



IATI

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INITIATIVE

Meeting of IATI Steering Committee Members and Observers: 2-3 December 2015

Final Minutes of the meeting (Full version)

The two days of Steering Committee meetings in Copenhagen were attended by 90 participants from 30 different countries representing 54 governments and organisations. Welcome announcements were made including significant voluntary contributions from the Hewlett Foundation for a voluntary contribution of USD 400,000 through a supplemental grant in addition to its regular membership fee payments, to span the period until the new end-date of the consortium's mandate (August 2018). With endorsement by SC members of a necessary modification to the EC contribution agreement, the European Commission also confirmed voluntary contributions for the 2015/16 period of €200,000. New memberships were announced including the Republic of Korea (1 January) and InterAction, with formal membership steps also expected soon for Guinea, FAO, WHO and UNIDO.

These minutes are complemented by inputs of all members captured using the online collaborative hackpad technology. These hackpads will form the basis for discussion by the Members Advisory Group and subsequently the Governing Board in shaping their proposals on governance and vision. Agenda, hackpads, participant list and all presentations are available on the IATI website here: <http://www.aidtransparency.net/governance/steering-committee/steering-committee-documents>, with several of these documents provided in French language, translated ahead of the meetings with kind support provided by the Governments of Madagascar and Canada.

Lunchtime sessions were led on both days by Publish What You Fund (Building Coalitions of Data Users) and by Catalpa together with the Government of Myanmar (Promoting data use at country level). Presentations from these sessions have also been posted on the IATI website at the link provided above.

Session 2 IATI Independent Evaluation

This session was led by USAID on behalf of the evaluation sub-group and reviewed the process and outcomes of the 2015 independent evaluation of IATI. There was general agreement that the exercise had been useful and had paved the way for work subsequently taken on by the Interim Members Advisory Group leading up to this meeting. Members emphasised a point highlighted in the evaluation that all members have responsibilities in relation to IATI, and encouraged each other to think more about the values and commitments to IATI and what the community can do to contribute to increasing data use. Partner country speakers similarly commented on the need to broaden the focus and be clear that the data should be used by everybody, not just partner countries.

Actions: *The evaluation sub-group agreed to work with the Secretariat to prepare a response to the evaluation, extracting all recommendations and commenting on how each one has been/will be handled. IATI should plan and budget for future evaluations to take place every 3-5 years.*

For the following two sessions (Governance and Vision), members in small groups reviewed recommendations prepared by the MAG and shared their feedback, indicating where consensus

was reached and conversely highlighting those areas in which further consideration was necessary. The following decisions were made in relation to the recommendations:

Session 3 IATI Governance

Members **approved MAG Recommendation 1** on governance, agreeing to establish a new structure comprising a Member Assembly meeting annually and a Governing Board composed of and voted in by IATI members to take work forward and prepare recommendations between Member Assembly meetings. Once the new structure is in place it will replace the current Steering Committee. The Chair requested the MAG to continue its engagement to support the process of developing Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Board, aiming to have the Board operational by March 2016.

Members also **approved MAG Recommendation 2** on governance, that responsibility for developing recommendations associated with changes to the vision, strategy, hosting arrangement, funding arrangements, budget, and governance structure be delegated to the Governing Board, once constituted. These governance changes would be subject to the approval of the Member Assembly. The Governing Board should further have authority for managing the strategy and budget of IATI as approved by the Member Assembly. The Board is expected to establish a clear mechanism for consulting with members between physical meetings. In establishing the new Board and Member Assembly structure, the interrelationship between these new bodies and the Secretariat should be made clear, as well as review processes to ensure delivery of results. Board TORs should present the scope of work for the Board rather than detailed activities, and should cover, *inter alia*: matters of size and composition of the Board; frequency of meetings; means of engaging expertise of non-Board members; transition from current governance arrangements; decision-making responsibilities for Member Assembly and for the Board; the role of a Board member as it relates to his/her own constituency; avoiding conflicts of interest among the Board members; and eligibility for Board membership.

Actions: *The MAG was requested to prepare Terms of Reference for a new Governing Board and remain engaged until the Board is operational in March 2016. The MAG will work with the Secretariat to determine clear roles and responsibilities of Board and Member Assembly. (January 2016). The IATI Standard Operating Procedures shall be amended to reflect these decisions and TORs, once finalised. The Secretariat to establish a process for election for the Board (January 2016), and determine a date for the next Member Assembly meeting around June 2016.*

Session 4 – Future Vision

The discussion on the MAG recommendations about the vision and strategic direction showed that members agreed on the need to define an ambitious long-term vision and a sustainable funding model to underpin the vision, whilst remaining realistic about what could be achieved in the short term within existing resources. The level of ambition should not be limited by short term funding constraints but rather the Board should look towards establishing a sustainable financing arrangement that fully meets the long term needs of the initiative.

