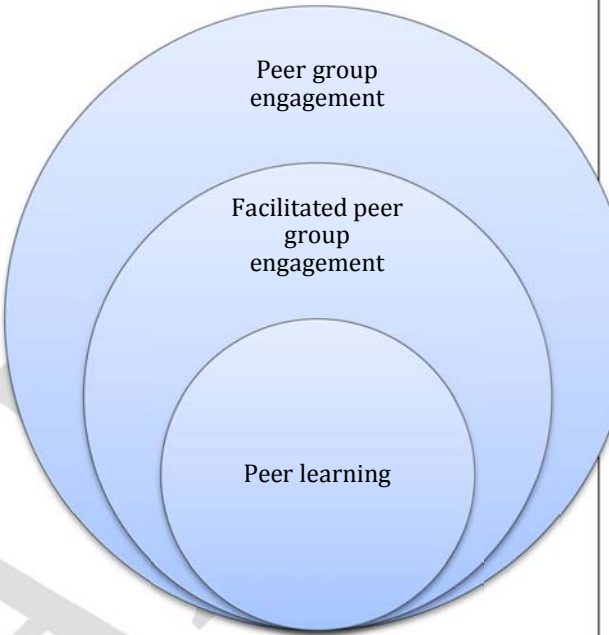|	
PIC Systems	Public Internal Control systems (EU).
PISA	OECD Programme for International Student Assessment
R4D TAP	Results for Development Transparency and Accountability Program
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SOE	State-Owned Enterprise
SP	Social Protection
STAREP	Strengthening Auditing and Reporting in the Countries of the Eastern Partnership)
SWFs	Sovereign Wealth Funds
TAXGIP	Tax Administrators eXchange for Global Innovative Practices
TCI	The global practitioners network for competitiveness, clusters and innovation
UZstandart	National agency responsible for NQI (Uzbekistan)
WAHO	West African Health Organization
WOP Africa Project	Water Operators Partnership, African Development Bank

Terminology

Community of Practice	Groups of people who, despite geographical distance, share a concern or a passion for something that they do and generally seek to learn how to do it better as many of them interact regularly (adapted from (Wenger, n/d, p.1). Communities of practice comprise: ***a professional/technical/functional domain*** (they are not merely a club of friends or a network of connections between people and have an identity defined by a shared interest and set of competences); ***a community*** (members engage in joint activities and build relationships that enable them to learn from each other); and ***a practice*** (members are practitioners with a shared repertoire of experiences, stories, tools and ways of addressing recurring problems) (Wenger, n/d).
Facilitated peer group engagement	Actively bringing together groups of potential peers, selected on criteria such as function or professional affiliation.
Facilitating organizations	The groups or organizations that are supporting peer group engagement.
Knowledge generation	Producing and promoting some kind of knowledge to share.
Learning Alliances	Collaborative multi-stakeholder groupings of institutions/organizations that are willing to actively share experiences on and approaches to public sector reforms, using different peer learning tools and methods to engage with each other over time through continuous, mutual learning about effective approaches to public sector reform and what makes peer learning processes successful (GPEDC, 2014).
Learning tools	Devices or techniques used during peer engagements, including: • **Modes of meeting** such as: large group meetings (like annual workshops); small group meetings (where only a few peers engage in more close-quarters engagement than an annual conference would allow); online and virtual engagement mechanisms and telecommunication devices (allowing peers to connect outside of face-to-face contexts). • **Focus areas for discussion** such as: externally produced knowledge products (like expert papers on different budgeting reforms); common assessment products (review templates); expert group reviews (where external experts analyze reviews); externally produced knowledge products; peer-produced knowledge products • **Shared experiences** such as site visits (where different delegations can visit others to learn first-hand about new ideas); • **Formal training sessions.**
Peer contracts	Soft contracts to foster commitment by individuals and their organizations to work together, attend peer meetings, communicate regularly, and to apply lessons learned in one's own organization.
Peer group engagement	Groups of potential peers, selected on criteria such as function or professional affiliation, brought together.
Peer interaction logistics	Organizational challenges facing peer group facilitators, including: • Ensuring peers have the time to engage with peers (at face-to-face events); • Ensuring peers have means, time to engage with peers (after face-to-face events); • Finding the appropriate venues for face-to-face peer engagement; and • Finding the appropriate media for non face-to-face peer engagement.
Peer learning	Public officials or other practitioners with some responsibility for reform design gaining practical insights into technical reform options and tactical modes of implementation from each other.
Peer learning communities of practice	Specific professional, technical or functional domains which peer learners may focus on within their overall peer learning (e.g. the Budget, Internal Audit and Treasury communities of practice within PEMPAL (Folscher, 2009, 2012).
Peer learning community	A group of people within a larger community of practice who come together to learn from each other.

Peer learning goals	Specified measures of the degree to which intermediate and final objectives have been achieved. **Intermediate objectives:** • Peer group foundational engagement established; • Peer group engagement mechanisms lead to sustained individual contacts; • Sustained individual contacts lead to practical peer learning. **Final objective:** Peer learning applied to create change at scale.
Peer reviews	A process by which a country or an agency assesses its performance against a set of benchmarks with the assessment often facilitated, and always ultimately reviewed, by a panel of country/agency peer experts. Peer reviews are a "facilitated peer group engagement" and are generally intended to assist in setting an agenda for reform, but that does not necessarily refer to improving the knowledge and skills or specific senior staff through sustained individual level contact – although it might. Thus peer reviews may or may not lead to peer learning and skill-building at the individual level. Peer reviews at the country level are an example of "soft modes of governance" by which policy dialogue is pursued and a general "best practice" agenda set, without any particular concern to develop individual skills.
Peer selection	The development and use of criteria for selecting and connecting peers with similar profiles.
Reflection mechanisms for application and diffusion	Discussion and review of efforts to ensure that lessons learned by individuals are actually reinforced and taken to scale.
Sharing forward	Ensuring lessons learned go beyond the individual to their home organization.
Theory of change	"(T)he rationale behind an… intervention, describing the relationships – and identifying the assumed links – between activities and desired outcomes. It shows a series of expected consequences…" (Dart, Hall, & Rudland, 2010, p.17).
Transformational change in the public sector	Significant improvements in public sector capacity envisaged by the post-Busan process and specifically implied by the negotiation of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

Concepts: people and activities

The people – peer learning communities take place within an overall community of practice, but can have specialist communities within them	**The activities** – peer engagement can happen for all manner of reasons, but it can be purposely facilitated and that can (but does not automatically) lead to peer learning
Community of Practice Peer learning community Peer learning communities of practice	Peer group engagement Facilitated peer group engagement Peer learning

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Introduction

Background and motivation for this work

The origins of this work lie in the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness conference in Busan and its call for a less didactic, "one size fits all" point of entry to improving state capacity (Various, 2011). The "Effective Institutions Platform"(EIP)[1], an international partnership of over 60 high, middle, and low income countries and organizations (multilateral and bilateral development agencies, civil society, think tanks) is seeking to operationalize the insight that that there is as much or more to be gained from the tactical and strategic responses of other reformers than from "first best" technical advice from experts.

The insight derives from the "new realist"[2] approaches to development in general and governance and public sector management in particular ('Doing Development Differently' workshop, 2014; Andrews, 2013; Andrews, Pritchett, & Woolcock, 2012; Blum, Manning, & Srivastava, 2012; Booth, 2014; Booth & Unsworth, 2014; World Bank, 2000, 2012b). Authors contributing to this way of thinking point out that it is expensive and difficult to find out what is really happening before, during, and after reforms. The incentives for reform actors to describe de jure aspirations rather than de facto achievements, and the unobservable nature of the changes which must take in the behaviors of the "distributed agents" ("budgeters, accountants, and such in sector ministries, provinces, and districts" (Andrews, 2014, p.1)) for reforms to be meaningful, combine to mean that knowledge about public sector reforms in general (what tends to work?), and knowledge about public sector reforms in context (what seems to work here?) are both very limited.

The new realists respond to these related problems of limited information about the real nature of reforms and the rewards for over-emphasizing anticipated rather than real impacts from public sector reform by emphasizing the importance of the tacit, experiential knowledge of practitioners responsible for reform, downplaying the traditional emphasis on standardized solutions and replacing the rather detached notions of "vision" and "political will" with an emphasis on practical problem-solving. They point out that practitioners who have lived through reform are more likely to know its actual impact, and practitioners who must implement reform are more likely to spot early on whether it seems to be doing what was claimed.

These ideas resonate loudly with prior work emphasizing the strategic side of public sector reforms and the role of people in the change process. For example, prominent texts on policy and reform processes in development have long emphasized the importance of the people involved in reforms, the way they engage and the experience they muster (Brinkerhoff & Crosby, 2002; Grindle & Thomas, 1991; Rondinelli, 1993; Thomas & Grindle). The ideas also overlap with recent work on institutional reform and change,

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[1]   http://www.effectiveinstitutions.org/
[2]   A term coined by Richard Batley, Emeritus Professor of Development Administration, University of Birmingham

which emphasizes the importance of institutional entrepreneurship by individuals and groups (Andrews, 2013; Dorado); and the role of learning in organizations and coalitions (Gramont, 2012; Leftwich & Wheeler, 2011).

Given these insights, mechanisms by which practitioners can engage with each other and learn from each other are clearly of great significance in the development arena, especially in the institutional and public sector reform areas. These are referred to in this paper under the broad heading of peer group engagement mechanisms (arrangements through which potential peers selected on criteria such as job function or professional affiliation are brought together), a category which can include formal opportunities for peer learning (where the practitioners gain insights into technical reform options and tactical modes of implementation from each other).

These mechanisms are now common in the development arena and more generally. They come with a challenge, however: *Peer learning is essentially about individuals learning from each other whereas the sort of transformational change in public sector capacity envisaged by the post-Busan process and specifically implied by the negotiation of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals is about scale.* The key challenge for research and guidance in this area is to examine how individual learning about reform feasibility and tactics can connect with the need for more substantial results in relation to the type of issues planned for discussion at the Finance for Development (FFD) meeting in Addis Ababa to be held in July and the post-2015 Summit in New York in September, including organization and country-level reform, poverty eradication, human development, gender equality and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Both the supply side and the demand side require some consideration

There is a supply side and a demand side to peer learning initiatives. On the supply side, there is an apparent growth in number and scope of peer engagement initiatives ranging from the African Peer Review Mechanism, the OECD's Anti-Corruption Network in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Collaborative African Budget Reform Initiative, the African Union's Regional Anticorruption Programme for Africa, through to the Club de Madrid's "Leaders Engaged in New Democracies" network. There is also a growing demand side, with individual respondents contacted for this mapping exercise both reporting positively on peer learning and reflecting on the possibility that, in retrospect, they could have learned more from peer engagements than they did.

Supply side developments

A set of Learning Alliances were launched at the Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in 2014 to fill the gap between the individual scale of peer learning and the organizational or country level need for change. They are described as follows:

> "[Learning Alliances are] loosely designed as collaborative multi-stakeholder groupings of institutions/organisations that are willing to actively share experiences on and approaches to public sector reforms…" These "Stakeholders will use different peer learning tools and methods to engage with each other over time. These are not ad hoc learning events, but allow for continuous, mutual learning about effective approaches to public sector reform and what makes peer learning processes successful…" The "Learning Alliances will give the peers the opportunity to **experiment**… (and) will provide participants from different institutions/ countries with **safe spaces to learn from each other**." (GPEDC, 2014, p.1 – emphases in the original)

This paper seeks to contribute to the thinking and practice of these Learning Alliances by offering structured insight on the practice of peer learning. It does this by mapping out what is currently being done in the area of peer learning—especially in the public sector reform realm of development—and reflecting on key challenges to ensure peer learning actively contributes to reform and development agendas.

Demand side

On the issue of the demand, or need, for peer learning, the big question alluded to above is, in caricature, "why would the participation of one or more practitioners from a given agency or country in a peer learning event assist, other than at the most micro incremental level, in facilitating a worthwhile reform in their home public sector environment?"   In current development terminology, this question is about the "theory of change" [3], the informed hunch as to why the learning will contribute to a reform program which, if it is to have any basis in reality must be "autonomy-respecting" (Ellerman, 2005) since compulsion of state actors is both infeasible and ineffective.

From the literature, any theory of change concerning the impact of peer learning is likely to have three elements.   First, there is the way in which the learner learns to define problems and whether learning can help identify the functional problem, helping to avoid starting with the preferred reform and noting that apparent dysfunction can be a misunderstood functioning arrangement.[4]   Emerging diagnostic approaches (Andrews, 2013, Ch 7; World

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[3]   In essence the term is intended to mean "the rationale behind an… intervention, describing the relationships – and identifying the assumed links – between activities and desired outcomes. It shows a series of expected consequences…" (Dart et al., 2010, p.17). See (Stein & Valters, 2012; Vogel, 2012) for some more detailed definitions. It is a "theory" because it produces predictions which are capable of falsification about why facilitating some managerial or institutional changes will lead to others and eventually to the desired improvement in the results chain.

[4]   For example, "(p)atronage systems are not synonymous with bad governance… Managers with discretion over hiring have significant opportunities to create islands of excellence… The fatal weakness of patronage systems is that they are capricious, not that they are inevitably incompetent" (Grindle, 2012, p. 261). Similarly, (Srivastava & Larizza, 2013) point out that apparent dysfunctions such as the rapid

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Bank, 2012b) draw from other research areas because public sector management research has been largely ether descriptive (observing trends) or normative (asserting that a specific institutional form is to be preferred). Nascent diagnostic work builds on the growth diagnostic work which seeks to counter "strong priors about the nature of the problem and the appropriate fixes" (Dani Rodrik, 2008), aiming to find out where the shoe pinches and to concentrate narrowly and pragmatically on fixing that (Hausmann, Rodrik, & Velasco, 2006; D. Rodrik, 2005).

Second, there is the potential for the learner to learn about negotiation skills, very particularly the challenge of managing up and across within large organizations, where lessons have tended to emerge from enterprise reform (Baldoni, 2010; Williams & Miller, 2002),   Finally, there is the part that coalition-building might play. The research literature has, to date, focused on coalitions which are identifiably political or are pursuing identifiably political objectives (CommGAP, 2008; Gramont, 2012; Leftwich & Wheeler, 2011; Peiffer, 2012). There is little empirical work on coalition building within the bureaucracy (Malinga, 2008).[5] (Grindle & Thomas, 1991) have usefully identified the conflicts and reactions that are triggered by attempts to change policies and institutions developing a useful framework for assessing where the resistance might lie in different types of reforms (Grindle & Thomas, 1991, fig. 8.1).

Limitations to the work

The scope of this work is limited in two ways, for practical reasons. First, it is limited to peer learning that originates in organized peer group engagement activities, excluding self-organized ad hoc peer learning activities. This not because that is the only conceivable starting point for peer learning, but because it is a mechanism which could, in principle, stimulate peer learning at scale and which is available to members of the EIP.   Second, those organized peer group engagement activities are only considered if they have an international dimension. Again this is because this is of primary interest to members of the EIP. This does not restrict consideration of purely local or national activities taking place elsewhere within the sequence – just that the assumed starting point has some international inputs.

The research undertaken for this mapping was essentially a snapshot – a picture of per learning initiatives at the current time. Understanding when and how peer learning equips the peer learner with the "politically savvy" skills necessary to introduce reform into complex systems requires a more longitudinal study. Thus this important area of work is treated primarily via a review of the literature.

"shuffling" of staff in Sierra Leone works perfectly well at constraining the power of (and information held by) senior administrators who might use that limit the ability of politicians to allocate goods and services to favored groups.

[5] (Christensen, Laegreid, Roness, & Rovik, 2007, ch 2) is one of the few in-depth analyses of strategies which bureaucratic coalitions for public sector reform can develop, noting the significance of identifying common ground, even if that means focusing on means more than ends or narrowing down the sphere of concern to particular agencies or programs in the first instance.

The mapping approach taken in this work

Peer learning is a popular concept in development. We see examples of peer learning emerging from the concerns that practitioners have that formal recommendations on organizational and managerial restructuring are failing to meet their needs for more flexible, tactical and context-specific approaches to problem-solving. Many organizations are working in this space, acting as facilitators of peer engagement. These activities are generally quite novel, with most having emerged in the last ten to fifteen years. The many peer engagement activities reflect a growing awareness that effective and sustainable development solutions emerge when those actually doing development learn about new ideas and how these can be adapted to their contexts.

There is much to be learned about peer learning in development itself, however, given limited work on the topic; with a dearth of studies even describing the many facilitation activities being undertaken in this space. There is even less on the impact of these activities. As a result, we do not have a disciplined view of what initiatives are being tried or about what kinds of initiatives might foster learning more effectively than others.

This mapping exercise intends to provide a view on this new and crowded terrain. Given the lack of organization in the field, the exercise resembles that of an adventurer in new territory: focused on showing general patterns and advising on directions, not on identifying specific routes and landmarks. It is, however, hoped that this initial mapping will provoke additional activities that are more detailed and specified and that offer increasingly actionable lessons about how to do peer learning in development.

Figure 1: An hour glass model - From peer engagement to results at scale via individual peer learning

The authors start the mapping with a stylized model summarized in Figure 1. The model makes a distinction between "facilitated peer group engagement", where groups of potential peers are selected on criteria such as function, professional affiliation and are brought together in some way and "individual peer learning", where public officials or others with some responsibility for reform design gain practical insights into technical reform options and tactical modes of implementation. At the top of the hourglass, large scale organized facilitation of peer engagement occurs such as through the OECD or NEPAD peer review modalities. These approaches are a prelude to an individual level interaction (the narrow part of the hour glass) with individual level gains in knowledge and insights, but then return to the large scale in that the purpose of the peer learning is to make an impact at the sectoral or national level.

Envisaging peer learning as a part of this larger process leads to a distinctive set of questions about the politics of change: why are some peer group engagements facilitated and not others?; what incentives are there for individuals to learn from peers and what

obstacles do they encounter?; and do peers really learn useful strategies for managing the intrinsically political nature of change in the public sector?

The mapping approach taken in this study provides a glimpse into the entire hourglass by collecting and describing three types of data:

- The first type of data centered on the facilitators of peer engagement activities in development, especially in the area of public sector reform. This area was chosen to limit the scope of the study and also because it is an area where peer connections are currently being emphasized. Over 50 initiatives were identified, through a process that involved purposeful and snowball sampling (A full listing with introductory web addresses is available in Annex 1). The goal was to identify a set of facilitated initiatives that would be rich in information. This information was sourced primarily from online materials provided by the facilitating organizations. Additional information was collected in some cases through interviews.

- The second type of data focused on individuals in the public sector reform arena who have been 'peer learners' themselves. These individuals were asked to complete a survey (see Annex 2). They were accessed through a professional organizations and an executive training program. They were asked a variety of questions about their own peer learning experiences through a survey tool. The number of respondents to the survey was 84. This is not intended to be a representative sample of 'peer learners' and was not collected with rigorous attention to scientific concerns about sampling (indeed, it is even impossible to say what the response rate was given that online tools were used to solicit responses). This approach is considered appropriate for the current study, however, given the inductive nature of the work. The survey responses are intended to provide a view onto the process of peer learning and not to test hypotheses.

- A third type of data came in the form of brief case studies intended to provide thicker sources of information on peer learning needs, processes, gaps and lessons (see Annex 3). The cases were identified purposefully by the authors and covered two types. The first focused on individuals who have been deeply engaged in reform processes. These cases examined peer learning experiences of these individuals to assess whether and to what extent peer learning is influencing reform processes. Cases taken directly from the World Bank's repository of South-South exchanges,[6] where 'results stories' reflect on how peer learning interventions actually take place, were also reviewed.

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6   http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/results. See specifically: "Strengthening nutrition programs in West African countries" (http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/story/strengthening-nutrition-programs-west-african-countries); "Strengthening Social Protection in Vietnam" (http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/story/strengthening-social-protection-vietnam); Strengthening Land Administration in Honduras (http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/story/strengthening-land-administration-honduras); "Enhancing the quality of Uzbekistan's exports" (http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/story/enhancing-quality-uzbekistans-exports); and "Strengthening Natural Resource Revenue Management and Lowering Volatility in Papua New Guinea" (http://wbi.worldbank.org/sske/story/strengthening-natural-resource-revenue-management-and-lowering-volatility-papua-new-guinea)

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The paper describes the mapping approach in the second part of this introductory section and then provides an empirical map of the territory showing: (i) the expansive presence of peer engagement and learning initiatives; (ii) 'who' the peers engaged in learning are; (iii) what tools externally facilitated peer engagement and learning initiatives commonly employ; (iv) how engagement and learning goals are conceived and assessed; and (v) what common challenges are faced in making peer learning valuable for reformers focused on fostering progress with development agendas. A conclusion suggests a nascent conceptual framework for thinking about peer learning in the coming High Level discussions on the topic and through the Learning Alliances and sets out the way forward in relation to the development of a toolkit and some associated experiments.

Mapping the territory

Peer engagement facilitation initiatives

The sample of 52 peer facilitation initiatives was built by gathering lists of prominent interventions affiliated with organizations like the Effective Institutions Platform. These included facilitators like the Collaborative African Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). This initial sample was augmented by adding peer engagement initiatives identified by interviewees from the first set of initiatives or from the individual survey process. The full sample includes facilitated initiatives covering many different areas in the public sector reform domain, as shown in Figure 2. Annex 1 provides full details.

The figure shows how many initiatives focused on different areas of public sector reform, as defined by the facilitation organizations themselves. For instance, CABRI focuses on PFM generally,[7] along with five other facilitation organizations (at the top of the figure). There are other facilitated initiatives that are more focused in PFM-related areas, however, like the Tax Administrators Exchange for Global Innovative Practices (TAXGIP), which engages peers to think about tax policy and administration only. Similarly, APRM was classified as working on 'General Governance' because it has a very broad mandate (with a selection of other facilitating entities), but the Corruption Hunter Network works more narrowly on bringing peers together to address anticorruption issues.

