

TOSSD

17th meeting of the international Task Force, July 2022

CSO initial comments

Item 1. TOSSD Governance arrangements

- We appreciate the clarifications provided with the latest reiteration of the ToRs of the ITF on the CSO permanent Observer seat: these further enhance transparency and the space for all stakeholders to take part in decisive conversations on TOSSD.
- We propose that the ToRs should restate – as agreed in in the TF April meeting - the current best practice that makes provisions for Observers and their Alternates, which is a very practical arrangement that improves burden sharing and effective participation. We agree that only one Observer per constituency should have voice in any given meeting.
- In line with previous observations on this subject, we would like to reiterate the importance of including a section on values in the ToRs to complement vision and mission. This section on values would speak to the fundamental principles that underpin the TOSSD Forum’s ways of working such as inclusiveness, open meetings and documentation, and transparency, which have been the practice and are reflected in the AAAA mandate as well.

Item 3. Reporting issues

Further guidance on sustainability

- We appreciate the additional efforts to operationalize the notion of sustainability and we welcome that the concerns over non-detrimental effects and the role of Partner countries have been clearly brought to the fore.
- On the other hand, this discussion once again highlights how important it is for a well-resourced Secretariat to carry out data validation to the maximum extent possible.
- As we fully support the involvement of recipient countries, we must acknowledge that the current proposal still struggles to delineate the role that CSOs will have in data validation against the ESS and the no-harm principle. We would like to invite further reflections as to a mechanism through which stakeholders might trigger data review and validation as regards consistency with the notion of sustainability.

Use of deflator

- It is a welcome development to introduce a methodology to offer constant price data in addition to current price data. We fully support the background paper’s suggestion for deflators that factor in two adjustments: inflation rates for Partner countries and the exchange rates from local currencies to the dollar.
- It would be ideal to have constant prices series not only for providers but also in the case of data for the multilaterals to provide comparability and consistency.
- A proposal to calculate a recipient perspective deflator could be an important value added for TOSSD, highly consistent with its default recipient perspective and its objective for increased transparency on the relative value of flows as received by partner countries. The Secretariat should explore the technical aspects of such a deflator, with perhaps a few country cases.

Anonymization

- It would be appropriate to consider a mechanism that can allow for parties that are beneficiaries of TOSSD activities to trigger a decision on anonymization, which for now seems to be only trusted with the reporting parties.

Covid 19 reporting

- We support the notion that a consistent implementation of the recipient perspective should inform the discussion on Covid 19 vaccine donations; we agree with the option outlined in the background

paper, namely the fact that reporting should cover only how many and which vaccine doses have been donated.

- On the other hand, we are doubtful about the suggested option regarding a provider perspective as it contradicts the concerns about not generating different data sets. We believe further reflections are needed to work out a method that is fully consistent with a recipient perspective, which is the distinctive feature of TOSSD.

Item 4. Further Development of the TOSSD Recipients' List

- There is the need to clarify that the opt-in procedure stays in place and is complemented by the options now for discussion.
- We would then support a multidimensional approach as it would be more consistent with a metric that is expected to be differentiated from ODA. As we note that this approach would link up TOSSD discussions with an on-going UN process (re the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for SDI), we can agree to an interim option including the DAC recipient list; in this regard, the argument for using the 2015 list would benefit from further clarifications.

Item 5 - Eligibility rules for Pillar II and tracking of activities with transnational benefits

- With respect to the issue of geographic reach, we would favour the second option, which allows for a clear distinction between the location of the expenditure / commitment, consistent with the recipient perspective, and this notion of geographic reach. It is important that TOSSD retain a clear notion of the geographic location of activities that are considered International Public Goods, i.e. many of them taking place in provider countries.
- There is an issue that is not addressed with respect to IPGs as reported to TOSSD, which we believe deserves further consideration. Proportionality is an important consideration to avoid inflated reporting, with a focus on the share of a given IPG activity expenditure for an activity consistent with the criteria of "substantial benefit to TOSSD recipient countries". In our review of data, particularly in the research area but also in telecommunications, it seemed to us that only a portion of these wider IPG investments could be seen to have actual substantial benefit to TOSSD recipients. While of course it would be somewhat subjective, apportioning a share of the total investment to the geographic reach in relation to substantial benefit to recipient countries could be more consistent with the overall recipient perspective.

Item 6 - Main findings of the data pilots and possible TOSSD data validation mechanism

- CSOs have provided comments on the Chile Pilot findings through a submission by Eurodad which collated a number of comments. Overall, we welcomed the study and its intention to improve the relevance of TOSSD to recipient countries and the examination of practical implications of recipient country verification of TOSSD data.
- We did highlight however that while its proposal for validation may be practical, it seems a bit far off in terms of the potential for implementation, given the several systemic and methodological issues identified in relation to country MIS throughout the three case studies.

Item 7 - Main findings of the Chile Pilot and TOSSD provider perspective.

- We welcome the Task Force's cautious approach to a provider perspective by emphasizing the primary objective of preserving the recipient perspective as the key and unique feature of this metric, including intense communication by providers. This is a consistent position shared by CSOs since the initiation of discussions on TOSSD.
- As for the option presented in the background paper, we would like to suggest assessing the possibility of applying the methodology proposed for earmarked flows through multilateral organizations also to core contributions to these organizations, based on the relative share of core finance by each provider. Multilateral flows to recipients based on these core contributions could be allocated back to providers based on their relative share of core finance for the organization. This approach would be consistent with the overall recipient perspective championed by the TOSSD.

- We appreciate the possibility of easing the access to the full data base by introducing a “download whole database” button.
- As for the other options for comments, we would like to:
 - support new data field on funder as it would improve data granularity as to multilaterals;
 - support a filter in the data visualization to help access data by provider, while the default visualization remains the recipient perspective;
 - support activity level publication of all flows in the provider perspective, rather relying on aggregates by the Secretariat.

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