

**Minutes of the 37th Board Meeting of the
Independent Commission for Aid Impact
Thursday 13th March 2015**

Attendees

Chief Commissioner: Graham Ward (GW)

Chief Commissioner Designate : Alison Evans (AE)

Commissioners: Diana Good (DG)
 Mark Foster (MF)

Secretariat: Alexandra Cran-McGreehin (AC-M)
 Caroline Daniels (CD)
 Miriam McCarthy (MM)
 Nisha Iswaran (NI)
 Sam Harrison (SH)

Apologies: John Githongo
 Matthew Wilkins

Details of the meeting: Thursday 13 March 2015, 09:15 – 14:30

Welcome

1. The Chief Commissioner welcomed everyone to ICAI's 37th Board Meeting and congratulated AE on her appointment as the next Chief Commissioner.

Minutes of the 36th Board Meeting

2. The minutes of the last ICAI Board meeting, held on 29 January 2015, were formally approved.

Action Log

3. AC-M led a discussion of progress against both outstanding and completed actions from previous Board meetings.

Correspondence and Meetings

4. AC-M and SH summarised the correspondence received and recent meetings held. There was discussion on the recent management response to the spend of Official Development Assistance by departments other than DFID report and a set of correspondence in relation to a whistleblowing case.
5. There had been meetings with DFID in regard to the Fragile States and Security and Justice reports in order to discuss findings. MF has met with DFID on the forthcoming Multilateral report. ACM reported on the OECD-DAC event at the ODI and SH had also held meetings with UKAN and BOND teams.

Action Commissioners: To notify the team of any ICAI-related events that they are attending.

6. DG notified the meeting that she would be speaking at the Skoll World Forum, the Oxford Good Governance Conference with Stefan Dercon and Paul Collier, and the MoD Think Tank DCDC at a workshop on conflict prevention.

Risk Management

7. AC-M led a discussion of risk management issues, particularly around the timely delivery of the remainder of ICAI's planned reports for Phase 1.

Programme Update

8. ACM updated the meeting on the current status of the programme. The Board discussed the progress that had been made since the last board meeting and the recent ICAI reports on Fragile States, Non-DFID ODA spend and Security & Justice. Commissioners discussed points relating to the upcoming Business in Development, Impact, Multilaterals and Follow-Up reports. There was discussion on the Payment-by-Results agenda.
9. The Board were informed of the provisional publication dates for the remaining reports. It was noted that there is little room for slippage.
10. ACM led a discussion on the contractor performance which will form part of the 2014-15 ICAI Annual Report.

Transition Update

11. MM updated the Commissioners on the transition process and confirmed that the new Commissioners would take up post in Summer 2015. MM informed the Board that DFID required an estimate of how many days they would require to complete the workplan.

Action Commissioners: Confirm the days needed for Phase 1

12. SH updated commissioners on communications activities. There was discussion about an engagement event in partnership with the African Research Institute provisionally to be held on June 11. Details of timings and agenda for the event will be circulated once confirmed. He is investigating other opportunities to talk about our findings from the last four years.

Discussion with KPMG

13. There was a discussion with the Consortium about the Impact, Follow-Up and Multilaterals reports' processes and progress. It was agreed that KPMG would work with the Secretariat to deliver the remaining reports on time and to a high standard.

Lessons Learned Discussion

14. There was a discussion on the lessons that had been identified and learned during the last four years broadly divided into three subject areas: the role of Commissioners, review teams and beneficiary feedback.
15. GW, MF and DG related their experiences as Commissioners. They explained that the role had evolved quickly into a more hands-on one. This had led to a greater

breadth of knowledge and insight which proved useful both for reviews and for select committee hearings as well as providing consistency of approach and learning for future reports. The country visits meant that Commissioners had greater ownership of reports and that their quality assurance was at a deeper level. The principle of collective responsibility had been applied, leading to the sharing of knowledge and informed decision making.

16. The Commissioner team believed that the make-up of review teams was essential to delivering good quality reports. There needs to be a good team leader who has a professional relationship with the lead Commissioner. MF noted that this has led to a reduction in drafting time. He went on to state that a good team needs people who are good at logical thinking and engagement; development of a narrative on the basis of the evidence; and the ability to manage organisational process of running reviews. DG agreed, adding that team members should be able to probe and investigate effectively.
17. DG led a discussion on beneficiary feedback and the use of it to triangulate findings. The Commissioners interview all levels of the impact chain from national government officials (at Ministerial and executive level) to Parliamentarians to regional and local officials, stakeholders such as DFID and their implementers, other players such as the UN, World Bank, the EU, NGOs, and think tanks, right the way through to the intended beneficiaries themselves including those who do benefit and those who do not. All of this evidence is weighed up and used to assess and verify findings, establish areas of consistency and inconsistency, checked against written reports and claims. This has always provided important evidence. Without the evidence of the intended beneficiaries the Commissioners would often not have been able to identify what aspects of programming was actually working and which were not working.
18. AE thanked the Commissioners for sharing their lessons and agreed that a meeting with the other new Commissioners would be useful.

AOB

19. There was no other business.

Action Log from 34th ICAI Board Meeting (27th October 2014)

Secretariat	To engage internal stakeholders to determine beneficiaries, scope and structure for an ICAI database	Complete
-------------	--	----------

Action Log from 35th ICAI Board Meeting (1st December 2014)

Secretariat	To write a paper on database design and functionality.	Complete
-------------	--	----------

Action Log from 36th ICAI Board Meeting (29th January 2015)

Commissioners	To discuss handover with the Chief Commissioner Designate and agree on plan of action.	Complete
Secretariat	To develop engagement opportunities for forthcoming Phase 1 reports.	Ongoing

Action Log from 37th ICAI Board Meeting (13 March 2015)

Commissioners	Confirm how many days are needed for the remainder of Phase 1	Ongoing
Secretariat	Circulate confirmed detail of the Phase 1 engagement event	Ongoing