

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

SAUL/ZILKHA ROOM

TRANSPARENCY AT THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION:
LAUNCHING THE PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE REPORT

Washington, D.C.

Friday, February 6, 2015

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. INGRAM: Good morning, everybody.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

MR. INGRAM: Can I hear that louder? Good morning, everybody.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

MR. INGRAM: Thank you for joining us today. The session today is hosted by Brookings and the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network. Most of you know Brookings as an independent research institution, and MFAN, the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, is an alliance of people from think tanks, NGOs, former government officials, who are dedicated to helping to improve the effectiveness of U.S. assistance.

The purpose of the session today is very practical. We want to get on the table lessons from key donor organizations on the implementation of aid transparency. Why do we care about aid transparency? I will just list four rationales: One, is it improves decision-making, two, it improves accountability, three, it allows for better sharing of information and coordination, and finally I think it helps protect the mission of organization. It keeps them targeted to the mission and protects them from tugs and pulls to go beyond that.

Why do we take the time to hold this session? The answer there is very simple. A number of agencies, both government and non-government, are struggling with the process of implementing aid transparency. We're taking advantage today of the recently-released MCC paper on its experience in moving to aid transparency to have a conversation with people from donor organizations that have been in the forefront of aid transparency on what their experience has been.

We're fortunate to have with us today, thanks to modern technology, the lead experts in four of those organizations: Aleem Walji to my right.

MR. WALJI: Walji.

MR. INGRAM: Walji.

MR. WALJI: Thank you.

MR. INGRAM: Okay, pronounce the J. Is the director at the Innovation Lab at the World Bank. He oversees open government transparency and accountability and has been particularly interested in leveraging technology to increase social accountability and to improve service delivery. He also serves as the lead of the development marketplace and serves on the Global Advisory Council on the future of government at the World Economic Forum. That sounds like another session, the future of world government.

John Adams, John, if you would wave to everybody. You're not up there yet, but you will be sure. He's Head of Business Innovation Team at DFID. He's been the technical lead for open-data initiatives, including DFID's publishing to IATI and including DFID using that data for its own internal management. He has led DFID into being one of the foremost transparent donors including through development of the DFID development tracker.

Theo van de Sande is the policy officer of the Directorate of Development Cooperation at Minbuza, which is Benevolence Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He is responsible for open data and data transparency and again has led Minbuza's effort to post their data to IATI and to use that data for internal purposes. He has pioneered the approach of publish once, use often.

Beth Tritter, to my left, is known to many of you in this room, but probably not in her current position as of 3 weeks ago as vice president for Policy and Evaluation at the MCC. Prior to that, you all probably knew her in a role at the Glover Park Group where she was the managing director of the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network for which data transparency has been a key objective. Before that, she was legislative director for Nita Lowey, a Congresswoman from New York, who's been one of the foremost champions of foreign assistance in the Congress.

We will begin the conversation with Beth making a brief presentation, 10 or 12 minutes, on the MCC paper. I will then engage the panelists in a conversation, and then I will turn the program over to you all to engage the panelists in further dialogue and issues.

Beth, thank you for being with us.

MS. TRITTER: Thank you, George. Thanks for having me.

Three weeks in, it's really an honor to be here and really to stand on the shoulders of all of the wonderful people at MCC and outside of MCC who helped to put this paper together. I'm very grateful to Brookings and MFAN for the platform. MCC's really proud of its work, and we're always happy for an opportunity to share it and frankly to learn from the experiences of other people in the field.

We have a great team from MCC that's actually here today, and I want to call out specifically Heather Hanson and Catherine Marschner for the excellent paper which I encourage you all to read if you haven't had a chance to read it yet. Also, we have Sarah Jane Staats, Jack Molyneaux, Jen Sturdy, who have been extremely helpful, and I'd be really remiss if I didn't call out my predecessor in the job that I'm in right now, Sheila Herling, from whom many of you have heard on the value of transparency and who provided a lot of the leadership within the organization that allowed the transparency agenda to move forward at MCC.

The paper we're launching today shares what we've learned from 10 years of putting the principle of transparency into practice. I'm going to talk about some of those lessons, but first I wanted to provide some brief background on MCC's approach to transparency and how it's woven into what we do and how we do it.

As a government agency, we take our responsibility to U.S. taxpayers very seriously, and we're transparent so that American taxpayers can see how their money's spent and make sure that we're getting results for our investments. But ultimately, we believe that transparency is a tool. It's a means to an end, and it's a tool for achieving more effective aid and for driving development results that transform societies. Ultimately, our mission is to reduce poverty through economic growth. That's what we're trying to do. That's why we're transparent.

The Obama administration has made it a big priority to promote openness and transparency, and one of the most visible results has been a changed playing field on foreign aid

transparency with the adoption of clear policy goals for these efforts. These are laid out, if you want a little extra weekend reading, in the U.S. Government National Action Plan developed as part our active leadership in the Open Government Partnership.

Where does MCC fit in? On this front, we have always been ahead of the curve. We were formed with transparency in our DNA, in large part because the effectiveness of all of our other principles, policy results, and country ownership rests upon a foundation of openness. For instance, MCC remains the only aid agency in the world to base country selection so heavily and transparently on public, third-party performance data.

This drives our selection process and often inspires countries to reform their policies even before we spend any money precisely because we've taken decisions about assistance out of this black box in which it often exists elsewhere in the world. We've seen this recently in -- oh, look at that. I guess I said something good. (Laughter)

MR. INGRAM: Hey, you brought the light on.

MS. TRITTER: Now we're being more transparent, I guess. (Laughter)

We've seen this recently in Côte d'Ivoire when the government used the score card that we use to guide its efforts to improve its family code and therefore improve its performance on the economic indicator we use. Côte d'Ivoire now passes that indicator and, partially as a result, is in the early stages of working towards a threshold program. In fact, we have a team going out there next week to work that.

Transparency also advances our principle of ownership, enabling governments to manage donor assistance as part of their own national plans and make data-driven decisions about their own budgets and helping citizens to hold their governments accountable.

Our transparent practices leave lasting effects such as in Morocco where the government credited MCC for inspiring public consultation in the government's first ever citizen-driven budget and design an implementation of new government programs. In Armenia, where one of our in-country

Millennium Challenge Accounts, or MCA, colleagues returned to the Ministry of Finance's donor coordinating unit and helped to develop a monitoring system based on the MCC, MCA monitoring model.

Transparency also advances our accountability for results. For our partners and for us to measure results in ways that improve the impact of every dollar spent, we need to share data and evidence on aid effectiveness. At MCC, we share pretty much everything. We share our economic analysis, expected rates of return, compact agreements, and monitoring indicators.

We use open, transparent procurement processes so businesses can compete for opportunities. We have a robust public evaluation catalogue that includes plans, data, and findings from our impact and performance evaluations, and we have established a disclosure review board that helps us release survey data sets while balancing privacy and public interest.

This is also why we became the first agency to fully report data to foreignassistance.gov, the first U.S. government agency to develop a comprehensive data file that meets the standard set by IATI, and the first U.S. government agency to submit a single data file in XML to foreignassistance.gov that meets all of the requirements.

In all of these efforts, our colleagues at State and USAID have been supportive partners working actively with MCC on data and process improvements.

We're pretty fortunate. Because transparency is a foundational principle of MCC, we haven't had to retrofit a transparency agenda on top of all of these other systems that have been setup over decades and decades. But even with that advantage, it hasn't always been easy.

