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Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships

Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships

Forth session

Geneva, 1-2 December 2020

Report of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on its fourth session

I. Attendance

1. The Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships held its fourth session on 1-2 December 2020 in hybrid format. Over 200 delegates registered and participated in the meeting. The session was attended by representatives from Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Greece, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Madagascar, Morocco, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, South Africa, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the Philippines, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Uzbekistan.

2. The European Union was also represented.

3. The following specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations participated in the session: the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Islamic Development Bank, the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Bank.

4. Representatives from non-governmental organizations, private sector entities, academic institutions and independent experts participated in the session.

II. Opening of the session

5. The Director of the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division of the UNECE recalled the secretariat's success in effectively mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) activities and in giving the SDG dimension the importance that it deserved. She noted that, despite the postponement of several physical



meetings, the PPP work programme under the Working Party had adapted very well to holding virtual meetings and has proved to be highly productive. She expressed her hope that the deliberations and the decisions taken by the Working Party, both on substance and on procedural issues, would make a concrete contribution to “building back better”, and to ensuring that the path forward would be a truly sustainable one.

III. Adoption of the agenda (Agenda item 1)

Documentation:

Annotated provisional agenda for the fourth session (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/1/Rev.1).

Conclusion 2020 – 1

The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda for its fourth session.

IV. Election of officers (Agenda item 2)¹

6. The Working Party discussed the timeline of the election of officers, notably in view of the expected adoption of its new Rules of Procedure. The representative of the European Union notably requested that the number of the Bureau members should not increase any further, reminding that the current Rules of Procedure state that there is one Chairperson and two vice-Chairpersons, and that the officers elected this year might not be able to finish a two-year term due to the expected adoption of the Rules of Procedure.

Conclusion 2020 – 2

The Working Party re-elected Mr. Sam Tabuchi (Japan) as its co-Chairperson, and Mr. Raymond Saner (Switzerland) and Ms. Beatrice Ikilai (Uganda) as vice-Chairpersons for a period of one year in accordance with the Commission’s Guidelines on Procedures and Practices. The Working Party also elected Mr. Christopher Clement-Davies (United Kingdom) as vice-Chairperson for a period of one year.

In the anticipation of the adoption of new Rules of Procedure at the fifth session of the Working Party, the Bureau members will stand as is until their terms expire or new Rules of Procedure are enacted.

The Working Party expressed its appreciation to Mr. Bekmurat Talipov (Kazakhstan) for his contribution to the UNECE PPP work as vice-Chairperson and wished him success in his future endeavours.

¹ The officers elected to the Bureau at the third session of the Working Party in 2019 will remain in office throughout 2021.

V. Policy discussion:² Mainstreaming People-first Public-Private Partnerships model (Agenda item 3)

Documentation:

Draft revised People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/3/Rev.1); and

Guidelines on Promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/5).

7. The Chairperson's summary of the discussions is annexed to the report.
8. The panellists appreciated the very valuable, and potentially impactful work undertaken by the Project Team in developing the draft Evaluation Methodology and expressed their interest and readiness to contribute to its further development and implementation. They also emphasised the relevance of supporting the transition to a circular economy and commended UNECE for its timely work on topics of cross-cutting policy relevance.
9. Speaking on behalf of the European Commission, the representative of the European Union referred to the European Union Communication from 2017 on Waste-to-Energy that gives an overview of the different technologies and identifies those that it considers the more environmentally friendly. The delegate argued that different strategies, like the Energy System Integration or the Methane Strategy, should be further used in the Guidelines on Promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/5). The delegate also stressed that, although Waste-to-Energy is preferred to landfilling, it was not considered to be at the top of the waste hierarchy. If it is true that the modern technology allows to reduce enormously emissions from incinerators (which are not the only solution: anaerobic digestors are clearly better and cheaper for organic waste), this technology is not implemented everywhere. She further mentioned that there are examples of over-capacity of incinerators in the European Union. Additionally, there has been some reluctance in the European Union to support incinerator projects because of bad experiences in the past, especially as the development of the circular economy leads to less waste to be burnt and some of the incinerators had to import waste. Finally, she suggested to include examples of other countries from the UNECE region to complement the example of Switzerland.
10. The Working Party thanked the panellists and participants for the productive exchange of experiences, and their contributions to the discussion.

