

**2016**  
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Publish What You Fund is the global campaign for aid transparency. Launched in 2008, we work to make information on aid flows and activities open by default, and to make sure it is shared and used. We believe that whether it's fighting poverty, famine or climate change, transparent aid is better aid. We want to see information on aid that is freely available and accessible. We want to see everyone from donors to citizens use that information. And we want to see greater development, better governance, democratic participation and reduced poverty as a result.

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# Executive Summary

2015 was an important year for international development, with governments agreeing to the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the next fifteen years. It was also a critical year for aid transparency. Back in 2011, leading donors committed in Busan to make their aid transparent by the end of 2015.

The 2016 Aid Transparency Index demonstrates whether that commitment has been met. Five years after the first Aid Transparency Index, and five years after the Busan commitment, it shows us how transparent major donors are as we begin the first year of the implementation of the SDGs.

The results find that ten donors of varied types and sizes, accounting for 25% of total aid, have met the commitment to aid transparency made in Busan. Over half of the organisations included in the 2016 Index publish data to the IATI Registry at least quarterly. However, most of the organisations covered fall into the lowest three categories, scoring below 60% and demonstrating that the publication of timely, comparable and disaggregated information about their development projects to the IATI Registry is far from complete. The Index also finds that over half of the organisations included do not publish budget information for the next one to three years – a key demand of partner countries.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) tops the Index for the second time with an excellent score of 93.3%, the only organisation to score above 90%. The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is placed second, performing well once again, and UNICEF enters the 'very good' category for the first time, jumping into third place. The 'very good' category also

includes the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (UK-DFID), the Global Fund, the World Bank-International Development Association (WB-IDA), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the Asian Development Bank (AsDB), the government of Sweden and the African Development Bank (AfDB). These donors should be commended for their efforts in dramatically improving the timeliness and the comprehensiveness of their aid information since 2011.

At the other end of the scale, some important donors are performing poorly. France, Italy and Japan have agencies in a group of twelve donors in the 'poor' and 'very poor' categories. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), a new addition in 2016, and China come last in the Index ranking. The largest number of donors is grouped under the 'fair' category, including some of the most important ones as categorised by aid budget such as USAID and Japan-JICA. Many of these donors are well established and have the structures in place to perform better.

Based on these findings, the report recommends that all publishers should recognise the right to information enshrined in the SDGs. Publishers should improve the quality and comprehensiveness of their data to provide a full picture of all development flows. This should be implemented along with strategies to realise the full potential of their data, using the IATI Standard as an opportunity to strengthen management systems, communication or serve accountability purposes better. Governments and civil society should work together to fill the gaps and advance open data and transparency in the development sector worldwide.

**If you produce data, publish it. If you have data, use it. If you don't have data, demand it.**

**5**

**7**

**16**

8

10

## OVERALL RANKING OF 46 DONOR ORGANISATIONS

## VERY GOOD

1 UNDP	93.3%
2 U.S. – MCC	89.6%
3 UNICEF	89.5%
4 UK – DFID	88.3%
5 GLOBAL FUND	86.9%
6 WORLD BANK – IDA	86.1%
7 IADB	85.6%
8 ASDB	84.9%
9 SWEDEN	80.7%
10 AFDB	80.2%

## GOOD

11 GAVI	78.0%
12 CANADA	76.3%
13 EC – NEAR	74.1%
14 EC – ECHO	71.9%
15 EC – DEVCO	68.7%

16 NETHERLANDS	66.6%
17 DENMARK	64.7%
18 GERMANY – BMZ-GIZ	63.2%

## FAIR

19 U.S. – USAID	59.1%
20 GERMANY – BMZ-KFW	59.0%
21 U.S. – TREASURY	58.1%
22 U.S. – PEPFAR	57.6%
23 U.S. – STATE	53.9%
24 EIB	53.5%
25 AUSTRALIA	49.9%
26 EBRD	49.7%
27 BELGIUM	47.7%
28 U.S. – DEFENSE	46.7%
29 SPAIN	46.2%
30 GATES FOUNDATION	46.0%
31 SWITZERLAND	45.4%

32 FRANCE – AFD	45.2%
33 JAPAN – JICA	44.2%
34 NORWAY	41.9%

## POOR

35 FINLAND	38.5%
36 FRANCE – MAEDI	38.0%
37 UN OCHA	37.0%
38 IRELAND	37.0%
39 IMF	31.3%
40 WORLD BANK – IFC	30.9%
41 KOREA	26.1%

## VERY POOR

42 ITALY	16.0%
43 JAPAN – MOFA	14.3%
44 FRANCE – MINEFI	9.2%
45 CHINA	2.2%
46 UAE	0.0%

# Introduction

## THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

There was little talk of open data or transparency when the Millennium Development Goals were adopted in 2000. Aid providers soon realised, however, the need to improve the quality of their aid and its impact on development. The governments of developing countries created national plans to meet the Goals. They demanded better data and more transparent aid to help them do so.

