



Infrastructure
Transparency
Initiative



CoST
International
Secretariat

2020 Annual Report

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FOREWORD

The world experienced severe adversity in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic and the health and economic crises resulting from it. Adversity can reveal strength and character and through their response to the crises, CoST members demonstrated that they have both in abundance.

Their response included convening stakeholders to ensure integrity in emergency procurement. They shifted their attention to expenditure on health facilities and on those sectors considered essential for economic recovery. In this way they demonstrated that transparency, participation and accountability are not a break on delivery, but rather they are the lubricant that ensures clean and efficient delivery.

The recovery will be long and arduous and whilst the immediate response to the pandemic was a test of agility, building resilience against future crises will be a test of endurance. Last year also saw CoST focus on developing its tools and resources to ensure relevance in the post-pandemic context. One of the most notable developments was the launch of the Infrastructure Transparency Index (ITI).

The ITI provides a methodology and a series of weighted indices that enable the comparison of the performance of individual procuring entities (PEs) in relation to transparency, participation and accountability. The ITI will be subject to

further testing in 2021 and strong interest has already been expressed in eventually extending its application to international comparisons.

The ITI and our members response to the pandemic are examples of how despite the challenges we faced in 2020, the importance of our work became even more apparent. There is however a bitter irony that the circumstances giving rise to the growing recognition of our work also threaten to deprive of us of the donor resources needed to respond to the opportunity it presents.

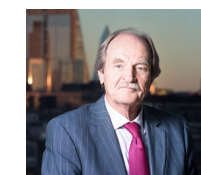
We are experiencing cuts to the funds we depend on to support our members. As with many others in the sector, our income is set to decrease in 2021 and whilst there are good prospects for new sources of income in the medium to long-term, including more members self-financing their programmes, the next 12 months are likely to be amongst the most difficult we have experienced.

To meet this challenge we will rely on the continued resiliency of our team, our innovation and agility, and the indispensable partnerships we have established with our members and supporters. Despite the dark shadow cast over 2020 by the pandemic, our resolve has not diminished and we emerge with renewed commitment and determination.



P. Matthews

Executive Director: **Petter Matthews**



C. Poortman

Chair: **Christiaan J Poortman**

HIGHLIGHTS

GLOBAL ACHIEVEMENTS

By the end of 2020, CoST promoted the disclosure of

19,950

projects in line with the CoST Infrastructure Data Standard (CoST IDS), bringing the cumulative total to

57,691

projects globally.

Over

2300

government, civil society and private sector stakeholders on disclosing and using infrastructure data.

CoST assurance recommendations led to

10 project level improvements and

12 sector reforms.

GUATEMALA

CoST Guatemala trained over 570 civil society and media officials on infrastructure project monitoring

Water sector reforms were introduced in Afghanistan and Guatemala based on the findings from CoST assurance reports

HONDURAS

CoST was asked to monitor the construction of new Covid-19 healthcare facilities by the President of Honduras

UGANDA

After building trust between the private sector and government throughout 2020, bids for construction contracts in Uganda increased from seven to 12 over a three-month period

UKRAINE

CoST Ukraine announced a new online platform, 'Great Construction Transparency', which will promote oversight of the government's US \$3 billion 'Great Construction' infrastructure programme

CoST launched two key products, the methodology of the first-of-its kind **Infrastructure Transparency Index** and its new **Business Plan 2020 - 2025**, demonstrating CoST relevance to pressing global issues.

AFGHANISTAN

CoST Afghanistan reached over 460 members of the private sector through online events promoting business integrity

CoST

Representatives from government, civil society and the private sector were brought together in new multi-stakeholder groups in Ecuador, Jalisco (Mexico), Mozambique and West Lombok (Indonesia)

MALAWI

Findings from a CoST Malawi assurance report resolved the Ministry of Health to allocate additional funding for a new cancer hospital ensuring patients will receive life-saving treatment

1. RESPONDING AND ADAPTING TO COVID-19

198
awareness activities held, reaching
5933
attendees

The onset of Covid-19 in 2020 exposed the vital need for healthcare facilities, sanitation systems and digital connectivity worldwide. It had an immediate impact on CoST, bringing in-person site visits, events and training to a halt – all key components of the CoST approach.

However, the crisis also underscored the flexible, adaptive nature of CoST: in person events were taken online, healthcare infrastructure was brought under the spotlight of [assurance](#) processes, and advocacy efforts were redoubled towards maintaining accountability in the face of fast paced procurement where a rapid response was prioritised over sufficient scrutiny. In order to keep a public, open and ongoing record of the innovation deployed by our members worldwide, the [CoST Covid-19 Compendium of Good Practice](#) was developed to capture some of the new and diverse ways our members responded to the crisis.

CoST Honduras promotes transparency in fast-paced procurement

As the Covid-19 crisis unfurled, President Juan Orlando Hernández committed to working with CoST to ensure the emergency response met Honduras's transparency commitments. In November 2020, the government recognised the value of the CoST approach again when it



CoST Thailand holds an in-person meeting with social distancing measures.

published an [executive decree](#) establishing a new Ministry of Transparency, and pledging to coordinate with initiatives including CoST to further align with international transparency standards.

