

IATI GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

DATE: APRIL 16TH & 17TH, UNDP HQ, NEW YORK, US

Participants

Attending: Bangladesh (Anwar Hossain), Madagascar (Zefania Romalahy), Netherlands (Theo van de Sande); Secretariat: Carolyn Culey, Argjira Belegu-Shuku (via zoom), Annelise Parr, Lea Zoric), TAG Chair (John Adams), UNICEF (Tim Takona); Bond (Sarah Johns (via zoom)); Oxfam Novib (Leo Stolk (via zoom))

Agenda

1. Opening & Introduction
2. Election of new chairs
3. Review of ways of working
4. Strengthening IATI's long-term strategic positioning
5. Financial overview Y5, and Y6 planning
6. Workstream 1: Promoting Data Use
7. Workstream 2: Improving IATI data quality, breadth and depth
8. Workstream 3: Maintaining and Strengthening IATI Systems
9. Workstream 4: Communication and Outreach
10. UN System Reform Resolutions
11. Members' Assembly Preparations
12. Workstream 5: Institutional Arrangements
13. Next Board meeting; AOB

Minutes

1. Opening & Introduction

a) Introduction of new Governing Board (GB) members

- Welcoming of the newly elected GB members and welcoming remarks from Margaret Thomas, newly appointed Chief a.i. of UNDP's Development Impact Group (where the IATI secretariat coordination is located).

b) Review of Agenda

- No agenda revision was proposed.

c) Approval of minutes from March 2018 GB Meeting

- In the section on the Institutional Review Working Group, Winnie Kamau and the Netherlands to be added to the list of members; otherwise the minutes are accepted.

d) Clarification of objectives/goals

- Expectations of the meeting included having a clearer vision on the TAG (Technical Advisory Group) meeting later this year; receiving an update on data use task force; developing a joint understanding on preparing for the 2018 Members' Assembly (MA);
- For the new GB to learn from previous experiences regarding the cooperation and coordination among the different IATI bodies;
- developing a common vision on the future strategic direction of IATI;

2. Election of new chairs

a) Chair

- The Netherlands, represented through Theo van de Sande, **was unanimously selected by the GB as chair.**

b) Vice-Chair

- Bond, represented by Sarah Johns and Bangladesh represented by Kazi Shofiqul declared their interest the role vice-chair; With two expressions of interest from different constituencies, the Board agreed to appoint two vice-chairs, and the SOP should be amended to reflect this. **Bond and Bangladesh confirmed as IATI vice-chairs.**

Action: SOP to be amended to allow for two Vice-Chairs from different constituencies

New chair, Theo van de Sande took up his role for the remainder of the meeting

3. Review of ways of working

a) Retrospective

- Participants held an open discussion around what had worked well, what could be done better, and any questions on the operations modality. Discussions centred around the workstreams as the Board explored ways of improving ways of working.
- The value of face-to-face meetings compared to e-meetings was highlighted, especially for strengthening the ties between GB and IATI Secretariat and for the on-boarding of the new members.

b) Roles of alternates to the GB

- The Board agreed that for all external matters, vice-chairs can act as alternates for the Chair. For internal matters, the Netherlands alternate would be his designated alternate Herman van Loon;
- Regarding alternates' attendance in GB meetings, as a general principle alternates will only attend if they replace the members, either remotely or physically.

c) Membership discussion with MDBs

- A meeting to clarify the future engagement and membership status of the MDBs took place in Washington DC on the 11th of April, however no clear way forward was agreed; a further webinar will be scheduled in the coming weeks. A fuller note on the MDB meeting has been prepared. This is not an item for the MA.

D) Communication modalities; timelines and GB transition

- Guiding principle around decision-making for the GB is the approved workplan. If an activity is in the workplan, no further layer of approval is needed (as long as it is within the range of the allocated budget); Expected over- and under-spend of the budget should be regularly communicated to the Chair of the Board.
- Zoom works well as a form of communication and will continue to be used for e-meetings;
- Yammer GB page will continue to be the main source of information sharing, with former Board members remaining in the group for a transition period up to the MA.
- To improve response rates, a better coding of Yammer announcements 'for review', 'for approval', etc. was agreed.

