

REPORT OF THE STUDY TOUR TO ARGENTINA

DATES: 31ST OCTOBER- 7TH NOVEMBER, 2016



Submitted by:

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1. Introduction

The study tour to Argentina was a culmination of an Online Learning Alliance that begun on 23rd May, 2016 and was concluded in August, 2016. The overall goal of the Learning Alliance was to learn and discuss actions directed at strengthening the capacity of legislative and executive bodies to make them more effective in exercising their horizontal accountability mandates based on a comparison of Latin American and African experiences. The moderation of the Online Learning Alliance on was led jointly by CIPPEC from Buenos Aires, Argentina and Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

2. Objectives of the Study Tour

The study tour was conducted on 31st October- 7th November, 2016 in the City of Buenos Aires in Argentina. The purpose of the study tour was to provide an opportunity to participants to:

- ✓ Understand how the accountability mechanisms in Argentina and Kenya work
- ✓ Visit the people who perform horizontal accountability in Argentina
- ✓ Visit the buildings where accountability takes place
- ✓ Exchange views about possible tools to improve the mechanisms with professionals
- ✓ Learn and improve participants Action Plans through peer-review and technical assessment

3. The Study Tour Participants

S/No	Name	Organization
1	Dr.Mohmand, Shandana	Fellow in the Governance, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex
2	Dr. Mukuna, Truphena	Acting Executive Director (OSSREA)
3	Dr. Buchere Philip Brightone	Director – Curriculum Training and Research-Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training (CPST) – Kenya
4	Adul, Anne Atieno	Speaker at Kisumu County Assembly-Kenya
5	Mose, Kefa	Research Officer -Parliament of Kenya
6	Kanyi, Eric Nganga	Fiscal Analyst -Parliament of Kenya
7	Kadonya, Charles Ngeleja	Principal Clerk-East African Legislative Assembly
8	Mallya, Emmanuel	Lecturer-Director – Open University Consultancy Bureau at Open University of Tanzania-Dar es Salaam
9	Makaye, Peter	Lecturer at Midlands State University-Zimbabwe
10	Chanza, Nonhlanhla Gloria	Parliamentary Liaison Officer at Law Society of South Africa
11	Akala Violet Asiko	Research Assistant- (CPST)- Kenya

The mix of the participants provided a very rich diversity that further enriched the programme. Briefly, the following sections highlight the major lessons for me as a participant in the programme.

4. Activities of the Study Tour

I. Meeting with Officials from CIPPEC

The Study Tour was organized and coordinated by CIPPEC, an influential think tank in Argentina and one of the top think tanks in Latin America. It promotes designs and implements public policies in the areas of social development, economic development, institutions and public management. CIPPEC has produced analysis and high-quality research that are translated into tangible achievements that improve public policies in Argentina and positively impact the lives of Argentine citizens. The participants met the President, Executive Director and Staff of CIPPEC who gave an overview of CIPPEC'S activities. From this session we learnt the following key important lessons:

Great organizational skills in organizing a serious study tour that covers participants from many countries. The choice of resource persons was superb and everything went according to plan. Secondly, the power of evidence based research in policy making came out very clearly

II. The Legislative branch in Argentina

In the first session participants met with one of the National Deputies from Congress who took them through the Argentina republic form of Government political system and the competencies and responsibilities of members of Congress. Additionally he highlighted on the Congress Party distribution. In this session a meeting was held with a former National Deputy and a National Deputy. Member of the Mixed Committee of Public Accounts. The Mixed Committee of Public Accounts (CPMRC, Comision Parlamentaria Mixta Revisora de Cuentas) is responsible for looking into the details of public sector finances and administration, and facilitates a fluid communication between Congress and the National Audit Office -responsible for auditing the financial and managerial operations of the ministries, secretariats and other government bodies. Given the reports by the National Audit Office, it is the CPMRC'S prerogative to decide how to proceed. The CPMRC can adopt a series of measures that range from filing the report, requesting further information from the corresponding agencies, ordering an assessment of responsibilities and fiscal damage, and informing the anticorruption agencies or filing the case before the Criminal Court of Appeals. The two facilitators shared the strengths and weaknesses of Horizontal Accountability in Argentina.



A session with a former National Deputy and a National Deputy. Member of the Mixed Committee of Public Accounts.

III. Round Table Meeting with Argentine specialists about African topics related to South-South Cooperation

The team travelled to International Affairs Argentine Council/CARI and met with specialists who focused on African topics related to South- South Cooperation. This space of interaction was dedicated resulted in an exchange views among colleagues about how South-South Cooperation is understood, how it is developed and how it could be improved since Latin America and Africa are regions with both similarities and differences in government and civil society. Additionally the specialists highlighted on governance aspects in Argentina.