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[7]   http://www.cabri-sbo.org

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Figure 2: The many areas of peer engagement in public sector reform
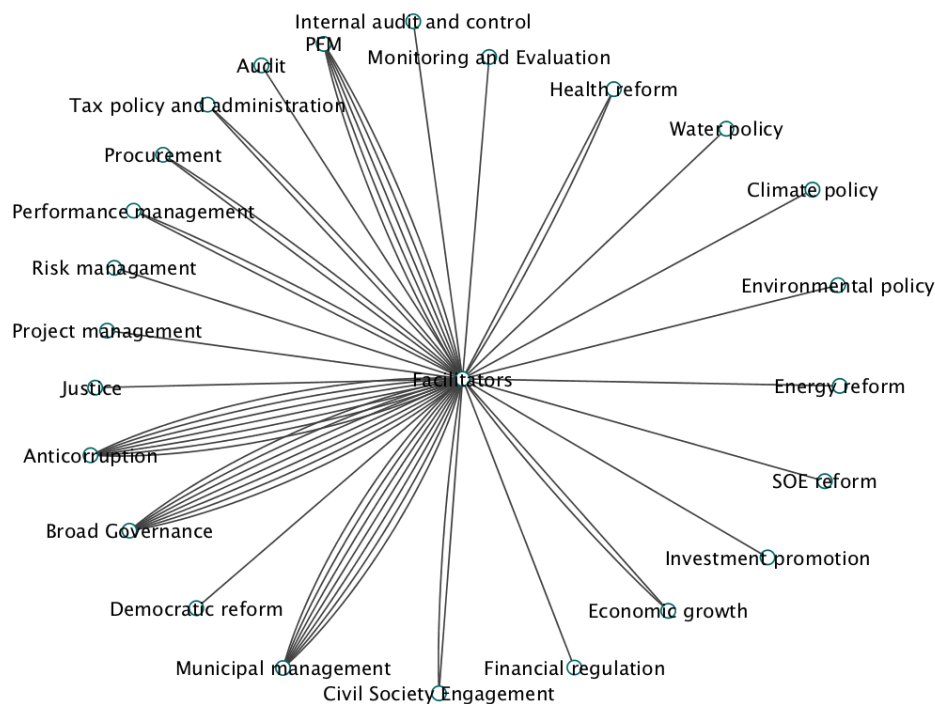
Source: Authors' analysis of 52 peer engagement initiatives.

Figure 2 is not meant to provide a holistic view onto the peer engagement terrain in development; there are many other initiatives that focus on peer engagement that are not included here. It does, however, provide an important starting point in the mapping process and reveals the scope of coverage of peer engagement initiatives. The sample is only of 52 initiatives, and the coverage is extremely broad, extending from core areas of public sector management (like PFM and municipal management) to reforms in service delivery sectors (like water and health) and to administrative and policy reforms in strategic parts of the broader social and economic development agenda (focused on democratic reform, civil society engagement, economic growth, financial regulation and investment promotion).

This indicates the influence of ideas about peer engagement in the public sector reform arena in development. Many of these areas were dominated by technical agendas in the past and emphasized the work of external experts and not internal peers. Many of the international organizations working in these domains sponsored such interventions as well, but they are now focusing at least some resources on a different approach—engaging peer practitioners actually doing reforms, helping these peers learn from others, and fostering an emergent and contextually fitted agenda rather than a technically driven one.

This growing focus on peer engagement and learning is reflected in the survey results of 'peer learners' as well. Over 90% of the 84 respondents to the survey answered 'yes' when

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asked if they had been involved in a peer learning engagement. This shows that the idea of peer learning is one that individuals relate to, and that many individuals have experience with. Beyond this, over half of these respondents noted that the engagements had been facilitated by entities like those listed in Annex 1 (37% of the individuals noted that a third party organization facilitated the interaction, and a further 23% said that a professional organization was responsible for such facilitation). One respondent noted that the peer learning was sparked at the European Consortium of Policy Research Summer School on Parliaments in 2010, for instance, and another said that the peer learning started after going to a "'master class' organized by a professional association of international sustainability professionals." Other entities that were mentioned included the Commonwealth Peer Review Group, European Union Visitors Programme, the Public Expenditure Management Network in Asia (PEMNA), CABRI, and the Center for Excellence in Finance (CEF) in Slovenia.

The bottom line is that individuals involved in reforms are open and interested in this kind of learning and a range of organizations are facilitating this kind of learning as well. There are both demand and supply dimensions to the terrain, and the challenge is to ensure these are synergized and balanced most effectively.

Ideas about 'the peers' involved in peer learning

A fundamental question for all those involved in peer learning is simply, "who are the peers engaged in the learning process?" The question was raised because literature on peer learning offers a variety of definitions of 'peers' but also notes the importance of being clear about who the 'peers' are. Without clarity about who the peers are, studies suggest, 'peer learning' initiatives can flounder. This is especially the case because the peers are both the source of lessons and targets of learning.

When the facilitating organizations were analyzed, it became obvious that there are many different ideas about who the peers are. At the most simple level, it is apparent that different facilitators target peers at different levels of engagement in the reform and development process. Facilitators like the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and OECD's Anti-Corruption Network (ACN) in Eastern Europe and Central Asia have a primary emphasis on peer countries for instance[8], whereas facilitators like Collaborative African Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI) are more focused on peer organizations in the PFM process, and the African Union's Regional Anticorruption Programme for Africa targets state and non-state organizations working on anticorruption initiatives.[9] Other facilitators like the CityNet and Urban Futures programs emphasize peer cities. Facilitators like the Corruption Hunters and the Club de Madrid's "Leaders Engaged in New Democracies" (LEND) network focus more on explicitly matched or targeted individuals (in these two

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[8] The ACN, for example, describes its mission as follows: "[The] main objective is to support its member countries in their efforts to prevent and fight corruption. It provides a regional forum for the promotion of anti-corruption activities, exchange of information, elaboration of best practices and donor coordination. The ACN operates through general meetings and conferences, sub-regional initiatives and thematic projects." See http://www.oecd.org/corruption/acn/aboutthenetwork/

[9] http://www.auanticorruption.org/uploads/Regional_Anti-Corruption_Programme.pdf.

examples the focus is on legal professionals engaged in anticorruption initiatives and hand-picked emerging leaders).

The different 'targets' of facilitation are shown in Figure 3. The majority of the facilitators target organizations as 'peers' and very few explicitly focus on 'specifically matched individuals' as peers. This targeting is a reflection of the facilitators' objectives and the theories of change they have about public sector reform. The APRM, for instance, focuses on governance reforms at the country level and espouses a theory of change in which peer relationships enhance accountability for reforms and open up channels for knowledge transfer to enhance reform designs and improve the likelihood and quality of reform implementation. The fact that most facilitators emphasize 'peer organizations' shows that organizations are at the center of the underpinning theory of change (or theories of change) in public sector reform in development. Facilitators like the Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning network (PEMPAL),[10] the WHO Peer Learning District Initiative, and OECD Knowledge Sharing Alliances focus on organizations like Budget Directorates and Internal Audit Agencies, District Health Secretariats, and Government Ministries. These are seen as the focus and target of change and reform, and the underlying theory of change is that peer exchange can promote important lessons about 'what' reforms should be done and 'how' they should be done by those organizations. Some of the facilitators speak explicitly about 'learning organizations' when describing the goals of their 'peer organization' initiatives, building on the idea that reforms should be organic and emerge within organizations (where learning is a constant and intrinsic to the organization). Peer learning between peer organizations is seen as a key aspect of the learning organization.

Figure 3: Peers targeted by facilitators   **Figure 4: Peers engaged by facilitators**

Source: Authors' analysis of 52 peer engagement initiatives.
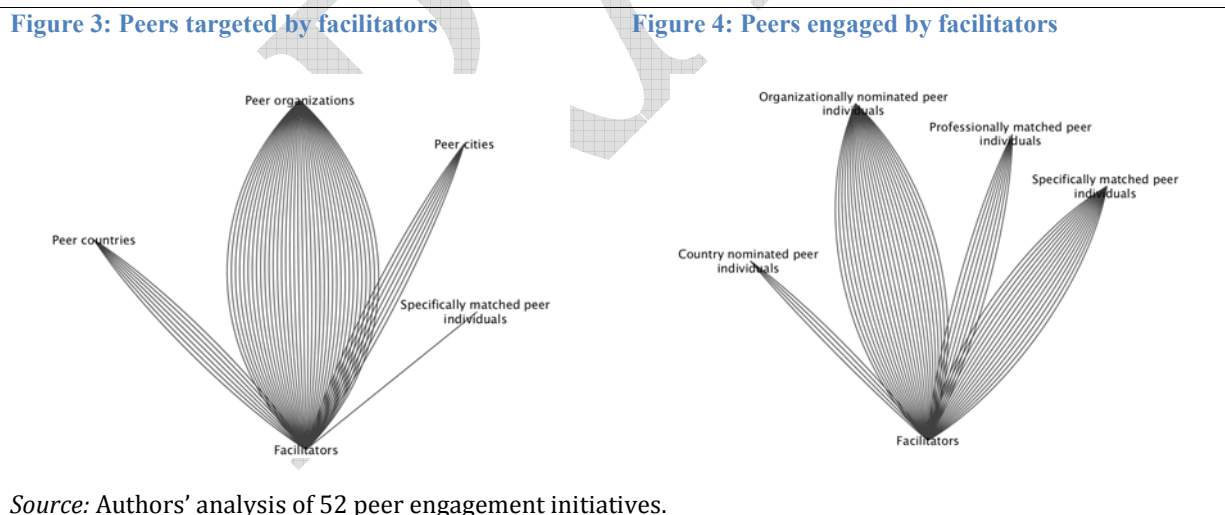
Figure 4 shows a different view of 'who' the peers are in the facilitated initiatives. This is the view one gets when looking at 'who' actually engages in the facilitated engagements (like the APRM Peer Reviews, MENA-OECD Peer Procurement Network meetings, and GoPemPal events). In all these cases the actual peers engaged are individuals. In most cases

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10 http://www.pempal.org/success-stories/

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the individuals were representatives of the peer countries or organizations targeted by the facilitators—including heads of states or ministers of finance, budget directors or mayors and municipal managers. They are invited to engage because of their positions and formal roles, given that facilitators tend to target countries and organizations for participation and the countries and organizations that send 'peers' are hoping these interactions yield larger scale impact. At the end of the day, however, the 'peers are still individuals. The learning happens directly with them, not with their 'countries' or 'organizations' (who must hope that there is an indirect diffusion or scaling of the learning, as discussed later in this paper).

This is clearly reflected in the case studies presented in Annex 3. The case studies of individuals involved in peer learning initiatives readily commented on how it was them who learned from the interactions and not their organizations. Consider, for instance, Joe Abah's (Director General of the Bureau of Public Sector Reforms (BPSR) in Nigeria) comment about *his learning* from involvement with the Commonwealth Peer Review Group:

> It helped me to learn about prioritizing change, identifying the immediate challenge amongst a long list of problems, and helped me reflect on how to strike a balance between whole of government reforms and a narrower focus on specific reform adaptation.

Abah notes that he then translated the lessons to colleagues in his home organization, but this act of diffusion was a personal one and not part of the facilitated initiative.

Edit Németh (Head of Department, Central Harmonization Unit for Public Internal Control, Ministry for National Economy, Hungary) gained similarly on a personal level through peer engagements,

> "with long term personal relationships established through the Public Internal Control Working Group and the PEMPAL Internal Audit Community of Practice (IACOP) [that] were of great value. When Ms. Németh was new in the job it helped her understand the scope of the task."

Ms. Németh's learning was certainly of value to her organization, especially as it pertained to management of change teams, but the learning was still predominantly hers—happening at the discrete level of the individual.

The World Bank South-South exchange case studies[11] also reinforce the observation that peer learning is fundamentally about exchange between individuals. In all of the cases one finds a description of exchanges between countries followed by a list of actual people involved. Box 1 provides an example, reflecting participants in various study visits in a West African exchange program centered on nutrition

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[11] See footnote 6

Box 1: Participants to study visits on nutrition from Ghana to the Gambia (February 2012)

Ghana to the Gambia (February 2012)
- Mrs. Wilhelmina Okwabi, Head of Nutrition Dept., Ghana Health Service & Nutrition Focal Point for ECOWAS Nutrition Forum
- Mr. Dennis V. Gbeddy, District Director, Ghana Health Service
- Ms. Paulina Addy, Head of Food Security Unit, Ministry of Food and Agriculture
- Mrs. Mary Mpereh, Nutrition Focal Point, National Development Planning Commission
- Ms. Nana Ayim Poawwa, Hunger and Malnutrition Focal Person
- Mr. James Krodua, World Bank Nutrition Desk, Ministry of Finance

Senegal to Ghana (March 2012)
- Mrs. Ndèye Mayé Diouf, Ministry of Finance,
- Mrs. Mame Mbayame Gueye Dione, Ministry of Health
- Mr. Adama Nguirane, Project Manager, Association Régionale des Agriculteurs de Fatick
- Mr. Abdoulaye Ka, National Coordinator, Cellule de Lutte contre la Malnutrition

Gambia to Senegal (April 2012)
- Mr. Modou Cheyassin Phall , NaNA Mr. Bakary Jallow, Principal Programme Officer, NaNA
- Mr. Dawda Joof, Action Aid International
- Mr. Suwaibou Barry, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
- Dr. Mamady Cham, Director of Health Services
- Mr. Jankoba Jabbie, Regional Health Director, Lower River Region

Gambia to Ghana (September 2012)
- Mr. Modou Cheyassin Phall, Executive Director, NaNA
- Mr. Bakary Jallow, NaNA
- Mr. Dawda Joof, Action Aid International The Gambia,
- Mr. Swaibou Barry, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
- Mr. Alhagie Sankareh, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
- Mr. Dawda Ceesay, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
- Mr. Musa Humma, Ministry of Agriculture
- Dr. Momodou Darboe. Medical Research Council.

On a mechanical level it is obvious that exchanges happen between individuals – the Bureau of the Budget cannot attend a meeting or join in a discussion as an entity – it has to be individuals that learn and then feed lessons back to their organizations, which is a second order interaction that often is not considered in designing peer learning initiatives. Beyond this complication, the point is that it matters whether peer learning engagements involve the individuals as people as opposed to transient and easily-substituted representatives of their agencies. A number of facilitators seem to recognize this distinction explicitly, focusing on specifically matched individuals—where they choose peers to engage with on the basis of more criteria than just their position and formal role. These include the PeerCities Network, the African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (AfCoP), and the R4D TAP program. These initiatives try to bring individuals together based on the tasks they are doing, the experience they have, and other factors. The goal is to ensure that they are well matched, sharing various similar attributes. This is considered important for the peer learning process, where better-matched peers are expected to have more to share with each other and are also expected to be more open to building the kind of trust needed for real sharing to take place.

The survey of peer learners indicated that these specifically matched individuals were the peers from whom lessons are most effectively gleaned. Figure 5 shows that 60% of the peer learners referred to such individuals when identifying who they see as a 'peer' and when describing the peers with (and from) whom they had learned in the past. Some of the

respondents did consider that peers could also be organizationally or professionally matched (fellow Auditor Generals or Accounting professionals, for instance), but the vast majority of respondents noted that peers needed to be specifically chosen and matched—not just appointed to engage. Figure 6 shows that factors that these individuals wanted to see matched. The categories were identified when coding responses to questions about 'who' the peer learners considered to be peers. (The numbers add up to more than 100% given that respondents typically identified multiple factors.) The major factors that they mentioned included facing common problems and challenges and having common goals and tasks. Literature shows that these kinds of similarities promote trust and a feeling of comfort and equality among peer learners, which allow for more effective transfer of tacit knowledge between peers (they all feel that their experiences will be understood by the others, and kept in confidence, because they have shared risk profiles and difficulties) (Adam, Skalicky, & Brown, 2011; Griffiths, Houston, & Lazenbatt, 1995; Heavey, 2006; Tosey, 1999).

Figure 5: Who the learners see as peers   **Figure 6: Factors to 'match' learners**

Source: Authors' analysis of peer learner survey results.
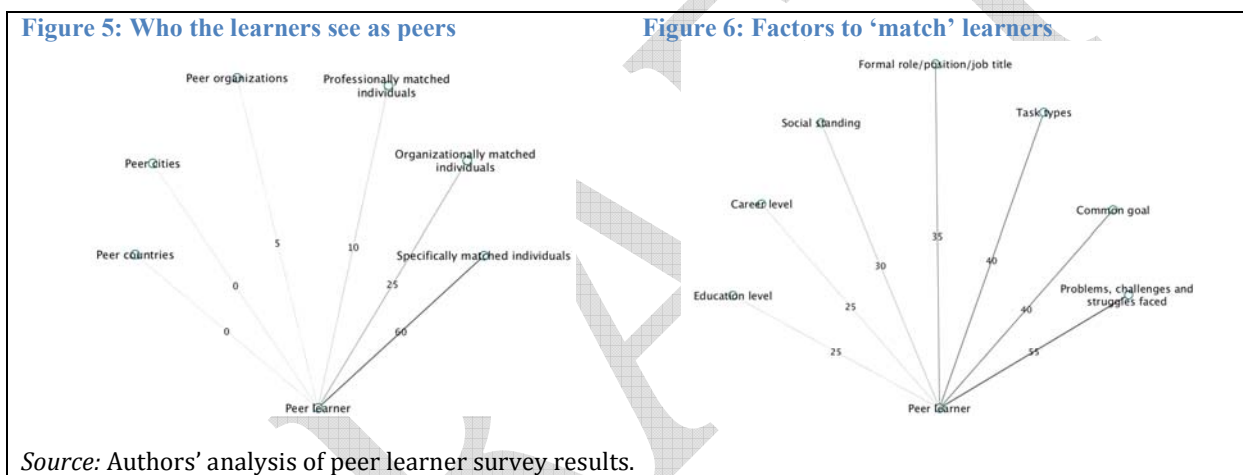
The bottom-line of this part of the mapping process is simply that facilitators often focus on peer entities like countries or organizations and cities, but peer learning is primarily about transfers between people. Furthermore, the transfers are likely to be most effective when the people are specifically matched to foster trust and sharing. These are interesting findings and highlight the tension flagged in the introduction at the heart of peer learning. On the one hand, facilitators target peer learning 'at scale' (in countries and organizations and cities), given a theory of change that results at scale require diffusion of lessons across a significant body of individuals, but on the other hand the peer learning actually happens more discretely (in the hearts and minds of individuals, partaking in specific personal relationships). This tension is well described by a recent AfCoP publication, which points to a "consensus that building individual capacity … is an important first step" but also notes that this kind of learning is insufficient "in order for countries to experience real change …"[12]

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[12] AfCoP-Pan African peer learning on managing for results. Available at http://www.southsouth.info/photo/2009-nov-joint-cop-meeting-in?context=album&albumId=3952417%3AAlbum%3A2558

The survey of peer learners asked respondents to identify major challenges they encountered in peer learning experiences. Table 3 lists key challenges identified in these comments.

Table 1: Challenges of facilitating peer learning with individual peers

Challenges with 'who' the peers are
Identifying 'the right' peers to engage with/ Involve in process
Ensuring peers are effectively matched through initial events
Managing differences among peers (personalities, cultures, etc.)

Challenges with getting peers to engage fully in the process
Building trust among peers
Ensuring all peers have the same willingness to learn
Ensuring peers are fully engaged from the start
Ensuring peers have authority to engage fully in the peer learning process

Challenges with the logistics of peer interaction
Ensuring peers have the time to engage with peers (at face-to-face events)
Ensuring peers have means, time to engage with peers (after face-to-face events)
Finding the appropriate venues for face-to-face peer engagement
Finding the appropriate media for non face-to-face peer engagement
Ensuring logistics are effectively and continuously addressed (so as not to get in the way of peers wanting to engage)

The first set of challenges centers on identifying peers and throws more light on the question of whether peers are selected on the basis of their position or other attributes. As discussed above (and shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4), most facilitators work with 'peer countries' or 'peer organizations' and engage individuals on the basis of pre-determined criteria that relate to job title and position or professional affiliation. This means that the 'peers' are pre-selected by participating organizations, often through internal political processes, and the facilitators cannot impose a more purposeful selection and matching regime. The result is that peers are matched purely on the basis of position (as Auditors General or Budget Directors or heads of Civil Service Bureaus, for instance) and facilitators must depend on luck to ensure that matches exist on the other criteria important to individual learners (shown in Figure 5, these include having shared (i) problems, challenges and struggles, (ii) goals, (iii) tasks, (iv) social standing, (v) career levels, and (vi) education levels). Facilitators must also depend on the participating countries and organizations to keep the individuals in their positions for long enough to build relationships necessary for effective relationship building between peers. Frequent changes in the representation of different organizations, due to staff turnover or other factors, undermines this relationship building and frustrates the peer learning process.[13]

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[13] This was an issue for the South African Community Grantmaker Leadership Cooperative, for instance, where the peer community was disrupted because of members leaving through succession planning within their own organizations.
http://www.sacglf.org/documents/First%20Narrative%20Report%20to%20Ford%20Foundation%20FINAL.pdf

The challenge of peer selection and matching can be addressed in different ways. One purposeful peer identification strategy was evident in a number of the cases reviewed in Annex 3 and the World Bank South-South exchange case studies.[14] Facilitator organizations using this strategy gather information on all these appointed peers, using mini surveys that ask about the 'matching factors' in Figure 5, and then work to connect peers with similar profiles in small group or even paired engagements. In the peer learning experience centered on social protection in Vietnam, for instance, an emergent lesson centered on the importance of selecting "Participants from a knowledge receiving country … based on their degree of influence over reforms and the programs addressed by the exchange." A key lesson after the peer learning initiative intended to help Uzbekistan with its exports was to select peers that have "pursued similar goals in the face of similar challenges."

