



**UNECE**

International PPP Centre of Excellence

# **Draft Provisional Programme<sup>1</sup>**

## **Fifth International PPP Forum:**

### **“Building Back Better through People-first Public-Private Partnerships”**

*22-23 April 2021*

*Palais des Nations, Tempus 2 and online  
Geneva, Switzerland*

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<sup>1</sup> As of 17 February 2021

## Introduction

After the huge disruptions and awful loss of life caused by COVID-19, there is a gathering consensus that the goal in the post pandemic world is to 'Build Back Better' so that such catastrophes will not happen again and that our societies will be far better prepared and more resilient in the future.<sup>2</sup> A return to the world we had before the pandemic struck, should not be the goal. As the OECD stated, "a return to business as usual and environmentally destructive investment patterns and activities, must be avoided".<sup>3</sup> But what does 'Build Back Better' precisely mean in terms of concrete policy, practice and of course projects on the ground?

For the United Nations the overwhelming problem that has to be overcome **are the underlying inequalities that have been accentuated by the pandemic**.<sup>4</sup> The United Nations Secretary-General has, for example, described inequality as the 'defining challenge of our era' – one that the COVID-19 crisis has thrown into even greater relief. In this regard, a close look at the health data, for example, shows that the communities which had been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19, have been the poor, ethnic minorities, people of colour, the elderly etc. Even in the distribution of vaccines the most recent studies show the same worrying trends.<sup>5</sup>

### Box 2. Reducing the inequalities caused by COVID-19

To reduce these inequalities caused by COVID-19, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) argued in the Policy Brief "The COVID-19, Inequality's and Building Back Better", that the focus should be on:

- Building stronger equity-oriented health systems;
- Strengthening social protection systems and public services to reduce inequalities;
- Forging a job intensive recovery for people centred and environmentally sustainable economies;
- Implement gender responsive economic policies based on international solidarity and multilateral collaboration; and
- Ensure social cohesion and community resilience.

### Box 1. Inequalities caused by COVID-19

The UN High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) Inequalities Task Team presented considerable evidence of inequalities caused by COVID-19 and the economic disruption and high unemployment affecting in particular the most vulnerable members of the community:

- While wealthier groups and those benefiting from various forms of privilege enjoy better underlying health access to treatment and options to limit their exposure, mortality rates have been highest among marginalised communities, those with lower socio-economic status and those with pre-existing health conditions many of which are non-communicable diseases linked to poverty.
- Worrying increases in food insecurity for poorer groups in many countries even wealthy ones.
- Inadequate, cramped housing rendering people more vulnerable.
- Increase violence against women and women's unpaid care work.
- Closure of schools and education has disrupted children from low income backgrounds far more than children from wealthier backgrounds as they have typically less access to IT communications, thereby increasing the divide in educational attainment.

For the UNECE PPP programme the way forward is to adopt People-first approach in Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and infrastructure. It recognises the weaknesses with the traditional PPP model – exclusively 'financial' and 'value for money' driven – and argues for greater emphasis on projects where people are the clear beneficiaries and sustainable development is at the core. Moreover, to make People-first PPPs real and concrete; a first version of the UNECE People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology (thereinafter the Evaluation Methodology) has been produced (now being tested) which attempts to measure the extent to which infrastructure projects and PPP are indeed 'People-first'.

To a large extent there are close synergies between the UN overall approach to 'Building Back Better' and reducing inequalities and the People-first approach to PPPs. For example, the People-first approach identifies as one of the outcomes that classifies projects as People-first, the improvement the project makes in people's lives through better access and equity in critical services. As can be seen

<sup>2</sup> The term entered the UN system with the Sendai Declaration in Japan as a response to natural disasters. Its meaning became quite concrete as the World Bank called for the adoption of all national legislation mandating that all new construction would energy-efficient and built to withstand natural hazards.

<sup>3</sup> Building back better: a sustainable resilient recovery after COVID-19, OECD, 5 June 2020. Many national Governments too use the phrase 'Build Back Better', notably the new United States of America (U.S.) administration.

<sup>4</sup> The 2030 agenda includes a specific goal SDG 10 to reduce inequality within and between countries as well as goal 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

<sup>5</sup> In the UK black people over the age of 80 were half as likely as their white peers to have been vaccinated against COVID-19 by 13th of January 2021, open safely study University of Oxford London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

in the review of the vaccine partnerships, 'access and equity' is critical so that vaccines are distributed fairly and on the basis of need - not on the basis of wealth either inside a country or between countries. Indeed, access and equity and the other five outcomes are arguably the route to 'Building Back Better'.