Honduras also faced destruction from hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020, which impacted around 3.4 million people across Central America and destroyed swathes of critical infrastructure. As reconstruction began, CoST Honduras voiced the need for transparency and quality in infrastructure delivery. CoST was invited to support the government by working with [Citizen Transparency Commissions](#) to monitor levels of

CoST Uganda adapted its activities by using a dashboard system connected to the government's e-procurement portal, which has been adjusted to track projects implemented during the pandemic. The programme also adapted its assurance process to the rapid pace of the emergency response, producing more regular insights through short reports highlighting key issues every two months.

disclosure and quality across 83 reconstruction projects. These will be included in future CoST Honduras assurance processes to highlight the accuracy of the data disclosed.

CoST Afghanistan brings Covid-19 healthcare infrastructure under the spotlight

Afghanistan joined countries worldwide in mobilising significant financial resources to address the challenges posed by the pandemic, with 89.9 billion AFN (US \$1.1 billion) allocated by the government and an additional US \$649 million from the international community. In response, CoST Afghanistan adapted its approach in order to establish and increase levels of transparency on Covid-19 projects through online events, project monitoring and advocacy.

Stakeholders came together during webinars throughout the year, gaining insight into the level of transparency and participation on the country's newly built healthcare infrastructure. Of note is a webinar held in July, where civil society and private sector participants voiced concerns on projects including hospitals and clinics, highlighting that many project contracts had gone undisclosed on the [Afghanistan Open and Electronic Procurement System \(AGEOPS\)](#) Covid-19 page.

As a result of these engagements, and to gain a fuller understanding of infrastructure projects that have been urgently procured during the pandemic, four such projects have been included in CoST Afghanistan's Third Assurance Report, which will be published in 2021.

The critical role of journalism in crises

CoST Honduras held its third annual Journalism Prize for Infrastructure Transparency in May, recognising the work of investigative journalists

– key [social accountability](#) actors – for stories uncovering mismanagement in public infrastructure. Alex Flores, journalist for the renowned 'El Mundo' won first prize for a two-part investigation using information gleaned from combing through 400 pages of contract data.

The [first](#) part of the investigation revealed conflicts of interest in contracts awarded for Covid-19 healthcare facilities: the same



"Government procurement mechanisms are opaque, so it is vital that there are tools to facilitate journalistic research. Without guidance to get there, it's almost blind research,"

Alex Flores, El Mundo Journalist.

companies contracted to design the projects were also contracted to monitor their construction. Without independent monitoring, any faults in project design were less likely to be raised or addressed, running the risk that this critical healthcare infrastructure – worth over US \$6.3 million – would be of poor quality. The [second](#) part of the investigation revealed

that four of the companies hired to build these facilities had been offered contracts with no quote for their services. You can read CoST's full interview with Alex Flores [here](#), which highlights the critical role played by journalists – and data portals – in enhancing oversight during fast-paced procurement.

CoST International Secretariat increases support at a challenging time

Covid-19 restrictions also meant the CoST International Secretariat (CoST IS) furthered its support to members during this time. With travel restricted and in-person technical assistance no longer a possibility, the CoST IS embarked on developing a [robust guidance package](#) and online training was adapted to different members and the myriad challenges they faced.

CoST brings global team together during unprecedented year

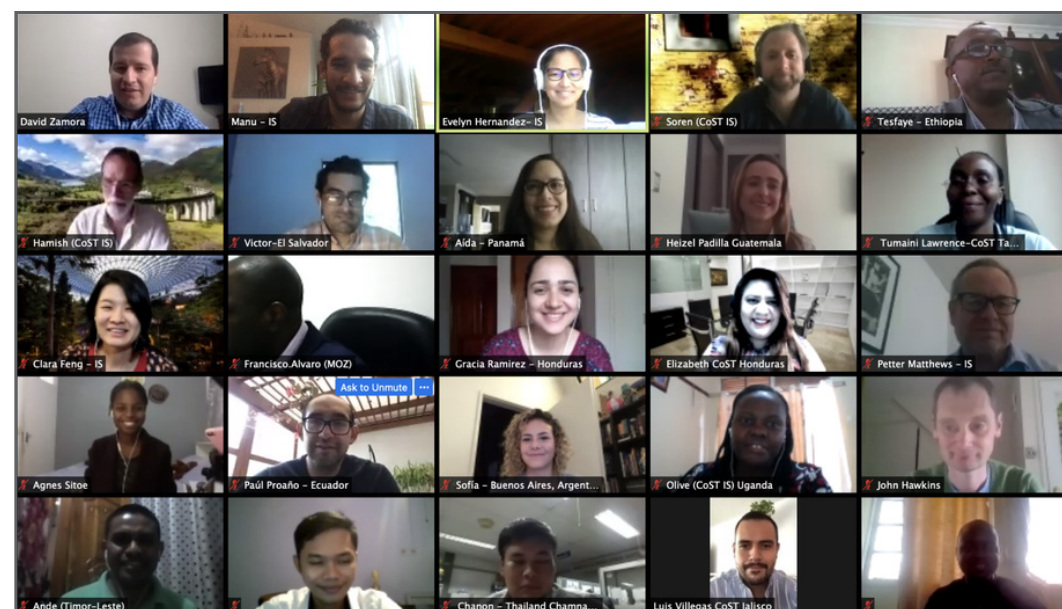
When Covid-19 travel restrictions hit, the CoST IS adapted its annual in-person workshop – which unites CoST managers from across the globe – to a virtual format. Colleagues from CoST's 19 member countries came together

to take stock of the previous year's achievements, develop approaches to the challenges posed by the pandemic and participate in bespoke sessions tailored to the maturity of each programme.

