IAPB Executive Committee

6th January 2014 – Teleconference

Time - 13:00-14:00 London time
Venue - Tele-Conference
Attending - Chair: Bob McMullan
Member(s): Johannes Trimmel; Adrian Poffley; Kathy Spahn; Abdulaziz AlRahji; Serge Resnikoff
In attendance: Peter Ackland; Alessandro Di Capua

MINUTES

Before starting with the agenda, BM noted the imminent departure of A. AlRahji from the Committee, as well as the IAPB Board, and thanked him for his contributions and support of IAPB over the last 10 years.

1. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved. There were the following matters arising:

- Tentative dates had now been scheduled for the meetings with Helen Clark of UNDP and Oleg Chestnov at WHO, 20th of January and 14th February respectively;
- No developments to report yet on finding a willing UK-based trustee to take on directorship of the Trading Subsidiary; IAPB Trading directors will be meeting on Monday 13th and their views will also be sought on then;
- The process for the appointment of the new Director of Health at the World Bank was ongoing and unlikely to be finalised before March.

2. Update on Global Action Plan implementation

PA referred to the paper outlining the possibility of setting up a fund to stimulate country implementation of the Global Action Plan. The idea had received initial positive feedback from a few corporates, trusts and foundations.

Discussion ensued, including the following points:
• An advisory committee would oversee the fund and approve grants – this would include participation of WHO and probably of representatives from funders;
• The choice of countries where the fund would be utilised would need to balance the interest of IAPB and those of funders – idea would be for fund to focus on middle income countries where IAPB members don’t traditionally work;
• It was suggested the fund should look at supporting deeper interventions in fewer countries, rather than be spread across individual activities in multiple countries;
• It was also noted that all contributions to the fund, should qualify as additional restricted income, rather than be a transfer from other pots;
• It was noted the new funds could be managed via the existing VISION 2020 Workshops framework, as in the past this had supported similar national activities;
• When looking at detailed implementation of the plan, it was important to carefully look at governance issues (for example ensuring IAPB’s fiduciary role over the funds) and risk considerations (for example future long-term sustainability of the activities the fund would support in the short-term).

The general agreement was that the idea was worth exploring further.

**ACTION:** PA to have more detailed conversations with possible funders and feedback to the next EC meeting in view to finalise a paper for the Board meeting in Singapore.

3. **VISION 2020 transition**

PA referred to the paper outlining recommendations for the alignment of the VISION 2020 initiative to the new Global Action Plan 2014-2019. He thanked S. Resnikoff and A. Foster for their input and noted that the thinking behind the paper was positively received by I. Kocur at WHO.

Discussion ensued, including the following points:

• 2020 as a time-bound reference to the year 2020 may still be felt by non-scientific communities (who may not immediately get the connection with visual acuity);
• The strap line Right to Sight had served well for advocacy and PR purposes as a powerful immediate message;
• It was noted the need to find the right balance between ensuring effective and immediate communications with the complexities behind our cause (for example in the way we refer to blindness and/or visual/vision impairment);
• It was noted that the Millennium Development Goals concept was going through a similar transition process in the lead up to 2015 and that lessons could be learned from the way the development sector was dealing with the issue;
• It was also noted that, given that VISION 2020 was subject to an Agreement of Collaboration between IAPB and WHO, any changes would have to be approved by WHO too, therefore it would be pragmatic to keep these to a minimum to avoid complications.
• It was also discussed the potential loss of fundraising appeal in moving from a message of ‘eliminating blindness’ to one of ‘reducing visual impairment, including blindness’.

ACTION: PA to amend the paper based on the above feedback (particularly in ensuring clarity of reference for 2020 and consistency in the way we use the terms blindness and visual/vision impairment).

4. De-registration from the UK

PA referred to the paper and the report by the consultant T. Morris on the extent of the UK legislative burden of governance and the opportunity for IAPB to consider de-registration. He noted that, after consideration of all costs and implications, the Officers’ recommendation was not to proceed with de-registration, which would be costly and burdensome in itself, but to adopt smaller solutions to minimise the burden of UK registration.

The Executive Committee agreed with the recommendations. It was also suggested that some underlying issues highlighted in the report should still be monitored and appropriately discussed at board level if necessary.

5. AOB

BM noted that the staff annual assessment would need to be finalised. As there was no other business PA and ADC left the room to enable the discussion to take place in staff absentia.