**Box 3. Can the Vaccine Partnerships to fight COVID-19, be described as 'People-first'?**

It may seem an odd question to raise about these partnerships: given the fact that such partnerships are undoubtedly the 'light' at the end of a very dark tunnel and that the breakneck speed by which they are being rolled out is testimony to human ingenuity: surely, the answer to this question is 'yes' they are good examples; indeed the very finest form of cooperation between the public and private sectors.

Yet, the great power and promise of these products and the partnerships which manufactured them should not absolve us from asking difficult questions about their safety, environmental impact, fair access and ethics. It is thus important that looking at such partnerships the five People-first outcomes are explored fully, namely:

- **Promote access and equity:** partnerships must promote access and be equitable and should not contribute to new divisions within society and between countries. Agreements should not turn blind eyes to queue jumping and or to the fact that poorer societies can be less prioritised, because they almost totally lack the necessary regulatory functions to ensure the safe use of vaccines by local populations. Do the partnership agreements in the contracts in any way limit access of the products to the poor? How can we ensure that partnership agreements developing new vaccines and treatments are 'Public Goods' and are fully accessible to all? Is there a possible role for the Evaluation Methodology to assess such partnerships in the future?
- **Encourage environmental sustainability:** Can we also ensure that the production of such vaccines on a massive scale is done in a way that is environmentally sustainable, i.e. that projects use only materials that can be recycled and the vaccine production process curb pollution?
- **Ensure projects are economically effective:** the vaccines once rolled out will allow people to contribute to economic welfare, retaining wages and contributing to productivity by keeping people healthy and able to work. Are women as part of the workforce fully participating and empowered in projects thereby increasing their effectiveness and beneficial impact?
- **Are replicable and scalable:** are the partnerships replicable so that the impacts of more partnerships can be scaled up to take forward the massive task of having to vaccinate effectively the whole world.

**Involve and engage with all stakeholders:** the testing of people especially those who are vulnerable has been critical and successful to date and in ensuring that those urgently in need of the vaccine are the ones which are being catered for. So important that partnerships can help with the roll out making sure that stakeholders patients doctors nurses all understand and have the knowledge to develop and deliver the vaccine safely and effectively.

Moreover, it might also be argued that the UN's general policy recommendations of the 'Building Back Better' approach could be considerably strengthened if for recommended projects they could use the Evaluation Methodology: the more so and with far greater impact, if this could be done together with the UN Agencies working as one. The UN Regional Commissions could for example roll out the Evaluation Methodology together. Additionally, UN Regional Commissions could build regional PPP networks to exchange best practices and experiences amongst PPP Units in order to lower transaction costs, improve the project pipelines and contribute to 'Building Back Better' at the global level.

However, ensuring cooperation between the UN's 'Building Back Better' policy on the one hand and the UNECE's People-first approach on the other, is easier said than done. There are still moreover considerable challenges to overcome e.g. the Evaluation Methodology needs to be carefully tested. There is a need to identify projects that can address the inequalities and build stronger, resilient communities. And at the same time consideration should be given to 'Build Back Better' and a close alignment with the concept of resilience and be reflected in any revisions to the Evaluation Methodology; for example giving more weight to the resilient aspects relative to the other four outcomes as stated in the box above.

But even more than this, the starting point should be to look at the vulnerable communities themselves and what has to be done to improve their resilience. A bottom-up approach that listens to their needs, allowing their full participation in decision taking in the new transformed world, needs to be adopted in the post-COVID recovery. Surely this is what community resilience means? Indeed, it is also not just identifying the projects for building back

better, it is also - because local authorities generally lack the capacity - the effective innovative, project delivery mechanisms that are needed in 'Building Back Better' so that projects can successfully work for these communities.

### **Purpose and objectives of the Forum**

The purpose and objectives of the Forum are threefold:

- (i) **Discuss** the ways that 'Building Back Better' can be best accomplished through People-first PPPs.
- (ii) **Consider** how the Evaluation Methodology might be revised to take on board the added importance of resilience.
- (iii) **Identify** the type of People-first projects that can best promote 'community resilience' amongst vulnerable members of society.

