IATI Data Use Fund Activities - update 2018

Early in 2017, UNDP launched the IATI Data Use Fund (DUF) and announced a call for expressions of interest to promote the DUF among the community of development transparency advocates and champions. Following the announcement, more than 30 organizations and private sector actors signaled their interest to work with IATI on strengthening data use. Since April 2017, UNDP published four requests for proposals to provide the IATI community with opportunities to bid for innovative small-scale activities and participate in implementing the IATI Data Use Strategy.

Below is an overview of completed and ongoing activities funded by the IATI Data Use Fund:

Theme 1 – Awareness Raising

Following the request for proposals (RfP) targeting awareness raising activities for IATI, two project proposals, one submitted by the Africa Open Data and Internet Research Foundation (AODIRF) based in Ghana and one from Oxfam America were selected for funding.

Funded by the DUF, **AODIRF** organized a series of IATI workshops, organized in Accra, Kumasi and Ho, as well as a final hackathon held in Accra. The objective was to build the capacity of stakeholders on the use of IATI data, analysis and visualization, and to develop mobile applications to access IATI data.

In total, over 420 people from more than 130 different organizations, including government institutions from all sectors, media, academia and civil society participated in the events, which generated extensive national and local media coverage.

As a result of the DUF-funded activity, awareness on the availability of IATI data and use of data in open format was created among a diverse group of data users and open data advocates. Additionally, the activities provided a forum for traditional development practitioners to connect with private sector, developers and other data specialists and discuss the benefits of open data for sustainable development.

Oxfam America conducted training sessions for selected civil society organizations in Uganda to strengthen their capacities around IATI data use. The specific interests of the CSOs, which included the Uganda Debt Network (UDN), Climate Action Network-Uganda (CAN-U), Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC) and the Women and Girl Child Development Association (WEGCDA), were to start using IATI data to monitor development projects and share information to increase accountability and participation in community and public affairs.

Guided by Oxfam experts, the partners assessed and analyzed project documents found on d-portal to gather project details which were then fact-checked through conversations with key stakeholders, potential beneficiaries, and staff involved in project implementation. At the same time as becoming more familiar with the data, the participants shared their data use stories through social and traditional media, becoming valuable multipliers and advocates for IATI data use.

Theme 2- Data Quality

One issue central to the quality of IATI data is the connection between data users and publishers; it is essential therefore for users to have the ability to provide feedback on the quality and usability of data to the individual data publisher. Precise and direct feedback will encourage publishers to report high quality data designed to meet the need of the data user and thereby increase the usability of the data.

In order to conduct research on the possibilities of a web-based feedback mechanism and provide recommendations on how such a feedback mechanism could look like, a proposal by Nepalese company **Young Innovations** was selected for funding under this theme. The results and recommendations based on their research are expected at the end of February 2019 and subsequently a second RfP for the implementation of such a feedback mechanism will be published.

Theme 3 – IATI tools

In Theme 3 **Development Gateway** was awarded funding to develop an "IATI Tool Guide" to provide a comprehensive overview of existing IATI tools, including user-case scenarios and step-by-step guidance material. As part of this activity, DG analysts conducted comprehensive research and provided guiding recommendations in terms of gaps and development needs regarding IATI data use tools. More information on the IATI Tool Guide and downloadable material is available here.

Theme 4 – User Guidance

With the anticipated update of the IATI Datastore (currently being implemented by Zimmerman and Zimmerman and expected to be functional in summer/fall 2019), activities related to this theme are currently on hold. However, comprehensive guidance on how to use the new IATI datastore will be required by the community, and requests for the design and implementation of related activities will be published in the first half of 2019.

Theme 5 – IATI-AIMS Integration

IATI data use by partner country governments – ideally through automated integration of IATI data into the national systems - is one of the main objectives outlined in the IATI data use strategy. Accordingly, one of the first RfPs published aimed to tackle this challenge and improve IATI data integration into national Aid Management Systems. Funded by the IATI Data Use Fund, **Development Gateway** updated an existing IATI-AIMS integration tool in Senegal and trained selected Senegalese government and development partners' staff on using the newly updated integration mechanism.