



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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First Expert Roundtable on the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments

Building to last: Parliamentary support aims for sustainable outcomes

Geneva, 28 October 2016

Background

Parliament is the central institution of democracy; it represents society in all its diversity and embodies the will of the people. In September 2015, world leaders underlined the importance of strong institutions through SDG 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and recognized that parliaments are essential to the implementation of the SDGs. Simply put, transparent, accountable and effective parliaments are fundamental to democracy, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality, and economic and social development.

In recent decades, support to parliaments has steadily increased, as have the number of support partners. To draw lessons from this experience and to enhance the effectiveness of support programmes, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the European Parliament, the National Assembly of France, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) worked together to develop the **Common Principles for Support to Parliaments**.¹ Drawing on inputs from parliaments and other organizations, the document identifies ten principles to guide parliamentary support. The Common Principles were formally adopted by the 131st IPU Assembly in October 2014, and have since received the endorsement of 108 parliaments and organizations that provide support to parliaments.²

Objective

To further implement the Common Principles, user-friendly tools that facilitate their application and improve feedback processes are needed. To inform the development of such tools, a series of expert roundtables providing focused insight on specific elements of the Common Principles will take place.

This first roundtable will focus on **Common Principle 3: *Parliamentary support aims for sustainable outcomes.***

“Sustainable outcomes” implies that external support meets the interests and priority needs of parliaments and that the benefits continue to accrue to the institution even after the assistance ceases. It also implies that parliaments develop the capacity to manage their change and renewal processes.

The roundtable will provide participants with the opportunity to:

- Review Common Principle 3 and share their perspectives on what sustainable outcomes and impact means to them;
- Identify lessons learned and challenges faced in achieving greater sustainability in support projects;
- Provide suggestions on tools that would help to ensure sustainable outcomes for support projects, and indicators to measure sustainability.

¹ http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/principles_en.pdf

² Endorsements as of 6 September 2016: <http://www.ipu.org/dem-e/cp-endorsements.pdf>

Agenda:

1. **Introduction to Common Principle 3**
The convenors will briefly present the content and objectives of Common Principle 3: *Parliamentary support aims for sustainable outcomes*.
2. **Challenges to achieving sustainable outcomes**
Participants will discuss experiences and challenges to ensuring sustainable outcomes while managing change within their respective institutions.
3. **Institutionalizing mechanisms and good practices for sustainable outcomes**
Parliaments and partners will share ideas and good practices on how to design mechanisms and processes that lead to sustainable outcomes, and indicators for measuring sustainability.
4. **Tools to help achieve sustainable outcomes**
Parliaments and partners will propose and discuss practical tools designed to help facilitate sustainable outcomes in the planning and implementation of support projects.
5. **The roles of parliamentary support actors in achieving sustainable outcomes**
Participants will discuss expectations of the roles of parliaments and parliamentary support partners when providing assistance in promoting sustainable outcomes.

Outcome:

The roundtable will result in a report which will inform the development of user-friendly tools and feedback processes to facilitate application of Common Principle 3.

Participants:

Participants will be representatives from parliaments and partner organisations who have responsibility for parliamentary support projects (Secretaries general, parliamentary staff, Members of parliament, parliamentary support partners and experts).

Registration:

Delegates should register online at the following link: <http://fluidsurveys.com/s/common-principles/langeng/>. The deadline for registration is 7 October 2016. Confirmation of registration will be sent within two working days.

Please note that space is limited. Parliaments are kindly requested to limit their participation to a maximum of two representatives and organizations to a maximum of one representative. We also encourage early registration to ensure your participation in the roundtable.

Languages:

English, French, Spanish and Arabic

Date and venue:

28 October 2016 from 9:30 to 17:30.

The roundtable will take place at IPU Headquarters, Geneva at the following address:

Chemin du Pommier 5
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex
Geneva – Switzerland