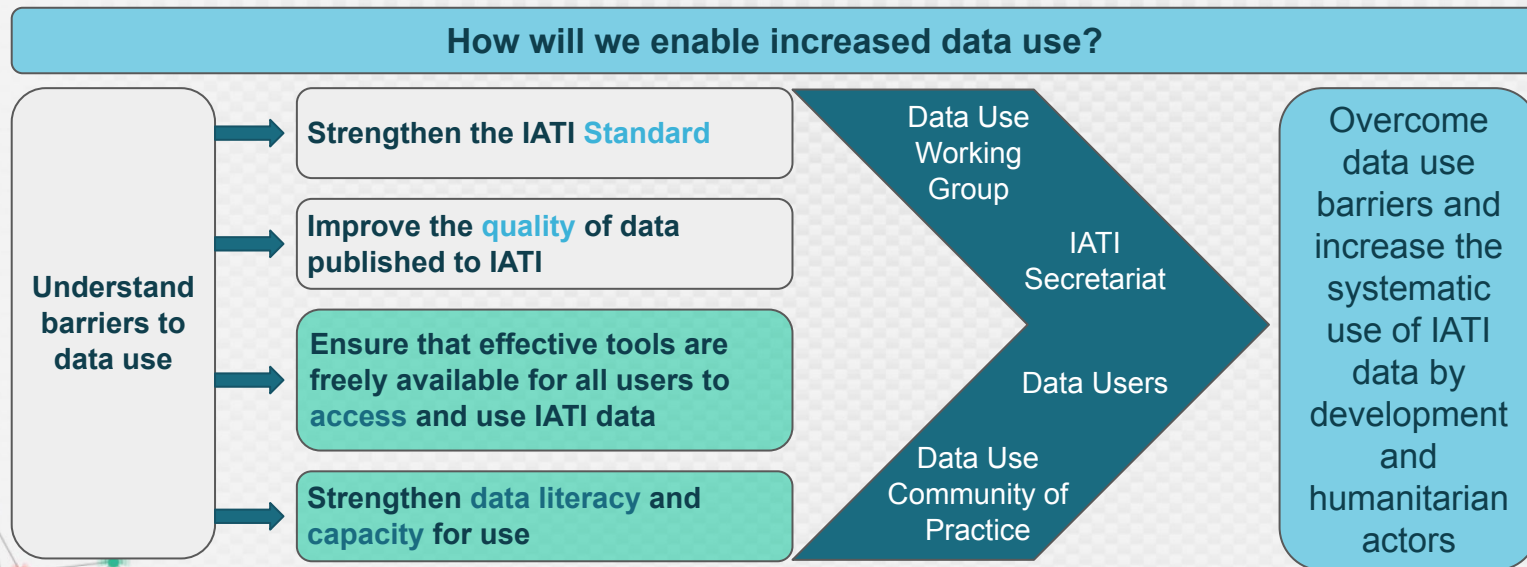# Progress in Improving Systematic Data Use and Introduction to Country Development Finance Data Tool

