Powering Transparency:
IATI's Role in Enhancing Accountability and Driving Impact

Forewords

Freek Kepples,

Director of Financial and Economic Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

As the current Chair of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), it is my pleasure to introduce this report on behalf of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a founding signatory of the initiative, the Netherlands has been at the forefront of promoting aid transparency for over 16 years. We were one of the first governments in the world to publish our aid spending according to the IATI Standard, making billions of dollars publicly available over the years.

This commitment has brought about better oversight, reduced waste, and empowered citizens by giving them the tools to see exactly where their taxes are going. IATI allows us to track the impact of our aid, ensuring it reaches those who need it most, while also serving our national interests.

At the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we believe transparency should not end at our door. Once aid leaves the government, we continue to ensure accountability. In fact, we are one of the few governments in the world that requires any NGO or organisation receiving Dutch aid to publish IATI data on how that money is eventually spent. Since 2016, it has been mandatory for all recipients of our aid to report their spending to the

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IATI Standard, resulting in hundreds of other organisations now providing data. We have also emphasised the importance of publishing not just financial information but results to ensure we know the impact of Dutch spending. This has led to the Netherlands being recognised for having some of the best aid data quality globally.

I am proud to reflect on the achievements of IATI, with today over 1,700 organisations publishing aid data on nearly one million activities through the initiative. Looking ahead, the next step is to ensure that this wealth of data is actively used. We must train civil society, journalists, parliamentarians, and citizens to use this data to drive accountability and the effectiveness of aid.

For this incredibly valuable open data agenda to remain successful, it must evolve into a core tool for decision-making in international development.

> **To tackle humanity's most urgent challenges—proliferating conflicts, accelerating climate change, and widening inequalities—we need to rebuild trust in the development system. The International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) plays a crucial role in this by making trillions of dollars in development finance open and accessible.**

Marcos Neto,

UN Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator & Director of Bureau for Policy and Programme Support

United Nations Development Programme

In a world where trust in international institutions is eroding, transparency is critical. To tackle humanity's most urgent challenges—proliferating conflicts, accelerating climate change, and widening inequalities—we need to rebuild trust in the development system. The International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) plays a crucial role in this by making trillions of dollars in development finance open and accessible. Academic research published recently is promising,[1] showing that transparency efforts, including publishing IATI data, increase public support for aid spending.

As one of the Initiative's 14 founding signatories, UNDP proudly hosts the IATI Secretariat. Launched at the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra in 2008, IATI's mission is to give developing countries access to comprehensive, timely aid data to support their national development plans. Today, it is a major achievement that two thirds of Official Development Assistance is now published to the IATI Standard. And this data is being used to inform governments' budgets, development plans and monitoring of development resources.

At UNDP, we don't just promote transparency—we commit to it. Through our transparency portal, open.undp.org, we share detailed data on over 5,200 development projects, worth more than USD 3.6 billion. By adhering to the IATI Standard, we ensure full accountability to our donors, partners,

and beneficiaries. This commitment has consistently placed us among the top-ranking organisations in the independent Aid Transparency Index for four consecutive assessments. We are also showing leadership in using the data to drive development effectiveness. UNDP has created its own internal performance monitoring dashboard using IATI data. This year, we will be exploring the use of IATI data to inform 86 Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs) as a key tool for supporting developing countries fund and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As the global community confronts the world's toughest challenges, transparency must remain at the forefront. The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) offer critical opportunities for international community to demonstrate its commitment to transparency. The global community should consider publishing timely, open data to track the USD 300 billion annual climate pledge made at COP 29 and we must ensure that development resources aimed at closing the USD 4.2 trillion SDG financing gap are published to IATI. This report serves as an essential reminder that international development cooperation must deliver results in an open, transparent way if we hope to secure a better future for our planet and its people.

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1   https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gove.12863#gove12863-bib-0016

Contents

About

Imagine a world where every dollar, every activity, and every resource used to address global poverty and crises is made completely transparent. The International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) exists to make this possible.

IATI encourages all organisations involved in providing and implementing development and humanitarian resources—such as donor governments, development finance institutions, and NGOs—to publish data throughout international delivery chains. This data is shared using the IATI Standard, a framework designed to ensure that development and humanitarian information is useful and accessible. Once published, IATI data is freely available online for anyone to access.

Since its establishment in 2008, much progress has been made. To date over 1,700 organisations have published IATI data on one million development and humanitarian activities. By making this data transparent, it can be used to improve coordination, accountability, and impact, ensuring resources reach the people who need them the most.

This report showcases the tremendous growth of IATI, which has a membership comprising the largest development and humanitarian agencies in the world; a data standard endorsed by major international commitments; and an impressive record of impactful data use cases.

For governments in developing countries, IATI data has meant increased visibility of aid flows to inform budgeting and development plans.

For donor governments, it has helped improve transparency and trust amongst taxpayers.

For delivery partners addressing a humanitarian crisis, IATI data is being recognised as an invaluable source of information for real-time coordination.

With dramatic changes to the global development and humanitarian landscape since IATI's inception, the report outlines the wide-ranging needs for the transparency initiative to address in the future. From rebuilding trust in internationalism, to tracking future spending pledges on climate action, the need for transparency is growing.

However, for this to be successful, there needs to be a revitalisation of the transparency movement. With IATI's next five-year strategic plan being developed, these priorities will be considered as part of upcoming consultations. **Among competing priorities, IATI's vision is clear: good quality data driving sustainable development for a better world.**

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Transparency journey: IATI timeline

September 2008
IATI is launched at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, Ghana by 14 founding signatories.

February 2011
Members formally agree the first version of the IATI Standard, establishing a set of international rules for publishing useful development data. The UK Department for International Development is the first to publish their data.

August 2011
The Prime Minister of Madagascar announces that his country will endorse IATI, joining 22 other partner countries.

November 2011
At the Busan High Level Forum, the outcome document agrees to implement a "common standard", which includes OECD-DAC reporting systems and the IATI Standard.

June 2015
The outcome document from the Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa recognises the essential nature of transparency in funding Agenda 2030 and learning from existing transparency initiatives and open data standards, specifically naming IATI.

2014
The Government of Liberia reports using IATI data to support the monitoring of aid contributions during the outbreak of the Ebola crisis.

February 2013
The 100th organisation publishes their data to IATI.

December 2012
The UK announces it will be the first government to introduce mandatory rules for organisations receiving funds to report their spending to IATI.

December 2015
IATI Standard version 2.02 is released. New features focus on improving data published to IATI on humanitarian financing and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals.

April 2016
The Netherlands is the second government (after the UK) to introduce mandatory rules for organisations receiving funds to report their spending to IATI.

May 2016
Humanitarian donors and aid providers commit to the Grand Bargain at the first World Humanitarian Summit. This commitment includes publishing timely, transparent, harmonised and open high-quality data on humanitarian funding within two years, and identifies IATI as the basis for a common standard.

December 2016
The 500th organisation publishes their data to IATI.

December 2017
The UN Secretary-General commits the United Nations Development System to publishing information on spending and results through "system-wide enrolment" into IATI.

March 2018
The number of development and humanitarian activities reported to IATI exceeds one million.

May 2018
Belgium joins the UK and the Netherlands as the third government to introduce mandatory rules for organisations receiving funds to report their spending to IATI.

September 2021
IATI reaches 100 members, representing donor and partner governments, multilaterals, foundations, private sector and civil society organisations.

December 2020
IATI moves swiftly to promote transparency during the pandemic. IATI data is published by 170 organisations on 10,000+ COVID-19 related development and humanitarian activities.

May 2019
1000 organisations now publish their development and humanitarian spending to IATI.

December 2021
The Government's of Chad and Nigeria use IATI data to inform their 2021 development cooperation reports

December 2022
During 2022, IATI data on the SDGs surpasses 100,000 activities. Data users are able to see which of the 17 goals and 169 targets of the SDGs the activities are contributing to.

December 2023
By the end of 2023, over 200 organisations had shared IATI data on their activities that were targeting climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Much done:
How IATI has enhanced transparency in the development system

iati

Est. 2008

IATI was launched in 2008 by 14 founding signatories at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, in Accra. Together they were the first to commit to the initiative by signing the IATI Accra Statement.

They agreed to provide political leadership to promote the transparency of aid in their own organisations and amongst other providers, as well as help establish "common definitions and a format to facilitate sharing of aid information".

Global Multistakholder Membership 100+

Today, IATI has expanded from 14 signatories to a membership base of over 100 governments, multilateral institutions and civil society and private sector organisations.

IATI members fund and govern the initiative, playing a crucial role in promoting transparency across the world.

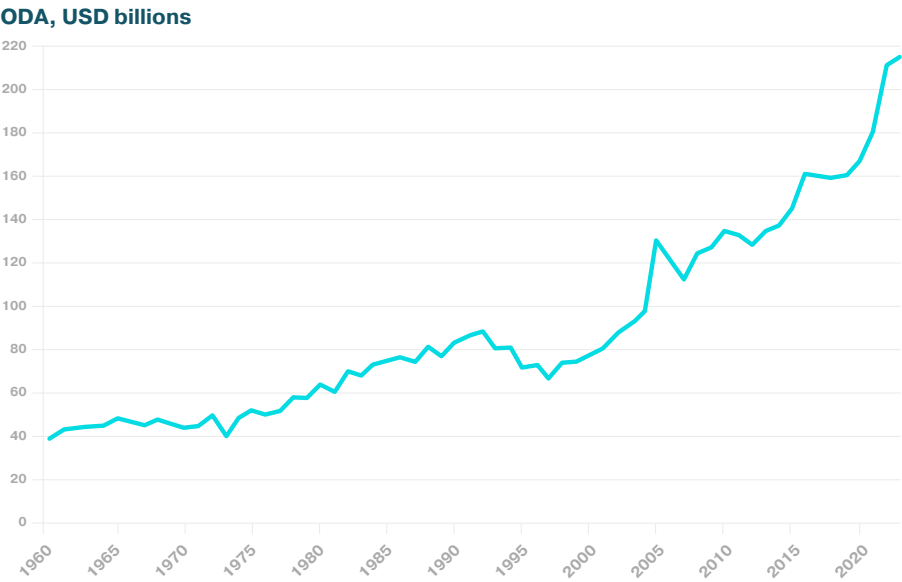# Advancing aid transparency: official development assistance

Since its inception, IATI sought to deliver on the Accra Agenda for Action for 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*". The collective efforts of IATI's members and the international community has delivered enormous results. Today, analysis shows two-thirds of official development assistance provided by OECD donors is represented in IATI.

Having ODA data in an open, accessible format enables officials in ministries of finance to align foreign aid with domestic resources in planning budgets and delivering on their national development plans. For example:

- Data from IATI has informed national budgets e.g. the **Government of Chad's** Medium Term Expenditure Framework projections[3]
- IATI data has been used to inform annual Development Cooperation Reports e.g. the **Governments of Nigeria**[4] and **Lesotho**[5]
- IATI data also supplements data in national aid information management systems e.g. in Liberia via the Government's online **Liberia Project Dashboard**[6]

Figure 1: official development assistance provided by OECD represented by IATI data[2]

ODA, USD billions

2/3

Today, analysis shows two-thirds of official development assistance provided by OECD donors is represented in IATI.

2   https://deepnote.com/workspace/Open-Data-Services-Cooperative-46a54078-1c9e-4c25-b08c-69c3957de83a/project/Flow-Type-6774294e-d80b-4798-a4e0-7f1039893fef/notebook/Commitment-vs-Flow-303d999f1d3c486694ebe448cfcb0970
3   https://iatistandard.org/documents/10823/IATI_Annual_Report_2023_EN.pdf
4   https://iatistandard.org/en/news/iati-workshop-held-to-strengthen-data-use-in-west-and-central-africa/
5   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQZP3O3MbFY
6   https://liberiaprojects.org/

Liberia Project Dashboard

The usefulness of IATI data extends far beyond governments. Civil society organisations, journalists, and citizens can access this data to hold decision-makers accountable, ensuring that resources are directed where they are needed most. For example:

- By publishing data on their spending to IATI, **Oxfam Novib**[7] has strengthened their commitment to transparency, improved information for internal decision-making and showcased their development activities to the world through their online portal, Atlas.

