



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS



## Celebrating our Achievements from a Year's Partnership between the Council of Governors (CoG) & the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP)

By Mary Mwiti, Chief Executive Officer, CoG

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### Introduction

The [CoG](#) is a Kenyan intergovernmental relations body established in the context of the devolution and the establishment of the 47 County Governments. The CoG acts as a forum for, among others, *sharing information on the performance of Counties in the execution of their functions with the objective of learning and promoting best practice, and where necessary, initiating preventive or corrective action*. It is based on this mandate that the Maarifa Centre was established.

The [EIP](#) has been partnering with the [Maarifa Centre](#) which acts as the knowledge and learning hub of the CoG. Its functions include documenting and sharing best practices emerging from County Governments as well as facilitating peer learning amongst County Governments on the implementation of their functions.

In March 2022, CoG through its Maarifa Centre responded to a call for expression of interest by the EIP to *co-create and pilot test monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) tools and approaches for peer-to-peer (P2P) learning*. The EIP selected Maarifa Centre for this collaboration, which began in earnest, guided by a roadmap jointly developed and revised as the collaboration took shape.

### Mapping the landscape of P2P learning in Kenya

Our collaboration accelerated in May 2022 when an EIP mission came to Kenya for in-person meetings with CoG management and Maarifa teams to agree on joint activities and timelines. This also created an opportunity to co-interview MEL stakeholders in the national ecosystem, including the Monitoring & Evaluation Directorate, New Partnership for Africa's Development, and Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis.

The CoG-EIP then hosted an interactive workshop with County Knowledge Management Champions from 10 Counties that allowed us to better understand how P2P learning is currently used, map current MEL practices in Counties and map remaining gaps.



*The CoG team led by the CEO, Ms Mary Mwiti (seated centre), engaging in a hybrid meeting with the EIP team led by Ms Catherine Anderson, Team Lead, Governance for Development (on the screen to the right)*

Partnership goals were subsequently recalibrated as a better understanding of the P2P learning landscape among Counties emerged. The roadmap moved, from focusing exclusively on pilot testing of P2P tools and approaches at CoG and County levels, to re-focusing on P2P learning methodologies and collaborative problem-solving.

The following activities were then conducted:

#### **Learning about P2P Learning Methodology from the Initial Engagement to the MEL Phase**

Our first step was to ask the EIP to train different CoG sectoral committees on P2P learning. A two-day [training of trainers on P2P learning](#), delivered by the EIP in October 2022, equipped



*CoG staff in group discussion at the ToT workshop*

our staff with innovative knowledge and skills that they can apply in generating local solutions for both institutional and service delivery challenges.

This knowledge, in addition to being diffused to CoG staff, was captured in a “How-to” guide on P2P learning which will now be cascaded to the 47 Kenyan Counties to ensure the adoption and replication of this methodology.

### Documenting practical examples of P2P Learning in Kenya

In parallel, a joint EIP-Maarifa Centre team conducted learning missions in three Counties to document two showcases of how P2P learning was used to enhance service delivery at County level. One case focused on the digitisation of community health services in Kisumu County (after learning from Isiolo County) while the other focused on the creation of a youth innovation and empowerment centre in Tana River County after learning from a practice implemented in Isiolo County.



L-R. Dr Gregory Ganda (Kisumu County Health CECM), Maureen Opiyo (CHS Coordinator), Jane Kimbwarata (CoG Maarifa) & Emile Boral Rolland (EIP) during the learning mission



A Kisumu CHV examining a child guided by the App on her phone during a household visit

Stakeholder interviews and focus group discussions demonstrated a high level of cross-learning across Counties with transformation in service delivery being visible in both cases. The findings of these missions were used to prepare two showcases that are allowing us to show Counties how P2P learning is already being used for institutional reforms and can be leveraged to create impact.



*An FGD with CHS focal points in Isiolo*



*Posing for a photo after an FGD with the Isiolo Youth Empowerment team*



*Youths actively participating in an ICT lesson at the Tana River Centre for Innovation and Youth Empowerment*



*Youths undertaking a vocational training course in fashion design and garment making at the Tana River Centre for Innovation and Youth Empowerment*

## **Documenting practical examples of P2P Learning in Kenya**

The highlights of these showcases were then shared as part of our final joint workshop held in December 2022 at the Jacaranda Hotel (Nairobi), involving 13 Counties interested in following similar reforms regarding digitisation of community health services and youth empowerment.

The workshop themed [\*Investing in Inter-County Peer Learning as a Strategy for Institutional Reform\*](#) brought Isiolo, Kisumu, Tana River and Embu Counties to showcase their reforms.

Other participating Counties learnt from the showcases, shared their own experiences and aspirations regarding intercounty peer learning, and participated in interactive problem-solving exercises.

As a way forward, Counties developed action plans to entrench P2P learning for institutional reform. The exchange of contacts and creation of WhatsApp groups has enabled continued

collaboration. County representatives also endeavoured to develop County-specific departmental action plans and act as P2P learning champions.



*County participants actively engaged in a breakout group in discussion*



*Group photo of participants at the EIP-CoG County P2P learning workshop*

**Partnership results and next steps**

It gives me great joy to see the final knowledge products which are now being disseminated to Kenyan Counties and the EIP network, including a *“How-to” Guide on P2P Learning*. The publication contains step-by-step guidance, including two MEL tools which enhance Counties’ ability to track and measure the impact of their P2P learning exchanges. This guide is accompanied by two County-level showcases demonstrating how P2P learning can be used for institutional reform in the context of our devolution process.

CoG will continue to disseminate these knowledge products and videos to Counties and devolution stakeholders, and will endeavour to support Counties in their long-term P2P learning engagements.

We wish to register our sincere gratitude to the EIP for providing us with the technical and financial support that led to the above achievements. I am proud of the CoG secretariat KM team — Jane Kimbwarata, Rosemary Njaramba, Catherine Ngave, Sharon Nzei and Mercy Gatabi, for the dedication and commitment they gave to the project. We appreciate the harmonious co-creation that has been witnessed since inception. While we acknowledge that the EIP Secretariat is being transferred to AUDA-NEPAD, we hope to continue our collaboration as we implement the *“How-to” Guide* at the CoG level and also as we seek to give technical assistance to Counties to institutionalize KM practices such as peer-to-peer learning.