² The policy discussion consisted of two sessions with two expert panel discussions focused on the People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs and the Guidelines on Promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy. The views expressed by the experts under this agenda item do not necessarily reflect the positions of the Member States.

VI. Review of the work since the third session of the Working Party on PPPs on 3-4 December 2019 (Agenda item 4)

Policy documents: International PPP standards, guidelines, guiding principles, declarations, and recommendations

Documentation:

Draft revised People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/3/Rev.1);

Guidelines on Promoting People-first PPP Waste-to Energy Projects for the Circular Economy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/5); and

Draft plan by the Bureau of the Working Party to make the People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology fully usable by the end of 2021 (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/INF.1).

11. The secretariat introduced the draft revised People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the Sustainable Development Goals and the draft plan by the Bureau of the Working Party to make the People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology fully usable by the end of 2021.

12. The representatives of Belarus, the European Union (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), France, Germany, Greece, Morocco, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Uganda expressed their appreciation of the very valuable work undertaken by the Project Team³ in developing the draft Evaluation Methodology. They also stressed that the draft Evaluation Methodology is an excellent foundation for further work and testing as described in the action plan proposed by the Bureau of the Working Party in document ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/INF.1.

13. The representatives of Belarus, the Russian Federation, Morocco, Turkey and Uganda urged the Working Party to endorse the draft Evaluation Methodology, to be further improved in 2021 according to the action plan. The representatives of France, Germany and Greece argued that the Working Party should welcome the document very warmly and should furthermore encourage its dissemination and use during a pilot phase while endorsing the Bureau plan of action.

14. The representative of Lebanon informed the delegates of the activities of the World Association of PPP Units and Professionals (WAPPP) and suggested that WAPPP could help promote and disseminate the People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology among many PPP Units around the world.

Conclusion 2020 – 4.1

The Working Party welcomed very warmly the draft People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/3/Rev.1) as an excellent basis going forward and encouraged its dissemination and use during a pilot phase pursuant to the plan of action in ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/INF.1.

The Working Party agreed to further the development of the Methodology in 2021 through rigorous testing with actual projects and thereby ensuring the Methodology will be properly implemented. The Working Party further agreed that a revised version of the Methodology based on this testing and on the lessons learned will be submitted to its next session.

³ The Project Team was led by Mr. Joan Ricard, Ms. Melissa Peneycad and Mr. James Stewart. The five group sub-leaders who coordinated the work on specific People-first PPP outcomes are: Ms. Tetiana Bessarab, Ms. Doris Chevalier, Mr. Anand Chiplunkar, Mr. Jean-Patrick Marquet and Ms. Amanda Loeffen. The Project Team was composed of over 100 experts.

The Working Party endorsed the plan for this work to be carried out in 2021 as contained in ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/INF.1 and requested the secretariat to incorporate it as an annex to the report of the session.⁴

Conclusion 2020 – 4.2

The Working Party discussed the Guidelines on promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy contained in ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/5, agreed on their further development based on comments from stakeholders, and proposed that they be submitted as a contribution to the high-level segment and cross-cutting theme of the forthcoming sixty-ninth Commission session in April 2021.

VII. Implementation plan for 2020-2021 (Agenda item 5)

Documentation:

Report of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on its third session (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2019/2); and

Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2020-2021 (ECE/EX/2020/L.6).

15. The Chairperson referred to the Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2020-2021 (ECE/EX/2020/L.6), which lists PPP activities for 2021, including the fifth edition of the UNECE International PPP Forum in April 2021.

16. The Chairperson also referred to the list of topics for future standards approved by the Working Party in its past sessions⁵ and encouraged interested parties to submit project proposals to the secretariat to develop standards on the topics included in the list in compliance with the Working Party's open and transparent standard development process.

17. The representative of the United States reiterated its objection, formulated at the 111th session of the Executive Committee on 5 October 2020 and at other sessions of the Working Party, to events outlined in the Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2020-2021 that support the Belt and Road Initiative, such as the second PPP dialogue for Belt and Road countries planned for next year and the capacity building project referenced in paragraph 27 for "countries within the Belt and Road Initiative". The representative cautioned the UNECE against promoting or taking actions that imply endorsement for the signature, global foreign policy platforms of one country, and against using the Belt and Road Initiative as a geographic indicator. The representative also urged the UNECE to avoid referencing this initiative in its programmes as it has no tangible bearing on the events and projects themselves and inappropriately implies support for that signature, global foreign policy platform.

