

3rd Board meeting of the Independent Commission for Aid Impact – 5 May 2011

Attendees

Commissioners: Graham Ward (GW)
Mark Foster (MF)
John Githongo (JG)
Diana Good (DG)
Secretariat: Tom McDonald (TM)
Clare Robathan (CR)
Santosh Chana (SC)

Details of the meeting – Thursday 5 May, 12.30 pm – 5.00 pm

Welcome and Introductions

The Chief Commissioner welcomed everyone to the 3rd Board Meeting of ICAI and thanked the Commissioners and Secretariat for their input and contributions to the International Development Select Committee (IDC) hearing and the DFID All Staff Meeting.

Minutes of the 2nd Board Meeting

The Commissioners approved the minutes of the last Board meeting.

Action Log

TM went through the Action Log and outstanding actions. There was a discussion of further updates since the last meeting.

Matters Arising

There was a brief discussion on DFID's official travel policy. SC confirmed that no air miles were added when flight bookings were made and it was agreed that the Secretariat will ensure that none are added when arranging travel.

The Board asked about the note from DFID on evaluation questions. TM said that DFID had produced a note on providing a business case for an evaluation and will circulate a copy to the Commissioners, together with a paper on country programme evaluations.

The Commissioners reflected on the recent IDC pre-appointment hearing and the DFID All Staff Meeting and agreed that they were both useful and raised relevant issues.

The Board discussed further changes to the Framework Agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding. The Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding and Framework Agreement.

Work Plan

The Commissioners discussed in detail the Work Plan and considered the recommendations made by the IDC at the pre-appointment hearing and in their subsequent letter.

GW stressed that there should be a formal written agreement of how work will be undertaken in any joint evaluations undertaken. It was agreed that the multilateral elements should be made clearer in the Work Plan.

It was agreed that ICAI should consider following up the IDC's work in a separate report.

It was agreed that the Work Plan should make clear each proposals connection to the Millennium Development Goals.

There was a discussion on the definition of aid effectiveness and value for money. GW suggested that the contractor could be asked to produce a paper on value for money and aid effectiveness which could provide a statement of ICAI's view of value for money and aid effectiveness. The Board agreed that this study would be included as a flex report in Year 1 and this should be reflected in the Work Plan.

GW stressed that the order of the reports in the Work Plan was not necessarily the order of publication. There will be a need to follow up reports that take account of outcomes and changing priorities which could be done in the Year 3 flex element.

Synthesis Report

The Board discussed the Synthesis Report produced by Roger Drew. It was noted that Commissioners' comments had been taken on board and ICAI had made a commitment to publish the document on the website on Thursday 12 May.

Action Secretariat: To circulate an updated Action Log.

Action Secretariat: To ensure no air miles are automatically added when arranging travel.

Action TM: To circulate DFID Business Case and country programme evaluation paper

Action TM: To e-mail Roger Drew regarding sources for charts in the synthesis report.

Action TM: To amend the Work Plan as agreed and to respond to IDC recommendations.

Definitions Paper

The Board discussed in detail the note on Report Definitions.

DG suggested that the definitions should be discussed with the contractor. Commissioners provided lists of some of the criteria they consider could be used as the criteria for assessing the effectiveness and value for money of UK aid. MF said he would produce a note for discussion at the next Board meeting which could then be used for further discussion with the Contractor.

Action Secretariat: To discuss definitions with the contractor.

Action MF: To circulate a note on 'terms' for discussion at the next Board meeting.

Update on Contracting Process

TM confirmed that the Secretary of State for International Development had approved the contract in principle.

Public Consultation

Commissioners noted that the Work Plan had taken into account the consultation responses and all submissions forwarded separately of the consultation had also been considered.

The Board discussed in detail the public response to the consultation, in particular the countries and areas they wanted ICAI to focus on.

It was agreed that ICAI will take into account public perception and views when considering any review.

The Board discussed aid to India, which had been high on the list in the public consultation and asked if the DFID Country Office/Internal Audit Team were aware of the recent articles in the media.

Any other business

JG confirmed that he is now unable to take part in the visit to Sierra Leone due to other commitments. He will provide some pointers for the visit that will help in obtaining more local perspective.

DG stressed that there should be open access to local people without aid officers being present.

Action JG: To provide some pointers for the Sierra Leone visit