13th INTOSAI-Donor Cooperation Steering Committee Meeting 2020

How can we operationalize the SAI Independence Rapid Advocacy Mechanism (SIRAM), and how can donors and INTOSAI support this.
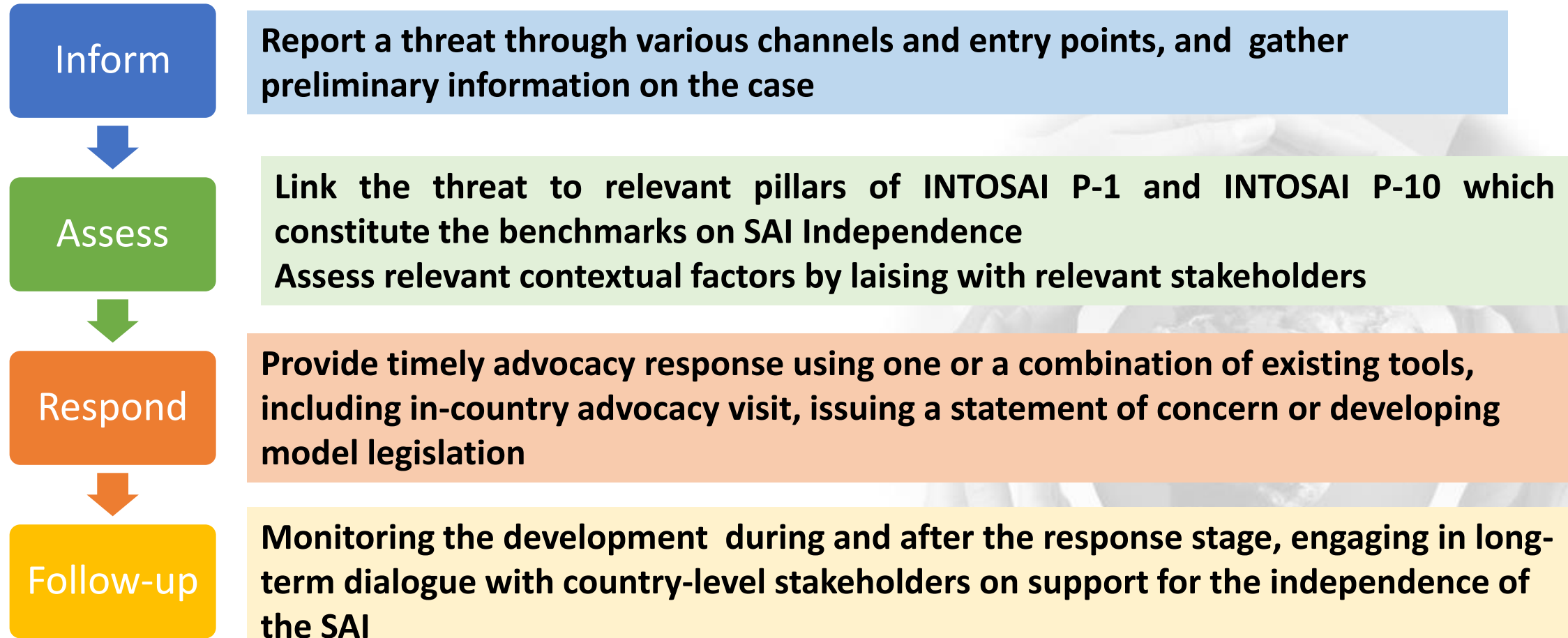
Freddy Ndjemba, IDI, Mohamed M Ali, Auditor General of Somalia, and Susanne Wille, European Commission

The SAI Independence Rapid Advocacy Mechanism (SIRAM) has been established to support efforts to advocate and raise awareness to threats to and breaches of SAI independence as well as brokering support for SAIs facing challenges to their independence.

SIRAM aims to help the INTOSAI and donor communities deliver timely and effective responses to political developments or legal reforms which may negatively affect the independence of a SAI

Such threats may manifest themselves through amendments to a country's constitution, changes to the budget or audit law, attempts to remove the Head(s) of the SAI, delays or interference in the appointment of the Head of SAI or even proposed abolition or downgrading of the SAI itself

SIRAM's 4-Stages

Inform

Report a threat through various channels and entry points, and gather preliminary information on the case

Assess

Link the threat to relevant pillars of INTOSAI P-1 and INTOSAI P-10 which constitute the benchmarks on SAI Independence
Assess relevant contextual factors by laising with relevant stakeholders

Respond

Provide timely advocacy response using one or a combination of existing tools, including in-country advocacy visit, issuing a statement of concern or developing model legislation

Follow-up

Monitoring the development during and after the response stage, engaging in long-term dialogue with country-level stakeholders on support for the independence of the SAI

Cases will only be processed with the approval of the SAI, which means that when cases are not reported by the SAI itself, its approval is a mandatory condition to move from one stage to another

The ambition is to process cases (moving from the Inform to the Response phase) within 20 days. Acheiving this objective requires effective communication and coordination.

Realizing Independence and Modernization by the Auditor General of Somalia

September 16 and 17, 2020

H.E Mohamed M Ali

Working as a team

Collaborating with partners and national stakeholders

Parliament deliberations

Thanks

SAI-Somalia
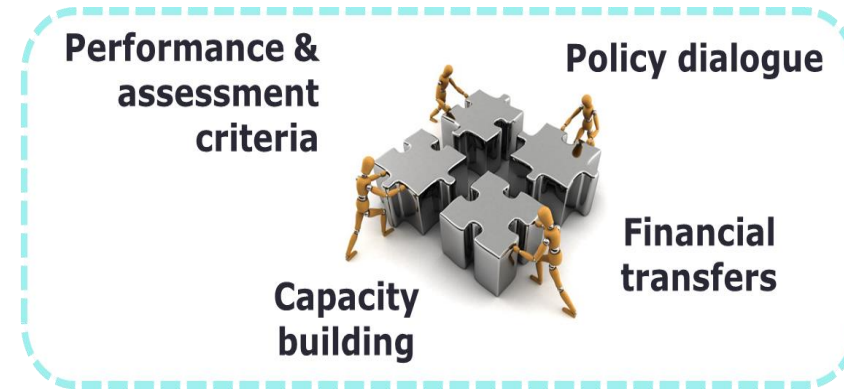
Why are strong SAI important ?

- SAIs have a crucial role as a key democratic institution. They form a critical link in a country's accountability chain. SAI contribute to good governance and effectiveness of public administration.

- National SAI are in charge of auditing the use of about 18% of EU funds in external cooperation.

- The response to the pandemic (and other epidemics) gives raise to opportunities for mis-management.

European Commission

Budget support = development effectiveness

- Dialogue on reforms, focus on results
- Alignment with countries' policies
- Using countries' systems
- Ownership = sustainable results

- Open portfolio of about EUR 10 bn
- 91 countries and territories
- EUR 1.7 billion disbursed in 2019
- 3.7 bn € to be disbursed in response to Covid

European Commission

Why is SIRAM important

- In the context of challenged independence the declaration of an INTOSAI body gives authority to the concerns other parties may voice.

- SIRAM is fast and 'technical' i.e. not responding to the political context, but to the acts and facts. It refers to internationally respected declarations and agreements.

- It thus gives a basis to the international community to reflect and consider action.

- It is a step on the long way to better governance and accountability

European Commission

- a)   What is your feedback on the design of SIRAM, including the use of different tools for tackling SAI independence breaches/ threats as outlined in the draft ToRs, and are you aware of additional tools that can be utilised?

- b)   How would you want to partner with and support IDI`s implementation of the SIRAM?