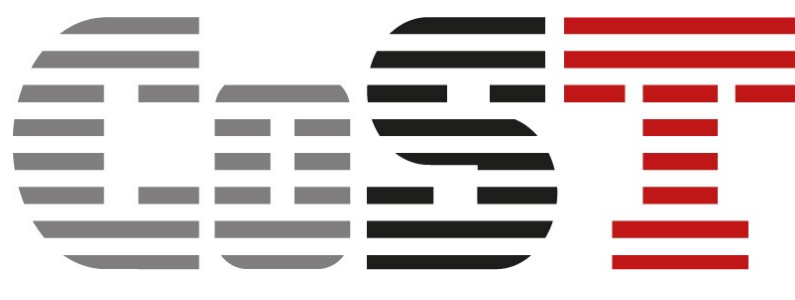


10 Things to Know About CoST in 2015



- www.constructiontransparency.org
- CoST International
- @CoSTransparency
- Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST)
- Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST)

Highlights from the Construction Sector Transparency (CoST) Initiative in 2015

1 CoST increased transparency

CoST ensures transparency by disclosing data from public infrastructure investment. This informs and empowers citizens, enabling them to hold decision-makers to account.

In 2015, CoST Guatemala and CoST Honduras significantly increased national levels of public infrastructure disclosure. Through their bespoke online portals, data on over 2,000 public infrastructure projects was disclosed to provide greater transparency in public investment. As its first full year in operation, CoST Honduras disclosed data on 146 projects in 2015 through SISOCS; whereas CoST Guatemala continues to scale up transparency, disclosing data on 2,340 projects through Guatecompras.

[Find out more about CoST disclosure.](#)



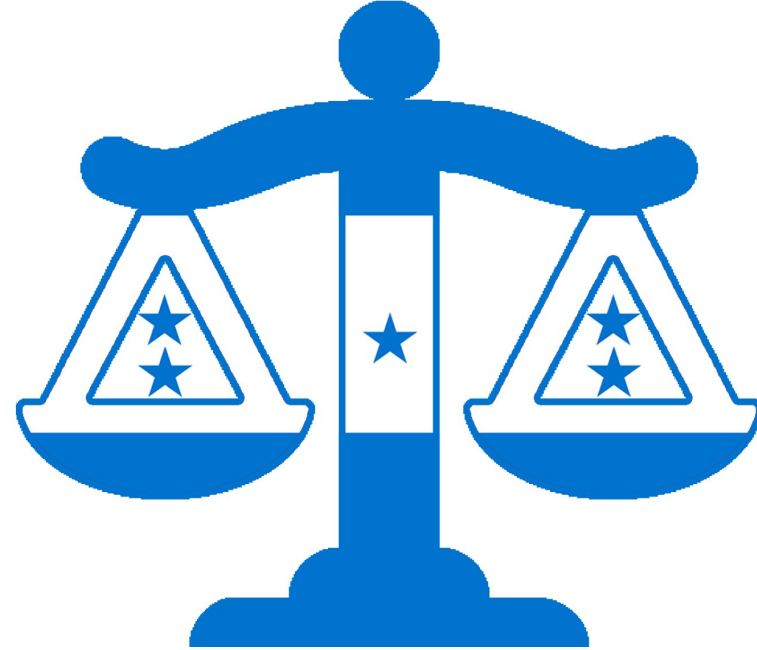
Disclosure level in 2014

2 CoST achieved legal mandates

CoST seeks to institutionalise transparency. This is achieved by establishing a Formal Disclosure Requirement (FDR) within national legislation, providing the legal basis for disclosure of data in accordance with the CoST Infrastructure Data Standard (IDS). The FDR is adaptable to the local legal, institutional and sector environment so as to ensure its viability.

In 2015, CoST Honduras established an FDR highlighting the country's commitment to transparency within public infrastructure. The FDR has led to the creation of SISOCS, a sub-system of the national e-procurement portal, and is one of the key attributing factors to the rising disclosure rates in Honduras. CoST Honduras' FDR goes beyond disclosure to mandate CoST multi-stakeholder working, assurance and civil society empowerment. To date, CoST has also successfully established FDRs in Ethiopia and Guatemala.