Action: Purchase Zoom account for Secretariat use

Code Yammer announcements for greater clarity

4. Strengthening of IATI's long term strategic positioning

a) Strategic positioning of IATI

- Long term key for IATI is the evolution from a Standard to a platform; this in turn relies on a new robust datastore;

- To maintain and further increase its relevance, IATI also needs to move beyond 'aid' data. While the inclusion of humanitarian data and the association with the Grand Bargain are important steps, the discussion around climate finance, private sector data, as well as around SDG monitoring also need to move forward;
- Partnerships with academia and think tanks, as well as close cooperation with other standards, indexes and data platform need to be continued.

b) IATI and SDGs

- SDGs are about results. In order to align closer to SDG-related processes, a shift is necessary from input-centered thinking (e.g. how much funds are allocated, spent, foreseen per country) towards outcome/results thinking, e.g. what was achieved and implemented;

c) Prioritization of action points

- Certain issues (most of all the datastore) need to be addressed/updated before IATI can evolve and it is important to have a solid grounding in data quality and use before IATI can strategically reposition itself.
- While some steps can be taken now, it is important over the next two years to focus on increasing data use and quality.
- GB needs to respond to a number of requests from the institutional review working group and different constituency needs. Key points include:
 - o Name and purpose of IATI, which should not limit its scope/reach;
 - o Clearer distinction between members and publishers;
 - o What is the relevance of constituencies and what role do they play.

⇒ **Conclusion:** *two topics for further discussion at the MA:*

- o *As part of the longer-term institutional arrangement discussion, what is needed to evolve from Standard to Platform;*
- o *Follow up and engage with the processes around SDG alignment and operationalization.*

5. Financial overview Y5, and Y6 planning

a) Overview of Y5 budget

- IATI currently has 87 members (of which 4 are Secretariat consortium)
- 44 members have already paid their Y5 membership contributions; total amount received is USD 2,647,890 (USD 2,240,583 from membership fees and USD 407,307 from voluntary contributions);
- Commitments from 7 members in the amount of 296,050 have been received;
- 32 members including 26 partner countries, 2 CSOs, and 4 providers have not yet paid their membership fees for Year 5 (Sep 2017-Aug 2018);

b) Financial matters

- Members' Assembly:

- o Numerous partner countries have not yet paid their membership contribution. As a result, their participation in the MA has to be covered by the partner countries themselves.
- o Strong engagement with partner countries is key to the success of the MA and GB and Secretariat will work towards mobilizing participation;

⇒ **Conclusion:** *Bangladesh and Madagascar will discuss a way of engaging with other partner countries to either mobilize membership contribution payments or cover their own expenses for attending the MA.*

⇒ *GB and Secretariat will search for solutions to handling small membership contribution amounts;*

⇒ *Budget, including fundraising will be a separate workstream within the Board (chair to lead, supported by UNDP and UNOPS).*

6. Workstream 1: Promoting Data Use

a) Data Use Task Force (DUTF)

- Active Task Force holds biweekly e-meetings and engages in debates and exchanges on Yammer;
- The update of the Datastore is central to the success of this workstream.
- The DUTF acts as a central point for ensuring coherence and avoiding duplication with the approved work of the Secretariat

b) Data Use Fund

- Data Use Fund (DUF) has been established and user stories have been elaborated to get a clearer understanding of user needs/matters to be tackled through the DUF;
- UNDP has published a call for the expression of interests (EOI) for the DUF in English and French and over 20 submissions were received;
- Following the EOI, specific requests for proposals (RFPs) will be published with the aim to contribute to the 5 outcomes set in the Data Use Strategy.
- The objective is to publish several specific and high-quality RFPs ahead of the MA.

c) Secretariat activities on data use

- UNDP is currently focusing on three activities:
 - Participating in the UNESCO World Press Freedom (WPF) Day, held in Ghana 2.-3. May: IATI will be delivering a training session for young journalists to advocate for IATI data as a source of information, as well as host a booth during the WPF conference in order to increase the visibility of IATI and promote data use (such as through d-portal);
 - Mapping IATI data vs. DAD data in Rwanda: the exercise is designed to compare the data available in IATI with the data in the national Development Assistance Database (DAD) for selected donors.
 - Organizing a regional event in the Western Balkans for Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff working on planning, aid effectiveness, etc.: the event will advocate for IATI in a region of emerging donor countries and enhance the knowledge on IATI as an initiative, a data source and a monitoring tool.