The result was a series of international agreements to make aid more effective: the Paris Declaration in 2005, the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008 and the Busan Partnership Agreement in 2011. Each agreement raised the ambition on transparency, culminating in Busan where endorser committed to:

“...implement a common, open standard for the electronic publication of timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information on resources provided through development cooperation [...] with the aim of implementing it fully by December 2015.”<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile the case for transparency was moving beyond the realm of aid. The Open Government Partnership was founded in 2011. In 2013, the United Nations called for “a data revolution in development”.<sup>2</sup> In 2015, access to information and data were enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals (see Box 1) and recognised in the International Open Data Charter as crucial to helping achieve the Goals.<sup>3</sup>

### Box 1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 16, target 10: “Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements”

Goal 17, target 18: “By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed

## THE PROBLEM

Publish What You Fund was founded in 2008, and published the first Aid Transparency Index in 2011. The same year saw the first data published to the IATI Registry, and a commitment to make all aid transparent by 2015. Five years on, how are we doing?

The Ebola crisis recently showed the power of global action, but also the cost of poor information

The aid and development landscape is changing. There are emerging players, such as the United Arab Emirates, which we are including in our Index for the first time.<sup>4</sup> There are more diverse financial flows, such as climate finance, income from natural resources exports, private and ‘blended finance’.<sup>5</sup> And there is a growing push to take transparency beyond the realm of aid and make sure that global policies on issues like trade and migration also support development.

Yet aid remains essential as a key resource for financing international development. The Ebola crisis recently showed the power of global action, but also the cost of poor information. Sadly, the end of the emergency situation has not led to better information. In January 2016, Oxfam found that \$1.9 billion of the \$5.8 billion committed to help Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone recover from Ebola had not yet been allocated to any country, and there was little information on how these remaining funds would be made available.<sup>6</sup>

1 Busan Partnership Agreement, article 23c, fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, 2011.

2 March 2013, High Level Panel Meeting, <http://www.post2015hlp.org/featured/high-level-panel-releases-recommendations-for-worlds-next-development-agenda/>

3 See: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300> and <http://opendatacharter.net/openness-as-an-enabler-of-the-2030-sustainable-development-agenda/>

4 Read more at <http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/updates/blog/2016-aid-transparency-index/>

5 Defined as the use of aid to subsidise private investment

6 See: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2016/01/international-community-fails-west-africa-yet-again-ebola>

Box 2.

## THE PUBLISH WHAT YOU FUND AID TRANSPARENCY PRINCIPLES

The Aid Transparency Principles are at the core of our work. They cover all forms of aid and related development activities. Over 100 civil society organisations endorsed these principles in the 'Make Aid Transparent' campaign in 2011.

1. Information on aid should be published proactively. Not just in response to requests.
2. Information on aid should be comprehensive, timely, accessible and comparable. Not just a glossy brochure.

3. Everyone should be able to request and receive information on aid processes. Not just officials in governments or aid agencies.
4. The right of access to information about aid should be promoted. Not published once and forgotten.

To read the Principles in full see:

<http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/resources/papers/publish-what-you-fund-principles/>

## THE SOLUTION

Aid transparency helps in three ways. It gives government officials better information to help them allocate resources. It gives civil society better information so they may hold government to account. And it helps people everywhere who care about development to share and learn from their experiences.

At the same time, transparency by itself will not bring about better development. The information needs to be available and accessible to everyone. People must be able to use it, give feedback and help improve it. Government must act on it. Publication is necessary, but far from sufficient.

Moreover, aid is only a part of the transparency agenda. Research shows that most people are more interested in knowing how to access public services than in knowing how those services are funded.<sup>7</sup> Full transparency therefore means following the money and tracking results.

Frederick Kraah at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning in Liberia, in 2016 said:

“IATI data supports national budget preparation and increases transparency and accountability of Official Development Aid (ODA) to Liberia. The data also helps to inform the national Legislature about donors operating in their constituencies. We also share our entire data set with Central Bank of Liberia economists, as it supports the production of Liberia’s Balance of Payments.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See USAID’s country pilot assessments, <https://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/progress-data/transparency>

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.aidtransparency.net/news/using-iati-data-60-second-interview-with-liberian-government>

# Methodology

Since the first Aid Transparency Index in 2011, aid providers have made progress in implementing and renewing their commitments to aid transparency. In response to these changes and to the need to improve the assessment of published data, the methodology of the Index has evolved over time.<sup>9</sup>

## THE EARLY PHASE: 2010-2012

Faced with a lack of comparable and primary data on development aid by major organisations, Publish What You Fund started by encouraging organisations to first “publish what [they] can” and then to build a system to collect the information they did not yet have.<sup>10</sup> The 2011 pilot and 2012 Aid Transparency Index established the core criterion of this index: publishing timely data (not more than twelve months old). This was identified as the highest priority for countries that were surveyed when IATI was established.