- **Investigative journalist Claire Provost** used IATI data to inform an exclusive report on CNN[8] into ODA (official development assistance) funding organisations who were campaigning against LGBTQI+ rights.

- **Georgetown University** used IATI data[9] that was rapidly published on covid-19 related development activities to explore the international response to mental health during the global pandemic.

7   https://iatistandard.org/en/about/case-studies/oxfam-novib-casestudy/
8   https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/13/africa/us-europe-aid-lgbtqi-ghana-churches-investigation-as-equals-intl-cmd-dg/index.html
9   https://www.iaticonnect.org/group/6/discussion/data-use-case-exploring-mental-health-international-covid19response

OVER 1700 IATI PUBLISHERS

- Donor governments
- Multilateral organisations
- Development finance institutions
- Philanthropic foundations
- Fund managers
- International non-governmental organisations
- National non-governmental organisations
- Private sector organisations
- Academic, training and research organisations

Going beyond ODA: IATI data from 1700+ organisations

Over the last two decades, the number and diversity of development actors has expanded significantly. According to the World Bank, the landscape of development finance has become more complex, with the number of donors significantly growing from 47 to 70 and the number of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies nearly tripling from 191 to 502.[10]

The IATI Standard, launched in 2011, has provided a flexible framework to deliver transparency in this increasingly complex development environment. Its first publisher was the UK Department for International Development in January 2011, followed shortly by the World Bank, the first multilateral agency, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the first foundation to participate.

In 2024, more than 1,700 donor governments, development finance institutions, UN agencies, non-governmental organisations, foundations, and private sector entities had adopted the IATI Standard, publishing data on over a million development and humanitarian projects.

The united efforts of these diverse development and humanitarian actors has resulted in the world having access to open data on trillions of dollars of resources. The total spend of all resources published to IATI up to August 2024 was an enormous **USD 3.5 trillion**, with budget data (detailing spending plans one year ahead) at **USD 4.1 trillion**.

10 https://desapublications.un.org/publications/financing-sustainable-development-report-2024

Tracing resources
through delivery chains

The IATI Standard enables funds to be traced as they pass from donors to implementing organisations through often complex delivery chains. The delivery of activities across organisations, as well as the results can also be traced. For these reasons, governments have found IATI immensely useful and have introduced mandatory rules for organisations receiving their aid to publish IATI data. Currently the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark require organisations who receive aid to publish information about where they spend their funds and how, to IATI. The introduction of these Government's policies has resulted in a significant increase in the number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) publishing IATI data.

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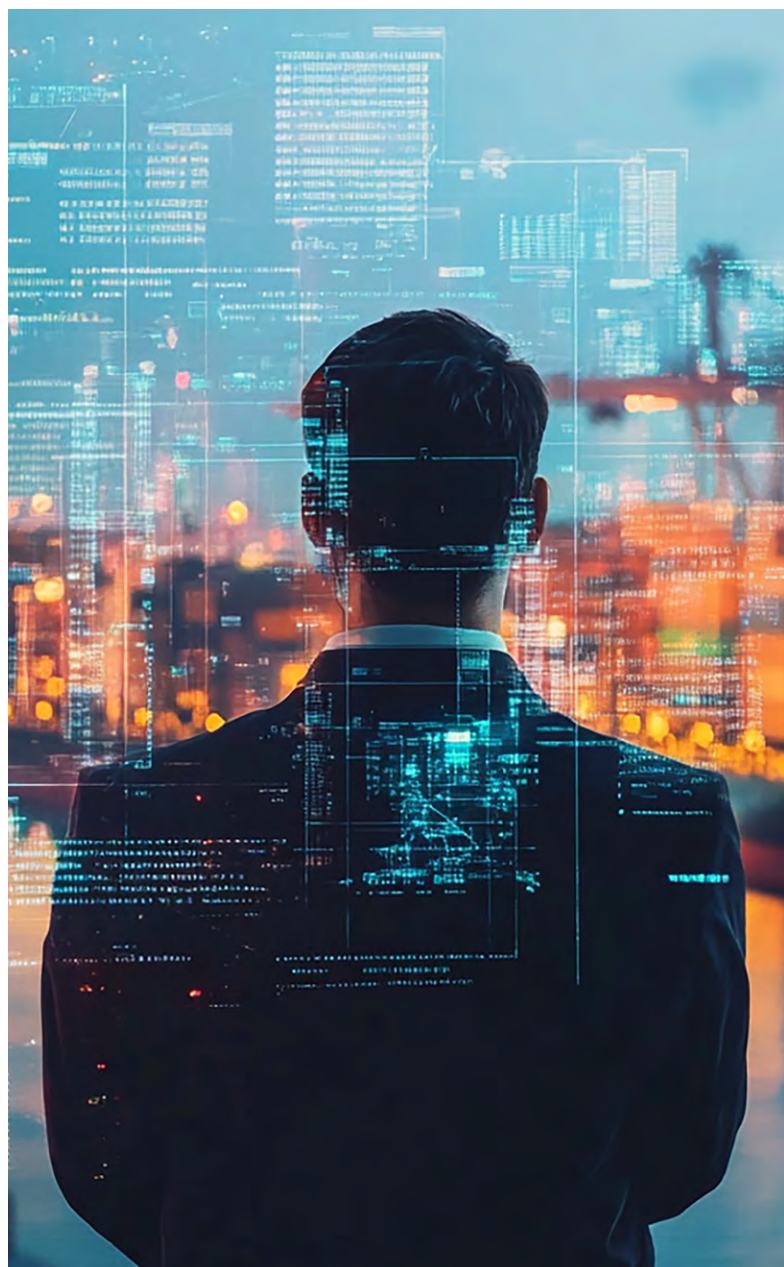
IATI Standard endorsed in international commitments

The IATI Standard has been endorsed in major international commitments, which have been essential for influencing development actors to take action on transparency.

The 2011 *Busan Partnership Agreement* included a time-bound commitment to aid information being published to a common standard, and resulted in the world's major donors publishing timely, comprehensive and forward-looking development financing to IATI, adhering to the deadline of 2015.[11] The 2016 Grand Bargain Agreement led to the IATI Standard being endorsed by the global humanitarian community. Nearly all signatories met their commitment to publishing their financing on humanitarian activities to IATI within two years.[12] As a result, IATI is now a useful source of information to humanitarian actors in a range of communities addressing crises. For example, IATI data is being used to inform food security preparedness plans for countries across the world (see page 15).

