

**Minutes of the 30th Board Meeting of the
Independent Commission for Aid Impact
12th May 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: Jennie Barugh, DFID (JB)
James Price, DFID (JP)
Rachel Turner, DFID (RT)
Anne Philpott, DFID (AP)
Jon Gorrie, KPMG (JG)
Matthew Smith, KPMG (MS)
Marcus Cox, Agulhas (MC)
Nigel Thornton, Aghulas (NT)

Apologies: John Githongo (ICAI Commissioner)

Details of the meeting: Monday 12th May, 09:15 – 16:00

Welcome

1. The Chief Commissioner welcomed everyone to ICAI's 30th Board Meeting.

Minutes of the 29th Board Meeting

2. The minutes of the last ICAI Board meeting, held on 7th April 2014, were formally approved.

Action Log

3. AC-M led a discussion of progress against both outstanding and completed actions from previous Board Meetings. There was a discussion of a summer stakeholder event hosted by ICAI to follow on from past engagement activities. Members of the International Development Committee, NGOs, think tanks, DFID staff and other stakeholders would be invited.

IDC Update

4. SH led a discussion regarding future preparations for report publication. Commissioners thanked SH for his work preparing for report publication thus far. It was agreed that the new template for briefing material should ensure that Commissioners are given greater clarity on key issues and likely discussion topics. Commissioners emphasised that contractor briefing should always be provided in a timely manner before publication.

Correspondence and Meetings

5. AC-M summarised the correspondence received and recent meetings held. This included the IDC session on our Afghanistan report; GW speaking at the UK Evaluation Society's conference; and GW's meeting with Richard Keys, the Chairman of DFID's Audit Committee.

6. GW notified Commissioners that he had written to the Secretary of State regarding our follow-up review findings on DFID Nigeria's Girls Education Programme.

Risk Management

7. AC-M led a discussion of risk management issues. This included an update on risks discussed at the April Board meeting.

Phase 2

8. AC-M gave an overview of the status of ICAI's transition to Phase 2, including recruitment of new Commissioners and procurement of a new contractor. She highlighted the process for an early market engagement with potential contractors in June. GW requested that ICAI's website include details of these processes as appropriate.

Action: To keep ICAI's website updated on processes related to the transition.

Briefing on DFID's Approach to Impact

9. GW welcomed JB and JP to the meeting. DG gave an overview of what our Impact review would cover and progress on the review. JB gave a presentation on DFID's approach to impact. She highlighted DFID's focus over the past few years on value for money, which incorporates consideration of cost and impact. She described the balance between bottom-up programming choices in-country and high-level strategies and commitments. Commissioners referenced findings from recent ICAI reports about a lack of coherence at the portfolio level in-country.
10. Commissioners asked about the line of sight to the poor, realism of goals, monitoring and evaluation and the emphasis on business cases. JB emphasised the need to keep an eye on multiple factors as part of programme management and discussed DFID's end-to-end review. There was also discussion of DFID's new Country Poverty Reduction Diagnostic and how this differs from previous processes. GW thanked JB & JP for attending.

Programme Update

11. MW updated the meeting on the current status of the programme. He reported that the Year 3 and 4 programmes were on track and that there had been some changes to the timetable which would make the programme more feasible. Commissioners were keen to build, as far as possible, a sense of continuity into the programme between phase 1 and phase 2.
12. MW went through the current projected programme budget and the dates for forthcoming Commissioner visits. Commissioners assessed the contractor's performance over the past year, to be summarised in ICAI's forthcoming Annual Report.

Annual Report Discussion

13. SH updated the meeting on publication dates and on deadlines for final comments and for the DFID fact checking process. He talked the meeting through the synthesis paper which will form part of the Annual Report. MC and NT also pointed out specific areas for discussion. Commissioners gave their views on this aspect of the document, as well as some more general comments.

Discussion with the Contractor Consortium

14. The Commissioners gave feedback to the consortium on the delivery of recent reports, terms of reference and inception reports. In particular, there was a discussion on the private sector report which had recently been published.

15. As media interest in our reports grows, Commissioners expressed a desire to ensure that they are well prepared in a timely manner through the new briefing template and process.
16. MC presented an options paper for ICAI's planned report on Ministry of Defence (MOD) spending, with three options for discussion. Commissioners agreed on the importance of understanding MOD ODA spending but also felt that this report should include consideration of aid spending by other government departments. It was agreed that the report would explore the extent and purpose of non-DFID ODA, whether it is appropriately managed and coordinated and whether ODA reporting is accurate. This preliminary investigation would not include field visits or an assessment of effectiveness or value for money but would be useful to identify non-DFID ODA programmes for examination in future ICAI reports.
17. NT led a discussion of the second options paper on the planned multilateral review. He explained that ICAI's work plan sets out a sector-specific focus but presented the benefits of a more thematic approach. It was agreed that a concept note should be developed for a study looking at the UK's core funding of multilaterals and how this interacts with the UK's use of multilaterals for delivering bilateral assistance.

Meeting with Rachel Turner

18. GW welcomed RT and AP to the meeting. RT gave some introductory comments which covered the challenges of delivering aid in fragile states, remote monitoring of programmes and how DFID identifies potential delivery partners.
19. There was a discussion of DFID's work on results-based payments in its programmes. Commissioners also expressed an interest in DFID's Country Poverty Reduction Diagnostics and how these are informing future programme choices.
20. There was a discussion of what DFID should be doing to oversee the work of multilaterals and RT said that ICAI's reviews had made a big and positive difference to the confidence of DFID staff to hold multilaterals to account. RT and Commissioners also discussed how often DFID staff go into the field to view programmes for themselves.
21. GW thanked everyone for their contribution.

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

Secretariat	To arrange a follow-up meeting with NGO partners	Ongoing
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Action Log from 29th ICAI Board Meeting (7th April 2014)

Secretariat	To develop a draft a set of protocols for ICAI interaction on Twitter.	Ongoing
Secretariat	To fix a date and attendee list for the summer engagement event.	Ongoing
Secretariat	To update the Assessment Framework to include a question on compliance with new gender equality legislation.	Ongoing

Action Log from 30th ICAI Board Meeting (12th May 2014)

Secretariat	To keep ICAI's website updated on processes related to the transition.	
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