
Minutes

3rd Steering Group Meeting of openIMIS Initiative

The third openIMIS Steering Group Meeting took place on 25th of November 2019 in Geneva, parallel to the Global Social Protection Week. For the first time, the two funding entities, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) were joined by two user organizations - National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) from Tanzania and Health Insurance Board (HIB) from Nepal.

In the first part of the meeting, experts in Social Health Protection and Health Financing from ILO, WHO, AFD, UNICEF and Global Fund joined as observers to the meeting. GIZ, in its role as the Coordination Desk of the openIMIS Initiative gave a short introduction on openIMIS and provided the participants with a review of the outcomes of the initiative in the period 2017-2019. At the end of the first part, an interesting discussion developed due to the expertise of the observers.

In the second part, which was only for members, the representatives from Nepal and Tanzania updated the Steering Group on the current state of the openIMIS implementations in their respective schemes as well as the next steps and priorities for the coming years. Overall, feature requests for upcoming openIMIS releases, possible changes to the mission and vision of the openIMIS initiative, and the terms of references of the Steering Group, figured among the list of discussed points.

Agenda – public session

TOPIC	TIME
(For members and observers)	2:00-3:40pm
Opening remarks by Chair	
1. Introduction	2:05-2:15pm
1.1 Welcome and introduction of participants and observers	
1.2 Check-in on agenda	
2. Main topics	2:15-3:30pm
<i>2.1 Review & outcomes of the openIMIS Initiative 2017-2019</i>	2:15-2:50pm
2.1.1 Governance (approval of new structure) & Community building	
2.1.2 Technical roadmap & milestones (including license status)	
2.1.3 Portfolio & scheme operators' assessment	
2.1.4 Communication & community tools	
<i>2.2 Strategic direction of openIMIS Initiative 2020-2022</i>	2:50-3:10pm

2.2.1	General orientation on priorities for global level (BMZ / SDC)	
2.2.1.1	Milestones 2020: Technical	
2.2.1.2	Milestones 2020: Operational	
2.3	Open discussion: expectations & remarks from observers	3:10-3:40pm
Coffee Break		

Q&A on presentation of the Coordination Desk

Topic	Discussion (O: Observer, CD: Coordination Desk, D: Donor, C: Country Representative)
2.1.3 Portfolio & scheme operators' assessment	<p>O: Where did the initiative come from for the current implementations?</p> <p>CD: It really depends on the country, e.g. in Cameroon, there is a P4H focal point. From our side, we are present in conferences, networking events, etc. However, we have also had instances where countries or consultancies contacted us directly, e.g. Djibouti.</p> <p>O: Instead of doing efforts individually, we should work together. The different institutions should coordinate together; define the minimum standards for unique identification, security, etc. Likewise, we should think about and contribute to the creation of guidelines, policies and how do we connect all these programs.</p> <p>O: Where is the link between policy, beneficiary and contribution within the system (including link to Accounting System)? ILO is advising Social Health Protection in several countries. National authorities need to be convinced that the system can manage large populations, e.g. 50 Mio. Data protection is also a concern, as well as the interface with accounting systems. ILO often supports countries with procurement processes, which could be an opportunity for collaboration with the openIMIS Initiative.</p> <p>CD: There is always the dilemma whether programs should be implemented in a few provinces, districts or nationally. In Tanzania, the software was implemented in three provinces and it worked. However, in many other countries, it works better to implement it nationally.</p>
2.1.4 Communication & Community tools	<p>Questions and comments from observers:</p> <p>Q: What is the needed Capacity Development?</p> <p>A: For the global initiative, it is important to build capacity on diverse levels, e.g. a broad network of implementing partners, which can in the future support interested user organizations.</p>
2.3 Open discussion: expectations & remarks from observers	<p>Remarks and questions:</p> <p>O: openIMIS has been used for specific schemes. What we see is that it has information on certain population groups and, that has implication for the information available on the population.</p> <p>CD: The reason for lack of integration is fragmentation in the set up of different schemes in the country. Despite that, openIMIS is completely flexible. It can be used</p>

to achieve UHC, integrating the management of different schemes, but the point is that the schemes do not cover the whole population.

