

**Publish What You Fund**  
**2016 Aid Transparency Index**

**Technical Paper**

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

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AIMS	Aid Information Management System
CPA	Country Programmable Aid
CRS	Creditor Reporting System (of the OECD DAC)
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSV	Comma separated values
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DFI	Development Finance Institution
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
ECHO	Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (European Commission)
FOI(A)	Freedom of Information (Act)
HTML	HyperText Markup Language
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IFI	International Financial Institution
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance (definition of OECD DAC)
ODF	Official Development Finance (definition of OECD DAC)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDF	Portable Document Format
RTI	Right to Information
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
U.S.	United States (of America)
USD	United States Dollar
XML	Extensible Markup Language

# Introduction

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This technical paper sets out the approach used to compile the 2016 Aid Transparency Index, including the methodology, donor selection criteria, indicator scoring and weighting, the data collection process, interpreting and comparing results and limitations.

## Rationale

In light of the December 2015 deadline for implementing the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) Standard, the release of the next Aid Transparency Index has been moved to early 2016. This is to allow for a stock take of progress on implementing the Busan commitment on aid transparency up to the deadline.

The purpose to this Aid Transparency Index is to:

- Assess how far donors have gone with meeting the December 2015 deadline.
- Facilitate peer learning.
- Raise awareness of transparency and open data standards in this critical year for development and to ensure that all development finance is transparent, building on existing open data standards like the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

## Maintaining the methodology from the 2014 Index

The methodology used in 2014 Index has been maintained for the 2016 Index, meaning that it continues to use 39 indicators to monitor both the availability of aid information and the format it is published in.

The Index is compiled using a combination of automatically and manually collected data:

- Via a survey
- A review of donors' implementation schedules
- An automated assessment of data published to the IATI Registry

A data collection platform, the [Aid Transparency Tracker](#), is used to collect and share the data included in the Aid Transparency Index. Section 4 provides more detail on the Tracker and the data collection process. As in previous years, **timeliness is a core criterion – the Index only scores data published in the previous 12 months and that relates to that period or after**. The incentives in the Index are clearly structured: more points are awarded for publishing in more useful formats. As a result, there are clear ways for organisations included in the Index to improve their aid transparency and boost their scores. Put simply, organisations that are not publishing current information in open, comparable and machine-readable formats do not perform as highly as those that do.

## Section 1. Donor selection

### Criteria for selection

Organisations are selected using three criteria, of which they have to meet a minimum of two:

- 1) They are a large donor (annual spend is more than USD 1bn);
- 2) They have a significant role and influence as a major aid agency and engagement with the Busan agenda;
- 3) They are an institution to which government or organisation-wide transparency commitments apply, for example members of the G7 or all U.S. agencies.

The list of organisations included in the 2016 Index has been revised. We have reviewed our criteria for donor selection and decided to concentrate on fewer, bigger donors, as well as those that are instrumental to advancing the course of aid transparency. For this reason, the 2016 Index will include 46 donors, accounting for 98% of ODF between them.

We are including a new donor this year: the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The growing influential role the UAE has been playing in international development in recent years highlights the wider potential for the post-2015 Agenda and the importance of transparency in an ever evolving environment.

The 2016 Index assesses 46 organisations, including 29 bilateral agencies, 16 multilateral organisations and one philanthropic organisation. Recognising that not all the indicators used in the Aid Transparency Index are a direct fit with every organisation's particular modus operandi, the scoring guidelines for certain indicators have been amended to accept equivalent documents or information based on the type of organisation under assessment. More details on the scoring guidelines for each indicator can be found in annex 1.

**Table 1: The 46 organisations included in the 2016 Aid Transparency Index, with 2013 spend figures and largest recipient**

Donor name	Spend in 2013 (USD mn) <sup>1</sup>	Largest recipient <sup>2</sup>
AfDB	4725	Democratic Republic of the Congo
AsDB	6163	China
Australia, DFAT	3500	Indonesia
Belgium, Directorate General for Cooperation and Development	918	Democratic Republic of the Congo

<sup>1</sup> The data source for calculating annual spend is the OECD DAC's Creditor Reporting System (CRS). The figures used are from the June 2015 CRS release of data for the year 2013. The asterisk (\*) denotes that figures are inclusive of both ODA and OOF spending. For those organisations that do not report to the DAC, the total spend is calculated based on the most recent annual financial report or other official data sources. Where official data sources are not available, the figures are obtained from news articles or other grey literature.

<sup>2</sup> Calculated based on DAC CRS 2013 ODA spend, information provided in annual reports or the donor's own data. Where official data sources are not available, the largest recipient is selected based on news articles and other grey literature. Where figures for 2013 are not available, the most recent figures available are used. For the EC's DG DEVCO and DG Enlargement, the largest recipient of funds managed centrally has been selected.

Donor name	Spend in 2013 (USD mn) <sup>1</sup>	Largest recipient <sup>2</sup>
Canada, DFATD	2860	Tanzania
China, MOFCOM	5000	Ghana
Denmark, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2272	Mozambique
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	3827	Turkey
European Investment Bank	6531	Turkey
European Commission, DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid	10160	Turkey
European Commission, DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection	1310	Syria
European Commission, DG Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations	3004	Serbia
Finland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	771	Tanzania
French Development Agency	5332	Mozambique
France, MAEDI	949	Morocco
France, MINEFI	1307	Myanmar
Germany, Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)-GIZ	5299	Cote d'Ivoire
Germany, Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)-KfW	2312	India
Gates Foundation	3635	India
GAVI	1544	Pakistan
Global Fund	4009	India
IADB	9819	Mexico
IMF	1212	Bangladesh
Ireland, Irish Aid	534	Mozambique
Italy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	276	Afghanistan
Japan, JICA	11509	Myanmar
Japan, MOFA	7643	Myanmar
Korea, KOICA	477	Vietnam
Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	3825	Afghanistan
Norway, MFA	4137	Brazil
Spain, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	639	Peru
Sweden, Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Swedish Development Agency	3772	Mozambique
Switzerland, SDC	1440	Nepal
United Arab Emirates, Department of finance	2644	Jordan
United Kingdom, Department for International Development	9090	Ethiopia
United States Agency for International Development	15899	Afghanistan
United States, Department of Defense	374	Afghanistan

Donor name	Spend in 2013 (USD mn) <sup>1</sup>	Largest recipient <sup>2</sup>
United States, Department of State	4352	Afghanistan
United States, Department of the Treasury	162	Cambodia
United States, Millennium Challenge Corporation	1681	Tanzania
United States, President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief	6639	Kenya
UN OCHA	865	Syria
UNDP	468	Bangladesh
UNICEF	1252	Nigeria
World Bank, IDA	12307	Vietnam
World Bank, IFC	22404	India

## Section 2. Indicators, grouping and scoring

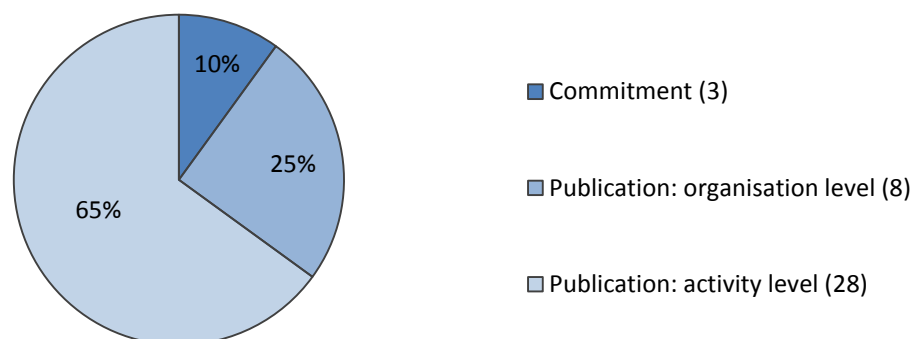
### General scoring approach

The Index uses 39 indicators to monitor aid transparency. The indicators have been selected using the information types agreed in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) Standard. The indicators represent the most commonly available information items where commitments to disclosure already exist. In addition, organisations' overall commitment to aid transparency is measured by the existence of Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation or disclosure policies, plans for IATI publication and the organisation's efforts to promote access, use and re-use of its information.

### Groups and sub-groups

The 39 indicators are grouped into weighted categories that measure **commitment to aid transparency** and those that measure **publication of aid information** at both organisation and activity level. Within the publication category, the organisation-level indicators account for 25% of the overall weight, while the activity-level indicators account for 65% (see chart 1 below). The two publication groups are further divided in subgroups, based largely upon the subgroups used in the Busan Common Standard implementation schedules template.<sup>3</sup> The subgroups are equally weighted, as are the indicators within each sub-group.

Chart 1. Grouping of the 39 indicators



#### Box 1. What is machine-readable data and why is it more valuable?

Information published in machine-readable formats is presented in a structured way (not free text) that can be read automatically by a computer. Formats such as XML or spreadsheets (Excel, CSV) are machine-readable formats. Traditional word processed documents, HTML and PDF files are easily read by humans but are difficult for machines to interpret.

There is a substantial difference between structured, machine-readable data where you can access and compare any number of worldwide projects across a number of fields as opposed to searching dozens of websites or looking for information published in different PDF files. This difference has been quantified in the Index by allowing organisations to score more highly on 22 indicators depending on the format of publication. For example, data published in PDFs scores lower than data published in CSV, Excel or XML files.

In the case of documents, the scoring approach recognises the importance of accessibility – an annual report published in PDF is much the same as an annual report published on a webpage. However, the inclusion of links to that PDF in an organisation's IATI data is more valuable, especially at the activity level, as it makes them easier to locate and identify.

<sup>3</sup> The Common Standard template is available from the OECD DAC website: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/aid-architecture/acomonstandard.htm>



A graduated scoring methodology is used for some of the publication indicators. For 22 indicators, the scoring takes into account the format that the data is provided in, depending on the accessibility and comparability of the information and how consistently it is published (see chart 2 below). For example, information published in PDFs scores lower than information published in machine-readable formats. Information published to the IATI Standard, the most comparable format, can score up to 100 for each indicator, depending on the coverage of information and frequency of publication.

**Chart 2. Scoring format of data for 22 indicators**

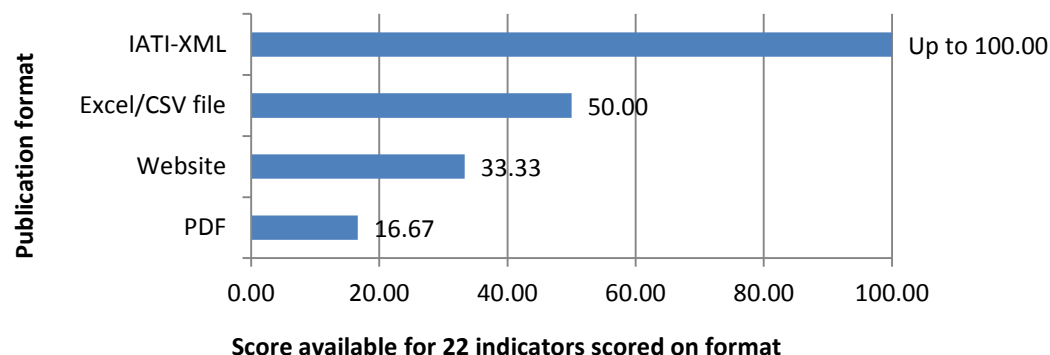


Table 2 below provides a summary of the 39 indicators, including the sub-groups and the scoring approach for each indicator.