Although not raised in the cases, even if peers are carefully selected, facilitators would still need to garner commitment of the individuals engaged, and would still depend on the home organizations keeping these individuals in their positions.

Another strategy identified to help counter this issue involves building broader peer communities. Membership would extend beyond individuals appointed because of position. Facilitators of these communities of practice still need to gather information about participants and actively match peers. The broad community of practice (CoP) approach helps to overcome risks that participants drop out because they move position. There would still be a risk related to personal commitment, however, as facilitators rely on the individual commitments of CoP members.

Peer engagement and learning tools

The third part of this mapping exercise involved examining the tools used in peer learning initiatives. In terms of tools, the focus was on identifying the mechanisms and devices used by different facilitating entities to engage peers and foster learning between the peers. A large number of tools were identified in this process. This is reflected in Figure 7, which identifies how frequently different tool types are used by the facilitators. The frequencies add up to more than 100% again, given that every facilitator uses more than one tool. The PEMPAL initiative, for instance, describes itself as primarily facilitating a peer learning network but actually uses many tools in this process; including large group meetings (like annual workshops), externally produced knowledge products (like expert papers on different budgeting reforms), site visits (where different delegations can visit others to learn first-hand about new ideas), and more. The OECD review processes similarly use common assessment products (review templates), expert group review (where external experts analyze reviews), and various kinds of reflection and dissemination mechanisms.

The most common tool types are large group meetings, externally produced knowledge products, and training sessions. Over 60% of the facilitating organizations use these tools

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[14] See footnote 6

at some point or other, hosting large conferences and workshops, sponsoring written reports or studies by consultants, academics and other experts, and providing professional training events (often tied to some kind of certification process, especially where the peer groups are professionally affiliated). The next most common tools are peer-produced knowledge products (like case studies of a peer's own experience) and small group meetings (where only a few peers engage in more close-quarters engagement than an annual conference would allow). Half of the facilitators used these tools to foster peer engagement and learning.

Figure 7: The types of tools facilitators use in promoting peer exchange

Source: Authors' analysis of 52 peer engagement initiatives.

Over 35% of the facilitators used different kinds of common assessment products (like the APRM and OECD review mechanisms, or report cards used in the R4D-TAP program on transparency, or benchmarking devices used in various initiatives). A similar proportion supported site visits, where peers would get a chance to see how other peers did things.[15] These visits were sometimes one-sided (where PEMPAL, for instance, sponsors a visit of

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[15] For example, 'in-field exchange events' are facilitated by the Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management Peer Assistance Network (AADP). These events bring peers together on study tours and targeted seminars to learn directly from each other's experiences.
http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Environment%20and%20Energy/sustainable%20land%20management/AADP%20Brochure.pdf

various ministry of finance officials to another country) or reciprocal (where officials from two countries might visit each other's context and compare notes on the site visits). More than 32% of the facilitating organizations also sponsored joint peer activities, which take a variety of forms. World Bank Knowledge Hubs attempt to engage peers in common projects intended to foster creativity and discovery of new ways of thinking, for instance. The Horizontal Learning Program in Bangladesh involves peers in hands-on projects to ensure knowledge is tested and disseminated while on-the-job.

Smaller proportions of the sample used a variety of other tools, including online and virtual engagement mechanisms and telecommunication devices (allowing peers to connect outside of face-to-face contexts). Paired engagements were also not that common, and while many organizations fostered some kind of peer assessment (often based on the common assessment mechanisms) the precise mechanisms for doing this were quite different. About a quarter of the facilitators supported expert reviews (where a panel of outside specialists would use an assessment tool to examine a 'peer' system) or multi-peer assessments (where a number of peers fill out the common assessments and then compare scores and notes with each other). About ten percent of the facilitators supported individual peer review processes (where one peer would assess its processes using the common assessment tool).

Interestingly, there were few tools in place to foster reflection on the lessons learned in these engagements. The kinds of tools one did find included processes where individual peers were asked to note what they had learned from other peers and how they would act on these lessons. Multiple-peer reflection tools were used by about 10% of facilitators and included efforts to get peers discussing their lessons amongst each other, often aiming to foster the common identification of positive deviance processes and ideas (that promote better results in some peers and could be replicated by all peers). As an example of this, the WHO Peer Learning District Initiative gathers peers from different health clinics together to benchmark their organizations, discuss the benchmarking results, visit those clinics with the best results, and then discuss (together, as a group) what they saw as the keys to success and how these ideas might be diffused.

The fact that all facilitators of peer engagements use multiple tools raises a variety of questions. The primary question is whether different combinations of tools yield different types of engagement and learning. This is an important question that goes beyond the scope of this study and is discussed further below. It is interesting to note, for instance, that there is variation in the tool mix used for doing peer reviews by the APRM,[16] Results for Development Transparency and Accountability Program (R4D TAP),[17] INTRAC's Peer Learning Programme for Small and Diaspora Organizations,[18] the African Development

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[16] http://aprm-au.org

[17] http://r4d.org/about-us/press-room/r4d's-transparency-and-accountability-program-convenes-african-civil-society-org

[18] INTRAC's program was included in the sample because its work with diaspora organizations is focused on impacting civil society engagement with public policy. This is a key issue in public sector reform agendas in many countries. The program blends review mechanisms (in the form of benchmarking exercises) with other peer learning tools. As described in their own materials, the organizations provides "year-long

Bank's WOP Africa Project,[19] and MENA-OECD Procurement Network. The APRM, for instance, relies on single-peer country self-assessments and expert group peer review (where one country assesses its performance against a set of benchmarks and this assessment is then reviewed by a high-profile panel of peer experts). The assessment is extremely broad and the assessment process seldom brings all 'peers' together to reflect in a mutual manner. The R4D TAP process brings individuals together from organizations involved in tackling corruption, has all of them fill out a report card of their performance (in multi-peer self-assessment), supports a multi-peer review and reflection process (where the peers all compare scores and performance and identify potential idea-leaders) and then sponsors joint engagements to experiment with new ideas or with 'good practice' ideas emerging from the reflections. The comparison of this mix of ideas could generate interesting ideas for both facilitators and for others using peer reviews to foster engagement and learning.

A second question centers on why multiple tools are used in facilitating peer learning. The peer learner survey results offer some help in addressing such question. The survey instrument asked respondents to reflect on experiences with peer learning, including the kinds of mechanisms they used in such process. Over 90% of these respondents identified more than one 'tool' in answering these questions, noting that they met the peers in various settings, spoke by telephone, read prepared materials, and more. The average number of 'tools' engaged with in the peer learning experiences was more than 3, showing that peer learning is a complex process involving multiple types of interactions and facilitated by multiple types of tools.

One can better understand why various tools are needed in the learning processes when recognizing that peer learning is seldom achieved in a one-off event. This was apparent from the peer learner surveys, where over three quarters of respondents noted that their most memorable peer learning experience took place over a few weeks or more. Some of the experiences seemed to be 'quick and thick'—where peers met at some event and then engaged daily or weekly for a few weeks or month via a mix of site visits, telephone or email engagements, and more. Other experiences seemed to be longer and more drawn out, however, with 45% of the respondents noting that their most memorable peer learning experiences lasted for one year or more and involved multiple interactions. These peers seemed to meet at some forum and then engaged over many months and even years in a process of continuing connection that included paired engagements (where peers were matched in pairs), site visits, and joint activities.

A good example comes from recent support by the IMF's African Technical Assistance Centers (AfriTAC) to countries concerned about low growth.[20] Delegates from various

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support [that] includes facilitating workshops, action learning sets and benchmarking clubs, on topics of interest to peers, as well as creating relevant tools and providing an online hub for peers to share their experiences and resources." (http://cgi-africa.org/who-we-are-plp/)

[19] http://www.afdb.org/en/projects-and-operations/project-portfolio/project/p-z1-ea0-005/

[20] http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2014/car121614a.htm
http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2015/car020215a.htm

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countries met at an initial conference held in November 2014 in Mauritius. They then engaged with each other using 'cost effective knowledge tools, including online' communications devices. A smaller set of delegations met again in February 2015 in Senegal, and an even more select group of 'comparator countries' continue to work together on 'an active peer learning effort' that is slated to include site visits and joint activities.

Other examples come from the case studies presented in Annex 3. Where the individual cases reflect on more effective peer learning experiences, for instance, it is obvious that the interactions happened over time with various types of engagement. Jean-Paul Mabaya (from the Democratic Republic of Congo) described experiences with various peer learning processes including regional workshops on CSR in Africa (African Training and Research Center in Administration for Development/CAFRAD) and peer mentoring relationships. He noted that the most effective peer learning occurred in engagements that were "long term, sustained over several years [where the peers] visited each other's workplaces and maintained contact by email."

All of the World Bank South-South exchange cases[21] reflect on peer learning that happened over time with various tools employed in repeated engagements. The work on Uzbekistan's exports incorporated site visits and dissemination workshops, for instance, and the intervention on natural resource revenues in Papua New Guinea blended large group conferences with small group 'dialogues' and site visits.

Given these observations, the sequence envisaged in the top part of the hourglass set out in Figure 1 seems reasonable, with peer learning happening in a process, over time, with an early stage requiring a foundational engagement—where peers meet and a peer learning agenda is framed. This often happens at some kind of convening forum (like a large group meeting or conference or a small meeting or workshop). A second part of the process involves continued connection between the peers—where individuals participate in repeat engagements like site visits or joint activities (and communicate using online tools, telephone or virtual mechanisms). These process parts are shown in Table 2. The table breaks each part down even further to reflect on basic challenges of peer learning facilitation: (i) interaction facilitation, which involves bringing individual peers together; (ii) knowledge generation, centered on promoting some kind of knowledge to share; (iii) sharing and exchange, which involves fostering knowledge sharing among peers; and (iv) reflection, application and diffusion, which centers on supporting efforts to ensure that lessons learned by individuals are actually reinforced and taken to scale. The table also shows which tool types are commonly used in each part of the learning process. The mapping of tools to process parts and to challenges in the different parts was done on the basis of impressions of how peer learning initiatives are structured. It is a subjective mapping that should be seen as descriptive and not prescriptive, and is an effort to show how different tools are used (not to argue for any specific modality).

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[21] See footnote 6

Table 2: Different tools promote different parts of the peer learning process

Parts of the peer learning process	Interaction facilitation	Knowledge generation	Sharing and exchange	Reflection, application and diffusion
Foundational engagement	Large group meetings Small group meetings	Common assessment product Externally produced knowledge products Peer produced knowledge products Training sessions	Expert group peer review Single peer self-assessment Multi-peer self-assessment	Single-peer reflection Multi-peer reflection
Sustained individual contacts	Paired engagements Online networking Virtual engagement Telecommunication engagements	Peer produced knowledge products Site visits Joint peer activities	Community publications Site visits Joint peer activities	Single-peer reflection Multi-peer reflection

Source: Authors' analysis of 52 peer engagement initiatives.

As noted, the table is not comprehensive or objective. It does, however, show how different tools seem to be used in promoting peer engagement and learning by the facilitators examined in this study:

- Various tools are used to foster foundational engagements: Peers are convened through meetings, and various knowledge products are presented (including common assessments like benchmarking studies and externally produced products like reports). Peers are encouraged to share and exchange lessons at these fora, often through assessment and review mechanisms. Some initiatives include tools at such meetings to promote reflection, application and diffusion of lessons learned (including activities that force peers to discuss what they learned and develop strategies to share lessons learned back into their organizations).
- Various tools are used to promote sustained individual contacts: Peers are encouraged to keep working together through tools that facilitate continued interaction (like paired engagements, online networking and virtual engagements). Other tools facilitate new knowledge creation through the sustained individual contacts (with knowledge emerging through site visits and joint peer activities, for instance). The new knowledge is shared and exchanged through mechanisms that are ongoing and repeated, and continuous reflection exercises help to solidify lessons and promote application and diffusion by peers in their organizations and countries.

Interestingly, the mapping exercise suggests that facilitators of peer learning processes employ tools unevenly, leaving various gaps in many processes. Table 3 shows this by drawing on the frequency data in Figure 5. Based on these data, it seems apparent that many peer engagement facilitators emphasize foundational engagement (what the AfCoP call 'event-focused' knowledge sharing) over sustained individual contacts (what the AfCoP

refer to as a more "sustained version of peer learning").[22] These data show that, in general, facilitation efforts also seem to focus more on interaction facilitation and knowledge generation than sharing and exchange. The biggest gap across all of the initiatives in the sample is in reflection and application; facilitator entities seldom employ explicit tools to ensure that lessons are effectively understood by individual peer learners and sufficiently structured to allow practical peer learning suitable and relevant for application back in their home context.

Table 3: Tools are not evenly used, leaving gaps in many peer-learning processes

Parts of the peer learning process	Interaction facilitation	Knowledge generation	Sharing and exchange	Reflection, application and diffusion
Foundational engagement	Large group meetings Small group meetings	Common assessment product Externally produced knowledge products Peer produced knowledge products Training sessions	Expert group peer review Single peer self-assessment Multi-peer self-assessment	Single-peer reflection Multi-peer reflection
Sustained individual contacts	Paired engagements Online networking Virtual engagement Telecommunication engagements	Peer produced knowledge products Site visits Joint peer activities	Community publications Site visits Joint peer activities	Single-peer reflection Multi-peer reflection

Source: Authors' analysis of 52 peer engagement initiatives.
Notes: The darker the shading of each block, the more one is likely to find tools employed in facilitating peer engagement and learning. Lighter blocks are those in which few tools are employed (or where tools are employed less frequently).

The bottom line of this section is that moving from sustained individual contact to practical peer learning is a weak link in many of the facilitated peer engagements. This is the case with engagements that involve one-off events and even with initiatives like peer review processes that have repeat interventions over multiple years. In all of these interventions it is clear that peer learning involves many different tools and that there are many considerations entailed in developing the right mix to meet the different challenges shown in Table 2 and Table 3, but crucially it seems that there are common gaps in the kinds of facilitated initiatives assessed in this study. These initiatives focus on foundational engagement and facilitating interaction and knowledge generation, and employ fewer tools to foster the reflection, application and diffusion considerations necessary to achieve practical, implementable learning. This last point is highlighted when comparing the importance that facilitators give to 'joint activities' in the learning process (like joint

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[22] This terminology is taken from the AfCoP-Pan African peer learning on managing for results. Available at http://www.southsouth.info/photo/2009-nov-joint-cop-meeting-in?context=album&albumId=3952417%3AAlbum%3A2558. One can see the 'event focused' approach in a number of the peer facilitator approaches, including the International Association of Anti-Corruption Agencies, which hosts annual workshops and conferences as the major tools of peer engagement. http://www.iaaca.org/Events/

benchmarking activities or combined projects) with that given by peer learners. More than two thirds of the peer learner survey respondents (69%) identified such activities as important parts of the peer learning processes, but only 33% of the facilitated initiatives included these activities.[23] These activities foster sustained individual contacts and sharing of new knowledge, which seem to be weaker links in many peer learning initiatives.

Peer engagement and learning goals

The results sought by facilitators are generally stated in terms of ultimate impacts on public sector reforms, and not learning gains between peers. For instance, the Transparency International School of Integrity emphasizes improved transparency as a driving goal, and the Regional Anticorruption Programme for Africa focuses on decreased corruption.

One can glean the implicit learning goals generally only through reading descriptions of the initiatives or background documentation explaining how the initiatives actually work. These implicit learning goals were categorized in seven ways during the analytical process, reflecting facilitators' intentions to promote: (i) formal knowledge sharing (through documentation); (ii) experiential knowledge sharing (where tacit knowledge is shared between peers); (iii) peer support (where peers motivate and encourage each other); (iv) peer-to-peer coordination and collaboration (where peers work together to achieve common goals); (v) specific training support (where peers are brought together to undergo common training); (vi) peer group identity (where peers are convened in a manner that helps them relate to each other, or to a common profession); and (vii) peer-to-peer pressure (where peers are held accountable to other peers, in an effort to promote commitment to reforms).

Figure 8 shows the way in which facilitated initiatives in different areas of the public sector reform arena emphasize different implicit learning goals. Initiatives in all areas had more than one of these goals with the most common learning goal centering on formal knowledge sharing (95% of initiatives refer to this, in some form or another). The next two most common learning goals are experiential knowledge sharing (where about 75% of the initiatives tried to engage peers to share tacit lessons about how to get reforms done) and peer-to-peer support (where about 70% of the facilitated engagements, like the PEMPAL, aimed to bring practitioners together to show that they face common struggles and can support each other in addressing such). These three goals were emphasized together in more than half of the facilitated initiatives, including examples as diverse as the OECD Knowledge Sharing Alliances, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, TAXGIP,[24] and the Africa Electricity Regulator Peer Review and Learning Network.

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[23] Mistra Urban Futures is one facilitator that does provide such tools, in its focus on 'co-creating knowledge' through peer exchange. Their work involves multiple steps, all involving peer engagement: "The first step is to identify challenges and questions that need to be met and to mobilize resources. The next step is to generate knowledge and understanding through different research projects. The final step is to enable implementation of the results, working towards a sustainable urban development." http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/node/1065

[24] http://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/tax-lessons-peers

The other four engagement and learning goals were much less apparent in the review of facilitators' intentions. About 35% of the initiatives emphasized peer-to-peer coordination and collaboration as a learning goal, and about 25% were focused on using the peer engagements to foster specific training results. The training goals tended to be emphasized by peer engagement initiatives associated with professions or other certification bodies (like the various associations of auditors and accountants and South Africa's Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) which focuses on training public, private and nonprofit agencies to promote wilderness protection). About 15% of the facilitator organizations were explicitly focused on promoting group identity or peer-to-peer pressure through the initiatives. The peer-to-peer pressure focus was almost exclusively a goal for organizations facilitating peer reviews (including APRM and the OECD-MENA Procurement network).

Figure 8: Peer engagement and learning goals of facilitators, by reform type
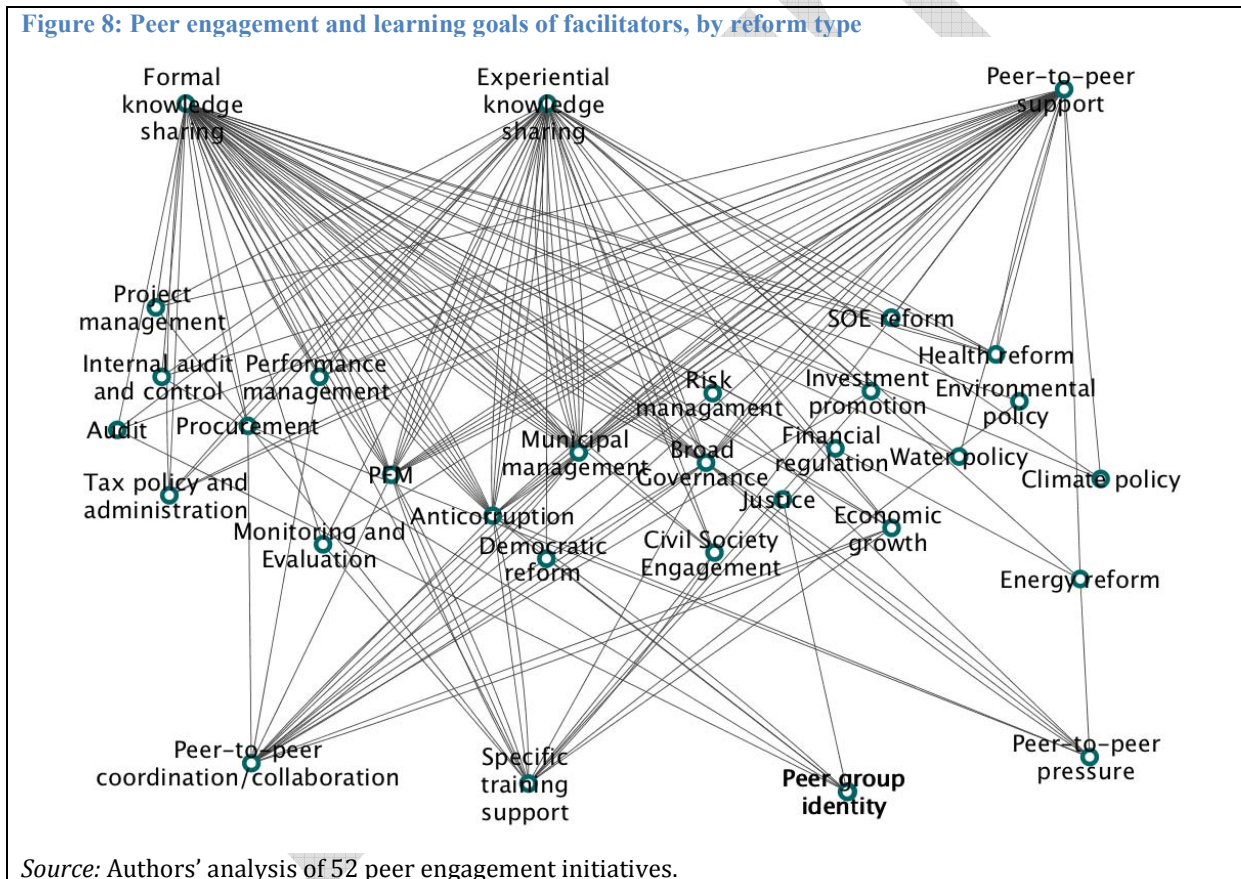
Source: Authors' analysis of 52 peer engagement initiatives.

