Aid Effectiveness: From commitment to transparency?

Open data, and the transparency and effectiveness of international development aid, have failed to get the attention they deserve.

After the adoption of the Millennium Declaration in 2000, several high-level forums on aid effectiveness have taken place.

In 2008, in Ghana, the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) was launched. The initiative is a global campaign that registers development aid data from many international donors and aims to increase the transparency of how development money is spent.

Timeline of Aid Effectiveness Agenda

- Paris, France: the Paris Declaration
- Accra, Ghana: "Agenda for Action" launch of the voluntary initiative and registry "International Aid Transparency Initiative" (IATI)
- Busan, South Korea: the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation confirmed the international standard IATI and committed to make its aid transparent by 2015
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) enshrine the access to information and data
- UN calls for "a data revolution in development"

In 2011, the NGO Publish What You Fund published the first IATI evaluation of all raw data on development aid from different kinds of donors.

The assessment was based on the IATI Standard: 39 indicators and a scoring system to improve the assessment of the transparency and effectiveness of development aid.

Database For Transparency
According to the IATI ranking, UNDP is the only organization to score above 90%.

Top 5 aid donors of the IATI ranking in transparency

- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 93%
- The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) 89.6%
- UNICEF 89.5%
- UK-DFID 88.3%
- Global Fund 86.9%

Overall, most organisations are still underperforming in transparency and effectiveness, according to the IATI evaluation.

Since 2014, only 18 evaluated organisations improved the documentation of their performances in quality and quantity.