**Table 2: Indicators, grouping and scoring approach**

Category	Sub-group	Indicator	Scoring Approach
Commitment to aid transparency	Commitment	1. Quality of FOI legislation	Graduated based on the score given in Right To Information (RTI) Rating. The complete approach to assessing and scoring FOIA and disclosure policies is outlined in box 2 on p.18.
		2. Implementation schedules	Graduated based on the total score received out of 100 based on analysis of Busan common standard/IATI implementation schedules.
		3. Accessibility (database/data portal)	Graduated based on three criteria: allows free bulk export of data; provides disaggregated, detailed data on activities; and data is released under an open licence.
Publication – Organisation level	Planning	4. Strategy	Graduated based on accessibility
		5. Annual report	Graduated based on accessibility
		6. Allocation policy	Graduated based on accessibility
		7. Procurement policy	Graduated based on accessibility
		8. Strategy (country/sector)	Graduated based on accessibility (and the proportion of countries for which strategies are provided for IATI publishers)

	Financial	9. Total organisation budget	Graduated based on format and number of years for which data is provided
		10. Disaggregated budget	Graduated based on format and number of years for which data is provided
		11. Audit	Graduated based on accessibility
Publication – Activity level	Basic activity information	12. Implementer	Graduated based on format
		13. Unique ID	Graduated based on format
		14. Title	Graduated based on format
		15. Description	Graduated based on format
		16. Planned dates	Graduated based on format
		17. Actual dates	Graduated based on format
		18. Current status	Graduated based on format
		19. Contact details	Graduated based on format
	Classifications	20. Collaboration type	Graduated based on format
		21. Flow type	Graduated based on format
		22. Aid type	Graduated based on format
		23. Finance type	Graduated based on format
		24. Sectors	Graduated based on format
		25. Sub-national location	Graduated based on format
		26. Tied aid status	Graduated based on format
	Related documents	27. Memorandum of Understanding	Graduated based on accessibility
		28. Evaluations	Graduated based on accessibility
		29. Objectives	Graduated based on accessibility
		30. Budget docs	Graduated based on accessibility
		31. Contracts	Graduated based on accessibility
		32. Tenders	Graduated based on accessibility
	Financial	33. Budget	Graduated based on format
		34. Commitments	Graduated based on format
		35. Disbursements & expenditures	Graduated based on format
		36. Budget ID	Graduated based on format
	Performance	37. Results	Graduated based on format
		38. Impact appraisals	Graduated based on accessibility
		39. Conditions	Graduated based on accessibility

Note: The source of information for indicators 4–39 is the IATI Registry, organisations’ own websites or other sources to which the organisation publishes information on its current aid activities.

### Selection of multiple agencies from the same donor country or group

As in previous years, the Aid Transparency Index assesses more than one agency for some large donors (EC, France, Germany, Japan, UN, U.S. and the World Bank) with multiple ministries or organisations responsible for significant proportions of Official Development Assistance (ODA). We have opted to maintain the

disaggregation of agencies for several reasons. First, no two agencies in the Aid Transparency Index score the same. There is often wide variation in the amount of information made available by different agencies in a single country or multilateral organisation. Second, agencies often retain a large amount of autonomy in deciding how much information they make available and have different publication approaches, and should therefore be held accountable for them. Third, it would be unfair for high performing agencies within a country or organisation to be pulled down by lower performing agencies, and similarly lower performing agencies should not have their poor performance masked in an average score.

Finally, it is unclear how we would aggregate agencies into a single country or organisation score in a way that reflects wide variations in performance. For example, if all U.S. agencies' levels of transparency were averaged to provide a single score in 2014, it would have been 40.2%, placing the U.S. in the fair category despite the high score of 86.9% of the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Ranked separately, it is possible to see the variation in the different agencies' performance and which common indicators they collectively perform well or poorly on. Moreover, it would be necessary to take into account the proportion of a country's aid delivered by each separate agency in order to create an aggregate country ranking that fairly reflected that country's level of aid transparency. This information is not always available.

Similarly, where a ministry or equivalent parent organisation, distinct from an implementing agency, is responsible for funding, strategy or policy-making for the implementing agency, we look at information from both organisations. The resulting assessment often bears the name of both agencies assessed. For example, the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is jointly assessed with its two major implementing agencies, GIZ and KfW. The resulting assessments are labelled BMZ-GIZ and BMZ-KfW respectively. In other cases where a ministry undertakes direct implementation, we separately assess them. For example, for Japan we include separate assessments for the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### **Donors not included in the 2016 Index**

There are some donor organisations that spend more than USD 1bn per annum that have not been included in the Index, for example Saudi Arabia and Turkey. The Index's coverage of development finance institutions (DFIs) and providers of south-south cooperation is also limited. Ideally we would like to rank all large or influential aid providers but this is not possible at the present time due to resource and capacity constraints. The Aid Transparency Tracker, the online platform used to collect the Index data, has been designed so that others can use it to collect and analyse data on different organisations. Please get in touch if you are interested in doing this: [tracker@publishwhatyoufund.org](mailto:tracker@publishwhatyoufund.org)

## General scoring guidelines

- **Survey data collection:** All surveys are completed using information pertaining to the country receiving the largest amount of aid by value from the development organisation. The value of aid to recipients is determined by the 2013 OECD DAC CRS figures. If this information is not available in the CRS, then the largest recipient is determined using the latest annual report for the organisation or related ministry. To establish that information is consistently, i.e. “always”, published at the activity level, a minimum of five activities are selected within the largest recipient country or thematic sector (if the organisation structures its work along thematic areas or sectors rather than by countries). If less than five activities represent the organisation’s total spend in its largest recipient country, information is cross-checked against four other randomly selected activities in other recipient countries. For two indicators –country/sector strategy and memorandum of understanding – the information is cross-checked for four other randomly selected countries in addition to the largest recipient country in order to establish that the information is “always” published. Only information that is found to be “always” published is scored in the Index. Information that is published inconsistently or only for some activities is recorded but not scored. For aid information to be comparable across donors and recipient countries and for it be useful for different end user groups, it needs to be consistently i.e. always published for all projects. Allocating points for information that is “sometimes published” would result in over-rewarding organisations given the small sample of five activities chosen for assessment. Data on how systematically information is published is collected to highlight and distinguish between information that is sporadically collected and published through existing systems and process and therefore should be easier to publish more consistently, and that which does not appear to be collected or published at all, indicating systems or processes need to be put in place.
- **Current data:** Data for each indicator must be current for an organisation to be able to score on the indicator. “Current” is defined as published within the 12 months immediately prior to the data collection period (1 October 2014 – 30 September 2015), so information published on 1 October 2014 or later and that relates to that date or later is accepted as current. Information published after 1 October 2014 but relating to a period prior to then, for example 2013 DAC CRS data, is not accepted as current. Documents that are not current under this definition are accepted only if they are up to date with their regular cycle of publication, for example, annual audits and evaluation reports, or if they have explicit extensions into the current period written into them.
- **Date information:** For indicators with a date component (e.g. actual dates, planned dates), both the month and the year are required in order to score.
- **Sampling:** A total of 14 indicators refer to documents. These documents are manually checked to verify that they contain the required information to score for the indicator. A minimum of five documents need to meet the required criteria to score for the indicator.<sup>4</sup> For IATI publishers, the documents are randomly selected from those projects that pass the tests for the relevant indicator. Data published to the IATI Registry on results, sub-national location and conditions are also sampled to ensure it meets the criteria for those indicators.
- **Multiple sources:** For organisations which publish information to multiple databases or websites, information from all sources is accepted. For example, data for the EC’s Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO) is published to two humanitarian databases, the European Disaster Response Information System (EDRIS) and the Financial Tracking Service (FTS), and to IATI. All three sources are accepted. If there are differences between the three information sources, priority is given to the most recent information in the most accessible format. The sources of information must be easily accessible from the organisation’s website.
- **Development focused:** For the handful of organisations whose primary mandate is not providing development assistance, the assessment of their aid transparency relates only to the development assistance aspect of their operations and not the transparency of the organisation more broadly.

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<sup>4</sup> Apart from for organisation-level documents covered by indicators 5, 6, 7 and 11, where only a single document is expected.

- **Parent or subsidiary organisations:** Information for some organisations is held or managed by other organisations. In such cases, we look at both organisations for the information, i.e. the primary organisation under assessment as well as the organisation holding/publishing the information.

## Details of scoring approach

- All indicators can score a maximum of 100 points.
- For all indicators for which scores are “**graduated on the basis of format**”, the information is scored as follows:
  - PDF = 16.67 points
  - Website = 33.33 points
  - Machine-readable (CSV, Excel, etc.) = 50.00 points
  - IATI XML = 50–100 points depending on data quality and frequency
- For organisation-level indicators for which the scores are “**graduated based on accessibility**”, information published to the IATI Registry is awarded the total score for the indicator, while information published in all other formats is awarded 50 points of the total possible score of 100.<sup>5</sup> These indicators relate to organisation documents which may be provided in IATI in the form of links to documents with the correct document code from the IATI ‘Organisation Documents Codelist’ specified. This makes them easier to locate and identify than documents available just on the organisation’s website, as they have been categorised according to a common standard; hence they are scored more highly.
- For activity-level indicators for which the scores are “**graduated on the basis of accessibility**”, information published to the IATI Registry can score between 50–100 points for that indicator based on data quality and frequency of publication. Information published in all other formats is awarded 50 points for the indicator.
- The scoring for the two forward budget indicators at the organisation level is “**graduated on the basis of both format and the number of years**” for which information is published. Publishing a budget for 2016 counts as one year forward looking, 2017 as two years and 2018 as three years. Budgets need to run up to a minimum of 31 December 2018 to score for three years. Aggregate budgets are treated the same as a one year forward-looking budget, i.e. an aggregate budget for 2015–2017 is treated the same as a one year budget for 2016. If an organisation publishes a budget for 2016 and then an aggregate budget for 2017–2018, then the budget is considered to be two years forward looking. The scores are graduated as follows:
  - PDF = 16.67 points \*  $y/3$  where  $y$  is the number of years – up to a maximum of 3 years – for which forward looking budget information is published
  - Website = 33.33 points \*  $y/3$
  - Machine-readable = 50.00 points \*  $y/3$
  - IATI XML = 50–100 points depending on data quality and frequency \*  $y/3$
  - Aggregate budgets of between 2–3 years are scored the same as 1 year forward budgets

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<sup>5</sup> Note that indicator 8 (country strategy) follows a slightly different scoring approach. The details of this are provided on page 26.

## Measuring quality and frequency for IATI XML data

**Quality:** The quality of data published in IATI XML is assessed by running a series of tests on all activity and organisation data packages being published to the IATI Registry. These tests have been designed to assess the availability, comprehensiveness and comparability of aid information and to determine whether an organisation's IATI data conforms to the IATI Standard appropriately. Most of the tests have been derived directly from the IATI schemas which provide formats for reporting data on various fields to the IATI Registry. Some additional tests have been designed to check that data published in IATI XML is presented in a manner which allows for comparison across organisations.

Tests are run against the following:

- 1) Ongoing activities;
- 2) Activities with planned or actual end dates within the previous 12 months;
- 3) Activities with disbursement or expenditure transaction dates within the previous 12 months.<sup>6</sup>

Example: The following data quality tests are run to determine the quality of information for the indicator 18 “current status”:

Test	Test Description
activity-status exists?	Does the activity status exist?
activity-status/@code is on list ActivityStatus?	Is the activity status code on the ActivityStatus codelist?

The tests return a “pass” or “fail” result for each activity (or organisation file depending on the indicator being measured) included in organisations' data packages that meet the current data requirement. A complete list of the tests run against data published to the IATI Registry for the Index is available in annex 2. These tests were developed in an open consultation with 2014 Index peer reviewers and current IATI publishers. We welcome feedback on them.<sup>7</sup>

Data quality is determined by the percentage of an organisation's total current activities published to IATI that pass the data quality tests. Organisations are awarded the first 50 points of the total possible score of 100 for at least one “pass” result on the data quality tests for the indicator and the remaining 50 points based on data quality and frequency of publication.

**Frequency:** Frequency refers to how often organisations publish activity-level information to IATI. For the activity level indicators, IATI publishers are awarded the first 50 points for at least one “pass” result on the data quality tests and the remaining 50 points based on the coverage and frequency of publication. Publishing monthly allows an organisation to achieve the maximum indicator score of 100 points; publishing quarterly up to 95 points; and publishing less than quarterly up to 75 points.

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<sup>6</sup> Activities that finish more than 12 months prior to data collection but are still receiving loan or interest repayments are therefore excluded from the tests.

<sup>7</sup> Publish What You Fund ran a public consultation on the tests used in January 2014 for the 2014 Index. We will continue to revisit the tests, particularly those used for measuring country strategy papers and disaggregated budgets and always welcome feedback and comments on further improvements. More information is available at: <https://github.com/pwxf/index-data-quality-tests/>. Please note that users needed to register on GitHub in order to comment on the tests; registration is free of charge.

