



March 2017

# **implementing and monitoring the Grand Bargain commitment on transparency**

Consultation paper

# Introduction

At the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016, [Grand Bargain](#) signatory organisations agreed to work towards greater transparency by identifying and implementing a shared open data standard and common digital platform to enhance transparency and decision-making.<sup>1</sup>

As a first step they committed to publishing timely, transparent, harmonised and open high-quality data on humanitarian funding and activities within two years of the Summit and identified the [International Aid Transparency Initiative](#) (IATI)<sup>2</sup> as the basis for a common standard. More information is available here: [An introduction to IATI for humanitarian actors](#).<sup>3</sup>

Development Initiatives is working with the Grand Bargain transparency workstream to improve humanitarian transparency and take forward the Grand Bargain commitment on transparency. We are consulting on proposals to:

1. Improve the IATI Standard to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the humanitarian community.
2. Develop a framework and methodology to support Grand Bargain signatories and the wider humanitarian community in monitoring progress against the transparency commitment.

We are inviting responses to a number of questions outlined below and will be holding a series of multi-stakeholder events to consult on this paper in the coming weeks. Organisations are invited to submit their views by 30 April 2017. Comments can either be provided via [our feedback form](#)<sup>4</sup> or by emailing comments to Liz Steele at [liz.steele@devinit.org](mailto:liz.steele@devinit.org).

The first part of this paper briefly summarises what IATI is and how the IATI Standard has been adapted to better meet the needs of humanitarian stakeholders. It presents a number of proposals for further enhancements to the Standard and asks some questions for your consideration.

The second part of this paper presents a framework and methodology for measuring IATI data quality and use to support Grand Bargain signatories and the wider humanitarian community in monitoring progress against the transparency commitment. It asks some questions for your consideration.

# Improving the IATI Standard

IATI is a multi-stakeholder initiative that works to ensure that transparent, high-quality information is available and used to achieve sustainable development and an effective response to humanitarian crises. The IATI community brings together governments, multilateral donors, partner countries, civil society organisations (CSOs) and private sector organisations to publish, improve and support the use of quality IATI data.

The IATI Standard is an internationally agreed framework for publishing open data<sup>5</sup> on development cooperation and humanitarian assistance in a comparable and machine-readable format. It continually evolves to better meet the publishing and monitoring needs of its stakeholders and adapt to the changing environment. This is achieved through the IATI Standard upgrade process. The most recent upgrade to the IATI Standard (version 2.02), approved in December 2015, was designed specifically to improve IATI's usability by the humanitarian community and to improve interoperability with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s Financial Tracking Service (FTS). New data fields and features added include:

- A humanitarian marker, which identifies activities or transactions as 'humanitarian'
- The ability to tag an activity in relation to a specific emergency or crisis
- The ability to link an activity to a specific UN appeal or plan
- The ability to link an activity to a one or more UN cluster(s).

The next IATI Standard upgrade process (currently planned for Spring 2017) offers an opportunity for Grand Bargain signatory organisations to propose new enhancements that will further meet the needs of the humanitarian community. The following enhancements have already been proposed:

- The ability to tag activities relating to rapid-onset emergencies; this allows published data to be tailored for quality reporting and monitoring of a specific type of crisis response
- The ability to track pledges via two new transaction types ('pledge' and 'incoming pledge'); this allows published data to be linked to subsequent financial transactions
- The ability to publish information on different funding modalities including cash transfers, vouchers and in-kind programming so that activities using such facilities can be easily identified by data users.

The online [IATI Community Discuss Forum](#)<sup>6</sup> and Technical Advisory Group Forum provide a full list of the proposed changes to the IATI Standard. Information about the IATI Standard upgrade process is available on the upgrades section of the [IATI Standard website](#).<sup>7</sup>

## Questions for consultation on improving the IATI Standard

1. Do you agree with the proposed changes outlined above?
2. Would you recommend further changes? If yes, please explain what these are and why you recommend them.

# Framework and methodology for measuring IATI data quality and use

## The monitoring framework

To support Grand Bargain signatory organisations monitor progress towards meeting the transparency commitment and improving the quality of the data they publish, we propose that two key indicators are measured:

1. Quality of the humanitarian and other aid data published to IATI
2. Use of the humanitarian aid data published to IATI

## Quality of the humanitarian and other aid data published to IATI

IATI currently provides publishing statistics for all IATI publishers. These are publicly available via the [IATI Dashboard](#) and are routinely used within organisations publishing to IATI and other external monitoring initiatives. Four performance measures are used to assess data quality:

- **Timeliness** – both the frequency (how often the published data is updated) and the time lag (how up to date the published data is) of published information.
- **Comprehensiveness** – the use of:
  - Core IATI fields (e.g. title, description, start date)
  - Financial fields (transaction and traceability information)
  - Value-added fields (e.g. subnational location data, information on results).
- **Forward Looking** – activity budget information for the next three years (as relevant).
- **Coverage** – the proportion of an organisation's total operational spending that is published to IATI.

