



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Third Expert Roundtable on the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments Challenges and opportunities in parliamentary monitoring and evaluation

Virtual event – 9 December 2020



Concept Note

In recent decades, external technical 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) led the development of 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 136 national parliaments and 27 partner organizations. The Principles are intended to provide a summary of what is most important and aspirational in parliamentary development and to be a common language that all actors involved in this development can share.

A series of Roundtables with parliaments and support partners is helping to apply the Common Principles. The first Expert Roundtable took place in October 2016 and focused on Common Principle 3: *Parliamentary support aims for sustainable outcomes*. It led to the exchange and compilation of good practices to strengthen the sustainability of support projects.² The second Roundtable in March 2018 examined strengthening the operationalization of parliamentary ownership – and the Common Principles as a whole – through increased engagement by parliaments in the identification and realization of development priorities. The second Roundtable resulted in a Guide, *Putting Parliamentary self-development into practice*, which aims to assist parliamentary leaders in achieving their development potential.³

The most important of the ten Common Principles is that only a parliament can take responsibility for its own development. The environment in which parliaments work is in constant flux, from social and political issues to economic and many other areas. A primary challenge for many parliaments is to identify tools to manage change and measure their own impact. The third Expert Roundtable will examine the issue of monitoring and evaluation so as to measure the impact of a parliament's performance. It is being jointly organized by the IPU and the Parliament of Uganda.

Objective

Through interactive discussions, the Roundtable will share experiences and good practices in parliamentary monitoring and evaluation through the following lenses:

- Why do parliaments monitor their performance and what do they measure?

The first session will examine the rationale and motivation of why parliaments monitor and evaluate institutional performance, from the perspective of both Members and the administration. It will also look at *what* parliaments measure, and which indicators are used. Participants will discuss constraints or challenges in determining the level of implementation that is being monitored (output, outcome etc). Often the *why* is to measure impact; but how can we ensure that *what* is measured provides the right data to answer our question about the impact of a parliament's work?

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

² Report of the first Roundtable: www.ipu.org/splz-e/common16/report.pdf

³ Report of the second Roundtable: www.ipu.org/event/second-expert-roundtable-common-principles-support-parliaments-proactive-parliaments-bolstering-self-development#event-sub-page-documents/

- Who carries out monitoring and evaluation work in parliaments and how do they monitor the performance of their institutions?

A second session will explore the different bodies, groups or individuals that are responsible for carrying out monitoring and evaluation work within parliaments, such as parliamentary committees, administrative units, monitoring and evaluation services, or – in cases where no dedicated body exists – individuals such as the Speaker or Secretary General of Parliament. Possible ingredients for success in the composition and working methods of these bodies will be discussed, as well as technical skills that are useful for this work.

The session will also examine the tools and processes that parliaments use to monitor and evaluate performance. It will highlight existing challenges and innovative practices. In addition, the session will look at self-assessment as a monitoring and evaluation tool and share experiences of self-assessment in a thematic area, such as gender or development.

Participants

Participants will be representatives of parliaments and partner organizations who have responsibility for parliamentary monitoring and evaluation, and who work on evidence-informed policymaking (Secretaries General, parliamentary staff, members of parliament, parliamentary support partners and experts).

The Roundtable format will be anchored to interactive discussions. Participants are therefore invited to come prepared to engage and share experiences from their respective parliaments.

Invitation for written inputs

Parliaments may also submit written inputs highlighting their country experiences on the topics under discussion. Written contributions should be sent to postbox@ipu.org by 27 November 2020.

Languages

Documents will be provided in English and French. Interpretation will be provided in English, French and Spanish.

Date, venue and platform

The Third Roundtable will take place on **9 December 2020**. It will be held twice, in two different time slots (sittings). Participants are invited to choose the sitting that best suits their time zone. Sitting 1 will be from 9:00 to 11:30 CET (Central Europe Time – Paris). Sitting 2 will be from 16:00 to 18:30 (CET).

Registration

Delegates can register online at the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/third-expert-roundtable-on-the-common-principles-for-support-to-parliaments-registration-128119231069>. The deadline for registration is **1 December 2020**.

Sitting 1: 9:00–11:30 (CET)

Timed to suit participants from Africa, Europe, Middle East, Asia and the Pacific/Oceania

Sitting 2: 16:00–18:30 (CET)

Timed to suit participants from the Americas, Africa and Europe