

**NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE TOSSD TASK FORCE
VIRTUAL MEETING – 7, 8 AND 12 DECEMBER 2022**

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION POINTS

This note presents the main conclusions and action points from the 19th meeting of the TOSSD Task Force (the TF) as recorded by the co-Chairs and the Secretariat. In brief:

- **Item 1. Update on the 2022 TOSSD data collection round on 2021 activities:** The Secretariat provided an update on the list of TOSSD reporters and noted that, as of 7 December, more than 100 countries and organisations had reported their 2021 activities. The Secretariat also shared that it aims to publish TOSSD data by 30 January.
- **Item 2. Governance of the TOSSD framework:** The Task Force completed a first full review of the draft Terms of Reference of the possible future ‘International Forum on TOSSD’.
- **Item 3. Use of Artificial Intelligence in TOSSD data processing:** The Secretariat updated the Task Force on the development of an artificial intelligence tool that uses machine learning techniques to help in the reporting against SDG targets.
- **Item 4. Update on financing of the TOSSD framework:** The Secretariat presented the updated pledges by stakeholder as of 8 December. The co-Chair of the EU insisted that there is still a funding gap to bridge, recalled TOSSD’s responsibility in the SDG indicators reporting, but also mentioned that this does not mean the DAC has the obligation to fund TOSSD.

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| | <p>Introduction and welcome</p> <p>The meeting was co-Chaired by Mr. Laurent Sarazin, EU, and Mr. Ashwell Jenneker, Deputy Director General of Statistics South Africa, acting for Mr Maluleke who was not able to attend the full meeting. The co-Chairs welcomed participants in this virtual meeting.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>Item 1.</p> | <p>Update on the 2022 TOSSD data collection round on 2021 activities</p> <p>The Secretariat provided an update on the list of TOSSD reporters and noted that, as of 7 December, 103 countries and organisations had reported their 2021 activities. The Secretariat also shared that it aims to publish TOSSD data by 30 January and outlined a few communications activities for early 2023 (e.g., data stories).</p> <p>Mexico highlighted that they had reported to TOSSD for the first time. Four members indicated that they were finalising their data files and would send them shortly. Finally, one multilateral organisation offered to arrange a session with its member countries to help with the dissemination of TOSSD data.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>Item 2.</p> | <p>Governance of the TOSSD framework</p> <p>The Task Force completed a first full review of the draft Terms of Reference of the possible future ‘International Forum on TOSSD’.¹</p> <p>The changes agreed for each section of the ToRs are indicated in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="268 913 1477 1870"> <tr> <td data-bbox="268 913 523 1077"> <p>Section 1. Context and purpose of the document</p> </td> <td data-bbox="523 913 1477 1077"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member had requested to soften the language, and this was done by using conditional verbs in paragraphs 5, 6 and 7. In paragraph 8, the text ‘work on a proposal for’ was also added. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="268 1077 523 1317"> <p>Section 2. Vision and mission statement</p> </td> <td data-bbox="523 1077 1477 1317"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several members suggested editing paragraph 10 to ensure that “partnerships” were presented as a “means” for improving the TOSSD measurement rather than an “objective” of the Forum. • The Secretariat suggested including in paragraph 11 a reference to TOSSD complementing existing statistical frameworks and databases on development finance. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="268 1317 523 1870"> <p>Section 3. Participation: Members, Observers, Reporters, and International Experts</p> </td> <td data-bbox="523 1317 1477 1870"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In paragraph 15, it was added that Members should commit to using TOSSD data to the greatest extent possible “in official work and public communications” and reporting TOSSD data “to the greatest extent possible”. The commitment to actively participate in the Forum “by attending the General Assembly meeting” was also added. • Three members and the co-Chair of the EU considered that mentioning “sponsorship” as an example of financial contribution might be too specific for the ToRs. The Task Force decided to erase this reference from paragraph 16. • Paragraph 21 was edited to clarify that observers may participate in all bodies, meetings, and activities of the Forum. • The Task Force agreed to clarify the status of reporters and therefore changed the title of section 3c to ‘non-member reporters’, also including this term in paragraph 23. </td> </tr> </table> | <p>Section 1. Context and purpose of the document</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member had requested to soften the language, and this was done by using conditional verbs in paragraphs 5, 6 and 7. In paragraph 8, the text ‘work on a proposal for’ was also added. | <p>Section 2. Vision and mission statement</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several members suggested editing paragraph 10 to ensure that “partnerships” were presented as a “means” for improving the TOSSD measurement rather than an “objective” of the Forum. • The Secretariat suggested including in paragraph 11 a reference to TOSSD complementing existing statistical frameworks and databases on development finance. | <p>Section 3. Participation: Members, Observers, Reporters, and International Experts</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In paragraph 15, it was added that Members should commit to using TOSSD data to the greatest extent possible “in official work and public communications” and reporting TOSSD data “to the greatest extent possible”. The commitment to actively participate in the Forum “by attending the General Assembly meeting” was also added. • Three members and the co-Chair of the EU considered that mentioning “sponsorship” as an example of financial contribution might be too specific for the ToRs. The Task Force decided to erase this reference from paragraph 16. • Paragraph 21 was edited to clarify that observers may participate in all bodies, meetings, and activities of the Forum. • The Task Force agreed to clarify the status of reporters and therefore changed the title of section 3c to ‘non-member reporters’, also including this term in paragraph 23. |
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¹ The version reviewed during the meeting is accessible at https://tossd.org/docs/Item_2_Draft%20TORs_IFT_19th_meeting.pdf.