Members approved Recommendation 1, agreeing that a new vision and three-year strategic framework should continue to reflect IATI's dual role as a political initiative and a technical standard. However, whilst there is a continuing role for promotion and outreach, it's important to continue to focus on improving data quality and usage. Some members felt that a definition of "policy and

technical initiative” would better reflect the concept of promoting both publishing and use of data, and acknowledge IATI’s role in the ecosystem of data.

There was strong support for Recommendation 2, that IATI should be positioned within the 2030 Agenda as an open data standard that can support results and impact more effectively by capturing data on all international resources for development. It was recognized that without broadening its scope beyond traditional aid, IATI would neither service the information needs of partner countries nor remain relevant within a changing financing architecture. However, members sought clarification on the scope and feasibility of capturing ‘all resources’ and recommended prioritisation of resource flows given IATI’s current budget constraints and the risk of duplication with other initiatives.

Members approved Recommendation 3 on renaming and re-branding of IATI in the interests of supporting outreach to a more diverse range of development actors and underpinning its positioning within the 2030 Agenda. There was consensus on retaining the acronym and identity that have become synonymous with transparency of development resources, though members agreed that the word ‘aid’ no longer fully reflected the inclusivity of the initiative. Whilst improving data quality and usage must remain a priority in 2016, the future Governing Board was nonetheless asked to take this discussion forward over the longer term.

Members approved Recommendation 4, to develop a new, more inclusive statement of values for IATI as the basis for future membership. Themes put forward included openness, commitments around data quality and use, and linking with existing processes such as the SDGs and the forthcoming HLM in Nairobi. Members pointed out the importance of preserving the original values as well as keeping the linkage to development effectiveness principles, while at the same time making the statement more inclusive and ensuring that all stakeholders are aware of their core responsibilities in relation to IATI.

***Actions:** The future Governing Board is requested to work with volunteer members (see Day 2 opening session) to develop a more inclusive statement of values and proposals around long-term vision and near term strategic direction for consideration in a subsequent Member Assembly. The Board is requested to look into the scope and feasibility of capturing data on all international resources for development. The Board is further requested to look in the long term into options for rebranding of IATI whilst retaining the IATI acronym.*

Session 5 – Future Hosting of IATI

In a session during which all members of the hosting consortium absented themselves, members agreed to ask the current consortium to extend its existing arrangement by a maximum of two years from the end of the present mandate (31 August 2016). The MAG and subsequently the new Board is requested to take up the process of establishing permanent hosting arrangements as soon as possible, taking into account all the possible configurations and setting firm deadlines as they work through this process.

***Action:** The MAG and subsequently Board is requested to establish a process and timeline and guide the work towards ensuring long-term sustainable arrangements for hosting of IATI. A report on progress of this work is requested in the next Member Assembly meeting.*

During a reception to conclude the first day IATI launched its latest Annual Report which contains financial data and case studies from publishers and users of IATI data. The report and executive summary can be downloaded [here](#) in English, French and Spanish.

Day 2, December 3rd

The second day began with an open session to flesh out the preliminary discussions from Session 4, Day 1 on developing a new and enduring vision for IATI. Several speakers offered contributions for the future vision, including: that should be grounded in principles from the country perspective; it should refer both to transparency and to accountability; it should be linked to the GPEDC and Busan 23c as acknowledgement that there is still work to be done to meet the common standard; it should reflect ambitious and durable goals and have reference to the Addis Ababa Accord for Action and Agenda 2030; it should reflect the need to capture information on all development flows, and the multistakeholder nature of IATI; it should reflect a theory of change, and a clear definition of IATI's role in how to achieve it; it should acknowledge that provision of data is not an end in itself, but the more important aspect is to have a greater understanding of what data is, ensure it is fit for purpose and that organisations and government users have the tools and understanding to use it most effectively. The European Commission, UNICEF, Development Gateway and Development Initiatives expressed an interest to contribute further to this work stream, guided by the MAG and future Governing Board.

Session 6 – Outreach and communications

In a session on outreach, members received an update on activities undertaken by IATI at events including the OGP Summit in Mexico City, the Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa and the UN Development Cooperation Forum in Uganda. Examining papers on opportunities for 2016, members agreed on the importance of IATI to be present and active at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and to use the opportunity to demonstrate its potential value in facilitating the coordination of financial flows in humanitarian emergencies. UNICEF, UNFPA and Denmark indicated willingness to join together as 'early adopters' of the new humanitarian fields included in the upgrade to IATI v2.02, to show how this can work by building a working model based on one country, potentially Nepal. Smaller donors highlighted the value of using IATI to demonstrate their contributions in humanitarian situations such as the current refugee crisis in Europe. Other opportunities coming up in 2016 include the International Open Data Conference in Madrid (6-7 October). IATI presence in regional and local events should also be considered where possible and relevant, and members were asked to share information on such upcoming events with the IATI Secretariat, and to support preparation for events in areas such as communications.

