
Attending

In-person: Thea Schepers (Netherlands, 2022-24 GB Vice-Chair); Zainab al-Azzawi (UNICEF); Charlie Ngounou (AfroLeadership); Siem Vaessen (Open Data Company – Zimmerman B.V.); Motai Ramokoinihi (Lesotho); Laurel Patterson, Yemesrach (Yemi) Workie, Annelise Parr (UNDP / IATI); Adriel Amaral (UNOPS); Steven Flower, Jack Lord (Open Data Services (ODS));

Virtual: Mohammad Gele - Somalia; Anand Nair, Fields Data

Opening sessions: Katrin Lichtenberg, Dan Bodunescu (UNOPS)

This was the first in-person Board meeting since the Bogota Members’ Assembly, and was an opportunity for meeting and introducing IATI’s new IATI Executive Director Ms. Yemesrach Workie (UNDP). At the beginning of the meeting, the Board had a bilateral discussion with the new Executive Director followed by an open discussion per the agenda. In opening, Board Chair Thea Schepers pointed to the urgency of demonstrating increasing relevance of IATI in the context of a changing aid landscape, as an important step towards ensuring continued support of key donors.

UNDP’s Laurel Patterson (SDG Integration Group) facilitated discussions on the short, medium and longer term objectives for the Board, using workshop-style exercises designed to support the Board in its thinking about IATI’s value addition for the future. Vibrant discussions of the Board touched on a wide range of topics which will be addressed in subsequent meetings and processes such as the upcoming strategic planning for IATI.

Within the wide ranging discussions, the meeting agreed that IATI has reached a new phase in which the focus must become much more outward-looking, and awareness of IATI is taken to global levels. Board members recognized that the true value of IATI will be in the impact it has for decision-makers. As possible flagship areas of focus/seeds of the future IATI over the next two years, the Board agreed on the following areas:

- Diversifying aid actors - responding to the diversity and complexity of the evolving development finance landscape, e.g. South-South Triangular Cooperation actors.
- Supporting partners and network communities to make evidence-based policy decisions in strategic areas, including - but not limited to - climate finance, green transition, displacement, pandemic preparedness and food security.
- Leveraging new technology to improve data quality.
- Ensuring the standard is updated as a strategic offer of IATI.
- Going beyond making data availability- towards dialogue at local level and building trust through partnerships.

There was a true sense of excitement for the future of IATI during this new phase, with a new board and executive director in place. The Board could see many opportunities for growth through the upcoming strategic planning process. There was clear recognition of the valuable foundations laid by the community and the strides already made in improving data quality through work undertaken with individual publishers. Governments using IATI data can make evidence-informed policy decisions, and the initiative must work towards achieving this impact. It is important to move beyond the notion of IATI as just a data standard, to get to the issues policy makers are truly interested in. IATI as a network and a community provides the opportunity to generate connections and open the doors for these valuable conversations. These strategic discussions underpinned the remainder of the two day meeting.

Actions

- *Within the current and two years work planning period, the following key actions were identified for inclusion, depending on resource availability:*
 - *Undertake stakeholder mapping*
 - *Identify champions for IATI and engage them*
 - *Engage International Financial Institutions (IFIs).*
 - *Work with Resident coordinators by demonstrating use cases and effective coordination*
 - *Share widely data insights to inform advocacy efforts and to the IATI community.*
 - *Undertake publishers/users journey to improve their experience with IATI and identify entry points.*
 - *Revisit the web interface of the IATI with a value proposition.*
- *ED to consolidate the discussion and feed into the new strategic planning process as issue note by third quarter.*

Clarifying roles and responsibilities for Board, Secretariat, Members

Towards clarifying roles and responsibilities for Board, Secretariat, Members, a quick briefing has been given by the Secretariat based on the Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) to promote shared understanding on the governing structure of IATI. Furthermore, the Board and Secretariat agreed on new collaborative and transparent ways of working and streamlining the use of tools and platforms for internal engagement, agreeing the following practical actions and focal point arrangements within the new Board:

- Data use: Motai / Charlie.
- Technical: Siem / Zainab.
- Communications and Community: Anand / Gele.
- Institutional / financial: Thea.

Defining new ways of working as IATI Executive Director joins

The Board and IATI ED made a number of agreements to streamline the operation of the Secretariat, which included the following:

- UNDP to phase out Yammer / Viva Engage (formerly in use for Board internal exchange), and replace it with Google Workspace as the single space for the storage of documents for consultation and for historical record. UNDP will explore the possibility of keeping the information in read only format as reference material for future.
- UNDP to clean up and align terminology used internally and externally (programme, project, work plan etc)
- UNDP/ODS to define, document and set up IT services for the board including a governingboard@iatistandard.org group email address as the primary mechanism for internal exchange, and clear document-sharing protocols (send links by email and store on Google Drive; no sharing attachments via email)
- UNDP to update the events calendar, and ensure that this is continually synced with the IATI Connect calendar.
 - Next MA meeting, Virtual, Q4
 - Next in-person MA in Q4 2025.
- Organising regional meetings during the long interim period would both provide the opportunity for the ED to meet members but also to help with further consultation with our new SP process.
- 2025 Work plan to be shared with the Board by October/November in time for agreement before the end of the year. The draft to be developed in a consultative manner.