A decade in, we've crystallized six lessons that you can find in the paper in greater detail that are going to steer our own efforts going forward and we hope will be guideposts for others. What are those six lessons?

First, transparency needs leaders and champions. This is critical to overcoming bureaucratic fears and inertia about sharing good and bad information. It requires leaders willing to support risk-taking and staff who feel properly incentivized and supported to try something new. It also

requires clear policy guidance to ensure that a presumption of disclosure, which is the default position of transparency that MCC has embraced, is implemented properly.

Two, we need a crack team of staff with the right skills. Practicing transparency responsibly requires staff who can balance data quality, openness, and potential risks, something that can't be accomplished by policy staff or data analysts or technical experts alone. We built an interdisciplinary team of professionals to guide our efforts, and we continue to leverage this team to refine our approach and up our game.

Three, we depend on your input. Put simply, and I know this because I come from the advocacy side and have provided some of that input in the past probably for better or for worse, if you and other stakeholders, including MCC's beneficiaries, and I would say especially MCC's beneficiaries, don't find the information we provide to be useful, we're not doing our jobs well.

We've prioritized providing information to stakeholders that stakeholders have asked for, and we work hard to contribute to IATI precisely because it was developed through a multi-stakeholder process, and so the likelihood that the data would be used is higher than perhaps other ways to share data.

We're going to continue to consult widely with consumers of our data, and we hope you will continue to communicate with us. Our effectiveness going forward depends on it, and we feel like we can only continue to be as innovative as we've been because of the help that you give us and the feedback that you give us.

Four, implementing transparency requires adaptability and flexibility. Technical, regulatory, staffing, and resource challenges have required MCC to constantly adapt its approach to practicing transparency. At times, we've had to rethink how to align the information gathering for internal purposes with the information that outside stakeholders want in order to ensure sure that the data collection and reporting systems that we've setup are responsive to both and don't duplicate efforts or create more work for people.

We've recruited short-term, expert technical assistance to get quickly up to speed in areas in which we need help. We've done a lot of due diligence on what it takes to ensure this function is adequately staffed and resourced in the long run. We've learned that it's best to pilot new projects and approaches before committing to an approach for the long term.

Five, data must be in useable formats, including and especially for our own staff. At the outset, MCC staff were spending a great deal of time producing IATI data that they really couldn't access in a useable format. As you might imagine, this makes learning from our own data more difficult than it should be, but it's also a disincentive for staff to do the hard work necessary to release the data. Ensuring staff can use the data they helped to prepare, including by developing visualization tools that we hope to share publicly in the future, has helped to create the (inaudible) needed to ensure data collection efforts remain robust.

Finally, transparency is a culture, not a policy. Transparency, as I said, at the MCC is baked into our DNA. It's a cultural choice. It requires people to decide every single day in every single decision that their default is going to be transparency and for them to know implicitly that their behavior is going to be rewarded and incentivized.

People need to be free to consider questions of how to balance openness and privacy and how best to apply transparency while advancing our effort to fight poverty through economic growth. We can't just be transparent when it's convenient, but when we can't disclose information because we've determined it would harm our mission we won't, and we'll tell our stakeholders why.

With these lessons, where do we go from here? Above all, our commitment to transparency is about achieving better results and empowering citizens and our partner countries to hold their own governments accountable for results over the long term. We envision partner country governments, over time, increasing their capacity to manage their own domestic resources effectively enough to meet their own national goals. We envision strong civil society organizations capable of tracking spending and holding their own government's accountable, stamping out corruption and waste,

and ensuring spending benefits the poor. We envision private-sector-led growth from greater investment and business activities that will have broad-based, societal benefits.

As in most things, achieving the vision means focusing on the details, particularly with respect to usability of and demand for data. While donors have made progress on the supply side, as a community we still face some big challenges, particularly with respect to awareness, accessibility, timeliness, and traceability.

That's why MCC is, among other things, working to use visualization tools to make our data more useable, adding geospatial information to our audio reporting in the coming year, and beginning to work with our Millennium Challenge Account counterparts and partner countries to increase their ability to report to IATI.

I think we can probably all agree at this point that data supply, while still imperfect, outstrips usability and demand. In solving that piece, which would help bridge the gap between transparency and accountability which is really the Holy Grail for us, is certainly something that we at MCC are going to be thinking about in the coming months, and I hope it's something that we can discuss today.

Finally, I want to thank Brookings and MFAN again for the opportunity to share our lessons. We hope that all of our stakeholders will share your experiences and will keep pushing us, as you have done so ably, and pushing others, as you should, to be more transparent and not just when things are going well. This is critical if we want to learn, but it requires a spirit of openness from us and from you as well as the political space to continue to be honest and rigorous. We look forward to continuing our good work together. I'm excited for the conversation.

MR. INGRAM: Beth, thank you very much.

MS. TRITTER: Thanks, George.

MR. INGRAM: I thank MCC for publishing this paper and putting out there their experiences and to you for starting this conversation.

MS. TRITTER: My pleasure.

MR. INGRAM: Beth, at the beginning of her conversation, began to get into the issue of the value proposition of why we care about data transparency, and I'd like to ask the other three panelists to weigh in on that.

I'd like to start with Aleem. Aleem, I'd like you to bring into this the conversation we had earlier this week because you made the distinction for me of not just the value proposition, but the business proposition, which, specifically for the bank, may be different from some of the other donors.

I'd like to start with you and then go to John and Theo.

MR. WALJI: The bank began this journey in 2010 when we had the access to information policy, which for us was really a game changer in the sense that this was the decision that we made, that everything that we had should be open except for certain things that wouldn't be with respect to certain types of contracts, etc., etc., where there is a proprietary nature, for example the IFC, the private sector arm of the bank.

But what we realized with access to information is that it was, kind of, a boil-the-ocean approach, and the data wasn't easily accessible. It wasn't in machine-readable formats. We didn't have a specific policy on usability and reusability. We weren't using a creative commons kind of a license.

Interesting enough, this wasn't because we made a decision not to. We just didn't realize that this is what one should do. I remember having lunch at that time with Bob Zelek, and I had just come from Google, and Hans Rosling some of you know, I used to share an office with Hans. He said, you know, all these institutions like the UN and the World Bank, they really suffer from DBHD, like I should know what DBHD was, and he said database-hugging disorder. (Laughter)

He said, you know, we're taxpayers. We invest in these institutions, and why can't we have access to the data? He said, I'm making a movie, some of you may have seen it, and I'm going to dress up as Robin Hood, and I'm going to come to these institutions in Washington and say, why is it that what the White House is doing on 1600 some of the rest of you on Pennsylvania Avenue and on Mass Avenue, etc., aren't doing the same thing? That occurred to me that there was an opportunity, and the

World Bank would lead the way.

At the time, we were the first multilateral to have an open-data policy, which was part of our broader access-to-information policy. But many of the folks didn't realize why it was even important. They said, okay, we make our data open. What'll happen then? Within about 10 weeks, we had more traffic to our data catalogue than we had to the home page, and nobody understood that. Since then, the usage has grown 15 times.

We've realized that our users are not the same as our clients. It's not just the governments of the world that lend, that are interested in this information. There's civil society organizations, academic institutions, interested users from all walks of life. We have continued to expand this. We now have 9000 indicators that are available. We have an open-knowledge policy that all of our publications are now available for free and downloadable in a digital format. We're now looking at open contracts. The Open Aid Partnership is something that we helped to start with the help of folks from the Development Gateway -- I see them in the back. I hope you're smiling -- and lots of other partners including the Canadians and the Brits and Swedes and the Finns, etc.

