

Minutes of the Meeting of the Bank Information Center's Board of Directors on July 10, 2012

Attendance

- 1) There were present:

Board members: Mamadou Goita (phone), Marcus Colchester (phone), Charly Moore (Treasurer), Juliette Majot (chair of the meeting)

Staff: Chad Dobson (Executive Director), Alvin Carlos (Development Director, Board Secretary), Hetal Patel (Senior Finance Associate, during Financials discussion), Joshua Klemm and Nadia Daar (during the African Development Bank discussion), Sarah McNeal (Asia Program Intern), Maria Strigunova (Europe and Central Asia Program intern)

Regrets from Board members: Katharine Redford, Athena Ballesteros, Lisa Veneklasen

Call to Order

- 2) Ms. Majot convened the meeting at 9:05am.

Review of Agenda

- 3) The Board reviewed and approved the agenda for the day, with an addition of an agenda item (Executive Director evaluation) before the Executive Session.

February 2012 Minutes

- 4) The Board approved the minutes of the February 8, 2012 Board meeting.

Executive Director's Report

- 5) **Staff positions.** Mr. Dobson enumerated the various vacant and recently filled positions in the organization. Vacant positions include the Information Services Assistant, Latin America Manager, and an associate for the child rights campaign. BIC recently hired new staff for its disability campaign and a consultant for its Yemen work. Mr. Colchester pointed out that giving staff flexibility on their work location can make positions more attractive, but cited the tradeoff in difficulty in coordinating work. The Board conveyed that it will give more thought on how it could help on staffing.
- 6) **Changes in external environment.** Mr. Dobson enumerated various changes in personnel (recent and upcoming) in the external environment BIC operates in.

- a. **World Bank Group.** These include the new World Bank president, Vice President of Sustainable Development, Vice President for External Affairs, Inspection Panel member, the CEO of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Vice President of IFC's Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman, and five new World Bank Executive Directors.
- b. **U.S. Congress.** These include the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.
- c. **Program Officers at Foundations.** These include the Mott Foundation, Sigrid Rausing Trust, and the Climate and Land Use Alliance.
- d. **NGO community in the U.S.** These include leadership at the World Resources Institute, Oxfam International and Friends of the Earth U.S., and staff at the Center for International Environmental Law.
- e. **Implications for BIC.** Mr. Dobson expressed concern that these changes will affect BIC's effectiveness in the long-run, and suggested that BIC convene key partners to strategize on how to address the changing environment. Mr. Dobson suggested that BIC re-examine its change model, and tackle the way international NGO community perceives how important the World Bank is to development. The Board talked about convening a small group of people in November, and asked how BIC staff can also be involved in strategizing.

Financials

- 7) The Board was briefed by Ms. Patel on the 2011 audited financials. The actual deficit was reduced from a projected ~\$70,000 deficit to a ~\$49,000 deficit, bringing its reserves to ~\$291,000.
- 8) The Board was briefed by Ms. Patel on the auditor's 2011 management letter. Ms. Patel conveyed that four of the five recommendations have already been addressed. Ms. Patel conveyed that after considering the auditor's recommendation on limiting the number of employees with company credit cards, management still chose to keep existing ones since it believes that exposure to risk is low and logistical benefits are high.
- 9) The Board was briefed by Mr. Carlos on the organization's fundraising efforts and the latest 2012 latest budget projections. Mr. Carlos noted that the organization obtained 11 new grants for 2012, and that the projected deficit of ~\$46,000 remains on track. Mr. Colchester offered to help make introductions with two potential funders.
- 10) The Board expressed that it would like to see a reduced deficit in 2013 and a balanced budget in 2014.

Board Development

- 11) The Board decided to postpone the Board profile grid discussion until most or all of the other Board members are present.
- 12) The Board expressed high appreciation to Atila Roque and Sandra Smithey for their service to BIC's Board.

- 13) The Board considered inviting Susanne Breitkopf as a new Board member. The Board agreed with her strong qualifications, and decided to extend her an invitation pending any comments from the rest of the board. The Board would like Ms. Brietkopf to start in November 2012.

AfDB report

- 14) The Board was briefed by Mr. Goita and Mr. Klemm about the developments around BIC's effort to build an African-led CSO coalition on the African Development Bank (AfDB).
- 15) The CSO Network on the AfDB continues to gather momentum. Its members include organizations from different regions in Africa, including sizable networks. It now has a coordinator and assistant based in Tunis. Its members worked actively on the AfDB disclosure policy, and are currently working to strengthen the AfDB's safeguards, including AfDB's policy on indigenous peoples.
- 16) The network will continue to need to build its capacity for its members, and BIC can continue to play a role on this. The network continues to discuss with its members about the most effective institutional setup.
- 17) Mr. Dobson reminded that the establishment of this network was part of the objectives set forth in BIC's 2009-2012 strategic plan. He expressed hope that the coalition can continue to strengthen its organizational capacity while conducting its campaigns, in a way that it will require less involvement of BIC staff in the future. Those present recognized that the African partners working on the AfDB are also most likely those interested on working with BIC on World Bank reform.

Executive Director's Evaluation

- 18) The Board discussed a proposal to hire Training Resources for the Environmental Community (TREC) to conduct Mr. Dobson's performance review. While the Board recognized the importance of TREC's 360 evaluation and emphasis on the process' forward-looking nature, it would like to fulfill its fiduciary responsibility and still treat this process as a performance review of Mr. Dobson.
- 19) As such, the Board will request TREC to have the evaluation report be disclosed to the Board Chair, followed by a discussion by the Board Chair and Mr. Dobson on how to move forward; shared to the full Board afterwards.

Executive Session

- 20) The Board commenced their executive session at 11:20am.
- 21) The Board adjourned at 11:23am.