A highlight of the week was a joint presentation from CoST and the World Bank on the World Bank's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) disclosure framework, delivered with a view to promote PPP project transparency in CoST countries beyond Honduras. Such was the success of the workshop that over 90% of respondents rated it 'very good' or 'good' in a post-workshop survey.

The value of the CoST approach in crises

The CoST guidance note [Improving infrastructure transparency, participation and accountability during a crisis](#) came in direct response to the fast-paced procurement of 2020 and its impact on transparency and accountability. The guidance note shows how CoST can be 'fast-tracked' by governments without necessarily becoming a member, emphasising how a rapid response can



The global CoST team comes together for the CoST Managers' Workshop 2020



incorporate vital safeguards which combat mismanagement, inefficiency and corruption. Ultimately, these safeguards will deliver the quality infrastructure, cost savings and trust which are so necessary – but so often lacking – in times of crisis.

CoST research pinpoints key challenges facing healthcare infrastructure

As recovery plans were announced globally, the CoST IS embarked on research to establish key issues affecting healthcare infrastructure

delivery, utilising data from a sample of health-related assurance projects from 2016-2019. Despite the small sample size – 18 projects across seven countries – the data provided [valuable insight](#) into challenges across three key categories: low levels of transparency; a lack of market competition and poor financial management. The lessons gleaned can be used to guide the delivery of resilient and accessible infrastructure of the future.

Deep dive: Financial mismanagement in Malawi

Data from Malawi showed a lack of financial planning was a common issue, found in 30% of the projects sampled. In one instance, construction of a cold-room to store vaccines and other medical supplies at Mzuzu Hospital in North Malawi was suspended in its early stages because funds provided by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) went missing. This prompted GAVI to request that a dedicated account be created to allow GAVI and partners UNICEF and PricewaterhouseCoopers to maintain direct control of the budget. Knowledge of common issues such as this, which delay much needed community healthcare infrastructure, raise important awareness among stakeholders as they deliver future projects.

Assurance findings drive safety improvements at Malawi cancer hospital

In June 2020 the Government of Malawi increased funding to support the design and construction of radiation treatment and brachytherapy units at a US \$10 million cancer hospital. This follows a CoST Malawi assurance report that highlighted that the units had not been built, as the lead consultant selected to develop the design and supervise the construction had allocated insufficient budget and lacked the expertise to design them. The additional budget allocated to this specialist facility will ensure Malawians can receive treatment within their own country and avoids a potential 'white elephant' hospital.

2. STRENGTHENING BUSINESS INTEGRITY AND MARKET COMPETITION

Despite the restrictions imposed by Covid-19, CoST members have used innovative methods to train over 2300 government, civil society and private sector stakeholders on disclosing and using infrastructure data. This includes 577 members of the private sector, who particularly benefited from enhanced knowledge of national procurement processes to gain access to bidding opportunities, enhancing competition, project quality and value for money as a result.

CoST Uganda levels playing field for national firms



Working as part of the UK Government's Business Integrity Initiative (BII), CoST Uganda's efforts over 2020 led to key reforms with the potential for lasting impact on

competition, contract price and quality in public procurement. Through regular meetings and webinars, CoST Uganda fostered discussion between public and private sectors, enabling business leaders to voice concerns over public procurement which ranged from local content provisions to bribery. The Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority responded by making several changes to the public procurement regulatory environment and worked to increase trust and participation in the system, leading to an increase in the number of bids per tender from 1.6 in 2019 to 12.5 in 2020.

Engagements through the BII also led the

government to introduce key reforms relating to local content. For instance, reservation schemes (which 'reserve' contracts for national and resident firms) have now been reviewed to include more sectors for local providers.

In a clear nod towards Uganda's procurement sector becoming more open, the number of data points from the CoST Infrastructure Data Standard (CoST IDS) included in the government's procurement portal increased from 12 to 20 throughout the year. This increase in transparency means that more key information will become visible, ensuring greater trust and competition in infrastructure delivery.



"We've basically managed to flip the narrative around bribery and infrastructure procurement. Construction companies in Uganda are increasingly seeing that business integrity is beneficial for all and can save them money."

Gilbert Sendugwa,
CoST Africa Senior Regional Manager

Afghanistan engages construction industry for more competitive bidding



The strides made by CoST Afghanistan in deepening private sector engagement are particularly notable. In a series of webinars held in collaboration with the Afghanistan Builders' Association (ABA) the programme reached over

460 private sector actors.

Adapted to a virtual format in light of Covid-19, these webinars raised capacity amongst the construction industry to bid for public contracts. A major takeaway from the webinar series was the importance of dialogue between the public and private sector, which was cited by private sector participants as key to increasing trust, and therefore participation, in public procurement. As well as providing opportunities for such dialogue with government ministers, CoST Afghanistan is facilitating the ABA's five-year strategy to promote coordination between construction companies as they bid for public tenders.