But the distinction I was making is I think the value proposition is clear. We say we want to be open about what we do and also open about what we know. There's many of us in the institution that I would call our, sort of, prophets of the message. The question we keep being asked is what's the impact that anything comes out of this? We make an investment. We've now invested in systems, technology, people, departments that do this, but where is the evidence that this makes a difference in development results? There's not much, right?

I'm not saying that it's not making a difference. I'm the one that's been trying to push this, and now I'm saying open by default should really be the way that the Bank works. But I guess the question we're being asked is that this costs us quite a bit. It's an investment. What's the business proposition?

One can talk about externalities. We have examples of all kinds of enterprises,

institutions, that wouldn't exist or wouldn't be able to do the work they did if it wasn't for the curated data that organizations like us make available. But that's the question that we have to answer. I make a distinction between the value proposition and the business case, and we're still asking ourselves that question.

MR. INGRAM: Your opening comments remind me of in the early 1990s when I was working in the former Soviet Union, and I realized that people there, as in the west, saw information as power. The difference is they saw that power as being built by hugging the information and keeping it to themselves whereas in the West we saw sharing information is a way to build up your own influence and power.

I articulate that that's Western approach, it's not the Western approach enough. As we move to John, those of you in the back, DDA, others, there are seats up here in the front. Please claim a seat. John and Theo, as you talk about the value proposition, also pick up on what Aleem talked about, and that is what's the impact and how do we tell the impact and what do we need to do to determine what the impact is of open data. John?

MR. HOLT: Yeah, thanks, George, and hi everybody from a very sunny Scotland. An unusual thing in Scotland, but it means that my face is quite dark.

I think for us, the value proposition for data transparency starts with what Beth talked about, which is about accountability directly to our stakeholders, essentially to the U.K. taxpayer, for what we're investing in. If we're open to our taxpayers it means that they can then look at what we do, they can critique what we do, but they can also see the outcomes, they can see the results, they can see the impact of the development interventions that we're doing.

I think it's also important that we're sharing stuff that works and stuff that doesn't work. When we're sharing open data, we're not just sharing data on spend and things of that. We're also sharing information on results, information on have we achieved what we meant to achieve. We share all the annual reviews, project completion reviews, and the documentary evidence which gives the impression

that there's some things that don't work and we know why they don't work and we're sharing that openly. I think that's a good thing for others as well.

But for me, the real value proposition, and we've not realized this yet, one of the dimensions I keep talking about is if I was in the private sector, I'd be talking about market intelligence. By each donor and each agency working in a particular sector or a particular geography, being open about what they're doing, what they're trying to address, what results they're achieving, if we pool that information together, we've got a phenomenal amount of information that we can share among the aid community about what works, what doesn't work, what's targeted, and what's not targeted.

I don't think we've exploited that much yet, and I think there's a few glimmers to this deep portal and things of that begin to bring stuff together, but we need to move away from thinking about this as an agency-specific transparency to more community transparency. That's when we'll start to get the benefit to aid targeting, aid delivery, and doing the right thing in the right place.

MR. INGRAM: Thank you. Theo?

MR. VAN DE SANDE: Hello from the Netherlands as well. It's not as sunny as in Scotland, but I don't know whether I look very dark or not, but -- (Laughter)

MR. INGRAM: You're coming through quite well.

MR. VAN DE SANDE: Okay. Thank you very much. Thanks again to MCC for providing a very powerful paper which was very useful and which is completely aligned with what our experience is.

Of course, I'm talking as a donor, an official bilateral donor, which is a very strange perspective on transparency, of course, because it's a limited one. It's a more limited one than Walji was referring to when he said, well, we are also a data producer in other areas.

From our perspective, I think our value proposition, if you want, is much alike as the one presented by MCC, which is, of course, that -- although maybe I can stress again what is the history with reporting to (inaudible) as an official bilateral donor. We have to have acknowledgement, which is accountability to (inaudible) referring to the accountability towards our efforts as (inaudible) providers,

which was to the international community and/or to the Dutch taxpayers an increasing need.

I think this is why we got a bit stuck in terms of what is the relevance of these findings towards what is also, for us of course, a major constituency which is developing countries and the governments and the NGOs and the people in developing countries to see what's coming to them and to see how they can have access to this information in order to steer it, to guide it, to influence what we, as donors, are doing and maybe to even influence local governments.

To us, this emerged into, let's say, a stretch from Dutch Parliament and Dutch citizens in general to become more transparent, and to become more transparent in another way than was allowed to by OECD, more timely, more comprehensive, also touching upon what I heard in many areas already discussed which is results. I think there is, and maybe as a (inaudible) more, but still, I think, a very serious one.

I very much rely on what was the last lesson as presented by MCC, which is transparency as a culture. I think the culture in which we are still fighting -- at least in the Netherlands we are still fighting against -- is the culture of input funding, which is there is so much stress on how much we put into the process and, at least in terms of data, so little in terms of what is the impact of it all. Especially not in data form because everybody expressed a concern for data, for results, which I seriously sympathize with, but at the same time of the 300 IATI publishers, there are only four that actually produce results in the IATI dataset as data.

This year, one of the major strongholds we are having within developing corporations is that, at least on aid data, we have an international standard. I think it will be very relevant in terms of the relevance of the data that we all abide by this standard and that we continue to progress in terms of how to deepen, broaden, and make more precise the IATI standard so that it can actually serve, as John mentioned, in terms of opening a development corporation or development funding as a network. This is going to be one of the major challenges.

To my mind, in many ways, many of the publishers in IATI are still presenting what they

are doing. I'd say there is a direct bilateral relation between what I'm doing as a donor and what is being done in developing countries. In most cases, it's not such a direct linkage. It's just a linkage which takes more and more the shape of networks, and I think one of the major challenges we are facing is in gaining relevance and making more transparent precisely these types of networks instead of pretending as if they are bilateral relations.

MR. INGRAM: Thank you very much. Let's --

MS. TRITTER: I just --

MR. INGRAM: Yeah.

MS. TRITTER: It was just a point to add on to what Aleem was saying about the business case and the value proposition being two different things.

There's obviously the business case for how transparency is going to drive the development results we're seeking to achieve. I would say that for U.S. government agencies, and it could be for others as well. I'd be interested to know.

When I first started working on Capitol Hill 15 years ago, if I wanted to know how much the U.S. government was spending in a particular country, I had to figure out who the right person in the Legislative Affairs Division of USAID was. I need to call them, and they needed to spend a couple weeks, if I was lucky, gathering information for me and coming up with something that may or may not be useful to the purpose that I needed it for, which meant finding information for the people who were actually making decisions about funding for foreign assistance was almost impossible.

I feel like that's one aspect of the business case, which is if we need funding for these things, if we need Congress to approve the funding that the President is asking, if we need the President to feel justified in asking for robust funding, we need to be transparent and accountable to our funders, to the taxpayers, in order to make the case why they should continue to give us the money for it.

Now that's, of course, different than whether or not transparency actually leads to development results. I realize those are two very different things, but I do think that that's an important

part of the business case for people in, sort of, the aid “business.” That in order to get the resources that we need to do the work that we think is going to achieve the results we want, we need to be transparent.