There was a sense that the Kenya High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership (November 2016) was a point at which to make a fresh political commitment around transparency, potentially focussed on data use, and in this context there was a specific proposal for IATI to formulate wording to feed into the outcome document for that meeting.

Action: *The Secretariat is requested to work with volunteer organisations to prepare a working model ahead of the Humanitarian Summit, as well as options for a possible side event and other activities during the WHS. The MAG/Board is requested to begin work on language for the GPHLM2 Outcome Document.*

Session 7 IATI Standard Update

A presentation was given on the process and content of the 2.02 decimal upgrade of the Standard, live on 7 December following a rigorous process of consultation ahead of the meetings. The upgrade makes the Standard fit for purpose for the humanitarian community, adding new optional fields, and enabling publishers to report data in real time via a humanitarian marker for fast-tracking publication of humanitarian activities. With v.2.02 all reporters are now able to report progress against the Sustainable Development Goals, with goals and targets already incorporated and a placeholder for indicators once these are agreed.

Comments were received on the nature of the term ‘voluntary’ in relation to new codes introduced with each upgrade, when donors sometimes make them mandatory for implementing partners. In this context, there was a reminder that guidelines and tools need to be changed and updated following every update, which proves burdensome for some members.

A brief update was provided on the progress with the budget identifier since the November meeting of the WP-Stat in which some clarifications had been requested. WP-STAT is expected to confirm the additions to the DAC code list and the new capital expenditure field via a written procedure [update: this is underway], and this will be communicated to DAC and IATI members once it has been agreed. There is no impact for the IATI standard. IATI publishers can already use the field for capital expenditure in the IATI standard. If approved, the new DAC code list would be released very quickly for use. Mapping of DAC sector codes to budget classification in partner countries will be needed so that the information can be used in their Public Finance Management Systems. The Budget Identifier Working Group has done this already with a few countries and would be happy to support others in the same way.

Session 8 – Update by Development Gateway on its IATI import work

Development Gateway provided input on its work in Chad, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Cote d’Ivoire and Madagascar to create conditions for partner countries to more easily access and use IATI data. It has worked with selected preliminary funders in those countries, and has developed a standalone data import tool which can also be used with other (non-AMP) systems. The tool works through import to a staging environment for government staff to review line by line before importing. Out of this exercise DG has updated its working paper and included some recommendations to the IATI community such as on use of language of partner countries, and increasing frequency of publication of data to match country processes. Among comments received was a general call to action to embrace and collaborative tools and opportunities to strengthen IATI, and for the different organisations / individuals working on implementing country systems / IATI import to AIMS to collaborate with each other and come up with some recommendations for how to make this work easier, more effective and more sustainable.

Session 9 – GPEDC Transparency Indicator

The Secretariat presented the refined methodology for IATI’s component of the indicator. Members gave overall support for the methodology and assessment of IATI data through its dashboard, which now includes the dimensions of timeliness, comprehensiveness and forward-looking as highlighted in the Busan transparency commitment. Some concerns were raised about the methodology to assess coverage and about specific details within the three dimensions. Final adjustments will be circulated by email to members on a non-objection basis.

Action: *The Secretariat will solve remaining issues for the IATI assessment methodology and circulate by email for members' non-objection (December 2015).*

A presentation was given by OECD on behalf of the GPEDC Joint Support Team on how to combine the IATI data component with OECD DAC and FSS components of the transparency indicator. On the two specific issues for consultation, members who expressed a view said they could live with option C (scoring the three systems separately), but several members expressed frustration that the proposed methodology is overly complex, difficult to understand and as a result not politically useful. On the proposed accuracy dimension, members expressed a range of views, one of the problems being that there was no clear agreement on a definition of "accuracy". There was a shared view on the general importance of measuring the quality of data. Members were encouraged to contribute further thoughts via the GPEDC online consultation site.

Session 10 – Capturing non-traditional flows including SSC

Complementary presentations were made by UNDP China and by the Government of Bangladesh together with consultants working on strengthening aid management through improved donor cooperation and reporting at country level in its Aid Information Management System. The first presentation delivered a powerful message that information on development cooperation is available even from countries not reporting to IATI, but it is up to partner countries to request this information through different means. Partner country representatives shared their experiences and recommendations on sourcing information not being reported through traditional channels. The work in Bangladesh is still ongoing and once completed the new modules developed will be available for other countries to use in importing IATI data. The key challenge the work will address is how to understand and represent projects reported by multiple organisations at different levels.

General

Given the short timeline for establishing the new governing structures ahead of the next meeting of members in June 2016 (TBC), the Chair asked the Interim Members Advisory Group (MAG) to continue its work and encouraged other members to volunteer to assist the MAG in some of its workstreams on the new governance structure, IATI's strategic vision, data use at country level and hosting arrangements.

Finally, members bid farewell and warm thanks to the Steering Committee Chair Robin Uyterlinde who has completed his two-year tenure in the role. He asked that the Vice-Chair agree to continue in this role until the creation of the new Governing Board.