Sarah McDuff and Amy Silcock, *IATI Secretariat*
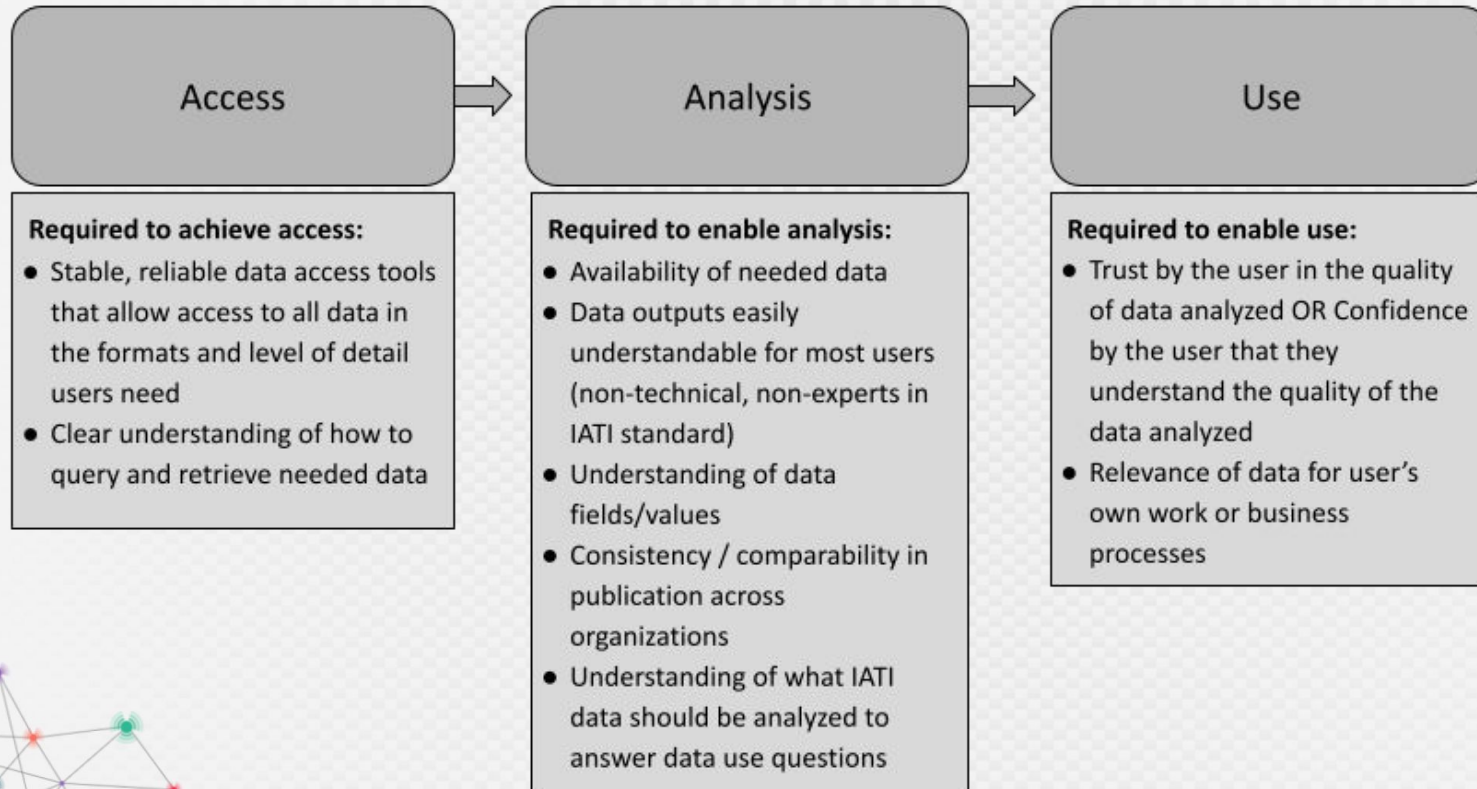Henry Asor, *Nigeria Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning*

What are we trying to achieve by 2025?

Core Objective: IATI data is systematically used by development and humanitarian actors for decision-making

How will we enable increased data use?

Understand barriers to data use

→ Strengthen the IATI **Standard**

→ Improve the **quality** of data published to IATI

→ Ensure that effective tools are freely available for all users to **access** and use IATI data

→ Strengthen **data literacy** and **capacity** for use

Data Use Working Group

IATI Secretariat

Data Users

Data Use Community of Practice

Overcome data use barriers and increase the systematic use of IATI data by development and humanitarian actors

iati VCE
community virtual exchange
13.04.2021

What is the Pathway to Progress?

Access	→	Analysis	→	Use

Required to achieve access:
- Stable, reliable data access tools that allow access to all data in the formats and level of detail users need
- Clear understanding of how to query and retrieve needed data

Required to enable analysis:
- Availability of needed data
- Data outputs easily understandable for most users (non-technical, non-experts in IATI standard)
- Understanding of data fields/values
- Consistency / comparability in publication across organizations
- Understanding of what IATI data should be analyzed to answer data use questions

Required to enable use:
- Trust by the user in the quality of data analyzed OR Confidence by the user that they understand the quality of the data analyzed
- Relevance of data for user's own work or business processes

What actions are we taking to make progress in 2021?

Ensure all users can access the data they need in the formats and level of detail that they need it

→ Rollout Country Development Finance Data tool
→ Conduct research and consultations to identify and confirm user requirements for new data portal
→ Ongoing support of Datastore and d-Portal

Understand barriers to data use and develop/implement strategies to eliminate them

→ Use findings on barriers to inform work on data access tools, prioritization of data quality work, consultations on Standard guidance, etc.
→ Carry out research on IATI/AIMS integration (delayed from 2020) and support uptake of the use of IATI data in AIMS
→ Develop/implement strategy on how to bridge gap between publisher practices and data use needs

Strengthen data literacy and capacity for use

→ Targeted guidance and training for partner country governments on how to understand and analyze data in the Country Development Finance Data tool outputs
→ Development of data access / use guidance materials based on 2020 gap analysis
→ Expansion of direct support to data users

