

OpenSpace Report on

BER Tournaments

2) Person suggesting Topic & Group Participants

Clifford Zinnes; 7 group participants remained throughout the discussions

3) Summary of Discussion

Informality in part is due to lack of implementing BERs that have already been passed into law. An exciting mechanism to get BER actually implemented by empowering stakeholders to collaboration through inter-jurisdictional competitions. Many examples already exist. There are four main types of public policy competitions (of which tournaments is one) that can be considered. These incentive mechanisms are not a panacea for all BER implementations. Must consider donor supply of capacity building as well as demand for assistance (which the tournament would stimulate). While there are many design issues to consider, much has been learned from experiences to date, though there wasn't time in our discussions to review it all. A level playing field of jurisdictions or players is critical. It may also be a challenge to design the incentives (prizes) and tasks. There is scope to involve the future players in the design, however, to create buy-in and legitimacy. One design issue is where the players depend on inputs from a higher level of authority. Therefore one has to be careful that players have enough levers to effect change. One should not expect all players to fully participate since there may not be interest or the costs of participation to a particular collective may be too great – but this is in fact economically efficient since we don't want to force reform implementation where the costs exceed the benefits. There was a bit of surprise that there weren't more participants in the group given the importance of finding mechanisms to get laws implemented to reduce informality.

4) Conclusions

Inter-jurisdictional competitions are a potentially powerful class of incentive mechanisms to get BER actually implemented by empowering stakeholders to collaboration, but they are not a panacea. Their design is deceptively complicated. Specific opportunities should be identified to explore their use through applications so that its effectiveness (or lack of effectiveness) in particular reform implementations and contexts can be disseminated. Donors may consider funding one or more of these opportunities, some of which have emerged in the course of this conference's discussions.

Cape Town, 15 April 2010