

INTERNATIONAL AID TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

FIRST MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 26TH NOVEMBER, OECD, PARIS

The first Steering Committee meeting of the International Aid Transparency Initiative was held in Paris on 26th November 2008. Members of the Steering Committee attended along with observers (see attached list.) The meeting was chaired by Sarah Cooke, DFID.

1) Welcome and introductions

The chair welcomed participants to the meeting. She explained that the main aim was to agree how to work together to make IATI a reality. This meant agreeing the governance structure, project plan and budget for IATI, as well as the ToR for the proposed scoping study.

2) Agenda.

- a. Aims and objectives of IATI and update on progress
- b. Review of ToR and composition for IATI Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
- c. Review of IATI Workplan and Budget
- d. Review of ToR for IATI scoping paper
- e. AOB

3) Aims and objectives of IATI and update on progress

- a) The chair reminded members that the IATI seeks to deliver a step shift in global public availability and accessibility of information on aid flows, for increased effectiveness and accountability of aid. It aims to do this by agreeing a set of common information standards applicable to all aid flows. DFID presented the concept of standards in more detail.

4) Review of ToR and composition for IATI Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Group

- a) The chair explained the proposed governance arrangements for IATI. These consist of the full IATI membership; a multi stakeholder Steering Committee; a multi-stakeholder Technical Advisory Group which reports to the Steering Committee; and a Secretariat comprising of DFID, UNDP and the non-profit organisation Development Initiatives for Poverty Research.

Members agreed with Secretariat arrangements. It was also noted that it is important for the DAC to be linked into the Secretariat.

- b) The ToR for the Steering Committee was presented. It was agreed that the objectives of the IATI should be clarified. Some wording was suggested and DFID will amend the ToR accordingly.

It was agreed that the ToR should be clearer on the relationship with the WP-EFF, DCF and WP-STAT. The Steering Committee is *accountable* to the IATI membership, but should provide *updates and information* to the WP-EFF, WP-STAT and DCF to ensure complementarity with the work of these groupings.

Action: DFID to revise ToR for Steering Committee and share with members and IATI membership.

- c) The ToR for the Technical Advisory Group was presented.

Members were broadly happy with the proposed ToR. It was agreed that the minutes and other outputs from the TAG and SC should be made publicly available. It was also agreed that the TAG should learn from other efforts to set standards, beyond those in aid effectiveness. In particular IT companies such as Google could provide a rich source of learning.

Given the fact that the ToR was not shared electronically ahead of the meeting, it was agreed that further comments would be accepted by e-mail until mid December.

Action: DFID to explore options for publishing minutes and other material on the web and amend ToR in light of discussion and comments submitted by e-mail.

5) IATI project plan and budget

- a) DFID presented the draft project plan. It was agreed that the timeframe was realistic but that it should not be allowed to slip.

There is potential synergy between the CSO consultations and some consultations planned by Reality of Aid and the Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness.

It was also agreed that Stage 2 (Research and Scoping) should include testing of standards in two donor and two partner countries and that this should be used to inform later TAG work. This will require extending the timeframe until May 2009.

It was agreed that the conference planned for May/June 2009 should focus more on the political level and explore the demand and supply of information on aid. Parliamentarians should also be involved.

It was also suggested that the project plan should make it clear how IATI will feed back to the 2010 DCF and 2011 HLF.

Action: DFID and Reality of Aid to follow up on proposal to combine consultations. DFID to amend project plan in light of discussions.

- b) DFID presented the budget. DFID and the Netherlands both announced that they were prepared to put in funds. However, other IATI members are also invited to contribute to meet the full budget costs and ensure ownership.

DFID agreed to manage the funds as this will make it easier for other donors to contribute.

Action: All to provide indications of their expected financial contribution to Romilly Greenhill (r-greenhill@dfid.gov.uk) by the end of the year.

6) ToR for Scoping Study

- a) The ToR for the proposed scoping study on the IATI standards was presented. It was agreed that the study should also consider other initiatives and mechanisms for agreeing common standards.

It was also agreed that the outline should be amended to focus less on technical information and data and more on broader information needs. It should also include a review of the demand for information from different user groups and different categories of countries.

Action: DFID to amend ToR and contract DIPR to prepare the paper. The preliminary findings will be presented at the next Steering Committee meeting in February 2009.

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