⇒ *Leo Stolk and John Adams will function as focal points for the Data Use workstream.*

7. Workstream 2: Improving IATI data quality, breadth and depth

a) Technical support to publishers

- Moving from 600 to 6000 publishers requires significant shifts and dedicated assistance is becoming more and more challenging to provide; a more automated service through a single user interface is needed in the longer term;
- Priority should be given to improving machine-based online support to publishers and users;
- Extra service to members (compared to publishers) should be considered as a way to make membership more attractive;

b) Data quality

- Data quality and validation are key and will result from datastore work;
- Coverage is a key issue: potentially focus could be directed at improving coverage in particular areas such as geo-coding, results or forward-looking;
- Monitoring and measuring of data to make improvements more visible is an integral element of improving data quality. Grand Bargain process could be reviewed and used as reference in regard to measurement of other factors 'timeliness' and 'geo-location';

- What role does the aid transparency index (ATI) play for monitoring data quality and how does it relate to IATI - ATI has always been well respected among stakeholders yet increasingly has a different methodology that is less aligned with IATI. A strategic discussion on future alignment/cooperation should take place with PWYF.

- ⇒ **Conclusion:** Question on strategic direction with a view to increasing coverage to be raised during MA;
- ⇒ Conversation with PWYF needed; methodology might need to be updated to bring the most value;
- ⇒ Sarah Johns and Zefania Romalahy will function as focal points for this workstream on the Board.

8. Workstream 3: Maintaining and Strengthening IATI Systems

a) Datastore

- Specific requirements for datastore service have been drafted and will be circulated for consultation before procurement through UNOPS. Contract will include maintenance for the first year. Bids should be received in time for the MA;
- D-portal vs. datastore: datastore is a data source (APIs, etc.), d-portal an information source (reports, maps, etc.). D-portal received a variety of updates over the last years, geographic location can now be downloaded for instance.

b) New Registry Provider

- Migration was carried out end of March 2018, initial problems have been solved. In the medium-term, maintenance could be moved back to an in-house arrangement but this is not considered a priority at the moment;
- Regarding the **costs:** budget should be adopted to the needs, instead of reducing needed service provision due to budgetary restrictions.

c) Website

- **New website progresses according to schedule:** in the first week of May (alpha site for consultation) and go live at the end of June 2018 in the English version only;
- Official launch will take place during MA;
- Website was designed to be used in languages based on the Latin alphabet. As agreed, French and Spanish will become available second half of this year;
- Launch of the new website is a big achievement for IATI and should be celebrated and promoted accordingly.

- ⇒ **Conclusion:** Promote new website once launched;
- ⇒ Raise strategic question in the MA regarding which services shall be kept in-house and what should be outsourced;
- ⇒ Leo Stolk and Theo van de Sande to act as focal points for this workstream.

9. Workstream 4: Communication and Outreach

a) General opportunities to promote/represent IATI

- A list of relevant events has been drawn up (and shared in Yammer) and IATI participation and potential contributions through GB and Secretariat need to be decided upon;
- The 2017 Annual Report was launched on 16th of April and distributed widely through social media.

b) 10-year anniversary

- An event to celebrate IATI's 10 year-anniversary during the UNGA 2018 is under consideration. Such event, hosted by IATI, would celebrate the milestones of the initiative, as well as reflect on the future.

c) TAG 2018

- The 10 year-anniversary of IATI will also be celebrated during the 2018 TAG, which is preliminarily scheduled to take place at the end of October (22nd or 29th);
- Kathmandu is under strong consideration based on a preference to hold this year's TAG in Asia and finding a location that is fairly easy to access in terms of visa regulations and air connections.
- UNOPS will be in charge of the event logistics, Secretariat and GB support to advertise the event and promote broad participation will be needed;
- Thematic areas will center on: data use, data quality and the standard. (Datastore should be ready by the time of the TAG).

Conclusions:

- ⇒ *Secretariat to develop a concept for an UNGA side event.*
- ⇒ *Speaker kits/ key messages need to be drafted or updated and shared among constituencies to enable them to speak on IATI/new website (corporate messaging);*
- ⇒ *Theo van de Sande will be focal point for this workstream.*