### **Organisation**

The Forum will be held as a hybrid event<sup>6</sup> as follows:

An **international debate** on how the world can 'Build Back Better'. It will also explore how People-first approach to PPP, can be more widely known and used by the UN System. In addition, a high-level debate will take place on a specific sector, water and sanitation, to discuss the projects and approaches needed to 'Build Back Better'.

**Session 1** reviews best practice 'Building Back Better' projects, using the Evaluation Methodology identifying some revisions in the tool as well as making 'Building Back Better' and People-first PPPs more aligned.

**Session 2** discusses with local authorities and city administrations their needs in protecting the vulnerable members of their communities and the projects that will be required in core areas – health care, food security, waste and circularity and Innovation and jobs – to delivering People-first PPP that can 'Build Back Better' and promote community resilience.

An **award ceremony** for the best 'Building Back Better' projects.

A **concluding session** that explores how the UN Regional Commissions are playing an important role in developing regional networks of PPP units and infrastructure entities to improve the capability to deliver projects and how such networks can turn their attention to those projects which can have potentially a dramatic impact on 'Building Back Better'.

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<sup>6</sup> Restrictions to in-person participation apply and delegates are encouraged to join the sessions virtually.

# Thursday, 22 April 2021

Tempus 2 and online  
(Morning session)

## 10:00-10:15 Opening session

Words of welcome:

- **Olga Algayerova**, Executive Secretary, UNECE

## 10:15-11:15 International Debate: Is 'Building Back Better' just a slogan or can it be translated into a roadmap for all stakeholders in the current post pandemic recovery period?

### Challenge:

Drastic measures will be needed to 'Build Back Better'. Early months of the pandemic showed that the bottom 60 per cent of the population got poorer because of the economic crisis whereas higher earners were benefiting – the result in many cases of government policy that supports employers and their companies.

**Not all is however bad:** there are trends hastened by COVID-19 but apparent before it struck, such as the greater use of e-Commerce, the uptake of contactless payments, the use of new ways for connectivity and service delivery and the transition from carbon energy to renewable electric power and these trends need to become permanent shifts which will be positive for our future.

**There is a need for infrastructure and services that can boost these positive trends, on the one hand, and which can overcome the increasing inequalities on the other.**

### The debate will discuss three main questions:

- How valid are the People-first outcomes when speed is of the essence in developing projects that can? Are the requirements in meeting such outcomes putting too much starting on People-first PPPs?
- Is more investment needed in the social sectors – health, education etc and a shift away from the economic sectors like transport and energy?
- What are the examples of projects that can 'Build Back Better'? Why are they so important and can they inspire others to be developed? What capacities are needed within governments and local authorities to develop these flagship projects?

### Strategic goal and expected outcome

Raise the profile of People-first PPPs amongst key stakeholders

### Moderator:

- **Reeta Chakrabarti**, BBC News (TBC)



### Panellists:

- **David Nabarro**, Senior Advisor to WHO Director General (TBC)
- **Marie Lam-Frendo**, CEO, GIH (TBC)
- **Sanda Ojiambo**, Executive Director and CEO, UN Global Compact (TBC)
- **Alexander Bazhenov**, Chairman, InfraKAP (TBC)
- **Elliott Harris**, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist in UN DESA (TBC)
- **Vera Songwe**, Executive Secretary, UNECA (TBC)
- **Nathalie Bernasconi-Osterwalder**, Executive Director, IISD Europe (TBC)

## 11:15-12:00 Sectoral-level Debate: 'Building Back Better' in the water and sanitation sector

### Challenge:

'Build Back Better' will be the target both overall and in specific industries and sectors and critical among these is water and sanitation. Water and sanitation is also a sector where there is much discussion on the involvement of the private sector and whether making profit from water, which is a basic human need, is appropriate.

### The debate will

- What are the cases of PPP in this sector which most epitomize the People-first PPP approach?

### Moderator:

- **Amanda Loeffen**, CEO, Human Right 2 Water

### Panellists:

- Representative of a Government
- Representative of Aquafed
- Representative of Veolia
- Representatives of an NGO
- Representative of the UNECE-affiliated Specialist PPP Centre of Excellence on Water and Sanitation

### Documentation:

Draft Standard on PPPs in water and sanitation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How should the Governments shape the new projects to 'Build Back Better'?</li> <li>- What are the specific challenges of doing People-first PPPs in low- and middle-income countries given the fact the right to water and sanitation is a human right?</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategic goal and expected outcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Give a platform to all stakeholders, e.g. Governments, industries, NGOs etc., all with different opposing perspectives.</li> <li>- A revised UNECE Standard on People-first PPP in the water and sanitation sector.<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>	
<b>12:00-13:00      LUNCH BREAK</b>	
<b>13:00-14:00      Lunch time event (English only) (TBC)</b>	

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<sup>7</sup> In 2017, work was begun on UNECE Standard on PPPs in water and sanitation. The work was not completed because the People-first is still not being fully articulated. With the Evaluation Methodology, there is now much more clarity on the concept and now is the time to finalise this document – a draft of this document will be submitted for the panellists in this debate.

