

Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST): Terms of Reference for an Independent External Evaluation

1. Background

The Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST) is a country-centred initiative which aims to improve the value for money spent on public infrastructure by increasing transparency in the delivery of construction projects. CoST is based on the belief that increased transparency through disclosure of project information will lead to greater accountability of public officials and eventually to more efficient and effective construction of public infrastructure.

CoST seeks to disclose basic project information to the public at key points of the project cycle. As construction project information is substantial and technical, an *assurance process* is added to validate the information and interpret it in plain language so that stakeholders can understand the main issues. It is expected that the enhanced transparency resulting from the public disclosure process will help to induce informed reactions from the public and greater accountability and thus in the long term help to improve value for money from investments in infrastructure. In each participating country the CoST process is led by a multi-stakeholder group (MSG) comprising volunteers from the public, private and civil society sectors, the objective of which is to catalyse pressure for greater transparency and accountability. CoST processes are designed to complement but not to replace a country's supervision, audit, regulatory, investigative, or judicial functions.

CoST was piloted in eight countries between April 2008 and June 2011 with funding from the UK Department for International Development and support from the World Bank. Since the conclusion of the pilot, the World Bank has provided funding under its Development Grant Facility (DGF) for the management and support of the programme. Engineers Against Poverty (EAP) signed a contract with the World Bank in November 2011 to provide the International Secretariat (IS) function and manage the DGF for the duration of the grant. The objectives for the 3 year Grant Agreement are to continue support (guidance and some limited funding) to existing CoST countries, encourage new countries to join the initiative and identify funds to support the programme into the future.

All DGF funded programmes must undertake an external evaluation that is independent of the programme's management. With the Grant Agreement now into its third and final year, we are looking to commission a consultant(s) to carry out an independent evaluation of the CoST programme since November 2011 until the present.

2. Aim and objectives of the evaluation

CoST is an international initiative that is implemented at country level. Each participating country is responsible for the development and implementation of its own programme. The international dimension provides the national countries (through their MSGs) with the support – in the form of technical guidance and sometimes funds – that they need to achieve the objectives. CoST requires each participating country (whether or not it is receiving funds from the programme) to conduct on-going monitoring and evaluation and to send reports to the

relevant international body (the International Secretariat) which will compile and compare them for presentation to the Board.

The aim of the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of CoST since the commencement of the Grant Agreement and the extent to which it has achieved the Grant Agreement objectives.

The objectives for the evaluation are as follows:

- a) Aggregate the main outputs and outcomes from the programme
- b) Assess the performance of the programme with respect to the agreed objectives
- c) Assess the relevance, efficacy and efficiency of the programme
- d) Assess the effectiveness of the governance structure and management of the programme
- e) Identify the key findings and lessons since the conclusion of the CoST pilot
- f) Set out a number of recommendations aimed at improving the relevance, efficacy, effectiveness, and governance and management of the programme

The findings and recommendations can cover a broad range of substantive, structural, procedural, instrumental or managerial issues. The recommendations should be prioritised and synthesised and presented in a way to give effective guidance to the CoST International Secretariat and Board.

3. Evaluation Criteria and Guiding Questions

a. Relevance

- i. To what extent are the objectives and activities of the reconfigured CoST Programme consistent with the needs, priorities, and strategies of beneficiary countries and global trends in transparency and accountability in the construction sector?
- ii. To what extent was the voice of the Multi-Stakeholder Groups expressed in developing the reconfigured CoST Programme?
- iii. What is the comparative advantage and value added of CoST relative to other similar programmes? What are the recommendations to CoST to minimise duplication?
- iv. To what extent are the strategies (including the results chain – see Annex) and the activities of the programme, primarily as expressed in the DGF Agreement and the Business Plan, appropriate for achieving the objectives?

b. Efficacy

- i. On an aggregated level, what were the main outputs and outcomes of CoST since November 2011?
- ii. To what extent have the stated objectives in the DGF agreement been achieved? Where progress has fallen short or exceeded those objectives, summarise the factors responsible.
- v. What constraints – both internal and external – did the programme face in implementing these activities?

- vi. What are the underlying and enabling conditions – or linkages – that are necessary for the effective implementation of the programmes activities and the achievements of the programme objective at the country level?
- vii. How did CoST aggregate its output and outcomes at the national and international level to provide an overall summary report of its results? How should it improve this aggregation in the future?

c. Efficiency

- i. What have been the principal sources of funds received during the evaluation period?
- ii. What have been the principal use of the funds by type of activity
- iii. Are the overhead costs of governing and managing the CoST programme reasonable and appropriate in relation to the objectives, activities and services?
- iv. For beneficiary countries, has receiving funding through CoST International Secretariat helped them to deliver their objectives?
- v. What should be considered to deliver CoST's results more cost-effectively?

d. Governance and management

- i. To what extent are the governance structures (CoST Board, International Secretariat, National Multi-Stakeholder Groups) and processes well-articulated and working well to bring about legitimate and effective governance and management?
- ii. To what extent do governance and management practices comply with the principles of good governance, such as legitimacy, accountability, responsibility, fairness, transparency, efficiency and probity?

e. Resource mobilisation

- i. Does the programme have clear and realistic plans for mobilising financial resources to meet its targets and needs?
- ii. To what extent was the funding strategy effective and how might it be improved?
- iii. To what extent are the sources and conditions of funding for the CoST Programme affecting, positively or negatively, its governance, management or sustainability?

f. Sustainability

- i. How does CoST expect that its long-term objectives will be reached and how will progress be measured along the way?
- ii. What is the likelihood of CoST achieving its long-term objectives?
- iii. In what areas could CoST improve in order to enhance its long-term future?