I would say that if you look at the trends in foreign assistance funding, even in the midst of this real financial crisis situation we’ve been in over the last few years with spending cuts -- I think that one of the things that has preserved foreign assistance funding, at least in the United States, is the fact that it is more transparent. Is the fact that anyone on Capitol Hill can go into foreignassistance.gov and find good information about what we’re spending and where. Maybe imperfect information about what we’re spending and where, but good information and certainly light years ahead of where we were 15 years ago. I think that that’s just an important thing to think about as well.

MR. WALJI: If I can just react to that, I think that’s right. I think that from the bilateral point-of-view, as John and others have said, that the idea that we can know as taxpayers in a country what’s happening, what the results of that are, often how small it is, and the impact that it often has as Bill Gates pointed out in his letter last year that the results are actually very good.

But I would say that the difference between what that is and some of the time I spend thinking about is the notion of externalizing accountability. What I mean by that is the accountability that I’m most concerned about is to the beneficiaries on the ground in the countries in which we work, right? That requires not just our data, but a lot of other data in those countries from their own governments from the statistical systems that are often in very bad shape.

For a person in a community in Kenya, they don’t care so much about whether the money came from Canada, the U.K., the U.S., or whatever. They’re worried about, does the school that I go in have textbooks? We understood there was money for bridges. Where is the bridge? Only half of it is built.

The accountability that we also worry about and we think about is for results on the ground in the countries in which we work and the interplay between what we do, which is a fraction. As an example in Kenya, only one percent of the budget is assistance from outside. Now, in Tanzania it’s a lot

greater. But the openness, the transparency, the engagement with the citizens is just as important as what's happening in the countries, between the citizens, etc.

MR. INGRAM: Good, good. Good point. Let's move to the topic of obstacles and what's been done to overcome those obstacles. I'm going to start across the ocean with John and then Theo.

I divide obstacles into three or four categories. I think of political, cultural, the culture of organizations. I think political in terms of the leadership. Either leadership is a block or it overcomes the obstacles. The bureaucracy may be the obstacle or it may be where the dynamic is first created to move to aid data.

I secondly think of technical issues of the problems of getting the data, of integrating systems.

Thirdly, I think of the cost. I make the dichotomy between cost being relatively minor as this is factored into annual updates of technology and systems or maybe the cost is fairly dramatic, fairly large, because you have to revamp your whole systems and bring in new ones.

I'm sure you all have other categories of obstacles that you have confronted along the way. Let's have a conversation about that.

Beth, as our three colleagues weigh in on this, think about whether or not there are points that they make that you want to probe them on and know more about.

John?

MR. HOLT: Okay, yeah. Thank you, George. I think in, I (inaudible) our obstacles into three or four like you, and I have very similar -- I separate organizational cultural from political cultural. If I start with the political cultural, I think in the U.K. we have benefited tremendously from a very supportive political environment. Without that political environment promoting transparency and openness, we wouldn't have had the organizational impetus to push as far as we have.

The whole political thing for us started in May 2010 with a letter from the prime minister which basically said, we're going to be publishing full details of all international development projects. That

was effectively our mandate, and it was just an instruction to go do it. We've been implementing that as a policy since. To have that supported by the political leadership means that you can then get over some of the organizational cultural issues.

For those, I think within an organization there even are different constituencies of culture. You've got the geeks. You've got people like me who like a bit of data, like openness, want to push it out. But you've also got, say, the statisticians, the people who like to get it right. I'm more concerned about getting it released than getting it right, and there's always a bit of tension there which we've had to deal with.

Then the workers, so the people, our colleagues, are working on the front line either in country or in front-line departments who are the people who are entering the data onto the system in the first place. They need to get some understanding of what happens the information that they enter on the system, otherwise they don't understand why we're being transparent. They don't understand why it's important to have good quality data. They don't want to be burdened by, you have to do this extra process because we're publishing something openly. We have to work hard to make sure that we get transparency baked into the processes that they already do so they're not having to do anything additional.

Then in terms of culture we've also got the external culture. What our citizens or our users, both in the U.K. and in the countries in which you work, what are they demanding of us? What do they want to know? As Aleem said, this citizen -- do they care where the money comes from -- whether it comes from the Dutch? No, they don't. How do we make sure that we enable the transparency to get down to the level at which citizens can hold their own organizations, their own country, their own service delivery partners to account. We need to look at the whole network.

For some of those partners, whether they be suppliers or country partners, there is a fear of exposure and there's a definite fear of additional cost and additional burden. We need to work hard with them to try and overcome that.

I think that's where I'd put the cultural barriers and obstacles. I can talk about technical

ones in a minute, but maybe we should stick to cultural ones to start.

MR. INGRAM: Great, thanks. Theo?

MR. VAN DE SANDE: Avoiding repetition of many of the things that John said about political leadership and it's indispensability, they also -- in the Netherlands by the way, I -- stimulated by Parliament to connect it's role in the pressing up on transparency, but we were fortunate enough to have some political leaders who picked that up in a very constructive way.

Having said that, I think what I would like to stress again is the validity of the ownership of what we are doing with the data by all of my colleagues because, after all, data quality, to a large extent, is dependent upon what they are putting into the system. For a long time, they only put things into the system, but they didn't make any use of it. They didn't have to make any use of it because it was simply accountability to the external environment.

What we try to stimulate within our own ministry is -- or build engagement with them by providing some things on the basis of our data that we, until recently, only provided to (inaudible) for an obvious reason. We provided them with what does this data tell for internal purposes and how can we learn from it and how can we step up our performances.

This also, next to, let's say, the transparency in itself, since recently we are publishing the assessment memoranda being written by our colleagues on activities, why they agreed to fund an activity or not. We are publishing them now openly. This in itself, of course, starts to (inaudible) a lot of fear of the colleagues. Now if I'm going to attach the grocery list of the ambassador as an assessment memorandum, and now I will look like a fool if this is going to be inserted in open data, which is true. It stepped up performance internally in that sense. Transparency also served to improve internal quality.

What we experience as the major obstacle is two. One is the culture I referred to earlier, which we still tend to have a very input-oriented culture within the ministry and monitoring and steering and data-based decision-making is still underdeveloped within my ministry, (inaudible) say so. What is being expressed is the big challenges of the big data revolution as if something is going to happen in 10 years.

We would like to keep it that because I can also assure them that also now you can already have data-based decision-making, and you don't have to wait until some unknown big data revolution is actually taking place.

This is one culture obstacle within my ministry itself. Resource-based management is not mainstreamed within my ministry. It is still much input-oriented.

Having said that, the second major obstacle we experience is not in the system because we have a very integrated system in the sense that our data we are producing on a monthly basis in IATI we put on the website is exactly the same as the one we are reporting to (inaudible). It's coming from the same source. There is no difference in terms of quality of our open data compared to the data we are reporting to OECD DAC.

The problem is in adjusting and modifying the system. If we want to even follow decision-making OECD DAC, which is a slow process, if we want to follow that in our system, for the slightest change it takes about half a year to a year in order to make these modifications. It's a serious obstacle to our ambition with respect to transparency.

MR. INGRAM: Aleem?

MR. WALJI: I think that on the technical and the cost side, obviously there are implications there. We've had to reconfigure back-end systems; we've had to hire teams; we've had to look at business processes; we've had to invest. All of those things that we've done so that now what we publish is what we use. We're now publishing quarterly of the MDGs, we're now the leader, etc., etc., but none of that would have been possible if we didn't have leadership.