[Find out more about CoST Formal Disclosure Requirement.](#)

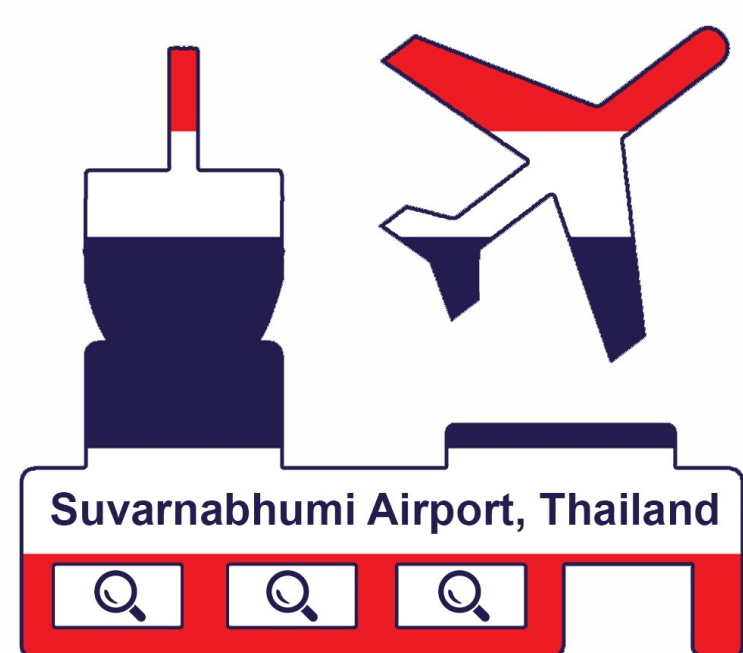


3 CoST applied to a mega project

CoST saves money. Since its launch, CoST actions have created savings totalling US\$8 million in order to deliver better value from public infrastructure. In 2015, the national programme in Thailand announced the first CoST megaproject. CoST Thailand will apply CoST to the Thailand Suvarnabhumi Airport expansion project which is valued at US\$2.5 billion.

The scale and complexity of the project presents new challenges in collating and examining data. The Airport Authority of Thailand (AOT), the Procuring Entity managing the project, has developed a website and started disclosing information. CoST Thailand will continue to work with the AOT to ensure that the data is accurate and understandable for citizens.

[Find out more about CoST Thailand.](#)

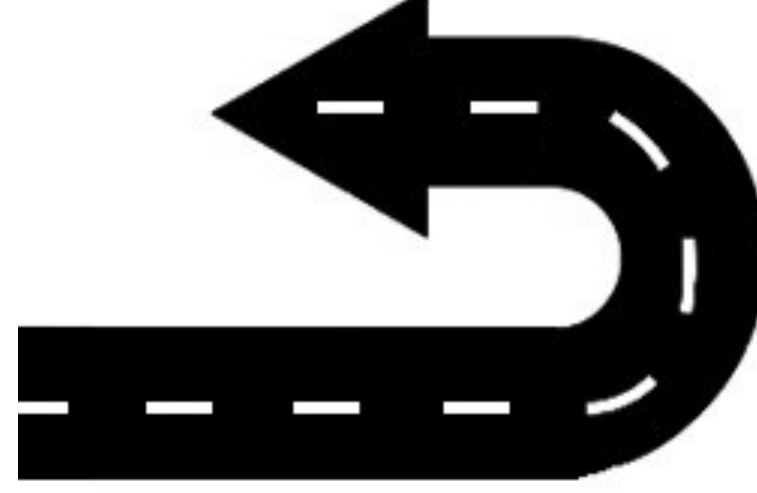


4 CoST enabled accountability

CoST Malawi's second assurance report in 2014 had highlighted extensive time and cost overruns on a number of public projects including Thyolo-Thekerani-Muona-Bangula Road and Zomba-Jalie-Phalombe-Chitakale Road, leading to the cancellation of these contracts.

In 2015, a selection process for appointing new contractors began. CoST Malawi worked with Malawi Roads Authority and followed the contract's retendering to ensure procurement was conducted in a transparent and accountable manner. Joe Ching'ani, CoST Malawi Chairman, said: "We are delighted that the government has chosen to select new contractors on two vital road projects and will support them in ensuring transparency and accountability. This process has demonstrated both the need for and value of CoST Malawi in supporting the government, industry and civil society to attain better value from infrastructure."

[Find out more about CoST Malawi efforts in the roads sector.](#)



5 CoST strengthened institutions

CoST ensures that all stakeholders have access to the information they need on public infrastructure projects. CoST supports the institutionalisation of transparency in public infrastructure through dedicated training programmes designed to increase the capacity of procuring entities and government agencies to disclose information. In 2015, CoST provided training to 134 individuals from 24 Procuring Entities.

These sessions focused on the promotion of CoST principles and values, as well as highlighting what information is required for disclosure and how this should be uploaded to the various portals. The training sessions, in conjunction with the implementation of FDRs and bespoke e-procurement portals, have created an enabling environment for transparency and accountability within public procurement institutions globally.