## THE SECOND PHASE: 2013-2016

By 2013 many donors were publishing some data in the IATI Standard, but the quality of the information was poor. Publish What You Fund revised the Index methodology to put greater emphasis on the quality of data. A selection of thirty-nine weighted indicators (see Table 1) was established and extra points awarded for data published in the IATI Standard (see Chart 1). We have continued to use this methodology. In 2016, the number of organisations included in the Index was reduced to forty-six in order to concentrate on fewer, larger donors, as well as those that are instrumental to advancing the course of aid transparency.

## THE THIRD PHASE: 2017 AND BEYOND

Since 2011, there has been a steady improvement in transparency, accompanied by the publication of more comprehensive and timely IATI data. However, the quality of most donors’ data is still not good enough for it to be used by other stakeholders.

**The quality of most donors’ data is still not good enough for it to be used by other stakeholders**

Starting in 2017, Publish What You Fund will highlight the importance of high quality aid data for all stakeholders. We are looking at ways to reflect data use in the Index, and in 2016 we will be consulting on changes to the methodology.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCESS<sup>11</sup>

Data collection ran from 1 October 2015 to 15 January 2016. Information published to the IATI Registry is automatically collected and tested by the Aid Transparency Tracker.<sup>12</sup> Information from all other sources is collected via the manual survey and completed in-house by Publish What You Fund. Donor organisations and partner civil society organisations are invited to review the surveys and provide any updates or corrections as necessary during the data collection period.

<sup>9</sup> While the number of organisations has changed over time, the methodology has been kept stable since 2013, using the same thirty-nine indicators and scoring system. Details on the methodology and results from previous years are available at <http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/index/>.

<sup>10</sup> See Recommendations section, p. 65 of the 2011 Pilot Aid Transparency Index <http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/index/2011-index/>

<sup>11</sup> For the detailed methodology, including indicator definitions, automated tests used on IATI data, challenges and limitations and areas for improvement for future versions of the Index, please see the separate technical paper <http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/index/2016-aid-transparency-index/>

<sup>12</sup> See [2016tracker.publishwhatyoufund.org](http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/2016tracker.publishwhatyoufund.org)



Chart 1.  
SCORING FORMAT OF DATA FOR 22 INDICATORS

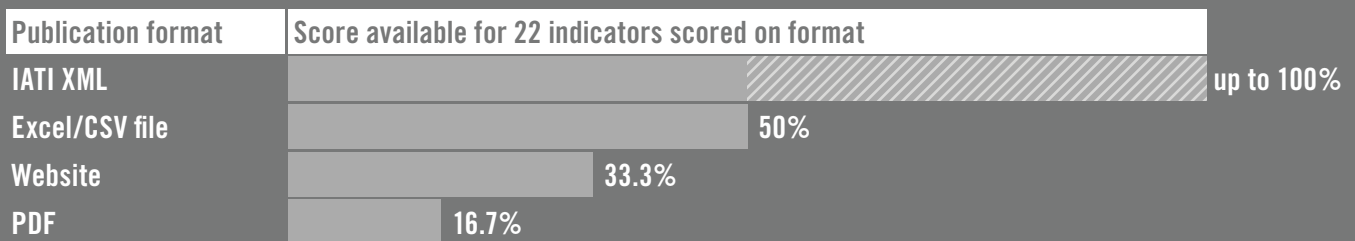


Table 1.  
SUMMARY TABLE OF INDICATORS USED

Group	Sub-group and weights	Indicator	Indicator weight		
Commitment to aid transparency	Commitment (10%)	1. Quality of FOI legislation	3.33%		
		2. Implementation schedules	3.33%		
		3. Accessibility (database/portal)	3.33%		
Publication – Organisation level	Planning (12.5%)	4. Strategy	2.50%		
		5. Annual report	2.50%		
		6. Allocation policy	2.50%		
		7. Procurement policy	2.50%		
		8. Strategy (country / sector)	2.50%		
		9. Total organisation budget	4.17%		
	Financial (12.5%)	10. Disaggregated budget	4.17%		
		11. Audit	4.17%		
		Publication – Activity level	Basic information (13%)	12. Implementer	1.63%
				13. Unique Identifier	1.63%
				14. Title	1.63%
15. Description	1.63%				
16. Planned dates	1.63%				
17. Actual dates	1.63%				
18. Current status	1.63%				
19. Contact details	1.63%				
Classifications (13%)	20. Collaboration type			1.86%	
	21. Flow type		1.86%		
	22. Aid type		1.86%		
	23. Finance type		1.86%		
	24. Sectors	1.86%			
	25. Sub-national location	1.86%			
Related documents (13%)	26. Tied aid status	1.86%			
	27. Memorandum of Understanding	2.17%			
	28. Evaluations	2.17%			
	29. Objectives	2.17%			
	30. Budget documents	2.17%			
	31. Contracts	2.17%			
	32. Tenders	2.17%			
Financial (13%)	33. Budget	3.25%			
	34. Commitments	3.25%			
	35. Disbursements & expenditures	3.25%			
	36. Budget Identifier	3.25%			
Performance (13%)	37. Results	4.33%			
	38. Impact appraisals	4.33%			
	39. Conditions	4.33%			

For the detailed methodology, including indicators definitions, automated tests used on IATI data, challenges and limitations and areas for improvement for future iterations of the Index, please see the separate Technical paper: <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/approach/methodology/>

# Overall Findings

## Ten donors have fully met the Busan commitment

Ten donors of all types and sizes, accounting for 25% of total aid, are included in the 'very good' category.<sup>13</sup> Each scores above 80% and is publishing timely, comprehensive, forward-looking data in an open and comparable format, meeting the 2011 Busan commitment to aid transparency.