In 2017, the UN Secretary-General committed the United Nations Development System to publishing spending and results through "system-wide enrolment" into IATI.[13] This involved United Nations agencies publishing IATI data on their financing to IATI, a commitment made in the UN System's Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review. In 2024 a report to the Economic and Social Council stated that 64% Currently, 61 per cent of United Nations development system entities publish financial data in accordance with the International Aid Transparency Initiative.[14]

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11 https://iatistandard.org/en/news/busan-endorsers-significantly-improve-iati-data-quality/
12 https://iatistandard.org/en/news/monitoring-the-grand bargain-commitment-on-transparency/
13 See Secretary-General's briefing on the Repositioning of the UN Development System, in the Context of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
14 See General Assembly Economic and Social Council: Implementation of General Assembly resolution 75/233 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system: funding of the United Nations development system Report of the Secretary-General

Transparency in Action: Use cases of IATI data

Making aid accountable in the Netherlands

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the Netherlands

The Netherlands' commitment to IATI has transformed how Dutch aid is managed, ensuring transparency and accountability through real-time data on spending.

In an era where efficiency and accountability are essential, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' commitment to IATI is helping to safeguard taxpayers' money, reduce waste, and ensure aid is delivered where it's needed most.

The Netherlands has a long history of championing transparency in aid and development. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) was a founding member of IATI in 2008 and has chaired the initiative three times, including this year, when the MFA representative Thea Schepers became Chair of the Governing Board.

Over 80% of the Ministry's aid spending is delivered to intermediary partners, rather than directly to the recipient country or project. In this context, networked data is crucial to getting a clear view of what, where, and how resources are used. By providing this clear view of how its partners are also using their resources, IATI data has a direct impact on the way that Dutch aid is managed.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs publishes its own data using the IATI Standard, and requires more than 500 of its partners – including NGOs and international organisations – to do the same. This data is openly available through the IATI Datastore, and the Ministry's own dashboards[15].

This commitment to IATI publishing across the Ministry's network makes it easier to "follow the money," linking funding sources, partners, and on-the-ground projects. This means the MFA can better understand where resources go, and the outcomes they deliver. In turn, it helps the MFA to make decisions that can maximise impact and reduce inefficiencies in the future.

The value of this approach is illustrated by a network visualisation of the Ministry's funding.[16] In Figure 2, each dot represents an organisation, and each line represents the flow of funding from one organisation to another. Directly or indirectly, each organisation is funded by the MFA.
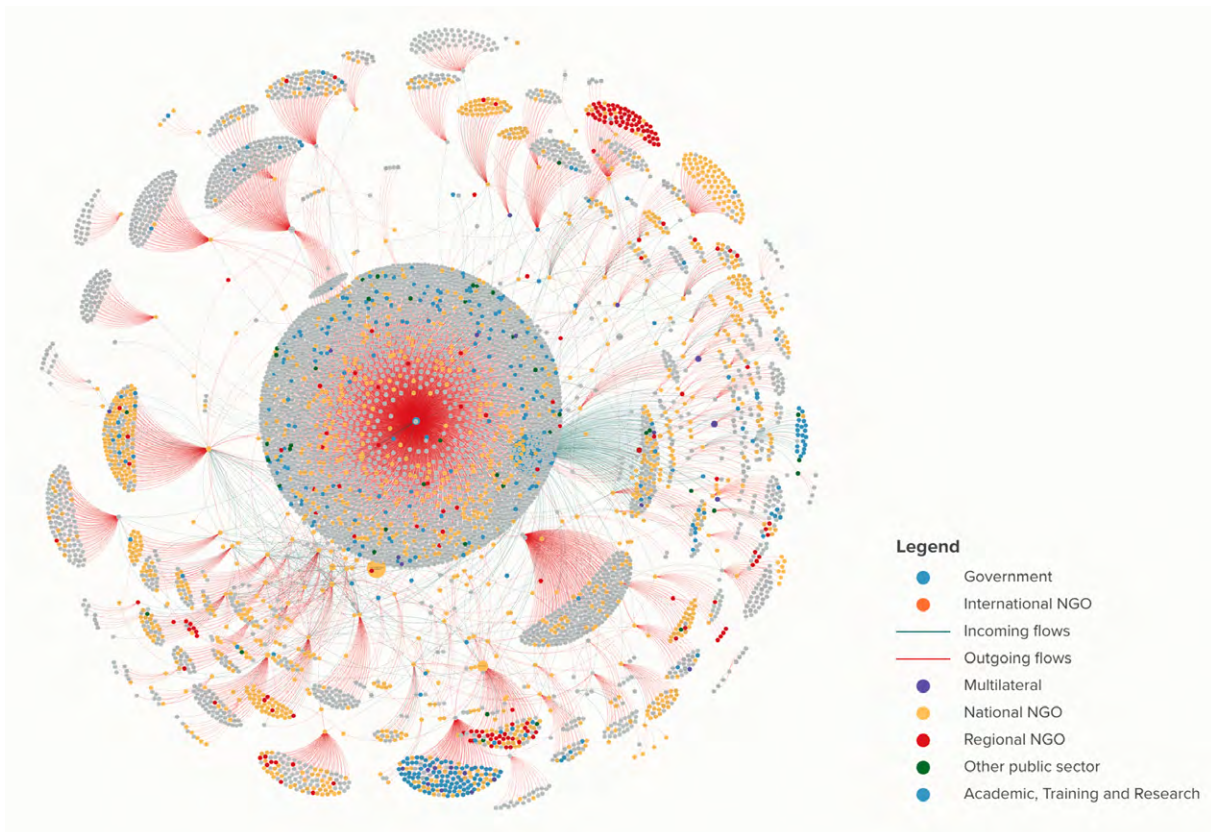
By taking this approach, the Ministry strengthens accountability across global aid and development networks, ensuring that taxpayers resources are directed to where they are most needed and most effective.