18. The representative of the European Union, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, thanked the secretariat, the Bureau and all the experts for their continuous efforts in promoting approaches to PPP that support the implementation of the SDGs, and reminded participants that the Working Party is a subsidiary body of the UNECE. As such, its work should be aimed towards strategies originating from the UNECE region, firstly, and then possibly outwards. The representative stressed that the European Union and its Member States welcome cooperation with the non-UNECE members in this context. Concretely, future work of this Working Party should refer to frameworks such as the Strategy "Connecting Europe and Asia" and the UNECE "Euro-Asian Transport Links" as

⁴ Annex II, pp. 10-12.

⁵ The list is annexed to the report of the second session of the Working Party (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2017/2) as amended in 2018 (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/2).

examples. As we are moving towards a greater focus on SDGs, whereby the PPP models should support the implementation of the SDGs, the representative invited the Working Party, through its Bureau, to consider finding a more distinctive name for the “People-first PPP model” which does not cover only “people” but also captures in the name the essence of the SDGs.

19. The representative of the United Kingdom thanked the Bureau and the secretariat for preparing the list of PPP activities in the Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2020-2021. The representative welcomed in particular the focus of the PPP activities on the SDGs. The representative supported the interventions by the United States and the European Union in relation to references to the Belt and Road Initiative. The United Kingdom recognises that the Belt and Road Initiative and other initiatives can play an important role in meeting the global infrastructure deficit. However, the representative stated that the United Kingdom does not believe it is helpful or appropriate to seek endorsement of national initiatives in UN documents. The representative encouraged selection of capacity building projects to be based on transparent criteria and support geared towards the national objectives in the beneficiary countries so that they make effective use of all potential infrastructure funding sources.

20. The representative of France referred to paragraph 28 of the Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2020-2021 (ECE/EX/2020/L.6) on the finalisation of the People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology, and argued that this should now be finalised in 2021 rather than in 2020 as indicated in ECE/EX/2020/L.6.

21. In reply to the comment by the representative of France, the secretariat clarified that this change will be duly reflected in the Committee’s draft Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2021-2022.

Conclusion 2020 – 5.1

The Working Party took note of the Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2020-2021 of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (ECE/EX/2020/L.6) in particular the list of the PPP activities planned for the rest of 2020 and for 2021.

Rules of Procedure of the Working Party

22. The Chairperson reminded delegates that the Working Party has used the Rules of Procedure of the Commission since its first session in 2017 in the absence of its own distinctive Rules. The Chairperson informed that the Bureau discussed the matter and recommends the Working Party to adopt its own Rules of Procedure and to set up a drafting group to prepare a draft document for the Working Party’s consideration at its next session. During the session of the Working Party, members States agreed that only representatives from the UNECE member States will be part of the drafting team to develop the draft Rules of Procedures.

Conclusion 2020 – 5.2

The Working Party agreed to develop its own Rules of Procedure in line with paragraph 2 of Appendix III of document E/ECE/1464 (Guidelines on procedures and practices for ECE bodies) and decided to set up a drafting team to develop the draft Rules of Procedure. It also requested the Bureau to decide on the composition of the drafting team at its next virtual meeting in accordance with the Guidelines for the Establishment and Functioning of Working Parties within UNECE and with due consideration to participants from UNECE Geneva-based delegations and government-nominated Bureau members.

VIII. Other business (Agenda item 6)

Dates of the next session

Conclusion 2020 – 6

The Working Party agreed that its next meeting be held in the fourth quarter of 2021. The secretariat will fix the dates in consultation with the Bureau and the Conference Management Unit at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

23. The representative of France requested the secretariat to check the dates of other major international PPP events before fixing the dates of the next session to ensure that they do not overlap.

IX. Adoption of the report (Agenda item 7)

Conclusion 2020 – 7

The Working Party decided, as part of the special procedures established by the ECE Executive Committee for the COVID-19 pandemic period (paragraph 3 of document ECE/EX/2020/L.12), to circulate the conclusions agreed at the session through all Geneva Permanent Representations, the Bureau and Working Party delegations for approval by silence procedure by the participating delegations of the session.⁶

The Working Party further requested the secretariat to prepare a draft report of the session and distribute it to all Geneva Permanent Representations, the Bureau and Working Party delegations for subsequent approval by silence procedure in accordance with paragraph 21 of Appendix III of document E/ECE/1464 (Guidelines on procedures and practices for ECE bodies). Once the draft report is adopted, it requests its publication in English, French and Russian.