[Find out more about recent CoST training sessions.](#)



6 CoST empowered civil society

According to World Bank data on governance, the majority of CoST countries are ranked in the lower percentile with regards to [Voice and Accountability](#). This demonstrates that there are limits and restrictions within these countries on the ability of civil society to actively engage or hold government to account.

CoST is founded upon multi-stakeholder working and actively seeks to engage civil society in demanding accountability on public infrastructure investments. In 2015, CoST Malawi organised radio debate shows to provide citizens with an opportunity to air their views and raise questions on public infrastructure within their communities. The first debate received 140 questions via SMS from citizens across the country. Government representatives also participated in the radio shows, enabling two-way dialogue between citizens and government and building trust and accountability within public infrastructure in Malawi.

[Find out more about recent CoST Malawi's work with civil society.](#)

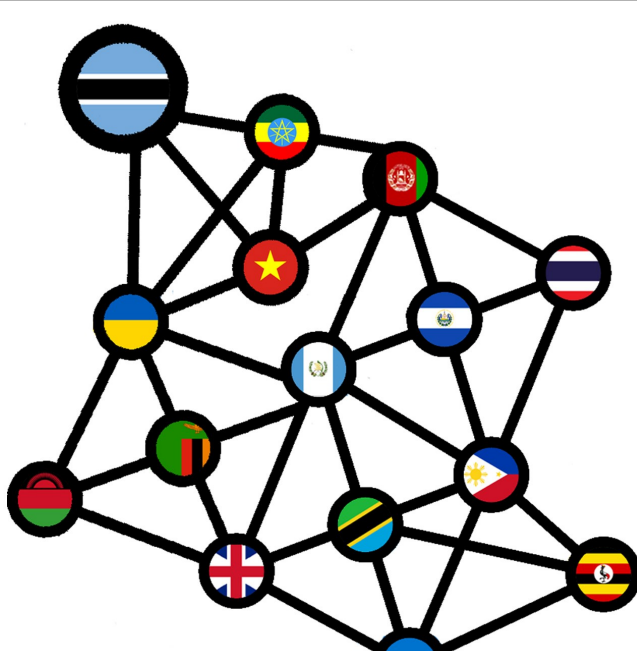


7 CoST grew to 15 countries

In 2015, Botswana became the fifteenth country to join the CoST initiative. Its commitment is particularly significant, as Botswana becomes the first upper-middle income country in Africa to join the initiative. A 2014 report from OECD cited Botswana's infrastructure investment needs as "significant", totalling US\$746 million (7% of GDP) across the four main sectors of power, water and sanitation, transport and ICT. It is therefore vital that any investment is transparent and accountable.

CoST's mission to deliver better value from public infrastructure has great potential to support higher income countries reduce mismanagement and inefficiency within public infrastructure investment. We welcome this commitment from Botswana which demonstrates the potential value of CoST in streamlining public infrastructure and ensuring better value from investment.

[Find out more about CoST national programmes.](#)



8 CoST received international support

In 2015, CoST secured a significant grant of GB£2 million from the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID). In addition to the financial support already provided by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MinBuZa), this funding demonstrates international acknowledgement of the need for greater transparency and accountability in public infrastructure.

One of the primary uses of the DFID funding was the allocation of grants to CoST national programmes. Nine grants were awarded at the end of 2015, which total GB£800,000 over two years. These funds will be used to support vital country activities, necessary for improving public infrastructure transparency and delivering real impact on the ground.

[Find out more about CoST supporters.](#)



9 CoST gained traction in Latin America

The achievements realised by CoST national programmes in Latin America have drawn the attention of other governments and donors in the region. Last year, the UK government's Foreign and Commonwealth Office awarded CoST a grant of £96,000 to introduce the initiative to Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama and Peru. This project culminated in a Regional Workshop, held in Lima, Peru.

As a result of this workshop, Costa Rica redrafted its 'Transparent Infrastructure' commitments under its National Strategy for Open Government (based on Costa Rica's Open Government Partnership commitments and Action Plan) to incorporate the learning from the workshop and align with CoST principles and recommendations.

[Find out more about CoST in Latin America.](#)



10 CoST influenced the global debate

CoST has received international recognition for its role in leading the development of transparency and accountability in public infrastructure. In 2015, CoST played an active role in eight major international events including delivering keynote speeches and organising dedicated sessions.

Without significant improvements in the delivery of public infrastructure, up to US\$5 trillion could be lost annually by 2025. CoST therefore seeks to be the catalyst in reforming the governance of public infrastructure and is grateful for these opportunities to advocate for change. This focus on transparency and accountability is essential as it creates better value for everyone: governments, the private sector and communities.

[Find out more about CoST events in 2015.](#)



In the pipeline for 2016...