Example: An organisation that publishes current data to IATI every quarter, with 80% of that current data passing the tests for an indicator, receives the following score for that indicator:  $50 \text{ points} + (80 \times 0.9) / 2 = 86 \text{ points}$ . (If the organisation publishes monthly, it receives a score of  $50 + (80 \times 1.0) / 2 = 90 \text{ points}$ .)

The frequency of publication is calculated based on the methodology used by the IATI Dashboard. Details of the methodology and the frequency of publication for existing publishers can be found at: <http://dashboard.iatistandard.org/timeliness.html>

Note that only IATI data is scored on frequency. Publishing information to IATI allows an organisation to score more points than publishing information in other formats. Because there are clear machine-readable logs of when this data changed, it is also possible to assess frequency – which is rarely possible for data published in other formats because the information is not always time-stamped.

## Section 3. Weighting

As detailed in Section 2 above, 22 indicators are scored based on format, while 14 are scored based on accessibility. In effect, this means that 50% of each indicator is scored on whether the organisation publishes the information in IATI XML format to the IATI Registry or links documents to their IATI files, i.e. the format of a donor's publication, together with the weight ascribed to indicators it scores on, determines its overall performance in the Index.

Each indicator differs in weight based on its category and sub-group. The commitment category indicators account for 10% of the overall weight. Publication accounts for 90% of the overall weight. The organisation-level indicators account for 25% of the overall weight, while the activity-level indicators account for 65%. Within these categories, the indicator sub-groups are equally weighted.

**Table 3: Categories, sub-groups and weighting**

Top-level category	Category	Sub-group	Number of indicators
Commitment = 10%	Commitment = 10%	Commitment = 10%	3 indicators = 3.3% each
Publication = 90%	Organisation level = 25%	Organisation – Planning = 12.5%	5 indicators = 2.5% each
		Organisation – Financial = 12.5%	3 indicators = 4.2% each
	Activity level = 65%	Basic activity information = 13%	8 indicators = 1.6% each
		Classifications = 13%	7 indicators = 1.9% each
		Related documents = 13%	6 indicators = 2.2% each
		Financial = 13%	4 indicators = 3.3% each
		Performance = 13%	3 indicators = 4.3% each
<b>Total</b>			<b>39 indicators = 100%</b>

As in previous years, commitment to aid transparency remains important, but the aid transparency agenda is sufficiently well-established for organisations to be primarily assessed on their actual publication. Although organisation-level publications such as annual reports are important, activity-level information is critical in order for information to be useful to recipient country governments, civil society and other stakeholders. This is reflected in the decision to assign heavier weighting to the activity level. Within these levels, the various sub-groups of information type are weighted equally. Organisation-level information is split into two equal sub-groups of planning information (12.5%) and financial information (12.5%). Activity-level information is split into five equal sub-groups as described above. As the number of indicators in each sub-group varies, individual indicators within each category carry different weights. Individual indicator weights are set out in Table 4 below.



**Table 4: Indicator weighting in 2016**

Category	Sub-group	Indicator	Scoring Approach	Weight
Commitment to aid transparency	Commitment	1. Quality of FOI legislation	Graduated based on the score given in Right To Information (RTI) Rating. <sup>8</sup>	3.33%
		2. Implementation schedules	Graduated based on the total score received out of 100 based on analysis of Busan common standard/IATI implementation schedules.	3.33%
		3. Accessibility	Graduated based on three criteria: allows free bulk export of data; provides disaggregated, detailed data on activities; and data is released under an open licence.	3.33%
Publication – Organisation level	Planning	4. Strategy	Graduated based on accessibility	2.50%
		5. Annual report	Graduated based on accessibility	2.50%
		6. Allocation policy	Graduated based on accessibility	2.50%
		7. Procurement policy	Graduated based on accessibility	2.50%
		8. Strategy (country / sector)	Graduated based on accessibility	2.50%
	Financial	9. Total organisation budget	Graduated based on format and number of years for which data is provided	4.17%
		10. Disaggregated budget	Graduated based on format and number of years for which data is provided	4.17%
		11. Audit	Graduated based on accessibility	4.17%
Publication – Activity level	Basic activity information	12. Implementer	Graduated based on format	1.63%
		13. Unique ID	Graduated based on format	1.63%
		14. Title	Graduated based on format	1.63%
		15. Description	Graduated based on format	1.63%
		16. Planned dates	Graduated based on format	1.63%
		17. Actual dates	Graduated based on format	1.63%
		18. Current status	Graduated based on format	1.63%
		19. Contact details	Graduated based on format	1.63%
	Classifications	20. Collaboration type	Graduated based on format	1.86%
		21. Flow type	Graduated based on format	1.86%
		22. Aid type	Graduated based on format	1.86%
		23. Finance type	Graduated based on format	1.86%
		24. Sectors	Graduated based on format	1.86%
		25. Sub-national location	Graduated based on format	1.86%
		26. Tied aid status	Graduated based on format	1.86%
	Related documents	27. Memorandum of Understanding	Graduated based on accessibility	2.17%
		28. Evaluations	Graduated based on accessibility	2.17%
		29. Objectives	Graduated based on accessibility	2.17%

<sup>8</sup> The complete approach to assessing and scoring FOIA and disclosure policy quality is detailed in box 2 on p.18.

		30. Budget docs	Graduated based on accessibility	2.17%
		31. Contracts	Graduated based on accessibility	2.17%
		32. Tenders	Graduated based on accessibility	2.17%
	Financial	33. Budget	Graduated based on format	3.25%
		34. Commitments	Graduated based on format	3.25%
		35. Disbursements & expenditures	Graduated based on format	3.25%
		36. Budget ID	Graduated based on format	3.25%
	Performance	37. Results	Graduated based on format	4.33%
		38. Impact appraisals	Graduated based on accessibility	4.33%
		39. Conditions	Graduated based on accessibility	4.33%

## Section 4. Data collection

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### The Aid Transparency Tracker

An online platform, the [Aid Transparency Tracker](http://tracker.publishwhatyoufund.org/), is used to collect and share the data included in the Index.<sup>9</sup> The Tracker is used to monitor progress made by organisations in making their aid information more transparent. It includes three components:

- 1) An automated **data quality assessment tool** which assesses the quality of data being published to the IATI Registry.
- 2) An online **survey** tool which assesses aid information published by organisations, in formats other than IATI XML, based on survey data collected manually for the Index.
- 3) An **implementation schedules tool** which assesses all IATI/common standard schedules published to date by organisations as part of their commitment to publish aid information to a common standard by the end of 2015.

The Tracker highlights what information donor organisations have committed to publish in their implementation schedules, as well as what they are currently publishing. While the analysis derived from all three tools feeds into the Index, the implementation schedules tool and the data quality tool are designed to be ‘living tools’ that continue to monitor and reflect changes in organisations’ plans or publication beyond period assessment processes. For more details on each of these tools, visit: <http://tracker.publishwhatyoufund.org>

### Data sources

Most information included in the Index is gathered from what is published online by each organisation – either on their website, national platforms such as the U.S. Foreign Assistance Dashboard, the OECD common standard website (for implementation schedules) or the IATI Registry. One indicator uses a secondary data source, the Global Right to Information (RTI) Rating, to assess the quality of Freedom of Information legislation.

The Global RTI Rating scores the strength of the legal framework in guaranteeing the right to information in a country. Based on a 61 indicator survey, the legislation is graded on a 150-point scale.<sup>10</sup> This has been adapted to a three point framework for the purposes of the Index. A second scale was developed in 2012 to score disclosure policies for non-bilaterals. This was guided by the principle that, while non-bilateral donors may not be legally obliged to disclose their information, many of them have disclosure policies and these should be taken into consideration rather than having a data gap or awarding them an average score for this indicator. For more details on the methodology, see box 2 on p.18.

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<sup>9</sup> See: <http://tracker.publishwhatyoufund.org/>

<sup>10</sup> The Global RTI Rating is produced by the Centre for Law and Democracy and Access Info Europe. For the methodology and dataset, visit: <http://www.rti-rating.org/index.html>

## IATI XML data and the IATI Registry

The IATI Registry is an important component of IATI publication, as it makes data discoverable and easier to access. IATI publishers "register" their IATI XML data, providing links back to the original source data – which remains on donors' own websites – and other useful metadata. As a result the IATI publication approach is interpreted strictly for the Index, meaning that IATI XML data needs to be available via the IATI Registry for it to be taken into account. IATI XML data that is not on the Registry is scored the same as other machine-readable data.

## Timeline and process

There is a defined data collection period (1 October 2015–15 January 2016) to ensure that organisations are compared fairly at the same period in time. If the organisation is not an IATI publisher then all the information is collected via the survey. Surveys are completed in-house by Publish What You Fund as per the methodology described in the general scoring guidelines in Section 2. Donor organisations and partner CSOs are invited to review the surveys and provide any updates or corrections as necessary.

For organisations that are publishing to the IATI Registry, data collection follows a two-step process:

- First, their data is run through the data quality tool, which is designed to run automated checks and tests on each organisation's data, providing both a comparative view across organisations and granular details on each organisation's data. These tests are aggregated to produce scores for indicators to which they are relevant.<sup>11</sup>
- Next, for those indicators for which information is not published in to the IATI Registry or does not pass the necessary tests, the data is collected via the survey.

The initial assessment will be made available to donors via the Tracker in October 2015 and will remain available for review and comment until the end of data collection. The final set of IATI data will be automatically collected shortly after the end of the data collection, so any improvements or changes to an organisation's IATI data during that period will be reflected in the final dataset used to compile the Index.

Only IATI data is collected and assessed automatically. The tests used to assess the data have been designed by Publish What You Fund after consulting with IATI data experts and Aid Transparency Index peer reviewers. Several donors also provided feedback on the tests. As in previous years, all organisations are assessed against the same indicators, meaning that a mixture of automatically and manually collected data can be used for IATI publishers included in 2015.<sup>12</sup>

After the end of data collection, all surveys are subject to a process of verification and standardisation. This is to ensure that what is accepted for scoring responses is consistent across all 46 surveys and to take into account feedback received both from donor organisations and independent reviewers.

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<sup>11</sup> For more information on the data quality tests, visit the data quality tool page on the Aid Transparency Tracker: <http://tracker.publishwhatyoufund.org/publish/about/>

<sup>12</sup> For IATI data to be taken into account, it needs to be current and pass a minimum threshold of 20% or more of the organisation's country programmable aid budget.

## Box 2. Approach to assessing and scoring FOIA quality

The Global RTI Rating scores the strength of the legal framework in guaranteeing the right to information in a country. Using a 61-indicator survey, the legislation is graded on a 150-point scale. This has been adapted to the 100-point scale used in the Index. Ideally, adapting the 150-scale to our 100 point score would entail dividing the scale evenly into thirds (33.33=1–50; 66.66=51–100; and 100=101–150). However, this does not capture the diversity of the RTI Rating, because at the time of writing, only one FOIA has scored 1–39 or 136–150 on the RTI scale, meaning that much of the substantive difference among legislation is lost by simply dividing the scale evenly into thirds.

To resolve this, the three-point scale has been altered by reducing the range of the '66.66' scoring option and increasing the ranges of the '33.33' and '100' options (0=no legislation; 33.33=1–60; 66.66=61–90; and 100=91–150). Using this scale allows for greater diversity in the results while maintaining a replicable scoring system that rewards objective progress. Though scoring donors on a relative scale was considered, given that both the Index and the RTI Rating score donors based on objective measures, it is not suitable to score organisations based on their performance relative to other organisations for this indicator alone.

As the RTI Rating covers FOI legislation only, this means there is a data gap for non-bilateral donors with disclosure policies. Publish What You Fund has therefore developed a second three point scale, guided by the principle that, while non-bilateral donors may not be legally obliged to disclose their information, many of them have disclosure policies and that these should be taken into consideration, rather than having a data gap or awarding them an average score for this indicator.

The scoring system used for disclosure policies in 2015 is a cumulative measure of three key indicators. If a donor's policy has all three, 100 is scored, if a donor's disclosure policy has none of the three, or no disclosure policy at all, it scores 0. The indicators are:

- 1) **Presumption of disclosure:** To score for this indicator, a disclosure policy must have a specific clause that states disclosure as the rule, thereby requiring a compelling reason for non-disclosure (33.33 points).
- 2) **Limitations on commercially sensitive and third party information and internal deliberations:** To score on this indicator, non-disclosure clauses related to these matters must be (a) defined clearly, (b) be subject to a harm test, and (c) be subject to a public interest override (33.33 points). To score on this indicator all three sub-criteria must be met.
- 3) **Independent appeals process:** To score for this indicator, non-disclosure clauses must include an independent appeals process and the appeals body must include individuals that are independent from the organisation (33.33 points).