# Thursday, 22 April 2021

Tempus 2 and online  
(Afternoon session)

## 14:00-14:45 Pre competition session (English only)

In this session, the finalists selected by the Jury will have an opportunity to make the case as to why their projects meet the 'Building Back Better' and People-first PPP objectives.

### Moderator:

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### Panellists:

- Finalists of the 'Building Back Better' infrastructure award.

### Documentation:

See annex for more information

## 15:00-17:00 Session 1: Testing the Evaluation Methodology and Competition for the 'Building Back Better' infrastructure award

### Challenge:

The challenge is to ensure the maximum use of the Evaluation Methodology to improve project delivery: consulting and testing should be carried out with all stakeholders. To date while People-first approaches are gaining traction it is still as yet not sufficiently mainstream while the Evaluation Methodology needs as well to be integrated into Government policy making and guidance.

## 15:00-16:00 Part 1: Views of Governments, private sectors, and civil society on the Evaluation Methodology

- Overall, how can the Evaluation Methodology be used to improve infrastructure projects, PPP, and their delivery?
- Is the weighting right between the five outcomes if the goals of 'Building Back Better' is to be achieved?<sup>8</sup>
- The Evaluation Methodology has 22 benchmarks and 100 indicators and evaluations using such a number of different criteria for evaluation may be criticised for being too complex, involving too much paperwork and due diligence. On the other hand, projects are in fact highly complex and need to be thoroughly evaluated to capture their full impact. What is in fact the views of different stakeholders? Are the outcomes and indicators in the Evaluation Methodology:
  - Too little,
  - Just about right, or
  - Too much?
- Do we need to quantify the performance of projects? Will this scoring approach, while mandated by UN member States, nonetheless make various stakeholders, especially the private sector, reluctant to use the Evaluation Methodology?
- If it is agreed that the Evaluation Methodology is useful how should it be operationalised both by governments and other stakeholders? For example, should Governments implement the tool:
  - Through passing new legislation,
  - Treating the Evaluation Methodology just like other project evaluation tools, e.g. Value for Money for evaluating projects, as part of overall guidance issued to public administrations and civil servants.

**Concluding remarks on Part 1:** Lessons learned from testing the Evaluation Methodology.

## Part 1

### Moderator:

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### Panellists:

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### Documentation:

- People-first Public-Private Partnerships Evaluation Methodology for the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/3/Rev.1)
- Draft User's Guide to the Self-Assessment Tool

<p><b>16:00-17:00</b>     <b>Part 2: Putting the Evaluation Methodology into practice: ‘Building Back Better’ infrastructure award</b></p> <p>The second part will take the form of a competition and will review a selection of projects by a Jury of international experts, aspiring to be ‘People-first’ and using the Evaluation Methodology to find out if they can be categorized as not only People-first in line with the SDGs, but also consistent with ‘Building Back Better’. The rules on the competition are found in the annex. The winners will be announced on the second day of the Forum at 15:45.</p> <p><b>Strategic objectives and expected outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Obtain the views of the stakeholders to ensure the Evaluation Methodology’s widespread use.</li> <li>- Review projects with a view to exploring their consistency with People-first and ‘Building Back Better’ outcomes.</li> <li>- To test its usability and identify useful lessons and experiences that can be used in the Evaluation Methodology’s revision.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Part 2</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Elisabeth Tuerk</b>, Director, ECTD, UNECE</li> </ul> <p><b>Panellists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-</li> </ul>
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<sup>8</sup> For example, it has been seen that for the UN ‘Building Back Better’ programme referred to above, argues for the need to address underling problems of inequality. This is covered in the outcome ‘promoting access and equity’. Is sufficient prominence given to this in the Evaluation Methodology or should it have more priority?