Five years ago, the decision at that point by the president of the Bank to say, this is just the right thing to do, and the group that was producing the data said, but that means we're not going to have a revenue stream if we give this away. A few million dollars for them was their budget. It took the leadership to say, we will deal with that. We will have other access to budget for you, but this is what we'll do. It's the right thing to do.

To me, a lot of this was really about leadership. I think that was the most important thing.

But again, I want to go behind aid data. I know that a lot of this is about aid data, but I think the notion of culture of openness has to be larger than aid data. What we're finding is that unlike the data revolution in many, many parts of the world including this one where the concern is about privacy, how much data's being collected on us, is this open, things that we as citizens have any say over how our data's used, etc.

In much of the world in which we work, these are data deserts. We don't have data. We have to figure out how to get data. We have announced that we want to end absolute poverty by 2030. How are we going to know if we get there? So many of the countries in Africa we don't even have accurate poverty measurements, and what we have is 5 years old. That's data that I care about a lot.

Country statistical systems need to be invested in. We've just recently signed an MOU with other MDGs and UN about building the capacity of statistical systems because garbage in, garbage out. If we're not getting it, how can we know what to do, what the results are, what we need to work on, where poverty's the highest, micro data, etc.

A lot of our time and effort these days is not just on the supply side. It is on the supply side in the countries in which we work. It's also on the demand side. Beth mentioned it. Who are these users? We've clearly been disappointed in countries like, for example, Kenya where I was one of the champions 5 years ago on open data. Kenya, it's gone flat. One of the reasons why it's gone flat is because it wasn't clear who was using it in country. We may have been using the Kenya data portal, but who is using it in Kenya?

The political will in the countries in which we work affect our ability to push the openness agenda, and just openness agenda from the perspective of our users with universities and the Oxfam's of the world here in the U.S. and to publish what (inaudible) in the U.K., etc., but about making sure that data systems are complete and open in the countries in which we work and making sure that there's a demand for the data.

MR. INGRAM: Beth, the MCC clearly has had the political leadership that has -- I don't know if it's pushed the agency or led the agency along. Clearly if there were technical problems they were overcome. They weren't insurmountable. How difficult were they and what was the cost: Large, small?

MS. TRITTER: The cost is not necessarily in preparing the data for reporting. The cost is in producing the data. I think MCC, because of the way it was setup, has been investing in collecting and producing the data necessary since 2006. But the trick then is pulling all the pieces together, and that requires more of the technical expertise. It's not as resource intensive as you might think, but the overall information system that MCC uses is resource intensive and something that we need to continue to invest in.

To your point about leadership pushing or leading, I think it's obviously a little bit of both. One of the things that struck me as I was hearing John and Theo speak -- and I was actually interested because you told me I was going to have an opportunity to probe them on something, so now I'm going to take that opportunity.

A few years back, MCC released its first round of impact evaluations on farmer-training programs, and I was not at MCC at the time. I was in the advocacy community. I remember it being a really big deal for advocates, and my impression is that it was a really big deal for MCC too. In part because it was one of the first opportunities for MCC to practice what it preaches in terms of this oversharing.

We say we're going to share. We don't have an obligation to trumpet things that are different to share, but we've made a conscious decision now to go out there. They didn't have to put together a paper on these impact evaluations. They didn't have to do events with outside organizations and bring them in and brief them on it.

But MCC actually made an affirmative decision to do so, which I think is a really important object lesson because the concern among a lot of stakeholders was that once you started putting something out there with mixed results, the axe was going to come down on you. There was a little bit of

just, oh, okay, we're going to put this information out there and wait for what's going to happen.

The fact that there wasn't a backlash after that is testament in part to the good work that the people who were at MCC long before I was did at preparing the groundwork for this and explaining to people what was going to happen, but also because people on the outside really respected the fact that they were willing to say, look, we measured our results. We told you were going to do it. We did. Instead of burying it on a public website that you have to search through that you might not even have the technology to read properly in order to find what we found, we're going to actually essentially spoon-feed it to the public, which I think was really important.

I'm really interested to hear, John and Theo, what your experience is then with telling people things that they don't want to hear and whether that's taxpayers in your own countries or whether that's other stakeholders. I know that doesn't necessarily speak to the partner country angle, the beneficiary angle, which I agree is our ultimate goal and is very important. But I do think that it does speak to one of the difficulties that at least the bilateral agencies have.

MR. INGRAM: Theo, would you like to start off in responding to Beth?

MR. VAN DE SANDE: I recognize very much the kinds of worries or anxieties of a company when opening up. Our first initial attempts were just to put the dataset on the website, and we did do that and then said let's said and see what happens. Nothing happened, of course. Nobody downloaded our database because everybody was -- everybody was very interested because at the same time -- I mean, in the meanwhile, a decision had been reached to cut our budget with 2 billion euros over the last couple of years, which was not related to an apparent analysis of our dataset, so that was a bit of a disappointment.

I think last year we decided -- which is, I think, quite a unique website in which we provide an overview of what is our budget, what are our planned expenditures, and what are our actual expenditures. We have an annual report which rolls over or rolls on throughout the year.

Then we expected that there will be some nasty questions from journalists or from

parliamentarians because it was right at the heart of the parliamentary discretion. But again, there was thundering silence. We are a serious dilemma that we are to face a (inaudible) situation that our data is either completely irrelevant to nobody's use or that something else is happening.

Why has there not been any use of it? I mean, it's really bothering us to the extent that we want to be transparent in order to engage in these discussions to learn, to push, and to persuade ourselves to do better. We don't seem to be able to create or stimulate such a dialogue on the basis of our open data and on our transparency policies.

We're really puzzled with it, but as I say to my colleagues and other ministries in the Netherlands who are still very fearful of transparency, I always can put them at ease and say, well, you can publish what you want because nobody cares. (Laughter)

MS. TRITTER: That wasn't quite our lesson, but -- (Laughter)

MR. VAN DE SANDE: It wasn't quite the lesson we were looking for either.

MR. WALJI: Very sobering indeed.

MS. TRITTER: Yeah, it really is. No, it speaks to the breadth of the challenge that we have to overcome going forward.

MR. INGRAM: John?

MR. HOLT: I wonder whether I can begin with a slightly different view on this. In the U.K., we have a very hostile media towards the idea of foreign assistance. Every other government department apart from, I think, health is getting cut or has been cut since 2010 except for overseas aid which has grown. We've obviously met the 0.7 ODA/GNI target in 2013, and that's raised the profile of the department quite a lot and raised the level of scrutiny from the media quite a lot.

I think having our data published openly -- I suppose that what we thought at the start was there would be a threat of that because -- and I remember going through every single project title trying to find the project titles that would be like red rags to the media. The best one we found actually incidentally was one which was entitled, 'Eradication of Alien Species,' (Laughter) which sends --

MR. INGRAM: We'd like to see the results of that.

MR. HOLT: Yeah, which turned out to be an island in the South Atlantic that's part of British territories where rats were eating all the native bird species, and that was part of our program to eradicate them. It wasn't Ghostbusters or it wasn't Men In Black unfortunately.

But I think there was a bit of nervousness when we first published around do we try and sanitize, do we try and clean, do we try and make sure it's explainable, and so on. But actually as it turned out, I think we've ended up with a culture that when we do get those Friday afternoon press office inquiries about data or about projects, we can direct them towards things like the development tracker, which is the human-readable version of IATI, and people can then go and read. There's the (inaudible) view. There's the annual review that says that partner X was not performing well, and this is what we did about it.

