

Observer policy for EITI Committees

On 26 January 2018, the EITI Board came to the [following decision](#):

Committees may decide that non-EITI Board members may observe committee meetings and teleconferences, provided that an observer is accepted by all members of the concerned committee and that the committee finds the numbers of observers reasonable. Non-Board members who wish to observe a committee meeting or teleconference should notify the Chair of the committee and the secretariat well in advance of the Committee meeting [three days before the meeting], so as to enable obtaining the **Committee's** consent ahead of the meeting.

Board members and alternates are welcome to observe committee meetings or teleconferences and should preferably notify the Chair of the committee and the secretariat of their intention to do so before a meeting takes place.

All observers taking part in a committee meeting or teleconference should refrain from actively participating in the discussions, but may intervene when requested by committee members. When a committee makes recommendations to the EITI Board, it may decide to only take into account the views of members of the committee.

Colleagues of committee members who are assisting committee members with their committee work are welcome to attend committee meetings without actively contributing to the discussions. Again, provided the numbers are reasonable. In the absence of the committee member, a colleague may intervene to **convey a committee member's position on an item for decision, although it is preferable if such positions** are conveyed to the Chair in advance of Committee meetings.

Background

The Implementation Committee has asked the Governance and Oversight Committee to review the EITI's policy on observers in committees. The EITI Board has on a number of occasions discussed and amended its policy on observers.

Article 13 of the Articles of Association enables the EITI Board to create committees to further specific issues. The Article requires that the Board ensure that the composition of the committee reflects the multi-stakeholder nature of the EITI Association.

Board Committees do not currently follow a consistent policy on observers' participation. Practice has varied from time to time and from committee to committee. Core aspects have been to allow Board members and their alternates to observe committees that they are not members of, to allow colleagues from the same institution or country to observe and to allow other observers if the numbers are reasonable. The practice has been that colleagues observing or other observers have been welcome to provide expert opinions, and should refrain from policy commentary and their views should not be counted to any recommendations agreed by the concerned committee.

The proposed policy builds on previous decisions. It reaffirms that non-Board members may observe committee meetings, when the numbers are reasonable. It introduces a requirement that any observers should express their interest in joining a committee meeting or teleconference in advance of it. The proposed policy takes into consideration the role of support staff and colleagues in committee meetings by recognizing that they may attend committee meetings.