# Friday, 23 April 2021

Tempus 2 and online  
(Morning session)

## Session 2: Empowering local authorities to build community resilience

### Challenge:

Local authorities must protect communities most at risk from the pandemic and must find the projects which can best do this. A new bottom up approach is called for. Local authorities however lack the knowledge and expertise to deliver projects and make them bankable: let alone identify those People-first PPPs that are especially needed (see below) to reach and protect the vulnerable members of communities: COVID-19 has struck at such groups and exposed existing social divisions, inequalities and community deprivations.

### Format of the session

The session is divided into three panel discussions:

- **Panel 1. Involving Mayors and heads of local authorities - Protecting vulnerable groups and promoting People-first PPP projects: the views of Mayors and local authorities on the projects which can 'Build Back Better'?**
- **Panel 2. Identifying priority projects in infrastructure and PPP that can build community resilience and can 'Build Back Better'**
- **Panel 3. Evaluating and advising projects for protecting communities and building community resilience**

### Strategic objective and expected outcome

- To discover the key projects that enhance community resilience
- A road map for 'Building Back Better' and a pilot project launched involving local authorities and private sector and national PPP agencies to develop a portfolio of projects which can both be considered People-first and 'Building Back Better'.

10:00-11:00

**Panel session: Involving Mayors and heads of local authorities - Protecting vulnerable groups and promoting People-first PPP projects: the views of Mayors and local authorities on the projects which can 'Build Back Better'?**

### Challenge:

Local authorities and cities are all engaged in 'Building Back Better'? and they have the direct challenge of finding solutions to very concrete problems and needs: They need in the day to day struggle against COVID-19 to engage directly with the communities concerned: How do they engage with difficult-to-reach communities?

The Panellists will review and comment on some Guidelines elaborated by the secretariat on 'Building Back Better' for communities at risk.

### Strategic outcome

Agreement on the best approach / policies to engaging with communities and meeting their needs through infrastructure projects and PPP.

### Moderator:

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### Panellists:

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### Documentation:

Some Guidelines for enhancing community resilience and 'Building Back Better'

11:00-12:00

**Panel session: Identifying priority projects and evaluating and advising projects to community resilience and can 'Build Back Better'.**

### Challenge:

What projects should local authorities prioritise and how can they engage with the affected communities to deliver projects that 'Build Back Better'?

Amongst some of the possible project options are the following:

- Healthcare;
- Food security;
- Waste management and circularity;
- Promotion of new jobs amongst poor communities, e.g. IT, start-ups, innovative industrial districts, expanding broadband etc.

### Moderator:

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### Panellists:

- **David MacDonald**, Scottish Futures Trust
- Local authorities
- National PPP Units
- International expert panel

### Documentation:

A set of Policy Recommendations on developing community resilient projects required for 'Building Back Better' that also capture the various social needs as set out in the UN DESA Policy Brief 'The COVID-19, in equality's and 'Building Back Better'.

<p><b>Organisation of the session</b></p> <p>In order to show the importance of good project delivery and the importance of prioritisation, mayors, cities etc. are invited to submit project proposals that can address the challenges of 'Building Back Better'.</p> <p>Experts will provide feedback for these presentations and proposals. In this feedback, experts will also provide guidance on possible funding options for these project proposals.</p> <p><b>Key questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why has the project concept been developed?</li> <li>- How were the main beneficiaries engaged?</li> <li>- What are the main reasons the project is difficult to start?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>12:00-13:00      LUNCH BREAK</b></p>	
<p><b>13:00-14:30      Lunch time event (English only) (TBC)</b></p>	

# Friday, 23 April 2021

Tempus 2 and online  
(Afternoon session)