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15 https://helpdesk-opendata-minbuza.nl/dashboards
16 https://embed.kumu.io/a3905cf57f1c16add7cd7c4c10f13836#bz-iati-network

Figure 2: Network of Dutch Aid

Legend
- Government
- International NGO
- Incoming flows
- Outgoing flows
- Multilateral
- National NGO
- Regional NGO
- Other public sector
- Academic, Training and Research

Evidence-based planning and coordination of development finance and partners

Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning,
Federal Government of Nigeria

In 2024, Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning launched the Nigeria Development Cooperation Dashboard, improving visibility of billions of dollars of resources.

In 2023, over 158 organisations published IATI data on projects in Nigeria totalling over USD 5 billion.[17] As the government works towards the goal of lifting over 100 million people out of poverty by 2030, the timely and open data IATI provides is crucial to driving evidence based decisions that can maximise the impact of development cooperation.[18]

Since joining IATI in 2015, Nigeria has played an active role advocating for transparency of aid and

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17 https://deepnote.com/workspace/Open-Data-Services-Cooperative-46a54078-1c9e-4c25-b08c-69c3957de83a/project/Nigeria-11ce1058-211b-4979-b664-40fe4c5d078f/notebook/2caaebb5a5b84d2fa5782ab86ce2cb3f
18 https://nigeriareposit.nln.gov.ng/items/1e1972a6-84c2-4465-949d-7ce24834e0b2

development resources. From 2020-2022, Nigeria served as a partner country representative on the Governing Board of IATI, and was elected chair of the Governing Board between 2022-2024.

The government has increasingly used IATI data to improve governance and economic planning. The Central Bank of Nigeria, for example, uses this data to calculate balance of payments, ensuring more accurate financial management. The Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning relies on the data to develop a more informed Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, improving budgeting decisions. The National Assembly also uses this data to provide parliamentary oversight, providing accountability that funds are spent effectively.

Henry Asor Nkang, Development Assistance Database Manager at the Nigeria Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning said "The government of Nigeria sees immense value in the International Aid Transparency Initiative and is using IATI data to track millions of dollars of development finance flowing into our country. We use IATI data to inform Nigeria's Development

Cooperation Reports which monitors development financing to our country and informs government decisions about the future coordination of these resources".

In 2024, Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning scaled up their use of IATI data by launching the Nigeria Development Cooperation Dashboard, a tool designed to enhance transparency and accountability of development resources. The dashboard maps IATI data to Nigeria's National Development Plan pillars and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This helps the government to better track and measure outcomes, adjust their strategies in real time, and ensure that resources are directed to the most impactful initiatives.

The Nigeria Development Cooperation Dashboard also helps to foster trust and accountability among development partners, civil society and the public. By providing timely access to comprehensive data, the dashboard helps stakeholders to better understand where resources are going, how they are being used, and the tangible outcomes that they deliver.

Powering Rapid Responses to Food and Nutritional Insecurity

Global Alliance for Food Security – GAFS

In 2023 IATI partnered with the Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS), helping them use IATI data to track, monitor and respond to the global food crisis.

According to the 2024 Global Report on Food Crises, over 282 million people across the world face acute food insecurity.[19] As conflict, economic shocks and the climate emergency continue to drive the global food crisis, timely and accurate data is critical infrastructure that can help deliver efficient and coordinated responses.

Founded in 2022 by the G7 Presidency, GAFS brings together over 40 institutions to catalyse swift and coordinated responses to food insecurity. One of the core tools under the auspices of GAFS is the Global Food and Nutrition Security Dashboard.[20] The publicly available dashboard provides a worldwide overview of food and nutritional security (FNS) by consolidating data from a wide variety of global, national and sub-national sources. The IATI datastore adds information about over 7,000 activities and 43,000 transactions related to FNS. The dashboard is updated weekly, enabling agencies to access real-time data and act swiftly in response to emerging food crises.

Another initiative under the auspices of GAFS are the Preparedness Plans for Food and Nutrition Security Crises, national operational plans that define what constitutes a major food and nutrition

security crisis, and details step-by-step protocols, roles and timelines for mobilising additional funding. Twenty-five national governments have committed to putting Preparedness Plans in place,[21] with over 60 additional countries expected to develop plans by 2030.

The IATI datastore adds information about over 7,000 activities and 43,000 transactions related to FNS.

IATI is working with GAFS to provide data infrastructure when a Preparedness Plan is triggered. By annotating IATI data about funding, resources and programme activities related to a specific Preparedness Plan, institutions including the World Bank, USAID and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization can track resources more easily, streamline co-ordination and deliver better outcomes in response to a crisis. Like all IATI data, these tagged activities will be open and freely available to use.

For example, in Somalia, where recurrent droughts severely impact food security, real-time tracking of funding and resource allocation can be critical. When a Preparedness Plan is activated, decision-makers can quickly identify

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19 https://www.fsinplatform.org/report/global-report-food-crises-2024/#acute-food-insecurity
20 https://www.gafs.info
21 Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Ethiopia, Grenada, Haiti, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Tajikistan, Yemen.

which regions are receiving aid and where there are gaps. If the data shows that a particular district is lagging in resource allocation despite a spike in food insecurity, organisations can redirect funds and supplies immediately.

IATI data helps to track, monitor and respond to food and nutritional insecurity in three key ways:

1) **Improving financial oversight** by providing up to date, detailed information on funding flows.
2) **Fostering cross sector collaboration** by facilitating alignment between governments, multilaterals and NGOs.

3) **Enabling agile responses,** by ensuring the right resources reach vulnerable populations when and where they are most needed.

As the global food crisis intensifies, the need for real time, actionable data has never been more pressing. Our partnership with GAFS has scaled IATI's impact, providing key data infrastructure driving informed decisions that can save lives in over 25 countries. This unique collaboration also shows the groundbreaking possibilities for other thematic communities, demonstrating how data can be a powerful tool for addressing global challenges in the link between humanitarian work, development, and peace.

Measuring Sustainable Development Across Africa

African Development Bank

The African Development Bank's MapAfrica tool uses IATI data to improve transparency and decision-making across over 5,500 development projects in Africa.