O: Is openIMIS integrated with e-payment? Is payment something that openIMIS has incorporated or does the country have to figure out the payment?

CD: Usually, there is a payment system that is used in the country and it makes more sense alias is mandatory to use the existing system. Moreover, once openIMIS is connected to the electronic payment system, there is the issue with the control number. Once a control number is generated and entered into the system, it will provide you all the information you need.

Remarks from openIMIS Coordination Desk

The first markets are those who do not have a system in place or use a small, partial solution. From our experience, that is the case for most African countries, as many Asian countries do already have a running information system in place. One of the reasons for modularizing the software is that some user organizations might only be in need of a specific module.

Interoperability is a goal. We are looking at interfaces with other systems. For example, we decided to interface with DHIS2 instead of developing another isolated tool.

We need the champions, ministries, etc. locally, who support the implementation of openIMIS

We are building regional hubs who are preparing regional expertise and then spreading it. Next week, the openMRS meeting is taking place in Mozambique. Jembi will present openIMIS at this event with the aim to integrate openMRS implementers into the openIMIS community.

O: There is a concern related to the policy bottleneck so that this type of system can be incorporated in policies and general discussion. A stronger collaboration with the p4h network makes a lot of sense. It is not good that people link openIMIS to insurances, so changing the name might be a good approach. The visibility of openIMIS was also mentioned as a problem, since the openIMIS team is often at events related to open source tools. Suggestion is to take into account e.g. the health information space, which is much broader than just open source tools.

Agenda - members only

TOPIC	TIME
<i>(For members only)</i>	4:00-5:30pm
2.4 Priorities at local level	45'
2.4.1 HIB Nepal	15'
2.4.2 NHIF Tanzania	15'
2.4.3 Other scheme operators	10'
Discussion on question: How does this feed into strategic direction on global level	5'
2.5 Update on Strategic Principles of openIMIS Initiative including vision & mission	10'
2.6 <i>Review of Steering Group Terms of Reference</i>	15'
2.6.1 Role of Steering Group & its members	5'
2.6.2 Meeting routine and format	5'
2.6.3 Member composition & admission criteria	5'
3. Take away & Round of remarks	15
Closing remarks by chair	5'

Q&A on presentations

Topic	Discussion
	(CD: Coordination Desk; D: Donors, C: Country representative)
2.4 Priorities at local level	<p>Priorities from Tanzania:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve claims processing integrated to GOTHOMIS. • If enrolment increases, it will translate into more claims. Then, a better and automated claims review will be needed. • NHIF exploring the use of openIMIS for managing the formal sector scheme <p>Priorities from Nepal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand insurance to all 77 districts of Nepal until 2020 • Increase enrolment rates • Improve benefit package • Ensuring better quality of services for insures • Better ability to analyze claims (Automated review for known cases)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to analyze service utilization data in depth (integration with Electronic Medical Record Systems) <p>Priorities from global level</p> <p>Donors will continue their investments into the global initiative for 2020-2022. Main activities will be maintained, specific focal areas will still be identified in a separate planning meeting to take place beginning of 2020. Focus will be on how to broaden user community and integrate user organizations with openIMIS governance structure.</p>
2.4.3 Priorities for expansion: other scheme operators	<p>D: Coordination Desk should balance between requests and issues. The openIMIS Coordination Desk should prioritize request coming from a user organizations, but balance with necessary technical updates. It is important that the system continues attractive for countries.</p>
2.5 Review of Strategic Principles including vision & mission	<p>Demands from donors to the Strategic Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission and vision can be shortened • Keep link to UHC and USP • Keep mentioning global good • More focused objectives, as mission is very vague • Should keep health financing as term <p>CD: The openIMIS Initiative focused in the past on the tool. The mission has been partly accomplished and a broadening of the mission and vision to other use cases is possible.</p> <p>The term insurance is risky, as openIMIS is a tool, which serves other schemes. The image of openIMIS is that it focuses on insurance, which is not helpful for the product. Others have the impression, that openIMIS is too limited.</p> <p>However, other social protection schemes could use openIMIS if it is adapted. We want to build bridges with donors, people working in social protection. Also, it would be more attractive for new countries. We need to keep both UHC and USP and be aware how to use it.</p> <p>Summary of discussion: The openIMIS Coordination Desk will make some fine-tuning of the mission and vision. The two concepts should include more focused objectives on what the Initiative will try to achieve in the next three years. The new version of the Strategic Principles can be reviewed in the planning meeting beginning of 2020.</p>
2.6 Review of Steering Group Terms of Reference	<p>Who needs to be in the SG? What kind of discussions should take place in the SG?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor Agencies investing into the openIMIS Initiative financial resources should have a final say on the main work packages on global level • The role of user organizations should be clearly defined in order to make sense for them to be member of the SG • Input from country representatives is definitely necessary to keep track what is happening at the country level • In case more than x schemes are using openIMIS, the representation of user organizations in the SG could alternate (in different years and among countries)

