

# **Cover Note: IATI 2030: Exploring Strategic Pathways in an Evolving Aid Landscape**

## **Executive Summary**

*As the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) approaches the end of its current Strategic Plan cycle (2020-2025), the global development and humanitarian landscape faces unprecedented challenges. These shifts are reshaping the dynamics of Official Development Assistance (ODA) with increasing complexity and fragmentation driven by the expansion of non-DAC providers, the transition from grants to loans, the rise of new financing models, and an escalating focus on humanitarian aid. These changes, along with growing economic inequalities, debt distress, and intensified humanitarian crises, demand that IATI re-evaluate its role and adapt to remain relevant, effective, and impactful.*

*This paper serves as both a reflection on the current aid environment and a roadmap for IATI's future, exploring how the initiative can navigate these complexities. Key trends shaping the aid landscape are analyzed, including:*

- **Barriers to Achieving the SDGs:** *Persistent poverty, widening inequalities, and the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic highlight the urgent need for more responsive and coordinated development approaches. The world's ability to achieve the SDGs is under significant pressure, with the 2030 timeline approaching and substantial work remaining.*
- **Evolving ODA Financing Trends:** *Shifts from grants to loans and a growing emphasis on humanitarian aid reflect a reallocation within ODA, which challenges the sustainability of aid in the most vulnerable regions. This trend underscores the need for IATI to support greater transparency around debt-related financing and to foster tools that can adapt to these complex shifts.*
- **Challenges of Fragmentation and Circumvention:** *With an increase in development actors and financing instruments, the aid landscape has grown more crowded and fragmented, complicating recipient countries' ability to effectively manage and coordinate aid. The rise of non-DAC providers and diverse financing models further complicates the landscape, demanding more inclusive and harmonized data systems that support coordination and minimize resource fragmentation.*

*Drawing from these insights, this paper identifies three strategic pillars that are pivotal to advancing IATI's mission and adapting to the evolving aid landscape:*

- **Consolidating Data Quality and Accessibility:** *Strengthening the reliability, timeliness, and usability of published data remains a critical priority for IATI. By addressing the risks associated with data complexity and fragmentation, IATI can ensure that stakeholders have access to high-quality, actionable information that enhances decision-making and drives impactful outcomes.*
- **Expanding Scope and Influence:** *IATI can broaden its impact by engaging with complementary initiatives and networks within the development and humanitarian sectors. Through collaborative efforts, IATI can enhance transparency across diverse funding and operational streams, ensuring that its data supports a wide range of global development goals. By integrating with other systems, IATI can position itself as a central resource for comprehensive, accessible information that informs effective decision-making across the aid landscape.*
- **Scaling Impact through Advocacy and Capacity Building:** *To maximize the utility of IATI data, targeted advocacy and capacity-building efforts are essential. By engaging stakeholders at multiple levels and fostering skills in data interpretation and use, IATI can transform data from a compliance requirement into a strategic resource for global development. This approach aims to encourage transparency as a driver of accountability and collaboration across sectors, ensuring data leads to meaningful outcomes.*

*As IATI looks to its future, the evolving aid landscape presents both challenges and unique opportunities that will shape the initiative's role and impact in the coming years. The shifts in ODA financing, expansion of development actors, and the rising demand for transparency across a more fragmented system all underscore the necessity for IATI to adapt. To continue delivering on its mission, IATI must broaden its vision beyond data publication to encompass deeper advocacy, targeted partnerships, and enhanced capacity-building efforts.*

*This paper provides a foundation for IATI's Strategic Plan consultations through 2030, highlighting strategic pathways – such as enhancing data quality, expanding scope, and strengthening stakeholder engagement – that will refine IATI's approach to transparency and accountability. Through this roadmap, IATI is poised to become not only a data exchange standard but a catalyst for transformative change in the global transparency landscape. Engaging with a broad spectrum of stakeholders during these consultations will ensure IATI remains responsive and effective, ultimately positioning the initiative to advance equitable, accountable, and impactful development outcomes.*