Figure 9 and Figure 10 summarize the complexity in Figure 8, showing the relative importance of different peer engagement and learning goals for facilitators. The relative importance can be compared with actual learning gains of peer learners, which were identified with reference to respondent comments about what they learned from peer learning engagements. These comments showed first that the gains emerged from an interactive process where peers learned from and with each other. Referencing such learning, 85% of the respondents used words like "sharing", "exchange", and "reciprocal" to describe what they gained. The vast majority of the peer learners identified experiential

knowledge sharing as the key gain of their experience. This kind of exchange fostered learning about 'softer' issues of reform, like building teams and managing political tensions and maintaining political support, and dealing with cultural challenges. This experiential knowledge sharing also helped participants learn about prioritization and sequencing reforms. Such learning is extremely difficult to codify and formalize in documents and is therefore often a peculiar product of peer learning exchanges—where peers can exchange tacit experiential knowledge with other peers who have enough in common to make sense of the informal sharing process.

Figure 9: Peer 'learning' goals of facilitating entities   Figure 10: Actual learning gains of peer learners

Source: Authors' analysis of 52 peer engagement initiatives and peer learner survey results.
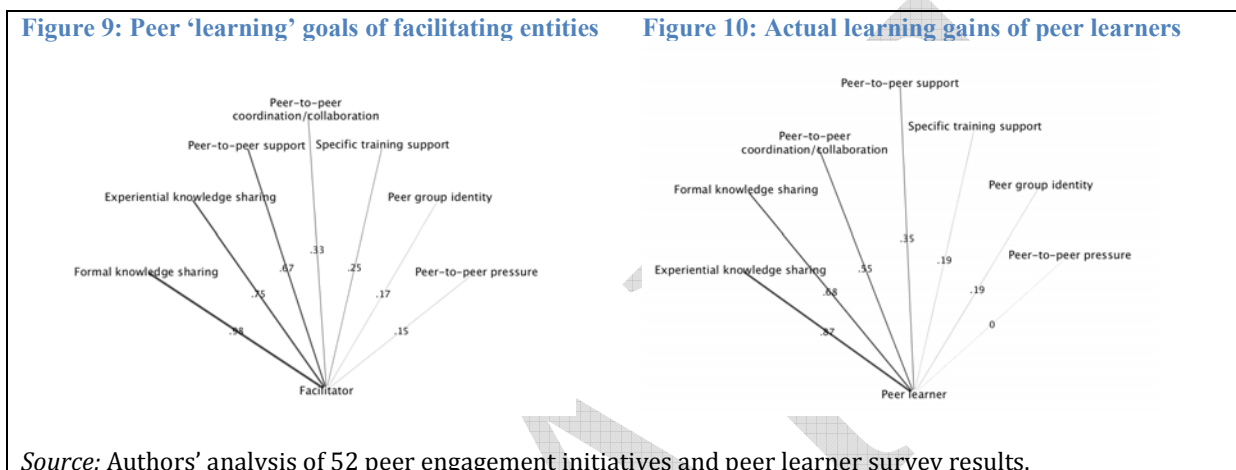
The second most common form of learning gains by peer learners arose through formal knowledge sharing. Examples of this included written case studies and the formal sharing facilitated by common assessments—where peers could refer to written descriptions of peers with better scores on common benchmarks. The topics around which knowledge like this is commonly shared are many, but some important dimensions of the development and public sector reform process are discussed below.

The peer learners also referred frequently to gains from peer-to-peer coordination and collaboration and peer-to-peer support. Examples of such comments include a respondent who noted that, "I have worked with the peers on common strategies and found that we can generate products that are better than I could on my own." Another respondent noted that the connections with new peers "proved valuable when I returned to work and encountered struggles, which my peers could relate to. The peers gave me advice on how to deal with the struggles and this was very useful." Another respondent spoke of the encouragement they received from peers, especially around dealing with challenging decisions in reform processes: "The peer contacts helped me think about sequencing issues and how to get support for my decisions."

There is quite a lot of synergy between the list of peer learning goals of facilitators and actual peer learning gains by surveyed peer learners. This is a very positive observation that suggests some overlap between thinking on the supply side of peer learning (by facilitators) and its demand side (by potential peer learners).

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The positive nature of this observation is tarnished by the fact that facilitators seldom focus on these learning goals when evaluating their initiatives. This focus was assessed by looking at evaluation documents for 34 of the 52 facilitator organizations (documents were difficult to find for the other initiatives). These documents tended to emphasize activities and 'event focused' participation and/or overall impact, and ignored the more direct peer learning goals discussed above. Figure 11 shows this clearly, illustrating how frequently different facilitator organizations evaluated different dimensions of the peer engagement and learning process. Evaluation documents of over 80% of the initiatives show numbers of official events and products and attendance (like the number of conference meetings and written case studies, or participants in meetings), and about 60% of the initiatives also reflect on overall impacts (like progress with reforms).[25] These two focal points are arguably the book-ends of any theory of change that involves peer learning. In between these book-ends are the peer learning gains and goals discussed above, which are commonly not evaluated. For instance, only about 20% of the initiatives assessed the results of training transfers; a smaller group assessed the improvement in group identity after peer engagements; some of the peer review initiatives reflected (unscientifically) on the peer pressure gains; and a smattering of facilitators evaluated whether peers maintained relationships or experienced gains from knowledge transfers.

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[25] For instance, the African Risk Capacity Agency report on the use of peer reviews discusses the number of groups created, reports produced, and impacts on country-level strategies (www.africanriskcapacity.org/documents/350251/389546/PRM_Report1_EN.pdf). A 2009 report by the South African Community Grantmaker Leadership Cooperative focuses on peer engagement activities, detailing the number and type of events and participation and membership. It describes how these events create spaces for learning and lists topics addressed, but does not give evidence about who learned what and how lessons were shared or diffused to home organizations. www.sacglf.org/documents/First%20Narrative%20Report%20to%20Ford%20Foundation%20FINAL.pdf. The 2013/2014 CLEAR initiative report describes the number and type of peer learning events, identifies participation data, and even points to products (like new monitoring and evaluation strategies developed by country teams) but does not actually specify peer learning gains.

Figure 11: The factors considered by facilitators in evaluating peer engagement results
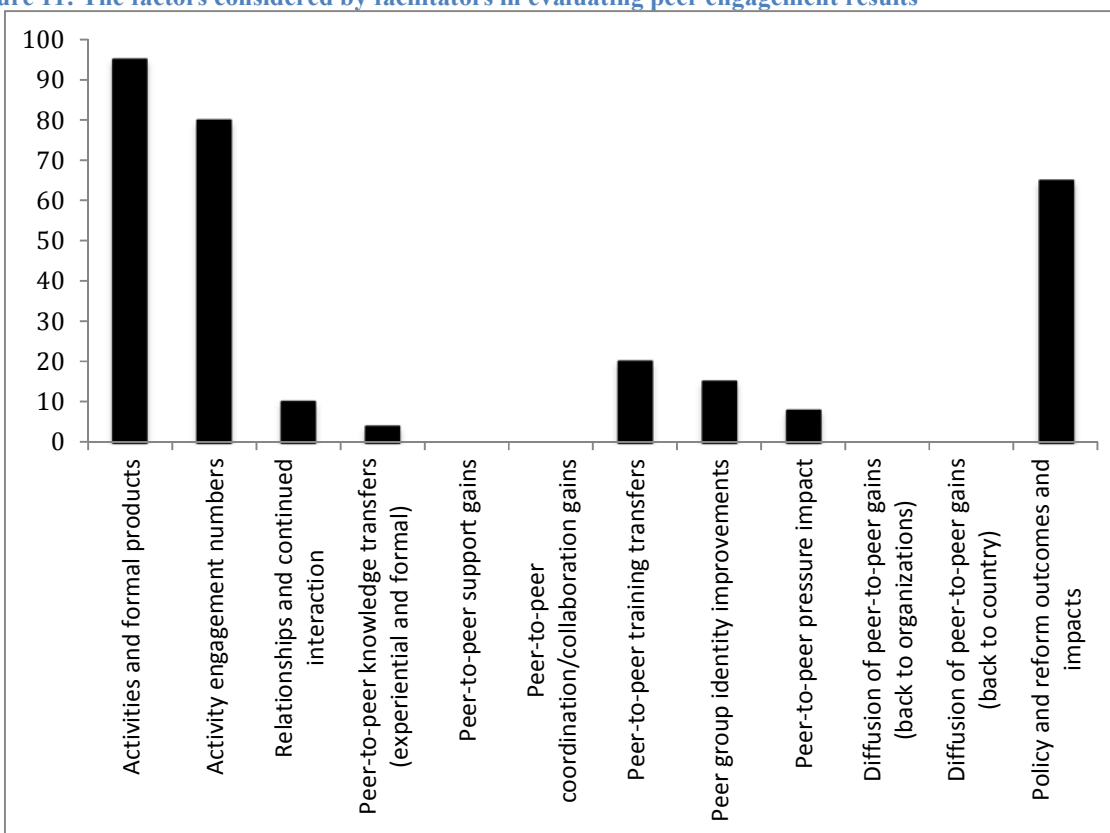
Source: Authors' analysis of 52 peer engagement initiatives.

The Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning network (PEMPAL) provides an example of how to assess learning gains. One of the mechanisms they use is Etienne Wenger's questions to evaluate learning in communities of practice. The approach is described in a recent 'success story':[26]

> Interviews were made on the basis of a questionnaire suggested in the Wenger et al. conceptual framework, and included the following questions:
> - What is the most meaningful PEM PAL activity that you have participated in and your experience of it (e.g., conversation, a working session, a project, etc.)?
> - Please describe a specific resource this activity produced for you (e.g., and idea or document) and why you thought it might be useful.
> - Please tell how you used this resource in your practice.
> - How did this affect your personal success?
> - Has your participation contributed to the success of your organization?

The African Transitional Justice Research Network is another peer learning facilitator that pays some attention to actual peer learning gains (albeit not as much attention as is given to basic engagement data). They survey 'members' of the network to track the usefulness of web-based resources in fostering supportive interactions and research skills and capacity:[27]

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[26] http://www.pempal.org/data/upload/files/2012/06/pem-pal_success_web.pdf.
[27] http://www.transitionaljustice.com/images/docs/atjrnevaluation.pdf

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"A majority of survey participants (63%) found the Network "helpful" or "very helpful" in enhancing contacts; and over half of participants (56%) found the Network "helpful" or "very helpful" in enhancing research skills and capacity. All of those who considered themselves part of the Network found it helpful in some way in terms of enhancing contact. The vast majority found it helpful in terms of enhancing research skills and capacity."

The World Bank South-South 'Results Stories' shown in Annex 3 also provide examples on how to evaluate more direct peer learning gains, although the 'results' they allude to are presented quite generally. An example comes from the peer learning engagement focused on social protection in Vietnam, where results are presented as follow:

"The delegates increased their capacity to develop and implement policies and programs to protect the poor and vulnerable in Vietnam:
- Delegates *increased their awareness* of new approaches and mechanisms for designing and targeting social programs for the transient poor and the poor in rural and urban areas.
- Delegates *increased their knowledge and skills* to manage and monitor social security and social insurance programs and benefits, including through use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). As suggested by the Vice-Chair of Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA), the "efficiency of the record keeping system of the new pension system in India is extremely relevant to strengthening SP programs in Vietnam." The Vice-Chair of the Vietnam Social Security Administration also noted that "the application of ITCs in management work on a large-scale [in India] is extremely well-organized . . . and lessons could be applied . . . in modernizing the social security system [in Vietnam]."
- The exchange helped officials within MoLISA agree on ways to support social protection in Vietnam. Since the exchange, Vietnamese officials have conducted workshops and technical meetings to share lessons and build consensus on next steps for reforms."

The general failure to assess peer-learning gains gives one the impression that the facilitated initiatives are more explicitly about peer engagement than about peer learning. This may be too rigid an interpretation of the evidence, however, and a more nuanced perspective might be that the facilitators are not yet clear about how to measure learning gains. This is a crucial observation that needs to be addressed if learning is actually one of the true focal points of the initiatives, however. The learning dimension of peer learning appears to be a black box that needs to be better understood if peer engagements are to effectively lead to peer learning.

The bottom line is that while there are many potential gains from peer learning which materialize when peers are effectively matched and engaged, most of the explicit learning gains are not included in evaluations by facilitators. Evaluations assess engagement (how many peers are attending workshops) but not learning from such engagement. The gap in evaluation may reflect a bias towards facilitating engagement over learning or just difficulty in thinking about what learning results look like. The gap needs to be closed for more effective capture of peer learning gains (to know what works and why).

Peer engagement and peer commitment

The challenge of ensuring peer commitment was noted in **Error! Reference source not found.**. The challenges include the difficulty of building trust among peers, ensuring all peers have the same willingness to learn, are fully engaged from the start, and enjoy

authorization to engage fully in the peer learning process. These concerns are crucial when thinking about creating the relational context needed to foster effective peer learning. Without trust and willingness to learn and engage, individuals are unlikely to be effective participants in a peer learning process. There are obviously many social, political and organizational factors that influence these issues. The complex relational contexts in which peer learning plays out have a large influence on the real and stated goals of engagement, for instance, and whether the individuals and organizations involved have similar interests in learning and diffusing learning.

The challenge of building peer commitment to the learning process plays out through time. Facilitators need to first engage commitment in peers and then foster committed connections over weeks, months, and even years. The challenge is partly about the individuals themselves and partly about their organizations (especially where initiatives engage individuals through organizations). One peer learner noted this clearly, describing the key challenge as "ensuring the 'learning focus' is relevant to all peers *and their organizations*." Another peer learner commented that the challenge was to "get all peers *and their organizations* to quickly and continuously recognize the value in engagement."

This challenge overlaps with the difficulty of managing logistics in the peer learning process. As shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**, this difficulty relates to ensuring peers have the time to engage (at face-to-face events and after face-to-face events), finding the appropriate venues for face-to-face peer engagement and the appropriate media for non face-to-face peer engagement, and dealing with logistics so that administrative details, costs and so forth do not to get in the way of peers wanting to engage.

Various ideas emerge to address these challenges; from views expressed by the peer learners and the experiences of some facilitator organizations. The more general literature on peer learning is also helpful (see Annex 4). The main idea centers on the importance of proving value of engagement early on and continuously (with the individuals engaged and the organizations from which they come). A key lesson in this light centers on ensuring that the peer learning is sufficiently focused and that the focus is directly relevant to targeted peers (and their organizations). Peer learners noted, for instance, that it was important for facilitators to address particular topics in learning engagements, and to ensure that these topics are relevant to the learners. One peer learner suggested that facilitators should even canvas potential peers ahead of peer learning initiatives to identify topics of interest. This might lead to a smaller peer engagement event but the peers at the event are often more likely to continue engaging after the event is over (because they self-select to some degree). An example of this comes from the approach taken to defining topics for attention in the Demand for Good Governance Peer Learning Network, where peers were contacted through a listserve and asked to refine broad topics for group meetings.[28]

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[28] http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/0,,content MDK:21589459~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:244363,00.html

Another approach to specifying agendas that are relevant involves doing research on the kinds of problems targeted peers commonly face. An example comes from the International Financial Corporation's (IFC) 2009 peer event on *Doing Business* reforms. The IFC convened a variety of countries in this initiative, and worked hard to ensure the topics were relevant by assessing the kinds of reforms they commonly struggled with. They focused on these areas, excluding some other issues in the interests of ensuring relevance:[29]

> "To determine which areas of reform were priorities in the region, we analyzed the *Doing Business* data across all topics and talked with our colleagues working in the field. We found that most of the participating countries were either in the process of reforming (or needed to improve) along four common themes: business start-up, construction permits, access to credit, and trade logistics. Other topics, such as insolvency procedures and investor protection, were also important, but we needed to focus the agenda to ensure a coherent discussion. We wanted to be sure the participants would take away meaningful and specific advice on a few topics, rather than just skim the surface of several."

This approach poses a challenge for peer engagement initiatives that are either very broad (like some of the peer review approaches) or are driven by pre-defined agendas (that are not open to shaping by participating peers). These initiatives are often inherently political in nature, and focus more on fostering peer-to-peer pressure around some key and pre-set ideas and agendas. This makes it difficult for facilitators to exert influence over the peers engaged (and hence match peers) or to ensure that the topics are specified sufficiently to ensure individuals are hooked in to commit to the process of learning. The peer learning gains of individuals involved in such initiatives may be limited as a result (which should probably be accepted, since the objectives are more about creating peer-to-peer pressure than learning).

Peer learners and some facilitators also noted the value of combining more directed and specific training (sometimes tied to certification) with more emergent peer learning activities. The training activities have stand-alone value for individuals (and their organizations) but could also provide opportunities for peer engagement and relationship building, and offer ways of framing more flexible follow-up peer learning connections. For instance, one of the respondents to the survey noted that they attended a public financial management (PFM) training event to get a new certificate but met new peers at the event and stayed connected for many months afterwards. Training like this is a key aspect of the peer learning initiatives facilitated by STAREP (Strengthening Auditing and Reporting in the Countries of the Eastern Partnership).[30] Peers are engaged in a community of practice where they can learn interactively but also receive formal training and receive certificates of achievement. This is crucial in peer networks focused on professional groups (like accountants and auditors, in this case, or experts on anticorruption in the case of Transparency International's School on Integrity[31]).

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[29] https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/10497/547650BRI0IFC011 peer0learning0event.pdf?sequence=1

[30] web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTCENFINREPREF/0,, contentMDK:23468684~menuPK:9341783~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:4152118,00. html

[31] www.transparency.org/news/event/transparency_international_school_on_integrity_lithuania

Peer learners also mentioned the use of peer contracts to foster commitment by individuals and their organizations. The brief descriptions of these contracts suggested a focus on working together, attending peer meetings, communication regularly, and applying lessons learned in one's own organization. These contracts are symbolic and are obviously difficult to enforce. However, they provide some basis for facilitators to set expectations of the peer participants, which is particularly useful when establishing sustained individual contacts by specific peers.

Ongoing communication was also emphasized as a potential remedy for these challenges. A handful of respondents pointed out that their organization had to sanction their engagement over a number of months, and needed constant reassurance about the value of the interaction. This required the facilitators structuring the peer-to-peer interactions to allow regular report-backs to those authorizing peer participation. One example is to create a 'course' around the peer learning engagement, where peers participate monthly in a mix of directed sessions (focused on specific training, alongside peers) and less directed peer-to-peer learning interactions. The peers remain committed because of the structured nature of the engagement and their employers remain supportive because of consistent reports of progress. Some survey respondents noted that the reports to employers even included estimates of potential return on investment for the interventions.

Clear logistics management was also considered vital. This is where a third party facilitator plays a very pivotal role. A number of survey respondents noted, for instance, that third party facilitators could deal with finances in a more effective way than their employers. This could overcome financial barriers to peer engagement. Beyond this, facilitators could address the administrative burdens of organizing and hosting meetings, which a number of survey respondents said could be real impediments to sustained individual contacts. This logistical assistance is obviously vital in facilitating large group meetings (like conferences). Three survey respondents pointed to the continued importance of such role after such events, however, and noted that third party conveners were required to continuous connections (by organizing site visits between paired peers, for instance, and even setting peers up with virtual communication software).

From peer learning to impact at scale

The study also raised questions about diffusing or scaling lessons learned through peer learning initiatives. As discussed earlier, it is clear that individuals are the direct learners in any peer learning initiative, but most facilitators are focused on the impacts of peer learning at an organizational or even city and country level. This leaves one wondering how to spread learning from discrete individuals to broader sets of actors who may not be directly engaged in the peer learning processes. Think, for instance, of how the head of an African electricity regulator takes lessons back home from a meeting of the Africa Electricity Regulator Peer Review and Learning Network.

Peer learner survey respondents identified a range of challenges related to this issue. Table 4 categorizes these challenges into two areas: getting peers to 'share forward' (ensuring lessons learned go beyond the individual to the organization) and ensuring that home organizations are open to learning from returning peers.

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Table 4: Challenges of diffusing and scaling the peer learning of individual peers

Challenges of getting peers to 'share forward'
Ensuring 'peers' reflect effectively on their peer learning gains
Ensuring 'peers' are willing to share learning back into their organizations
Ensuring 'peers' are able to share learning back to their organizations

Challenges of ensuring home organizations are open to learning
Ensuring organizations are open to learning from 'returning peers'
Ensuring organizations are willing to invest in learning from 'returning peers'
Creating time and spaces to bring lessons home

</div>

Once again, these challenges play out at both the individual and organizational levels. Respondents to the peer learning survey suggested some ideas to address the challenges at both levels. The most relevant comment emphasized the importance of building commitment to take lessons home among peers participating in learning initiatives. Another respondent noted that peers participating in events could be required to interact with groups in home organizations before and after the events are over, and contracts with peers could even require them to 'share forward'. One idea in this respect involves getting peers to work with colleagues in their home organizations when they contribute to ideas about the topics to be addressed in peer learning initiatives. The same peers could be then be required to do presentations on these topics when they return to their home organizations. These engagements could be included as part of the evaluation of peer learning efforts.

These ideas do not effectively address organizational constraints to learning that might impede the potential to diffuse learning from individual peers to organizations in which they work. It is quite likely that countries and organizations send peers to events with no expectation of broad impact afterwards. There may be no infrastructure in place in the home organization to allow lesson diffusion, including time, money and facilities. Five respondents noted that these challenges were best addressed by ensuring organizational commitment to diffusion prior to the engagement of any individual peers. They mentioned the importance of formalizing ideas about expected learning gains for individuals and plans to transfer these gains to others. These plans should include practical attention to the time off needed for diffusion, financial requirements of such, and possible beneficiaries.