⁶ The silence procedure to approve the conclusions adopted at the session took place between 7 and 10 December 2020.

Annex I.

Chairperson’s summary of the policy discussion “Mainstreaming People-first Public-Private Partnerships model” under Agenda item 3

Introduction

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a monumental challenge that has caused huge distress and economic turmoil, catching Governments unprepared. Not surprisingly, there is now a desire from people everywhere for a return to normal life. While understandable, the challenge however is not to return to normal and “business as usual”; rather it is to learn the lessons from the pandemic and “build back better”.

2. Equally important is to ensure that the path forward is an uncompromisingly green and sustainable one. This will require the conscious use of natural resources and reduction and avoidance of waste. In this regard, the high-level theme of the forthcoming sixty-ninth Commission session in April 2021 is to promote circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in the UNECE region. One key task is also to build resilience within communities, that is, their ability to withstand shocks, recover, carry on and move forward so that there can never be a recurrence of such a scale in the future, when next time a pandemic or disaster strikes.

3. From the UNECE perspective, the draft People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/3/Rev.1) and the Guidelines on Promoting People-first Public-Private Partnerships Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/5) could be important instruments to help “build back better”.

Session 1: Towards a fully usable People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs

Speakers:

- Mr. Frédéric Bobay, Project Director, FIN INFRA, Ministry of the Economy, Finance and the Recovery of France (Bureau member)
- Ms. Tetiana Bessarab, Senior PPP consultant, Ukraine
- Ms. Nathalie Bernasconi-Osterwalder, Executive Director, IISD Europe, Senior Director, Economic Law and Policy
- Mr. Pierre Sarrat, Chief Operating Officer, Sustainable Infrastructure Foundation (SIF)
- Ms. Kari Aina Eik, Secretary General, Organization for International Economic Relations (OiER), Leader United for Smart Sustainable Cities Implementation Program

4. Up until now, the UN System has lacked a way in which infrastructure projects could be evaluated according to the SDGs. Many private companies are also saying that their projects are SDG-compliant but there is no objective way until now to substantiate that claim. The UNECE People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs (thereinafter the Methodology) can contribute to filling the gap by allowing public and private sectors as well

as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to demonstrate their concrete contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

5. The fundamental goal of the Methodology is to take into account the SDGs and move from the traditional approach to PPP to the People-first approach to PPPs, thus ensuring the alignment of infrastructure projects with the SDGs. However, the Methodology argued one panellist, is not a substitute for existing methodologies – such as cost-benefit analysis, “value for money” or *ex post* evaluations – but rather a complement to these, that will help Governments ensure their projects are aligned with the SDGs and the Guiding Principles on People-first PPP.

6. The panellists recognised that the draft Methodology sets the foundations for a fully functional Methodology. Additionally, the Methodology could help Governments develop robust legal frameworks which are key to the development of sustainable infrastructure. For greater impact, city administrations could be encouraged to use the Methodology to make sure that SDGs are at the centre of their infrastructure planning. To this end, the UNECE PPP programme could cooperate with the Housing and Land Management programme which has its own Methodology for Key Performance Indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities. Panellists further recognised that the Methodology can be applied to all infrastructure projects, independently of the delivery model being used, PPP or not.

7. Some panellists argued that there is also a great interest from the private sector – as many businesses already use sustainable development to govern their strategy – to have their infrastructure projects recognised as SDG-compliant. Moreover, to this end, there is a demand, including by the private sector, for a third-party recognition scheme in addition to a self-assessment tool, mindful of the need that this work should be carried out by reputable organisations in compliance with the United Nations rules and regulations.

8. Some panellists argued that a number of improvements could be made to the Methodology. These could, for example, include having a better balance of the five People-first outcomes and clarifying when in the PPP process the Methodology will apply. To this end, further testing should be carried out in 2021 to ensure the full functionality of the Methodology. Additionally, the Methodology could build further on existing methodologies such as IISD’s Sustainable Asset Valuation (SAVi). Such “system methodologies” reflect the true interconnectedness of social, economic and environmental aspects. Finally, engaging with the World Bank, the EBRD and UNCTAD could help improving the Methodology by identifying the best practices in the experience of such organisations in PPP projects.

