



## NGO and trade unions workshop on public-private partnerships (PPPs): towards a global campaign on PPPs

*Concept note and agenda*

**When: Tuesday 20 June, 10:00 to 13:00**

**Where: The Hague, The Netherlands (venue tbc)**

### **Background**

PPPs are increasingly being promoted as a way of funding development projects. The last decade has seen a dramatic increase in the amount of money invested in PPPs in the developing world. Between 2004 and 2012 investments through PPPs increased by a factor of six: from US\$ 25 billion to US\$ 164 billion. Although investments in PPPs fell in 2013, it has continued to be on the rise since 2014. The global push for PPPs is taking place at different levels: international (the G20, the World Bank Group), regional (EU) and national, and it has an impact in the provision of infrastructure and social services, including electricity, water, healthcare, and education. A key driver of the rise of PPP-funded projects is the use of 'off budget' accounting, which allow governments to hide the true costs of PPP projects. There is also an empirically unfounded ideological push in favour of private sector management and delivery of services, and a strong push from the corporate sector to secure a revenue stream.

NGOs and trade unions have repeatedly questioned the biased promotion of the PPP model, providing increasing evidence that indicates that PPPs can seriously jeopardise universal access to basic goods and often worsen the fiscal problems against which they are offered as solutions. This has already led to some fruitful joint advocacy actions. For example, in March 2016, co-ordinated advocacy efforts were agreed to challenge the work of the [UNECE on developing international guidelines on PPPs](#), and in February 2017, a group of more than 110 NGOs and trade unions from all over the world sent a [letter to the World Bank PPP team and Executive Directors](#) announcing that they will no longer participate in public consultations on PPPs until the WBG takes seriously the fiscal problems associated with PPPs.

This collaboration should continue if we want to make substantive progress in our campaign. Given the upcoming launch of Public Service International (PSI)'s campaign on the fight against privatisation, and the ongoing work of many NGOs in this field, the time is now for NGOs and trade unions to sit together and discuss how we can strengthen our collaboration.

### **Proposal and objectives**

The objective is to exchange ideas on potential advocacy and campaign activities for the year ahead and, if possible, agree on joint actions. The takeaways from this workshop will feed into two related events taking place within the programme of the conference: a workshop on market finance vs. public finance of infrastructure and a strategy meeting on publicly-backed private finance.

### **Participants and format**

- Expected participants: Eurodad members and partners from North and South working on PPPs and PPP-related issues, such as water privatisation and infrastructure finance, including the Bretton Woods Project, Counter Balance, The Corner House, Society for International Development, SOMO, and Oxfam; PSI and affiliates, ITUC, TUAC, and Transnational Institute.



- Background papers will be circulated beforehand by Eurodad and PSI to inform the discussions. This will include information about PSI's campaign and an upcoming Eurodad briefing on PPPs & fiscal risks.

### Agenda

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topics and speakers</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
10:00 – 10:20	Welcome and introductions – Setting the scene for the workshop  → Eurodad and PSI	-Present the main objectives for the session
10:20 – 11:00	“Getting to know each other:” Round of brief comments on ongoing work and plans on PPPs  → All participants	-Share information and plans
11:00 – 12:45	Towards a global campaign on PPPs  → PSI explains the purpose, focus and format of their campaign → Eurodad unpacks its theory of change on PPPs → Round of feedback from all participants  Guiding questions: - What do you want to see reflected in a global campaign on PPPs? - How does it fit in with your research and campaign plans? How can it contribute to your work? - What can be the role/contribution of your organization? - What are our key demands/advocacy messages? - What are the main processes to target with a global campaign on PPPs? - What are the joint advocacy opportunities in 2017 and beyond, including a day of action?	-Collect feedback and exchange views on possible joint actions (NGOs and trade unions)
12:45 – 13:00	Wrap up and closing	