

GuideStar International Engagement Process

The table below outlines the key stages of development for a national GuideStar service.

'Readiness' Assessment

- Completion of 'GuideStar Readiness' questionnaire
- Partner identification and selection
- Key stakeholder engagement (sector support groups, donors and intermediaries, government agencies etc)
- Development contract between GSI and national partner

Development Phase

- In -depth stakeholder engagement and requirements analysis
- Data acquisition strategy development
- Launch of Pilot site – including user testing and feedback
- Operating plan development

Implementation

- Ongoing sector engagement and capacity building to promote good quality, consistent, CSO reports
- Data loading
- Operating contract and Service Level Agreement between GSI and national partner
- Launch of public website.
- Membership in GuideStar Alliance & participation in GuideStar Global upon launch of website

Readiness Assessment

The Readiness Assessment helps GSI and interested national groups understand the opportunities for GuideStar development in a country. The main steps are to:

1. Undertake a mapping of the civil society sector and conduct a 'data audit' of CSO reporting and data availability in the country [[see the readiness questionnaire](#)]
2. Identify key stakeholders
3. Engage relevant government agency(ies) to acquire sample data

Once this assessment is completed, and assuming there is significant interest from key stakeholders (CSO leadership organisations, government agencies, donors) for continued development, a plan is then developed in collaboration with these groups and GSI to embark on a Development Phase.

Development Phase

The Development Phase is conducted over approximately 12 months during which time relationships with key stakeholders are further developed and deployment strategies cemented. A pilot service can be built by GSI to support these activities.

The following specific outcomes should result from the completion of the Development Phase:

- An Implementation Plan for a GuideStar service;
- A non profit institutional structure for the service. This might be a new formal and registered organisation or as part of an existing organisation;
- A strategy for data generation from the relevant government agency(ies);
- Strategic relationships with key stakeholders including foundations, CSOs, other government ministries and academics to optimise immediate and long-term relations, to ensure the service satisfies the stakeholder requirements to the extent possible and encourage participation in and use of the eventual system;
- The full requirements of the database, search and display features of the technology reflecting the needs of the system's stakeholders; and
- A map of the country's CSOs and resulting engagement strategy to ensure rapid acceptance of and participation in GuideStar service during its implementation.

Implementation

During the implementation phase all available data is acquired and uploaded to the database. Internal plans and budgets are finalised and staff training undertaken. Continued communication and engagement with CSOs and other stakeholders is also undertaken throughout this period. At this stage, GSI and the implementing organisation sign an Operating Agreement and Service Level Agreement that oversees the operation of the GuideStar service.

The key output of the Implementation phase is the launch of the public website.

Upon launch, the national GuideStar service is included in the global search facility and becomes a member of the GuideStar Alliance.

GuideStar Values

Through its activities and operations, each GuideStar service strives to conform to the following principles:

- **Self-generated information:** all reports must be generated by the management of the CSO or their agents.
- **Immediately useful:** reports should be useful immediately for CSO staff, trustees and critical audiences.
- **Flexible and inclusive:** the reporting framework should be sufficiently flexible to attract useful information from the most and least experienced CSOs. Only answers to critical questions should be mandatory for a CSO to attain 'participant' status.
- **Straightforward:** it must be simple and straightforward enough that it will attract, not deter, the provision of information.
- **Comprehensive:** provide opportunities for organisations to enter information to communicate or document all facets of their work they think are pertinent for their audiences. Provide a free, de facto website for small, under-resourced organisations that have no other web alternatives.
- **Consistent across the world:** the reporting frameworks used by all the GuideStar services should be as consistent as possible.
- **Good practice reinforcing:** reports should promote and support best internal planning, management, reporting and learning practices for CSOs.