

IATI Members' Assembly and Community Exchange 2025

26 - 27 November 2025

Nairobi, Kenya



IATI Community Exchange

Thursday 27th November 2025

Concept Note: Session 1

Reimagining Data Quality: A Strategic and User-Centric Approach

Time: 09:20 – 10:30

Moderator: Ammar Malik, Senior Program Officer, Development Policy & Finance, Gates Foundation

1. Purpose of the Session

Data quality remains one of the most strategic and cross-cutting priorities within IATI, underpinning the usability, visibility, and trustworthiness of IATI data across governments, multilaterals, humanitarian actors, civil society, and global initiatives. As IATI enters a new Strategic Plan cycle (2026–2030), there is a growing recognition that data quality must first and foremost respond to the needs of data users, ensuring that information is timely, usable, and fit for purpose, while also being fair, proportionate, and aligned with the diverse realities of IATI's publishers.

Building on years of community learning, country-level perspectives, and analytical work, this session will introduce a more strategic and user-driven vision for data quality, informed by the Issue Note *Reimagining Data Quality: A User-Centric Approach*. The aim is to strengthen the accessibility, relevance, and usability of IATI data – particularly for country-level stakeholders, local actors, and sectoral or policy practitioners – while supporting realistic, achievable expectations across different types of organisations.

This session will present the emerging strategic framing, share insights from the 2025 State of the Data Deep Dives, and invite reflections from key constituencies on what a future-facing approach to data quality should look like.

2. Background and Strategic Context

A convergence of developments within IATI and the broader development ecosystem has placed data quality at the centre of discussions on data use, interoperability, and impact:

- The forthcoming **IATI Strategic Plan 2026–2030** elevates data quality as foundational to strengthening IATI’s value proposition; in areas including localisation, crisis financing, sectoral resource tracking, and public financial management.
- **Independent assessments such as Publish What You Fund’s Aid Transparency Index (ATI)** have, over the years, been an important driver of improvement in the transparency and quality of IATI publishing. These assessments have helped raise ambition and visibility across the community. At the same time, they have also highlighted important questions about the diversity of IATI publishing practices - including the different incentives, capacities, and operating contexts that shape how various types of organisations publish.
- The [Issue Note on Reimagining Data Quality](#) outlines the need for a balanced approach that recognises different organisational mandates and capacities, while focusing more intentionally on how data is used by stakeholders.
- Insights from the **2025 State of the Data Dialogues** reveal systemic issues and opportunities, covering document accessibility, delivery-chain visibility across 17,000 organisations, and the importance of timely and forward-looking data for crisis response.
- Country-level stakeholders continue to highlight the need for timely, comprehensive, and predictable data to manage increasingly complex financing landscapes.
- Donors and multilaterals, including the European Commission and UK FCDO, are strengthening their own publishing practices and supporting improvements across the IATI ecosystem (including new mentoring programmes for EU Member States).

These developments collectively underscore the need for a **more strategic, collaborative, and user-centred approach to data quality**

3. Session Structure

Introduction:

Welcome by moderator Ammar Malik, Gates Foundation. Short background, run of Show and speaker introductions.

A. Presentation 1 – Strategic Framing: A Renewed Vision for Data Quality

Speaker: *Cody Wallace, Policy and Governance Specialist, IATI Secretariat*

The IATI Secretariat will open the session by setting out the strategic direction for data quality as IATI enters the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan period. This presentation will highlight why data quality is a foundational pillar of IATI’s future work and how the Initiative is positioning itself to meet the evolving needs of governments, donors, humanitarian actors, civil society, and data intermediaries.

Drawing on the Issue Note *Reimagining Data Quality: A User-Centric Approach*, the Secretariat will outline:

- The institutional rationale for reimagining data quality around usability, user needs, and organisational appropriateness;
- Lessons from IATI’s historical evolution of data quality and why a refreshed approach is needed now;
- How the Secretariat aims to balance ambition with fairness, ensuring expectations reflect the diversity of publisher types and capacities;
- The need to strengthen the feedback loop between data producers (publishers) and data users – including more systematic mechanisms for publishers to receive actionable input from the community and supplemented by State of the Data reviews and other dialogue fora;
- The proposed shift toward targeted diagnostics, continuous improvement cycles, and clearer linkages with infrastructure and Standard governance;
- How the 2026 Work Plan, the Strategic Plan, and upcoming consultations will shape the roadmap for implementing this new framework.

B. Presentation 2 – State of the Data 2025: Insights from Deep Dives

Speaker: *Steven Flower, Technical Lead – IATI Secretariat / Open Data Services*

The IATI Secretariat's technical team, led by Open Data Services (ODS), will present analytical insights and evidence from this year's State of the Data (SotD) programme - a core pillar of IATI's data-quality workstream.