3. MONITORING AND IMPROVING THE WATER SECTOR

Guatemala strengthens citizen oversight of water projects

CoST Guatemala's social audit programme - which trains citizens on the key tenets of infrastructure project monitoring - has gone from strength to strength in recent years. In 2020 over 570 civil society and media officials were trained by the programme, including 180 university students who were introduced to social auditing as part of a USAID urban governance programme. Students gained knowledge on key issues in transparency, participation and accountability in public infrastructure, and several have begun independently monitoring projects with the support of CoST Guatemala.

CoST Guatemala also delivered social audit training to citizens across the department of San Marcos, strengthening local oversight of water projects delivered by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and Government of Spain. The social audit training focussed on using data portals such as the [National Public](#)

[Investment System](#) and [Guatecompras](#) to assess whether key data points were published on projects relating to clean water supply and sanitation systems.

As a result, citizens were able to flag instances where critical information on budgets and



feasibility studies was missing. They also monitored delivery of environmental impact assessments, an important tool in a country highly susceptible to the impacts of climate change and drought. A social audit report was presented to the IADB in September, which will be used to identify areas of improvement in future project delivery.

Developing Afghanistan's water sector to deliver vital services



In Afghanistan, widespread drought led to the displacement of more than 371,000 people in 2018 alone. Improving water management is therefore a key priority for the government, and one which CoST Afghanistan supports by monitoring the design and delivery of water infrastructure projects in its assurance process. After major problems were

A procuring entity in **Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana**, extended water supply to all three community markets in the district, after findings from CoST Sekondi-Takoradi's First Assurance Report revealed there were no toilets or drinking water available.

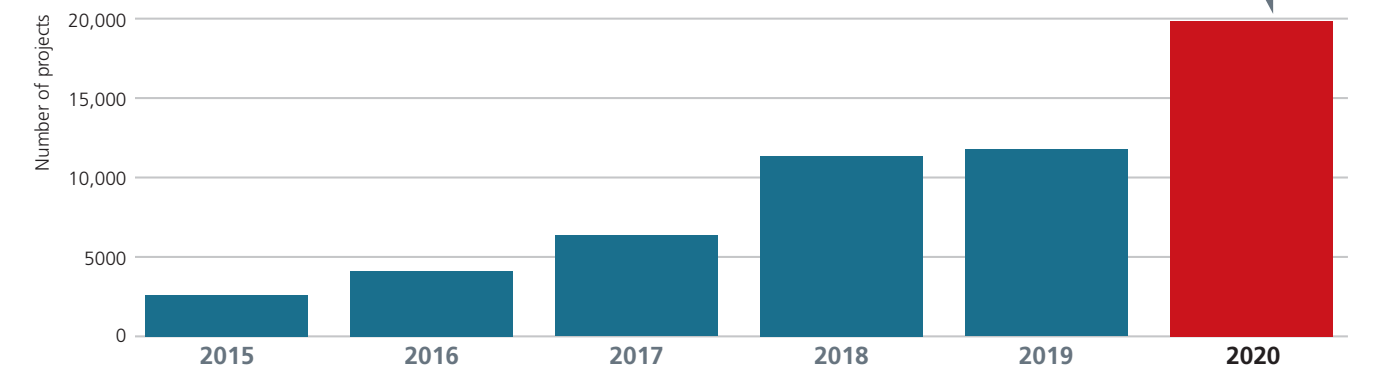
highlighted in the project preparation stage in CoST Afghanistan's 2019 assurance report - leading to time and cost overruns on almost all projects - the Afghanistan National Water Affairs Regulatory Authority (NWARA) introduced a 'backup unit' of engineers to oversee project quality and design. Since being established in early 2020, the unit has surveyed 302 projects and overseen the design of 215, reducing the risks of delays and cost overruns in the long-term and laying the foundations for a more efficient water sector. This builds on previous examples of governance reform spurred by recommendations from CoST Afghanistan's assurance reports, including the creation of a design review unit by the Ministry of Public Works which led to cost-savings of more than **US \$8 million**.



Senior engineers discuss NWARA projects

4. INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

19,950 infrastructure projects disclosed in 2020



Number of projects disclosed in line with the CoST Infrastructure Data Standard

By the end of 2020, CoST supported the publication of data on 19,950 projects in line with the CoST Infrastructure Data Standard (CoST IDS), bringing the cumulative total to 57,691 projects globally. Despite restrictions imposed by Covid-19, this 56% increase in disclosure from 2019 is the result of long-standing efforts to institutionalise data disclosure amongst procuring entities. It also shows the importance of developing successful e-platforms such as those developed in Afghanistan, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Thailand.