While relatively simple, this indicator reflects international best practice in maximising the right to information with the acknowledgement that donors are required not to disclose certain types of information. Note that in previous years, the limitations on third party information and internal deliberations were listed as separate criteria and appeals were assessed as part of the public interest override clause within each of these. The simplification in the grouping of criteria in 2014 was made based on advice received from FOI experts in FOI legislation.

## Section 5. Comparing results with previous years

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### Comparing with Index results from previous years

Maintaining the Index methodology for 2013, 2014 and 2016 allows for comparisons of absolute scores for the organisations assessed in all three years. However, it is important to note that only a sub-set of the 68 organisations assessed in 2014 have been included in the 2016 Index. This means that drawing direct comparisons between the ranking of the 46 organisations included in the 2016 Index with the ranking of the 68 organisations included in the 2014 Index is not possible. Only absolute scores can be compared over the three years. For example, if donor X scored 55% in 2014 and ranked 23/68 compared to 60% in 2016 and ranked 23/46, its overall performance has improved even though its ranking has declined.

Scoring the quality and frequency of publication since 2013 has provided a more accurate picture of aid transparency, but this also means that it is not possible to compare absolute scores from 2013 onwards with absolute scores in 2012 or earlier. For example, in 2012, organisations would have scored either 0% or 100% for an indicator regardless of the format of the data. From 2013 onwards, for 22 indicators, publishing in IATI XML format can score between 50% and 100%, while publishing a PDF can score only 16.67%. So an organisation that may have scored 100% for an indicator in 2012 may only have scored 16.67% in 2013 or later without changing its practice, due to the change in scoring method.

### Trends over time and how we might identify them

It will be easier to identify trends in aid transparency as annual data is generated through the Aid Transparency Tracker. It is already possible to start identifying:

- Whether there are general increases in aid transparency
- Whether more donors are publishing in more accessible data formats
- Whether more information is being published to IATI, and what types
- Whether the quality of data published to IATI is improving

## Section 6. Challenges, limitations and lessons learnt

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The methodology used for the Aid Transparency Index has been developed in close consultation with development experts, taking into consideration the challenges and limitations faced in previous years and any lessons learnt. The following issues remain:

### Representative nature of an organisation

The Index covers lead agencies of different donor countries or groups. We received feedback from some donors that we should not be considering agencies separately, but should rather consider that donor organisation as a whole. We opted to maintain the disaggregation of agencies. As a result the Index reflects the transparency of only those organisations that have been assessed. These results are not a particularly good proxy for the whole of the donor's aid transparency. Consequently the agency or organisation under assessment is always specified.

### Exemptions

Exemptions are not addressed in the Index. We recognise that there are often legitimate reasons for excluding specific information items (or sometimes entire projects) from publication where publishing such information may cause harm. However, we do not accept that certain organisations should not be measured for certain indicators; rather all organisations covered by the Index should publish to all indicators with exclusions or redactions as necessary. The principle we have adopted is that exclusions should be transparently stated, and should be at a low enough level to allow them to be challenged where they do not appear to be warranted, while at the same time ensuring the purpose of legitimate exclusions is not compromised. For instance, if contracts contain commercially sensitive information, we would still expect the contract to be published with redactions and the reasons for those redactions, including why publishing the information will cause material and direct harm.

The IATI Standard allows for exemptions as long as the reasons for exemptions are stated in an exclusions policy document. However, stating exemptions for specific projects is currently not possible within the existing Standard. We will work with donors to propose an extension to address the issue of project-specific exemptions in a future upgrade of the IATI Standard.

### Scoring all organisations on all indicators

As in previous years, all organisations are scored on all indicators. All organisations – bilateral agencies, IFIs, multilateral institutions – are worth assessing together as they are influential providers with an explicit development or poverty reduction mandate, mostly represent official external financing and all have an impact on recipient countries and actors. They are, therefore, held to a common set of standards, within or without “official development assistance” flows. Not all donors have or collect all the information that we are looking for and so they cannot make it available.

We recognise that not all the indicators are a direct fit with an organisation's particular modus operandi. To address this, the scoring guidelines for certain indicators have been amended to accept equivalent documents or information. Annex 1 lists the equivalent documents that are considered to serve similar purposes to those set out for each indicator and therefore accepted for scoring responses.

## Difficult indicators

Some indicators are subject to particular scrutiny to ensure that we are being fair to all donors assessed and that we are not duplicating any indicators.

### Forward budgets

In 2011 and 2012, a full three years of forward visibility was required in order to score on the total organisation budget and disaggregated budget indicators (indicators 9 and 10). This was amended in 2013 and is now a graduated score based on the number of years (up to three years) for which organisations are publishing budget information. This allows some credit to donors that publish some forward budget information, albeit not for the full three years.

Each year ahead is worth one third of the total possible score for the indicator. Aggregate budgets are treated the same as a one year forward looking, i.e. a lump sum budget for 2015–2017 is treated the same as a one year budget for 2016. If a donor publishes a budget for 2016 and then a lump sum budget for 2017–2018, then this is considered to be two years forward looking. In addition to the number of years, scores are also graduated based on the format in which the information is published. The final score is then  $(x/3)$  for years forward – and then multiplied by the format score (see details of scoring approach in Section 2). Budgets need to run up to a minimum of December 2018 to score for 'three years forward'. Organisations at the end of their fixed budget cycles and therefore without a published budget for the next three years do not receive points for this indicator.

Activity budgets (indicator 33) have to be forward-looking and broken down by quarter ahead to score. Information on planned expenditures needs to be broken down by year and by quarter in order to score for the indicator. For IATI data, half of the data quality points are awarded for having a one-year forward looking budget, and the remaining half of the points are awarded for providing a quarterly forward-looking budget.

IFIs and DFIs do not have budgets allocated to them as traditional aid agencies do. In many cases, total budgets are established annually, once total financial figures of all investments are taken into account. However, they do have projected total spend figures that they sometimes publish. If published, these projected figures are accepted for this indicator. Similarly, indicative figures are accepted where actual figures are not available. Thematic budgets are accepted for the disaggregated budgets indicator for organisations that do not organise themselves by countries. Projected figures disaggregated along thematic and sectoral priorities, at a similar level of detail to their total organisation budgets, are accepted.

### Implementation schedules

In 2011 and 2012, engagement with the International Aid Transparency Initiative was used to measure an organisation's overall commitment to aid transparency. From 2013 onwards, donors' schedules for implementing the IATI component of the common standard are analysed in order to provide a comparative overview of donors' plans to implement the Busan commitments within the agreed timeline.

The schedules are assessed on three key criteria:

- 1) Intention to publish to IATI
- 2) Publication approach, i.e. the frequency of their publication and the licence under which the information is or will be published
- 3) Coverage of fields of the IATI Standard



The full details of the scoring approach can be found in the ‘Plan’ section of the Aid Transparency Tracker: <http://tracker.publishwhatyoufund.org/plan/about/>.

There are several challenges with completing this analysis. While there is an agreed template for the common standard implementation schedules, several different versions of the template exist, with donors adding to this complexity by modifying it, changing options, and adding and deleting rows. At the time of writing, a total of 11 different versions are being used and have to be supported by the application.<sup>13</sup> This creates difficulties in analysing the information and necessitates considerable interpretation to ensure consistency and comparability across the schedules. It is also evident that donors' have different approaches to completing the schedule. Some have taken a conservative approach, by leaving much of the schedule blank (e.g. Poland). Others have potentially understated the ambition of some of their own agencies (by not specifying those which *can* publish certain fields), where information fields are not feasible from *all* of their agencies (e.g. the U.S.). Donors have made liberal use of the “not applicable” option. This option is certainly valid in several data fields – those fields that are only sometimes applicable to organisations publishing to IATI have been excluded from the scoring and final analysis. However, some donors have stated that fields such as results, conditions and even activity budgets are “not applicable”, though rarely with any explanation.

We can deduce that donors have chosen “not applicable” in such cases for three broad reasons:

- **Where information is available but seen as redundant or repetitive.** In situations where the organisation’s business model defines the answer (e.g. for “tied aid status”, where tying under DAC definitions is not possible), those organisations do not always realise the utility of completing the field (which is necessary for a complete dataset on tying across donors, sectors and countries).
- **Misinterpretation.** Where the meaning of the field has been misinterpreted (e.g. implementing organisations). For example, some donors excluded funding organisation, even though the funding organisation is (in almost all cases) simply that donor.
- **In error.** Donors often used “not applicable” when a more accurate status would have been “not publishing now”.

There is also some confusion about certain data fields or groups of fields, especially “participating organisation” – implementing, funding, extending and accountable – and between “other activity identifiers” and “related activities”. More generally, the schedules do not distinguish whether the organisation intends to implement specific fields according to the IATI approach (e.g. timely and in the IATI XML format), on account of the overlap between some CRS and IATI fields.

We encourage donors to revise and re-submit implementation schedules to accurately reflect the current status of their publication and their future plans so that the analysis can be updated to be a more accurate reflection of donors’ publication plans.

### Memorandum of Understanding

Some organisations do not sign Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), which are usually government-to-government documents, often covering several activities. For example, some IFIs have highlighted that they do not always sign MoUs with governments because they operate in the private sector. Similarly, humanitarian organisations often operate in emergency contexts and do not always sign MoUs, and philanthropic organisations tend to operate at the grantee level and do not have presence at an intermediate level above that of the activity. It could be argued that such organisations should not be expected to have such agreements or be scored down as a result of not publishing this information. We carefully considered this issue in relation to the wide variety of organisations that are assessed and concluded that it is possible to score all organisations based on equivalent documents such as: strategy papers that are jointly developed with

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<sup>13</sup> The agreed template is available from the OECD website: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/aid-architecture/acommonstandard.htm>

recipients; activity-level agreement documents; and agreements between the donor and the grantee or implementing partner. However, where organisations do sign agreements with recipient governments, these are expected to be published in order to score.

## Challenges of survey data collection

In previous years, finding information on donors' aid activities presented a challenge particularly for those donors who had poorly designed or hard-to-navigate websites. This issue has been addressed to some extent since 2013 by taking into account donors' IATI publication and automating its assessment. However, for organisations that do not publish information to IATI, data collection continues to be done using a survey and involves looking at organisations' websites exhaustively and checking any related websites where necessary. In some cases, the information may be published but not easily available using the menu or search functions on an organisation's website or database. Time constraints mean that our researchers will search for information up to a reasonable point but if the information appears to be unavailable, will score the indicator as zero.

If our researchers cannot find a piece of information, the organisations being assessed have the opportunity to address this while reviewing the survey data. They can provide links to the information directly in order for it to be assessed and scored. Surveys are also shared with independent reviewers for verification and to check that information hasn't been misunderstood or incorrectly scored. This approach to completing the surveys helps ensure that the availability of current information is reflected as accurately as possible, even though the process of finding it may not always be easy.

## Representative nature of activities

It is difficult to ascertain how representative the activities assessed in the survey are. The methodology continues to be constrained by the fact that, for most donors, it is not possible to randomly sample typical projects. Precisely because the information is usually either not published systematically, or else is only available as unstructured data, it is difficult to calculate what a "typical" project is. There are two ways of approaching this challenge: 1) To look at all published projects for that donor and try to calculate the average based on the information they make publicly available; or 2) to ask the donor to clarify what an average size project is and provide the details for how this figure has been calculated. Option 1 would create an unfeasible increase in the resource intensity of each survey – when multiplied by the number of donors included in the Index, it would make the process impossible. Option 2 would not provide independently verifiable data, and there is a risk that responses would not be received from all donors, meaning that two different methodologies would have to be used for activity selection. Although the methodology used is not ideal, of the options available, it strikes the right balance where information is not available in structured formats.