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| | <p>Section Governance arrangements</p> <p>4.</p> | <p>4.b. Chairing arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On paragraph 28, the Secretariat confirmed that the names of the bodies for the future IFT are in line with other OECD bodies and institutions hosted by the Organisation. • On paragraph 31, the Task Force decided to include some outreach and engagement functions for IFT co-Chairs. • Paragraphs 34 and 35 were edited to use the term ‘appointment process’ instead of ‘election’, to ensure coherence in terminology throughout the ToRs. <p>4.c. General Assembly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding paragraph 37, the Secretariat suggested adding that the General Assembly decides on the invitation of observers to join the Steering Group. This proposal was accepted by the Task Force. • On paragraph 39, a repetition related to the appointment of the Forum’s co-Chairs and members of the Steering Group was removed (these appointments were already mentioned in paragraph 37). The Task Force also included in this paragraph a reference to the role of the General Assembly in supporting the implementation of TOSSD Communications and Outreach Strategy. • On paragraph 41, the Secretariat and the co-Chair of the EU recalled that the two-thirds majority rule exists in other OECD bodies and international organisations. <p>4.d. Steering Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On paragraph 44, one member and one observer proposed clarifying that Steering Group members “are not appointed to represent the position of their stakeholder groups”. • On paragraph 45, the co-Chair of the EU suggested complementing the first bullet with a note that some Steering Group members will be appointed annually by the General Assembly with a view to ensuring the balanced composition of the Steering Group. • The Task Force agreed to the integration of former Annex A (Composition of the Steering Group) into paragraph 49. • On paragraph 50, the Task Force agreed to include the oversight of the implementation of the work plan and budget as a role for the Steering Group. • On paragraph 51, the Task Force agreed that if the Steering Group fails to reach consensus, the co-Chairs may put an item for decision by a two-thirds majority vote of Steering Group Members present “at the next meeting”. • Regarding the issue of when a contribution gives right to a seat in the Steering Group, the co-Chair of the EU concluded that this is an issue that can be discussed in the future, but before the establishment of the Forum. <p>4.e. Working Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Task Force agreed that Working Groups will not take decisions but rather provide expert advice, analyse key issues, and prepare documents as key outputs of their work (paragraph 64). • On paragraph 74, the Task Force confirmed that, if consensus cannot be reached in a working group on a specific issue, the matter will be transferred to the Steering Group. |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Task Force agreed to the inclusion of former Annex D (Statistical Working Group - SWG) in the body of the text. • It was confirmed that the SWG’s composition follows the one of the Steering Group (apart from the co-Chairs that may be different from those of the General Assembly / Steering Group). The Task Force agreed that the Chair of IATI be invited as an observer to the SWG, and that up to two non-member reporters may be invited as observers too. <p>4.f. Secretariat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Task Force specified in paragraph 76 that functions of the Secretariat will be carried out “at the direction of the membership”. The core function ‘finance and administration’ was renamed ‘financial management and administration’. • The Task Force agreed to integrate Annex B (Functions of the Secretariat) in the body of the ToRs. • A member asked about the use in paragraph 77 of the word “may” in the expression ‘such functions may include’. The Secretariat clarified that this word was used because the list of functions was only indicative and would notably depend on the final budget of the Forum. • The co-Chair of the EU asked about the reporting line between the Secretariat and the co-Chairs. The Secretariat said this aspect was covered in the draft MoU, but not in the ToRs. One member suggested adding in this section that the Secretariat should “Engage with co-Chairs and the Steering Group as necessary throughout the year to ensure the smooth functioning of the Forum.” |
| <p>Item 3.</p> | <p>Use of Artificial Intelligence in TOSSD data processing</p> <p>The Secretariat updated the Task Force on the development of an artificial intelligence tool that uses machine learning techniques to help in the reporting against SDG targets.</p> <p>One member suggested the tool be named ‘SDG verifier’. Another member commented that the quality and level of SDG reporting varies greatly across TOSSD reporters, which go well beyond international co-operation ministries. The AI tool could be particularly useful for these reporters but should be simple to use and allow the visualisation of the results it generates in a user-friendly way. Two members commented that they had developed similar tools with different technologies. One of them noted that deploying the tool had proven challenging and that the alignment of SDG targets by humans had proven more efficient. The other member added that there are many different projects ongoing to align activities to the SDGs, and that the most efficient tool will surface at some point and take over the others. This member further asked whether the sector codes could be used to complement the analysis. The Secretariat responded that the tool made use of information beyond the description and the project title fields (e.g., sector code, channel name) to suggest SDG targets.</p> <p>The Secretariat asked Task Force members with SDG information gaps if they would be interested in using the tool for reporting. Two members reacted that a detailed review of the model by technical experts was needed first; they also thought a complementary human review of the targets assigned to each activity would be necessary. The Secretariat clarified that the tool would only be used with the consent of the reporter.</p> | |
| <p>Item 4.</p> | <p>Update on financing of the TOSSD framework</p> <p>The Secretariat presented the updated pledges by stakeholder as of 8 December. The co-Chair of the EU commented that the EU had started reaching out to some of its member states to obtain additional financial support for the Forum. The Secretariat added that it had been in contact with two Arab countries reporting to TOSSD and is approaching another. An observer from the CSO community had encouraged a government to support TOSSD financially. The co-Chair of the EU reminded the Task</p> | |

