

FINAL IATI Governing Board Meeting Minutes Q4 Y7 - 22 October 2020

Attendees (Virtual):

Theo van de Sande (Chair); Joseph Barnes, UNICEF; Melinda Cuzner (Sida); Piper Hart (UNDP, Nepal, representing Narayan Dhakal, Nepal); Sanjo Faniran, Henry Asor (Nigeria); Winnie Kamau (AFJ); Leo Stolk (Oxfam Novib); Annelise Parr, Margaret Thomas (UNDP, Secretariat); Wendy Thomas, (DI, Secretariat); Argjira Belegu-Shuku (UNOPS, Secretariat).

Secretariat representatives Anna Whitson (UNDP) and Kate Hughes (DI) joined for relevant items.
Note taker: Sarah McDuff, UNDP

1. Standing Items

The Chair led a brief review of standing items, noting that Q3 minutes had been approved through Yammer. No items of AOB were added. The Board acknowledged the addition of new risks in the Risk Register, asking for further information on external reports referred to within the Register. No changes were made to the Conflict Register. An overview of the workplan implementation had been shared in advance.

The Board reviewed the quarterly financial report for the previous quarter (July - Sept), formally approving the budget revision, but noting the importance of acknowledging the reasons for underspend (59% of budget) particularly in the Data Use workstream, which went beyond travel restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic. Delays also resulted from the trialling of a new grant-making modality which was not yet fully functioning, and the fact that some planned projects were dependent on the completion of technical tools and were postponed to Q4 or 2021. The Board acknowledged that underspend does not equate to under-performance, and that going forward, where capacity to deliver was the issue, this should be carefully aligned with activities in the course of work planning for 2021. The Board agreed to work with the Secretariat to establish an innovative work plan for 2021 that would still achieve key objectives through different means, in the face of continued travel restrictions.

Action points:

- *Provide Board with drafts of any reports potentially relevant to IATI's reputation or strategic objectives*
- *Update budget revision document to add clarification on delays.*
- *Work with Board (initially UNICEF) to mitigate financial risks around underspend, particularly in context of in setting 2021 workplan.*
- *Engage Board focal points across all workstreams as part of 2021 work planning.*

2. Technical Stocktake follow up

Having received endorsement at July's Board meeting to take next steps in implementing the Technical Stocktake recommendations, IATI's Technical Lead provided a roadmap for implementation, together

with a plan outlining a proposed approach for developing options for a publisher tool. These documents had been prepared in close consultation with the Board's Technical Focal Points.

The Technical Lead presented plans for the following activities: establishing an API Gateway; documenting the Registry API; planning for the datastore (maintenance only planned for 2021) and validator (establishing it as a decoupled microservice); establishing a set of non-functional requirements to guide all design actions; establishing a new semantic layer (steps from UX and design to procurement, 2021); design of new publishing statistics methodology; consultation on hosting of publishers' XML files; storing of historical data; and setting out publishing tool options.

Board members recognised the roadmap was a step forward and were generally supportive of the approach set out for this work, acknowledging that this move to an integrated system architecture is a first for IATI and has tremendous strategic value. The Board considered whether additional external advisory capacity may be necessary to ensure due diligence in signing off roadmaps, but accepted that Board technical focal points cover this oversight role sufficiently. The Board thanked the Technical Lead and Board technical focal points for their efforts.

In discussion of the roadmap presentation, Board members expressed the importance of placing technical roadmap decisions in context of strategic objectives of improving data use and quality, in addition to consolidating the technical core, with the linkages between work streams clearly articulated. Regarding sequencing of activities in the roadmap, it was noted that the Data Quality plan envisages connections between work on standardising the Standard, donor harmonisation and the validator, that could impact the publishing tool, and care must be taken in the sequencing of this work to ensure it doesn't have to be repeated in a year or two.

There was discussion around the different consultations proposed by the roadmap, and agreement that some questions, for example on the specifications for a publisher tool, could be resolved by the Secretariat and Board through targeted inquiry without requiring broad community consultation.

Members agreed on the critical importance of communicating clearly and regularly with the IATI community about progress and implementation of technical work. Suggestions were made as to how to convey information to a non-technical audience (perhaps through animated materials) at the MA.

In view of the cross-cutting nature of technical work and implication across all workstreams, the Board agreed that all key decisions going forward must be taken at Board level.

Action points:

- *A smart presentation (visual) should be prepared for the MA.*
- *Consultations should make full use of board expertise*
- *Board to make all key decisions, with a table of such expected decisions to be prepared and shared after this meeting, along with any updates to the roadmap.*
- *Regular updates to be provided at each board meeting.*

3. Outreach, Communications and Community

The Board approved an updated Outreach and Engagement Strategy developed in close consultation with the Board focal points. The Strategy restated the key messages agreed by the Board and set out a clear approach towards articulating those messages with different audiences and stakeholders. It was

acknowledged that the paper is a living document, and that different messages are required for different audiences and fora. Information was shared on the development of a new membership pack (currently ongoing) and the new service offered by the Secretariat offering bespoke presentations upon request for different groups and purposes. A new Social Media Strategy was also approved.

Moving to the Community workstream, Board members approved a new Communities of Practice (COP) Strategy and received an update on the progress in building and launching a new digital platform for use by new COPs, set for public launch on November 30th. In regard to progress with establishing Working Groups (WGs) the Board heard that the Data Use Task Force was now a formal working group, and a second WG is in the process of being established to work on planning for the pilot annual event (referred to as the IATI Expo) postponed from 2020 to late 2021 in view of pandemic travel restrictions. A series of mini-Expos are planned in 2021 leading up to a full event in the fourth quarter, to address the risks inherent in not holding an in-person event for such a long stretch. Board members expressed appreciation for the good work in moving this work forward, with some requesting to be involved in user testing of the platform. The Board noted the high community expectations for the communities of practice and the digital platform and acknowledged that full time platform support by the Secretariat would be essential, in addition to a full time community manager, to sustain healthy networks.

Action points:

- *Secretariat to keep Outreach Strategy under review and update as required, and maintain a tracking process for outreach activities delivered*
- *Secretariat to ensure sufficient resourcing to sustain both platform and communities, in the 2021 work planning process.*

MA planning

The Board heard a brief update on the principles and progress with planning for the MA in December. They recalled the SOP provision that the Board was responsible for setting work plans and budgets and that the MA would receive a high level version for review only. With time running short, the Board agreed to carefully review the shared draft agenda for the MA and the principles underpinning its planning. There was a caution to learn lessons from other online conferences to avoid pitfalls and ensure success.

Action points:

- *Board to review and comment on draft MA agenda via Yammer.*

In closing the meeting, the Chair asked participants to review the focal point protocols posted in Yammer as there had been no time for discussion on this item during the meeting itself. He set a tentative date for the next meeting of February 10, 2021, with acknowledgement of the need for a pre-MA Board meeting, to be scheduled.