Why and how to use IATI data for public-interest accountability investigations

Claire Provost, investigative journalist
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This session:

*Why and how to use IATI data for public-interest accountability investigations*

- Introduction
- Case study: Ghana CNN investigation
- Key lessons for accountability investigations
- Questions & discussion
Introduction:

Accountability investigations

- National laws; international commitments; pledges/promises
- Intended beneficiaries; taxpayers; specific communities
- Fact-checking; following the money; multiple sources
- Wrongdoing; negligence; process failures + human consequences

About me

- Investigative journalist
- Started using aid data in stories in 2011! (at The Guardian)
- Watched IATI develop; become more complete/accessible/useful :)
- Recent story using IATI data for CNN (case study for today)

About you
Exclusive: Millions in Western aid flowed to churches in Ghana despite years of campaigning against LGBTQI+ rights

Words by Claire Provost and Nana Darkoa Sekyiamah, for CNN
Video by Barbara Arvanitidis, Nima Elbagir and Alex Platt, CNN
Case study

Extreme’ anti-LGBT bill in parliament in Ghana, supported by powerful religious groups

Donor pledges to support LGBT rights globally

ODA flows connecting them

Questions about this funding undermining other policies; due diligence and intermediaries
Case study

Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects run by or benefiting...</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Total aid by church/group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian Council of Ghana (CCG)</td>
<td>$245,000*</td>
<td>$130,881</td>
<td>$13,429</td>
<td></td>
<td>$389,310</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evangelical Presbyterian Church (CCG member)</td>
<td>$5,908</td>
<td>$112,234</td>
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<td>$118,142</td>
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<td>Methodist Church (CCG member)</td>
<td>$290,405</td>
<td>$108,880</td>
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<td>$399,285</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Church (CCG member)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$159,130</td>
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<td>$159,130</td>
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<td>Catholic Church</td>
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<td>$91,102</td>
<td>$859,266</td>
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<td>$4,083,530</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total aid by donor country</td>
<td>$3,674,475</td>
<td>$471,346</td>
<td>$130,881</td>
<td>$872,695</td>
<td>$5,149,397</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sources

- OECD CRS
- IATI (d-portal.org and countrydata.iatistandard.org)
- Donor disclosures
Case study

Accessing IATI data

Country Development Finance Data
Access data on development and humanitarian activities, presented simply by country, reporting organisation and sector. Visualise or download the data for easy analysis.

Explore Data Dashboards

by Recipient Country or Region  by Reporting Organisation  by Sector Category

Access data files
Ghana

Download file →

Language
- English
- French
- Spanish
- Portuguese

Last updated 28/03/2023

Custom data download
Choose the columns to be included in your spreadsheet and the filters to narrow your search. Download the custom set of data in Excel.
Case study

Christian Council of Ghana (CCG)
IATI identifier GB-CHC-1105851-6F7E3E
Case study

UK ODA receipts: 2018-2020

Other sources; timeline

CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA (CCG)

STATEMENT ON RECENT LGBTQI ACTIVITIES IN GHANA

TO ALL PRESS HOUSES

February 23, 2020

The Christian Council of Ghana has followed with concern and keen interest, the recent developments in the country regarding the supposed rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) individuals and the office space that the perpetrators of this act have established.

As a Christian majority nation, the CCG has a mandate to espouse the position of the Christian faith on homosexuality to all citizens. We therefore deem it appropriate to explain briefly, the Bible position on marriage, homosexuality and the family values that we the people of Ghana uphold.

The Bible and marriage

The Bible has established clearly, what marriage is supposed to be, i.e. A union between a man and a woman.
Case study

UK ODA receipts: 2018-2020

Other sources; timeline

Press release

UK and Argentina take on co-chair of Equal Rights Coalition

UK and Argentina to co-chair of the Equal Rights Coalition to protect the human rights of LGBT people around the world.

From: Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Published 14 June 2019
Case study

Human sources

Donor & intermediary dialogue

UK: Funding has ended

US: ‘Regulations in place at the time… would not have prohibited funding’

Italy: ‘Not responsible for the use of these funds’

Germany: Additional funding disclosed; reliance on dialogue with intermediaries
Lessons learned

- added value of IATI data and portals such as d-portal.org and countrydata.iatistandard.org (with caveats)

- value of analysing text fields (not just numbers)

- need to combine datasets with other sources, to identify public interest and tell more complete stories

- ongoing information gaps (as evidenced by added info from donor disclosures, not found in the data)

- high level of public & media interest
Lessons learned

Understanding *what* can be found + *where*
Lessons learned

- approaching data with public interest hypotheses;

- using unique identifiers to further follow money;

- establishing innovative collaborations including between journalists and activists to do this work
Questions?
+ Discussion

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