



Wilton Park

Provisional programme

Tax capacity building for tomorrow: digital and analogue approaches

Monday 27 – Wednesday 29 November 2017 | WP1566

Strengthening tax systems has become a priority focus for governments, donors and multi-lateral agencies. The 2030 Agenda has underscored the importance of domestic resource mobilisation, with robust tax systems seen as critical for resourcing state-building and wider development. Unprecedented international cooperation on taxation has produced a large number of initiatives aimed at tax system reform. These range from capacity building and policy advice to increased participation in global taxation debates by developing countries. This event is aimed at looking beyond established conversations and examining the role that technology can play in capacity building and improving transparency and accountability, as well as the measures needed to implement digital transformation effectively.

A majority of tax administrations across the world work with information and communications technology (ICT) systems which are fully integrated into their everyday working practices. However, innovative technologies, such as distributed ledgers, big data and advanced analytical capabilities together with the increased penetration of mobile technologies have the potential to provide a new set of opportunities to expand capacity and increase transparency. Discussions at this event will focus on the contribution that digital transformation can make and the analogue programmes needed to accompany digital tools to ensure they achieve maximum impact.

Over the course of the 48 hour conference, participants will take part in open plenary sessions and interactive working group exercises focused on the following:

In association with:



The Joffe Charitable Trust

With support from:



- Assessing the contribution being made by ICT systems to tax administrations in lower and middle income economies, including their effectiveness, gaps and opportunities for further development and lessons learnt from implementation.
- Identifying specific opportunities for harnessing technological innovation for 'leapfrogging' in transparency and capacity building. Participants will have the chance to exchange ideas in small groups and explore the technologies which could drive transformation.
- Examining the human element of successful digital transformation. Participants will discuss the analogue context for reform including skills, partnerships and strategies for implementation.

The dialogue will produce a set of recommendations summarised in a conference report to inform decisions on tax and development at national and international levels.

In association with Common Vision's Responsible Tax Lab, The Joffe Charitable Trust, the Department for International Development, and the OECD. With support from KPMG.

(Speakers invited and themes proposed * denotes to be confirmed)

Monday 27 November

1200

Participants arrive and buffet lunch available

1400-1445

Welcome and introduction

Myles Wickstead

Wilton Park Advisory Council, Steyning

Mita Samani

Head, Public Finance Group, Department for International Development (DFID), London

1445-1615

1. Shaping tax administrations for the next ten years: context and ambition

What are the core components of a successful tax administration? What challenges do economic and social changes in emerging and developing economies present for tax administrations? How are ICT systems currently being used by revenue authorities? How do digital tools fit into the wider reform and capacity building landscape? Which tools best fit the needs of tax systems in lower and middle income countries? Are their requirements best fulfilled by building on existing systems or through the purchase of commercial off the shelf software (COTS)? Where do assumptions about technology's role need to be challenged in the developing country context? What are the best means of delivering new systems to ensure they are effective? What needs to be included in a sophisticated understanding of digital transformation?

Elfrieda Stewart Tamba

Commissioner General and Chief Executive Officer, Liberia Revenue Authority, Paynesville

Pete Schofield

Director, Development, Test and Operations, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), London

Angie Sarmiento

Chief Information Officer, Department of Finance, Manila

1615-1700

Photograph followed by tea/coffee

1700-1830

2. Case studies: where has innovative technology been harnessed and what lessons can be learnt?

Session two will involve scene-setting case studies where participants will be able to hear about and consider the opportunities offered by particular innovative technologies and the process of design, development and implementation.

Shikha Mehra

Senior Research Associate, Jindal Global Law School, Sonipat

Marcela Lacoste

IT Head of Electronic Invoicing, Internal Revenue Service (Servicio Impuestos Internos, SII), Santiago

Luis Cadena

General Director for IT, Tax and Customs Administration Service of Mexico (SAT), Mexico City

1845

Reception followed by dinner

Tuesday 28 November

0800-0845

Breakfast

0915-1045

3. The role of innovative technologies in increasing transparency and accountability

Where can technology help increase accountability between tax payers and governments and promote transparency in the wider public domain? Do technological approaches need to be founded on a more sophisticated understanding of accountability? What are the risks and benefits of using technology to increase public transparency in tax systems? How do technological initiatives affect taxpayers' attitudes towards transparency and accountability? How can revenue authorities keep pace as the amount of data being exchanged grows? What relevant lessons can be learnt from other sectors and initiatives?