In 2023, African Development Bank (AfDB) projects delivered transformative results on the ground: 2.4 million people had access to new electricity connections, 3.5 million people gained access to better transport services, and 9 million people had new or improved access to water and sanitation.[22]

IATI data is a key foundation for mapping and monitoring the transformative impact of AfDB's investments. Since joining IATI in 2011 and adopting the IATI Standard to publish spending and results data in 2013, the AfDB has demonstrated outstanding transparency. AfDB

now shares detailed data on over 5,500 projects across 17,000 locations, representing over USD 184 billion in investments through **MapAfrica**, the Bank's dynamic data platform.

MapAfrica offers a clear view of how the Bank's **High 5 Priorities[23]** are being realised across the continent through datasets and impact stories. The **Results Measurement Framework** empowers anyone with internet access to visualise, filter and export AfDB's investment data in Excel or CSV format, making it a valuable resource for understanding the full scope of AfDB's contributions to Africa's development.

In 2024, the Bank launched a refreshed version of the MapAfrica platform, offering a more robust technical infrastructure and a streamlined user experience that makes it easier to explore data

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22 https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/annual-development-effectiveness-review-2024
23 Light up and Power Africa, Feed Africa, Industrialize Africa, Integrate Africa, and Improve the Quality of Life for the People of Africa.

on AfDB investments and their outcomes. Since its soft launch on 30th May 2024, over **100,000 unique visitors** have used the platform, with a total of 134,000 visits to explore the Bank's activities.

Horia Sohir Debbiche, Principal Results and Transparency Officer at AfDB, said *"Progress doesn't happen overnight—it takes years of rigour, dedication, and a relentless commitment to transparency and accountability. At AfDB, we've embraced this journey by aligning with* *IATI standards and continuously improving our organisational efficiency. For the second consecutive year, our sovereign portfolio has been ranked the most transparent in the world by the Aid Transparency Index—a testament to our unwavering dedication to openness and impact."*

As AfDB continues to expand and enhance MapAfrica, these efforts towards openness and transparency are improving decision making and fostering collaboration for sustainable development across Africa.

Driving access to open data across Latin America and the Caribbean

CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean

CAF –Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean, has published data on the financing of over 150 development activities, across 14 countries totalling over USD 5 billion.

In 2024, CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean started publishing IATI data. By joining the IATI community, and publishing their data using the IATI Standard, CAF is showcasing how cooperation among regional partners can drive growth and develop location solutions that accelerate progress towards shared development goals.
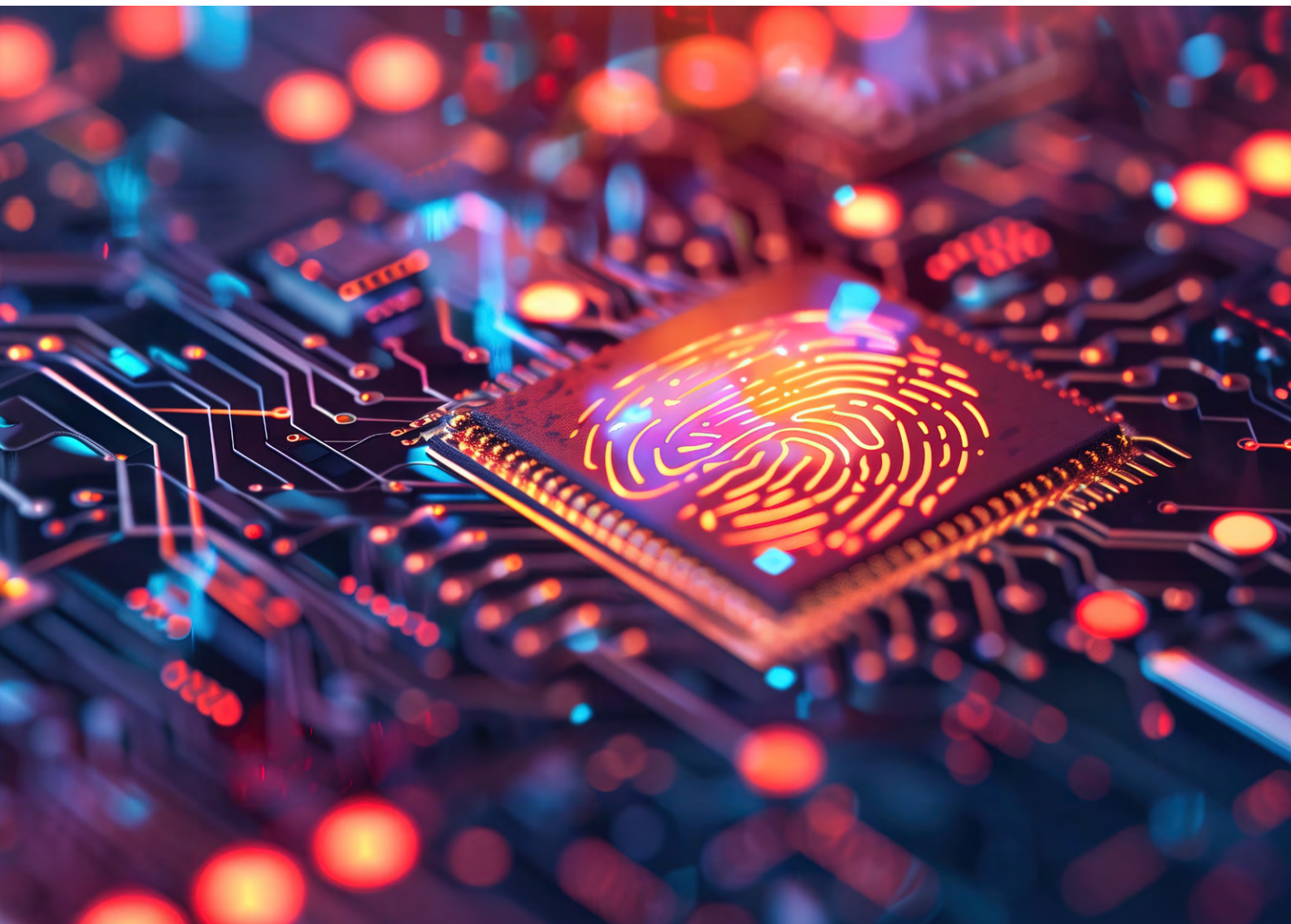
CAF's mission is to improve the quality of life for all in Latin America and the Caribbean by promoting sustainable development and regional integration. The Bank offers advice and financial support to public and private sectors of its shareholder countries, including 21 countries from across Latin America and the Caribbean.[24]

In 2023, the Bank designed its first Access to Information and Institutional Transparency Program. The goal of this program is to advance a culture of openness and strengthen public trust in the bank's actions. As part of the program, the bank wanted to start sharing information about their resources using the IATI Standard, making it easier to find, access and use that data to improve outcomes.