Round Table Meeting with Argentine specialists about African topics

The lessons learnt here were : The role of parliamentary diplomacy and its nexus to horizontal accountability, two the role of academia in supporting legislatures to

enhance accountability mechanisms, and the need for greater collaboration on Afro-Argentine relations

IV. Introducing Argentine and Kenyan Regional Evidence Papers on horizontal accountability

CIPPEC and OSSREA prepared two Regional Evidence Papers and one Comparative Evidence Paper about horizontal accountability. These documents triggered the online exchange and the study tour. In this session the participants acknowledged discoveries from the Argentina and Kenyan Regional Evidence Papers about horizontal accountability and clear out possible doubts and reviewed basic and important concepts from horizontal accountability and set a common framework analysis.

Lesson here were the gaps identified in the area of horizontal accountability by the two studies.

V. Travel to Government of the City of Buenos Aires building

The City of Buenos Aires is an Autonomous City with the rank of a province and thus entitled to local government. The purpose of the visit was to expose the team to Horizontal Accountability in the sub-national government. The meeting was held with sub national State representatives from the Executive who shared their commitments and the accountability strategy put in place.



Picture Taken at the Government of the City of Buenos Aires building

Lesson here was the concept of smart cities based on specific commitments upon which the populace will hold the city managers accountable

VI. Meeting with Journalists Specializing on Horizontal Accountability

Media is a relevant actor in the policy-making process. Specialized journalists devoted to horizontal accountability, transparency and access to information are well-known in the country. Since its position and vision is considerably different from the one of officers of the Executive and legislators, it was deemed necessary to have them share their experiences. The most impressive role noted during this session was the role the media played in communicating the Chief of Cabinet's report and the presidential State of the Nation address, its dissemination and monitoring.

Lesson here was the concept of Digital journalism and access to information as vital to horizontal accountability.

VII. Meeting with the Undersecretary of Parliamentary Relations, Chief of Cabinet of the Nation

The link inside the Executive with the Legislative branch is the Undersecretary of Parliamentary Relations of the Chief of Cabinet. This person is in charge of preparing the monthly report to be presented during the monthly informative sessions that the Chief of Cabinet must attend. Moreover, this figure is a permanent contact between the Chief of Cabinet, who is the person in charge of the general administration of the country and the Legislative branch, in charge of making laws. It was thus considered relevant to organize a meeting with the undersecretary. She explained in detail how the Chief of Cabinet's monthly report enters the Chamber, how it is treated and how the informative session to introduce it is prepared.

Lesson here was the need for good intergovernmental relations between the executive and the legislature is vital to horizontal accountability.

VIII. Visit to the National Audit Office

The National Audit Office (NAO, Auditoria General de la Nacion) provides technical assistance to Congress and is in charge of the external control of the national public sector. In other words, it is responsible for auditing the financial and managerial operations of the ministries, secretariats and other government bodies. The President of the National Audit Office is proposed by the largest opposition party group in Congress. The NAO's directorate is composed of its President and six other General Audit Officers who are designated by Congress (three per Chamber, two representing the majority party group and the remaining officer representing the first minority party group). The focus of the meeting was to will acquaint the participants on the mandate of National Audit Office and how they fulfill their goals.

Lesson here was interesting to see how an audit office is headed by a president who is a politician

IX. Meeting with Civil Society Organizations specialized on horizontal accountability

Argentina recently approved a law that guarantees access to public information. This was one of the many claims and actions that non-government organizations introduced in order to improve the republican checks and balances of the Nation. During this

session, specialists introduced proposals and strategies to enlarge horizontal accountability mechanism feasibility, transparency and open government.

Lesson here was crucial role played by civil societies in enhancing horizontal accountability

X. Visit to the National Congress

The National Congress was built during the first years of the 20th Century. Its architecture is world-wide known. The participants were taken through a 90-minute guided tour will to the House of Deputies. This was to enable them discover and receive information about the history of the building and the Legislative power of Argentina.



Picture taken at the National Congress

Lesson here was how the Argentine society value their culture, art and history reflected in the congress