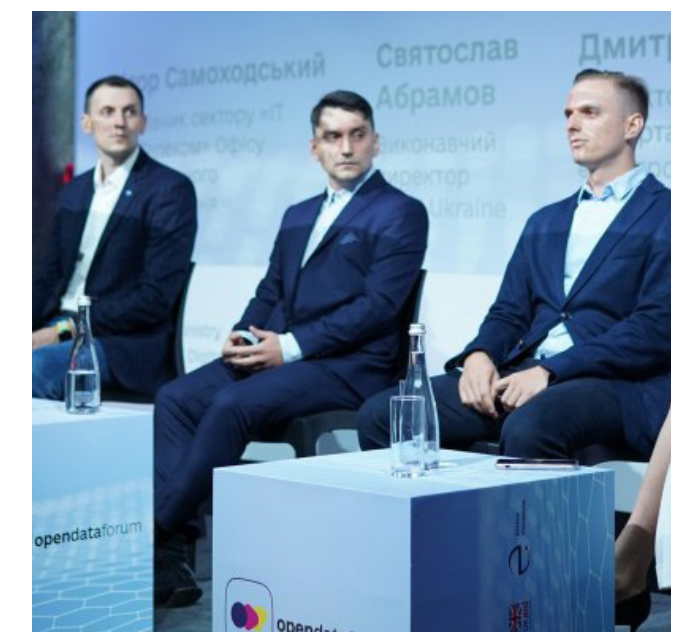
the Open Contracting for Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS), will promote transparency around the government's 85 billion UAH (US \$3 billion) infrastructure programme '**Great Construction**'. Interactive analytical dashboards on the tool will enable civil society to easily monitor and analyse how the programme is delivered. Great Construction Transparency follows the launch of the CoST Ukraine

CoST Ukraine announces tool for oversight of US \$3 billion infrastructure programme



CoST Ukraine continued to develop its technical offering with the announcement of a new tool, 'Great Construction Transparency', at the Ukraine Open Data Forum 2020. The online

platform, which will be populated with data using



Sviatoslav Abramov, (centre) CoST Ukraine Programme Manager, with panellists at the Ukraine Open Data Forum 2020

CoST Ukraine continued to make strides towards greater civic oversight on local roads projects in 2020. Through the USAID supported project, “Transparency and Accountability in Local Road Works”, the programme’s network of civil society monitors made seven site visits throughout the year. Their recommendations on safety and quality issues resulted in tangible change, with authorities implementing repairs on two projects and ringfencing a further three roads for repair in 2021.

analytical tool, which published data on 4000 new road projects and attracted over 3200 new users over 2020. Of particular note is the interest sparked from the private sector, who can use its interactive, analytical features to assess levels of competition across Ukraine’s road sector.

CoST Malawi’s long-term political engagement bears fruit



In Malawi, the 2017 Public Procurement Act was published in the Malawi Government Gazette, bringing a legal requirement for procuring entities to disclose data in line with

the CoST IDS into effect. The process towards securing a legal mandate for disclosure was hard-won, and the publication of the Act is the culmination of many years of engagement with various government administrations throughout periods of political instability.

Publication of the legal requirement comes alongside the announcement naming President of Malawi, Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera as the new CoST Malawi ‘Champion’. Having the President as Champion will help to solicit valuable political support for CoST across government which



Natalie Forsyuk, Deputy Minister for Infrastructure, Ukraine, addresses participants during the launch of the Infrastructure Transparency Index

will work in tandem with the legal mandate to institutionalise disclosure practices.

Panama moves from public contracting to open contracting



Panama took a stride towards greater oversight in public procurement when its Procurement Law was amended in September to include an article on open data in public

procurement. The amendment means procuring entities are now obliged to publish all data related to public contracting on the **PanamaenObras** and **PanamaCompra** e-platforms, in an open data format. The data published on PanamaenObras will be done so in line with the CoST IDS until

Governments in **Afghanistan, Sekondi-Takoradi (Ghana)** and **Malawi** are following in the steps of Honduras and Ukraine by integrating the OC4IDS into their disclosure platforms. Doing so will transform their existing platforms into ‘open data platforms’, promoting access to interoperable data.

2021, after which it will be published in line with CoST and Open Contracting Partnership’s flagship standard, the OC4IDS.

Roll out of the Infrastructure Transparency Index amongst CoST members

CoST launched the methodology of the first-of-its-kind Infrastructure Transparency Index (ITI) to mark International Anti-Corruption Day 2020. Over 60 infrastructure, data and indices experts joined the online event to hear ministers in Ukraine and Afghanistan commit to implementing the methodology as outlined in an **ITI Manual**. This will be used to evaluate procuring entities to establish levels of infrastructure transparency and the quality of processes that improve participation and accountability, the results of

which will be published as an index. After being successfully tested in Guatemala and Honduras during 2019, the ITI is now being rolled out in Afghanistan, Costa Rica, Honduras, Sekondi-Takoradi (Ghana), Ukraine and Uganda.

SISOCS platform code to be shared amongst open-data community

Honduras’s disclosure platforms **SISOCS** and **SISOCS APP** have provided access to key data on thousands of public and private projects, worth over US \$2.2 billion. To replicate their success, CoST developed the open-source code for both platforms in 2020 which will be made available in an open repository in 2021. Not just for CoST members, the repository will welcome the wider open-data community to use and build on the open-source tools housed within it.



The SISOCS platform is put to use during a CoST Honduras workshop

5. INCLUSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure should be designed to meet the needs of all citizens, but CoST is aware that the process of its delivery can exclude the views of women, young people and people with disabilities. As a result, and as laid out in the Business Plan 2021-2025, gender and inclusion has been ring-fenced as an integral part of the CoST approach over the next five years.