10. UN Development System Reform Resolution

- In two recent resolutions on UN reform¹, the UNSG proposed very specific wording to “Enhance transparency and access to financial information across all entities, through system-wide enrolment in the International Aid Transparency Initiative, as well as full compliance with international transparency standards”; UN agencies have sought clarification on the meaning of ‘enrolment’.
- A number of UN agencies are planning to publish data soon, however, there are also several major questions and obstacles, such as different budget periods, level of reporting, etc. that need to be solved;
- UNDP has been working with UN colleagues on the Funding Compact and with the Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) to brief them on IATI with a view to working towards aligning reporting requirements across the UN so that IATI publishing meets UN donor reporting requirements.
- ⇒ **Conclusion:** *Include information on these UN resolutions in next IATI newsletter.*
- ⇒ *Develop a paper for UN agencies outlining exactly what is meant by ‘enrolment’ and ‘other transparency standards’; continue work with UN agencies encouraging them to join as well as publish.*

11. Members’ Assembly preparations

a) Logistics:

- Date and Duration: 10th to 11th of July in UN City (CPH);
- 9th July to be used for GB meeting, institutional review working group, constituency caucus meetings, etc.;
- Translation for MA and partner country caucus will be decided based upon participants response (esp the partner countries), the budget is available.

b) Content & methodology

- MA needs to be engaging and interactive; suggestions for modalities/set-up are welcome and the engagement of a moderator/facilitator is under consideration;

¹ Repositioning the United Nations Development System to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet, GA/ECOSOC, 21.12.17;

SG Report: Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: ensuring a better future for all, GA, 27.09.17.

- Preparation of the event, including clear objectives of outcomes of each session are crucial (especially against the background of the large number of likely participants);
- Launch of new website a key agenda item.
- Agenda/concept could also include space for a “tools market place”, and exchange and capacity development opportunities for data users;
- Data Use and institutional review will be core issues of MA;
- Budget and annual plan to be presented by Chair.

c) Dates and “to dos”

- On May 28 the draft agenda should be circulated for comments;
- On 11 June all relevant documents for the MA must be sent to GB for approval;
- On June 25 all relevant documents for the MA need to be shared with members;
- **Institutional Review Working Group:**
 - o Tim Takona to set agenda for institutional review working group meeting (taking place ahead of MA);
 - o Working group to analyze and further elaborate recommendations from the consultants and prepare a presentation to the MA (preferably two options for discussion in smaller groups);
 - o Leo Stolk, Anwar Hossain and Zefania Romalahy to prepare break-out sessions/ modalities on institutional review;
- **Caucus meetings:**
 - o Zefania Romalahy will prepare partner country caucus agenda in cooperation with Bangladesh and Secretariat; Chair to deliver opening remarks;
 - o CSO caucus meeting: as required;
- Leo Stolk and John Adams to lead on concept for data use session;
- Focal points (AP, ZR, ABS) will reach out to partner countries to clarify the question on modalities of MA participation (payment of contributions or travel) following decision (2.3.6 SOP).

12. Workstream 5: Institutional Arrangements

a) GB – Secretariat arrangements

- Secretariat, as the executive, can make decisions on activities and budget as agreed upon in the work plan and budget. Decisions with budget implications require GB approval;
- Deviations in the budget (under and over) needs to be reported to the GB as early as possible; Strategic, financial, etc. decisions should be made or approved by the GB;
- GB meetings to take place on bi-monthly basis, in the lead-up to an MA monthly (about 3 months before MA). Mechanisms to include Bangladesh regularly must be found (time difference is a challenge), potentially extra consultations between Bangladesh and rest of the GB could be established (if needed);
- **Face-to-face meetings:** a one-day f2f is planned one day before the MA; and two more are to be scheduled annually in most cost-effective venues or in the margins of other events.

⇒ *Secretariat to update the **meeting schedule** for the rest of the year (including venues) and propose this to GB.*

b) Institutional Review Working Group Update

- Working group was established to conduct further analytical work on the future institutional set-up; Bi-weekly meetings take place and sub-groups of the working group are examining different elements of future institutional set-up;
- Consultants to conduct the review and present options are on-board and at work with a deadline of May 30th for them to complete their work;

- Two options should be presented at MA by the working group; consultants are not expected to participate in the MA;
- MA is expected to receive enough information for members to make a broad decision on future arrangements after receiving the analysis paper well in advance of the MA to familiarize themselves with the outcomes of the review;
- Consultations with members beforehand are strongly advised (through constituencies).

⇒ **Conclusion:** *The working group will keep the GB informed on progress and outcomes;*

⇒ *The (newly elected) Chair will withdraw from the working group and Tim Takona and Zefania Romalahy will act as liaison between the working group and the GB.*

13. Next GB meeting and AOB

- To be scheduled in draft annual meeting plan after consultation.
- No further AOB.