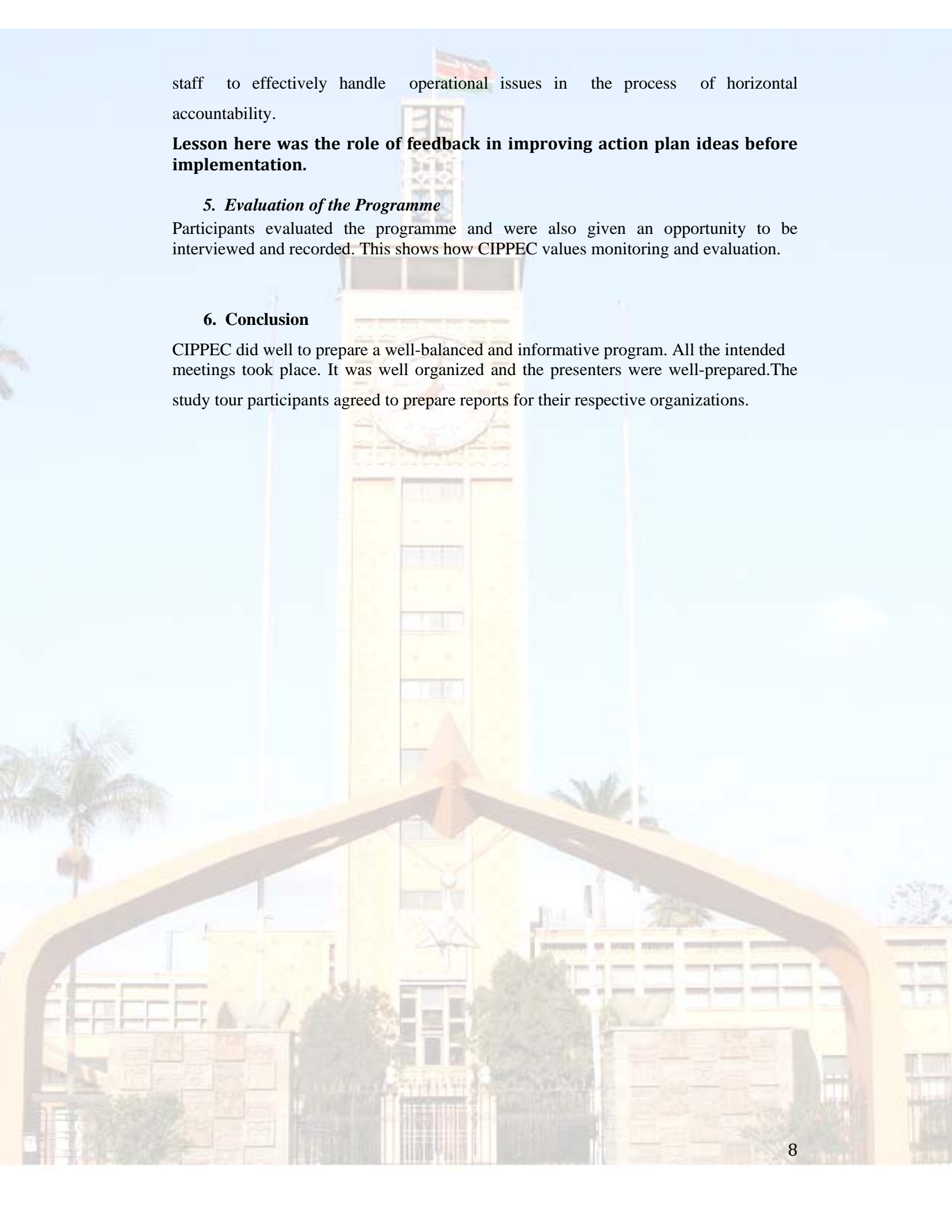
Picture taken at the House of Deputies

XI. Presentation of Action Plans By Individual Participants

The ELLA programme is offering Learning into Practice (LEAP) Awards, on a competitive basis, to Study Tour Participants. The LEAP awards are small bursaries (up to US\$ 5000) given to support innovative proposals that use, expand and draw on the knowledge, lessons, meetings, field visits, discussions etc. held through the Learning Alliances, Study Tours and other research uptake activities carried out in the ELLA Programme. The objective of the LEAP awards is to support and promote the use of the lessons and knowledge gained through the ELLA programme, and carry it into practice. The LEAP awards support people in developing projects, plans etc. to further inform, influence or change policies or practices drawing on the knowledge, lessons, meetings, field visits, discussions etc. held through the Online Learning Alliances, Study Tours and other research uptake activities

Each participant was thus given an opportunity to present their respective action plans and receive feedback from Shandana Mohmand from the Institute of Development Studies colleagues. The best action plans were qualified for the LEAP award.

Based on this, Dr. Philip Buchere and Violet Asiko proposed to develop an operational manual on accountability for Members and staff and use it to undertake induction trainings for Members of Parliament and County Assemblies after the 2017 general elections induction. The manual will also serve officers serving in the Executive and supreme audit institutions who interact with the legislature in the course of their work in horizontal accountability. The need for this manual is to fill an information gap by providing a quick, simplified reference material that will enable the members and



staff to effectively handle operational issues in the process of horizontal accountability.

Lesson here was the role of feedback in improving action plan ideas before implementation.

5. Evaluation of the Programme

Participants evaluated the programme and were also given an opportunity to be interviewed and recorded. This shows how CIPPEC values monitoring and evaluation.

6. Conclusion

CIPPEC did well to prepare a well-balanced and informative program. All the intended meetings took place. It was well organized and the presenters were well-prepared. The study tour participants agreed to prepare reports for their respective organizations.