Gender review reveals key lessons for CoST members

In both perception and practice, the infrastructure sector is male dominated. CoST began the process of addressing the issue throughout 2020 by publishing a review into the CoST Thailand programme, [Enhancing inclusive infrastructure: A review of gender equality in CoST Thailand](#).

The publication provides a valuable baseline for CoST Thailand to measure progress in gender equality, with lessons for our global members to inform their approach to achieving more gender-inclusive programme delivery. In the future, guidance will also be developed to assist members to further improve female representation on their [multi-stakeholder groups](#) (MSGs) who guide programme delivery. Importantly, the guidance will also show how citizen-engagement mechanisms can successfully promote the participation of women and other marginalised groups.

CoST Multi-Stakeholder Working strengthens female representation

Whilst MSGs are likely to see greater gender parity in the future, several senior women assumed new positions within the groups

in 2020. In Mexico, Cynthia Cantero, the President of the Institute of Transparency, Public Information and Protection of Personal Data (ITEI) took the role of CoST Jalisco MSG Chair. And in Afghanistan, the newly appointed Minister of Economy, HE Dr Karima Hamed Faryabi, became Chair of the CoST Afghanistan MSG, joining government adviser Foman Forough on the MSG.

Increasing female participation

Female participation also increased across other aspects of the CoST approach, with women playing a growing role in the disclosure, validation and monitoring of infrastructure projects. CoST Uganda took action to promote greater inclusion in infrastructure delivery by implementing a targeted communications strategy with messaging towards women, utilising radio and TV advertising to increase



HE Dr Karima Hamed Faryabi,
Minister for Economy, Afghanistan

female attendance at CoST events. This has increased opportunities for women to raise issues relating to unsafe roads, poor drainage and waste disposal that the local government has since responded to.

In Latin America, CoST Honduras is publishing data on the employment of women on their open data platform SISOCs, whilst El Salvador captures the percentage of women employed on infrastructure projects as part of their assurance process.

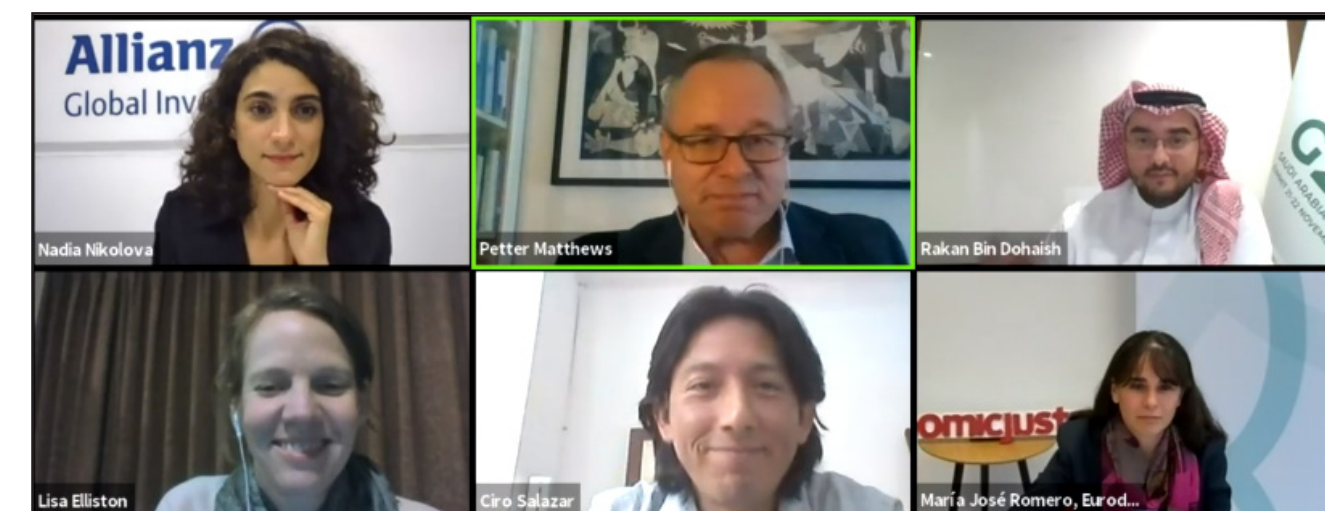
Promoting inclusive infrastructure in Lukaya, Uganda

Recommendations from CoST Uganda's Second Assurance Report led the Ministry of Public Works to terminate and re-tender a contract to rebuild a marketplace, so that important provisions such as toilets for both women and men were included in project design. The assurance report also highlighted a lack of a socio-economic or environmental impact assessment. Lukaya Town Council took onboard CoST recommendations to increase civic participation in infrastructure delivery, leading to improved relations with the local community as a result.

6. INFLUENCING

As Covid-19 placed restrictions on in-person engagement throughout the year, the CoST International Secretariat (CoST IS) pivoted its approach to influencing, increasingly drawing on online events and digital engagement over in-person engagement. Through these online means CoST emphasised the value of infrastructure transparency to large audiences from all corners of the world, both facilitating and participating in influential events.