Finances and financial oversight

The Board referred to feedback received from members during the April MA, in which members had requested clearer presentation of financial data in a format that was comparable year upon year. Key takeaways from a financial presentation by UNOPS were that IATI income remains stable at around US\$ 2.9 million per year, despite some delays in membership payment. Although there has been an increasing trend in expenditures over the past years, on average these have remained lower than budget, indicating the need for prudent work planning. IATI has an anticipated carry over of funding for 2025 averaging US\$ 1.2 million. The IATI Executive Director agreed to work closely with UNOPS and to revert to the Board with a proposed template for reporting that would address the concerns raised, ahead of the next quarterly Board meeting.

The Board requested clearer and more timely information on the timelines and progress for work plan deliverables in 2024. It was agreed that the Secretariat would formulate and share a specific work plan overview listing the activities that are underway across the whole Secretariat, together with their current status by July 15th, taking stock of six-month progress.

On work planning and budgeting, a timeframe was discussed and agreed to ensure approval of these documents in advance of each calendar year. In relation to the Contingency Fund, the Board agreed that it would not be replenished in full during the 2024 calendar year, which could cause cashflow difficulty during the 2024/25 financial year. The replenishment would take place gradually over time, with

financial decisions to be taken by the Board on the basis of a detailed financial sustainability review to be led by the IATI ED working closely with UNOPS.

Actions

- *UNOPS to provide a cash flow analysis and 2025 forecasting after discussing the matter with the IATI Executive Director.*
- *Working with the IATI ED, UNOPS to provide a summarised expenditure report by cost category ensuring financial reporting meets international standards for project reporting.*
- *UNDP/UNOPS/ODS to prepare the 2025 budget according to the following time frame:*
 - *Ready for Secretariat discussion by 1st October*
 - *Ready for the Board by 8th October (assuming a 20th November virtual MA meeting)*
 - *Board decision at the Q4 GB meeting*
- *UNDP/ODS to update the approved work plan to provide more detailed information on current and planned activities by 15th July 2024.*
- *Secretariat to provide work plan overviews regularly two weeks prior to Board meetings.*

Monitoring and management of risks

In a session on risk management the Secretariat explained the existence and use of the risk register, and at the Board's request, agreed that the ED to provide an update of previously recorded risks that are still relevant every quarter and if required, draw to the Board's attention the escalation of risks as appropriate.

UNOPS updated that operational steps for making the outstanding payments to Publish What You Fund were in hand after some lengthy delay, and the third of four tranches should be paid within the coming weeks. UNOPS is in touch with PWYF CEO Gary Forster and keeping him updated on this progress.

With the current arrangement on funding of the 2024 ATI coming to a close this year, the IATI ED agreed to reach out to PWYF CEO for a courtesy call in the context of the current engagement in the lead-up to the 2024 ATI launch and to explore possibilities for strengthening partnership between the two organisations.

In the context of financial sustainability, the IATI ED is preparing to undertake a broad review with the support of UNOPS, and will revert with findings and proposals around future resource mobilisation recommendations in time for the Q3 Board meeting.

Actions

- *Secretariat to provide an update/review of update of previously recorded risks that are still relevant (for Q3 Board).*
- *IATI ED to proceed with financial sustainability review together with UNOPS and revert with resource mobilisation proposals (for Q3 Board meeting).*
- *Secretariat to undertake a maturity review of the IATI tech portfolio (ODS, for the next board meeting).*
- *Secretariat to provide a status update of the work plan and, as appropriate, any revisions on the work plan following this Board meeting.*

Functioning of Permanent Working Groups

The Board discussed Permanent Working Groups (Publishers, Data Users, and Technical) established by the previous Board, exploring whether they were useful in their current form or whether changes were needed. The Secretariat provided some historical context for establishing the working group mechanism - to serve formally as advisory groups to the Board, in place of the former TAG (Technical Advisory Group). There was some discussion around whether the objectives could be met through other existing means such as communities of practice, leveraging the wealth of experience accessible through UNDP's SDG Integration Team, where the IATI Secretariat project is now based. A specific question arose in the context of the new Working Group on governance of the Standard and whether the objectives of that group proposed and agreed during the MA, could actually be achieved through a Technical Permanent Working Group.

Not all Board members were confident that these Permanent Working Groups added sufficient value in their current form, and it was agreed that the Board Chair would consult with the chairs of the respective working groups to determine a path forward.

Working Groups

At the Board's request, an overview of the current and former working groups was shared. The Board approved proposals for the following new working groups and requested the Secretariat to develop / update TORs for Working Groups for each of the following:

- Governance of the Standard
- South South Cooperation WG
- SOP Phase II WG
- Strategic Plan WG

Actions:

- Board Chair to contact PWG chairs to agree a path forward for Technical, Publishers and Data Use.
- Secretariat to update TORs for the WG on Governance of the Standard (ODS, by end June), and develop TORs for other new WGs, prioritising the Strategic Plan WG (UNDP, by mid-July).
- Board to review Terms of Reference for new Standard Working Group and South South Cooperation Working Group within three working days.

Governance

Written procedure consultation on SOP v.8 was underway at the time of the Board meeting, and feedback will be shared once the closing date for feedback passes on June 14th. In this context there was a request by the Board to share on the IATI website the Letter of Agreement (LoA) signed between UNDP, UNOPS and the IATI Governing Board establishing the new hosting arrangements. This has been shared previously through IATI Connect.

Actions:

- Secretariat to finalise the SoPs and share based on the feedback provided by members.
- Secretariat to share LoA.

Closing

The Board meeting concluded with a positive note that the future of IATI is bright as UNDP/UNOPS/ODS collaboratively work with the strategic guidance of the Board. Noting that the three objectives of the Strategic Plan (SP) are interrelated, effort to coherently address issues is needed. IATI success also is dependent on its engagement strategy with key partners. Both the Board and the secretariat will work towards enhancing communication across the board.