## Limits on cross checking 'always' scores at the activity level and comprehensiveness of activity-level data

Scores for activity-level indicators for organisations publishing information to the IATI Registry are calculated based on the percentage of activities that pass data quality tests underlying each indicator. This process is automated and therefore researchers are not required to sample other activities to determine whether or not information is consistently, i.e. 'always', published as they are with the survey data. Information on activities published in IATI XML is subject to a more rigorous assessment.

There are limits on cross-checking comprehensiveness of publication in other formats. For this manually collected data, the process relies on several steps to determine whether information at the activity level is consistently published. All surveys are completed using information pertaining to the recipient country receiving the largest amount of aid by value from that donor agency. In 2015, the value of aid to recipients is determined using 2013 OECD DAC CRS figures. If this

information is not available in the CRS then the largest recipient is determined using the latest annual report for the agency or related ministry. To establish that information is consistently published at the activity level, a minimum of five activities are selected within the largest recipient country or thematic sector (if the donor agency organises itself along thematic areas or sectors rather than by countries). While checking and verifying the data, organisations are asked to confirm if the responses are representative as a whole.

If it is stated that the project information published is for ‘case studies’, ‘some projects’ or ‘selected projects’ then it is assumed that this information is published only ‘sometimes’ and the organisation is scored zero for that indicator.

We have always acknowledged that this approach cannot give a true picture of the amount of information being published at activity level. The ultimate constraint is not being able to identify all current activities being delivered to all countries or sectors. Without that information being provided in a well-structured format, it is impossible to randomly sample for an ‘average’ country and an ‘average’ project. The approach taken is therefore a purposive sampling approach. We recognise that this may introduce positive bias, as it seems more likely that donors will publish the most information for their largest recipient, but this has been a deliberate decision. Arguably, it is more important that funds are transparent when flows are larger. The aim is not to try to ‘catch out’ donors. Selecting at random a smaller recipient country could introduce negative bias, and as the flows assessed would represent a much smaller proportion of the donor’s total, it would reveal less about that donor’s overall approach to aid transparency.

### **Organisations that do not participate in the review process**

All donor organisations are invited to review the initial survey findings and to provide feedback on any information that may have been missed or interpreted incorrectly. All surveys go through a process of verification and standardisation to ensure that what is accepted for scoring responses is consistent across all organisations, taking into account the feedback received from donors and independent reviewers. For organisations that do not participate in the review process, it is possible that information that is not easily discoverable on their websites or databases is not been taken into account for their final assessment.

## **Challenges of automating IATI data quality assessment**

The Aid Transparency Tracker is a complex piece of software. For the first time in 2013, a portion of the data collection for the Index was automated through the Tracker’s data quality tool. This is the first tool of its kind to assess the quality of data under any spending standard (not just aid data). Naturally, there are some challenges automating the testing of data across different organisations and several lessons have been learnt for improvements in future years.

### **Designing data quality tests**

Data quality tests have been designed to assess the availability, comprehensiveness and comparability of aid information and to determine whether an organisation’s IATI data conforms to the IATI Standard appropriately. As described in Section 2, the majority of the tests have been derived directly from the IATI schemas which provide a common format for reporting data on various fields to the IATI Registry. Some additional tests have been designed to check that data published to IATI is presented in a manner which allows for comparison across organisations. Technical reviewers and donors were asked to provide feedback on the tests before and during the data collection process in 2013. In addition, a public consultation was held in January–February 2014. Based on the feedback received, some of the data quality tests have been tightened up to improve the quality of the automated assessment of IATI data. Information on the public consultation, the feedback received and Publish What You Fund’s responses is available at: <https://github.com/pwyf/index-data-quality-tests/>

Several methodological changes were made to the data quality tests in response to the feedback received. The feedback suggested that where possible and reasonably practicable, donors should not be penalised for not publishing information where it should not be expected to be published. For example, activity end dates should not be expected to exist for projects which are not yet completed. These nuances have been incorporated into the methodology by altering the tests to return results based on other related elements in the data. For example, based on activity status codes to only look at activities at least in the implementation stage; or aid type codes to look only at budget support activities.

Tests for the following indicators were particularly difficult to design:

### **1) Disaggregated budgets**

Disaggregated budgets are scored for each of the three years ahead for which they are available. This is assessed as the value of all recipient country budgets available for the relevant year as a percentage of 50% of the average of Country Programmable Aid (CPA)<sup>14</sup>, multiplied by the total budget for the relevant year. If the relevant year is not available, the current year is used instead.

The first year must have an end date of at least 230 days forward from the last date on which tests are run.<sup>15</sup> The second year must be 365 days later, and the third year a further 365 days forward. The points available are derived from an average of the points available from each of the three years.

For example, for an organisation with a total budget of USD 1,000, the total country spend per year required to receive the full score is USD 213.60. If the following figures on annual spend are found in an organisation's IATI files:

- Total country budgets in Year 1: USD 300 => over USD 213.60, so 100 points for year 1
- Total country budgets in Year 2: USD 150 => 70% of USD 213.60, so 70 points for year 2
- Total country budgets in Year 3: USD 0 => 0% of USD 213.60, so 0 for year 3

Total data quality score:  $(100+70+0)/3 = 57$

This means that the scoring approaching for this indicator is rather generous as most donor organisations are likely to allocate more than 21.36% of their overall organisation budget as CPA. However, it also means that an organisation that does not publish at least a total budget for the current year does not score for disaggregated budgets even if the latter are provided in the organisation's IATI feed. We accept that this methodology is not perfect and welcome suggestions for making further improvements to this test.

For organisations that do not allocate their resources by country, but instead do so by sector or thematic area, we will consider developing a methodology in the future to use new 2.01 budget-line elements for thematic/sector budgets. As this methodology will be complex and require some consultation with affected publishers, we will not introduce such a change in the mid-term Index. Such organisations are scored via the survey.

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<sup>14</sup> Calculated as 21.36% based on OECD DAC 2011 data.

<sup>15</sup> In order to score the maximum points on the forward budget indicators, budgets need to run up to a minimum of December 2018. The number of days used in the tests help ensure that budgets that are mid-cycle are still captured but that they run up to the required end date of 31 December 2016, 2017 and 2018 to score the points for each year.

## **2) Forward-looking activity budgets**

A forward-looking budget is expected for the all activities that are at least in implementation stage and do not have end dates that fall within the next six months (pipeline/identification activities are also explicitly excluded).

The budget end date must fall within a window period which starts on the date of the test-run and ends 367 days later (so if the test is run on 1 October 2015, for an activity to pass this test, it must have a budget with an end date which falls within the period of 1 November 2015–1 October 2016.)

If a single budget end date exists within the window period above, then the organisation passes the first of the two data quality tests for this indicator which checks to see if a forward-looking budget is available. In order to pass the second test for this indicator, which checks to see if the budget is broken down by quarters, one of the budget elements must have a maximum length of 94 days and be within the window period.

This means that for the purposes of the first test, an activity with a forward-looking budget that covers one week is treated the same as a forward-looking budget that covers one year, as long as it falls within the window period assessed. However, for an organisation to do well on the second test, there must be one budget within the window period that lasts for a maximum of one quarter (94 days). This test was extremely difficult to design in a way that could programmatically take into account different budget cycles as well as distinguish between activities under implementation that are expected to have additional budgets allocated to them in the future and those that do not. As a result, it is possible that some organisations may have been over or under-rewarded. Suggestions on improving this test are welcomed.

## **3) Country strategy papers**

Country strategy papers are defined as available if, for each recipient country budget published, there is an equivalent country strategy paper available. Scoring on the country strategy indicator is therefore conditional upon publishing current year budgets for each recipient country. Designing a test for this indicator proved to be difficult given the structure of the IATI Standard and the fact that country strategy papers cannot be identified as being related to specific countries in the IATI Standard except by comparing text strings. Publish What You Fund has made a proposal in the past to improve the Standard to address these issue. We welcome feedback on how links between country budgets and country strategies might be improved.

For organisations that do not allocate their resources by country but instead by sector or thematic area, we will consider developing a methodology that uses new budget-line elements for reporting sector or thematic budgets. An element for sector or thematic strategies was added in v2.01 of the IATI Standard, but as the methodology is complex and will require consultation with affected publishers, we have not introduced this change for the mid-term Index. Such organisations are scored via the survey for this indicator.

## **4) Evaluations**

The data quality test for the evaluations indicator (indicator 28) takes into account all activities that are tagged in IATI as being in completion or later stages without taking into account the dates when the activities ended. This means that projects that are completed in recent months before the date of the test run are checked to see if an evaluation report is published. All types of activities, regardless of size and type, are expected to have evaluations. We recognise that it is not reasonable to expect evaluation documents to be published for all projects and immediately after a project is completed. We considered adding a time-lag after project completion

to the test and consulted with peer reviewers and several donor organisations to understand whether this would work. Based on our consultations, we found that approaches vary widely depending on the project intervention type and size. Further, some large donors have dedicated, semi-independent monitoring and evaluations divisions whereas others complete evaluations internally or contract external consultants to conduct them, meaning that the timelines for publishing evaluations vary significantly. Given that we want to assess the comprehensiveness of publication for evaluations (rather than assessing different approaches to conducting them), the difficulties associated with programmatically assessing donors based on their individual approaches to evaluations, and that we want to encourage best case practices and timely publication, we did not include a time lag in the test used in 2014. While we recognise that the test as it stands is imperfect and would like to consider further improvements, we did not want to make changes that would not be sustainable in the future. One suggested option for testing evaluations published to IATI in the future is to allow organisations to add a flag or marker against activities that are expected to be evaluated along with dates for expected publication, so activities can be selected for assessment accordingly. However, such a flagging system does not exist in the Standard currently.

### **Ensuring documents published as links in IATI meet the criteria set out in the scoring guidelines for indicators**

It is possible to add organisation documents such as annual reports, allocation policies and procurement guidelines, and related documents for an activity such as contracts, budget documents, evaluations, etc. in order to provide a wider context for an activity. This makes documents easier to locate and identify than documents available just on the organisation's website, hence they are scored more highly in the Index.

However, it is difficult to verify the quality of each document linked in an organisation's IATI file. The number of documents that would require individual checking is prohibitive (especially for donors reporting thousands of activities in their IATI files). In 2013, some random spot checks were made on organisation-level documents to ensure these met the criteria defined in the scoring guidelines. From 2014 onwards, a more systematic procedure is used for sampling and conducting checks against all document types published at both the organisation and activity level, as detailed in section 2 on p.9.

### **Clarifying the methodology of the automated assessment to donors and partner organisations**

Explaining the process for automatically collecting and assessing IATI XML data is challenging. Indicator scoring guidelines and details of the tests underlying the automated assessment are made available on Publish What You Fund's website and the Tracker during data collection. Cross-references have also been included in the indicator guidelines so publishers can see which element of IATI the tests are being run against for a particular indicator.

We are happy to provide clarifications to donors and CSOs on how scores from the automated tests are amalgamated with those from the survey, particularly so that donors can understand the gaps in their data and identify areas of improvement.

## **Future iterations of the assessment**

The new methodology that was introduced in 2013 allows for a more accurate reflection of organisations' publication practices. However, we recognise that the automated component used to assess the quality of IATI data needed some refinement. A key priority in 2014 was to improve the data quality tests to address some of the challenges described above. We will continue to revisit the tests, particularly those used for measuring country strategy papers and disaggregated budgets.

It is anticipated that data collection and analysis will become easier in future years as more donors publish to IATI, automating a large amount of the data collection. This may allow for the inclusion of an increased range of donors in future iterations. We would also like to consider extending our assessment to include more DFIs

and/or providers of south-south cooperation, either as part of the annual Index process or in separate publications that focus on the specific practices of these organisations and the challenges they face in enhancing their transparency.