<p><b>15:00-15:45</b>      <b>Panel session: Metro rail in the post pandemic world</b></p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> How to redesign cities for more accessible, less polluting, less commuting time etc.: new transport forms including metro rail and the challenges of public transport in this new era.</p>	<p><b>Moderator:</b> -</p> <p><b>Panellists:</b> -      <b>Kaimeng Li</b>, Bureau member (China)</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b></p>
<p><b>15:45-16:00</b>      <b>Announcing the winners of the ‘Building Back Better’ infrastructure award</b></p>	
<p><b>16:00-17:00</b>      <b>Concluding session and next steps.</b></p> <p><b>Challenge:</b> ‘Build Back Better’ will remain a slogan until delivery of pipelines of projects become a reality. And critical are the challenges local authorities face when directly with communities where access to services like health, meaningful jobs, adequate housing are problematic. However, these high valued projects are difficult to do and need new skills such as procurement, contracts, negotiation etc.</p> <p>How to overcome such capacity gaps within Governments?</p> <p>It takes time to develop these skills and while many staff in public administrations having acquired skills, leave for jobs in better paid private sector work. This being said, national PPP units have engaged with local authorities to deliver municipal services, demonstrating that such challenges can be overcome.</p> <p>But even so, there are today, to date, few regular opportunities to exchange experiences on PPP activities and projects internationally. This is a pity as such work could do much to improve the capacity of the Governments at all levels.</p> <p>This final session explores how the UN Regional Commissions are playing an important role in developing regional networks of PPP units and infrastructure entities to improve the capability to deliver projects and how such networks can turn their attention to those projects which can have potentially a dramatic impact on ‘Building Back Better’: ESCAP, UNECA, ECLAC, ESCWA and UNECE.</p> <p>Critical too will be the cooperation with OECD, EPEC, other UN Agencies along with the Multilateral Development Banks.</p> <p><b>Key questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How could the UN Regional Commissions develop their own networks and institute greater cooperation between PPP Units across their respective regions?</li> <li>- Could the annual PPP Forum be a mechanism by which PPP Units from each of the UN Regional Commission organise regular exchanges on best practices, ‘Building Back Better’ strategies and achieving the SDGs?</li> </ul> <p><b>Expected outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Next steps on the testing of the Evaluation Methodology.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Moderator:</b> -</p> <p><b>Panellists:</b> -</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Governments, UN bodies, organisations, companies to make announcements on using the Evaluation Methodology to 'Build Back Better'.</li><li>- Joining forces for 'Build Back Better' infrastructure for the SDGs.</li></ul>	
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## ANNEX

### Call for projects

#### UNECE 'Building Back Better' infrastructure award 2021

##### UNECE PPP Forum 2021 (22-23 April 2021)

The world desperately needs People-first infrastructure projects to 'Build Back Better' from the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to incentivise innovative thinking and creating ideas for 'Building Back Better', the UNECE has decided to hold at its PPP Forum 2021, a competition. By utilising the UNECE People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for this purpose, the competition will also serve to help test the its effectiveness and use. The following note sets out the main features of this competition.

#### About the UNECE 'Building Back Better' infrastructure award 2021

- *A call for projects:* everyone is welcome to submit their infrastructure projects. This call is especially made to PPP units, government agencies, companies, lenders and NGOs and is looking for projects at various stages of development (design, construction and operation phases) that contribute to the theme of the UNECE PPP Forum 2021 'Building Back Better' and that can help achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Preference might be given to projects in the following sectors and industries: healthcare, water and sanitation, food, jobs for recovery, broadband and IT, sustainable energy, sustainable transport (e.g. metro rail, light rail), area regeneration, disaster resilience, multiple project local and community services, etc.
- *The selection process:* project information is submitted through this [link](#). Applicants will then be invited for a brief information session with the secretariat to receive details on the UNECE People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology. The Self-assessment tool, which is one component of this methodology, will need to be filled for each project as a requirement for participation in the competition. The Jury will select the projects that will be showcased at the UNECE International PPP Forum on 22-23 April 2021.
- *Projects' presentation:* on 22 April 2021, the finalists will present their projects to delegates in the presence of the Jury and will be given 5 minutes for this presentation. There will also be an opportunity for the Jury to ask questions to the finalists about their projects in a separate pre-competition session also held on 22 April.
- *Voting:* The Jury will decide those projects that they think best fit with 'Building Back Better'. The shortlisted projects will be submitted to the participants in the Forum for the final vote on 22 April 2021. The Forum participants will be able to vote using their smart devices (e.g. smartphones, tablets etc.) or computers thereby enabling their full engagement and participation which fits very well with the ethos of the People-first approach to infrastructure and PPPs espoused by the UNECE PPP programme.
- *Award Ceremony:* the winners will be announced during the award ceremony on 23 April 2021 at 15:45.
- *Prizes:* The top-ranking projects will receive an acknowledgment letter from the United Nations and a certificate acknowledging their ranking. In addition, partners from public and sectors, will be invited to volunteer their network and services to help these projects *inter alia* gain traction, improve delivery and impact, achieve recognition, etc. All interested parties are encouraged to enter this competition.

**Jury members:** The Jury is composed of 5 to 6 top international infrastructure experts chaired by Mr. James Stewart. Mr. Pedro Neves acts as the Secretary to the Jury.

**Deadline for submission of projects:** The deadline for submission of projects is 31 March 2021.