

Incorporating lessons from iDSI's mid-term learning review

Dr Kalipso Chalkidou, Director

Laura Morris, Analyst

Global Health and Development Group

Institute of Global Health Innovation, Imperial College

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Outcomes of the Mid-Term Review (2016)

- MTR reported to Board in Sept 2016
- Over same period, iDSI Secretariat moved from NICE to Imperial – now operating fully from new home
- Findings demonstrated **clear value** of iDSI, high expectations
- Some **parallel iDSI activity** in 2016/17 addresses MTR recommendations (e.g. Communications strategy and personnel)
- Balance in **responses**:
 - Inform existing strategic and operational planning, not replace it
 - Judge timing for introducing changes – never intended to be one-off exercise



Outcomes of the Mid-Term Review (2016)

General discussion points:

- Our Theory of Change + activities are not direct/short term
 - Institutionalization involves **paradigm shifts over a longer period** than our work to date
- In the last Board meeting members discussed commissioning an **external strategic review** in future
 - When is the appropriate point for this?
- Many governance and management recommendations covered by increased formalisation of Board papers, other documentation (*see Board paper Annex 1.1.6 for list*)
 - Are any governance issues outstanding?



High



Medium



Low

iDSI responses:

- a. Accept with actions
- b. Accept – no actions (in current grant)
- c. Partially accept

Responses from iDSI partners

	Recommendation	iDSI response	Overall comment	Update (January 2017)	Proposed indicator (2017-18)
	1. Clarify strategy, vision and operational priorities	Accept – plan actions	<i>Actions must be phased and draw on earlier strategic planning.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications + Knowledge Management strategy has been revised, building on MTR • Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) activity ongoing to capture and reflect on iDSI's contributions to progress 	<p>Initially (2016-17): Communicate existing strategy</p> <p>Continuous activity: Use ongoing MEL to inform strategic discussions</p> <p>Medium-term discussion(2017-): Reflect on our sustainability</p> <p>Medium/long-term: Possibly commission external strategic plan</p>
	2. Continue to strengthen governance arrangements	Partially accept	<i>Good principles, but risk of pre-empting our operational growth.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant change; more governance/ management documents now formalise processes [see Board papers] 	<p>Secretariat activity(2017): explore voluntary transparency adherence for not-for-profits</p> <p>Board(Sep 2017): Risk register and processes codified further DEG stronger and Board more engaged</p>



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3.	<i>Develop structured, resourced strategy for global engagement</i>	Accept - plan actions	<i>More pro-active strategy for global engagement needed, although we focus on iDSI operations not governance.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No current changes but continue engaging with global partners. [See Board item 9] iDSI MEL assessing engagement w/global partners; will report to DEG Q2 2017 Consider ERG for iDSI3 	<p>Ongoing activity: Standing updates in Board meetings</p> <p>Ongoing discussion: Review aims from engaging international partners</p>
4.	<i>Review approaches to engaging and supporting countries</i>	Accept- no action yet	<i>Recognise balance between LT support and response to immediate need/demand.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational update: refined processes for agreeing new iDSI projects and seeking supplemental funding. [See Board item 11] Following Secretariat move to IC, more able to respond flexibly to requests. In country presence in India 	<p>Annual activity: Use country-based vignettes and MEL assessments to capture achievements, issues</p> <p>Activity: revisit country engagement criteria every 3-5 years</p> <p>Activity: engage ODI for SSA scoping (subject to £)</p>



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	5. <i>Identify the full range of skills and expertise needed in the network and proactively seek these out</i>	Partially accept	<p><i>Recommended short-term focus on building new partnerships to deliver on novel topics (priority).</i></p> <p><i>Experience in countries on 'end-to-end' of priority-setting</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No structural change: reflect if there are any gaps in network in skills to deliver on current commitments. Sought expertise from partners (incl. Skills Matrix for board) • Recent examples of proactively seeking out partnerships – e.g. ODI in relation to political economy 	<p>Ongoing activity: identify expertise generally required in engagements</p> <p>Discussion (medium term): Review expertise identified in relation to global and country aims.</p>
	6. <i>Develop a knowledge generation strategy that links knowledge to country and global needs.</i>	Accept – plan actions	<p><i>Took steps when scaling up to address the link with country needs, including requiring research partners to specify policy applicability.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEAR database (launch Mar 2017) is an additional means of eliciting research and policy questions 	<p>Activity: Preliminary scoping with funders on priorities in commissioning future research</p>



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	7. <i>Strengthen knowledge management and communication.</i>	Accept – plan actions	<i>Relates strongly (not exclusively) to parallel development of comms work stream.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently planning revision of website & introducing F1000 open access platform to improve presentation of KPs • Comms & Knowledge Management strategy revised in Jan 2017 • Recruiting for Comms Manager at IC 	Activity: Secretariat including knowledge management in Comms staff spec (incl. knowledge translation and exchange)
	8. [Cross-cutting] Consider implications for organisational structure if become an ‘one stop shop’	Partially accept	<i>Potential breadth of our offer is an ongoing question; avoid losing our distinctiveness as we expand.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>No significant changes: reflect as part of future strategic discussions.</i> ○ Engaging more with initiatives mentioned to ensure collaboration ○ Stronger procurement links through NHS England and NHSO 	Activity: work with JLN/WB, DCP, PATH etc to avoid replicating areas of activity