We welcome feedback and comments on further improvements and in response to the challenges outlined in Section 6. Please send suggestions to:  
[tracker@publishwhatyoufund.org](mailto:tracker@publishwhatyoufund.org)

## Annex 1: Indicator definitions

Table 5: Definitions used for the 39 indicators

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
<b>Commitment level</b>				
Commitment	1. Quality of FOI legislation	Quality of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or disclosure policy	The definition used in the Global RTI Rating is that it has to be a law in the strict sense, it must include the right of access to information, this right has to be enforceable and there must be complaint, court and high court appeal possibilities. Decrees are included if they meet the same standards. In addition, the FOIA must be in use for at least the executive part of the government; therefore, FOIAs which are only adopted, approved or still in draft form are not counted.	For multilateral donors, international finance institutions (IFIs) and private foundations, a disclosure or transparency policy is accepted as equivalent to a FOIA. Publish What You Fund completes an assessment of the quality of these disclosure policies based on the overarching approach taken in the Global RTI Rating.
	2. Implementation schedules	Quality of Implementation Schedules	The Busan Partnership agreement required schedules for implementing the common standard to be published by December 2012. Publish What You Fund conducted an assessment of the schedules completed by development providers and submitted to the OECD common standard implementation website. Schedules are scored on the level of ambition shown by organisations in implementing the IATI component of the common standard.	The complete assessment can be found on Publish What You Fund's <a href="#">Aid Transparency Tracker</a> website.  IATI implementation schedules are also accepted.
	3. Accessibility	Does this organisation promote access and use of its aid information?	The overall accessibility of aid information through the organisations' portals, project databases or searchable data sources. These are scored using three criteria: 1) the portal allows free, bulk export of data; 2) it contains detailed disaggregated data; 3) the data is published under an open licence.	Data sources are the organisations' own aid portals, publicly accessible databases or websites – accessed in that order. The portal or database must include information on current activities for the countries or sectors the organisation is working in rather than just one individual country/sector or a selected group. It should contain information on at least five of the activity-level indicators, at least one of which should cover financial information.  The same data source is used for all three checks. For example, if the aid portal does not state that the data is published under an open licence, this is not checked elsewhere on the organisation's project database or website. If the organisation's



Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
				<p>website is the data source then it cannot score on the “free bulk export” criterion.</p> <p>If a portal allows bulk export through its API but not through its web-user interface, this is accepted as allowing free, bulk export of data.</p> <p>Note: that raw IATI files are not accepted for this indicator as the underlying principle behind this indicator is to assess what organisations are doing to promote access and use of their aid information. Information published to the IATI Registry is taken into account for the publication indicators.</p>
<b>Publication – organisation level</b>				
Planning	4. Strategy	Does this organisation publish an overarching strategy document?	<p>An overarching strategy document explains the general approach and policies of the organisation towards international development. This should be forward looking.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Institutional strategy paper (document code = B02).</p>	For organisations whose primary mandate is not development, a document clarifying that its overarching development strategy is accepted. This information needs to be forward looking.
	5. Annual report	Does this organisation publish an annual report?	<p>Annual reports outline basic (normally aggregate) information about how aid was spent in the previous year, broken down by sector and/or country. This should be backward looking.</p> <p>Annual reports which are up to date within their regular cycle, i.e. the organisation publishes an annual report a year behind, the most recent document within this time frame are accepted.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Annual report (document code = B01).</p>	To score for this indicator, the annual report needs to include details of where the organisation is spending its resources and the information needs to be forward looking, i.e. cover current activity period.

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
	6. Allocation policy	Does this organisation publish its aid allocation policy?	<p>Aid allocation policies are the detailed policy documents by which the organisation chooses where to spend its resources, i.e. on which countries or themes rather than others. Relatively general documents or web pages outlining which countries, themes and institutions the agency will fund are accepted, as long as this is forward looking and not wholly retrospective.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Aid allocation policy (document code = B04).</p>	For organisations such as IFIs and private foundations which do not have an “aid allocation” policy, equivalent documents are accepted; for example, “investment strategy/policy” or “grant-making policy”.
	7. Procurement policy	Does this organisation publish its procurement procedures?	<p>An organisation’s procurement procedures explain the process used to tender and contract (invite bids for) goods and services. This must fully explain the criteria on which decisions are made, and could be in a single procurement policy document or attached to each tender.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Procurement policy and procedure (document code = B05).</p>	<p>For IFIs which are often demand-driven, this is understood as their investment policy. For private foundations, this is their grant making policy.</p> <p>For organisations that do not undertake procurement related to aid projects (e.g. if procurement is undertaken by grantees or other implementing agencies), a statement explicitly clarifying this is required, as well as the overall policy for procuring goods and services at the headquarter level.</p>
	8. Strategy (country/sector)	Does this organisation publish the country strategy paper for this recipient country?	<p>A country strategy paper sets out the organisation’s planned approach and activities in the recipient country. For it to be accepted it needs to be a detailed document, rather than just a paragraph on the organisation’s website.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Country strategy paper (document code = B03).</p>	<p>For organisations such as IFIs, philanthropic organisations and vertical funds which may not have country-level strategies, mid-level documents between organisation and activity-level are accepted, e.g. thematic or sectoral level documents.</p> <p>If the organisation follows the strategy of a parent or related organisation, a statement clarifying this is needed on the website along with a link to the relevant strategy document. Similarly, if the organisation supports a country-led or developed strategy, this must be explicitly stated on the website and the link to the relevant strategy document needs to be provided.</p>
Financial	9. Total organisation budget	Does this organisation publish the total organisation budget	The total organisation budget is the total amount that the organisation will be allocated by the government or its funders per year for the next three years. This is money	IFIs and DFIs do not have budgets allocated to them as traditional aid agencies do. In many cases, total budgets are established annually, once total

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
		per year for the next three years, up to 2017?	<p>going to the organisation and can be indicative. Each year ahead is worth one third of the total possible score for this indicator. Aggregate budgets of between 2–3 years are scored the same as 1 year forward budgets.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Annual forward planning budget (total-budget)</p>	<p>financial figures of all investments are taken into account. However, they do have projected total spend figures that they sometimes publish. If published, these projected figures are accepted for this indicator.</p> <p>Similarly, for private foundations and humanitarian agencies, indicative figures of available funds are accepted.</p>
	10. Disaggregated budget	Does this organisation publish their annual forward planning budget for assistance to different countries and institutions per year for the next three years, up to 2017?	<p>The organisation's annual forward planning budget for assistance is the disaggregated budget that the organisation or agency will spend on different countries, programmes and institutions per year, for at least the next three years. The figure could be indicative.</p> <p>Scores are awarded on the basis of the number of years (up to three years) for which organisations are publishing budget information. Each year ahead is worth 33.33 points out of a total possible score of 100. Aggregate budgets of between 2–3 years are scored the same as 1 year forward budgets.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Annual forward planning budgets for recipient countries (recipient-country-budget).</p>	<p>Both country budgets and thematic budgets are accepted for organisations that prioritise their work by countries. Projected figures disaggregated along thematic and sectoral priorities, at a near similar level of detail to total organisation budgets are accepted. IFIs and DFIs sometimes publish "road maps" which contain this information.</p> <p>The start and end date for forward budgets are calculated based on organisations' fiscal years for information collected via the survey. Budgets need to run up to a minimum of December 2016 to score for 'three years forward'. Organisations at the end of their fixed budget cycles and therefore without a published budget for the next three years do not receive points for this indicator.</p> <p>Forward Spending Survey data reported to the OECD DAC is taken into account only if it is available for the specific organisation under assessment.</p>
	11. Audit	Does this organisation publish an annual audit of its aid programmes?	<p>The organisation's annual audit of its activities is an official inspection of the accounts and activities of this organisation, typically by an independent body.</p> <p>Audits up to date with regular audit cycles are accepted, i.e. if the organisation publishes biennial audits, the most recent document within this time frame is accepted.</p>	<p>A formally approved audit of annual accounts is required to score on this indicator. Audits conducted by official government agencies such as State Audit Offices or Controller General Reports are accepted for this indicator.</p>

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
			The IATI reference for this indicator is: Institutional audit report (document code = B06).	
<b>Publication – activity level</b>				
Basic activity information	12. Implementer	Does this organisation publish which organisation implements the activity?	<p>The implementer of the activity is the organisation which is principally responsible for delivering this activity.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Implementing organisation (participating-org role = implementing).</p>	This information may not be available in all cases due to “legitimate exclusions”. For example, humanitarian agencies may not be able to reveal who the implementing agencies are due to security reasons. Such exclusions are accepted but need to be explicitly stated (in order to distinguish these from cases of simple omission).
	13. Unique ID	Does this organisation publish a unique activity identifier?	<p>The activity identifier is a unique reference ID for the activity, e.g. a project number. It allows an activity to be referred to and searched for by a code, which can be used to retrieve the project from a database or filing system.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: IATI identifier.</p>	The project ID must be stated clearly on the page. It is not sufficient if it is only stated in the URL. It must be numeric or alpha-numeric.
	14. Title	Does this organisation publish the title of the activity?	<p>The title of the activity is the name of the activity. This is preferably the formal name of the activity, but does not have to be.</p> <p>The title needs to be complete with any abbreviations or acronyms explained.</p>	
	15. Description	Does this organisation publish a description of the activity?	The description of the activity is a descriptive text, longer than the title, explaining what the activity is. Sometimes it is just a short sentence but could also be more detailed. Either is accepted.	The description of the activity needs to contain a minimum of 10 words in order to be considered a description rather than just a title.
	16. Planned dates	Does this organisation publish the planned start and end dates?	<p>The planned dates are the dates that the activity is scheduled to start and end on. If there are one set of dates but they are not explicitly planned or actual dates, given that these are for activities which are current (i.e. being implemented at the time of data collection) it is assumed that they are planned dates.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Activity date (activity date type = start-planned and end-planned).</p>	<p>Both month and year are required to score on this indicator in recognition of recipient countries needing to be able to map activities to their own financial year rather than the calendar year.</p> <p>If the activity has started or has finished, the original planned start and end dates must be retained in addition to the actual dates in order to score on this indicator.</p>
	17. Actual dates	Does this organisation publish the actual start and end dates?	These are the dates that the activity actually started (and ended on, if the activity has finished). If there is only one set of dates but they are not explicitly stated as planned	Both month and year are required to score on this indicator in recognition of recipient countries

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
		(If they are not explicitly stated as actual dates then it is assumed that they are planned dates.)	or actual dates, then it is assumed they are planned dates. Actual dates are accepted where specific events occurred, e.g. the date the project/programme agreement is signed, a board presentation or an appraisal date.  The IATI reference for this indicator is: Activity date (activity date type = start-actual and end-actual).	needing to be able to map activities to their own financial year rather than the calendar year.
	18.Current status	Does this organisation publish the current status of the aid activity (e.g.in pipe line, implementation, completion, post-completion or cancelled)?	This shows whether the activity is currently under design, being implemented, has finished or has been cancelled.  The IATI reference for this indicator is: Activity status.	
	19.Contact details	Are contact details provided for the activity?	This shows who can be contacted in relation to this activity. This does not have to be the contact information for an individual or project manager and could refer to a central contact or information desk. Contacts for either the funding organisation or the implementing organisation were accepted.  This has to be stated alongside the activity or on an obvious “contact us” link alongside the activity.	
Classifications	20.Collaboration type	Does this organisation publish the “Collaboration Type”, i.e. whether the activity is funded bilaterally or multilaterally, as a core contribution to NGOs and other private bodies/Public-Private Partnerships, multilateral outflow or private sector outflow?	The collaboration type shows how the activity is funded – whether directly from one government to another (bilaterally), through institutions such as the World Bank or UN (multilaterally), or otherwise. This needs to be explicitly stated.  To be accepted, responses need to be stated per activity, or once in a country strategy paper or a clear place on the website, if there is only one collaboration type for the whole organisation, e.g. “all aid is funded bilaterally” or “we work exclusively with the private sector/non profits” or “all our activities are funded through pooled funds”.	
	21.Flow type	Does this organisation publish the “Flow	The flow type shows whether the organisation states this activity counts as ODA, OOF, climate finance or any other	