## The quality of data published to the IATI Registry has improved

Overall, progress has been made by donors to improve the comprehensiveness and timeliness of their publications. Most of the data that was collected in the process is available on the IATI Registry, which allows it to be shared and compared across organisations. Over half the organisations included in this Index publish IATI data at least quarterly.<sup>14</sup>

## Key data on development projects from a majority of publishers is still missing

Twenty-eight organisations are still in the 'fair' to 'very poor' categories. The publication of disaggregated data on donors' development projects in the IATI Standard (as opposed to planning and financial data on the organisation as a whole) is incomplete. Specifically, information at the activity level on finances (such as budgets), on performance (such as results) and on documents (such as evaluations and contracts), which is important to both aid providers and recipient countries for planning purposes is not always published. For example, thirty providers do not get points for results, meaning either that the information is not published at all or that it is not published consistently.

## The provision of forward-looking budgets information is insufficient

This has been a consistent demand from aid beneficiaries to help with their financial management and planning. Over half of the organisations included in this Index do not publish forward-looking budgets in the IATI Standard, including a breakdown by countries. Twenty-four organisations do not publish budgets for their activities to the IATI Standard.<sup>15</sup>

**Italy, Japan-MOFA, France-MINEFI and China have been in the 'very poor' category for the past three years**

## Some organisations still fail to commit to transparency efforts

Italy, Japan-MOFA, France-MINEFI and China have been in the 'very poor' category for the past three years. The eight organisations at the bottom of the Index have not joined IATI yet. Information from these donors is mostly lacking, raising serious doubts about their commitment to transparency.

13 Defined as Official Development Finance (ODF), including both Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and certain non-concessional flows, based on 2013 OECD Development assistance Committee (DAC) Creditor Reporting System (CRS) data.

14 Details on the methodology to measure timeliness and individual performance per organisations are available at <http://dashboard.iatistandard.org/timeliness.html>

15 See: <http://www.aidtransparency.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Paper-4a-Country-Survey-of-AIMS.pdf> and <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/finding/forward-budgets/>. Detail per organisation provided on donor profile pages at <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/>

16 See additional examples in the 2014 Aid Transparency Index report: <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/finding/open-data-platforms-the-beginnings-of-the-aid-data-revolution/>

17 See: <http://beta.foreignassistance.gov/>

18 See: [www.gavi.org/results/disbursements/](http://www.gavi.org/results/disbursements/)

19 See: [open.unicef.org](http://open.unicef.org)

20 See: <http://afd.opendatasoft.com/page/apropos/>

# 2016 Highlights

## BEST PERFORMERS AND IMPROVERS

The 2016 results show that UNDP is the top performer and the only organisation to score above 90% with an even better score than in 2014 as a result of improving its publication of activity-level documents such as contracts and evaluations. MCC and UNICEF follow closely. The AfDB, the IADB and the Global Fund score above 80% and are in the 'very good' category for the first time, joining the UK-DFID, the WB-IDA, the AsDB and Sweden, which have consistently performed well in the Index.

## UNDP is the top performer and the only organisation to score above 90%

Seventeen donors improved by one category, and one, Belgium, improved by two categories, thanks to making its first IATI publication in 2015 (See Table 2). Other notable improvers include UNICEF, France-AFD, the U.S. Treasury, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

## WORST PERFORMERS AND SLOW MOVERS

In 2016, the UAE and China take the two lowest places in the Index, as they have yet to address aid transparency. Influential donors such as France-MINEFI, Japan-MOFA and Italy also score very poorly, as in previous years. Despite having the structures in place to perform better, these organisations, along with Switzerland, Finland, Ireland and France-MAEDI are among the worst performers since 2014.

A number of donors included in the 'good' and 'fair' categories are among the slow movers. The Gates Foundation, the European Commission's Directorate-General for International cooperation and Development (EC-DEVCO), Switzerland and Spain have stalled in terms of improving the comprehensiveness of their IATI publications, especially on timely reporting about their development projects. The frequency of publication for Spain has fallen from monthly in 2014 and 2015 to less than quarterly in 2016. The Gates Foundation and Australia have failed to make any significant improvement in the comprehensiveness or timeliness of their data.