Identify and share real use cases and challenges

→ Increase sharing and engagement with community on how users are attempting to and/or using IATI data and challenges they encounter

Expansion of Direct Support to Data Users:
Review of 2020 Data Use Queries

Increase in number of data use support requests

- 62 requests in 2020 via the help desk
- 26 requests first quarter 2021 via the helpdesk
- Plus more through other channels

Common Questions

- How to access data in the right format, particularly transaction data
- Tracking COVID-19 funding, plus disaggregation e.g. mental health / projects
- Differences between d-portal and the Datastore
- Using IATI to populate data portals
- How to analyze projections and spending by country

Expansion of Direct Support to Data Users:
Improvements being implemented in 2021

- Increased capacity to respond to queries
- 1-1 calls with data users
- Help with data extraction and preparation
- Review data user's analysis
- Feedback data use issues to publishers

Upcoming support

- Data Use Drop-Ins: monthly opportunity to get support and discuss data access/analysis/use questions and issues
- Document and promote analysis done by IATI data users
- Design better data access tools
- Create data use guidance

Expansion of Direct Support to Data Users:

Example: Customized support to data users to access/analyze data

Task: Find COVID + mental health spending

1) **Identify activities**
   a) Use the IATI Datastore
   b) Follow COVID-19 data use guidance
   c) Combine data from different search terms
   d) Search within CSV file for terms relating to mental health
   e) Collect relevant IATI Identifiers

2) **Identify transactions**
   a) Use the Country Development Finance Data tool
   b) Download specific country transaction data
   c) Select relevant IATI Identifier from
   d) Analyse funding

Introduction: Country Development Finance Data Tool

https://countrydata.iatistandard.org/

- Simple data access tool that provides access to Excel-formatted data on projections and spending by country and region
- Interim solution to meet the needs of partner countries while work is underway to design and develop a new data portal

Why was this developed?

- *IATI Strategic Plan 2020-2025*: "In order to be successful in delivering on its objectives, IATI must prioritise the particular data needs and challenges of partner countries."
- Standard set of data needed by partner countries
- Envisioned that partner countries would access IATI data through AIMS; this has proven challenging
- Providing direct access to needed data in user-friendly Excel format key to enabling data use

What informed its development?

- Assessment of the data and user needs of partner countries
- Support to the Governments of Chad and Nigeria to access, process, and analyze data to inform national budget planning and produce development cooperation reports
- Consultations with partner country governments

What does it offer?

- Two files for each country and region: 1) Transactions; 2) Budgets
- Easy analysis in pivot table
- Quarterly aggregations of budgets, commitments, disbursements, and expenditures
- Aggregations by organisation (and type), sector, aid type, finance type

Using IATI Data in Nigeria

Why do countries need timely, good quality data on external resource flows?

- Availability of timely and comprehensive data helps in promoting transparency and mutual accountability between the government and development partners, but will also provide a clear bearing towards achieving the SDGs.

- Enables governments, development partners and stakeholders generally (policy makers, private sector, general public, academicians, etc.), to appraise the role of aid to economic development, poverty eradication, humanitarian assistance, crisis prevention, etc.

Using IATI Data in Nigeria

What data do countries need?

- Individual country expectations differ, the data needed are broadly but not limited to:

  - Number of development partners (Bilateral, Multilateral, INGOs, CSOs, South South Cooperation, Private Organizations, Development Finance Banks, etc.) in the country;
  - Number of projects and implementation status of each project;
  - Volume of aid projected to be disbursed over the next 3 years;
  - Volume of aid commitment and disbursements;
  - Volume of aid to various sectors;
  - Types of disbursement (grants, technical assistance, loan, etc.);
  - Geographical (location) distribution of activities/disbursement.

- Needed to support many country level processes, including budget planning, monitoring of project implementation, assessment of resources allocated to SDGs, and analysis of the entire envelope of resource flows to the country.

Using IATI Data in Nigeria

Why are we using IATI data to help meet these needs?

- Data published to IATI contains much of the information that is needed to support country level processes.

- In Nigeria, given challenges with donor reporting to the Development Assistance Database, we recognize the value add that IATI data can bring – by helping to increase the quantity and quality of data available at the country level.

- Data is also often available in IATI sooner than it is shared by development partner country offices in the DAD.

Using IATI Data in Nigeria

How are we using IATI data?

- During 2020, we used IATI data to inform the national budget planning process and to assess external resource flows to Nigeria for 2016-2020 for our Development Cooperation Report.

- As we were not able to access the data we needed without extensive complicated processing, we engaged the support of the Secretariat to help in accessing and processing the data.