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
		Type", i.e. whether the activity is categorised as Official Development Assistance (ODA), Other Official Flows (OOF), private grants, private market flows, non-flows (e.g. GNI) or any other flows?	type of flow. This has to be explicitly stated per activity, or once in a country strategy paper or a single place on the organisation's website if there is only one flow type for all activities, e.g. "all aid is ODA", or "we only provide private grants".	
	22.Aid type	Does this organisation publish the type of aid given (e.g. budget support, pooled funds, project-type interventions, experts, scholarships, debt relief, or administrative costs)?	The type of aid shows whether the activity is classed as budget support, a project, technical assistance, debt relief, administrative costs, and so on. This needs to be explicitly stated per activity, or once in a country strategy paper or on a clear place on the organisation's website if there is only one aid type for the whole organisation, e.g. "all aid is project-type interventions".	The advisory services business line/type of intervention (investment climate, public-private partnership, etc.), can be seen as broadly equivalent.  Statements clarifying business line/intervention type published anywhere on the organisation's website count towards publishing aid type in the web format.
	23.Finance type	Does this organisation publish the type of finance given (e.g. grant, loan, export credit, debt relief)?	The type of finance shows whether the activity is a grant, loan, export credit or debt relief. This needs to be explicitly stated per activity, or once in a country strategy paper or clearly on the organisation's website if there is only one finance type for the whole organisation, e.g. "all aid is grants".	Investment type (loan, equity, etc.) can be interpreted as equivalent.  Statements clarifying investment type published anywhere on the website count towards publishing finance type in the web format.
	24.Sectors	Does this organisation publish the specific areas or "sectors" of the recipient's economic or social development that the activity intends to foster, e.g. education, health and infrastructure?	The sectors of the activity explain whether this is, for example, a health or education project. It does not count if it is just mentioned incidentally within the title, description, etc. It needs to be stated separately and explicitly.	If projects are presented by sector on an organisation's website, it must be clearly stated whether the organisation works only in those sectors that are listed.
	25.Sub-national location	Does this organisation publish the sub-national geographic	The sub-national geographic location is information about where the activity is located within a country. This may be a province or city, or it could be geo-coded (whereby the	For activities that are relevant at a country or regional level, information on the location where the funds are sent to or where the recipient is located are accepted for this indicator. For

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
		location for this activity?	precise longitude and latitude is published). It needs to be stated separately and explicitly.  The IATI reference for this indicator is: Location.	example, capital city for a country, or location information of the implementing organisation. This includes private sector investment, loans or debt relief payments, where the location of the relevant bank or organisation is accepted.
	26. Tied aid status	Does this organisation publish whether the aid is tied or not?	The tied aid status shows whether the organisation states that this activity counts as “tied” (procurement is restricted to the donor organisation country) or “untied” (open procurement).  Specifying location requirements in activity documents such as procurement policies or tenders is accepted as publishing tied aid status.  The IATI reference for this indicator is: Default tied status.	For organisations’ lending directly to national investment agencies, an explicit statement demonstrating their aid is not tied is required. For IFIs and DFIs, investment codes clarifying their position are accepted. For private foundations, grant-making policies are accepted. If these are not available, the organisation’s procurement policy must clearly state if there are any eligibility requirements for contracts based on country of origin.
Related documents	27. Memorandum of Understanding	Is the Memorandum of Understanding published?	A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a document which details the agreement usually between the organisation and recipient government for the provision of aid in the country.  The IATI reference for this indicator is: Memorandum of understanding (document code = A09).	Some organisations do not sign MoUs, so jointly developed documents governing the relationship between the organisation and the recipient are accepted as equivalent, e.g. investment codes or partnership/country agreements that have been developed in conjunction with recipient governments, agreements with implementing partners or with grantees.
	28. Evaluations	Are evaluation documents published for all completed activities in this recipient country?	Evaluation documents consider what the activity achieved, whether the intended objectives were met, what the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives were and an assessment of the impact, effect and value of the activity. This information may be on a specific evaluation section of the organisation’s website.  If the activity under assessment is not completed but evaluation documents are available for other completed activities, the organisation can score for this indicator.  The IATI reference for this indicator is: Review of project performance and evaluation (document code = A07).	Not all organisations carry out evaluations for all of their activities. Organisations can score on this indicator as long as they publish evaluations within their regular evaluation cycles, i.e. the organisation publishes country evaluations every three years, the most recent documents within this time frame are accepted.

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
	29.Objectives	Are the objectives or purposes of the activity published?	<p>The objectives or purposes of the activity are those that the activity intends to achieve.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Objectives / Purpose of activity (document code = A02) or Description (description type = 2).</p>	The objectives need to include the detailed description of the activity, the target sector/group and expected outcomes.
	30.Budget docs	Is the budget of the activity published?	<p>This is a specific budget detailing what the intended spending is for the different lines of the individual activity. It is often a document published on the organisation's website.</p> <p>Budget documents cannot simply be at the country level. If an activity budget is included in a larger country-level document, it is only accepted if the budget for the activity is broken down line by line.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Budget (document code = A05).</p>	For organisations where budget documents might be considered commercially sensitive, documents with redactions of the commercially sensitive pieces of information are accepted but the specific reasons for the redactions need to be explicitly stated in detail and must clarify why the information is commercially sensitive and would cause material and direct harm if published.
	31.Contracts	Is the contract for the activity published?	<p>The individual contract(s) which is signed with a company, organisation or individual that provides goods and services for the activity. This could be on a procurement section of the organisation's website, on a separate website or on a central government procurement website.</p> <p>Contract documents cannot simply be at the country level. If an activity contract is included in a larger country-level document, it is only accepted if the contract mentions the activity specifically and in detail.</p> <p>Basic information about the activity contract is accepted if it contains three of the following five information items: awardee, amount, overview of services being provided, start/end dates, unique reference to original tender documents.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Contract (document code = A11 or A06).</p>	<p>This indicator is retained for all organisations. In cases where organisations consider such information to be commercially sensitive, sections within the contract can be redacted but the reason for the redactions needs to be explicitly stated.</p> <p>Due to the difficulty in checking contracts manually, rather than looking for the specific activity and the contract linked to it, a review of the organisation's overall contracts is completed in line with the organisation's procurement policy.</p> <p>For vertical funds, equivalent documents are accepted, such as approved country proposals or agreements between the recipient and the funder.</p>



Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
	32. Tenders	Does this organisation publish all tenders?	<p>Tenders are the individual contracts or proposals that have been put out to invite bids from companies or organisations that want to provide goods and services for an activity. They may be on a separate website, possibly on a central government procurement website.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Tender (document code = A10).</p>	<p>Investment codes or policies for IFIs and DFIs are accepted. For private foundations, calls for grant submissions are accepted. For humanitarian agencies, documents that provide guidance on securing funding are accepted.</p> <p>Due to the difficulty with manually finding tenders linked to current activities, rather than looking for the specific tender, a review of the organisation's overall calls for tenders is completed to check it is publishing them consistently and in-line with their procurement policy.</p> <p>For organisations that do not issue tenders related to aid projects (e.g. if procurement is undertaken by grantees or other implementing agencies), a statement explicitly clarifying this is required.</p>
Financial	33. Budget	Does this organisation provide a breakdown of the budget of the activity by year and/or quarter?	<p>The budget of the activity is the breakdown of the total financial commitment to the activity into forward-looking annual and quarterly chunks.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Budget or Planned Disbursement.</p>	<p>For organisations where this may be deemed as commercially sensitive information, total estimated cost of fund/grant/loan amount is accepted or sections within a document can be redacted. The specific reasons for the redactions need to be explicitly stated in detail and must clarify why the information is commercially sensitive and would cause material and direct harm if published.</p> <p>This indicator is more rigorously measured for IATI publishers (information published to IATI is scored higher than information published in other formats). Providing an annual forward budget allows an IATI publisher to score up to half the total available data quality points, while providing a quarterly forward-looking budget enables them to score the remaining half. This change has been made in recognition of recipient countries needing to be able to map activities to their own financial year rather than the calendar year.</p>

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
				Note: The difference between indicators 33 and 30 is that indicator 30 requires the overall activity budget to be broken down by individual line items for the activity. To score on indicator 33, the funds allocated to the activity must be broken down by year and quarter for at least the next year ahead. Spending by individual line items is not required. If the required information for both indicators 30 and 33 is available in a single document, it can be considered for both indicators.
	34. Commitments	Does this organisation provide details of the overall financial commitment made to the activity?	<p>This refers to the financial commitment for the activity as a whole for the lifetime of the activity. This is generally a high level commitment rather than a detailed breakdown of the activity budget.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Transaction (transaction type = commitment).</p>	
	35. Disbursements & expenditures	Does this organisation provide transaction-level details of individual actual financial disbursements / expenditures for this activity?	<p>Individual actual financial disbursements must be related to individual activities and must be on a per-transaction basis. Each activity is likely to have several transactions.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Transaction (transaction type = disbursement and expenditure).</p>	While such information might be considered to be commercially sensitive by some organisations, Publish What You Fund's view is that actual expenditure information is less sensitive once the money has been spent. Hence all organisations are scored on this indicator. For IFIs and DFIs, the total fund/loan amount spent is accepted and details of the loan repayment costs and related charges can be redacted. The specific reasons for the redactions need to be explicitly stated in detail and must clarify why the information is commercially sensitive and would cause material and direct harm if published.
	36. Budget ID	Does this organisation provide information about the activity that can link the activity to the recipient government's relevant budget classifications?	The budget classification is a way of linking the activity to the recipient country government's own budget codes. There are two parts to this indicator. The administrative classification can either be provided as the budget codes themselves, or as a common code that can map from a donor organisation's detailed purpose codes to the recipient country's functional or administrative budget classifications. In addition, the economic classification	<p>This indicator is retained for all organisations.</p> <p>The budget identifier helps to explain aid flows in the context of the recipient government's own budget. It does not relate only to those flows that are direct to the government ("on budget"), but also to other flows which may relate to the government's own budget. In cases where the organisation is only providing private sector</p>

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
			<p>provides the percentage of the budget that is capital versus current expenditure.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Country budget items and capital spend.</p>	<p>investment, budget classifications are still possible. Such activities could, for example, be classified as current expenditure under the microfinance and financial services function.</p>
Performance	37.Results	Are results, outcomes and outputs published for all completed activities in this recipient country?	<p>The results show whether activities achieved their intended outputs in accordance with the stated goals or plans. This information often refers to logframes and results chains and may be within a specific results or evaluation section of the organisation's website.</p> <p>The IATI references for this indicator are: Result and/or Results, outcomes and outputs (Document code = A08).</p>	<p>Both current and completed activities are considered for this indicator. If the activity is ongoing then the expected results should be available. If the activity has ended then the actual results should be available within 12 months of ending.</p>
	38.Impact appraisals	Are pre-project impact appraisals published?	<p>Pre-project impact appraisals explain the totality of positive and negative, primary and secondary effects expected to be produced by a development intervention.</p> <p>Environmental impact assessments as well as impact assessments which explain what objectives the project itself intends to provide are accepted.</p> <p>The IATI reference for this indicator is: Pre and post-project impact appraisal (document code = A01).</p>	<p>IFIs and DFIs tend only to publish impact appraisals if regulations require them to, but given the link they have to the eventual impact and results of the activity, all organisations are scored on this indicator.</p> <p>For loans or private sector investment, risk assessments and the fiscal objectives detailed in the loan document are accepted. These need to be sufficiently detailed and include any criteria used to assess eligibility for receiving the loan.</p> <p>Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs) and project plans are accepted for humanitarian agencies.</p>
	39.Conditions	Are the terms and conditions attached to the activity published?	<p>The terms and conditions of the activity may also be referred to as benchmarks, priors, or involve words such as "subject to...". They are specific to an individual activity and explain what the recipient must do in order to be eligible for the funds to be released.</p> <p>The conditions should include loan repayment terms if the activity is financed by a loan.</p> <p>The IATI references for this indicator are: Conditions and/or Conditions document (document code = A04).</p>	<p>For IFIs and DFIs, this includes loan repayment conditions or special terms and conditions. In cases where the loan repayment terms are considered commercially sensitive, this information can be redacted. The reason for the redactions needs to be explicitly stated in detail and must clarify why the information is commercially sensitive and would cause material and direct harm if published.</p>

Sub-group	Indicator	Survey question	Definition	Additional definitions and notes
				<p>For private foundations and humanitarian agencies, statements setting out what the grant can be spent on are accepted.</p> <p>Templates for general terms and conditions are not accepted for scoring this indicator. If there are no policy, performance or fiduciary conditions associated with an activity, this must be explicitly stated.</p>

## Annex 2: Data quality tests

The data quality tool of the [Aid Transparency Tracker](#) automatically assesses the quality of data published to the IATI Registry. Both organisation and activity files are tested.

The automated analysis works as follows:

For activity files:

- Packages are automatically attached to specific organisations included in the Index.
- Each activity in each package is tested by running a series of tests. These are then aggregated up to create total scores for each test in each package; once for all data, and once to include only those activities which are defined as “current”.
- The tests are then aggregated up into indicators for the single organisation.