The events took on varied themes, audiences and formats, continuing to show the relevance of the CoST mission to many diverse stakeholders. They included those organised by Hivos, FIDIC, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the London School of Economics, Transparency International and the World Bank. One particular highlight was CoST participation at the Civil-20 (C20) Global Summit – a dynamic five-day event attracting 40,000 global attendees



Panelists at CoST and Eurodad's joint session at the C20 Global Summit

from 118 countries. Here, CoST Executive Director and Chair of the C20 Infrastructure Working Group, Petter Matthews, convened leading voices in infrastructure for a joint session with civil-society network, Eurodad. 'Financing infrastructure in an era of crisis' brought together representatives of the G20 and C20 working groups, investors and civil society who put forth contrasting viewpoints on the G20 focus of establishing infrastructure as an asset class as a key way to meet growing infrastructure needs. While participants differed on the G20 focus, a resounding takeaway was the major role that infrastructure can play in both aiding recovery and preparing us for future crises.

CoST oversees wide participation to inform new Business Plan 2021-2025: Strengthening economies and improving lives

In early 2020 CoST undertook a public consultation on its new [Business Plan](#). Appropriate to the extraordinary times in which it was developed, the consultation was the most researched and participatory undertaken by CoST. Through online calls and events CoST solicited expert opinion from across government, private sector, civil society, international institutions and, importantly, CoST members to help guide CoST strategy over the next five years. The resulting plan demonstrates how CoST, working with partners and donors, can meet the challenges of Covid-19 and other pressing issues such as climate change and shrinking civic space.

How CoST fights corruption: World Bank showcases CoST impact

In the World Bank report [Enhancing government effectiveness and transparency](#) CoST and other approaches were highlighted as key examples of how countries are progressing in the fight to end corruption. CoST activities from the diverse contexts of Honduras, Ukraine and Thailand show how a flexible but universal standard can achieve great impact even in the unlikeliest scenarios. Each story has its nuances but highlights the key role of CoST's core features across their collective narratives.

The report was launched at a high-level event during which key influencers endorsed the publication, with Delia Rubio, Chair of Transparency International and Bernard Myers, World Bank's public sector specialist emphasising the value of CoST.

7. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

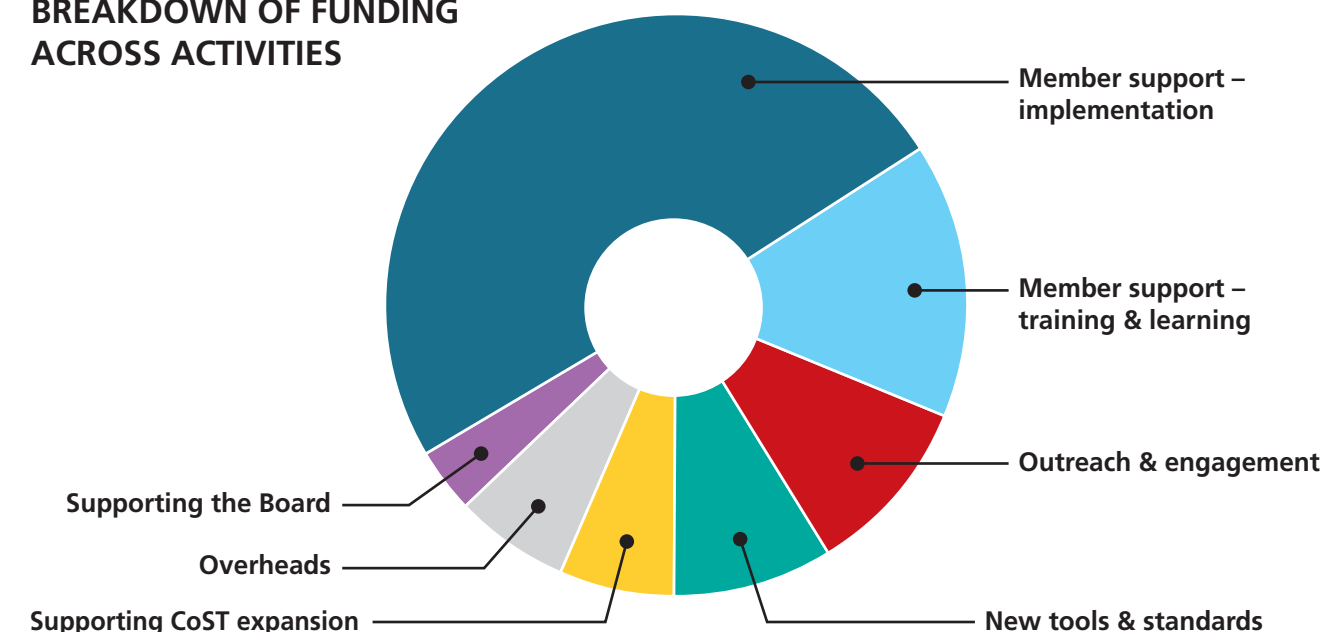
OVERVIEW OF SUPPORT TO THE CoST INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT AND TO CoST MEMBERS

In 2020 we received funding from the **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)**, **Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MinBuZa)**, **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, **World Bank** and **Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)**



Total income: **£1,844,983**

BREAKDOWN OF FUNDING ACROSS ACTIVITIES



*These figures have not been subject to audit.
The audited accounts will be made available in late 2020.*

Total expenditure: **£1,523,835**

8. CONCLUSION

The last year was one in which the CoST approach – and its ability to respond flexibly to evolving political and social realities – was truly put to the test. With core elements of the CoST approach restricted, members were forced to think creatively about how best to increase transparency, participation and accountability in infrastructure. In spite of these challenges, CoST members around the world adapted their approach to continue engaging the public through digital events, reaching thousands in the process.