### Case Study 1.

## ALLOWING FOR AND PROMOTING THE USE OF IATI DATA THROUGH OPEN DATA PORTALS

In recent years, a growing number of organisations have developed open data portals driven by IATI data in an effort to make their own aid data more accessible to all.<sup>16</sup> As measured by the Index indicator on accessibility, twenty donors included in the 2016 Index have portals providing current information about their ongoing development and cooperation projects across the world, all using an open license (this is particularly important as anyone can access, use and share the data). Changes were implemented in 2015 in particular by the U.S. Dashboard<sup>17</sup>, GAVI<sup>18</sup>, UNICEF<sup>19</sup> and France-AFD.<sup>20</sup> To reach their full potential, these portals should not only display the work done by aid providers but also be accessible to users in partner countries.

Table 2.  
IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE 2014 AID TRANSPARENCY INDEX

Moved up 2 categories	% Points
Belgium	28
Moved up 1 category	% Points
UNICEF	24.8
Global Fund	13.5
IADB	11
AfDB	5.7
EC – NEAR	12.3
EC – ECHO	11.9
Netherlands	12.8
Denmark	15.0
Germany – BMZ-GIZ	9.3
U.S. Treasury	23.2
U.S. State	15.0
EIB	28.9
EBRD	25.2
U.S. Defense	15.9
France – AFD	20.4
Japan – JICA	6.9
Norway	14.2

Figures express the % point change between 2014 and 2016.

# Performance on the Aid Transparency Index Over Time

Since 2013, UNICEF (see box 3) has made the most progress, jumping from 'poor' to 'very good' in three years and performing well in each year. Two of the U.S. aid agencies, PEPFAR and Department of State, as well as France-AFD, which is now the leading French aid agency, are also among the best performers over the years. But they have farther to go if they are to join the organisations in the 'good' or 'very good' categories. Overall, since 2013, sixteen donors have improved their total score by at least twenty percentage points to move up at least one performance category.

Looking more specifically at multiple agencies included since the first Index, UNDP and UNICEF are both now in the 'very good' category and come first and third respectively in the 2016 Index ranking. Since 2013, UN agencies have attempted to coordinate their work on transparency through what is now a formalised task team and advocating for the adoption of a common transparency standard across the UN system. The three EU directorates-general included in the Index have achieved their best scores this year. The European Commission's

(EC) Inter-service working group, set up in 2013, facilitated improvement across departments.<sup>21</sup> Finally, some of the U.S. agencies, namely U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Treasury, have also improved and all U.S. agencies are now grouped in the 'fair' category with the exception of US. MCC in the 'very good' category.

By contrast, over the years, the Index results indicate that when agencies have divergent approaches, the transparency gap between them seems to widen. France-AFD is among the agencies most improved since the 2014 Index with a 20.4% points increase in its overall score while France-MAEDI has slipped down into the 'poor' category and France-MINEFI remains among the worst performers. The same divergence of results has been seen between Japan-JICA and Japan-MOFA as well as between World Bank-IDA and World Bank-IFC.

<sup>21</sup> See: <http://new.roadto2015.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015-Aid-Transparency-Review.pdf>

## Box 3. UNICEF, BEST IMPROVER OVER THE YEARS

UNICEF, which came third in the overall 2016 ranking, is one of the best performers on the 2016 Index and has made the most significant progress of all organisations since 2013, improving its overall score by 45.2% points. Fueling this drive for greater transparency has been the combination of high level internal support and improved technical infrastructure.

In 2013, UNICEF created a data warehouse and automated reporting system, leading to its first publication to the IATI Registry. In 2014, a new unit was created at the headquarters to improve aid transparency. In 2015, UNICEF concentrated on improving the quality of its data and raising awareness within the institution and with partners.

At the same time, it launched a new open aid portal, 'open.unicef.org' to ensure improved accessibility to updated

programme and financial data for the public. UNICEF explained that "being open to the public and all stakeholders who are, by default, 'data auditors', has given considerable impetus to UNICEF's internal efforts for improvement in the accuracy, completeness and reliability of its data".

UNICEF's next challenge is to use its data internally and share with its partner governments. In 2016, UNICEF will be working with recipient governments in at least two countries to demonstrate full use of its country-level IATI datasets for government reporting. The objective is to encourage greater use of the data in decision making, by a broader range of stakeholders and data users, including country offices and recipient governments.

# Performance Categories

As in previous years, five categories are used for comparing performance in the Aid Transparency Index: Very Good (80-100%), Good (60-79%), Fair (40-59%), Poor (20-39%) and Very Poor (0-19%). By mostly publishing timely, comprehensive and forward looking information in an open format, donors included in the 'very good' category meet the Busan commitment to aid transparency, while those in the 'good' category partly meet it. The 'fair', 'poor' and 'very poor' categories regroup donors who have not met the commitment.

## VERY GOOD

In 2016, there are ten donors in the 'very good' category, more than ever before. The variety of organisations included in this category, from development finance institutions to multilateral organisations, bilateral donors, and health organisations suggests that the structure, size and operational model of donors do not determine their degree of transparency. Their success can be attributed to the fact that they make information on nearly all indicators available in the IATI Standard and publish their data at least quarterly. Both the AfDB and UNDP publish all indicators in the IATI Standard while the AsDB, which publishes the smallest number of indicators in this group, publishes all but two indicators.