There are examples of facilitated initiatives that pay serious attention to this issue of diffusion. The Horizontal Learning Program in Bangladesh, for instance, provides peer learning opportunities for officials from regional and local governments. [32] The opportunities are not limited to individuals, however, with teams from different governments engaged together in a variety of activities (including benchmarking, site

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[32] www.wsp.org/sites/wsp.org/files/publications/horizontal_learning_strenthening_capacities.pdf

visits, and knowledge sharing events). The program also includes pre-planned dissemination events to ensure that lessons learned are widely communicated:

> "As part of dissemination of learning, the Local Government Division, Ministry of LGRD&C with support from partners under the horizontal learning program, organized a national dissemination workshop on October 30, 2008, at the Winter Garden of the Sheraton Hotel, Dhaka. The purpose of the workshop was to: (a) share the lessons learned from the first year of the horizontal learning program among a larger audience; and (b) formulate a roadmap for the future, with the consensus of potential players in the sector, to strengthen capacities of local government institutions through the horizontal learning program. More than 300 participants representing government, local government institutions, non-governmental organizations, and development partners participated in the workshop."

The program budgets for opportunities for new peer engagement that may arise in these kinds of events—especially joint activities where new peers are engaged with peers already engaged in the initiative. This means that the peer learning extends beyond simple sharing of knowledge to include new experiments and interventions based on the knowledge sharing. In this way the peer network grows through time and the learning opportunities expand.

Another example of this planned diffusion comes in a World Bank project in Kyrgyzstan, the Transparency and Accountability in Budgeting Peer Assisted Learning Network[33] inspired by the regional Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning (PEMPAL) initiative. Public financial management officials at the central level had been engaged in PEMPAL where they benefited from peer learning gains. They noted that the lessons learned from other countries were not trickling down to regional and local governments, however, where these was even weak transmission of lessons about positive deviance in the Kyrgyz system itself (where local governments were performing better than average because of home-grown solutions). Inspired by the PEMPAL example, and with World Bank assistance, government officials created a network in Kyrgyz, blending ideas of a community of practice with other peer learning tools (like study tours and online knowledge sharing):

> "[The initiative sponsored] 11 peer-to-peer study tours involving over 100 local government and council representatives across the country. [It] has also developed a dedicated website (www.msu.kg) to address needs of local officials, and providing updated information and innovative approaches in local government."

This is an example of an intentional effort to ensure learning diffusion within and across 'home' organizations. In the simplest form it involves a clear strategy to facilitate peer-to-peer connections in the home context, where individuals who have gained from peer interaction are connected to other peers to transfer those gains. This is an essential characteristic of any learning organization (where individuals are constantly encouraged to learn and connections between individuals are facilitated to allow for peer-learning opportunities). Figure 8 captures this kind of structure, showing how different groups of individuals might be able to connect to others and diffuse new ideas and ways of doing. Imagine that five individuals (a, b, c, d and e) participate in a peer learning initiative and gain from such in discrete ways (where learning happens in their individual heads).

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33   www.efca.kg/project-view/transparency-and-accountability-in-local-budgeting-peer-assisted-learning/

Individuals b, c and d return to their organizations and do not share their learning with others. Individual a, on the other hand, connects and shares with individual f who connects and shares with individuals g, h, i, and j; this ensures diffusion of the peer learning gains enjoyed by individual a. Individual e also shares peer learning gains from the a, b, c, d and e interaction—but more directly by convening individual m, n, o and p.

Figure 12: Diffusion of peer learning through horizontal connections
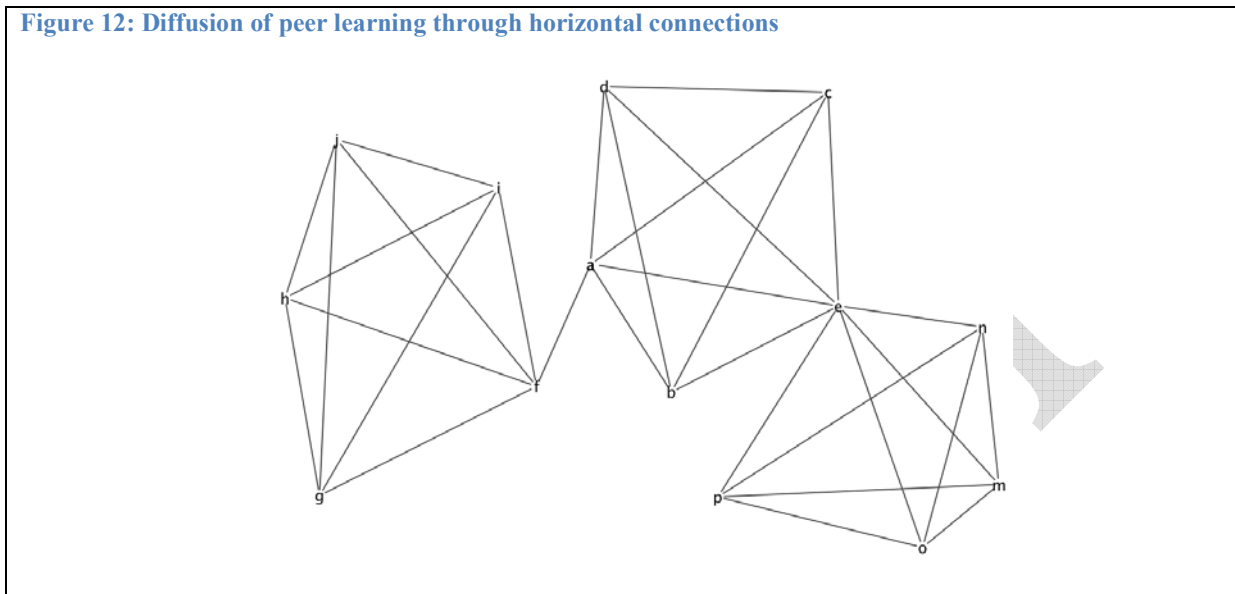
Variations on this approach seem to be the most prominent (and only) way of ensuring that discrete peer learning gains diffuse and scale. It seems to be a demanding and transaction and resource intensive approach that many facilitators would probably not be able to resource or support. This may be why most facilitator organizations do not include such activities into their agendas. However, some examples do exist and offer ideas on how to achieve scale in a cost effective and organic manner.

An example is World Vision's internal Project model Accredited Learning and Support program[34], which "is an online community learning approach that delivers facilitated module based learning and support to World Vision economic development programming staff based in the field." It employs online mechanisms to facilitate learning by peers (blending training and less structured peer-to-peer interaction), which is both cost effective and "allows for the different time-zones, travel commitments, and connectivity issues facing the global participants whilst also ensuring they move through the activities at the same pace and benefit from being part of an online interactive community learning together." The peers engaged in this community are connected in a system resembling that in Figure 12.

Another example is the African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (AfCoP). It uses a variety of tools and mechanisms to foster diffusion of learning

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[34] https://www.worldvision.com.au/Libraries/SEED_page/PALS.pdf

from core groups of peers to others. These include sub-regional meetings and national chapters of the CoP. These are "autonomous bodies, launched at the initiative of senior-level government officials and linked to national processes" (much like the e, m, n, o and p cluster in Figure 12). A national chapter in Niger was started by a member of the full AfCoP, who "mobilized 300 civil servants, representatives of civil society, the private sector, and development agencies, whom at the end of the week had become eager to implement MfDR (Managing for Development Results) concepts in their organization." The national chapters allow AfCoP peer learners to engage back into their home contexts, with little demands on the AfCoP facilitators:

> In terms of sustainability, national chapters are supported by their national government. Donors contribute to their activities on a case by case basis. The regional AfCoP platform ensures that knowledge and information is continuously shared in both directions between the regional community and the national groups.

Conclusion and next steps

A model emerges

We started this investigation with an outline model. The mapping has allowed us to develop and extend this. The resulting conceptual model is not normative (we do not know enough to assert that this is the best way of seeing the connections between actions or that the steps identified really are causally connected) and it is not theoretical (while informed by many theories, they have little combined predictive power). Our model is a way of integrating our hypotheses and exposing them to some empirical daylight.

Our model has to be sufficiently clear to withstand some confusing cross-winds. Rhetoric about peer learning in development is undisciplined, making it difficult to determine exactly what kinds of peer learning activities are in place in which situation. The term "peer" is now a common adjective used in the description of formal arrangements and there is much enthusiasm resulting from the pressures to declare victory on any alternative to traditional Technical Assistance.[35] As a result, activities which are branded as "peer"-related vary from informal communities of practice, through somewhat didactic lesson-giving platforms for donors, to highly structured benchmarking exercises between organizations or even countries. Organizations exist in most countries and regions of the developing world to ensure peers collaborate, connect, share, and engage. This is especially true in the area of public sector reform, where initiatives are commonplace in areas ranging from urban reform to audit practice, budgeting, civil service and personnel management, regulatory management, and general policy-making (involving sectors like food provision, agriculture, land management, infrastructure, and more). These initiatives are commonly sponsored by donors, including multilaterals (like the World Bank), bilaterals (like Germany's GIZ), and private organizations (like the Hewlett Foundation). They are also often supported by developing countries themselves.

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[35] (Keijzer, 2013b) offers a particularly useful overview

The research literature does not provide much firm ground on which to base a determination of what is peer learning and when is it likely to be effective (see Annex 4). It focuses on western countries and is heavily biased to the higher education process (explaining how students can learn from each other), yielding hypotheses that are not well shaped for application in the public sector reform context in developing countries.
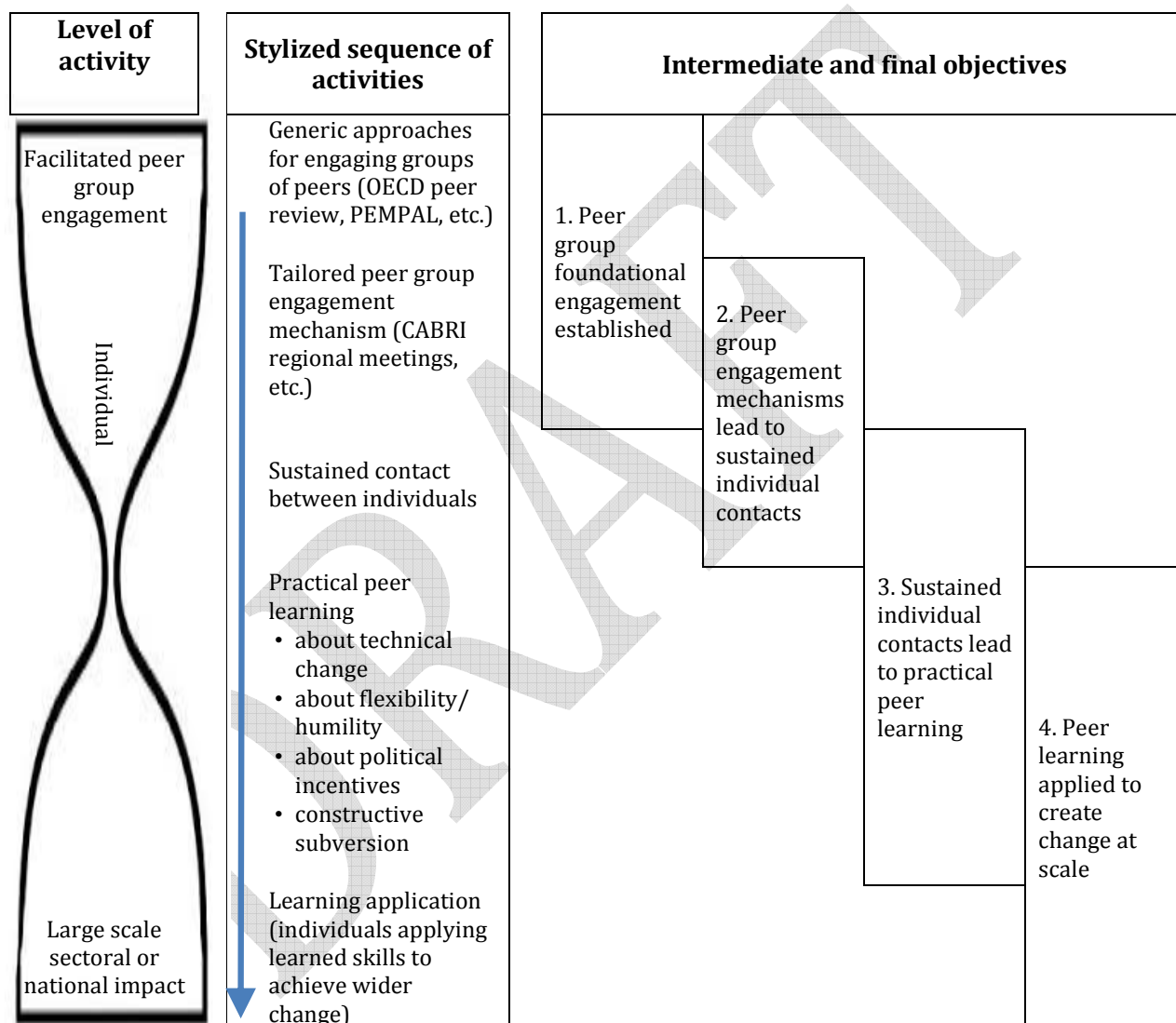
Thus while the research literature has little relevant to the sector or the country environment, the development discourse is confused as to whether it is even referring to individuals learning from each other. More recent discussion of peer learning in development has begun to locate it as a specific capacity-building modality, but it has not addressed the challenge of linking individual learning experiences to results at scale (Keijzer, 2013a).

The emerging conceptual model is set out below (Figure 13). It sets out a stylized sequence of activities beginning with approaches for engaging groups of peers, such as the OECD or NEPAD peer review modalities. These generic approaches can be tailored to suit particular topics, regions or countries, producing arrangements (such as the CABRI regional meetings or the PEMPAL Budget Community of Practice Regional Meetings) which can lead to link peers together in groups (in real time and space or virtually) which can foster sustained, individual-level contacts. Those sustained contacts can offer peer learning, producing practical skills which can then be applied to achieve wider change. The model is hour-glass shaped in that it proposes a sequence from the large scale organizational arrangements necessary to establish the peer group engagements, to individual level gains in knowledge and insights, and back to the large scale in making impacts at the sectoral or national level. Linking individual peer learning with its organizational origins and its ultimate impact, distinguishes this model from other typologies of peer learning approaches which tend to either focus entirely on the organizational (Keijzer, 2013a, figure 1) or which discuss peer learning in isolation from the mechanisms that enable it (Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 2001; Keijzer, 2013a). The Public Expenditure Management Network in Asia (PEMNA) "Value Added Chain" is broadly consistent with this model (World Bank, 2013, figure 2) as are the outcomes proposed by the 2012 strategy of the Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning Network (PEMPAL) (PEMPAL Steering Committee, 2012), although neither PEMNA nor PEMPAL identify individual level peer learning as fundamental.

The model in Figure 13 makes a distinction between on the one hand "peer group engagement", where the primary unit of analysis is the agency or the country, and on the other "individual peer learning", where public officials or others with some responsibility for reform design gain practical insights into technical reform options and tactical modes of implementation. This recognizes that not all "peer group engagement" is intended to lead to "peer learning". For example, OECD public governance peer reviews are a "peer group engagement" and are intended to assist in setting an agenda for reform, delineating the types of developments emerging in other OECD countries (Unalan, 2009). This includes "learning opportunities for all involved as countries share how they have addressed shared challenges and objectives" (OECD, 2010, p.8) but that does not necessarily refer to improving the knowledge and skills or specific senior staff through sustained individual level contact – although it might. Similar points apply to the Pacific Forum Compact Peer

Reviews (Forum Secretariat, 2013) and the Open Government Partnership which produces biannual independent progress reports for each participating country in order to motivate improvements in transparency but with no stated intention to link this to skill-building at the individual level. Country participation in the triennial surveys of the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is also intended to stimulate debate and policy change by comparison between peers, but is not linked to individual learning.

Figure 13: Peer engagement to peer learning to results at scale

Level of activity	Stylized sequence of activities	Intermediate and final objectives			
Facilitated peer group engagement	Generic approaches for engaging groups of peers (OECD peer review, PEMPAL, etc.)	1. Peer group foundational engagement established			
	Tailored peer group engagement mechanism (CABRI regional meetings, etc.)		2. Peer group engagement mechanisms lead to sustained individual contacts		
Individual	Sustained contact between individuals				
	Practical peer learning • about technical change • about flexibility/ humility • about political incentives • constructive subversion			3. Sustained individual contacts lead to practical peer learning	4. Peer learning applied to create change at scale
Large scale sectoral or national impact	Learning application (individuals applying learned skills to achieve wider change)				

As shown in Figure 13, the final outcome of the model is that peer learning has been applied to create change at scale. Associated prior intermediate outcomes are that the peer group engagement mechanisms were adjusted for context and led to sustained individual contacts, and that sustained individual contacts led to practical learning.

Some emerging conclusions and the questions that they raise

The map of the peer learning territory set out above offers insights into how the model is operationalized. It uncovered much similarity in the experience of the surveyed peer learners with the majority noting, for example, that 'peers' were individuals with similar characteristics to their own. The learners also noted that peer learning happens through deep and ongoing engagement with these peers, where trust-based exchange produces opportunities for lesson transfer. The learners noted further that peer learning requires multiple parts, where peers meet and interact for the first time and where peers interact on a more ongoing basis afterwards. The peer learners spoke to how important joint work is in these interactions, and how learning gains tend to center on the knowledge that is shared through such interaction. The main gains are in the sharing of experiential or tacit knowledge, but gains also take the form of more formal knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer collaboration and support.

The mapping exercise also uncovered much variation in the peer engagement and learning efforts of facilitators (entities that lead initiatives to provide peer engagement and learning opportunities). These facilitators engage in different areas of public sector reform, use different tool mixes, and emphasize different learning and engagement goals. The variation is not always extreme but is sufficient to complicate any effort to identify clear dimensions along which one might think of organizing facilitation types.

The mapping suggests three early conclusions – each of which provokes further questions.

First, it is clear that there is considerable investment of effort and optimism about the potential of peer learning. The associated question is whether this has "magic bullet" overtones, where yet another generic solution is offered to the confounding problem of public sector reform.

Second, the peer engagement exercises suggest that the focus on managing the logistical challenges of organizing meetings and maintaining peer engagement often exceeds the focus on the larger objective of using peer learning to achieve reform results at scale. The associated question is how the final objective of effective public sector reform can inform the design of peer engagements without unduly adding to the already significant management burdens which they represent.

Finally, examining peer engagement from a political economy perspective suggests two levels of challenge facing peer learning. First there is the question of the degree to which learning – however flexible and contextually-appropriate – can assist in developing the negotiation and coalition-building skills necessary to accompany technical reform proposals. Second there are questions concerning the pressures and incentives that facilitators of peer engagement face: what is the room for maneuver for peer engagement facilitators which are dependent on donor funding for organizational survival and can be under pressure to promulgate standard reform solutions?

1. Peer learning offers promise

Evidence from the 52 peer facilitation initiatives, the 84 individual survey respondents and from the range of case studies examined in this report points to enthusiasm for peer learning. Notions of "success" were too varied to allow any simple aggregate ratings of the degree to which peer learning is "effective", but it is clear that the idea of peer engagement has found a firm place in discussion of public sector reform and development. The previous technical agendas have been, at least, supplemented by an approach which seeks to engage peer practitioners doing reforms, helping these peers learn from others to identify a contextually relevant reform approach. Individuals involved in reforms are open and interested in this kind of learning and a range of organizations are now facilitating this kind of learning.

There is a clear supply side to this growing enthusiasm, with the growth in number and scope of facilitators ranging from the African Peer Review Mechanism, the OECD's Anti-Corruption Network in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Collaborative African Budget Reform Initiative, the African Union's Regional Anticorruption Programme for Africa, through to the Club de Madrid's "Leaders Engaged in New Democracies" network). But the growing enthusiasm is also marked on the demand side, with individual respondents reflecting on the possibility that, in retrospect, they could have learned more from peer engagements than they did (see the case studies in Annex 3).

This raises questions for further consideration about whether the supply and demand are matched and whether the demand is always linked to concern for effective public sector reform or whether it can also reflect other professional or career incentives from public officials.

Emerging question: Interest in peer engagement is growing – to what degree is this linked to its effectiveness in facilitating effective public sector reform and to what degree are we seeing the early stages of yet another "magic bullet" which will provide a way forward regardless of context?

2. Peer engagement can become an end as much as a means

The mapping exercise highlights that organized peer engagements are generally not designed to achieve all the intermediate objectives and did not consistently have change at scale as a guiding final objective. There is an emphasis on the early and somewhat logistical stages of the process, with evaluations focusing on whether the peer group foundational engagements were established and well-resourced and attended and, to a lesser degree, whether the engagement mechanisms led to sustained individual contacts. Questions of whether the individual contacts sustained through the facilitated peer engagements led to practical peer learning, and whether the peer learning was subsequently applied to create change at scale were largely ignored. In sum, facilitated peer group engagements were rarely designed and implemented with the full hourglass

model in mind. Attention was focused on the mechanics of establishing the engagement at organizational and at individual level.

The literature on peer learning (reviewed in Annex 4) also shows that researchers have rarely considered the complete process envisaged in the hourglass. The literature has focused on four areas, each offering only a very partial insight into an effective peer learning process.

One set of documents describes, generally in very upbeat terms, how the various forms of peer engagement are employed in particular contexts (Mahon & McBride, 2008; NEPAD, 2015; OECD, 2007, 2014; Pal, 2012).

A second set of more robustly evaluative documents sets out when and how individual peer learning works (Adam et al., 2011; Boud et al., 2001; Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Griffiths et al., 1995; Heavey, 2006; Keijzer, 2013a; Kimmins, 2013; McLeay & Wesson; Tosey, 1999; Van der Veen, 2000; Willey & Gardner, 2010) with an emphasis on further and higher education.

