

**Minutes of the 28th Board Meeting of the
Independent Commission for Aid Impact
3rd March 2014**

Attendees

Chief Commissioner: Graham Ward (GW)
Commissioners: Mark Foster (MF)
Diana Good (DG)
Secretariat: Alexandra Cran-McGreehin (AC-M)
Sam Harrison (SH)
Matthew Wilkins (MW)
Elspeth Robinson (ER)
External: Officials from DFID, DECC and DEFRA
Apologies: John Githongo (ICAI Commissioner)

Details of the meeting: Monday 3rd March, 09:15 – 17:30

Welcome

1. The Chief Commissioner welcomed everyone to ICAI's 28th Board Meeting.

Minutes of the 27th Board Meeting

2. The minutes of the last ICAI Board meeting, held on 13th January 2014, were formally approved.

Action Log

3. AC-M led a discussion of progress against both outstanding and completed actions from previous Board Meetings. It was agreed that some longer-term ongoing actions had progressed far enough to remove from the actions log.
4. Commissioners agreed to offer to give a presentation about ICAI to DFID country offices as standard when they accompany field visits, following positive recent examples of doing this, to increase DFID staff understanding of ICAI's work.

Action Secretariat: To ensure that Commissioner presentations to DFID country offices are planned into visits as standard.

Correspondence and Meetings

5. AC-M summarised the correspondence received and recent meetings held. This included her attendance at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee meeting in Paris, where she and the DFID Head of Evaluation did a joint presentation on ICAI's and DFID's respective roles in scrutinising and evaluating the UK's aid expenditure. She also updated Commissioners on a meeting with Cabinet Office officials who are looking at DFID's use of evidence.
6. Commissioners fed back on meetings with DFID, including with Mark Lowcock (DFID Permanent Secretary) on our Private Sector review; and the Chief Commissioner's meeting with Ewen McDonald, the Deputy Secretary of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

7. Commissioners agreed that a breakfast meeting held with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) was useful and should be the start of an ongoing conversation with the sector. Commissioners asked the Secretariat to arrange a follow-up meeting.

Action Secretariat: To arrange a follow-up meeting with NGO partners.

Risk Management

8. AC-M led a discussion of risk management issues. This included working with DFID to ensure continuity of ICAI's functions into its next period of operations from May 2015.

International Climate Fund (ICF) Briefing

9. GW welcomed officials from DFID, DECC and DEFRA to the meeting. Officials made introductions and gave an overview of: the ICF's purpose and structure; its three focus areas (adaptation, low carbon development and forests); spending and results to date; and the recent refresh of the ICF's strategy.
10. Commissioners probed a range of areas including: the reasons for underspending to date, including the need to build capacity; the ICF's approach to risk capital; learning and scale-up of initiatives; how the central co-ordination works and how to ensure a coherent package of activities; and how the ICF fits into the wider global architecture. When questioned about the major constraints to success, officials highlighted a number of areas, including commercial expertise, constraints regarding delivery partners, the ability to be responsive, defining appropriate indicators and managing higher-risk initiatives. Commissioners agreed that it was very important to learn from what does not work, as well as from what does.
11. During the course of the discussion, Commissioners requested further information analysing why the ICF's Key Performance Indicators are the correct ones and how the results numbers are derived, as well as any further evidence available on the transformational and catalytic objectives and impacts of the ICF. Officials agreed to share this information. GW thanked the officials from all departments for their contributions.

Action Officials: To share with ICAI further information on the ICF as requested.

ICAI Phase 2 and the Model

12. ACM led a discussion on how to manage ICAI's transition to Phase 2 from May 2015. It was recognised that practical challenges and constraints would need to be factored into plans carefully. Commissioners discussed the value of a shadow operating period for newly appointed Commissioners and the timetable for the transition of Commissioners and contractors. Potential actions to increase the sustainability of the ICAI model in future were also discussed.

Programme Update

13. MW updated the meeting on the current status of the programme. He reported that Year 3 was on track and gave Commissioners an overview of upcoming programme activity, including Commissioner visits. Commissioners agreed with proposed Lead Commissioner allocations for remaining Year 4 reports. Commissioners also approved a proposed improvement to the review process,

involving an additional discussion between the team and Lead Commissioner shortly after the initial findings meeting, to assist with honing the findings of more complex reviews before report drafting begins.

14. ER gave Commissioners an overview of the Year 2 follow-up programme and highlighted current trends. Commissioners agreed that the process whereby ICAI highlights any particularly concerning issues to the Secretary of State ahead of report publication should also apply to the follow-up work.

Communication Update

15. SH summarised recent activity on the ICAI website. He then led a discussion of the use of blogs by review team leaders. Commissioners agreed this should be encouraged.
16. There was a discussion on the use of events and conferences to both promulgate lessons identified from ICAI reports and to engage with stakeholders and other bodies. It was agreed that SH would look at developing a programme of events including the potential for a Commissioner-led conference.

Annual Report Synthesis of ICAI Findings

17. MC presented a paper on the concept and possible themes for this piece of work and requested early Commissioner input. Commissioners agreed the value of this work and gave some feedback on areas they wished to see included within the analysis. Commissioners were content with the contextual elements of the paper.

Discussion with the Contractor Consortium

18. The Commissioners gave feedback to the consortium on the delivery of recent reports and lessons arising from these were discussed. ICAI's experience to date of using local consultants to carry out beneficiary engagement was discussed and it was agreed that the contractor would present a paper to the next Board meeting (as per the action from the 27th Board meeting).
19. There was a discussion on the scope of the upcoming Security and Justice report. The team leader outlined that DFID has made a corporate commitment to providing 10 million girls and women with improved access to security and justice services by 2015, with security and justice results promised in 18 countries under the Bilateral Aid Review. Commissioners discussed the complex, multi-dimensional challenge of combating violence against women and girls. It was agreed that this review should focus on this issue, with more work needed to firm up the review's scope more precisely.

Action Log from 23rd ICAI Board Meeting (9th July 2013)

Secretariat	To build events into communications planning.	Complete
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Action Log from 25th ICAI Board Meeting (29th October 2013)

Secretariat	To write a short briefing paper to sit alongside the Assessment Framework. This should explain the new framework and outline our approach to reviews.	Complete
Secretariat	To draft presentation for country visits and to investigate the options for carrying out learning sessions with stakeholders following report publication.	Complete

Action Log from 26th ICAI Board Meeting (3rd December 2013)

Commissioners	To send (i) introductory presentations used during field visits; and (ii) a summary of questions asked during these sessions to the Secretariat.	Complete
Secretariat	To circulate a meeting note of the learning event held with past and current review team leaders.	Ongoing

Action Log from 27th ICAI Board Meeting (13th January 2014)

Secretariat	To draft a letter for the Chief Commissioner to send to the Secretary of State summarising ICAI advice on the transition to Phase 2.	Complete
Secretariat	To consult with the International Development Committee on publication dates for upcoming reports.	Complete
Contractor	To produce a note on intended beneficiary engagement in the field.	Ongoing
Secretariat	To organise engagement between team leaders and Lead Commissioners post-initial findings meetings.	Ongoing

Action Log from 28th ICAI Board Meeting (3rd March 2014)

Secretariat	To ensure that Commissioner presentations to DFID country offices are planned into visits as standard.	
Secretariat	To arrange a follow-up meeting with NGO partners	
Officials	To share with ICAI further information on the ICF as requested.	