For some cases, that can become a negative report in the press, but for other the cases it means that the press actually gets the full context. By being open with that full context, it allows the people who are managing the media to really try and explain what's going on a bit better than if it was just a, we received a leak from your department that something isn't going well.

We thought were some risks. We thought there were some things that we were going to get really flamed about when we did publish our data that didn't come about, but when we do get criticism we can then turn to the data and use that as supporting the media story and supporting the response to the press.

MR. INGRAM: It's now time to turn to the rest of the people in the room to engage in this conversation. There's a microphone, and please introduce yourself. Before we do that, I want to save the last 5 minutes for each of the panelists to wrap up.

But I want you to think about targeting your comments on two things: One is to what extent will your organization be fully compliant with IATI by the end of this year; how close will you come to that? Secondly, to pick up on a comment that Aleem made, which I'm going to paraphrase him on and he can correct me, is I'm interested in the sustainability of what you all have been involved in. Are your

organizations irreversibly committed to open data, to openness, and what I heard Aleem say, the extent to which there is that sustainability and to which extent to which there is value there, it really depends on the use of the data. That is the outstanding question, and I'll let Aleem kick off on the closing so we can correct my paraphrasing of him. With that, please raise your hand and introduce yourself and ask a question. Up here in front, Sally.

MS. PAXTON: Thanks. Sally Paxton, U.S. Representative to Publish What You Fund.

First of all, thanks to MCC for doing this paper. You know that we've been very excited about the fact that you put out the practical lessons learned.

I think this question is mostly directed to John and Theo, but maybe Aleem also. One of the challenges that the U.S. has in terms of their systems is, first of all, there are a number of agencies involved in foreign assistance, and all of them have different systems and different challenges. But for the bigger agencies involved in foreign assistance, their systems are old and were never setup -- their financial systems, they were never setup to publish the kind of information that IATI calls for. I think they have struggled with how to move forward.

When the U.K. or the Netherlands decided to undertake their IATI publication, do you have any advice or experience for agencies such as State or USAID, which are the two top foreign assistance spenders in the U.S., for how they should approach their situation? They've got financial systems.

Was it your experience that you re-haul the entire system of your reporting to make sure that you could be fully compliant with IATI, or did you do this piecemeal? Do you link the financial information and the program information?

Then finally, without having to be too cheating in terms of having too many questions, sorry, George, we've talked a little bit about cost, and we've talked a little bit about benefits. If there's anything that you can say in terms of specific costs I think it would be helpful because one of the things that we hear often is it's going to be very, very, very expensive for the U.S. to publish IATI information. It's not clear to me that that cost analysis has been done.

Finally, there are obviously benefits: Management benefits, information benefits. I'm wondering whether anybody has actually tried to quantify those yet.

MR. INGRAM: Sally wants more on the question I posed because we didn't get into enough detail, and that's fair enough. John or Theo, would one of you like to go first? Go ahead, John.

MR. HOLT: I can start if that's okay. Sally, thanks for the question. I think for us, we are in a relatively good position because we had one central system managing both finance and projects. We were already publishing to CRS, so we already had some of the extraction, transform, load-type routines that we could then call on to publish IATI.

For us, IATI was a relatively -- we found it challenging at the time because it was new and we were the first publishers and the bill kept changing the standard as we were trying to publish to it. There's quite a lot of flux going on at the time. That was challenging, but I think if we were to start again with a mature standard like this, it would be relatively straightforward.

But what you need is a good business analyst who understands the data. Someone who knows the meaning of the data can translate the meaning of the data from a core system to the IATI meaning, and you need someone who's good technically who can do the grunging in the data to actually get it mapped through to the IATI schema. I think getting a person who knows the data and a person who knows how to bring the data together, then you've actually got a really good quality team to deal with that.

But also, we didn't try and do everything at once. I think doing it in a piecemeal way -- you can tackle transactions one week, and then you can tackle budget the next. But you can still publish partial datasets to IATI and it's still compliant and it still gets you on the right direction.

In terms of cost to publish IATI, we were definitely in the -- I'll try to put it in U.S. dollars -- we were probably around a couple of hundred thousand dollars to convert our systems to publish IATI. Not a massive amount of cost, but you need the right people with the right skills and the right knowledge. That's probably the challenge.

But we then continued and we have tried to sustain that, so we've actually probably put in

many more times that amount of investment since we started publishing because we're trying to continue to improve. We're now going back to our core systems to say that they're probably not good enough. We have to change those so that we can publish better IATI. We're getting on this virtual circle of continued improvement, and it goes all right throughout the life cycle of our project data.

The other thing, if you're starting from scratch now there are tools. We are willing to share the tool that we used to do our IATI publishing. Very happy to share that with people, but you'll need some technical skill to implement it. I'm sure there are other tools around that people are using to help publish IATI on a much more industrial scale. We are publishing 14,000 activities every month, so we're pretty industrial. We're willing to help and support people.

MR. INGRAM: All right. Thanks, John. That cost is very instructive and nice to know that you're willing to share your tool. Theo?

MR. VAN DE SANDE: The story of the Netherlands is very much comparable to what John has just said, even in the figures, because we only have integrated system, financial and project management, project registration, so that's a fair basis. Also, keeping in mind, of course, this entire system was fully geared towards serious reporting, and if you saw serious reporting and you do it on a monthly basis, then basically you have a relatively compliant and relatively full IATI standard anyway.

As I sketched out here, when consolidated at the warehouse in which we can pick either to report to OECD DAC or to use the same data to report on a monthly basis to publish our IATI report. These are relatively comparable. What is, of course, one of our major standing blocks is if you want to extend beyond what is being reported to CRS, and then if you don't have the data in your system you can't publish them in IATI as well. This is, let's say, for us a major challenge. How we want to make incremental improvements in our IATI dataset compared to, let's say, what was the source or the origin or the starting point regarding serious reporting.

There is one other major difference compared to -- especially the situation in the United States, which is that almost roughly 80 or 85 percent of total OBA coming from the Netherlands is coming

from my ministry. In our open data, we have a coverage of about 80 or 85 percent of total OBA, and the rest of Dutch OBA is coming in five or six transactions from other ministries. In fact, if I add all the transactions that we are doing from our ministry with five transactions, we have coverage of 100 percent.

Now, this is almost unimaginable, probably, in the situation in the U.K., let alone in the United States, where there are many publishers who all want, among others, even bilateral publishers where it will be increasingly difficult to force upon them to use one and the same system and therefore to publish one and the same system.

I happened to be in the United States last week, and this is more a question or a counter question from my observation is that even within agencies you can hardly speak of one integrated system. I don't know how you are going to solve that, but it seems to be rather overstretching to ask from all of these agencies to start working in one integrated system and among the agencies to use one and the same system. This will be quite a challenge.

I think we'll have to live with the fact that there are multiple IATI publishers and that they are using their own systems and that they have to scratch for data internally as we also have to do.

MR. INGRAM: Maybe next time you come over here you need to stay longer and help us out, Theo. (Laughter) Aleem, do you want to weigh in on this?

MR. WALJI: I don't think I have much more to add. It has been a challenge for us. There's business processes that we've had to go back and rethink. We've had to have our IT systems speak to our updated warehousing, etc., etc. But I just think that a lot of it comes down to will. There's (inaudible) there's way to get systems to speak to each other or sometimes they cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, etc. If you want to do it, you can do it.