The third set of documents presents a mixed picture of whether the peer engagements lead to constructive policy transfer (Ad Hoc Working Group of Senior Officials, 2003; Bing-Pappoe, 2010; Casey & Gold, 2005; King, Keijzer, Spierings, & Matthews, 2012; OECD, 2008; Pal, 2014; 2011; World Bank Institute, 2013a, 2013b)

A fourth and final set of documents cover the beginning of the process (foundational engagement) and the end (policy or institutional change) but with little or no consideration of how individual contacts play their part. This literature falls under the general heading of analysis of "soft modes of governance" (Borrás & Conzelmann, 2007) by which policy dialogue is pursued and a general "best practice" agenda set, without any particular concern to develop individual skills. See (Conzelmann, 2014a) in particular for a discussion of this in relation to the World Trade Organization and the OECD's Economic and Development Review Committee. This literature essentially concludes that peer reviews of this type are exercises in the management of information rather than learning mechanisms (Conzelmann, 2014b).

Thus while there are some important insights, the key conclusion from a review of the current literature is that it there is no empirically-based guidance about moving along the entire path from peer engagement to peer learning to results at scale.

Emerging question: How can the final objective of achieving effective public sector reform at scale usefully inform the design of peer engagements without unduly adding to the already significant management burdens of organizing them?

3. There are two dimensions to thinking politically

It goes without saying that public sector reforms are deeply political processes. Core public sector management is not separate from politics – political influences and interest group

preferences pervade every system, every relationship and every transaction. There are the "big" politics with identifiable elites driven by the self-interest of remaining in power or in office and self-enrichment; a phenomenon which is more evident in weak governance environments with "extractive institutions" (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012) or in "Limited Access Orders", where the consensus about rent distributions between elites is unstable (North, Wallis, Webb, & Weingast, 2007). There are just as importantly the "small politics" of inter-ministerial rivalries, union concerns and cadre and bureaucratic rivalries. While many politicians promise improved public sector results rather fewer seek election on an administrative reform platform, as they know that changes in how money and people are managed within the public sector will prod interest groups into defensive action with few public consequences. It was noted earlier that these complex stakeholder interests are further clouded by incentives for reform actors to overclaim, describing de jure aspirations rather than de facto achievements, and by the unobservable nature of the changes which must take in the behaviors of the "distributed agents" (Andrews, 2014, p.1) for reforms to be meaningful.

The challenge of "being politically smart" requires that reformers are both politically informed (with an awareness of what has happened previously and an in-depth understanding of the context, including embedded structures, informal institutions, relationships and actors) and politically astute (using information about the politics with intelligence, creativity and the skills to be clever operators working with the politics or around them according to what works best in the context) (Booth & Unsworth, 2014, p.3). These requirements apply both to the process of setting up the peer learning (Why is this being done? In whose interests and why now?) and to the learning outcomes that it should provide to peer learners (Can the learning assist in developing the negotiation and coalition-building skills necessary to accompany technical reform proposals?)

On the politics of the process of setting up the peer learning agenda, the mapping gave glimpses of the complex incentives at work. For example, peer engagement facilitators need funding and they are subject to the same pressures to show that funding will achieve demonstrable results in the short term as other actors in the development field (Independent Evaluation Group, 2011). The facilitators can be subject to pressures to demonstrate that they are adhering to current development fashions (Carothers & Brechenmacher, 2014). **Emerging question: Can peer engagement facilitators freely select their approaches based on realistic prospects for sustainable reform, managing other pressures for their own organizational survival?**

Are facilitating organizations free to ensure that the engagements lead to sustained individual contacts? For similar reasons of funding, facilitating organizations might find themselves under some pressure to ensure that they and their brand remain prominent in the peer learning process. **Emerging question: Is the need for branding of the facilitating organization always compatible with useful individual-level learning, much of which might take place outside of the formal meetings to which the facilitator's name is attached?**

Do the peers automatically want to use the opportunity provided by the peer learning to develop skills for realistic public sector reform? The incentives to promote a commodified reform package are very present for officials within the public sector, including for the organizers of peer learning. **Emerging question: Can peer learning be designed to encourage the development of skills for developing contextually appropriate reforms and can the pressures to promulgate standard reform solutions be managed?**

On the second set of questions concerning inculcating skills for "politically smart" practice, as was noted above the static snapshot provided by the mapping was not able to identify whether and to what degree such skills are taught successfully in the peer learning initiatives studied, and so these points emerge from the literature and are more speculative.

In terms of overall "politically smart" strategy skills, peer learners might usefully learn about flexibility and humility in change management, putting into practice the insight that reform approaches should aim for some degree of agnosticism about preferred processes or organizational forms seeking ideas which are locally-led and adapted as lessons emerge during implementation. They might also learn about "politically smart" perspectives on change, very particularly about operationalizing the insight that apparent dysfunction can be a misunderstood functioning arrangement (Grindle, 2012, p. 261; Srivastava & Larizza, 2013). Finally, learners might learn "constructive subversion" or the resistance to promotion of commodified reform packages. **Emerging question: Can peer learning be designed to teach very soft skills and do peer learning facilitators risk their funding by encouraging "subversive" lesson-learning?**

There are also some narrower "politically smart" learning objectives that peer learning might seek. Can peer learning convey ways to help identify the functional problem, helping to avoid starting with the preferred reform? Is it a useful vehicle for learning about negotiation skills, very particularly the challenge of managing up and across within large organizations? Finally, can and does peer learning help with coalition-building skills? **Emerging question: Can very soft "politically smart" learning objectives be facilitated through peer learning – and how would skill acquisition be evaluated?**

The foundations of a toolkit

With these insights from the mapping and the conceptual model in mind, Figure 14 sets out a stylized path by which peer engagement can lead, via peer learning, to create change at scale. The challenge for facilitators of peer engagement and peer learning is to design a process which leads to the end of this path.

Figure 14: The stylized path from peer engagement to peer learning to results at scale
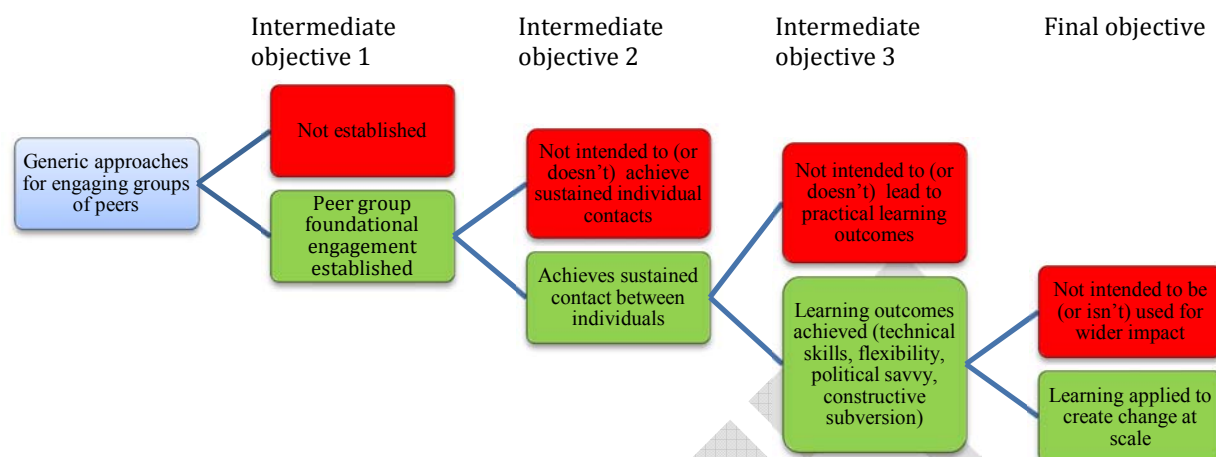
Given the limited data beyond that revealed by the mapping, the toolkit will initially take the form of a tailored checklist with associated guidance, which will assist organizers in reflecting on their options and strategies for moving along the path in achieving the objective of creating change at scale. The checklist will draw on the four stages of the model. Annex 5 provides a summary list of the proposed toolkit contents.

1. Establishing the peer group foundational engagement

Defining and selecting peers in the context of an explicit theory of change:
- Identifying 'the right' peers to engage with/involve in process
- Specifying the level of engagement of the peers in the reform and development process
- Individual peers as people as opposed to substitutable representatives of their agencies
- Matching by organization, function or professional allegiance
- Ensuring peers are effectively matched through initial events
- Managing differences among peers (personalities, cultures, etc.)

2. Ensuring that peer group engagements lead to sustained individual contacts

Selection of strategies to encourage peers to engage fully
- Building trust among peers
- Ensuring all peers have the same willingness to learn
- Ensuring peers are fully engaged from the start
- Ensuring peers have authority to engage fully in the peer learning process

Managing the logistics of peer interaction
- Ensuring peers have the time to engage with peers (at face-to-face events)
- Ensuring peers have means, time to engage with peers (after face-to-face events)
- Finding the appropriate venues for face-to-face peer engagement
- Finding the appropriate media for non face-to-face peer engagement

- Ensuring logistics are effectively and continuously addressed (so as not to get in the way of peers wanting to engage)

Selecting specific tools:
- Large group meetings (like annual workshops)
- Externally produced knowledge products (like expert papers on different budgeting reforms)
- Site visits (one-sided or reciprocal where different delegations can visit others to learn first-hand about new ideas), common assessment products (review templates)
- Expert group review (where external experts analyze reviews)
- Training sessions (potentially related to a certification process)
- Peer-produced knowledge products (like case studies of a peer's own experience)
- Small group meetings (where only a few peers engage in more close-quarters engagement than an annual conference would allow).
- Online and virtual engagement mechanisms and telecommunication devices (allowing peers to connect outside of face-to-face contexts)
- Reflection approaches (individual peers asked to note what they had learned from other peers and how they would act on these lessons, or multiple-peer reflection tools including peers discussing their lessons with each other)
- Achieving continuity – 'quick and thick' vs. Longer and more drawn out engagements

3. Ensuring that sustained individual contacts lead to practical peer learning

Tools for evaluating the learning process:
- Interaction facilitation
- Knowledge generation
- Sharing and exchange (including the use of peer contracts)
- Reflection, application and diffusion

Tools for specifying and evaluating learning outcomes:
- Learning about technical aspects of change
  o Country systems
  o Sequencing
  o Avoiding collateral damage
- Learning about flexibility and humility in change management
- Learning about "politically savvy" perspectives on change
- Learning "constructive subversion" and resistance to promotion of commodified reform packages

4. Applying peer learning to create change at scale

Helping peers to 'share forward':
- Ensuring 'peers' reflect effectively on their peer learning gains
- Ensuring 'peers' are willing to share learning back into their organizations
- Ensuring 'peers' are able to share learning back to their organizations

Ensuring home organizations are open to learning:
- Ensuring organizations are open to learning from 'returning peers'
- Ensuring organizations are willing to invest in learning from 'returning peers'
- Creating time and spaces to bring lessons home

Systematic feedback about the utility of the learning:
- Evaluation techniques to identify how learning outcomes were used in practice and how they contributed to an individual's personal success and the success of their organization

Learning from experiments

In discussion with the agencies/sites willing to use and review the toolkit, three types of experiment will be run:
- Structured experiments - where there is willingness to test different models for testing alternative methods devised by the researchers for maximizing the opportunity within peer engagements to engender practical peer learning;
- Open-ended experiments – for peer engagements which provide less opportunity for experiments devised by the researchers but where the brokers are interested in running their own experiments to achieve practical peer learning which leads to results at scale; and
- Natural experiments – where there has been a historical series of brokered peer engagements and the individual peer learning experiences of those involved could be compared with other colleagues who were not a direct part of the overall engagement.

The experiments will use the toolkit to answer the questions flagged above:
1. Interest in peer engagement is growing – how do we ensure that this is linked to its effectiveness in facilitating effective public sector reform, avoiding the emergence of another "magic bullet" which will provide a way forward regardless of context?
2. How can the final objective of achieving effective public sector reform at scale usefully inform the design of peer engagements without unduly adding to the already significant management burdens of organizing them?
3. How can peer engagement facilitators keep a focus on the ultimate objective of sustainable reform while managing other pressures for their own organizational survival?
4. How can pressures for branding of the facilitating organization allow learning to take place outside of the formal meetings to which the facilitator's name is attached?
5. Can peer learning be designed to encourage the development of skills for developing contextually appropriate reforms, mitigating the risks that it might be used to promulgate standard reform solutions?
6. Can peer learning be designed to teach very soft skills and do peer learning facilitators risk their funding by encouraging "subversive" lesson-learning?
7. Can very soft "politically smart" learning objectives be facilitated through peer learning – and how would skill acquisition be evaluated?

Structured experiments

There are several agencies willing to allow the results from their selections from the toolkit to be compared with the selections of others and with the differences in intermediate and final objectives measured.

Open-ended experiments

Existing and well-established peer engagement mechanisms provide less opportunity for experiments devised by the researchers, but some of the facilitators are interested in running experiments of their own devising to achieve practical peer learning which leads to results at scale (PEMPAL, PEMNA).

The experiments would be at two levels. The first would ask *facilitators* to devise a plan for increasing the intensity of peer contact, identifying impacts which can be measured before and after a treatment which they have themselves designed.

The second would ask *peers* in contact with each other to devise plans for increasing the learning content of those peer contacts, identifying impacts which can be measured before and after the treatments which they have themselves designed.

In the experiments to increase the intensity of peer contact:
- Facilitators of peer engagement would be asked to identify at least 6 of the individuals that are included in a given engagement activity who they hope will be learning from each other.
- They would ask these people to agree to respond to a very short twice-weekly text message/email for 3 months.   The messages would simply ask each of the 6 to report on how many others in the 6 they had had contact with and the degree to which it was informal vs. structured. It would be designed so that it only took 2 minutes to reply to.
- The facilitators would get twice-weekly feedback with a "contact heat map" of some sort - along with a challenge to devise any activities which might increase the scale of informal dialogue between the 6. (If we imagine a 6x6 matrix, with the cells green for formal contact and red for informal, then their target is to get the entire matrix to turn red).
- At the end of the period, the researchers will ask the brokers to report on what they did - and the researchers could then compare that with the changes made in the "contact heat map".

In the experiments to strengthen practical learning:
- Facilitators would ask participants who have any sort of regular contact with others to agree to a weekly text/email. They would be asked if they had had a productive conversation about a reform challenge in the last week.
- Each of the text/emails would be accompanied by a "personal learning heat map" of some sort.

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- Again, the challenge would be to see what they could do to increase what they were getting out of these contacts so that their "personal learning heat map" turns red.
- At the end of the period, the researchers would ask them to report on what they did - and could then compare that with the change that it made in the "heat map"

Natural experiments

Where there has been a historical series of brokered peer engagements (OECD Public Governance Reviews, etc.) then public officials who have been central to recent reviews would be contacted by the researchers (around 6-10 civil servants per review and focusing on perhaps 7-8 recent reviews) requesting their involvement in the research. If they agree, they would be sent a short questionnaire (estimated completion time of 20 minutes) asking for: (i) details of their position and involvement in a public governance review; (ii) the degree to which this led to sustained contact with "peer(s)" in other countries; and if it did lead to sustained contacts (iii) how those contacts were structured and the key learning that emerged for them. They would also be asked to identify other colleagues with similar responsibilities who were not involved in the review – and they would be asked questions (ii) and (iii) also, to allow a comparison.

Respondents would be offered the opportunity for a phone conversation if they wished to discuss the questions in more detail.

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Annex 1: The 52 peer engagement and learning facilitators 'mapped'

Initiative	A web reference to get some feeling of the initiative's content
Africa Electricity Regulator Peer Review and Learning Network	http://www.gsb.uct.ac.za/s.asp?p=155
Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management Peer Assistance Network (AADP)	http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Environment%20and%20Energy/sustainable%20land%20management/AADP%20Brochure.pdf
African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (AfCoP),	http://www.impactalliance.org/ev_en.php?ID=49248_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC
African Development Bank WOP Africa Project	http://www.afdb.org/en/projects-and-operations/project-portfolio/project/p-z1-ea0-005/
African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)	http://www.pacweb.org/Documents/APRM/APRM_Seven_countries_March2010-E.pdf; http://aprm-au.org
African Risk Capacity	http://www.africanriskcapacity.org/events/past
African Transitional Justice Research Network	http://www.transitionaljustice.com
Center for Excellence in Finance	http://www.cef-see.org
Center for Financial Reporting Reform (CFFR), Strengthening Auditing and Reporting in the Countries of the Eastern Partnership (STAREP)	http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTCENFINREPREF/0,,contentMDK:23584520~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:4152118,00.html
Centers for Learning on Evaluation And Results (CLEAR)	http://www.theclearinitiative.org/PDFs/ar-2013-2014.pdf
Circle of Sustainability	http://www.circlesofsustainability.org/tools/peer-review-process/
Cities Development Initiative	http://cdia.asia/2014/11/21/asian-cities-to-strengthen-peer-to-peer-learning-on-urban-infrastructure-innovations/
CityNet association of urban stakeholders committed to sustainable development	http://citynet-ap.org
Club de Madrid LEND Network	http://www.clubmadrid.org/en/programa/lend_network_for_leaders_engaged_in_new_democracies
Collaborative African Budget Reform Initiative	http://www.cabri-sbo.org
Conference on PIC Systems in EU Member States	http://ec.europa.eu/budget/events/pic2012_en.cfm
Corruption Hunter Network	http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704067504575305200456314876
Demand for Good Governance Peer Learning Network	http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/0,,contentMDK:21589459~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:244363,00.html
Development Alternatives and Resource Center	http://ptfund.org/2012/12/transparency-public-procurement-nigeria/
Ethiopian Cities Association	http://www.citiesalliance.org/node/3668
GoPemPal	http://www.gopempal.org/?q=about-us
Horizontal Learning Program in Bangladesh	http://www.wsp.org/sites/wsp.org/files/publications/horizontal_learning_strengthening_capacities.pdf
IMF African Technical Assistance Centers (AfriTAC)	http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2014/car121614a.htm; http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2015/car020215a.htm
International Association of Anticorruption Authorities (IAACA)	http://www.iaaca.org
International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI)	http://www.intosai.org/news.html
IPAC International programming	http://www.ipac.ca/international_programming
Kyrgyz Transparency and Accountability in Budgeting Peer Assisted Learning Network	http://www.efca.kg/project-view/transparency-and-accountability-in-local-budgeting-peer-assisted-learning/
Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool Peer Learning	http://www.wildernessfoundation.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=142:mett-peer-learning-sessions-help-identify-effective-solutions&catid=2:news&Itemid=18
Medicines Transparency Alliance	http://www.medicinestransparency.org/meta-countries/uganda/
MENA-OECD Procurement network	http://www.oecd.org/gov/ethics/Governance%20structure%20of%20the%20Network.pdf
Mistra Urban Futures	http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/node/1065
OECD Anticorruption Network for Eastern	http://www.oecd.org/corruption/acn/aboutthenetwork/

Europe and Central Asia	
OECD Joint Learning Studies	http://www.oecd.org/corruption/ethics/oecdjointlearningstudies.htm
OECD Knowledge Sharing Alliances	http://www.oecd.org/knowledge-sharing-alliance/
OECD Peer Reviews	http://www.oecd.org/site/peerreview/
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/about-us/
Public Expenditure Management Network in Asia (PEMNA)	http://blog-pfm.imf.org/pfmblog/2014/12/sharing-success-in-asia-through-pemna.html
Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning Network (PEMPAL)	http://www.pempal.org
Regional Anticorruption Programme for Africa	http://www.auanticorruption.org/uploads/Regional_Anti-Corruption_Programme.pdf
Results for Development Transparency and Accountability Program (R4DTAP)	http://r4d.org/about-us/press-room/r4d's-transparency-and-accountability-program-convenes-african-civil-society-org
SADC SOE Network	http://www.oecd.org/southafrica/soe-africa.htm
South African Community Grantmaker Leadership Cooperative	http://www.sacglf.org/document.centre.reports.of.peer.learning.events
Tax Administrators eXchange for Global Innovative Practices (TAXGIP)	http://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/tax-lessons-peers
TCI: The global practitioners network for competitiveness, clusters and innovation	http://www.tci-network.org/reviews
The International Financial Corporation's (IFC) 2009 peer event on *Doing Business* reforms.	https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/10497/547650BRI0IFC011peer0learning0event.pdf?sequence=1 http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTCENFINREPREF/0,,contentMDK:23468684~menuPK:9341783~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:4152118,00.html
The Peer Learning Programme for Small and Diaspora Organizations	http://cgi-africa.org/who-we-are-plp/
The The Southeast Europe Tax Transparency and Simplification Program	http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region__ext_content/regions/europe+middle+east+and+north+africa/ifc+in+europe+and+central+asia/countries/the+southeast+europe+tax+transparency+and+simplification+program
Transparency International School on Integrity	http://www.transparency.org/news/event/transparency_international_school_on_integrity_lithuania
Urban Nexus Project	http://www2.gtz.de/urbanet/opencommunity/news/detail.asp?number=4220
WHO Peer learning district initiative	http://www.afro.who.int/pt/tanzania/press-materials/item/6590-who-improves-district-health-service-delivery-through-the-peer-learning-district-initiative/6590-who-improves-district-health-service-delivery-through-the-peer-learning-district-initiative.html
World Bank Knowledge Hubs	www.knowledgehubs.org
World Vision Project Model Accelerated Learning and Support (PALS)	https://www.worldvision.com.au/Libraries/SEED_page/PALS.pdf

Annex 2: The survey questionnaire used with 'peer learners'

Peer learning in the development process

A survey

This survey asks about peer learning and how this learning impacts experience with change and/or reform in organizations/governments you have worked in.

Your responses help a great deal in fostering a better understanding of the way peer learning contributes to development.
   A. Name
   B. Organization
   C. Country

What I mean by a peer

1. Could you briefly describe what you believe a 'peer' is, in writing below.

2. Which of the following would you call a 'peer'? (Check which you agree with, as many as you feel is appropriate)
   •   A more experienced colleague working with me in my workplace
   •   A colleague/colleagues doing a similar job to mine but in other organizations in my country
   •   A colleague/colleagues doing a similar job to mine but in other organizations in other countries
   •   A colleague/colleagues in a professional association or grouping that I relate to
   •   Other (please explain your thinking):

Most significant learning from a peer

3. Have you ever learned from a peer?
   •   Yes
   •   No

4. If you have learned from a peer, could you describe the learning experience in writing (please describe the most memorable experience); identify who it was, what their peer relationship was, what you learned from them, how, when, and with what impact.

