

Our approach

The four features of CoST

We use a four pronged approach to increasing infrastructure transparency and accountability : multi-stakeholder working, publication of data (disclosure), independent review of data (assurance) and social accountability. This provides a global standard for CoST implementation to enhance quality and delivery of infrastructure, and transform lives.

Whilst the standard is universally applied by CoST members, we encourage it to be adapted to local and regional contexts, so that it is appropriately applied to different political, economic and social systems.

Multi-stakeholder working

Enhancing transparency and accountability in public infrastructure involves collaboration across stakeholder groups from government, private sector and civil society who have different perspectives and backgrounds.

CoST brings these stakeholders together through multi-stakeholder groups in each member or programme. The groups guide the delivery of CoST and provide a neutral forum for stakeholders to pursue infrastructure transparency together. Find out more about multi-stakeholder working.



The Guatemala MSG

Publication of data

The process of publishing data (disclosure) sees that information such as the purpose, scope, costs and implementation of infrastructure projects is open, accessible and more readily available to the public.

We aim for data to be published in accordance with the CoST Infrastructure Data Standard (CoST IDS) and the Open Contracting for Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS). The CoST IDS requires procuring entities to publish proactively 40 data points or 'items' across key stages of the infrastructure project cycle. The OC4IDS combines contract-level disclosure based on the Open Contracting Data Standard and project-level disclosure based on the CoST IDS. It standardises the approach to publishing data through the use of online platforms, encouraging data centralisation and making it available in 'real time'. Learn more about how we use disclosure.



Malawi's disclosure platform

Independent review of data

An independent review of the published data, known as assurance, is appointed by CoST programmes. The teams look at the data published through the disclosure process and identify key issues of concern, gaps in the data and areas of good practice. They put technical jargon into plain language, turning data into compelling information. This allows social accountability stakeholders to easily understand the issues and hold decision-makers to account. Find out more about our independent review process.



Afghanistan's assurance team

Social accountability

Social accountability stakeholders such as the media, civil society and academia play an important role in holding decision-makers to account. CoST works with these stakeholders to promote the use of data published by governments and the use of the findings from its independent review (assurance) process so that they can put key issues in the public domain. Read more about how



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