## GOOD

Denmark, the Netherlands, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development-Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (BMZ-GIZ) and the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (EC-ECHO) have all graduated from the 'fair' category, increasing their

overall scores by around 10% points and joining Canada, the European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement (EC-NEAR) and EC-DEVCO in the 'good' category, bringing the total to eight. They scored better at the activity level, increasing the number of items measured by the Index and publishing these to the IATI Registry, mostly on basic information about development projects. Denmark and the Netherlands have also started publishing monthly in 2015, as well as Canada and the three directorates-general of the European Commission.

## EC-ECHO's good performance demonstrates that humanitarian organisations can also be transparent about their activities

For the first time, EC-ECHO joins EC-DEVCO and EC-NEAR in this category with EC-NEAR taking the lead. EC-ECHO's good performance demonstrates that humanitarian organisations can also be transparent about their activities and provide forward-looking budgets information.

GAVI is the only organisation that dropped down from the 'very good' category because of a lower score on frequency of publication. The organisation has already begun dealing with this shortcoming.

Overall, providers in this category publish very strongly on organisation-level indicators, scoring 89.2% of the points available on average. At the activity level, however, while basic and classification indicators, such as titles or aid types, are mostly published, performance data and documents on development projects, such as results and evaluations, are published only inconsistently.

### Case Study 2.

#### MAKING HUMANITARIAN AID TRANSPARENCY A REALITY

Humanitarian emergencies present a special challenge to transparency. Actors need to move quickly to respond to people in need, often in unstable environments. In 2015, the IATI Standard was updated to improve the capture of data on humanitarian crises. Humanitarian aid data published to the IATI Registry will automatically feed into multiple platforms

including UN OCHA's Financial Tracking System (FTS) and the European Emergency Disaster Information System (EDRIS), increasing comparability and reducing the reporting burden. Daily updates of financial and logistics data will automatically be exchanged between donors, implementers and coordinating bodies.

## FAIR

The 'fair' category is the largest in 2016, containing sixteen organisations that demonstrate opposing trends: stagnation for Spain, Switzerland, Australia, and the Gates Foundation and progress for five U.S. aid agencies, led by USAID.<sup>22</sup>

Overall, the organisations in the 'fair' category do not publish more frequently than quarterly, with the exception of the U.S agencies and in Europe, the EBRD (publishing quarterly) and the EIB (publishing monthly).

At the activity level, performance on basic and classification transparency indicators averages 78.7% and 77% respectively. Severe transparency issues become evident in the levels of reporting on the budget identifier, impact appraisals, results and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs); none of the donors included in the 'fair' category scores on these indicators.

## POOR

## VERY POOR

There are seven organisations in the 'poor' category and five in the 'very poor'. The eight donors at the bottom of the ranking are the only aid providers included in the Index that do not publish data to the IATI Registry. Korea has recently announced that it will join IATI in 2016. The UAE is developing a new foreign aid policy and restructuring the institutions responsible for aid delivery to put transparency higher on the agenda. Finland, France-MAEDI, Ireland and the

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) have dropped down one category since 2014 because these organisations either publish less information in the IATI Standard or have reduced the frequency of their publication, or both.

**For France-MINEFI, Japan-MOFA and the World Bank – IFC, the gap with other agencies of the same country or institution included in the Index is widening as these other agencies perform better**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is the only organisation in this category publishing all three performance indicators. The WB-IFC is the only donor getting full points for its data portal, as it provides current disaggregated data and allows for bulk export under an open license.

### Case Study 3.

## THE AID EFFECTIVENESS PROJECT IN BANGLADESH

Launched in October 2014, the home-grown Aid Information Management Systems (AIMS) in Bangladesh<sup>23</sup> currently gathers data from fourteen major development partners, such as the AsDB, UK-DFID and Canada. The system is IATI compatible – many of the fields and classifications conform to the IATI Standard. The Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance and UNDP are working to develop a module to import data from the IATI Standard,

to be launched in mid 2016. The module will be open source and has been designed to import data automatically from as many development partners as possible. The aim is to reduce the burden on development partners to provide data while significantly increasing the quality of data in the AIMS. Similar projects exist in Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Kosovo, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Nepal and Senegal.<sup>24</sup>

22 More information on the U.S. agencies included in the 2016 U.S. Brief

23 See: <http://aims.erd.gov.bd/>

24 See for example the 2015 EU Aid Transparency review, p. 10 and Development Gateway's website <http://www.developmentgateway.org/reach/>

# Performance Across Indicators

Table 3.  
TOP 5 PERFORMERS BY INDICATOR SUB-GROUPS IN 2016<sup>25</sup>

Organisation level			Activity level				
Commitment	Planning	Financial	Basic information	Classifications	Related documents	Financial	Performance
Sweden	UK – DFID	UNDP	Global Fund	UNICEF	Global Fund	UK – DFID	Global Fund
DFID	IADB	AfDB	EC – ECHO	UNDP	WB – IDA	UNICEF	US – MCC
EC – DEVCO	UNDP	GAVI	UNDP	EC – DEVCO	UNDP	US – MCC	IADB
EC – NEAR	Sweden	AsDB	UNICEF	Canada	IADB	UNDP	UNDP
GAVI	UNICEF	Denmark	UK – DFID	Netherlands	AsDB	Global Fund	AsDB