4. Scope of work

The assignment should include, but not be limited to the following activities:

- a) Conduct a desk based review of all relevant documentation including:
 - The 'Design Document' which sets out the design and implementation of CoST for the Global Programme

- The Guidance Note Series on establishing and implementing a national programme
 - Business Plan
 - Monitoring & Evaluation Framework – a results-based approach to Monitoring & Evaluating the Construction Sector Transparency (CoST) Initiative
 - Funding applications and reports from national programmes
 - Applications to join CoST
 - Minutes of the Interim Board Meetings
 - Financial expenditure records
 - Evaluation for the CoST Pilot
 - The Grant Agreements between Engineers Against Poverty and the World Bank
- b) Interview CoST Country stakeholders, Board Members, the World Bank and the International Secretariat. Such interviews could be in groups or on an individual basis and may include telephone, e-mail, video-conferencing, internet conferencing and personal interviews. A limited number of field visits are encouraged but are not a requirement. .
- c) Produce a report in English of no longer than 50 pages excluding appendices. The report should include an executive summary and a comprehensive narrative of evidence, findings, methodology and recommendations. The appendices should provide an adequate level of documentation to sustain the findings and recommendations.

5. Indicative timetable

Date	Milestone
5 th September 2014	Deadline for submission of proposals
14 th September 2014	Target contract start date
End September 2014	Inception report from selected consultant(s) including detail work plan submitted for review by CoST International Secretariat
September / October 2014	Desk based study & field work
Early November 2014	Submit first draft and a potentially present the interim findings to the CoST Board
Mid-December 2014	Final report is submitted to the CoST International Secretariat

6. Obligations of the International Secretariat

- Provide key documents and other project document as appropriate
- Facilitate contacts with MSG Members, Board Members, International Secretariat Members and other partners
- Ensure independence of the evaluation

7. Obligations of the consultant

- Inform the International Secretariat in timely fashion of all contacts made with MSGs
- Treat documents in a confidential manner
- Not publish evaluation results or output without permission from the Secretariat
- Return all CoST documents used in the evaluation
- Report on a timely basis any possible conflicts of interest

8. Procurement process

Interested applicants are invited to submit a proposal for the assignment to John Hawkins at the CoST International Secretariat (j.hawkins@constructiontransparency.org) by Friday 5th September. Each proposal should include:

- How the terms of reference (if appropriate) can be improved
- No longer than a 4 page methodology to meet the objectives,
- Statement about the firm's /group general approach to managing similar projects
- Experience of delivery /completion of similar assignments
- CVs of the study team
- A programme for the study indicating time, resources and price for the work.
- Details of the Professional Indemnity Insurance that is carried by the tenderer.
- A statement of availability to do the work in the restricted time available

Proposals will be assessed by the CoST International Secretariat and the World Bank on the basis of quality only. Please note that the budget for this study is USD \$50,000.00 (GBP £29,500) inclusive of VAT and expenses.

It is likely that a short-list of applicants will then be invited to meet with the International Secretariat to discuss their proposal in detail.

9. Contract Award

The client for this contract is Engineers Against Poverty, the host for the CoST International Secretariat, and the grant holder with the World Bank. The NEC3 Professional Services Short Contract will be used for this assignment with the Terms of Reference identified in Contract Data Part 1 as the Scope.

10. Further information

If you have any questions, please contact John Hawkins, Programme Manager CoST International Secretariat (j.hawkins@constructiontransparency.org or +44 (0)20 3206 0489). Further information is available from the CoST website (www.constructiontransparency.org).

Annex: Results Chain

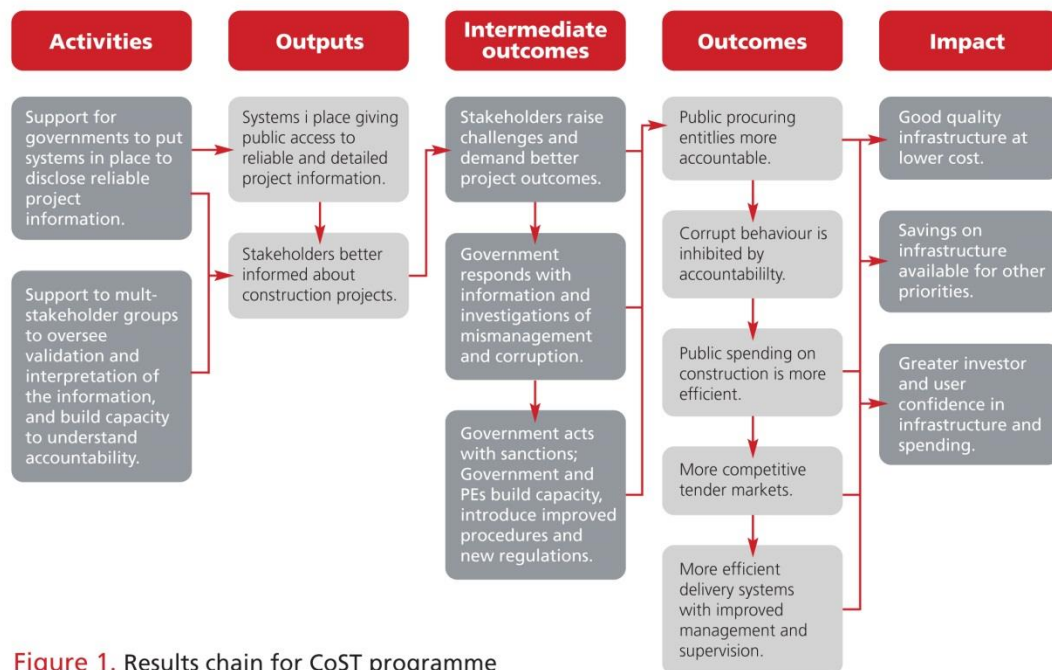


Figure 1. Results chain for CoST programme