Chair: Alex Jacobs

Chair, The Joffe Charitable Trust, Swindon

Jeffrey Owens

Director, WU Global Tax Policy Centre, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Vienna

Nick Mathiason

Director, Finance Uncovered, London

Kgabo Hlalefi Hlahla

Group Executive, Strategy Architecture and Information Security, South African Revenue Service (SARS), Pretoria

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1245

4. Building the right enabling environment: the analogue context for reform

What does the analogue environment need to provide for successful digital projects? What factors can inhibit the implementation of new systems? What are the necessary skills required for a tax administration in the 21st century? What are the right incentives to drive initiatives? Which actors should be involved to ensure successful reform? What role can legislation play in enabling or preventing technology-led approaches? What can ministries and revenue authorities do to identify policy changes needed to accompany reforms?

What examples of successful initiatives can we draw upon?

Margaret Cotton

Senior Economist, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Washington DC

Stephen Callahan

Director, KPMG, Sydney

Yvonne Wafula

Manager, Data Warehouse and Business Intelligence, Kenya Revenue Authority, Nairobi

1245-1415

Lunch

1415-1545

5. Developing innovative tools: the role of partnerships

What opportunities are there for tax administrations to collaborate on developing innovative, technology-led initiatives? What resources are required for the implementation of new systems, and how can partnerships help bridge gaps? What role can regional tax forums play? Where can the private sector provide services beyond ICT systems? What role can local technology enterprises play? What are the risks and challenges of this approach?

Lionel Nobre

Latin America Tax Director, Dell Technologies, Porto Alegre

Socorro Velazquez

Director of Planning, Inter-American Centre of Tax Administrations (CIAT), Panama

Phillipe Dadour

Managing Partner, Catalyst for Development (C2D) Services, Montreal

1545-1615

Tea/coffee

1615-1715

6. Working groups

Building upon discussions in the preceding sessions, participants will split into working groups. Each group will explore three central questions and produce recommendations for how digital technology can contribute to resolving the issue under examination.

- Why does the issue matter for tax administrations and wider societies?
- What are the difficulties and challenges involved in addressing the issue?
- How can digital technologies be harnessed to resolve these issues and what might this look like?

Working group 1: Reaching the informal and grey economy

Peter Green

Head, Forum on Tax Administration (FTA), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris

Working group 2: Promoting trust and tax payer education

Varsha Singh

Deputy Head, Global Relations and Development Division, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris

Working group 3: The sources, use and governance of data

Caroline Macfarland

Founder and Director, Common Vision (CoVi), London

Working group 4: Reducing compliance burdens and supporting businesses

Jeffrey Owens

Director, WU Global Tax Policy Centre, Vienna University of Economics and Business

1715-1745

Tea/coffee

1745-1845

7. Working groups (continued)

Working groups will continue in the same rooms.

1915

Dinner followed by a fireside chat hosted by

Myles Wickstead

Wilton Park Advisory Council, Steyning

with

John Njirani

Commissioner General, Kenya Revenue Authority, Nairobi

and

Yves Giroux

Assistant Commissioner, Canadian Revenue Agency, Ottawa

Wednesday 29 November

0800-0845

Breakfast and checkout

0900-0945

8. Report back from working groups

Participants will present their findings from the previous day's working sessions and debate amongst the group. They will be encouraged to draw out practical and applicable new approaches to the issues suggested.

0945-1045

9. Making the most of digital transformation: establishing political support

To what extent are innovative technologies different to other types of capacity building? Who are the actors that can drive the projects forward and what roles can they play? What specific actions can be taken to make full use of technological tools? Which particular issues deserve more attention or need to be better understood? How might the demands and expectations of publics shape the course of IT-led initiatives? What can be done to positively engage with publics around reforms?

Sam Kawale

Chairperson, Media and ICT Committee of Parliament, Malawi National Assembly, Lilongwe

Varsha Singh

Deputy Head, Global Relations and Development Division, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris

Yana Bugrimova

Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, Kiev

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1125

10. Evaluation survey

Completion of online survey

1125-1230

11. Conclusions and recommendations

In this session, participants will be encouraged to propose ways of taking the recommendations and discussions forward in practical ways, both at policymaking and operational levels.

Mick Moore

Chief Executive Officer, International Centre for Tax and Development (ICTD), Brighton

Peter Green

Head, Forum on Tax Administration (FTA), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris

1230

Lunch

1330

Participants depart

This is a preview programme and as such may be subject to change.

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