The increase in disclosure we have seen this year is testament to the long-term, hard-won efforts to engage procuring entities and institutionalise cultures of transparency. Given the issues which arose from the fast-paced procurement of the Covid-19 response, there has never been a greater need for disclosure and oversight within these processes. Uptake of the Open Contracting for Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS) and Infrastructure Transparency Index over 2021 will only increase the value of the data disclosed.

Our members also recognised the need to adapt CoST assurance processes to the healthcare facilities which were so hastily procured and constructed, bringing much-needed oversight to an otherwise opaque area of public expenditure. By also extending focus into other key areas of social infrastructure – such as water and sanitation facilities – CoST members continue to prove the value of the CoST approach to essential community services.

CoST continues to strengthen its partnerships with key organisations, ranging from the G20 and C20, the International Federation of Consulting

Engineers (FIDIC) and the World Bank. Doing so will enable us to cut across sectors and demonstrate the value of the CoST approach to new and diverse stakeholders.

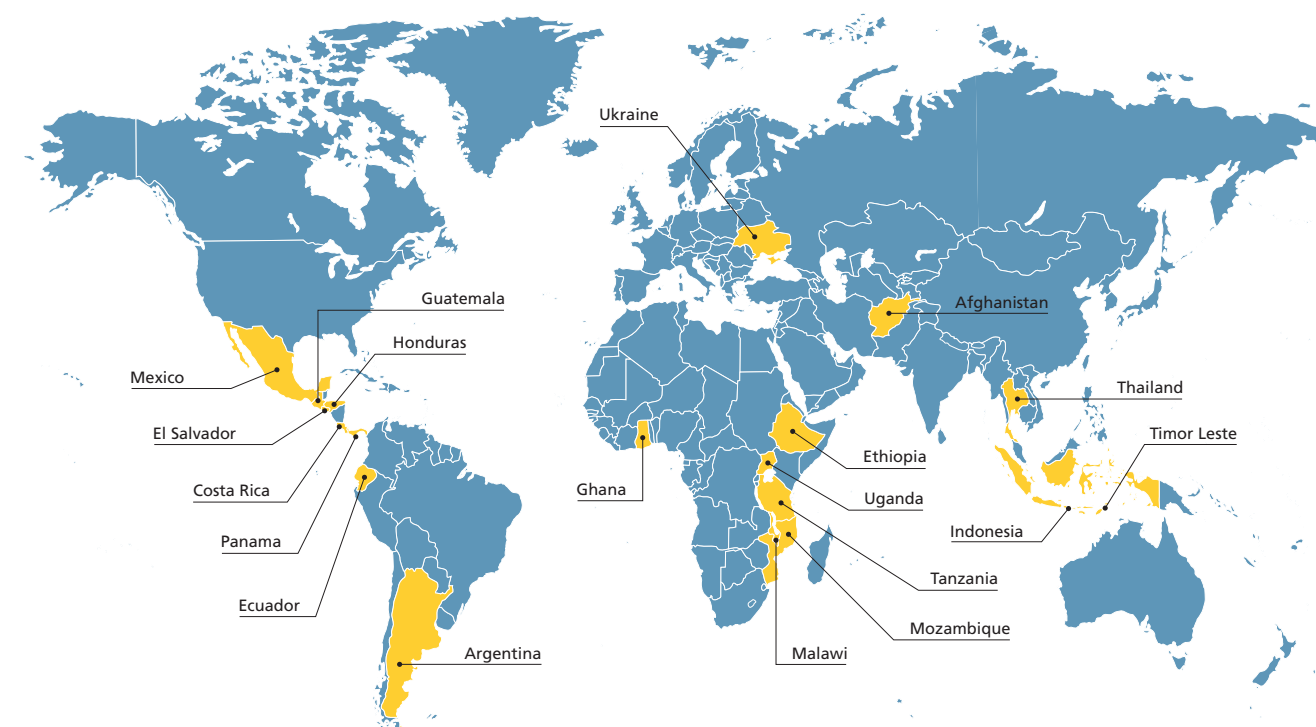
In our next annual report, we look forward to reporting on progress and achievements relating to:

1. Completing our robust guidance package aimed at CoST members and others to help them mainstream gender inclusion in their programmes and further improve their social accountability and multi-stakeholder working features.
2. Publishing an Infrastructure Transparency Index in Afghanistan, Costa Rica, Sekondi-Takoradi (Ghana), Ukraine and Uganda.
3. Promoting lessons learnt from enhancing Public-Private Partnership (PPP) project transparency in Honduras and launching the open-source code of the country's SISOCS PPPs platform to help replicate its success.
4. Increasing strategic partnerships and new approaches to diversify funding to CoST and working closely with CoST members to move towards greater self-financing.
5. Assurance reports published by El Salvador, Uganda, Sekondi-Takoradi (Ghana), Thailand and Malawi including a focus on healthcare infrastructure projects.
6. Raising awareness on the value of infrastructure transparency to economic crisis recovery, using events of the OECD, Open Government Partnership, FIDIC and others to do so.

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