From Data Collection to Development Effectiveness

IATI Community Exchange
Copenhagen, March 2023
MFDP requested the development of the Project Dashboard in 2019, which was supported by ODI and financed by the Swedish government.

This request flows from the National Aid and NGO Policy recently adopted by Liberia.

Support will be taken forward by Emergentally as part of efforts to strengthen the sustainability of the system, including by offering the system to other countries.
Focus on your development effectiveness challenges with a preference for long-term engagements.

- Consider software development and data management as tools rather than objectives in themselves.
- Collaboration with software developers based in the country or region of the client.

We work with civil servants, policy makers, and development partners.
1. Data collection - a strategic issue
2. Simplifying data collection - using the Project Dashboard and IATI
3. Turning attention back to development effectiveness
1. Data collection

Getting good quality data as a strategic challenge
Examples of data required by Liberia

• Project name
• Description
• Objectives
• Start and end date of project
• MTEF Projection (once per year, for the coming 3 years)
• Project cost
• Project code
• Disbursements (quarterly)
• Implementing organisation
• Alignment with SDGs
Data collection is difficult

Example of Liberia:
• Many projects (497 ongoing)
• Many development partners (around 32), resident and non-resident

Challenges:
• **For government**: reconciling data collected with data already in the system
• **For Development Partners**: exporting and sharing data from internal systems
The experience of legacy systems

2017 study: among 75 installations of AIMS (Aid Information Management Systems):

- 12 are active (online and updated at least once in the past 6 months)
- 27 are online, but without currently updated data
- 32 are no longer online

=> what lessons can we draw from this experience?
Lessons from this experience

Systems require:

- User-friendly data entry and reporting tools
- Summary view of the data by development partner or sector
- Simple to use without frequent training
- Data required for country-specific processes (budget, planning)
- A sustainable business model
A big step forward:
Country Development Finance Data (IATI)

- Visualisation by reporting organisation, sector or country
- Customised dashboards
- Files formatted according to the needs of governments

https://countrydata.iatistandard.org/
Why a country system is still needed

- Data collection
  - Partial publication - need to supplement missing data
  - Non-publication - need to collect data for certain partners (+ govt)
  - Validation by development partners

- Curation of data
  - Handling data quality issues
  - Overcoming double-counting

- Contextualisation of data
  - Budget classifications
  - Particular needs (functionalities, types of projects)

- Policy questions
  - What should be included?

⇒ Respond to the **specific needs** of each country
2. Simplifying data collection

Using the Project Dashboard and IATI data
Tracking development across Liberia

Activity locations

https://liberiaprojects.org
Liberia Project Dashboard

- Developed since 2019, for the Government of Liberia
- Made public in December 2020
- Since 2021: IATI import launched
- Financed by Sweden
- Continual development

https://liberiaprojects.org
Simplifying manual data collection

- Fast and user-friendly interface
- Upload data using Excel templates
- Monitoring data quality

... but also: IATI import
INTERNATIONAL AID TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE
ACCRA STATEMENT

4th September 2008

We, representatives of developed countries responsible for promoting development and Heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions, and representatives of philanthropic foundations, meeting in Accra on 4 September 2008:

- Welcome the commitments in the draft Accra Agenda for Action by all donors to “publicly disclose regular, detailed and timely information on volume, allocation and when, available, results of development expenditure to enable more accurate budget, accounting and audit by developing countries”, “support information systems for managing aid”; and “provide full and timely information on annual commitments and actual disbursements”
Why use IATI data?

1. **Improve data quality**
   - More detailed data
   - Automatic currency conversion

2. **Reduce the burden of data collection**
   - Automated daily updates
   - Overcoming issue of donor responsiveness
   - Clearer process for reconciliation
   - Overcoming manual data entry challenges

3. **Discover new activities**
   - Import detailed project data
Our strategy for using IATI data

1. **Prioritisation**
   - The largest Development Partners (75% of spend)

2. **Validation**
   - Contacting DP country offices
   - ... and those at HQ (responsible for IATI publication)

3. **Integration**
   - Technical work, taking into account differences in the data, as well as the benefits and challenges of the data published by each DP
Progress

Liberia is the only country with an IATI integration currently in use, using the Project Dashboard.

Automatically importing data for:
• African Development Bank
• European Union
• World Bank (*from Client Connection, so not fully automated*)

Undertaking further discussions with DPs before importing data for Sweden, UK and USAID.
How IATI import works:

1/ Select a project

- Search for a project using the project code
- Retrieve data from Datastore Classic
- Select the relevant activity

*(Example of an EU project)*
How IATI import works:

2/ Verification through preview

• Shows a simple summary of data in IATI and in the Dashboard.

• Possibility to import data selectively (e.g. only disbursements, and not commitments).
IATI Datastore Classic

The classic version of the IATI Datastore, reloaded.

Access 1,058,097 activities and 7,956,254 transactions.

Datastore fully operational

Last updated: 2 hours ago

https://datastore.codeforiati.org/
Meeting our objectives

1. **Improve data quality**
   a. Avoid keying errors
   b. Handle currency conversion issues
   c. Obtain the full history of a project’s transactions

2. **Reduce burden of data collection**
   a. Don’t have to request quarterly disbursement data for imported projects
   b. Don’t have to manually key in data, often for a large number of projects

3. **Discover new projects**
   a. Import detailed project data
Before import

- TSF component (grant)
- ADF component (loan)

Fish Town Harper Road Project-Phase I: Paving of Harper to Karloken: [https://liberiaprojects.org/activities/317](https://liberiaprojects.org/activities/317)
Fish Town Harper Road Project-Phase I: Paving of Harper to Karloken: https://liberiaprojects.org/activities/317
3. Turning attention back to development effectiveness

Using the Project Dashboard and IATI data
Counterpart funding
Are government and donor contributions well aligned?
Coordination
Do local health facilities have the medication they need?
Resource mobilisation
What is the spend of different partners over time?

https://liberiaprojects.org/donors/1
Sustainability
What happens at the end of donor financing?
Alignment
Are projects aligned to the national development plan (PAPD)?

https://liberiaprojects.org/papd
Results
Are projects delivering their intended benefits?
These results were automatically captured from this donor's IATI data.

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>Direct project beneficiaries</td>
<td>2011-09-01</td>
<td>2024-06-28</td>
<td>362905.00</td>
<td>330822.00</td>
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<td>Number of rural people with access to an all-season road</td>
<td>2011-09-01</td>
<td>2024-06-30</td>
<td>362905.00</td>
<td>288000.00</td>
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<td>Number of staff trained in road safety</td>
<td>2017-03-13</td>
<td>2024-06-30</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Number of women who have their livelihood and income restored</td>
<td>2017-03-13</td>
<td>2018-06-30</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
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