9. Once the Methodology becomes fully operational, the Sustainable Infrastructure Foundation (SIF) with its SOURCE platform could be an important partner for its implementation and dissemination. The Methodology should also be linked to other existing tools on SDGs and ongoing SDG processes, especially at local levels.

Session 2: Waste-to-Energy’s contribution to the circular economy

Speakers:

- Mr. Athanasios Bourtsalas, Lecturer in Energy and Materials, Columbia University
- Ms. Amanda Loeffen, CEO, HumanRight2Water
- Mr. Thomas Obermeier, Head of Business Development, EEW Energy from Waste GmbH and President, German Waste Industry Association (DGAW)

10. Panellists argued that turning waste into a value is critical for moving towards a circular economy. Without this new approach to waste, the optimal recycling of materials

and a waste-free society cannot be realistically achieved. Turning waste into a value is not only a viable business opportunity but an absolute necessity.

11. As some materials cannot be recycled – such as sanitary materials – and others lose their recycling capacity after each round of recycling – only metals and glass can be recycled indefinitely – some waste has to be incinerated. Waste incineration has been a challenge since ancient times, but it can have a number of benefits and can contribute to the circular economy. For example, waste incineration can recover residual materials, generate power and heat, be a renewable energy source, save natural resources, and reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions of uncontrolled composting or landfilling, especially methane, which is a much more severe greenhouse gas than CO₂. However, waste incineration must be differentiated from Waste-to-Energy, a process that converts waste into energy and, mainly, heat.

12. Many concerns exist about Waste-to-Energy however: it can be seen as an activity that is negative for the environment, can discourage recycling, is expensive or ignores the needs of vulnerable groups and local stakeholders. Particularly, as Waste-to-Energy plants emit CO₂, it is important to collect it or use it as a source for industry. As a result, there is often hostility from local stakeholders in having Waste-to-Energy facilities located close to their homes (the “Not In My Back Yard” or “NIMBY” effect). A People-first approach to Waste-to-Energy PPP projects, especially by engaging with all stakeholders, can lead to more sustainable projects that are designed to fit the needs of the local community. Through the meaningful participation of stakeholders in an inclusive, non-discriminatory and transparent way, community acceptability can be increased. In addition, all stakeholders should give as much emphasis as possible in their projects to improve design, generate wider social and cultural community benefits, improve environmental impacts, at the same time stimulating the local economy, local employment and support women and vulnerable groups.

13. In Europe, landfilling varies amongst countries but can be very high in some. Amongst the 27 countries of the European Union, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland, 13 countries dispose more than 49 per cent of their municipal waste in landfill sites. Although prevention is the preferable option as defined in the “waste hierarchy”,⁷ Waste-to-Energy could play an important role for the circular economy in Europe, particularly for the recycling of various metals.

14. The focus of the Guidelines on promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy should be now twofold: i) analysing the strategies of other countries in the UNECE region, in addition to the strategy of Switzerland, as to the disposal of waste and the extent to which these countries’ practices are consistent with circular economy approaches, and ii) exploring the way new technologies applied to Waste-to-Energy schemes can radically reduce negative impacts on the environment especially moving in the direction of facilities having zero CO₂ emissions.

⁷ Waste-to-Energy is currently placed above the use of landfills in the so-called “waste hierarchy”, top of which comes “Reduce, Reuse and Recycle” which are classified as circular economy practices.

Annex II.

Action Plan to enhance the People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology and make it fully usable by the end of 2021

I. Goal

Enhance the People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology⁸ (hereinafter the Methodology) to help Governments achieve the Guiding Principles on People-first PPP and the SDGs and make it fully usable by the end of 2021.

The focus of the Methodology is primarily government officials in charge of infrastructure project preparation in their respective country, and especially PPPs. It provides an easy-to-use tool for identifying whether projects are in alignment with the Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs and as such is a contribution to achieving the SDGs. The focus on People-first PPPs in the Methodology is intended as *supplement* to the traditional methodologies for *ex ante* infrastructure project preparation (e.g. Cost Benefit Analysis, Value for Money etc.) and to other *ex post* infrastructure project evaluations.

II. Action Plan

The following actions to achieve this goal will be undertaken in 2021 set out in twin tracked approach below and carried out in parallel, subject to extrabudgetary resources (sequencing and prioritisation to be decided).