CAF's approach to publishing their data shows the power of collaboration. The Bank brought together a team to support their IATI publication, including members from the General Secretariat, the business units, the IT Unit, the Strategic Communications Unit and the Corporate Risk Unit to ensure a joined up approach to publishing their data. This approach

24 Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela.

enabled CAF to invest internally in their knowledge of the IATI Standard, helping them to establish a sustainable and scalable way to publish their data.

The IATI Secretariat supported CAF to make sure the data they were publishing met the IATI Standard. This support included help modelling their data for publication, using tools such as the IATI Validator to assess the data quality, and refining their method to make sure CAF could regularly and consistently publish high quality data.

Alejandra Claros Borda, Secretary-General of CAF, said "Being a member of IATI is evidence of CAF's dedication to advancing a culture of openness and strengthening public trust in all our actions. Thanks to efforts to promote transparency, in addition to being accountable to our Governing Bodies and citizens, we also promote an environment where the final beneficiaries can have a participation and voice in the projects we finance".

By sharing their data openly using the IATI Standard, CAF is demonstrating how accessible, high-quality data can strengthen regional cooperation to drive more effective development outcomes. This data will help CAF to build trust, improve coordination and ultimately deliver better outcomes for the communities CAF serves.

The Road Ahead:
How can IATI renew trust and elevate development effectiveness?

Though much has been achieved, the need for transparency has grown more urgent. Since IATI's inception, the global development financing landscape has grown in complexity and trust in the international system is eroding. Currently only 17 per cent of the SDG targets are currently on track and open data can play a major role in driving up the effectiveness of scare resources.

IATI, through its next five-year strategic plan, seeks to align its efforts with the evolving needs of the development community. As part of this process, IATI will consult on key priorities, ensuring that good-quality data continues to drive sustainable development and foster a more accountable, effective future. This section explores how IATI can harness these priorities to restore trust, promote transparency, and deliver impact in a rapidly changing global environment.

Embodying trust and accountability

IATI could play a crucial role in addressing the growing public distrust in multilateralism and political systems by promoting transparency and open data.

In recent years, numerous studies have shown that public trust in multilateralism has reached record lows,[25] and UNDP's 2024 Human Development Report[26] highlighted that two out of three people feel voiceless in their political systems. Transparency and open data are essential tools for empowering individuals by giving them access to the information they need to hold decision-makers and institutions accountable. Arguably, the need to invest in and strengthen transparency initiatives, such as IATI, has never been greater.

This need spans governments across the political spectrum, with wide-ranging policies and spending plans on aid. Regardless of the volume, all governments and organisations should strive to publish good-quality data on every dollar spent on their development and humanitarian activities, embodying a key principle of good governance.

Furthermore, new academic research by Heinzel, Reinsberg, and Swedlund (2024)[27] provides evidence that greater transparency by government aid agencies increases support for aid. They studied public perceptions of the UK's transparency approach to publishing IATI data through their DevTracker website[28] and reviewed policies and public perceptions in 22 European countries. The study showed that the effect of transparency practices was greatest on those who were most sceptical of foreign aid and who lacked trust in government in general. The research underscores the case for involvement in and publication of IATI data, demonstrating how transparency enhances the legitimacy of international development policy.

25 See summary: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/12/how-to-rebuild -trust-in-philanthropy-results-results-results/
26 https://www.undp.org/bhutan/publications/breaking-gridlock-reimagining -cooperation-polarized-world
27 https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gove.12863#gove12863-bib -0016
28 https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/

IATI data in use: delivering development effectiveness

Making data available is just the first step towards promoting transparency in international aid. For the data to be truly impactful, it must be used to improve the effectiveness and accountability of aid delivery. IATI recognises this, acknowledging that its data is "good enough" to be utilised by a wide range of development and humanitarian actors. The 2024 Aid Transparency Index, from *Publish What You Fund* (PWYF)[29], supports this view in its recent assessment of IATI data of major international aid organisations. In 2024, PWYF recorded its highest-ever transparency scores[30]. With good quality, open data available, governments, development sectors, and civil society now have an excellent information resource to help drive aid effectiveness.

Donors who publish IATI data are encouraged to play a central role in promoting its use by offering online resources, training opportunities, and awareness-raising events targeting civil society organisations (CSOs), journalists, think tanks, and academics. By leading these initiatives, donors can ensure that aid data is utilised for better coordination, learning, scrutiny, and more informed decision-making.

Governments in Developing Countries remain a priority for IATI members[31] who want to use IATI data to inform their national development plans, national budgets and development cooperation reports. Members' have expressed that the initiative should expand its reach beyond aid coordination units in Ministries of Finance, which focus on the collection of data. To ensure the data is used for decision making, other ministries should be reached as well as Prime Ministers' Offices, and National Statistical Offices.

Civil Society can also play an essential role in promoting the use of data to improve the effectiveness of development resources. Civil society organisations (CSOs) working on open data and transparency can act as 'data intermediaries' to interpret IATI data for end users. These CSOs (e.g. Development Initiatives, Publish What You Fund, Datalat) have the data literacy, local context, and sector/industry expertise to turn IATI XML data into the "facts and figures" that other, more 'direct' users such as journalists and government officials find useful. Civil society can also use the data themselves to contribute to development effectiveness through advocacy, policy work, improved project coordination, and access to more information on funding opportunities.

With good quality, open data available, governments, development sectors, and civil society now have an excellent information resource to help drive aid effectiveness.

