



REMARKS/PURPOSE BY CoST SEKONDI-TAKORADI MANAGER AT A CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR 8 MMDAs IN THE WESTERN REGION ON CoST DISCLOSURE USING THE INFRASTRUCTURE DATA STANDARD (IDS) HELD ON FRIDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL, 2021 AT TAKORADI.

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Distinguished Invited Officers of the 8-MMDAs, Members of Civil Society, friends from the Media, Ladies and Gentlemen; I am very glad to welcome you to this important capacity building workshop on data disclosure under the CoST Programme. I am very grateful for your presence here in spite of your busy schedule.

CoST is an Infrastructure Transparency Initiative which aims is to increase the transparency and accountability of publicly funded infrastructure projects. CoST is a charity and non-profit company based in the United Kingdom. Its day-to-day operations are delivered by an International Secretariat (CoST IS).

Its membership span across four continents which has increased in the last five years to 19 countries worldwide. CoST Sekondi-Takoradi is among the six (6) CoST members from Africa, (Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Malawi) and the 1<sup>st</sup> subnational to be admitted by CoST in 2019. The rational for joining CoST is to use the CoST approach to enhance Infrastructure Transparency and Social Accountability.

Globally, CoST work has seen impressive impact<sup>1</sup> in diverse contexts in terms of cost savings, better quality infrastructure, improved lives and increased trust between citizens and decision-makers. CoST deliver this via four core features, namely: Disclosure<sup>2</sup>, Assurance<sup>3</sup>, Multi-Stakeholder Group<sup>4</sup> and Social Accountability<sup>5</sup>.

This capacity building event is part of a series of recommendations in CoST's 2<sup>nd</sup> Assurance Report targeted at enhancing proactive disclosure of information related to infrastructure projects within your districts.

In March this year, CoST Sekondi-Takoradi launched its 2<sup>nd</sup> Assurance Report with eight high-value projects across education, health, road and industrial sectors of the economy. The projects were selected from a pool provided by eight (8) Procuring Entities (PEs) who are all with us here today: Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly Effia-Kwesinmintsim Municipal Assembly, Ahanta West Municipal Assembly, Nzema East Municipal Assembly, Mpohor District

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<sup>1</sup> <https://infrastructuretransparency.org/costimpact/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://infrastructuretransparency.org/our-approach/disclosure/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://infrastructuretransparency.org/our-approach/core-feature-assurance/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://infrastructuretransparency.org/our-approach/cost-feature-multi-stakeholder/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://infrastructuretransparency.org/our-approach/cost-core-feature-social-accountability/>

Assembly, Shama District Assembly and Wassa East District Assembly. The Assurance Report focused on eight (8) infrastructural projects within the western region. The Assurance Process was conducted by a team of Assurance Professionals from the Takoradi Technical University (TTU) led by Dr. Matthew Kwaw Somiah.

Specifically, this workshop is aimed at equipping key officers directly involved in the delivery of public infrastructure at the Assembly to adopt the CoST approach to disclose project and contract information to both direct and indirect beneficiaries and other key stakeholders during the project life cycle.

I am glad to inform you that CoST Sekondi-Takoradi has developed an online Disclosure Portal which has incorporated the international standard of both the Infrastructure Data Standard (IDS) and Open Contract for Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS) to enable PEs to disclose project and contract data. As part of today's capacity building workshop, all the 8-MMDAs will be trained on how to use the disclosure portal. Citizens in the western region will soon be able to access infrastructure data through the CoST portal.

### **What information is disclosed through CoST?**

The information disclosed will usually include a description of the project (e.g. its purpose, location, specification, cost, contractor and completion dates) and justification for any significant differences between what was planned and budgeted for and what was eventually constructed and paid for.

This data can be disclosed in two ways, through proactive which has 40 data points and reactive 27 data point for disclosure. **Proactive disclosure** relates to data disclosed **'without official request'**, at specified stages. **Reactive disclosure** meanwhile, relates to additional information that project owners and procuring entities are required to make available **'upon request'**.

Proactively disclosed data, in a clear and usable format, is disseminated through a public medium such as an online portal, notice board, project sign board etc. Reactively disclosed data meanwhile, is made available to the requesting party in a usable form, in an accessible place and under a specified set of conditions.

### **Who will disclose the information?**

The information belongs to the organization responsible for procuring the construction work, or what is sometimes referred to as the procuring entity. This will usually be a government department or an agency established by government. Ideally, the procuring entity will release the information directly into the public domain and will be responsible for dealing with any questions arising from it.

It is my hope that the 8-MMDAs selected will use this opportunity and support to increase transparency and social accountability in publicly-funded infrastructure delivery in their various districts to better the lives of their citizens.

Once again, thank you very much for your presence here today and I wish us all a fruitful discussion in a COVID-19 compliant environment. Thank you.