The Index assesses donors' transparency at two levels. Eight indicators measure the extent to which organisations publish planning and financial information as a whole. Twenty-eight indicators measure the extent to which organisations publish information about their development projects. S. Greene explained how "If donors complied fully with the IATI standard (especially breaking data out by subnational levels), the data would be highly valuable to all these different groups [ministers, parliament, media, academia, NGOs, private sector]".<sup>26</sup>

## PERFORMANCE AT THE ORGANISATION LEVEL

Most donors publish organisation-level information – with the exception of China and the UAE – and the majority of them publish these in the IATI Standard. UK-DFID and the AfDB achieve the maximum score for publishing all organisation planning indicators to the IATI Registry. The UNDP, the AfDB, GAVI, the AsDB, Denmark and EC-DEVCO all get the maximum score for financial indicators at the organisation level. Some donors have not published a full organisation file (that includes planning and financial information on the organisation) to the IATI Registry or do not publish planning and financial information on the organisation consistently when available. Others, such as Japan, do not make any financial information available.

## PERFORMANCE AT THE ACTIVITY LEVEL

There is a greater disparity among donors regarding information published on their development projects. The Global Fund leads on indicators regarding both performance and activity-level documents, while UK-DFID leads on financial data about development projects. The two UN agencies (UNDP and UNICEF) are leading on providing sub-national geographic locations for their development projects.

**If donors complied fully with the IATI standard, the data would be highly valuable to ministers, parliament, media, academia, NGOs and the private sector**

More specifically, some of the information that is most useful for planning purposes and assessing the effectiveness of aid is the least published.<sup>27</sup> Thirty donors do not score on the Index for results on account of the information being published only sometimes or not being published at all; twenty-one organisations do not score at all for sub-national locations and contracts; fifteen organisations do not score for evaluations (see graphs below).

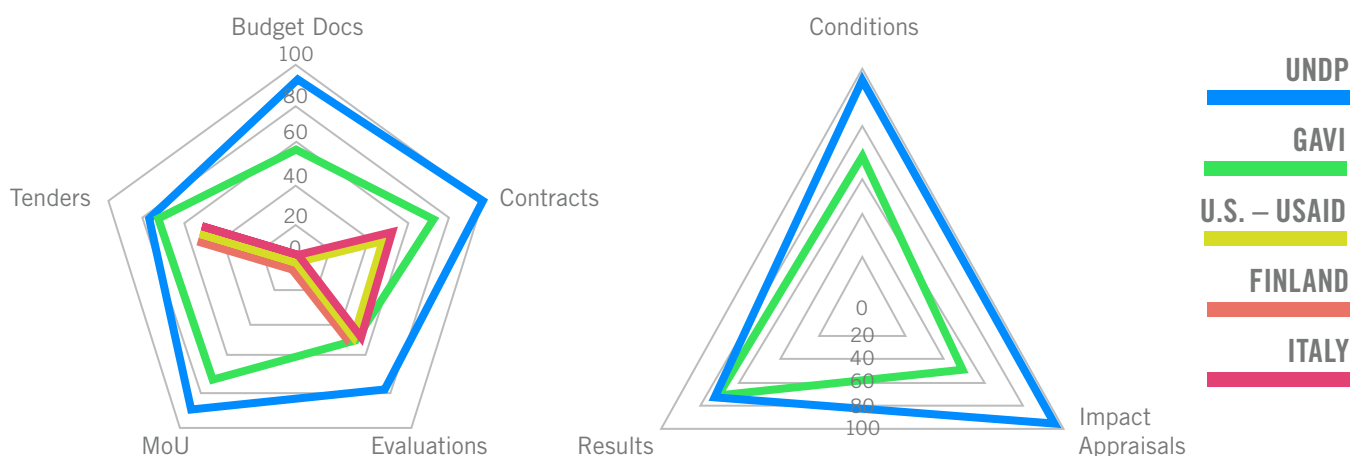
<sup>25</sup> For the full list of indicators, see p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> S. Greene, [http://www.sonjara.com/blog?article\\_id=150](http://www.sonjara.com/blog?article_id=150)

<sup>27</sup> On data use and the relevance of specific indicators to partner countries, see <https://www.usaid.gov/transparency/country-pilot-assessment> and <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/finding/geo-coding-its-huge-potential-and-current-limitations/>



Graphs 2 and 3.  
**TOP PERFORMERS PER CATEGORY ON ACTIVITY DOCUMENTS INDICATORS (2) AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (3)<sup>28</sup>**



Graph 2 shows that while the best performers in the ‘very good’ and ‘good’ category publish all activity documents indicators, this information is provided less often or not at all in the lower categories. Budget documents and contracts in particular when not published prevent from accessing useful information on financial transactions for each development project.