Learning from a peer about introducing change

5. Can you identify a particular change or reform experience you have participated in in your organization or country where you remember learning from a peer/peers?
   •   Yes
   •   No

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6. Could you briefly describe this experience; identify who it was, what their peer relationship was, what you learned from them, how, when, and with what impact.

7. In the experience you describe in question 6, how would you classify the 'peer' you learned from:
- A more experienced colleague working with me in my workplace
- A colleague/colleagues doing a similar job to mine but in other organizations in my country
- A colleague/colleagues doing a similar job to mine but in other organizations in other countries
- A colleague/colleagues in a professional association or grouping that I relate to
- Other (please explain your thinking):

8. In the experience you describe in question 6, could you identify how you found the peer you eventually learned from:
- I knew the person already
- I was introduced through a personal contact (friend or colleague at work or family member)
- I was introduced through a professional association
- I was introduced through a project or activity I was engaged in
- I was introduced through a third organization that brings peers together (in some kind of study tour, or through a twinning exercise, or other)
- Other (please explain):

8. In the experience you describe in question 6: How often did you interact to learn from the peer during this experience?
- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Once every two months
- Less often than every two months

9. In the experience you describe in question 6: How did you interact with the peer from whom you learned? (Check as many as are relevant)
- We worked together for a time
- We met in my workplace
- I visited the peer's workplace
- We met outside of the workplace
- We spoke on the telephone
- We emailed each other
- I read material my peer developed, about her/his experiences
- Other (please explain):

9. In the experience you describe in question 6: What was the most rewarding form of interaction with the peer from whom you learned?
- We worked together for a time
- We met in my workplace
- I visited the peer's workplace
- We met outside of the workplace
- We spoke on the telephone
- We emailed each other
- I read material my peer developed, about her/his experiences
- Other (please explain):

10. In the experience you describe in question 6: What did you learn from the peer? (If you learned in any one of these areas, check a box and note how important the learning was – score 5 if it was very important and 3 if it was quite important and 1 if it was not important)
- that change was necessary
- about prioritizing change (choosing which change to focus on)
- about sequencing in the change process
- about building political support for the change
- about technical design of the change ideas
- about how to form and operate a team to implement change
- about the technicality of change implementation
- about measuring the impact of changes
- other (please explain)

11. In the experience you describe in question 6: How long did you engage with the peer in the learning process?
- For just one interaction
- For a few weeks
- For a few months
- For a year
- For over a year

12. In the experience you describe in question 6: How did you obtain authorization to learn from the peer (how did you get money to pay for interactions, and authority to engage, etc.)?

13. In the experience you describe in question 6: Did you and the peer engage in any 'learning by doing' where you actually worked together?
- Yes
- No

14. If you answered yes to question 13, how valuable was the 'learning by doing', compared with other types of learning?
- Very valuable

- Somewhat valuable
- Not valuable

15. In the experience you describe in question 6: What were the biggest challenges to making the peer learning experience work?

16. In the experience you describe in question 6: What lessons would you offer for making peer learning work in development?

Others learning from you as a peer

17. To your knowledge, have others learned from you as a peer?
- Yes
- No

18. If others have learned from you as a peer, could you describe the learning experience in writing from your point of view; identify who it was, what their relationship with you was, what they learned from you, how, when, and with what impact.

Annex 3: Case studies

Nigeria

Joe Abah is Director General of the Bureau of Public Sector Reforms (BPSR) in Nigeria

> *Key message:*
> *Peer learning can contribute significantly to reform efforts but has a poor track record in Nigeria where it has been associated, historically, with discredited study tours and where donors have not always adapted their advice and resources to suit the country's peculiarities. In the complex and politically challenging task of reducing expenditures on ghost employees and creating a strong workforce planning function within ministries and departments, useful lessons from peers were available in-country from those states and federal agencies which had already made significant progress. Experiences from other countries would have offered little more.*

The Nigerian public service did not know how many staff it employed. The government was spending well over 75% of its resources to pay less than 1% of its citizens (public servants). There was a suspicion that a large number of the people collecting salaries were "ghost" workers and pensioners, and this suspicion was borne out with the introduction of the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS). The system included a biometric component which ensures that all wage and salary payments are associated with a unique individual. To date, this has weeded out 60,000 ghost workers and saved the government $3 million in its first month of operation in 2007 and a total of more than $1 billion to date, even though only about 60% of government establishments have been covered by the system.

In the first instance, the reform has focused primarily on improving the functioning of central agencies like the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation and the Budget Office of the Federation. However, as it is an integrated government-wide payroll system it will eventually have an impact on all entities that draw funds from the Federal Budget, including the Police and the Universities.

The introduction of the IPPIS has been combined with a systematic strengthening of the HR capacity at the ministry/department level and very particularly the development of a robust role for the Strategic Human Resource Managers. Thus the objective is not just cost-cutting (although that is clearly important) but also to empower departmental HR professionals to match organizational delivery priorities with workforce planning, including skill identification and recruitment. The reform began with payroll management and is only now focusing on the Human Resource Management aspects, a full 8 years after the IPPIS system was put in place.

In this way, the intended impact of the reforms includes fiscal savings but is also improved functioning of all the covered entities – whether their function is policy development, management oversight or service delivery.

While there was a clear reform plan for piloting IPPIS in a few ministries, the wider rollout and the deepening of the reforms to include strategic human resource management was virtually unplanned. The Bureau of Public Service Reforms initiated the reform with a team which includes the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, the Federal Civil Service Commission, the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation, the Budget Office of the Federation and Galaxy Backbone (the government IT provider). Because the initial emphasis was on payroll, the reform team was largely driven and sustained by the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation. The Office of the Head of Service has now regained the driving seat in order to put in place the HR component.

I am generally supportive of the idea of peer learning, and found my experiences as a member of a Commonwealth Peer Review Group to be very productive. I learnt that although the challenges facing countries differ in scale and complexity, many common issues can be found among different countries. In that experience, my peers learned from me how Nigeria had addressed challenges that they were currently facing. It helped me to learn about prioritizing change, identifying the immediate challenge amongst a long list of problems, and helped me reflect on how to strike a balance between whole of government reforms and a narrower focus on specific reform adaptation.

That said, the Nigerian public service is notorious for visiting other countries on various forms of study tour, but this is often just an excuse to claim very generous duty tour allowances. There is very little link between what they learn from peers and what gets done on the ground here. It is for this reason that the Federal Government has recently announced a ban on foreign training and a general restriction on foreign travel.

The fiscal necessity of the IPPIS scheme was clear to all and since many state governments within Nigeria had embarked on similar initiatives before the federal IPPIS, and even some federal government organizations such as the Federal Inland Revenue Service had done something similar using the SAP software, rich lessons from practical experiences were available within the country. No peer learning has been undertaken or is planned with other countries.

Donors were influential in getting the IPPIS programme off the ground, primarily through a credit from the World Bank's Economic Reform and Governance Programme. The World Bank also provided a project manager for the initial phase of the programme, who was a Nigerian citizen with similar experience from elsewhere. However, beyond introducing the scheme, donors have had little influence on these reforms – partly because their budgetary contribution is so small (the sum total of donor assistance to Nigeria is less than 1% of Gross National Income) and partly because of their overriding focus on 'numbers' and quantitative 'results.'. Once the 'ghost worker' figures had been announced, there didn't seem to be a planned programme of support for the country to deepen the gains of IPPIS.

There have been two problems in the reform design – neither of which would have been ameliorated by external peer learning. First, there has been some over-emphasis on monies saved at the expense of the strategic human resource management aspects of the reform. Second, limited arrangements for "Change Management" have meant that resistance from those with valid concerns, as well as those who are benefiting from the existence of ghost workers, has not been well managed.

If peer learning had any place at all, it would be in relation to the state governments and other federal government organizations such as the Federal Inland Revenue Service. That happened to the extent that bidders for IPPIS were required to demonstrate that their solutions had worked elsewhere in Nigeria. Government officials went round to look at those project sites and to talk to users, providing some grounding to claims made.

Hungary

Ms. Edit Németh is Head of Department, Central Harmonization Unit for Public Internal Control, Ministry for National Economy, Hungary.

Key message:
Ms. Németh's priority in assuming leadership of the Central Harmonization Unit in 2010 was to ensure that the practice of the new internal control processes reflected the intention of the new Public Finance Act in central and local governments, aligning behaviors with the spirit as well as the letter of the new laws. Post-accession reforms such as these received less support than the earlier round of structural reforms. The PEMPAL Internal Audit Community of Practice (IACOP) was particularly valuable for Ms. Németh in offering the opportunity for more detailed and personal sharing of experience, particularly in helping her understand the scope of the task when new in the job. In addition to the technical support, IACOP was helpful to Ms. Németh in reviewing options for forming and operating the change team. Ms. Németh finds it significant that IACOP is self-governing as this encourages ownership by the members.

Ms. Németh assumed her responsibilities in 2010, when the main formal structural reforms associated with EU accession had been completed. The Central Harmonization Unit (CHU) had 15 staff and support from a public sector training organization. Her priority was to ensure that the practice of the new internal control processes reflected the intention of the new Public Finance Act in central and local governments, aligning behaviors with the spirit as well as the letter of the new laws. She had a clear reform plan from the outset, stretching over several years. Her initial task was to review all relevant legislation and guidelines – material which she was familiar with because of her previous role as internal auditor. This led her to undertake a significant simplification of the legislation and some modification to their content to ensure alignment with international audit standards and to plug gaps which had become evident. She also introduced a training and certification system on control procedures for staff: internal auditors, heads and financial managers of public budgetary organizations in all levels of government. There is now a quality assurance process in place, entailing visits to public bodies to evaluate their internal control system and to address questions and concerns.

In retrospect, and if Ms. Németh had been in post at that time, she would have developed the training system earlier, in parallel with rather than following changes in the legislation – and those legislative changes would have focused on internal control at the same time as internal audit.

The accession reforms had been assisted by regular dialogue with the EU (DG Enlargement) and by support from EU Twinning and "Twinning Light" projects. Hungary's twinning partner was France, and later Germany. In addition, there were regular missions from OECD/Sigma and support from the major accounting firms including Arthur Andersen, KPMG and Ernst &Young in elaborating the procedure manuals.

The post-accession reforms coordinated by Ms. Németh were supported, to a lesser extent, by the EU "Twinning Light" program, which assisted in the development of the Training and Certification System, and more open-ended support from the Public Internal Control Working Group of the EU (DG Budget) and the PEMPAL Internal Audit Community of Practice (IACOP). The Public Internal Control Working Group is the formal forum for cooperation between EU member states, but it helps also to create informal connections addressing problems as they arise. IACOP was particularly valuable for Ms. Németh in offering the opportunity for more detailed sharing of experience in the light of reforms undertaken in other countries. The group includes representatives from 23 countries and staff from the World Bank and the Netherlands National Academy for Finance and Economics. The CHU is planning an international conference on internal audit and internal control.

The long term personal relationships established through the Public Internal Control Working Group and the PEMPAL Internal Audit Community of Practice (IACOP) were of great value. When Ms. Németh was new in the job it helped her understand the scope of the task. There are no similar organizations within Hungary and so contacts with others with similar responsibilities in other countries were of great practical value. In addition to the technical support, IACOP was helpful to Ms. Németh in reviewing options for forming and operating the change team. Discussions during meetings take varied forms (table discussions, case studies, fishbowl, role plays, world café etc.) and continue between formal meetings via -mail, wikispace, skype etc. PEMPAL IACOP is elaborating and publishing knowledge products which are also very useful (e.g. Internal Audit Manual, Risk Assessment in Audit Planning, Quality Assurance etc.). Ms. Németh finds it significant that IACOP is self-governing (although funded by World Bank, Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation, OECD and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs) as this encourages ownership by the members.

Malaysia

Koshy Thomas is Deputy Director and Head of the Outcome Based Budgeting Project Team, National Budget Office, Ministry of Finance in Malaysia.

> *Key message:*
> *The key challenge in the introduction of Outcome-based Budgeting (OBB) is to move mindsets from procedural compliance to pro-active responsibility for improving ministry level strategic processes.*
> *Peer learning was useful at a general strategic level but had little to offer when reform implementation commenced, not least because the development of an online application for sharing objectives, budget submissions and impact data was specific to Malaysia and had not been achieved elsewhere. In retrospect, peers in other countries might have been able to offer more guidance on the 'soft aspects" of managing resistance through a change management and communication strategy.*

Koshy and team with technical advice from Dr. Aru Rasappan[36] have designed, developed and are in the process of implementing Outcome-based Budgeting (OBB) as part of an integrated results-based management approach being introduced across the public sector. The work includes awareness programs, training of trainers, and data quality improvement workshops. At the heart of the reform, and to facilitate data management, a software application has been developed which underpins strategy development, budget preparation and performance reporting for all sector ministries.

The reforms started with policy review at the national and sectoral levels, with high level objectives identified which are then cascaded to the Ministries leading to the reformulation of Programs and Sub programs at the ministry level. The initial policy review involved 3 key central agencies: the Economic Planning Unit; MOF; and the Public Services Department. The roll-out cascades the objectives down to the line ministries and statutory bodies, but currently it excludes state governments and financially independent government companies.

Three years into the reforms, the focus is on building capacity and managing change in the ministries. Improving planning mechanisms and improving the quality of the data have been priorities in preparation for performance reporting. This has already helped identify program redundancies with associated cost savings, with significant additional savings anticipated. The most noticeable results were in strategy building and execution as opposed focusing on processes and outputs. Outputs were better designed and executed as it has linkages to achievement of outcomes. With an improved performance framework, it is anticipated that improved accountability through better transparency will be achieved in those ministries (9 ministries) where it has been piloted.

The main challenge for the reforms is to move mindsets from procedural compliance to pro-active responsibility for improving ministry level strategic processes.

There was a comprehensive 5 year reform plan established at the outset with a number of sub committees established to drive specific aspects of the institutional and legal framework reform. The reform was driven by a dedicated team that reported to the

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[36] Dr. Aru Rasappan, Senior Advisor to the Centre for Research and Development in Evaluation (CeDRE) International; developed the IRBM Model used as the basis for OBB in Malaysia

Steering Committee chaired by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Finance and including the DG of the Economic Planning Unit, the Public services Depart and other Central Agencies.

The overall reform design led internally, but there was significant peer input via visits to other countries including Canada, NZ, and Singapore. Reviews were also made on systems used in Australia and United Kingdom. A regional COP on Managing for Development Results funded by the ADB was helpful, and specific lessons were learned from Thailand, China, Korea and Singapore. Malaysia continues to collaborate with Thailand and Korea on aspects of program evaluation. Local technical advisors were contracted when there was insufficient capacity in-house. Peers were useful in helping to think through the overall strategy and implementation tactics of the reforms, but had little to offer in the very Malaysia-specific development of an online application for strategic planning, budget submissions and performance reporting. While on-line budget submission has been undertaken in many countries, the difference in Malaysia is that it was accompanied by a comprehensive results framework. It is a government wide modular system that allows ministries and programs to manage performance and expenditure online.

Malaysia has been evolving various approaches to performance management for more than 30 years and most people have reasonable understanding of the basic concepts. The challenge was moving from process driven operations to a strategy driven operations, with a new type of leadership. There has been a fair amount resistance from departments, not so much on the issue of accountability but rather on the increased documentation in the initial years of building the framework.

Many lessons were taken from the private sector, where strategy driven initiatives are more established than in public sector. Koshy and colleagues managed to get transformational leaders to provide talks to the senior management in public service. However, he considers that more could have been done to manage change and achieve buy-in from agencies through more effective communication strategies. In sum, while change management was recognized as major challenge during implementation, in retrospect more attention could have been paid to peer experiences from others in the public sector which might have been able to offer guidance on managing resistance better.

Samoa

Oscar Thomas Malielegaoi is Director's Advisor at the Asian Development Bank with responsibility for Armenia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic, New Zealand, Samoa and Tonga.
He was previously head of the Budget Division in Samoa where this case is located.

Key message:
The new "Performance Framework" introduced by the Ministry of Finance in Samoa in 2010/11 is shifting the focus of government budgeting to an outcome based approach to performance. Peer learning was not a fundamental part of the reform although a short study

Effective Institutions Platform

In 2010, the Samoa Ministry of Finance introduced a new "Performance Framework", shifting the focus of government budgeting to an outcome based approach to performance. The focus of this reform was not both to transform the operations and efficiency within Line Ministries and to help them demonstrate the relationship between their outputs and higher level outcomes sought by government, identified under Samoa's "Strategy for the Development of Samoa". Hence, the reform promoted a sector wide approach with sector level delivery actors and key stakeholders widely consulted during the preparation and implementation phases.

From a Ministry of Finance perspective, the new Framework has had some positive impact on budgeting and financial management systems and has established that future resources and budget envelopes depend on effective execution of current work plans and existing Ministry outputs. Ministries can now clearly demonstrate how their outputs contribute to higher level national outcomes and there is some redirection of resources to priority areas. Both MoF and line ministry staff are now focused on measurable and realistic outcomes and impacts.

Government adopted a cautious approach with implementation following a 2 stage phased approach. 8 Pilot ministries were selected in 2010/2011 with the remaining agencies included the following year. Lessons learned from the 8 pilot ministries were addressed in the next financial year budget.

The Ministry of Finance's Budget and Planning Committee consisting of key Divisions within the Ministry (Budget Division, Planning Division, Aid and Debt Management Division, Accounts Division, State Owned Monitoring Division and the Public Financial Management Unit) led the reform. The project team consisted mainly of the Budget team but was closely supported by Management and staff from other key Divisions who were part of the Budget Planning Committee.

The result of the reform is that Ministries asking for more resources must offer real deliverables in terms of demonstrating how resources are to be spent on outputs to achieve higher level outcomes. Government will thus be in a far better position in deciding how to allocate limited funding to priority areas. The streamlining of performance measures into more realistic Key Performance Indicators ensures some standardization of results frameworks. The Budget Committee (consisting of representatives from MoF, PSC and Audit) sits in early February to review and scrutinize line ministries performance for the first six months of the FY and to engage them in a conversation about financial performance, service delivery and achievement of outcomes and targets.

Other than a 2 week study tour of Australia with visits and meetings conducted with both State and Commonwealth Officials in the Department of Finance and Deregulation in

Melbourne, Canberra and Brisbane, there was no influence from peers in other similar countries in the region in designing or in implementing the reforms. The project was a component of Samoa's PFM reform program assistance provided by Development partners with significant funding and some technical support from AusAID. AusAID (now DFAT) was very flexible and open to suggestions and advice from our own officials and practitioners but the project was driven by Samoa's Ministry of Finance with only technical advice provided by donors.

Visible increases to budget resources for Health and Education have been translated into better health and education facilities with improved curriculum materials, teacher development and medical school scholarships.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Jean-Paul Mabaya is the "Conseiller Principal en charge des Réformes" in the "Cabinet du Premier Ministre" in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Key message:
Establishing sector "roadmaps" towards improved service delivery underpinned by sector performance contracts signed between the heads of department and the Prime Minister initially proved difficult because they tend towards formulaic, generic documents with little practical bite. Regular international peer learning has provided informal and "down to earth" practical suggestions which have helped to improve the realism and the impact of the roadmaps and contracts. The peer contact was not intensive – they met less often than every two months – but it was long term and sustained over several years.

Since 2012 Mr. Mabaya has been assisting the PM of DRC to improve the quality of the policy process within the executive, ensuring that policy priorities are fully discussed and costed, and introducing a system of performance contracts for senior staff to ensure their implementation. The identification of the policy process (priority-setting and effective implementation) as the key problem to be tackled emerged from a joint donor-government evaluation of the PRSP in March 2010. That review found that the government priorities were driven by donor priorities with implementation monitored by diverse donor-led M&E arrangements. The consequence was little connection between sector priorities and medium term planning priorities and budget realities. A new government came into office in DRC in May 2012 with a 5-year program, endorsed by the National Assembly, with an expressed determination to address this, although this in turn reflected commitments made in the peace deal that ended the civil war in the DRC (Sun City 2003).

The initial focus of the reform was on systems and arrangements within the PM's department, ensuring that policy proposals are consistent with sector priorities and firmly located within planning and budgeting systems. This approach was shared with and accepted by members of the government during their very first government seminar in July 2012. This aspect has undoubtedly led to an improvement in the prioritization of government policies. The sector departments' "roadmaps" published in May 2012 and the

associated pilot sector performance contracts signed between the heads of department and the Prime Minister in September 2012 were somewhat formulaic and not particularly realistic. One year later, the 2013 "roadmaps" and the performance contracts were more clearly linked to agreed sector priorities and the budgetary implications are fully explored. This has allowed better alignment of quarterly commitment plans with cash flow planning.

Translating these "upstream" improvements into "downstream" sector results is the most challenging aspect of this work. Unsurprisingly, the binding constraint is the way that the civil service operates.

The approach has been to pilot the introduction of performance contracts, in order to provide guidance and incentives for senior line department staff, while simultaneously seeking to improve the incentives and performance of the wider civil service.[37]

The pilot performance contracts were monitored monthly by PM's advisers and senior members of the involved departments. These meetings reviewed progress in the way spending ministries implemented and monitored their performance contracts in achieving key sector priorities. There was also an attempt to generate public demand for progress by publication of departmental performance in May 2013.

Most crucially, this formal process was supplemented by quarterly international peer support funded by the World Bank.[38] This mechanism has provided useful peer learning and was successful because it provided informal and "down to earth" practical suggestions to Mr. Mabaya and to other staff of the PM's department, on a distinctly personal level.