For further information on these data quality performance measures (also known as “dimensions”) see [IATI Dashboard Publishing Statistics](#).<sup>8</sup>

IATI is also proposing the introduction of a new ‘humanitarian’ dimension for all IATI publishers of humanitarian-related information. This proposal recommends the assessment of:

1. The number of current activities that are marked as being humanitarian related
2. If organisations are using the humanitarian-related elements introduced in v2.02 of the IATI Standard
3. The ability to publish information quickly during the initial response to a rapid-onset emergency.<sup>9</sup>

The proposed specification for the humanitarian methodology is available on the [IATI Community Discuss Forum](#).<sup>10</sup>

### Use of the humanitarian aid data published to IATI

To fulfil IATI's potential to improve decision-making and learning, it is critical that Grand Bargain signatory organisations are aware of and use IATI-published data in addition to other available humanitarian-related data. We therefore propose that the monitoring methodology includes a performance measure for data use, which will assess:

- Whether IATI-published data can be automatically or otherwise imported into the UN OCHA FTS
- Whether a signatory organisation's own IATI published data is regularly used as part of internal reporting or other operational working practice(s)
- Whether signatories regularly use the IATI-published data of other organisations (including but not limited to partner organisations).

### Performance measurement and publication of results

All of the above performance measures are quantified and assessed by quintile ratings in accordance with the table below.

Quintile	Assessment
80% to 100%	Very good
60% to 79%	Good
40% to 59%	Fair
20% to 39%	Poor
0 to 19%	Very poor

To determine if a signatory organisation has met the transparency commitment, we propose that organisations achieve an assessment of 'Good' (60 to 79%) or above for each of the five performance measures on IATI data quality and also for the indicator on data use. We also propose that all six performance measure scores are subsequently aggregated into a single total score for each organisation.

All Grand Bargain signatory organisations that publish their humanitarian aid data to IATI will be assessed individually. The results for multiple national government agencies or federated organisations may be aggregated into a single score.

The results from the monitoring statistics will be published on a separate Grand Bargain transparency commitment dashboard (web address URL to be determined), which will be available from June 2017 onwards. As with the IATI Dashboard Publisher Statistics, which are updated on a daily basis, figures on the Grand Bargain dashboard will be updated daily.

## Questions for consideration on the framework and methodology for measuring IATI data quality and use

1. Do you agree with our proposal on how to determine if the Grand Bargain transparency commitment has been met? If not, please provide details.
2. Which of the proposed performance measures (timeliness, coverage, humanitarian, data use etc) are of the most value or relevance to humanitarian actors?
3. Should other performance measures be considered for monitoring purposes? If yes, please give details.
4. Should all performance measures be weighted the same, or are some more important than others?

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> <https://consultations.worldhumanitariansummit.org/bitcache/075d4c18b82e0853e3d393e90af18acf734baf29?vid=580250&disposition=inline&op=view>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aidtransparency.net/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://devinit.org/post/an-introduction-to-iati-for-humanitarian-actors/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfIijVpgkzd07oaGesmIYPahpaG-kgoMZNhY0DseQHddWZiJg/viewform>

<sup>5</sup> Open data is data that is freely available for everyone to use and republish as they wish, without restrictions from copyright, patents or other mechanisms of control.

<sup>6</sup> <http://discuss.iatistandard.org/t/welcome-to-iati-discuss/6>

<sup>7</sup> <http://iatistandard.org/202/upgrades/>

<sup>8</sup> [http://dashboard.iatistandard.org/publishing\\_stats.html](http://dashboard.iatistandard.org/publishing_stats.html)

<sup>9</sup> To note: It is unlikely that any automated check for this criterion would be available at the proposed start of the monitoring process.

<sup>10</sup> <http://discuss.iatistandard.org/t/welcome-to-iati-discuss/6>

---

Development Initiatives (DI) is an independent international development organisation working on the use of data to drive poverty eradication and sustainable development. Our vision is a world without poverty that invests in human security and where everyone shares the benefits of opportunity and growth.

We work to ensure that decisions about the allocation of finance and resources result in an end to poverty, increase the resilience of the world's most vulnerable people, and ensure no one is left behind.

Copyright © 2017 Development Initiatives  
We encourage dissemination of our work provided a reference is included.

Contact  
Liz Steele  
Consultant  
[liz.steele@devinit.org](mailto:liz.steele@devinit.org)

To find out more about our work visit:  
[www.devinit.org](http://www.devinit.org)  
Twitter: @devinitorg  
Email: [info@devinit.org](mailto:info@devinit.org)

Development Initiatives is a group headed by Development Initiatives Poverty Research Limited, a not-for-profit company established in England no. 06368740. Registered office: North Quay House, Quay Side, Temple Back, Bristol, BS1 6FL, UK.

#### **UK OFFICE**

Development Initiatives  
North Quay House  
Quay Side, Temple Back  
Bristol, BS1 6FL, UK  
+44 (0) 1179 272 505

#### **KENYA OFFICE**

Development Initiatives  
Shelter Afrique Building  
4th Floor, Mamlaka Road  
Nairobi, Kenya  
PO Box 102802-00101  
+254 (0) 20 272 5346

#### **DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH AND TRAINING (DRT)**

Ggaba Road, Mutesasira  
Zone, Kansanga  
PO Box 22459  
Kampala, Uganda  
+256 (0) 312 – 263629/30  
+256 (0) 414 – 269495  
[www.drt-ug.org](http://www.drt-ug.org)

#### **US OFFICE**

Development Initiatives  
1110 Vermont Ave NW,  
Suite 500, Washington DC  
20005, US