This segment will illustrate how data analysis and community dialogue are informing the next generation of IATI's data-quality strategy. Key insights and important lessons will be drawn from:

- **Document Accessibility in an AI Era:** Findings on broken links, document integrity, and opportunities for enhanced retrieval and machine-readability;
- **Aid in Motion Analysis:** What an examination of 17,000 organisations across delivery chains reveals about visibility gaps, traceability, and localisation challenges;
- **Timeliness Deep Dive:** The practical consequences of inconsistent publishing rhythms, including for crisis response, national planning, and budget analysis.

The SotD programme has also highlighted its utility in providing feedback loops for stakeholders, leading to data-driven ideas, requests and participation about possibilities for how IATI Standard, infrastructure and data services could evolve. This session will discuss how we may want to utilise on this, and how we may further evolve this model throughout 2026.

C. Reflection 1 – European Commission (DG INTPA)

Speaker: *Guillermo Vitale, Policy Officer, EC DG INTPA*

The European Commission (DG INTPA) will provide reflections as one of IATI's largest and most influential donor members, and a longstanding champion of improving data quality and data use across the development cooperation system. The EC's engagement is especially timely given its investment in strengthening IATI infrastructure and its leadership in expanding IATI publishing among EU Member States.

The EC's contribution will highlight:

- Why improving data quality is strategically important for EU development cooperation, joint programming, and geopolitical priorities;
- The launch of the EU mentoring programme to strengthen Member State publishing practices and improve visibility of EU-level cooperation;

- How higher-quality IATI data supports evidence-based decision-making, sector coordination, and upstream reporting across the EU institutions;
 - The role of major donors in setting expectations, supporting capacity strengthening, and championing a shared commitment to improved data quality.
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D. Reflection 2 – Partner-Country Perspective: Nigeria

Speaker: *Henry Asor, Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, Nigeria*

Nigeria will offer a partner-country perspective grounded in practical experience using IATI data to manage a large and diverse development-cooperation portfolio. As one of the most active government users of IATI data, Nigeria brings critical insights into what partner countries need from publishers to support national planning, transparency, and coordination.

Nigeria’s reflections will emphasise:

- Why timeliness, forward-looking budgets, and complete coverage are essential for effective development and humanitarian coordination;
 - Common data-quality challenges that partner countries face when relying on IATI data for planning and decision-making;
 - Insights from Nigeria’s own systems — including the Development Cooperation Dashboard — and how IATI data enhances visibility of external financing;
 - The importance of predictable publishing rhythms for in-country use;
 - The shared responsibility across donors, multilaterals, and implementers to improve data quality in ways that support local systems and national ownership.
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E. Reflection 3 – Donor Practice: UK FCDO

Speaker: *Jack Lightly, Private Secretary / UK FCDO*

The UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) will share reflections from the standpoint of a major bilateral donor actively working to improve both the quality and internal usability of its own development-cooperation data. FCDO’s

long-standing leadership on transparency and commitment to IATI make its experience highly relevant to the future direction of IATI's data-quality agenda.

FCDO's reflections will explore:

- Why high-quality IATI data is vital for donor coordination, portfolio management, and crisis-response effectiveness;
- How FCDO is strengthening its internal publishing systems, data governance processes, and organisational incentives;
- Lessons learned from internal reforms aimed at improving accuracy, timeliness, and harmonisation of data;
- The types of support and infrastructure donors need from IATI to sustain long-term improvements;
- The important role that major donors play in raising ambition and driving community-wide improvements in data quality.

4. Guided Discussion – Plenary Reflections

Following the presentations, the moderator (Ammar Malik, Gates Foundation) will lead a high-level plenary discussion to surface community perspectives on the future direction of IATI's data-quality work.

The conversation will encourage broad reflections on:

- How data quality can better align with the needs of partner-country governments, multilaterals, humanitarian actors, and civil society.
- Which data quality improvements (e.g. timeliness, guidance/documentation, organisational information) create the greatest usability gains.
- Opportunities for strategic progress as the 2026–2030 period begins.
- How to maintain fairness and proportionality across diverse publishers.
- What types of incentives, support mechanisms, or enabling structures could help publishers strengthen data quality.

This dialogue is intended to help consolidate shared understanding and stimulate collective thinking about the most user-centred and feasible pathways for strengthening IATI's approach to data quality.

5. Expected Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will have:

- A shared understanding of the strategic direction for data quality in the 2026–2030 period.
- Consolidated insights from the 2025 State of the Data Deep Dives and their implications.
- Reflections from donors, partner countries, publishers, and analysts on what “high-quality, usable IATI data” means in practice.
- Community input to refine the 2026 data-quality workstream; including utility & scope of topics for the SotD programme next year (towards systematic improvements in diagnostics, guidance, capacity support, technical improvements).
- Strengthened alignment and momentum around the importance of data quality as a foundation for IATI’s relevance, usability, and impact.