What opportunities does the CDFD tool offer?

- Ability to access data directly so it can be used by various entities in the Government.

- Already using it for real time monitoring of resource flows, e.g. looking at Q4 2020 spending for the quarterly Balance of Payments assessment.

- Plan to use it later this year to pull data for budget planning and also to prepare our new Development Cooperation Report.

Example 1: What resources were spent in Q4 of 2020 in country x?

1. Select recipient country
2. Download Transactions file
3. Insert pivot table
   - Add Calendar Year to Filters and select 2020
   - Add Transaction Type to Filters and select Disbursement and Expenditure
   - Add Calendar Quarter to Columns
   - Add Value (USD) to Values
   - Add Provider Org to Rows (and add any other variable to rows that you want to analyze -- e.g. Sector Category; Finance Type; Aid Type)
4. Easily assess key questions about Q4 spending

Quiz:

Assess resources spent in Q4 of 2020 in Burkina Faso

1. **What were the total resources spent in Q4 of 2020?**
    Answer: USD 851 million (as of 11 April 2021)

2. **To which sector category were the most resources allocated?**
    Answer: Other Multisector (as of 11 April 2021)

3. **What was the allocation of resources to loans vs grants?**
    Answer: 70% grants; 22% loans; 8% unallocated
    (as of 11 April 2021)

Example 2: Analysis of trends in external resource flows to country x

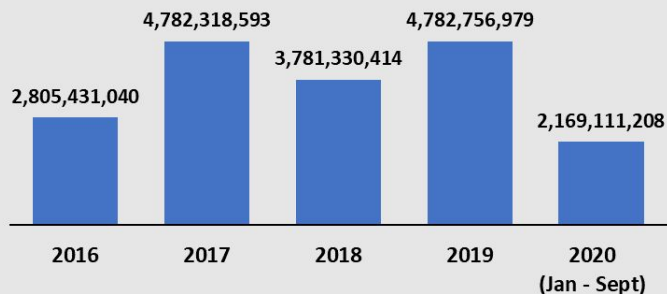Figure 7: Development Cooperation to Nigeria (USD), 2016-2020

- 2016: 2,805,431,040
- 2017: 4,782,318,593
- 2018: 3,781,330,414
- 2019: 4,782,756,979
- 2020 (Jan - Sept): 2,169,111,208

Figure 13: Spending (USD) by Sector, 2019 (top 10)

- Basic Health: 1,052,188,112
- Emergency Response: 736,372,877
- Agriculture: 396,119,985
- Health, General: 333,391,513
- Government & Civil Society-general: 306,064,669
- Banking & Financial Services: 297,142,643
- Population Policies/Programmes & Reproductive Health: 282,735,430
- Other Social Infrastructure & Services: 213,666,595
- Water Supply & Sanitation: 203,157,653
- Other Multisector: 163,587,746
- Unallocated / Unspecified: 128,549,998

Figure 8: Spending (USD) by Organization Type, 2016-2020

Legend:
- Academic, Training and Research
- Foundation
- Government
- International NGO
- Multilateral
- National NGO
- Other
- Other Public Sector
- Private Sector
- Public Private Partnership
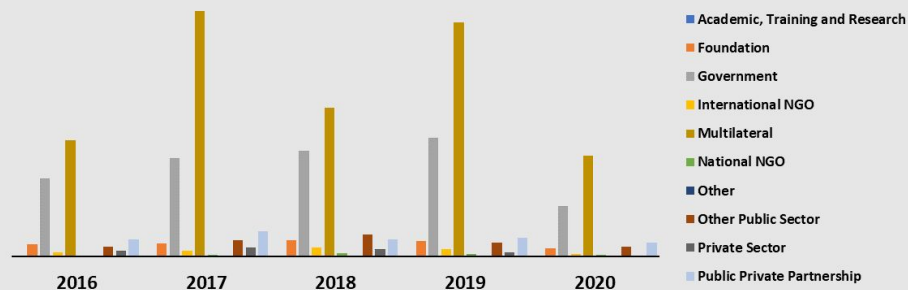
Quiz:
Analyse trends in resource flows to Yemen

1. In which year were the most resources spent between 2016 and 2020?
   Answer: 2019 (as of 11 April 2021)

2. Does the top sector stay consistent from 2016 and 2020 or vary from year to year?
   Answer: Consistent; Emergency Response (as of 11 April 2021)

Next Steps

Join the Data Use Community of Practice on IATI Connect

Join the Data Use Drop-In on the 4th Monday of each month starting in May!

Reach out to get one-on-one support →
support@iatistandard.org