In the U.S., I don't know how you would account for what the Department of State would spend in suitcases that go to folks on the back of trucks in Afghanistan, as an example. When I spoke to the folks at USAID, they said, we can give you this information, but there's all kinds of stuff that's an entire black box. If you were to add up all the U.S. -- I don't know how those sorts of things would be accounted

for. There are certainly challenges, and it's not going to be everything. I think in certain countries it's less of an issue, but I think if the will is there it can be done.

MR. INGRAM: Can you put a range of the monetary cost to the Bank of hundreds of thousands or couple millions, (inaudible)?

MR. WALJI: I think it's been in the millions for us. I don't think it's been in the high millions, but as you speak about the sustainability of the initiative, we have to continue to invest and there are investments that we make.

The sustainability of it is a good question because as we face right now a \$400 million expenditure review, one of the questions we're being asked is what's the ROI of all this that we're investing. We often don't have very good answers; things like it's a public good and it's high value.

It comes down to culture. Is there a culture that says this is important, and I think Jin Kim is very much of the ilk that this is important, but we have to make a case -- even he has to make a case to our CFO how much more of this should we do; how much more of this should we be investing in.

MR. INGRAM: Definitely.

MS. TRITTER: I'll just say that that's where it comes down to, to how the data's used. It's ultimately really hard to make the case for something if people don't care about it on the outside and if people aren't brought in on the outside, but that second piece is if people aren't using it on the outside. I feel like the investments going forward in addition to the investments that we need to keep making to our own systems internally. We need to be putting some serious thought into how to make sure that we're not creating out of whole cloth consumers for our data, but making sure that people are aware of the fact that it exists, the fact that they can use it, how they can use it, and what they can use it for.

MR. WALJI: Just want to say one other thing. Two quick points is that IATI is a database for geeks, and it's not really something that you can use as a regular user. We've been trying to use visualization and mapping so that it's much more accessible. Even then it's not going to be accessible to everyone, but accessible to a lot more people because it's in a language, it's in a vernacular, it's in

visualization. A lot of the work that we've doing on mapping, the opening partnership. If you go to openaid.org you'll see it.

But the other thing that I would say is that who are your users and what are they asking for? What we found out in a lot of ways is what we were publishing wasn't what people wanted to see in the first place. They want to know about contracts. They wanted to know about how gets contracts, how much of it goes to what country, how much of it stays in the country. We made maps to say, here are the contracts, how much of it stays in Liberia, how much of it ends up in a country in Europe. That's the information that they wanted.

We can publish all we want, but unless we're clear, unless were human-centered and user-centric, we may be publishing things that are less important and avoiding sometimes the things that are most demanded. I think that has to be part of the process.

MR. INGRAM: Good. We have two questions up front: Diane and then Laia.

MS. OHLBAUM: Thanks. I'm Diane Ohlbaum. I'm one of the co-chairs of MFAN's Accountability Working Group.

In this discussion about data, use and data consumption, you've all been mostly focused on external use and consumption, which makes sense because it really isn't an accountability issue.

But I think part of the reason that it will be most sustainable will be when there's internal use and consumption of the data as a management tool because the data information -- we want to have a system where decisions are made on the basis of facts and evidence. If people inside the system aren't using it, including political leaders, it would be a real shame.

I'm wondering if you could tell me what kinds of things you've been doing or thinking about or planning to do that will make the data more useful as a management tool.

MS. GRINO: Thanks. Laia Grino with InterAction. my question's actually related to Diane's. Part of this conversation has been about agencies needing to justify the cost of investing in aid transparency. My question is what benefits, when you think about ROI, what kind of return for your agency

would justify the cost? Because I think obviously internal use is one, and even just moving beyond agencies' own internal use then other aid providers using it just to make the aid system more effective, that's another return on investment.

And then, Aleem, I really appreciate your point about making sure that people in-country can benefit from this, but the causal chain (inaudible) releasing aid data to having an impact on results in the ground is a very long and indirect one. It takes a lot of other people making data available as well.

Just if you could address that question of what return for your agencies justify this cost would be really interesting to hear.

MR. INGRAM: We've got 10 minutes left, and Diane and Laia have really picked up on part of my final question, and that is the sustainability, the use of the data, what can be done to make sure the data's being used well, and what is the benefit of this and the return. If each of you would focus on that, and then we'll come back for a quick round after that to are you going to make the compliance with IATI.

Anybody want to start? Aleem, you've got good notes there. Why don't you start?

(Laughter)

MR. WALJI: This'll actually be my last thing to say because I think I can wrap it up in these last two questions. I think they're right on the mark, and unfortunately I have to go.

The notion of internal systems and how we use the data for us is right on because I think if we're going to be sustainable we also have to show that it matters inside. We have a president right now who's all about data-driven development.

We're creating dashboards and we're creating all kinds of different mechanisms by which we are much more data-driven, evidence-based in the way that we work. He's actually created something called a Presidential Delivery Unit who literally has Bloomberg-like screens everywhere that show data and results and then even report on how well we are doing internally on things like 100 percent citizen engagement on all the projects. In some instances that's not even possible because it's not investment

lending; it's budget support to a ministry. It's kind of hard to know how you do citizen engagement. He wants mapping and visualization to be done across the board, etc., etc.

The extent to where there's an internal culture of data use, data-driven processes lends itself to greater sustainability. I think that's one aspect that is a good thing for us.

Laia, your question around ROI from the perspective of the end user, etc., that's something that we grapple with. Let's be clear: There's a theory of change which I think needs to be constantly interrogated that says data leads to accountability. Some folks say as long as it does that, we're done.

We say data leads to accountability which is an intermediate outcome. For some it's a goal in and of itself, but for us it's an important but insufficient goal. Data leads to transparency that leads to accountability that then leads to improved development results. We don't have solid evidence that that's the case.

It's something I've been working on for 10 years. We wrote a report back in 2000 about closing the feedback loops, etc., etc., so that this would happen more rapidly. But impact evaluations are something that we're now employing around this question. If we're going to continue to push the envelope on this, we're going to have to show that the right things are happening in that circle.

With respect to IATI specifically, there's a commitment now to publish on a quarterly basis. There's a commitment now to go beyond higher, aggregated information to look at project-level results. We've just moved from 'good' to 'very good,' and so there is a commitment to continue to do this.

The challenge sometimes is that because it's a bit of a moving target we adapt something, we invest a lot in it, and then it shifts again. Where do you pitch exactly? Where we're trying to pitch is where it's useable for us and the investments we make work, and it's where IATI was when they said we should do that. But when I say to my colleagues, why are not 100 percent this year? They said, we did what we were supposed to do last year. Something shifted. But the commitment and the intention is to do that.

MR. INGRAM: You've used language that doesn't allow me to hold you 100 percent compliant by the end of this year, and I was hoping you would use some squishy language that would allow me to make that interpretation. I'm kidding you. That was (inaudible).

MR. WALJI: No, but to be fair, this is not my remit anymore. I asked my colleagues, and I've said what they have written in my notes on the last part. (Laughter)

MR. INGRAM: Okay. To go across the ocean, Theo?

MR. VAN DE SANDE: On internal use, I think I made a reference earlier that one of the things which we're trying to create and which we succeeded in is to build (inaudible) internally and to let them be part of the decision-making process and increasing the decision-making process.

