

# Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting of the Independent Commission for Aid Impact – 17 February 2011

## Attendees

**Commissioners:** Graham Ward (GW)  
Mark Foster (MF)  
John Githongo (JG)  
Diana Good (DG)

**Secretariat:** Tom McDonald (TM)  
Clare Robathan (CR)

**For item 10:** Emma Donnelly, DFID (ED)

## Details of the meeting - Thursday 17 February, 9:30: to 4:00

### Introductions

The Commissioners and Secretariat introduced themselves and gave a brief overview of their background and their interest in taking this job.

DG asked if there could be a discussion on her Camfed report, 'Accounting to the Girl' at a future meeting.

**Action Secretariat:** To arrange a session on the Camfed report 'Accounting to the Girl' at the next meeting.

### Vision for ICAI

The Commissioners discussed their vision for ICAI, including the commitment to be evidence based, objective, constructive and transparent in the way it operates.

There was a discussion around views coming out of stakeholder meetings. It was recognised that the general view of ICAI is positive, but there is also scepticism that ICAI may not have the capacity to deliver its challenging mandate.

### Update on ongoing activities

#### *International Development Committee report into DFIDs accounts*

The Commissioners discussed the recent International Development Committee report into DFID's accounts, and noted the sections on ICAI, including the list from the Committee on how it sees ICAI being effective. Commissioners also noted the Committee's intention to ask ICAI to examine if DFID's external suppliers are providing value for money.

#### *Cabinet Office Review*

The Commissioners discussed the Cabinet Office's decision on permanent status - that ICAI should be an advisory non-departmental public body. It was agreed that the decision was satisfactory and that the associated conditions were workable.

There was a discussion about what this would mean for ICAI, including the possibility of a pre-appointment hearing for Commissioners with the International Development Committee.

**Action Secretariat:** To arrange a session on preparing Commissioners for appearance before a Select Committee at a future meeting.

#### *Procurement process*

Commissioners discussed the procurement process and recognised that contract negotiations are continuing. The process is expected to take at least another 6 or 7 weeks.

#### *Public consultation*

Commissioners discussed how to further promote the consultation to the public. It was agreed that the Commissioners would send suggestions to the Secretariat on how and who to promote the consultation. Commissioners then discussed some of the themes emerging from the responses to the consultation.

There was a discussion around the ease of finding the consultation response form on the ICAI website. It was agreed that the website could be more user friendly in this regard. It was agreed that it would be useful to have a comprehensive idea of what stakeholders were saying about ICAI and their views of development.

**Action CR:** To improve the ease of use of the consultation on the ICAI website and to have a link to the response form in the downloadable questions.

**Action CR:** To produce a paper on stakeholder opinion of ICAI and development issues in general.

**Action Commissioners:** To send CR names and suggestions for promotion of the consultation on an ongoing basis.

#### *Synthesis report*

The Commissioners discussed the background, terms of reference and methods behind the synthesis report which the consultant has carried out. It was agreed that the report will be a valuable input for the work plan.

**Action Secretariat:** To arrange a session on the synthesis report for the next meeting.

#### *Reflections from the first DFID induction day*

The group discussed their reflections of the DFID induction day that took place on 15 February 2011 and agreed some priority areas for future induction days.

#### **Ways of working**

The Commissioners discussed the responsibilities of Commissioners and the Secretariat as laid out in the Ways of Working paper and agreed final amendments.

**Action TM:** To update the 'Ways of Working' paper with agreed final amendments

#### **Preliminary strategy for work plan**

The Commissioners discussed the framework for deciding which projects to scrutinise over the next three years, and agreed on a final framework.

It was agreed that there would be a discussion around a draft work plan at the next Commissioner Board meeting.

**Action Secretariat:** To include a session on the work plan at the next Board meeting.

**Action Secretariat:** To source papers on DFID spend on ODA.

#### **Session on ethics with Emma Donnelly, DFID**

Emma Donnelly took the Commissioners through the process and approach around propriety and ethics, and explained that they were adhering to the same approach that is taken with Ministers.

**Action ED:** To send Commissioners an electronic copy of the declaration of interest form.

#### **Any other business**

The Commissioners discussed agenda items for the next induction day and dates for upcoming meetings.

**Action Secretariat:** To organise the DFID second induction day based on Commissioners' requests for information and sessions.

**Action Secretariat:** To email Commissioners with upcoming dates for the diary.