	<p>Where / when should the Steering Group Meeting take place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The in person meeting of the SG could take place parallel to always the same event where are potential country implementers to obtain more exchange, e.g. WHA, GF Board meeting, WHS? • In the second part of the year, there are more events. The criteria should be an event that happens annually and then we can set a fixed day for the SG meeting. • We could have a formal Steering Group where more details on the initiative are discussed plus meeting with observers / TAG where openIMIS Initiative receives feedback . The open part can be used to establish / strengthen networks and promote the initiative. • Another idea could be to have the SG meeting divided into two parts, one technical and one strategic and compose the participants according to the topics. <p>Who should be involved in reviewing the ToR? What should be reviewed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination Desk will make a proposal for simplified ToR of the SG, which will be reviewed by its members. One opportunity for discussions it he upcoming planning workshop. User organizations need to be involved in a different format. • Project management and budget planning can be separated from promotion and sales activities of the Initiative. • ToR should include realistic steps and what is expected for the next 2 years. • The SG is the only place where participation of user organizations can be guaranteed. One possibility to separate into strategic and technical discussions might be to have a SG composed by donors and additionally an extended SG, as there is clear value added from the insights of implementers. • The initiative could also have two committees: a technical one and second one to steer the budget direction. <p>Summary of discussion: The Coordination Desk should provide suggestions to simplify the Terms of References. Nevertheless, we should work jointly in this task (Donors, User organizations, Coordination Desk). The Coordination Desk should identify to which international conference the SG meeting can be linked in the future. Therefore, the list of events and conferences will be updated. The Coordination Desk should evaluate the topics decided at the executive meeting of WHO, which will define the direction of the general assembly. Depending on topics, it should be decided whether we can link the SG meeting to that event.</p>
<p>3. Take away & round of remarks</p>	<p>D:</p> <p>First part</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is useful to broaden to observers from international organizations. We should repeat this approach also in the future. 2. It is beneficial to have implementing countries in the meeting. For the next SG, we should keep the link to implementing countries. 3. Agenda of the SG meetings should focus on practical discussions and solutions. <p>Second part</p>

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. GIZ has done prioritization of issues. Find balance from requests from implementing countries and technical updates to strengthen openIMIS as a tool.2. The brainstorming on mission and vision was useful. They should be revised and linked to the time period of the next phase of 2 years.3. ToR should be reviewed and simplified as well as be realistic as to what can be achieved. It should be detailed what can be expected from each member.4. We need an annual face to face meeting that is linked to an international conference . We should have more implementers, observers, and donor agencies during these meetings.5. Another meeting is needed with a stronger focus on implementations. |
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