1. Improving the Methodology:
 - (a) Make the Methodology more inclusive by *inter alia*:
 - Referencing the research and best practices of the Specialist Centres of Excellence endorsed by the Working Party, and
 - Clarifying the role of the Methodology amongst related other traditional evaluation methodologies used in public infrastructure and PPP projects.
 - (b) Clarify when in the project development cycle the Methodology can be used in a simple and efficient manner in countries.
 - (c) Clarify the conditions for marketing the Methodology and for engaging reliable and independent consultants to implement the Methodology when necessary.
 - (d) Undertake a survey among primarily the Government users to obtain their views on the Methodology.
 - (e) Use the results of the survey and the testing to further improve the Methodology and revise, as appropriate, the indicators, benchmarks, scoring and weighting with a view:
 - To have a more balanced distribution amongst the five People-first outcomes.
 - To avoid overlaps by consolidating benchmarks and indicators.
 - (f) Revisit the term “benchmarks” with a more appropriate term such as “criteria”.

⁸ As contained in ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/3.Rev1.

(g) Conduct a sensitivity analysis across the scoring and weighting systems: for example, three different scoring systems could be tested on the same set of projects.

(h) Use the results and revise accordingly the draft User's Guide on the Methodology.

(i) Advance the future implementation framework in cooperation inter alia with the Sustainable Infrastructure Foundation (SIF) for disseminating through the multilateral platform SOURCE.

2. Testing the Methodology in accordance with a testing protocol and mobilising interest:⁹

(a) Develop a testing protocol that includes:

- A detailed template on how the testing is conducted and the inputs submitted to the secretariat, and
- The identification of partners responsible for some of the testing (e.g. the UNECE-affiliated Specialist Centres of Excellence in their area and sector of expertise) under the coordination of secretariat.

(b) Identify projects in different sectors, PPP models and countries to be evaluated/tested in 2021 through the testing protocol.

(c) Test the Methodology by evaluating a significant number of projects (e.g. at least 30 projects).

(d) Ensure that the Governments and PPP Units that indicated their desire to use the Methodology to score their projects fully participate in the testing of the Methodology.

(e) Consult with the private sector, e.g. construction contractors, involved in delivering PPPs and public service for the purpose of testing the Methodology.

III. Timeline

31 March 2021: (in time for the International PPP Forum)

- Mid-term review of progress on the improvement of the Methodology.
- Mid-term review of progress on testing: Testing protocol developed.
- A prototype self-assessment tool available online.
- Initial results of some (e.g. 10) infrastructure PPP projects evaluated/tested.

31 July 2021: (in time for the preparations of the revised Methodology to be submitted to the Working Party)

- Overall testing results are presented, with several (e.g. 20) infrastructure PPP projects evaluated/tested.
- Improved version of the Methodology, including the adapted version of the User's Guide and of the self-assessment tool available online.

⁹ An initial testing of the Methodology was done in the summer of 2020 which resulted in an improved version of the Methodology.

31 December 2021:

- Overall testing results of the enhanced Methodology, with more projects tested (e.g. at least 30 infrastructure PPP projects evaluated/tested).

IV. Resources

- (a) Expert team to contribute to the above-mentioned action points:
 - Volunteers will be needed: existing members of the Project Team, interested members of the Bureau, the heads of the UNECE-affiliated Specialist Centres of Excellence and SIF.
 - Team members will be identified to lead on particular tasks.
- (b) Partnering with existing funded programmes.
- (c) The secretariat to explore extrabudgetary resources for the rolling out of the improved version of the Methodology.

V. Marketing and Governance

- (a) Identifying different types of demand (e.g. for Governments evaluating their national infrastructure strategies) and tailoring the Methodology to meet the demand and thereby permitting the maximum amount of dissemination as possible.
- (b) Making the title more attractive to facilitate the marketing of the Methodology.
- (c) Ensuring good governance in the rolling out of Methodology in awarding the people-first status through the Recognition Scheme (impartiality, transparency, fairness, checks and balances, redress mechanism etc.).

VI. Implementation and Monitoring

- (a) Responsibility for implementation and monitoring of this Action Plan is with the secretariat working closely with the Project Team, the UNECE-affiliated Specialist Centres of Excellence and other experts.
 - (b) Regular reports on implementation of the Action Plan will be provided by the secretariat to the Bureau.
 - (c) Priority will be given in January 2021 to the development of a testing protocol with a roadmap to the testing.
-