You see, for a long time since our GNI was growing and since we had 0.8 percent of GNI to ODA, there was no need as long as we fulfilled these needs. Then we also met, of course, all the other targets at the same time. Now that that budget has been reduced, increasingly we are being confronted with a situation that the figures tell a different story than our process.

Instead of just massaging the data, which we don't do, it might become a time that these dashboards provide real intelligence to start influencing decision-making. This is where the data and building dashboard and using them, presenting them, showing them, and (inaudible) within or (inaudible) things for them within the ministry.

It also contributes to a change in mind in terms of decision-making because no matter how much we like it, of course, there is a lot of political decision-making which is not necessarily data based. Now, their transparency might help and stimulate a lot in the sense that sometimes the data is in conflict with what the minister is saying in parliament or in the newspapers. This gives (inaudible) some reason to reconsider, and maybe we should start working and increasing the support for more data-based decision-making, which you might refer to as rational decision-making.

In this sense, it's a process. This relates more, and it's also to the sustainability of what we're doing. In that sense also, data becomes indispensable for internal decision-making. At the same

time, I think the sustainability for us is beyond any doubt in the sense that we will continue to report to CRS, and in CRS we will have to produce the data, and we have the system.

There is no question whatsoever that we are not going to be able to produce this data anymore. But this is with respect to the sustainability also related to internal use, which is one pillar of why I think it is sustainable, and there is an increased sustainability perspective for data.

Now with respect to the compliance, of course, I have to say that we are 100 percent compliant to the implementation schedule as agreed upon (inaudible), but this is something different from whether we are 100 percent IATI compliant.

I think we are not going to simply because we don't have data on many of the IATI fields, also, to my disappointment, one of the important ones being precisely on impact on resources. We don't have the data in our system, so therefore we can't publish them. Even if we would have the intention to start publishing them, you first have to have this data in order to be able to do that.

That's going to be a long and painstaking process to change from input-oriented to result-based management like approaches within the Development Corporation in the Netherlands, which is peculiar to the Netherlands. These peculiarities that are of great influence on what you're doing. In the Netherlands, for instance, there's hardly any interest in contracts unlike with the World Bank. If we would publish this data, nobody would be interested in the Netherlands.

What we do, however -- and I think this is also, at least from our perspective, an interesting and relevant contribution -- is to persuade, to push, to force upon the recipients of our support, irrespective of whether they're NGOs or multilaterals or whatever, to start publishing to us as a reporting format and IATI dataset and make these datasets and have them publish them on their own websites, of course, so that they will become available for the entire community.

This is our contribution from the point we are standing. We can open up these networks on development funding in a more broad sense. This is what we are aiming for, and we are preparing this now. Starting in 2016, we will be asking from all those who received funding from us to produce a full, 100

percent compliant IATI dataset. Let's say it's somewhat ambiguous that we are not doing 100 percent compliance, but we are forcing upon the recipients that they will.

MR. INGRAM: Good, thank you. John?

MR. HOLT: Yeah, I'm going to build on that but I can answer Diane's question and Laia's question with really answering Laia's.

The return of investment for us comes with a number of dimensions. One is the use internally. Since we launched development tracker, we've noticed that probably 30 to 50 percent of our traffic on development tracker comes from our own team, our own people, because they can get ready access to the information that helps them understand both what they're doing and also what other parts of the organization are doing. Organizational learning is supported by having the data in a readily, easily consumable format.

Having the data available for internal use also means that people care about the quality because it's published, it's external. I get emails, phone calls from people going, my data's wrong. What do I do? And that's a really good question, so push on that.

A couple of other places where we're seeing it, it won't work. Traceability's one of them, where all of our NGOs are already committed to publishing IATI data. We're able to link that back to our data in development tracker. If you go and search in development tracker for Girls' Education Challenge Fund or U.K. Aid Match or things like that, then you'll be able to find some traceable data.

That begins to get this network concept in. We're looking not just at our data, but our partner's data as well. I think that's a good return of investment, that we haven't had that before and to get that information is really quite challenging.

Building on the integration of that, Josh Powell published something a couple of weeks ago from Development Gateway about integrating IATI data in with country-management platforms and making IATI a data transport mechanism where everybody could share that no matter what they're loading the data onto. That saves an amount of grunt work in our country offices, but it also means that people like

partner countries, governments, have got access to reliable, timely, good-quality data.

Finally, coming back to the thing that I mentioned at the start, which is market intelligence. What do we, as a development community know about what's going on elsewhere in the countries, in the sectors, in which we are working? We can only tell that through open data that's published by everybody and by aggregating that on some form of intelligence platforms that actually give us something to base our decisions on.

As we get more and more results -- like the Netherlands, we're still working on getting results into our IATI dataset. But when we get that, we can then see not just the inputs, but also what we've achieved and have that on a community basis. I think that's the prize.

I've always said to ministers and others that the prize of both traceability and results is something that will take 3 to 5 years. It probably will always take 3 to 5 years no matter where you're starting, but let's aim for that prize because that's really valuable to us.

MR. INGRAM: All right. Thanks, John. Beth, you get the final word. You got the first word --

MS. TRITTER: And I get the last.

MR. INGRAM: -- and we've gone a few minutes --

MS. TRITTER: No, you're going to get the last.

MR. INGRAM: -- over, so you don't have to take too much time.

MS. TRITTER: Sure. I'll just go really quickly.

In terms of usability for management in our own building, sometimes the data that our own folks need to do their jobs on a day-to-day basis is somewhat different from the data that we're publishing to IATI.

We are working on creating different types of applications for them to take the data that we're reporting and make it more useable for them on a day-to-day basis, and that's an ongoing effort and something that we continue to talk to folks about inside the building about what they need, what they're

looking for, what they'd like to have, and working on that.

In terms of whether we get a return on our investment that's sufficient to continue doing what we're doing, if I were going to make an MCC joke I would say as long as it's above a 10 percent economic rate of return, we'll continue to do it, but I won't make that joke. (Laughter) What I'll say is that I think it's pretty much baked into who we are.

I don't anticipate we're going to backtrack because we're going to decide this isn't worth it. It's who we are. We can't stop doing this. We're going to keep trying to do it better and we're going to keep trying to innovate and we're going to keep trying to share the lessons that we've learned. I anticipate that that will continue to happen.

If I can just get one last word -- I'll take three last words, and I'll just say demand, demand, demand. That's what this next phase is about. It's about creating the demand, it's about making sure that the demand is out there for what we're providing, and it's about making sure that what we're providing is responding to the demand. I think that that's really what MCC is going to be digging into, and we look forward to working on that with all of you.

MR. INGRAM: Great. John and Theo, thank you very much for joining us. You have led Brookings into a new technological era because, until two days ago, Brookings had never streamed two people together on the same screen. We've broken that barrier.

Aleem, thank you very much for squeezing us in between getting your kids to school and your next meeting that you're rushing off to.

Beth, I'm not going to thank you for what --

MS. TRITTER: No, you should thank them really.

MR. INGRAM: -- MCC has accomplished.

MS. TRITTER: Yeah.

MR. INGRAM: That goes to all the leadership at MCC, but I thank you for leading the advocacy community on this issue. I expect a year from now to be able to commend you for MCC being

100 percent IATI compliant. (Laughter)(Applause)

MS. TRITTER: We are.

MR. INGRAM: Thanks everybody.

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