For organisation files:

- Packages are automatically attached to specific organisations included in the Index.
- Each package is then tested by running a series of tests, which are then aggregated up into indicators for that organisation.

## Tests

Data that is published to the IATI Registry is automatically assessed by running one or more tests for each of the 36 publication indicators. The specific test expressions are below.

### FoXPath

The tests are written in FoXPath, a language that was developed specifically for the Aid Transparency Tracker, but which should have wider applicability. The aim was to develop a human-readable test based on XPath, which could then be parsed into any programming language and then used to test XML files.

The following abbreviations are used in this section:

- L is the name of a list (e.g. a codelist)
- N is a number
- T is a type
- X is an XPath string
- V is a string (or value)

### Formats

The tests are flexible but must conform to a specific format. The available formats could fairly easily be expanded on. Each of the tests returns a pass, fail or error (if for some reason something unexpected happened). Errors do not count against a publisher; total scores for each test for each package are composed of **(pass/pass+fail) x100**.

The following formats are used in the tests:

- X exists?
- X exists N times?
- X or X exists?
- X has more than N characters?
- X is in list L?

The following formats are not used for the review, but are supported:

- only one of X or X exists?
- X is a T?
- X sum to N?

### Conditions

Certain conditions restrict whether a test is run. Any conditions can be found in brackets at the end of the test. These are of the format:

- if X is at least N
- if X or X is not V
- if X is at least N and (if X or X is not V)
- if X is at least N and (if X or X is at least N)

If the condition is not passed, then the test does not count either as a pass or a fail.

The tests were derived programmatically from the IATI schema in the first instance to test for the existence of each element that has a relevant indicator in the Index. Additional tests were incorporated in order to ensure that the data is useful – for example, titles must have a minimum character length in order to be meaningful.

Following donor feedback regarding the tests, further modifications have been made to reduce the extent to which donors are penalised for not publishing information that would be logically impossible for them to publish. For example, activity end dates not be expected to exist until a project has closed, so the existence of this information is only tested if an activity is in the completion stage or later.

**Table 6: Tests used on data published to the IATI Registry<sup>16</sup>**

Indicator	Test expression	Test Name	Conditions
<b>Organisation level</b>			
4. Strategy	document-link/category[@code='B02'] exists?	Strategy	
5. Annual report	document-link/category[@code='B01'] exists?	Annual report	
6. Allocation policy	document-link/category[@code='B04'] exists?	Allocation policy	
7. Procurement policy	document-link/category[@code='B05'] exists?	Procurement policy	
8. Country strategy	See page 44	Country strategy paper	
9. Total organisation budget	See page 44	Total organisation budget	
10. Disaggregated budget	See page 44	Disaggregated budget	
11. Audit	document-link/category[@code='B06'] exists?	Audit	
<b>Activity level</b>			
12. Implementer	participating-org[@role='Implementing'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Implementing organisation	At least implementation
13. Unique ID	iati-identifier exists?	Unique IATI Identifier	
13. Unique ID	iati-identifier/text() starts with reporting-org/@ref or other-identifier[@type='B1']/@ref?	IATI Identifier starts with reporting org reference	
14. Title	title/text() or title/narrative/text() exists?	Title	
14. Title	title/text() or title/narrative/text() has more than 10 characters?	Title, more than 10 characters	
15. Description	description/text() or description/narrative/text() exists?	Description	
15. Description	description/text() or description/narrative/text() has more than 40 characters?	Description, more than 40 characters	
16. Planned dates	activity-date[@type='end-planned'] exists?	Activity date planned end date	
16. Planned dates	activity-date[@type='start-planned'] exists?	Activity date planned start date	
17. Actual dates	activity-date[@type='end-actual'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 3)?	Activity date actual end date	At least completion
17. Actual dates	activity-date[@type='start-actual'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Activity date actual start date	At least implementation
18. Current Status	activity-status exists?	Activity status	
18. Current Status	activity-status/@code is on list ActivityStatus?	Activity status, only once	
19. Contact details	contact-info exists?	Contact information for the activity	
20. Collaboration Type	collaboration-type exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Collaboration type	At least implementation

<sup>16</sup> Where more than one test is used for a single indicator, the total available data quality points are divided equally amongst the tests. For example: For indicator 14 (title), half the quality points are available for providing the title for every activity and the remaining half are available if the titles have more than 10 characters.

20. Collaboration Type	collaboration-type/@code is on list CollaborationType (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Collaboration type uses standard codelist	At least implementation
21. Flow Type	default-flow-type or transaction/flow-type exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Flow type	At least implementation
21. Flow Type	default-flow-type/@code or transaction/flow-type/@code is on list FlowType (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Flow type uses standard codelist	At least implementation
22. Aid Type	default-aid-type or transaction/aid-type exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Default aid type	At least implementation
22. Aid Type	default-aid-type/@code or transaction/aid-type/@code is on list AidType (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Aid type uses standard codelist	At least implementation
23. Finance Type	default-finance-type or transaction/finance-type exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Default finance type	At least implementation
23. Finance Type	default-finance-type/@code or transaction/finance-type/@code is on list FinanceType (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Finance type uses standard codelist	At least implementation
24. Sector	sector or transaction/sector exists?	Sector	
24. Sector	at least one (sector[@vocabulary="DAC"]/@code or sector[not(@vocabulary)]/@code or sector[@vocabulary="1"]/@code or transaction/sector[@vocabulary="1"]/@code) is on list Sector?	Sector uses standard codelist	
25. Sub-national location	location exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2 and recipient-region/@code is not 998)?	Location (sub-national)	At least implementation, and recipient region is not 'bilateral unspecified'
25. Sub-national location	location/coordinates exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2 and recipient-region/@code is not 998)?	Location (sub-national) coordinates	At least implementation, and recipient region is not 'bilateral unspecified'
26. Tied Aid Status	default-tied-status or transaction/tied-status exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Tied aid status	At least implementation
26. Tied Aid Status	default-tied-status/@code or transaction/tied-status/@code is on list TiedStatus (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Tied aid status uses standard codelist	At least implementation
27. MoU	document-link/category[@code='A09'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Document - Memorandum of understanding document	At least implementation
28. Evaluations	document-link/category[@code='A07'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 3)?	Document - Review of project performance and evaluation document	At least completion
29. Objectives	document-link/category[@code='A02'] or description[@type='2'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Document - Objectives / Purpose of activity document	At least implementation

30. Budget Docs	document-link/category[@code='A05'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2 and (default-aid-type/@code or transaction/aid-type/@code is not A01))?	Document - Budget document	At least implementation and aid type is not budget support
31. Contracts	document-link/category[@code='A06'] or document-link/category[@code='A11'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2 and (default-aid-type/@code or transaction/aid-type/@code is not A01))?	Document - Contract	At least implementation and aid type is not budget support
32. Tenders	document-link/category[@code='A10'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2 and (default-aid-type/@code or transaction/aid-type/@code is not A01))?	Document - Tender	At least implementation and aid type is not budget support
33. Budget	budget or planned-disbursement is available forward (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Budget	At least implementation
33. Budget	budget or planned-disbursement is available forward by quarters (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Budget, by quarters	At least implementation
34. Commitments	transaction/transaction-type[@code='C'] or transaction/transaction-type[@code='2'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Commitments	At least implementation
35. Disbursements and expenditures	transaction/transaction-type[@code='D'] or transaction/transaction-type[@code='E'] or transaction/transaction-type[@code='3'] or transaction/transaction-type[@code='4'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Disbursements and expenditures	At least implementation
36. Budget Identifier	at least one country-budget-items[@vocabulary='1']/budget-item/@code is on list BudgetIdentifier (if activity-status/@code is at least 2 and (default-aid-type/@code or transaction/aid-type/@code is not A01 or A02))?	Budget identifier, administrative/functional classification	At least implementation and aid type is not budget support
36. Budget Identifier	capital-spend exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2 and (default-aid-type/@code or transaction/aid-type/@code is not A01 or A02))?	Budget identifier, economic classification	At least implementation and aid type is not budget support
37. Results	result exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Result	At least implementation
37. Results	document-link/category[@code='A08'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Document - Results, outcomes and outputs document	At least implementation
38. Impact Appraisals	document-link/category[@code='A01'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Document - Pre- and post-project impact appraisal	At least implementation
39. Conditions	conditions exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Conditions	At least implementation
39. Conditions	document-link/category[@code='A04'] exists (if activity-status/@code is at least 2)?	Conditions document	At least implementation



## Test on indicators 8, 9 and 10

The following tests were more complicated to design because they rely on comparing text strings or they require cross-referencing with other IATI fields. Publish What You Fund welcomes feedback on these tests.

**Country strategies (indicator 8):** For each recipient country for which there is a current budget, we look to see whether a country strategy paper is published. Given the way that the IATI Standard is currently structured in this area, the tests are somewhat complicated in order to try and capture as much information as possible.

For each country, we look in the title of each country strategy paper for:

- a) the name of the country, using the same name as provided in the recipient country budget;
- b) the English language name of the country, if the ISO country codes list is used for reporting the country budget.

Where a country strategy paper uses in its title a name that is not used in the recipient country budget, and that is also not a standard version (e.g. Viet Nam vs Vietnam), the tests may on occasions fail to pick up those countries. The tests appear to be picking up almost all countries, and from 2014 onwards, manual checks are conducted to ensure this is the case to the extent possible. We will be engaging with the IATI Technical Advisory Group on how to improve the Standard so that country strategy papers can be better coded in the future.

**Total budget (indicator 9):** We look to see whether there is a total budget one, two and three years forward. The first year must have an end date of at least 230 days forward from the last date on which the tests are run.<sup>17</sup> The second year must be 365 days later, and the third year a further 365 days later. The points available are distributed equally among the three years, so one year forward gets 33.33 points; two years forward gets 66.66 points; and three years gets 100 points.

**Disaggregated budget (indicator 10):** Disaggregated budgets are scored for each of the three years ahead for which they are available. This is assessed as the value of all recipient country budgets available for the relevant year as a percentage of 50% of the average of Country Programmable Aid (CPA)<sup>18</sup>, multiplied by the total budget for the relevant year. If the relevant year is not available, the current year is used instead. We used the same fraction for all donors (21.36%). As above, the total points available are derived from an average of the points received in each of the three years.

For example, total budget: USD 1,000

Total country spend per year required for getting maximum possible points for each year: USD 213.60 (i.e. 21.36% of 1,000)

Total country budgets in Year 1: USD 300 => over USD 213.60, so 100 points for year 1

Total country budgets in Year 2: USD 150 => 70% of USD 213.60, so 70 points for year 2

Total country budgets in Year 3: USD 0 => 0% of USD 213.60, so 0 for year 3

**Total data quality score:**  $(100+70+0)/3 = 57$

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<sup>17</sup> In order to score the maximum points on the forward budget indicators, budgets need to run up to a minimum of December 2017. The number of days used in the tests help ensure that budgets that are mid-cycle are still captured but that they run up to the required end date of 31 December 2015, 2016 and 2017 to score the points for each year.

<sup>18</sup> Calculated as 21.36% based on OECD DAC 2011 data.

### Current data test

The tests above are only run against current data for the purposes of the Index. Current data is defined as:

- ongoing activities; or
- planned end dates within the previous 12 months; or
- actual end dates within the previous 12 months; or
- disbursement or expenditure transaction dates within the previous 12 months.

The test expression used is:

activity-date[@type='end-planned']/@iso-date|activity-date[@type='end-planned']/text()|activity-date[@type='end-actual']/@iso-date|activity-date[@type='end-actual']/text()|activity-date[@type='3']/@iso-date|activity-date[@type='3']/text()|activity-date[@type='4']/@iso-date|activity-date[@type='4']/text()|transaction-date/@iso-date (for any transaction[transaction-type/@code='D']|transaction[transaction-type/@code='E']|transaction[transaction-type/@code='3']|transaction[transaction-type/@code='4']) is less than 13 months ago?

### Frequency test

The frequency of publication is calculated based on the methodology used by the IATI Dashboard. Details of the methodology used and the frequency of publication for existing publishers can be found here: <http://dashboard.iatistandard.org/timeliness.html>