Mr. Mabaya defines a peer as a professional in the same area of work and with similar responsibilities in another country. He describes "peer learning" as a way of exchanging experiences between colleagues doing a similar job but working or having worked in different contexts, with the aim of unblocking reform obstacles and avoiding traps. He has participated in various peer learning processes including regional workshops on CSR in Africa (African Training and Research Center in Administration for Development/CAFRAD), but the mentoring arrangements with these very experienced colleagues were the most valuable peer learning process he has engaged in. With their assistance, he learned about maintaining momentum for institutional change through permanent dialogue, sustaining a coalition of reformers and identifying some quick wins. The peer learning particularly focused on the importance of personal contacts and using one to one meetings with those affected by reform in building confidence.

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[37] The government of DRC has adopted and published a strategy for civil service reform which includes the implementation of a new dedicated HR unit within every department. The World Bank is providing technical assistance to help develop a new HR procedure manual, setting new rules for individual objectives assignment and annual performance evaluation. At the same time DfID is building the capacity of the PM's department to monitor and assess the implementation of performance contracts signed by the PM.

[38] From July 2012 to January 2014 Mr. Tertius Zongo (former Prime Minister of Burkina Faso) and Serge Michailof (former World Bank country director) conducted six country missions.

The peer contact was not intensive – they met less often than every two months – but it was long term, sustained over several years. They visited each other's workplaces and maintained contact by email. Mr. Mabaya made use of the peers' experiences and short technical notes from them to shape the dialogue about performance contracts.

There has subsequently been a strong demand from some provincial executives to benefit from similar peer support. A couple of provincial governors are currently working with peers to assist them in developing performance measurement tools. There was an attempt to set up a peer learning arrangement with former ministers of finance to act as mentors to the Ministry of Finance – but this was resisted.

There is no shortage of technical specialists available from the donors. What are needed, in Mr. Mabaya's view, are more informal and flexible peer-based arrangements able to help seize reform opportunities which are specific to DRC.

Malawi[39]

As a country, Malawi underwent a peer review in 2004—under the auspices of the African Peer Review Mechanism. The integrated financial management information system (IFMIS) was one of the areas targeted for change in this review. The review provided a long list of deficiencies in the IFMIS, and also emphasized that political and other incentives in the government had undermined past reform progress. Under pressure to respond to this review, and with a new president pushing the reform, government officials visited Tanzania in March 2005 to learn about its IFMIS—then considered a better practice example on the continent. By November 2005, Malawi was in the process of adopting the off the shelf Epicor system in place in Tanzania. The system was considered successful until a corruption scandal in 2013 revealed that it had long-standing gaps and was vulnerable to the same political interference as the prior system had been. Interestingly, reviews in Tanzania had found similar deficiencies in their system (which had been the 'learning case').

> *Key message:*
> *Peer engagement is common across the developing world, and is intended to promote reforms by fostering pressure to act, learning about how to act, and reflection on the result of action. Peer evaluations are frequently used to promote this kind of engagement, as are study tours to 'better practice' peers. These mechanisms have a lot of potential but can also produce distortionary results when they are used in an overly mechanical, hurried manner.*

Malawi has pursued reforms in the public financial management (PFM) domain since the mid-1990s. Its early reforms involved work with the World Bank on an integrated financial management information system (IFMIS). This system was intended to computerize the financial management of government, improving the efficiency of spending and enhancing

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[39]   The narrative in this brief case study emerges from research into the topic derived from a variety of sources, including (Andrews, 2013; Duravall & Erlandsson, 2005; Fölscher, Mkandawire, & Faragher, 2012; Khan & Pessoa, 2010; MEPD, 2004)

controls and accountability. A change in government occurred in 2004, on the heels of a corruption crisis that pointed to major gaps in the PFM domain. Malawi underwent a government-wide peer review at this time—as part of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). A large team of ex officials and consultants from other African countries undertook the review, and the IFMIS came under particular scrutiny. The review identified a long list of 21 issues needing attention in the existing system, noting that failure to address these issues would result in continued vulnerability for government. The main failures centered on a lack of core functions in the system—focused especially on internal control deficiencies and gaps in coverage. Importantly, the review also noted that the system's weaknesses arose because of political interference and management and implementation failures. Political incentives were seen to undermine reform potential and hurried and poorly designed implementation processes had led to poor training, gaps in licensing, and more.

Under pressure to respond to this review, the government sent a team of officials to Tanzania in March 2005. The purpose was to conduct a study tour of the country and investigate the functionality of Tanzania's IMFIS—then considered a better practice example in Africa. The team returned to Malawi and advised the government to adopt the Tanzanian system (an Epicor system), using Tanzanian consultants. This led to a decision to adopt the new system in May 2005 and hire the contractor in a rapid, sole source process. By November 2005, the Epicor system went live (with commitment control and accounts payable modules) in five pilot sites. By July 2006 all national ministries headquarters were using these modules.

The system's rapid initial progress led to early gains in functionality. Government had greater control over fund flows, for instance, and borrowing declined (and borrowing costs decreased as well). These are common early gains that are as much associated with having a more rigid single treasury account as having an IFMIS. The system's gains and rollout slowed after these initial gains, however. A 2009 evaluation by the government itself found various concerns with the consultant contract and deficiencies with implementation of the system. These concerns echoed significantly the list of 21 issues in the 2004 review. The system still had coverage gaps, for instance, and internal controls were weak. The report also reflected on political and managerial challenges similar to those discussed in the 2004 review, noting that these had not been effectively addressed in the new IFMIS reforms. Reports in 2011 show that these concerns were still not receiving attention; with weak implementation of key modules (especially those required to introduce controls) and slow and partial inclusion of distributed spending agencies (and local governments), and limited coverage of a broad swathe of transactions (like procurement and development spending).

Interestingly, Tanzania's system came under scrutiny around this time as well, and similar deficiencies showed themselves. The system had not been rolled out to local governments as effectively as planned, and key modules were not in place (leaving similar gaps in controls and coverage). Reports pointed to political and managerial challenges that had not been addressed in Tanzania that also resembled those that festered in Malawi.

Unfortunately, Malawi's problems with the system went far beyond critical reports. In 2013 a corruption scandal erupted that was directly connected to the reforms. Government officials had manipulated the IFMIS and taken advantage of gaps in the system to steal millions of dollars. Called 'cashgate', the scandal had many consequences; it led to donors pulling money out of the country, legal action against various officials, and more. In the midst of the recriminations, many observers have offered thoughts about what went wrong. Most agree that the IFMIS itself cannot be blamed for its failures, but there have been many questions, about a variety of issues, including:

- o If the pressure for a hurried response to the 2004 peer review undermined the necessary reflection by Malawian officials of the 'lessons' from its own past, carried in that review (and in other documents at the time);
- o If the initial March 2005 study tour to Tanzania gave Malawian officials enough insight into how the system worked (and how it did not); or if the study tour was about diffusing a product rather than diffusing learning about that product;
- o If the Malawian and Tanzanian officials could have worked more consistently together after March 2005 study tour to ensure reflection, learning and adaptation in the implementation process;
- o If the Malawian officials could have used their own internal reviews more effectively to promote learning and adaptation;
- o If the Peer Review mechanisms could have included more regular peer follow ups to assess whether reform responses actually addressed outstanding issues.

Looking back on this experience, it appears that history repeated itself in Malawi—with an IFMIS produced after 2004 that had many of the same deficiencies as the one that existed previously. Peer engagements that could have led to learning between these two experiences seemed to have a blunted impact at best; and a negative impact in fact. The peer review engagement seemed to create pressure for hurried responses and was not then followed up by some ongoing interaction to ensure the responses were substantively effective. Faced with this pressure, the March 2005 study tour to Tanzania then bought Malawian officials into contact with peers in other countries, but with a very narrow agenda that focused more directly on finding a technical solution than on learning.

South Africa

In 2004, Project Consolidate ran a program to help struggling municipalities improve their operational capacity. The Horizontal Learning Pogramme evolved at a similar time. It had a distinct peer review and learning component.[40]

> *Key message:*
> *Peer review can be a powerful lever for peer learning, fostering real reform and change in the process. The peer reviews need to be carefully structured to have such an impact, however. They must be undertaken in context of established relationships, focused on issues that are of concern to participants, structured to foster learning and reflection, and well resourced and*

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[40] For sources, see (Africa & Nicol; Andrews, 2002; Lazin, Evans, Hoffmann-Martinot, & Wollmann, 2008). Project Consolidate and Hologram do not run any more.

South Africa underwent significant change after the 1994 elections that signaled an end to apartheid. The country decentralized through its new constitution shortly thereafter. A raft of policy papers and laws on local government then followed, building an aggressive and demanding vision of what a local authority should do in the new country. Various reforms were envisaged to help facilitate the realization of this vision. Unfortunately, it became obvious by the early 2000s that many localities would not be able to reach management and operational standards required for effectiveness.

The Horizontal Learning Program (Hologram) was born in this context. It was a locally led, but donor funded project that encouraged learning and sharing among South African municipalities. A key part of the program centered on creating networks of district and local municipalities. Members of the networks collaborated to learn from each other about operational and service delivery challenges. The networks had action plans tailored to the needs of members, all of which participated voluntarily and paid dues to be part of the exercise (such that the network was predominantly self-funded).

The networks adopted a peer review program as part of the intervention. These reviews were conceptualized as 'hands on events' incorporating a five day evaluation exercise. An external facilitator organized each review, acting on an expression of interest by the focal authority. The review teams were chosen from councilors and officials in nearby municipalities or districts (depending on whether the focal authority was a municipality or district). This team would work alongside a selected team in the focal authority to conduct a benchmark analysis of operational capacity and performance. The benchmarking instrument was developed in an iterative and participatory manner by local government officials under the auspices of the South African Local Government Association (which managed the entire process, with authority and governance provided by a steering committee elected from network members).

The peer review process is deliberately designed to afford participants opportunities to exchange knowledge and learn from each other throughout the week of engagement (and beyond). The review team splits into teams of 2 or 3, who work alongside home authority officials—fostering close and deep engagement at all times. Time is set aside each night for reflection and debriefing, in a facilitated session led by the review manager. This allows significant knowledge exchange and second-order learning, where peers can explore ideas that have already been exchanged, clarify these ideas, and explore potential applications of these ideas. These interactions lead to many joint activities in the post-review process (including peer-to-peer exchanges, coaching and mentoring, and study-tours). Peer reviews are published once finalized and accepted, and each focal municipality develops a public Improvement Plan as well.

It is important to know that the peer review program is only one of the tools used to foster peer learning in Hologram. The network also holds plenary meetings, for instance, where experts do presentations on issues of common interest and recent peer reviews are

discussed (to provide even broader reflection and diffusion of lessons). The plenary discussions also allow for reporting on the results of peer reviews, where members reflect on what was learned as well as how the process fostered improved reform performance. This community-based reporting provokes peer pressure and competition as well. It also allows for rumination on the peer review processes adopted and this is vital for constant iterative improvement of such process (including adjustments to the benchmarking mechanism).

Peer reviews have proved powerful in facilitating peer learning and municipal reform in this context. A few lessons appear vital when considering how and why they proved so effective, however:
- o The reviews took place in the context of a closely connected membership network that had a common and focused agenda.
- o The municipalities and districts in the networks chose to use peer reviews as the main method of engagement and learning.
- o The network members were engaged in designing the benchmarking mechanism and had a clear voice in shaping and re-shaping this mechanism.
- o Individuals in the municipalities and networks were clearly authorized and encouraged to participate and learn in the review processes.
- o The peer review process was carefully designed to allow for constant learning, including reflection.
- o The peer review process was structured to support post-review follow up activities, where peers could continue their engagements.
- o The process was well resourced and closely supported (administration was handled by a third party, and finances were dealt with up-front).
- o Expert organization began well in advance of the peer review event, and was available to ensure follow up after the event as well.
- o Evaluations of the process were quick and focused on the progress with both learning and reform results.

Georgia[41]

Georgia underwent a non-violent revolution in 2003. The revolution was bought on by many factors, including high levels of corruption in government and low levels of service delivery. One of the first reforms instituted after the revolution aimed at improving the Public Registry—making it easier to register land, property and more. Government officials started the reform process with a clear idea of their reform goals but did not know exactly what to do to achieve these goals. They adopted a multi-pronged approach to finding and fitting reform solutions that incorporated some active peer learning initiatives. Some of the peer-to-peer learning experiences proved more useful than others, and it was vital that the government officials could determine what was more useful to learn in this process.

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[41] This draws on the Innovations for Successful Societies case on Georgia's registry (http://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/sites/successfulsocieties/files/Policy_Note_ID109.pdf) and (World Bank, 2012a).

Jaba Ebanoidze took charge of the Public Registry after Georgia's Rose Revolution in 2003. Housed within the Ministry of Justice, the registry provided information about land, property rights and titling. It was a vital part of government, especially because the country need foreign direct investment to promote growth and foreign investors needed information about land. Without an effective registry, no investor could attract capital or be sure of ownership of key assets.

The registry did not work well before the Rose Revolution. Procedures were very bureaucratic and there was a high level of corruption, with applicants to the registry having to pay bribes for even the most basic service. The new president, Mikheil Saakashvili, had previously been Minister of Justice and knew the deficiencies of this registry. That is why he appointed Ebanoidze, and charged him with cleaning the registry—making the process more efficient and less corrupt.

Ebanoidze and his staff had experience working with international non-governmental organizations and studying abroad, which gave them a clear sense of the end goal of reform. They even had an idea of the kind of metrics they wanted to improve—centered on lower waiting times, and better responsiveness. They also knew that other countries had achieved these kinds of improvements in prior reforms, so there were 'peers' to learn from. They did no, however, know which peers were the right ones to learn from or which practical solution they should adopt.

Armed with a clear goal and with a good understanding of their own capacity constraints (financial and skills), Ebanoidze and his staff began looking for fitted solutions. As part of this search, they engaged foreign consultants who had worked in other countries on similar challenges and they engaged in a variety of study visits to countries where they had heard about good practice examples. A small group went to examine the Swedish registry systems, for instance, and the systems of other countries in Western and Eastern Europe. They met with peers who worked din the same domain and learned about how other registries were organized and operated. They also learned about the history of the registries and of reforms in the countries visited.

When these lessons were carefully considered, especially against the Georgian examples, Ebanoidze and his team quickly decided that Western European models were not

appropriate for his country. These models had emerged over hundreds of years and relied on capacities and realities that were not evident in Georgia. However, there were better-fitted reforms in other Eastern European countries that caught the attention of Ebanoidze and his team. They found the peer learning in Estonia and other countries extremely useful, because of similarities between these contexts and Georgia and the fact that the reforms were newly introduced (and hence more comparable). The examples in these contexts were largely technology-based reforms, which convinced Ebanoidze to use information technology as the basis for his reforms. Improving IT would help to improve the registry's efficiency, transparency, and corruption problems.

Ebanoidze and his team took the lessons from these peer visits back to Georgia and began designing and implementing reforms. He introduced a policy that required team members to share all ideas and plans in written form at all times. This served to create a record of options considered and ideas floated, which helped to ensure interactive learning among the group of peers that had been visiting other countries. Building on the reflections facilitated by this learning, his team developed a step-by-step plan for achieving the changes they wanted. Each step had a milestone or output benchmark associated with it, and the tasks were specifically assigned to different people in the office. Weekly meetings were held to monitor and discuss progress, and a full team process was instituted to ensure shared responsibility for results.

The peer learning in this case occurred across and within borders; with ideas shared between countries and on-the-job peer learning happening within the registry itself. The Georgians were able to discern the value of lessons learned across countries given their clear ideas about both their goals and the problems they faced. They were able to ensure the diffusion, adaptation and implementation of lessons learned because of structured interactions in the registry after the study visits were over.

Annex 4: Focus areas of relevant literature

Generic approaches for engaging groups of peers with an international dimension	Intermediate outcomes			Final outcome
	1. Peer group engagement adjusted for context	**2. Peer group engagement mechanisms leading to sustained individual contacts**	**3. Sustained individual contacts leading to practical peer learning**	**4. Learning applied to create change at scale**
Research literature unrelated to any particular peer engagement process	The most recent World Development Report cites evidence that group deliberation can deepen empirical basis for action (World Bank, 2014, p.183), consistent with findings that contestation can counter confirmatory bias. (Bächtiger & Gerber, 2014, p.116).		Various definitions of peer learning (Boud et al., 2001; Keijzer, 2013a). Broad requirements for effective peer learning identified (Adam et al., 2011; Griffiths et al., 1995; Heavey, 2006; Tosey, 1999). When the preconditions are met, then peer learning can be an effective method for conveying technical skills and for learning about how to undertake more continuous learning (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Kimmins, 2013; Van der Veen, 2000; Willey & Gardner, 2010) but these findings are weighted towards further and higher education. (McLeay & Wesson) find that peer review mechanisms affect peer learning differently across different cultures.	
OECD peer reviews (general)[42]	The OECD reached some conclusions about how to tailor peer reviews to country and sector context, but the evidence base is not clear (OECD, 2007)			Skepticism about the degree to which the peer reviews lead to constructive policy transfer (Pal, 2014).
OECD Public Governance Reviews	Some research on how OECD public governance reviews are structured (Mahon & McBride, 2008; Pal, 2012).			

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[42] For an overview of the various OECD peer review mechanisms, see (Pagani, 2002).

Generic approaches for engaging groups of peers with an international dimension	Intermediate outcomes			Final outcome
	1. Peer group engagement adjusted for context	2. Peer group engagement mechanisms leading to sustained individual contacts	3. Sustained individual contacts leading to practical peer learning	4. Learning applied to create change at scale
OECD Development Assistance Committee Peer Reviews	Conclusion that reviews should be open and transparent, to enhance public trust in development policy (OECD, 2014)			Conflicting judgments. (Ashoff, 2013, p.1) noted that "over 90 percent of DAC members rated their policy impact as "medium to very high"... (with) 88 percent of recommendations... partly or fully implemented in the last two years. (King et al., 2012) conclude that DAC peer reviews tend to stop at the level of formal arrangements and would be enhanced by stronger empirics (OECD, 2008).
EU peer reviews of labor market programs				Skepticism about the degree to which the peer reviews lead to constructive policy transfer (Casey & Gold, 2005)
Africa Peer Review Mechanism	Study distinguished between the political level of peers in the APRM and the technical level in the diverse reviews undertaken by different OECD Committees (NEPAD, 2015).			Research indicated limited implementation of recommendations (Bing-Pappoe, 2010).
World Bank Institute Knowledge Exchange				Case studies highlight that peer group engagements were successful in informing change in diverse sectors (World Bank Institute, 2013a, 2013b)
UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews				Case studies suggest that peer reviews were successful in incentivizing policy change (Ad Hoc Working Group of Senior Officials, 2003)
UNCTAD Voluntary Peer Reviews on Competition Law and Policy				Case studies suggest that peer reviews were successful in incentivizing policy change (2011)

Effective Institutions Platform

Generic approaches for engaging groups of peers with an international dimension	Intermediate outcomes			Final outcome
	1. Peer group engagement adjusted for context	2. Peer group engagement mechanisms leading to sustained individual contacts	3. Sustained individual contacts leading to practical peer learning	4. Learning applied to create change at scale
Trade Policy Review Mechanism (WTO)	Reviews lead to the provision of appropriate technical assistance (Joint Group on Trade and Competition, 2002)			Reviews have a "soft law" effect in socializing members towards each other's attempts to avoid protectionism. "the Secretariat sometimes warns or expresses worries but never criticizes Members explicitly, and never comments on their rights and obligations under the WTO agreements." (Gerasimchuk, 2013, p. 7)
Papa Andina (a regional network of the International Potato Center which promotes knowledge sharing in Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador)	Summary of evaluations of four workshops detailing how their structure has led to deep and sustained collaboration between participants (Thiele, Devaux, Velasco, & Manrique, 2013)			
Public Expenditure Management Peer-Assisted Learning Network (PEMPAL)	Evaluations of PEMPAL have found that the intermediate objectives were achieved in relation to all the Communities of Practice established within PEMPAL (Internal Audit, Budget and Treasury). The evaluations were optimistic but did not collect evidence that peer learning occurred systematically (as distinct from learning from experts) or that such learning facilitated change at scale (Folscher, 2009, 2012)			
Pacific Forum Compact Peer Reviews	Reviews are tailored to each country (Forum Secretariat, 2014)			
Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes				Reviews have a "soft law" effect in socializing members towards transparency and effective exchange of information for tax purposes (Gerasimchuk, 2013)

Effective Institutions Platform

Introduction: So you think that you might be interested in facilitating peer learning for public sector reform?
    Intro 1: Becoming familiar with the concepts and terminology
        Concepts: people and activities
        Terminology
    Intro 2: Reality check questions for potential peer learning facilitators
    Intro 3: Scoping the demand
    Intro 4: Other facilitators to learn from
    Intro 5: Learning from the (limited) literature
        Summarizing the literature
        Focus areas of relevant literature

Part 1: Establishing the peer group foundational engagement
    1:1 Ensuring an overlap of peer interests
        Building in matches
        Looking for matches
    1:2 Supplement the tacit knowledge of the peer learners with research evidence
    1:3 Establishing commitment and trust within the peer learning community

Part 2: Peer group engagements which lead to meaningful individual contacts
    2:1 Tools for facilitating meaningful inter-peer discussions
    2:2 Maintaining momentum

Part 3: Ensuring that sustained individual contacts lead to practical peer learning
    3:1 Define the medium term learning objectives
    3:2 A menu of learning tools
    3:3 Evaluate the achievement of the learning objectives

Part 4: Applying peer learning to create change at scale
    4:1 Establish a theory of change
        Getting a fix on the problem
        What part will negotiation skills play
        What part will coalition-building play?
    4:2 Build links between the peer learning and the home context
    4:3 Coalitions
    4:3 Use the power of reflection
    4:4 Evaluate the overall peer learning initiative

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