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| | <p>Force that the budget must be ready no later than April 2023 and encouraged members to confirm their contributions.</p> <p>In follow-up to a request by some members, the Secretariat had undertaken a prioritisation exercise and classified the Forum secretariat functions with two levels of priority. One member flagged that this was problematic as it was working on an agreement with the OECD where many of the activities indicated as priority 2 were mentioned. This member encouraged members to find additional resources to avoid the de-prioritisation of some activities. Two members considered that the prioritisation exercise was a useful one for the membership to understand what is necessary for the Secretariat to manage TOSSD and the consequences of a lower budget. One of these members mentioned that there are some elements, such as the promotion in international fora that members of the steering group of the future ‘International Forum on TOSSD’ could do themselves. This member further recommended showing where IFT members could help carry out priority 2 activities. Another member reminded that now that TOSSD is a data source for the SDG indicator 17.3.1., members have a responsibility to ensure the continuity and financial sustainability of the TOSSD Framework. The member also commented that, if the TOSSD budget is only based on voluntary contributions, the sustainability of the budget and the framework itself could be in jeopardy and suggested that for this reason the DAC should keep a budget line on TOSSD in the DAC PWB. Another member expressed concerns about the possible de-prioritisation of the outreach to new reporters. The same member asked whether a situation where the Secretariat would focus only on Priority 1 functions would result in a smaller team within the Secretariat. The Secretariat answered that a reduced budget would mean reduced number of in-person meeting, staff missions, publications, and one person less in statistical engagement and only 50% of the administrative person.</p> <p>The co-Chair of the EU insisted that there is still a funding gap to bridge, recalled TOSSD’s responsibility in the SDG indicators reporting, but also mentioned that this does not mean the DAC has the obligation to fund TOSSD.</p> |
| | <p>AOB and Wrap-up:</p> <p>The Secretariat commented that an update on TOSSD will be presented to the DAC at its February 2023 meeting. After that session, a discussion is foreseen at the OECD Executive Committee and the OECD Council. The Secretariat will circulate the reviewed version of the TORs to the Task Force.</p> |