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29 https://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/the-index/2024/
30 https://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/the-index/2024/
31 See IATI Summary and Actions: IATI Member Data Use Brainstorming Sessions August 2024 https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PNW9Lin-EpnCrKjZQBnkyAnF0II6xdCO/view?usp=drive_link

Reaffirming IATI's mission in an evolving ODA landscape

IATI's original mandate of improving the transparency of aid remains as critical today as when the initiative was first established. In 2023, Official Development Assistance (ODA) reached an all-time high of USD 223.7 billion, according to the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC)[32]. It marked the fifth consecutive year of record-high ODA levels, with international aid increasing by 1.8% in real terms from 2022. The case for continuing to maintain at least, if not rising efforts to capture timely, and comparable information on aid is compelling for IATI.

IATI is also useful for providing increased scrutiny and timely information needed to respond to recent shifts in the ODA landscape. For example, less than a quarter (24%) of ODA was disbursed to countries classified as least developed and/or low-income, a significant drop from 31% in 2021[33]. Rises in ODA spending on in-donor refugee costs, humanitarian aid to Ukraine and shift from grants to loans are all useful trends that can be captured by the IATI Standard.

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32 https://www.oecd.org/en/about/news/press-releases
33 Knox, Duncan; Wozniak, Paul.2024: Key facts about official development assistance. Development Initiatives Factsheets. Available at: https://devinit.org/resources/aid-2022-key-facts-official-development-assistance-oda-aid/#section-1-6

Commitment to transparency at Financing for Development (FFD4)

Since the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD3) in 2015, the global development landscape has experienced a significant shift, with the financing gap required to achieve the SDGs growing from USD 2.5 trillion to USD 4.2 trillion by 2024. With only 17% of SDG targets currently on track, the need for more effective and accountable development finance has never been more critical.

As the global community prepares for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4), set to be held in Spain from June 30 to July 3, 2025, IATI is advocating for greater transparency in development finance. Recognising the growing need for financing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), IATI is calling for a commitment in the FFD4 outcome document to ensure that all development finance is published according to the IATI Standard.

IATI is calling for greater transparency as part of the wider development effectiveness agenda. As highlighted in the 2024 Financing for Sustainable Development Report, "attention to development effectiveness has been lagging," and there needs to be a "renewed focus on effectiveness principles." At the 2024 UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), IATI and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) raised awareness of these issues at a joint side-event, *"Road to FfD4: Laying the Groundwork for a New Era of Transparency & Development Effectiveness".*

Tracking climate financing to developing countries

Climate finance has grown exponentially since the inception of IATI and now represents a significant flow of international resources. In May 2024, the OECD reported that developed countries provided and mobilised USD 115.9 billion[34] in climate finance for developing countries in 2022—an increase of 30% from 2021, marking the largest year-on-year rise to date. Importantly, 2022 was the first year that developed countries met the USD 100 billion annual target set at COP15 in 2009 to help developing countries address climate change. With COP29 agreeing on a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance, transparency should play a central role in tracking how the USD 300 billion annual pledge for developing countries is mobilised and implemented.

The IATI Standard currently enables organisations to publish data about their climate action financing, using OECD statistical policy markers. IATI data presently includes:

- 29,019 activities targeting climate mitigation from 190 organisations
- 37,169 activities targeting climate adaptation from 212 organisations

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34 https://www.oecd.org/en/about/news/press-releases/2024/05/developed-countries-materially-surpassed-their-usd-100-billion-climate-finance-commitment-in-2022-oecd.html

To maintain IATI's relevance as a source of external resource flow data for developing countries, expanding efforts to capture climate financing is both useful and necessary. This is particularly true for countries most vulnerable to climate change, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

IATI is well-positioned to capture commitments and the implementation of global climate action for several reasons:

- **Representation of Developing Countries and Civil Society:** IATI's membership of over 100 organisations, along with its wider community, includes not only climate finance providers but also voices from across the climate sector, including developing countries and civil society. For example, a coalition of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) is collaborating with IATI[35] to track funding commitments made to IPLCs as partners in addressing climate change and conserving biodiversity.

- **Traceability:** IATI enables resources to be traced across delivery chains, through diverse organisations (including pooled funds). This is crucial for capturing the increasingly complex and fragmented climate finance landscape, which the *Financing For Sustainable Development Report 2024*[36] highlights, noting a proliferation of funds—81 active climate funds in 2022, 62 of which are multilateral.

- **Activity level data:** recent reports[37] highlighted an absence of a common definition of what constitutes a climate project. One of IATI's core strengths is that data is published on specific activities including projects. This can offer greater transparency and monitoring on what projects climate financing is being allocated and spent on.

- **Development, humanitarian and climate data in one place:** With IATI already capturing development and humanitarian resource flows and activities, capturing more climate finance data would enable developing countries and other users to access and compare information through a single data standard. Consolidating data in one place could also enhance transparency, addressing some recent concerns about foreign aid being reclassified and reported as climate finance (see Centre for Global Development).

- **Supporting the transparency of financing from MDBs and DFIs:** The IATI Standard could help meet calls for increased transparency in climate finance provided by multilateral development banks (MDBs) and development finance institutions (DFIs). Publish What You Fund (PWYF) has raised concerns that a significant portion of climate finance is offered as loans rather than grants,[38] complicating the accurate reporting of climate finance when the full face value of these loans is counted. As part of its Development Finance Transparency Index[39] PWYF has urged MDBs and DFIs to publish their data to IATI.

- **Flexible open data Standard:** IATI's flexible data Standard can be updated to include additional information on climate action. This can include tagging activities related to the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance made at COP29 in November 2024. To ensure compatibility with other climate datasets, IATI can align its code lists and data fields with other reporting standards, including those from the UNFCCC.

IATI's ability to trace, standardise, and provide open data can offer an additional tool in improving the transparency and accountability in global climate action going forward. As climate finance continues to grow, maintaining alignment with international standards and enhancing the visibility of diverse funding sources will be essential to meet future climate commitments.

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35 https://iatistandard.org/en/news/iati-at-un-permanent-forum-on-indigenous-issues-2024/
36 https://desapublications.un.org/publications/financing-sustainable-development-report-2024 p.9
37 https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/climate-change-finance/
38 https://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/2024/06/how-transparent-is-dfi-climate-finance/#:~:text=DFI%20climate%20finance%20lacks%20transparency
39 https://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/dfi-index/

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