The triangle in graph 3 shows how performance-related information at the activity-level is made available only by the top performers of the ‘very good’ and ‘good’ categories. The same information is missing for all other top performers in the ‘fair’, ‘poor’ and ‘very poor’ categories. Such gaps make it difficult to assess and monitor the impact of transparency on the effectiveness of aid.

#### Case Study 4. **MEETING THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF PARTNER COUNTRIES**

In 2011, donors made a commitment to improve their data on development cooperation in a way that would “...meet the information needs of developing countries and non-state actors”. In late 2015, members of the OECD DAC agreed in principle to implement the “budget identifier” methodology which would

allow the aid data published by donors to be mapped onto recipient countries’ own budgets. Once a formal proposal has been agreed, donors and partner countries will find it easier to join up aid with budget data to get a full picture of their resources.

<sup>28</sup> These five indicators were identified as the most important in a consultation conducted by Publish What You Fund in 2013.



# Conclusions

## Aid is becoming more transparent, with a growing number of donors taking the lead.

Since we began our campaign, there has been a substantial improvement in aid transparency. There are now almost 400 publishers to the IATI Registry; five years ago there was one.

Since 2011, ten publishers, accounting for 25% of total aid, are now meeting the 2011 Busan commitment to aid transparency in full, and another eight have met it in part. Agencies of the United Nations, the U.S. government and the European Commission have improved their data transparency by developing common platforms and trying to work together.

## The majority of donors are still underperforming.

There are still a few organisations that don't appear to accept the need for transparency at all, and refuse to engage on the question. But they are a small minority. The majority fall into two categories. Either they agree that transparency is important, but publish data that is out of date, incomplete or inconsistent, or they publish data to the IATI Registry and their own websites, but without the detailed information at the activity level, or the contracts or data on results that would allow them to be held to account.

## We're raising the bar.

The Aid Transparency Index has been going since 2011, and its methodology has remained substantially unchanged since 2013. When we first produced the Index, no donors were in the 'very good' or 'good' categories. Now a third of them are. So we are raising the bar. Later this year we will consult on revisions to the Aid Transparency Index, with a view to testing three main options:

- Looking at a **broader set of financial flows**, including loans and climate finance.
- Encouraging **better quality data** that makes it easier to trace aid and its results.
- Focusing on **how the data is used**, by asking who uses data, what their needs are and how donors can help meet those needs.

There are now almost 400 publishers to the IATI Registry; five years ago there was one.

# Recommendations

## **If you produce data, publish it.**

Transparency applies to everyone. Publishers should recognise the right to information enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals, and publish more and better data on the growing range of aid and development related activities.

Talk to each other to share good practice and lessons. Ask the IATI Secretariat for technical support, and use the IATI Standard as an opportunity to strengthen your management systems and improve accountability.

## **If you have data, use it.**

There's more and more data out there. Use it, and tell us what is still missing.

For publishers with good data, that means using open data yourself, sharing information with your country offices, parliamentarians and journalists, so they can hold you to account.

For partner governments, that means incorporating data published in the IATI Standard into your aid management system, and joining that data with budget information.

For civil society organisations, that means adapting and using the data both for your activities and to hold governments to account.

For activists, that means using data to fight corruption, and to tackle waste and duplication.

## **If you don't have data, demand it.**

Aid is getting more transparent, but there is a long way to go. Governments and civil society need to work together to identify the biggest gaps and help to close them.

We also know that development is moving beyond aid. So we are calling for donors to make humanitarian aid, climate finance and development finance transparent as well.

# Acronyms & Acknowledgements

<b>AFD</b>	French Agency for Development (Agence Française de Développement)
<b>AfDB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>AsDB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>BMZ</b>	German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung)
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development (UK government)
<b>DG DEVCO</b>	Directorate General Development and Cooperation
<b>DOD</b>	Department of Defense (U.S. government)
<b>EBRD</b>	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>ECHO</b>	Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (European Commission)
<b>EIB</b>	European Investment Bank
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FTS</b>	Financial Tracking Service (of UN OCHA)
<b>GAVI</b>	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization
<b>GIZ</b>	German Agency for International Cooperation (Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
<b>Global Fund</b>	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
<b>IADB</b>	Inter-American Development Bank
<b>IATI</b>	International Aid Transparency Initiative
<b>IDA</b>	International Development Association (World Bank)
<b>IFC</b>	International Finance Corporation (World Bank)
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>JICA</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency
<b>MAEDI</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et du Développement International – French government)
<b>MCC</b>	Millennium Challenge Corporation
<b>MINEFI</b>	Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry (le Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances – French government)
<b>OCHA</b>	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (United Nations)
<b>ODF</b>	Official Development Finance
<b>PEPFAR</b>	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>U.S.</b>	United States (of America)
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

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**“Being open to the public and all stakeholders who are, by default, ‘data auditors’, has given considerable impetus to UNICEF’s internal efforts for improvement in the accuracy, completeness and reliability of its data”**

**Timothy Takona, Senior Adviser, Field Results Group, UNICEF, 2016**