IATI Community Support Proposals

Introduction

Definitions

- **IATI Standard** - the set of documentation and tools in use around the International Aid Transparency Initiative
- **Developers** - those interacting directly with the IATI Standard in order to either publish data that is IATI compliant, or reuse existing IATI data
- **Stakeholders** - those using the IATI Standard within organisations that wish to publish/use IATI data. NB - these people may not be technically aware/engaged
- **Supporters** - those advocating transparency and open aid - and willing the IATI Standard to support stakeholders and developers engaged.

Proposals

There are four key areas to act around

- **Documentation** - keeping clear and current information on the IATI Standard
- **Monitoring** - providing a means for people to monitor IATI Standard and IATI data updates [does this also include e.g. email list]
- **Community Channels** - maintaining routes for the IATI Standard communities to contact and support each other
- **Support & Help** - defining routes through which communities can seek help in relation to the IATI Standard

[There is perhaps a section on governance. How do changes occur, what is the process, how to get involved, minutes of meetings etc. Some of which can be on this site, some elsewhere.]

Whilst some of these areas may overlap, it is envisaged that by clearly defining them, we can successfully develop and build them within scope.

Documentation

Aim: *providing a core and current documentation hub for the IATI Standard*

Overview:

The IATIStandard website should be the authoritative and definitive point of reference for documentation on all core components of the IATI Standard - namely:

- The data schemas in use
- Code lists required
- Information on publishing IATI data
- Information on testing/evaluating compliance in IATI data
- Where to seek support

Recommendation(s):

- iatistandard.org is reconfigured around these five key remits
- Versioning of schemas and code lists is integrated
- The core documentation on the standard elements is also versioned
- Clear links to support/community channels is provided (rather than hosted on this site)

Timescale:

Development site in progress. Launch as soon as ready (end of May 2012?).

Status:

Current site is in dev.iatistandard.org
Working notes at:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1v-hBL9V2b-__2UXrM58I1uU13ASgZnCWWPDnV4Q2rzI/edit

Monitoring

Aim: *providing a means for the community to monitor updates around the IATI Standard and IATI data*

Overview:

It is important that the community can monitor and receive updates around various developments around the IATI Standard. These include developments that affect the actual IATI Standard and resultant documentation, but also updates in terms of data being published, and applications using it.

Recommendation(s):

- RSS Feeds from IATIRegistry to be "fixed" and documented (where?)
- Email subscription project with Gov Delivery to be piloted
- Clear guidance, timescales and dates on how the IATI TAG operates, including how updates are requested, processed, approved and implemented
- Establish a broadcast method for IATI Standard updates - check if this could be facilitated via the AidInfo aidtransparency updates (using Feedburner?)
- *Utilise the Knowledge Base as a repository for Release Notes on various datasets?*
- A central "Monitor IATI" hub for various subscription channels - possibly at iatistandard.org ?

Timescale:

1st April 2012

Status:

RSS Feeds fix underway
Email subscriptions ready
TAG Guidance being developed -
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z6cqwBVJ9-uibiddwBG9ZsvXh9cfVVGIb6KPNWxVfbg/edit
"Monitor IATI" to be discussed/developed

Community Channels

Aim: *maintaining a clear set of communication channels for the community to interact, share and seek support*

Overview:

It is vital that all communities interacting with the IATI Standard can contact each other and have the fora to seek support, advice and help. As the IATI Standard matures, these channels will become a real resource, but would require careful curating.

Needs:
- Anyone developing tools or working with data needs to know when the standard changes or when there are significant updates to the data;
- Anyone working with the data who hits technical challenges needs somewhere to share this, and discuss those challenges with peers - with e-mail notification option.
- For TAG members to hear about and discuss proposed changes to the standard
  - Suggest an e-mail list / website which gives an option for 'forced notifications' and option to control whether you see the discussions or not
- Occasional push updates for people: newsletter of latest updates. For example, news of:
  - N new signatories
  - New discussions on the knowledge base
  - Other news
- Tool builders would like regular conversations - for example Google hangouts
- Webinars

Suggested recommendation(s):
- Establish a self-hosted or hosted Stack Overflow space specifically for IATI
  - Use this for both creation and use questions and answers
- **Converted IATI-Tools google group to IATI-Technical**
- Establish a Wiki as the place to write up 'Knowledge Base' type articles
  - With space for published content, and space for collaboration on content
  - **Using Dokuwiki**
- Establish an IATI TAG email list for announcements of proposed standard changes. Invite only to TAG members **?**
- Possibly deprecate the Zendesk Knowledge Base and move to:
  - Using Stackoverflow platform for public support
  - A simple ticketing system for private support
- Establish a regular e-mail newsletter
- Establish good feeds on the front page of a relevant site (e.g. IATIStandard) that show what is going on across:

- - The stack overflow
  - News and updates
- Host regular hangouts for technical actors - both creators and data users
- (Depending upon the above) Establish an alternative channel for community self-help - possibly using Stackoverflow-type open source software such as osqa.net

Timescale:

Project starts 1st April - seeking consultation with community on and around TAG Meeting in mid May?

Status:

Help & Support

Aim: *establishing clear channels for the community to seek support and advice around the IATI Standard, especially from perceived "official" channels*

Overview:

Currently, there are several tickets submitted by the community via support.iatistandard.org that have not been adequately processed and subsequently documented. Many of these look to be of an official nature - which further hinders community engagement when not dealt with. Equally, the close nature of the ticket system in use, means that issues are left "in the dark" , with community members not engaged. Again, the wider community is not knowledgeable about such issues.

It is envisaged that by moving to a more open and fully-documented means of support, will limit the "official" traffic directed to the IATI Standard. Much of this rests on actions detailed elsewhere, although consideration much be given on support to those starting out to publish IATI data, and/or official signatories.

Recommendation(s):
- Evaluate that Community Channels (see above) can be public, open and the main channel for support
- Ensure that Documentation on procedures for IATI Standard updates and developments is widely available - see above actions
- Establish a central ticket system, whereby tickets can be grouped and allocated to any specific publisher/signatory. Utilise this as a means for publication support with a publisher - and be clear on the parameters of usage. This *could* be the only private channel for support - and gate-kept accordingly (ie a case management system such as Atrium)

Timescale:

Status: