



**iati**  International  
Aid Transparency  
Initiative

# Driving IATI's Strategic Plan forward

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

# Foreword



**Theo van de Sande**  
Chair of IATI Governing Board

While the world experienced another year of COVID-19-related challenges, in 2021 IATI continued to focus on developing its basic infrastructure that will serve as the solid basis for providing more and better accessible open, real-time information on development and humanitarian activities. Over the past year, in line with the aims of our 2020-2025 IATI Strategic Plan, we continued our efforts to improve the technical infrastructure underpinning our data services, and to enable its systematic use by country-level stakeholders, including developing country governments, civil society organisations and journalists. By the end of 2021, more than 1400 organisations had published data in IATI on 1 million+ development and humanitarian activities, including on more than 15,000 activities related to COVID-19 (covering 119 billion USD in disbursements). These actions supported development and humanitarian stakeholders to better plan, manage and coordinate their activities for more effective outcomes.

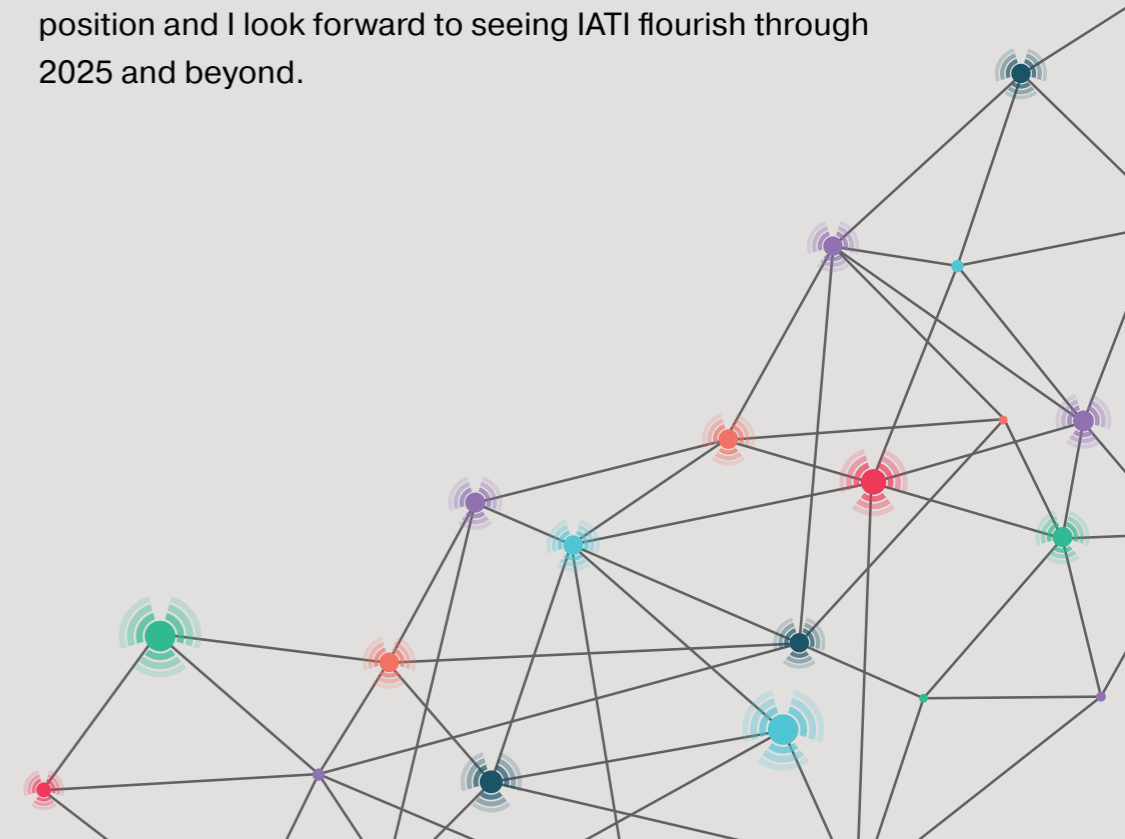
In 2021, we saw strong growth in people searching for IATI data, with the number of new users to our search platform d-portal.org increasing by almost 400%; we also saw encouraging progress in the systematic use of IATI data in partner countries (including Chad, Lesotho and Nigeria, amongst others) to inform national planning processes. Six new members joined our initiative, and we engaged with these and many other new faces during our inaugural Virtual Community Exchanges in April and October, attracting more than 600 individuals, many learning about IATI for the first time.

But alongside our successes, new challenges are on the horizon for 2022. Since the launch of IATI in 2008, the aid transparency movement has made a powerful political impact, including through IATI's work to improve standards of transparency for development cooperation providers. However, challenges remain in transforming political will into good quality data; and ensuring IATI is seen by partner country stakeholders as a source of trusted information.

At the same time, the development financing landscape is changing - with some partners of emerging importance not yet publishing in IATI.

Having achieved significant progress in building our technical infrastructure in 2021, we now have the foundations in place to step up the work on strengthening both the quality and the use of IATI data and reinvigorating our community of publishers, members and data users. We will also look to strategically expand the IATI reach and adapt to the changing development support landscape. We will reach out to stakeholders of emerging importance - including those in the humanitarian community, development finance institutions, the private sector, non-traditional donor countries and others - and proactively put in place the necessary mechanisms and guidance to enable monitoring and assessment of these flows, adding strategic value to IATI data. IATI will be developing its own publishing tool to enable more partners to publish their IATI data in a practicable way.

As the outgoing Governing Board Chair, I am proud of what IATI has achieved over the past four years in providing the solid basis that is needed to face future challenges. I am equally proud of the committed network of publishers, data users and transparency advocates that make up our initiative. It has been a sincere privilege serving in this position and I look forward to seeing IATI flourish through 2025 and beyond.



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# About IATI



The International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) works to ensure that transparent, good quality information on development cooperation and humanitarian assistance is available and used to help achieve sustainable development outcomes.

Organisations publish information according to the rules and guidance set out in the IATI Standard, generating data that is freely and openly available to anybody with internet access. The initiative supports its publishers to improve the quality of IATI data and facilitates access to effective tools and guidance to use this information to drive decision-making and accountability.

IATI is hosted by a multi-stakeholder consortium led by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), together with the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the international development organisation Development Initiatives. The initiative is governed by its members and a member-elected Governing Board, and it is supported by a global community of development and humanitarian practitioners, advocates for transparency, data experts and technical specialists.

## Annual Report 2021

This year's Annual Report shares the progress and challenges in 2021 of implementing the IATI Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025. This report is accompanied by a separate Financial Report that provides accessible and transparent information about IATI's finances.

[ACCESS FINANCIAL REPORT 2021](#)

# 2021 Overview

2021 marked the second year of implementation for IATI's ambitious five-year Strategic Plan. It also marked the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic, which meant that as with many other industries, IATI's community and members were unable to gather in-person, and the Secretariat and Governing Board worked remotely for much of the year. Despite this, the initiative was able to deliver a wide range of actions that contributed to achieving the IATI Strategic Plan 2020-25.

## Driving progress on IATI Strategic Plan objectives

Promising steps were taken **to promote the systematic use of IATI data** by development and humanitarian actors. Further enhancements were made to IATI's Country Development Finance Data tool in 2021, providing support to partner country governments to analyse external development finance for budget planning and monitoring. During the year, data users in almost 100 countries had used the tool to download IATI data in simple Excel spreadsheets to support their analysis and decision-making.

**To improve the quality of data published**, an extensive consultation was launched to help create a new IATI Data Quality Index. As a key commitment in the IATI Strategic Plan, the Index aims to measure the components of IATI data that matter most to development and humanitarian data users.

**To strengthen IATI's technical tools and services**, in 2021 the IATI Validator version 2 was launched and the IATI Datastore was rebuilt and brought in-house, onto IATI's new Unified Platform. This was a key recommendation of the 2020 Technical Stocktake, and marks significant progress in IATI's evolution from a siloed set of technical tools and products to a single, integrated system architecture.

## Increase in development and humanitarian data available

**In 2021, the amount of data available in IATI on development and humanitarian resource flows and activities continued to increase.**

- An additional **135 organisations** started to publish their data to IATI, representing a growth of publishers of 10% since 2020
- Organisations published data on a further **51,493 development and humanitarian activities**
  - ◊ **6,189** of these were marked as addressing humanitarian crises, representing **8% more activities compared to 2020**
- Activities containing information on how they are contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals increased by **26% (20,379 more activities) since 2020**



## Strengthening the IATI Community

IATI's diverse community expanded significantly in 2021 as the initiative was successfully able to engage new audiences virtually. IATI's community platform, Connect, expanded from 392 users in January to nearly 1000 users by the end of 2021. In addition IATI held two Virtual Community Exchange (VCE) meetings for the first time, attracting the highest number of attendees of any previous IATI event. The increased engagement from IATI's community contributed and strengthened discussions, consultations and collaboration between open data publishers and users.

# Overview of data available from IATI



# Budget and Spending data available from IATI

**1400 organisations** have published data on their development and humanitarian spending and activities.

As of 31 December 2021, the following data was available:

**Over one million  
(1,079,730)**

development and humanitarian activities

## Budget data

Budget data indicates the amount of money an organisation plans to spend in future years.

The following data was available on 2022 budgets (as of the end of 2021):

**USD 148 billion** in forward-looking budgets for **198\*** recipient countries

**Multilateral organisations published 56% of this data** followed by bilateral governments (at 34%)

## Spending data (disbursements and expenditures)

Spending data (disbursements and expenditures) on development and humanitarian activities, showing money being transferred from one organisation to another across delivery chains, and on the eventual spending on goods and services.

The following data was available on 2021 spending, as of the end of 2021;

**USD 229 billion** in spending for **225\*** recipient countries

\*The IATI Country codelist is generated from the ISO 3166-1 part of the ISO 3166 standard



## IATI data available on humanitarian assistance

Organisations have published data on over **80,000 activities**, flagging them as specifically responding to humanitarian crises in **204\* countries**.

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IATI has aligned its terminology and definitions with other humanitarian initiatives, ensuring IATI data is meaningful for the sector. In 2021, more organisations published data on the ways in which their humanitarian activities relate to international responses:

Publishers have indicated which humanitarian emergencies their activities are responding to by using internationally recognised GLIDE codes (GLobal IDEntifier number).

IATI data is available on activities addressing **441 unique GLIDE** codes, and IATI data from 2021 refers to 20 humanitarian emergencies taking place during the year

Organisations publish IATI data on the ways in which their activities are contributing to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s Humanitarian Response Plans and Flash Appeals.

There are over **300 unique Humanitarian appeals** referenced in IATI data

\*The IATI Country codelist is generated from the ISO 3166-1 part of the ISO 3166 standard





## IATI data on the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Users can see how almost **100,000 activities** are contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These activities cover all 17 goals and 169 targets of the SDGs



## IATI data on Covid-19

During 2021, IATI publishers continued to share open data on their Covid-19-related funding and activities using the IATI Standard.

**As of the end of 2021, data was available on:**

Over **15,000** development and humanitarian Covid-19-related activities from **236** organisations, including governments, UN agencies and NGOs

on **USD 179 billion** in outgoing commitments from Covid-19 related activities and **USD 119 billion** in disbursements from Covid-19 related activities



## IATI data on climate action

Organisations are starting to share data on which of their activities are targeting climate change adaptation and mitigation.

**By the end of 2021**

**158** organisations marked almost **40,000 of their activities** as targeting climate change adaptation and mitigation

Over **12,000** of these activities were being delivered during 2021

# Discover 2021 IATI data by country

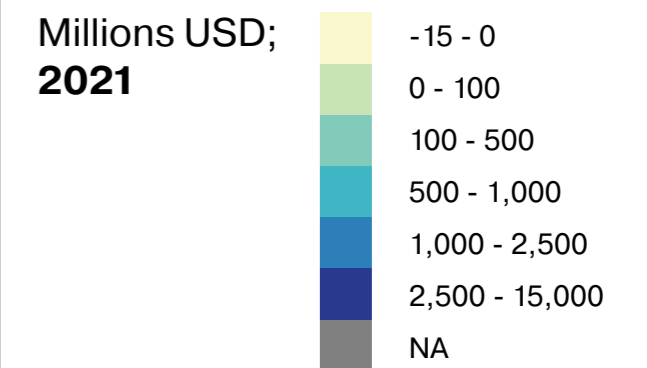
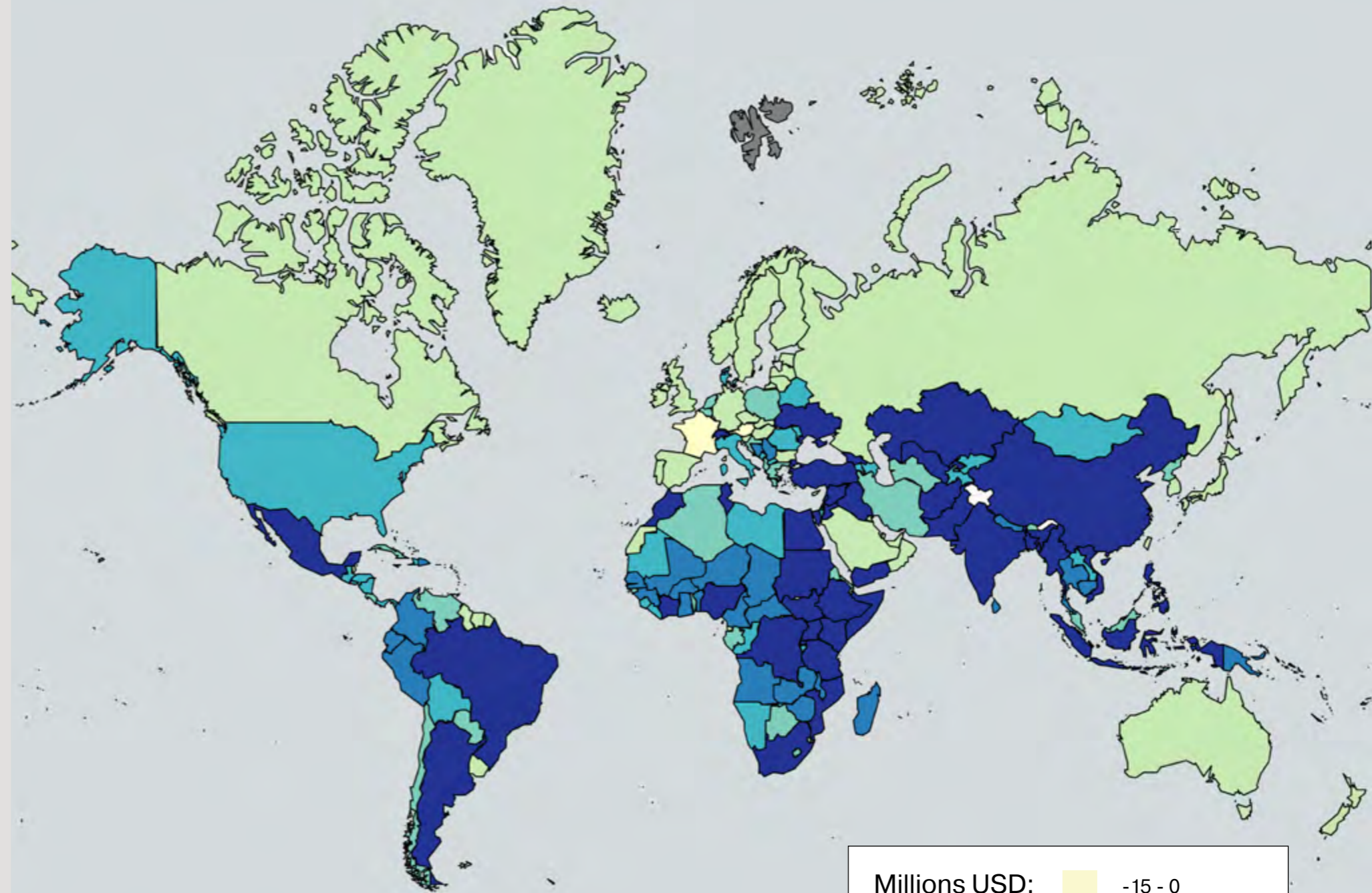
IATI provides a useful source of data on development budgets and spending. In 2021 IATI introduced a new [Country Development Finance Data tool](#), providing simple, accessible Excel-formatted IATI data on development finance by recipient country or region.

View the [following global map online](#) to discover how much IATI data was available for each country's incoming budgets, spending and activities in 2021.

The online map provides links to download the Excel spreadsheets on 2021 IATI data for each country (taken from the Country Development Finance Data tool). For information about using this data please read the [IATI Country Development Finance Data tool guidance](#).

[VIEW GLOBAL MAP](#)

- Budgets
- Spending
- Activities





# Driving IATI's Strategic Plan forward

IATI's Strategic Plan 2020-2025 sets out a clear direction for the initiative to maximise its contribution towards achieving sustainable development outcomes.

**It aims to achieve three objectives:**

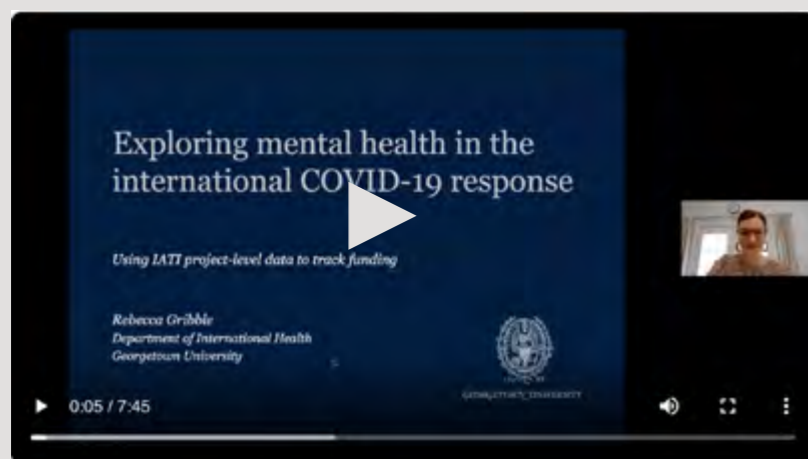
- Promote the systematic use of IATI data by development and humanitarian actors
- Drive a significant improvement in the quality of data published to IATI
- Strengthen the IATI Standard to support objectives (1) and (2) by consolidating its technical core, maintaining its infrastructure and reinvigorating its community of publishers and members

To measure the delivery of the Strategic Plan in each of the five years and to shape successive annual work plans, an annual monitoring exercise is undertaken based on the [Strategic Plan's Results Framework](#). Results for the last year will be released in a separate Strategic Plan Results Framework Monitoring Report 2021.



# IATI Strategic Plan Objective

## Promote the systematic use of IATI data by development and humanitarian actors



[Watch Department of International Health of the Georgetown University's IATI data use case](#)

IATI's Strategic Plan aims for IATI data to be systematically used to inform the planning, coordination and accountability of development and humanitarian resources. In 2021, the IATI Secretariat launched a wide range of new support to data users, including to partner country governments and journalists. Over the year, many examples of organisations using IATI data emerged, signifying positive progress towards achieving this strategic objective.

### Wide range of IATI data use cases

**In 2021, organisations from across IATI's diverse community shared examples of how they are using IATI data to inform their development and humanitarian work. Here are just a few use cases presented during the year:**

**Partner countries:** At IATI's second Virtual Community Exchange meeting in October 2021, partner country governments [presented](#) on how they are making use of IATI data. The Government of Lesotho shared their experience of analysing and using IATI data in their annual development cooperation reports, and the Government of Chad showcased their work on using IATI data to plan their national budgeting process.

**NGOs:** Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) shared examples of using IATI data to inform their work in implementing development and humanitarian activities. ActionAid UK, in partnership with ActionAid Bangladesh and ActionAid's Global Secretariat, used IATI data [to brief their staff](#) on analysing funding flows on ActionAid Bangladesh's Covid-19 response. World Vision UK's Policy and Programme department has used IATI data [to better understand donor investment trends](#) by location and sectors, to inform where they would direct their efforts in applying for grants.

**Academics and organisations delivering research:** IATI also offers academics and researchers a valuable data source when analysing development and humanitarian flows.

At IATI's second Virtual Community Exchange meeting in October, Georgetown University [presented](#) how they used IATI data in their Covid-19 health research. Their findings indicated that the response to mental health issues during the pandemic was being underfunded. In April 2021, Development Initiatives, in partnership with the International Rescue Committee used IATI data in a [report](#) that analysed humanitarian funding for the Covid-19 pandemic response.

**Open data/transparency initiatives:** During the year, IATI data was used in the work of international open data and transparency initiatives. At the UN World Data Forum in October 2021, [the Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data was launched](#), providing IATI data on the financing of 15,000 data projects. The Clearinghouse was developed by the Bern Network to advocate for more support to strengthen data and statistics and to help development actors identify existing funding opportunities. In 2021, Publish What You Fund continued to use IATI data to inform their work on promoting aid transparency. In their [Women's Economic Empowerment project](#) they collected data from a wide variety of sources, including IATI to better track funding going to women's financial inclusion and women's empowerment collectives.

### New data use training and support

IATI's Secretariat launched monthly *Data Use Drop-In Sessions* for data users to bring their questions and receive on-the-spot support from the IATI Secretariat and other data users. The Secretariat also launched the [Data Use Query Corner](#) on IATI's community platform, IATI Connect in August 2021. This space provides suggested approaches for answering specific data queries, and enables data users to ask questions to the Secretariat and IATI community.

Virtual training sessions were delivered to more than 20 partner country governments in June and July 2021 on how to use IATI data. The training sessions included demonstrations on how to use IATI's Country Development

Finance Data tool and was followed by one-to-one support to individual governments. The Secretariat delivered virtual training on how to access and analyse IATI data to journalists from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe in October 2021.

## Tools for accessing IATI data

During 2021, important work was undertaken to improve IATI tools to enable users to access and analyse IATI data.

### IATI's Country Development Finance Data tool

Following its release in 2020, IATI launched improvements to the [Country Development Finance Data tool](#) in March 2021 to enable users to download simple, Excel-formatted IATI data on development finance by recipient country or region. This tool was designed to meet the needs of partner country governments for analysing external development finance for budget planning and monitoring.

During the year, new guidance and an Excel Analysis Dashboard was added and the translated versions of the tool in French, Spanish and Portuguese were launched. By the end of the year, data users in almost 100 countries had downloaded spreadsheets from the tool to support their analysis and decision-making.

### d-portal and new data portal research

The use of IATI data continued to rapidly expand on IATI's search tool [d-portal](#) in 2021. During the year the number of new users increased by 362% - from 43,294 between January - December 2020 to 200,000 between January - December 2021.

As part of the planned upgrade of d-portal, an assessment of user requirements was conducted. The Secretariat

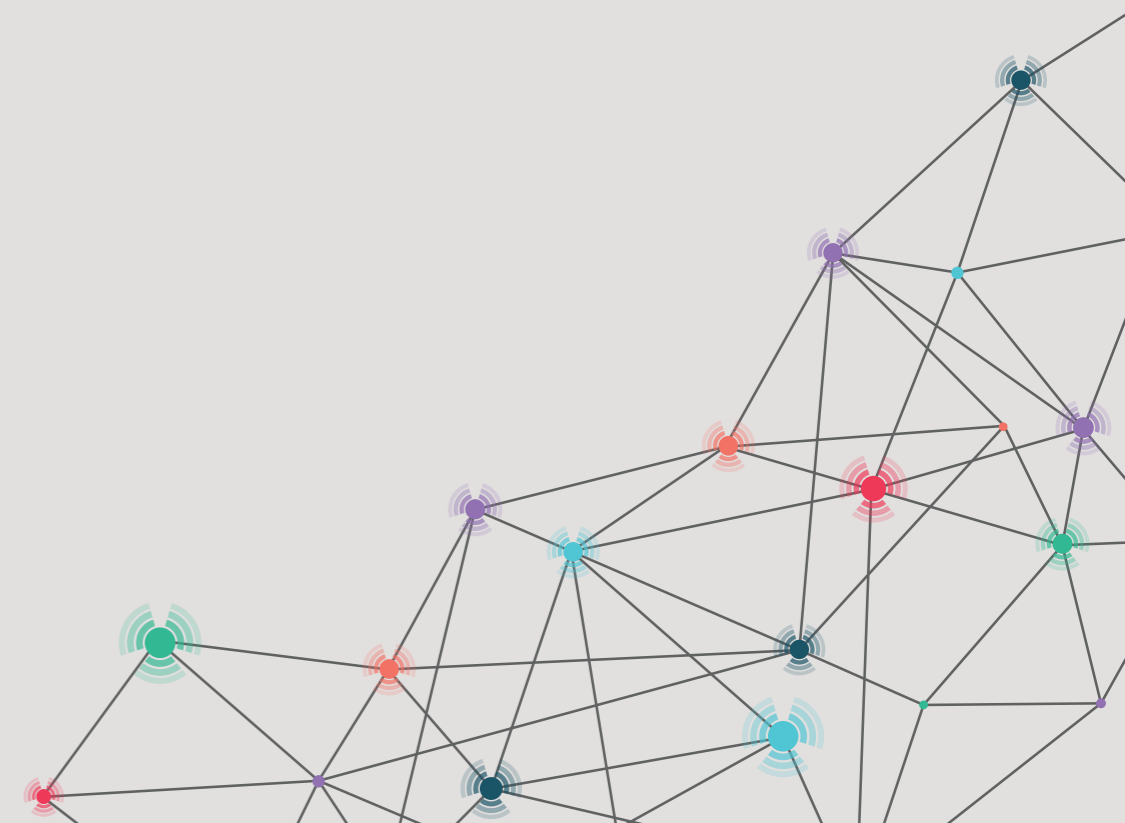
reviewed and carefully documented user issues and needs gathered from research, inputs on Github, Discuss, Connect, the iATI Helpdesk, and recommendations from IATI's 2020 Technical Stocktake. This comprehensive research will be used in 2022 to inform the development of the new version of d-portal.

## Data Use Working Group

The Data Use Working Group (DUWG) continued to meet biweekly in 2021, bringing stakeholders from across IATI's diverse community to collaborate on improving the use of IATI data. The DUWG developed a joint Data Use Action Plan with the Secretariat and held a series of knowledge sharing presentations from community members.

Through the Data Use Fund, the DUWG funded a report by Open Data Watch, on creating an inventory of IATI training materials and data use tools. Their research identified 15 IATI training materials and 27 IATI data use tools being provided by a range of organisations. Using the inventory, [a list of data access tools](#) has been published to provide users with information on the range of ways they can access IATI data.

During the year the Data Use Fund supported maintenance of IATI Datastore Classic (a version of the original IATI Datastore updated/improved by Code for IATI) to enable data users to search data by a set of key filters and download activities with all data fields. The Data Use Fund also funded projects on developing a CSO Training Course, and videos on the Datastore Classic and the Country Development Finance Data tool.

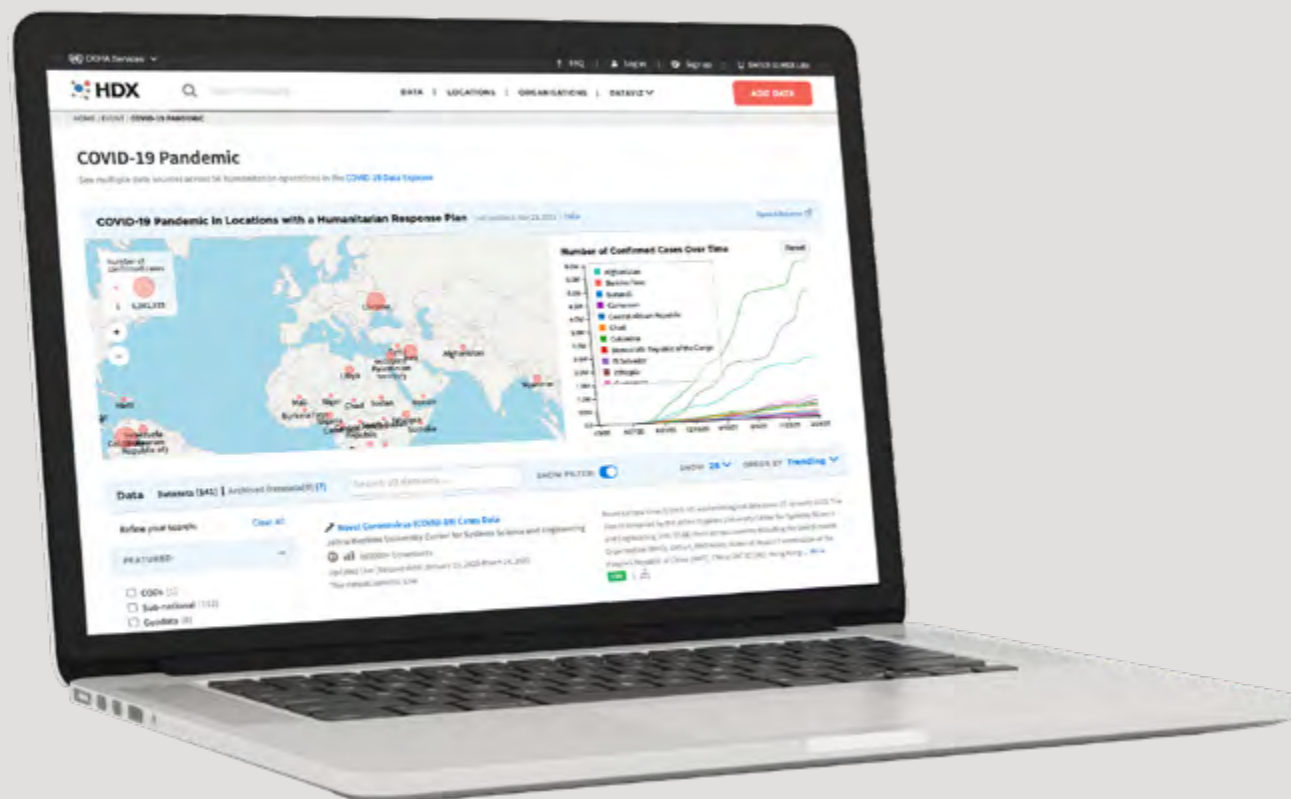


# Case Study

## Centre for Humanitarian Data's IATI Covid-19 Dashboard

Following the World Health Organisation's declaration of a pandemic in March 2020, the IATI Secretariat issued guidance on how to publish Covid-19 development and humanitarian data. By the end of 2021, IATI data was published on over 10,000 activities by around 200 organisations.

The [OCHA Centre for Humanitarian Data](#) worked to understand IATI Covid-19 data and make it accessible to stakeholders. In October 2021 they released an [IATI COVID-19 Funding Dashboard](#) which visualises financial commitments and spending related to the pandemic. It displays the figures as aggregates, with breakdowns by country, sector and publisher, and also shows trends-over-time and flows between organisations. The work covered in this project was funded by the United States Agency for International Development.



[Visit the Centre for Humanitarian Data's IATI COVID-19 Funding Dashboard](#)

**Steven Flower, IATI Technical Specialist at the Centre for Humanitarian Data said:** “We use data from any IATI publisher that follows the IATI Covid-19 guidelines. The dashboard automatically updates every night, meaning that if an organisation adds or annotates their IATI data with Covid-19 information, then it will be included without the need to tell us!”

**To reach audiences not familiar with IATI, the Centre created a data story that highlights specific insights, including:**

- How quickly IATI publishers began sharing Covid-19-related data
- The major sectors targeted with Covid-19-related funding
- The uneven distribution of gaps between money committed and money spent for different countries
- The distribution of funding for the health sector over time
- Gaps in organisation-to-organisation funding flows

The Centre also noted that dashboard users value seeing IATI Covid-19 data over time. Steven Flower said: “A great thing about IATI data is that it is published over many years, and offers granularity. Even though we launched the dashboard in October 2021, the actual data spans back to the onset of the pandemic in early 2020.”

The Centre has said that IATI publishers also find the dashboard useful to spot errors in their data and quickly compare it with other organisations. “During the course of this project, the Centre has become a significant IATI data user, and we have involved many members of our team who previously had no exposure to the IATI Standard. Our experience has given us a strong appreciation of the value of the IATI Standard and its community of publishers. We believe that the international aid community has just begun to tap the potential of IATI as a data source”.



## IATI Strategic Plan Objective

Drive a significant improvement in the quality of data published to IATI



To ensure that IATI data is useful, the IATI Strategic Plan has an important objective of improving the quality of the data published. In 2021, the IATI Secretariat supported a wide range of organisations to improve their data, as well as laying the groundwork to inform a new measurement of IATI data quality.

### IATI Data Quality Index consultation

As a key commitment of the IATI Strategic Plan, IATI launched a consultation to inform the development of a new Data Quality Index. Launched in September, the Secretariat published proposals for a new index to measure the components of IATI data that matter most to the IATI community.

The first phase of the consultation was undertaken between September and November 2021, and attracted a wide range of comments on [IATI Connect](#). Two virtual consultations were also held to facilitate discussion within the community. In response, the IATI Secretariat published a [summary paper](#) on the feedback received on each component of data quality that had been discussed.

The second phase of the consultation will be concluded in 2022 and the implementation of the Data Quality Index will begin, resulting in an accessible measure of data quality available to all IATI publishers and data users.

### New guidance for using the IATI Standard

**In 2021, the IATI Secretariat developed new guidance providing clear instructions for organisations on:**

- **Humanitarian guidance:** finalised in February to help align and import IATI humanitarian data into UN OCHA's Financial Tracking Service, as well as meeting Grand Bargain transparency commitments

- **Traceability guidance:** aims to improve IATI data for tracking development and humanitarian funds and activities throughout complex delivery chains

### Review of how publishers are using the IATI Standard

In 2021 the Secretariat conducted a systematic review of how 100 organisations are currently using the IATI Standard to publish data. The research was undertaken to better understand how to support organisations to improve their data quality. As part of the review, the Secretariat held webinars with the 100 publishers reviewed and shared a [summary report](#) of their findings in September. Findings from this review, together with insights from data users, will inform development of a strategy in 2022 to bridge the gap between current publisher practices and data users' needs.

### IATI Helpdesk and support using the IATI Validator

IATI's Helpdesk continued to provide dedicated support to organisations who requested assistance to publish their data. Since January 2021, the Secretariat has addressed over 2100 diverse requests for support to publish IATI data.

During the year, the IATI Technical Team continued to provide one-to-one support to publishers to use the IATI Validator tool. The tool checks organisations' data for errors that need to be corrected. Through the support provided, increasingly, publishers are now using the Validator independently to check the quality of their data and taking steps to eliminate errors. The tool also underwent technical updates, which are outlined on page 15.

# Case Study

## UNHCR: Increasing the usefulness of IATI data on humanitarian assistance

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, began publishing data to IATI in 2018 as part of implementing their commitment to the Grand Bargain Agreement. This agreement involved some of the largest donors and humanitarian organisations signing up to a range of actions, including publishing open data on their humanitarian financing.

In 2018, UNHCR started publishing IATI data on all their operations, donor contributions, disbursements, expenditures and results. Since then UNHCR has strived to improve the usefulness of their information by investing in a new internal publishing system and receiving one-to-one support from IATI's Technical Team to make use of IATI tools.

**Justin Senn, Donor Relations Officer at UNHCR said:**  
“The IATI Technical Team has been super helpful over the years by providing guidance on data quality, and helping us with new tools such as the IATI Validator.”

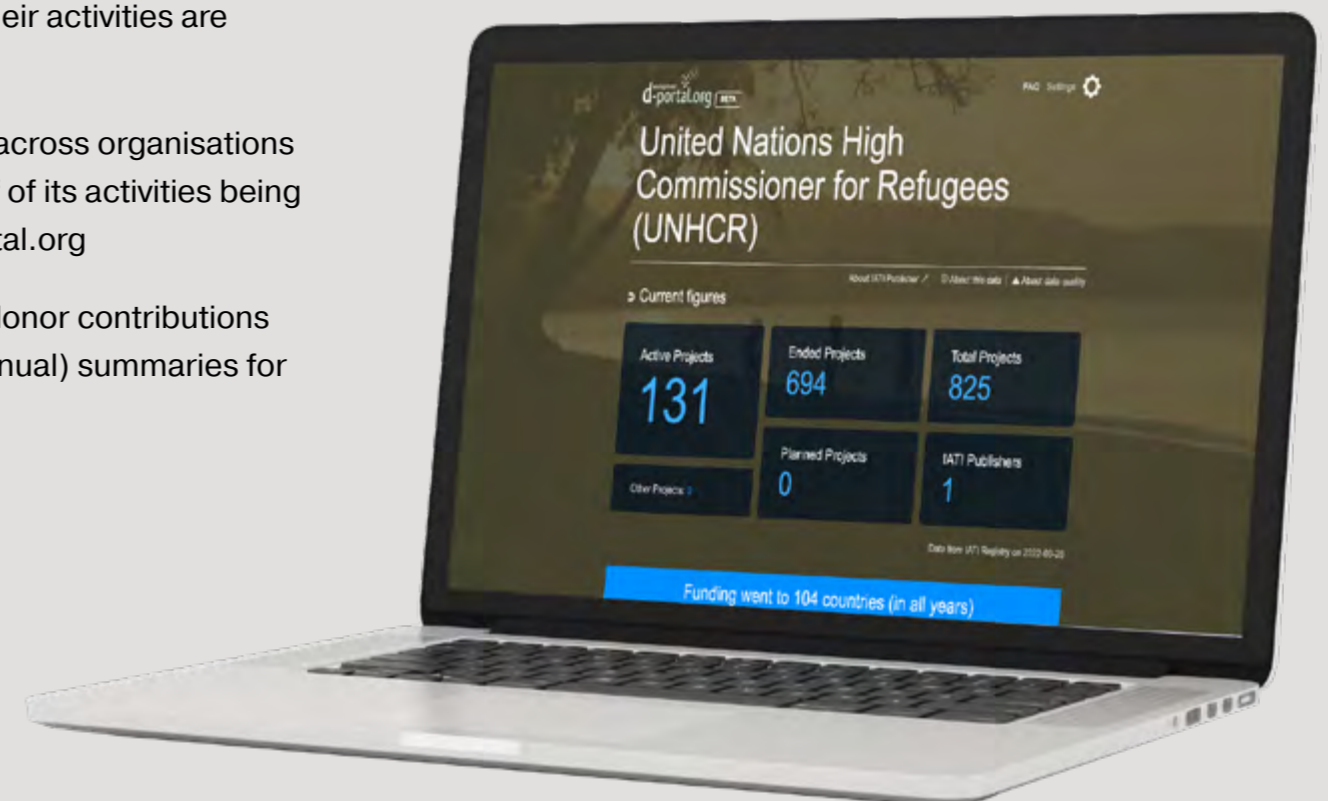
**By the end of 2021, UNHCR had significantly expanded the data it provided on its financing of humanitarian activities including:**

- More data on which sectors that their activities are working in
- Data for tracing funds transferred across organisations and activities, resulting in over half of its activities being marked as “traceable” on humportal.org
- Providing the earmarking level of donor contributions and giving monthly (rather than annual) summaries for the private sector

- Adding data on which humanitarian emergencies their activities are responding to by using internationally recognised HRP and GLIDE codes, and how UNHCR is contributing to specific appeals and response plans
- Better presentation on results achieved, including the targeted population as a separate dimension

This has increased the usefulness of UNHCR's IATI data to governments and other humanitarian partners who plan, coordinate, and implement humanitarian assistance. Over the next year UNHCR plans to continue investing in its internal systems, to deliver further improvements to the quality of its IATI data.

Justin Senn said: “Going forward, the data published by UNHCR should get even better thanks to the new planning system, COMPASS, which includes a mapping of activities to the SDGs and multi-year planning.”







## IATI Strategic Plan Objective

**Strengthen the IATI Standard by consolidating its technical core, maintaining its infrastructure and reinvigorating its community of publishers and members**



In 2021, IATI's Technical Team focused on rebuilding the fundamental technical infrastructure that underpins the delivery of IATI's publishing and data use services.

### **IATI Unified Platform launched**

In September 2021, IATI's new Unified Platform was launched, fulfilling a recommendation in IATI's Technical Stocktake 2020 to deliver an integrated system architecture. It has a robust, scalable and performant Cloud-based system, utilising a microservice architecture.

**The IATI Unified Platform delivers significant improvements including:**

- Reducing the timescale of processing IATI documents – from discovery through validation to the IATI Datastore – from 10 days or longer, to a matter of hours
- Reducing the monthly hosting costs to less than half that incurred previously
- Representing all valid documents in the IATI Datastore exactly as they were published, using unique, dynamic and recursive algorithms
- Providing complete transparency and understanding of the journey of each published document, both in terms of where they are in the discovery-validation-index pipeline and also their history of validation
- Providing best-in-class API management and discovery via the API Gateway and Developer Portal

### **IATI API Gateway and Developer Portal launched**

IATI's Technical Team launched an API (application programming interface) Gateway in 2021 to offer technical users a single point of access to all IATI public API services.

This service was launched simultaneously with the IATI Unified Platform, along with a Web application, the [IATI Developer Portal](#). The API Gateway includes:

- Detailed and dynamic documentation of public APIs, allowing users to build and run queries within the interface
- Detailed analytics of API usage
- Extensive service-protection features

Through the API Gateway, the Technical Team is now better able to track API usage and protect IATI tools from overuse and abuse.

## Version 2 of the IATI Validator launched

The IATI Technical Team worked to bring the IATI Validator in-house on IATI's Unified Platform and delivered enhanced services for organisations to check errors in their data:

- The IATI Validator was rebuilt from the ground up to allow on-demand, simultaneous and scalable validation of IATI documents, both via the API and via the web application, at greatly increased speed
- The [online Validator tool](#) received important technical updates and now delivers faster checks of data files. Users can also more easily identify and prioritise different error types with clearer messaging and use of different colours
- A [new public IATI Validator API](#) was released for organisations to integrate IATI validation into their internal data systems and external tools

## Version 3 of the IATI Datastore developed and launched

The IATI Datastore aims to offer robust access to IATI data to technical users in JSON, CSV and XML formats. In 2021

the Technical Team worked to bring the IATI Datastore in-house and onto the new unified single platform. After user-testing, they successfully delivered a 'soft' launch of the IATI Datastore Version 3 with an entirely new codebase and a new API, offering the following:

- Updates in less than 24 hours
- Ability to return activity, transaction and budget data filtered by any element or attribute in the IATI Activity Standard
- Ability to return all valid data for each activity

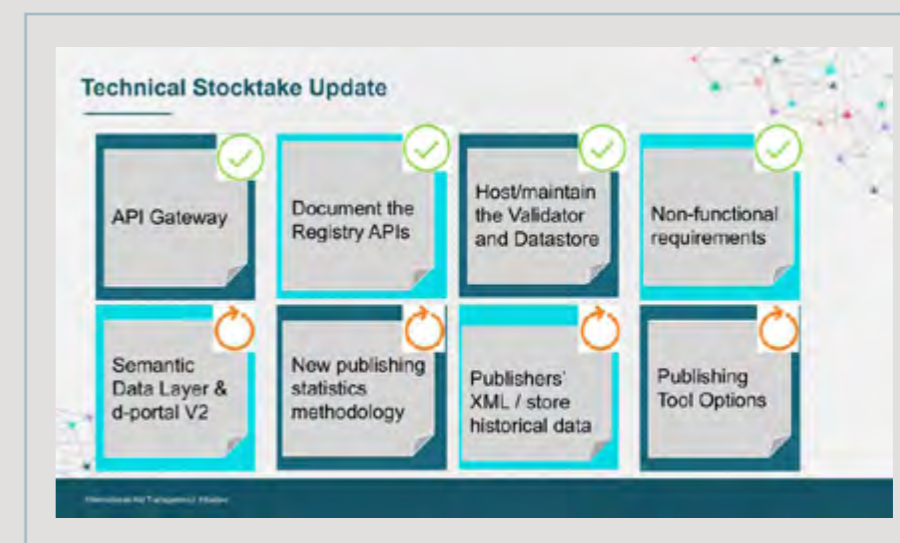
## User experience projects to inform new and existing tools

As part of addressing IATI Technical Stocktake 2020 recommendations agreed by the Governing Board, two user experience projects were conducted in 2021:

- **IATI-supported publishing tool:** The IATI Technical Team worked with ThresholdWorld to capture user requirements for an IATI-supported publishing tool. Their work informed the IATI Governing Board's decision to launch an open procurement for the provision of a free publishing tool
- **Registry improvements:** ThresholdWorld's project also made key recommendations on improving the user experience of the IATI Registry, which were delivered in January 2022
- **Semantic Data Layer (SDL) project as research for d-portal version 2:** The IATI Secretariat worked with Ventures Consulting to learn more about how users who are not familiar with IATI use and access IATI data. Their findings will help inform requirements for d-portal version 2, in a project which will get underway in 2022

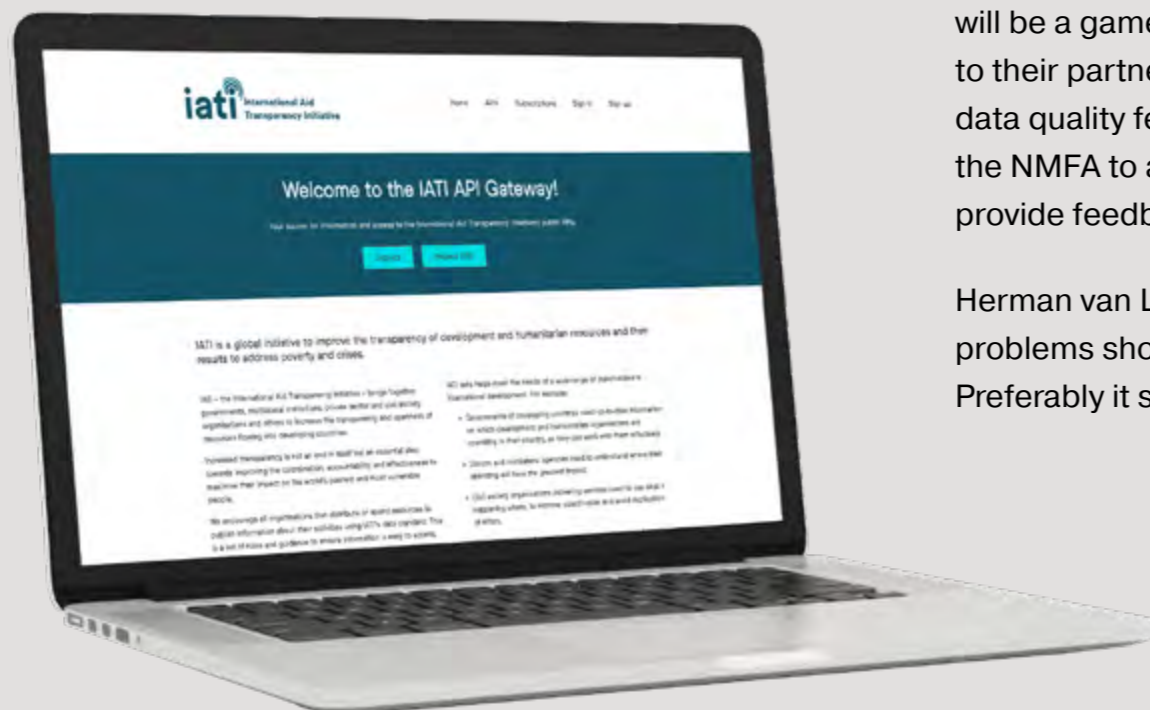
## Progress on the Technical Stocktake

By delivering the technical projects described above, the IATI Technical Team has made considerable progress in implementing the recommendations of the [2020 Technical Stocktake](#). The majority of recommendations have been implemented and the remainder are well underway, as shown in the diagram below. Further details are available in the Technical Team's quarterly updates.



## Case Study

# Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs Realising the potential of IATI's new Validator API



The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) uses IATI as a useful means of communication with its development and humanitarian partners, who publish data on how they spend NMFA funds. To ensure this data is useful, the Ministry strives to support its development and humanitarian partners to publish good quality IATI data.

Every year, the NMFA's Open Data Helpdesk answers more than a thousand questions on how to correctly publish IATI data, from approximately 400 partners. In 2021, the NMFA found the new IATI Validator very useful for running checks for errors on data published by partner organisations, when responding to their requests for support.

Herman van Loon, Technical lead for IATI at the NMFA said "A lot of these questions are about the correct usage of the IATI Standard and its rules. This is where the new IATI Validator proves invaluable. It gives our partners the functionality to easily check the quality of their IATI publication and by doing so making their data more fit for use".

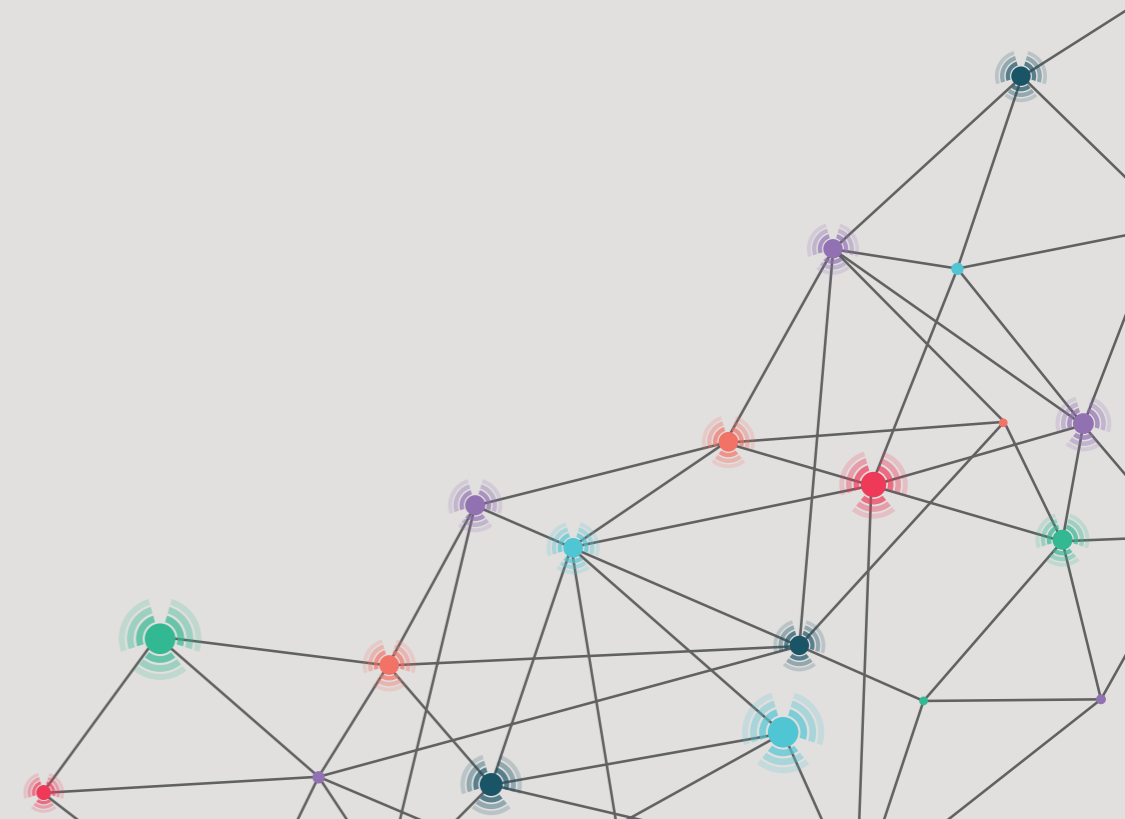
In 2021, IATI launched a public API enabling organisations such as the NMFA to integrate IATI validation into their internal data systems and external tools. The Validator API will be a gamechanger for how the NMFA provides support to their partners, as they plan to use it to build an automatic data quality feedback service. This new service will enable the NMFA to automatically check their partners' data and provide feedback to them in clearly formatted emails.

Herman van Loon said: "The identification of data quality problems should be as lightweight and easy as possible. Preferably it should not be dependent on a publisher's

action and therefore we are now piloting an automatic data quality feedback service for our partners. The cornerstone for this service is the new IATI Validator application program interface (API).

We anticipate that this feedback will reduce the workload on our support team because all common mistakes will be identified automatically without human intervention. That will leave room to spend more energy on the more complex publishing issues.

Going forward, the NMFA is keen for the IATI Validator to perform additional checks, particularly on data required to trace funding as it is transferred through organisations and activities. By gaining good quality IATI data from their partners, the NMFA will better understand how their aid is being spent and can better monitor the results being achieved. This information is vital to improve the effectiveness of their development and humanitarian efforts across the world.



# Governance, membership and community

IATI is run by its members who govern and fund the initiative through membership contributions. Any organisation committed to improving the transparency of development and humanitarian resources and results can join IATI as a member.

## New members

By the end of 2021, IATI membership totaled 102 organisations including governments, multilateral institutions, philanthropic foundations, civil society and private sector organisations. IATI warmly welcomed six new members in 2021:

- AfroLeadership (civil society organisation)
- BOAD - West African Development Bank (provider of development cooperation)
- Government of Chad (partner country)
- International Labour Organization (provider of development cooperation)
- MSF Southern Africa (civil society organisation)
- WEglobal (private sector)

## Virtual Members' Assembly 2021

IATI members meet once a year at the Members' Assembly to steer the initiative's governance and strategic direction. Due to continuing travel restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Members' Assembly took place virtually for the second time, with over 100 attendees joining from 69 member and observer organisations.

## Institutional Working Group

In 2021 a working group of members was established to deliver recommendations for IATI's hosting arrangements

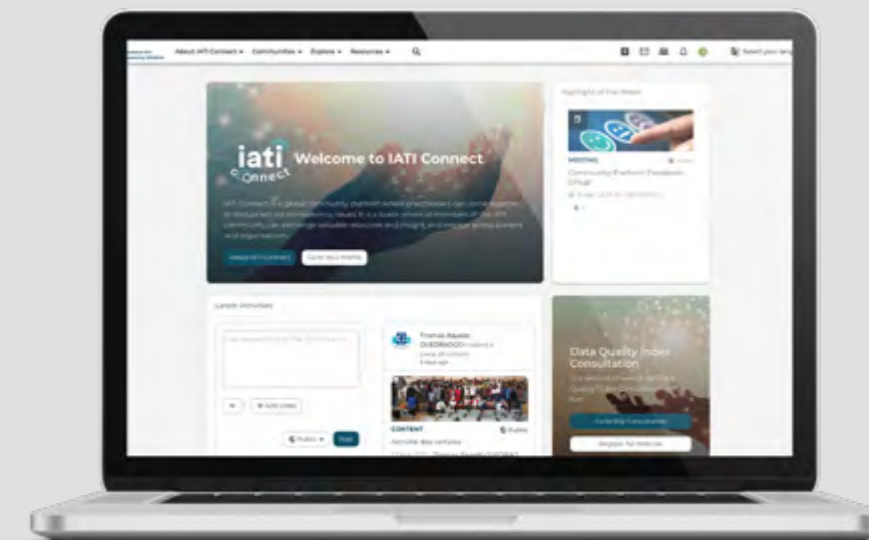
after the mandate of the current hosting consortium of UNDP, UNOPS and Development Initiatives expires at the end of 2022. The group met virtually several times throughout the year and presented a report of findings to the Governing Board, which in turn made recommendations for discussion at the Members' Assembly 2021.

The Institutional Working Group will continue their work in 2022 supporting IATI's Governing Board to finalise the hosting arrangements for IATI from January 2023.

## Reinvigorating IATI's community

In 2021, IATI stepped up its efforts to deliver a key commitment in the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 to "reinvigorate its community of publishers and members". During 2021 new Virtual Community Exchange meetings were held in place of in-person events during the continuing Covid-19 pandemic.

**IATI Connect** rapidly expanded from 392 users in January to 1000 users by the end of 2021. Fourteen dedicated Community Groups were established, mostly instigated on request by community members, covering a wide range of thematic areas to meet their diverse open data discussion needs.



**IATI Virtual Community Exchanges (1 and 2):** IATI's first Virtual Community Exchanges (VCE) were held in April and October, attracting large numbers of attendees including many newcomers to IATI. The Virtual Community Exchanges involved leading experts working on open data, from inspiring opening remarks at VCE1 by Jenna Slotin (Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data) to a key-note speech by Ulrika Modeer (Assistant Secretary General, UNDP) on transparency in a post-COVID world. In total 29 VCE-sessions were (co-)hosted by existing and new partners from across the globe, and close to 400 people attending the first VCE alone.

**IATI Connect hosted important community-wide consultations in 2021, helping to increase the level of engagement in key IATI projects:**

- Help Shape IATI Standard Traceability Guidance (March - April)
- Data Quality Index Consultation (part 1) (September - October)
- Responsible Transparency Discussion (September - November)

New features were added on IATI Connect, including customised dashboards such as the Data Use Query Corner and the IATI Standard Publishing Guidance page. To improve the usability of the platform, new extensions were released, including a co-editing tool (Connect Collaborate) and cross-posting feature (Cross Connect).

Monthly video interviews with organisations engaged in IATI's community were delivered along with the monthly IATI Connect Snapshot to update the community on progress, and share engagement opportunities.

## Outreach and engagement

Over the year, IATI continued to collaborate widely with relevant open data standards and initiatives within the development and humanitarian sectors. IATI participated in meetings of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Working Party on Development Finance Statistics (WP-STAT). The IATI Secretariat also engaged with the Grand Bargain Transparency workstream, Bern Network on Financing Data for Development, IFR4NPO - International Financial Reporting for Non-Profit Organisations, UN System Chief Executives Board, the UN Transparency Task Force, and Open Contracting Partnership.

### UNGA 76 briefing

Ahead of the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 76), IATI released a briefing on the open data discussions happening at the meeting. The briefing highlighted the importance of open, transparent data for addressing the UNGA 76 theme of 'recovering from COVID-19 and rebuilding sustainably'. The briefing also



provided a list of UNGA 76 virtual events relevant to IATI, open data and transparency communities. IATI members welcomed the briefing as a useful resource to raise awareness of IATI in this important global forum.

### Responsible Transparency

Following the changes of authorities in Afghanistan and Myanmar in 2021, IATI launched a consultation to engage its open data community on how best to ensure responsible transparency (September 2021). Hosted on IATI Connect, participants shared their views about the balance between transparent and open development cooperation data and 'doing no harm' to implementing partners. The community explored recent trends of data publishers editing, anonymising and restricting their data.

The consultation successfully engaged both development and humanitarian open data experts, and was followed by a vibrant session on the topic at IATI's Virtual Community Exchange 2.

### Raising awareness during COP26

As the dominant international event last year, the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) engaged an extensive range of development and humanitarian communities. During the conference, IATI raised awareness using its social media channels on the need for open data to drive effective climate action. IATI promoted the 152 organisations that had already published IATI data on 38,000+ projects on climate action, and sign-posted this data on d-portal. IATI also promoted that this data is being used in the UNFF Clearing House on Forest Financing and was included in the Clean Air Fund's State of Global Air Quality Funding Report 2021. IATI shared these messages on social media, which generated over 7500 views and was the most popular content on any single topic for the initiative during 2021.

# Looking ahead: Priorities and challenges for 2022



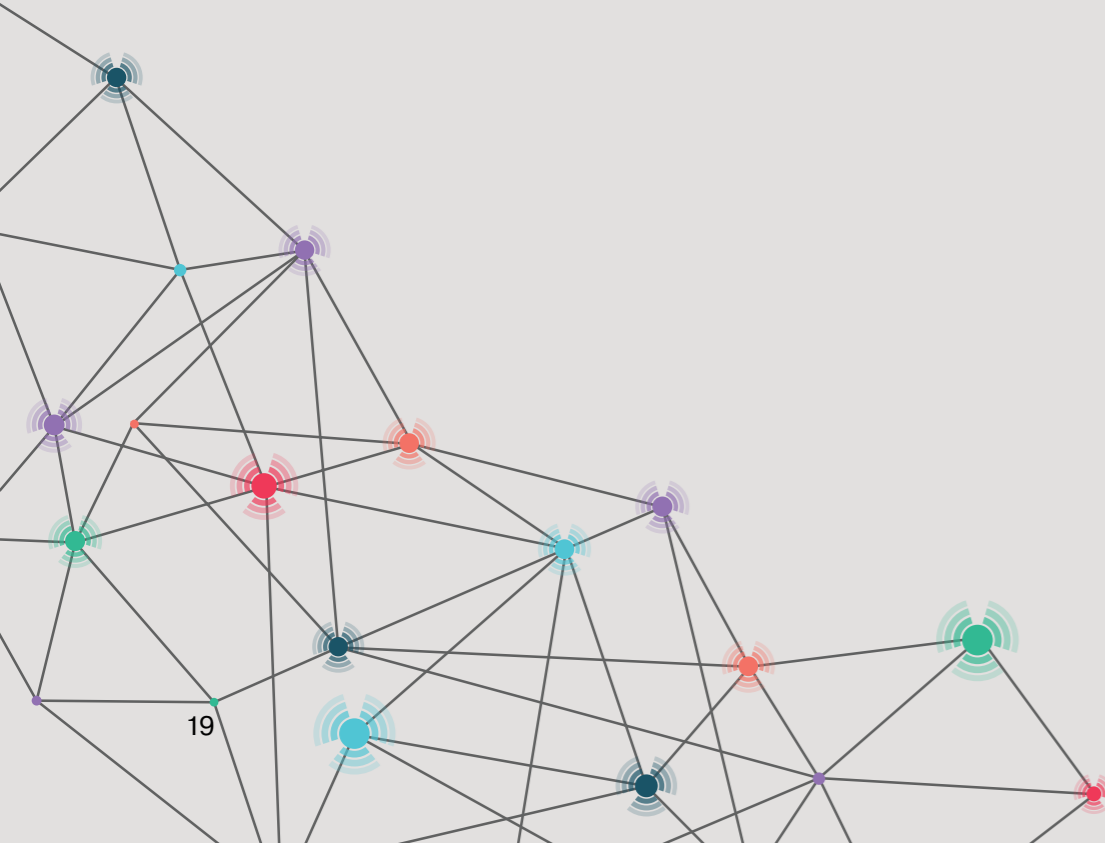
As the initiative draws closer to the mid-point of delivering the IATI Strategic Plan, 2022 will involve careful assessment of what actions are needed to ensure IATI remains on track to deliver its three ambitious objectives by 2025.



**Objective: Promote the systematic use of IATI data by development and humanitarian actors.**

Building on the expansion of services and support to data users in 2021, the Secretariat will focus on the following priorities:

- Improving data access via improved tools: IATI will focus the year on developing a new version of IATI's search tool, d-portal that is easy to use and meets the data needs of a wide range of stakeholders. A new user interface to be released in 2022 will enable more detailed and complex IATI data queries
- Training and capacity building: IATI will deliver regional workshops to raise awareness and support governments, development partners, and civil society organisations in partner countries to use IATI data. The Secretariat will also continue to offer training and support online throughout the year via IATI Connect, the IATI Helpdesk and virtual meetings
- AIMS strategy: The Secretariat will develop a strategy with experts that identifies solutions to address challenges encountered in efforts to use IATI data in partner countries' Aid Information Management Systems





## **Objective: Drive a significant improvement in the quality of data published to IATI.**

A key focus for IATI in 2022 will be to complete the consultation on the Data Quality Index. The Secretariat will work with IATI's community to finalise the Index's methodology in three parts:

1. Timeliness and Validation
2. Data Completeness
3. How the measures should be weighted and summarised within the Index

Once the Data Quality Index methodology is finalised, the Secretariat will work with IATI's community to implement an online system to process and visualise the agreed data quality metrics and track their progress over time. The new index will be used to support organisations improve their IATI data, to ensure it is useful to data users.

Another key focus will be to create feedback mechanisms between data publishers and users to drive up the quality of IATI data. The Technical Team will also continue to support organisations to use the Validator tool to eliminate errors from their IATI data, and this year will specifically advocate for timely publishing.



## **Objective: Strengthen the IATI Standard by consolidating its technical core, maintaining its infrastructure and reinvigorating its community of publishers and members.**

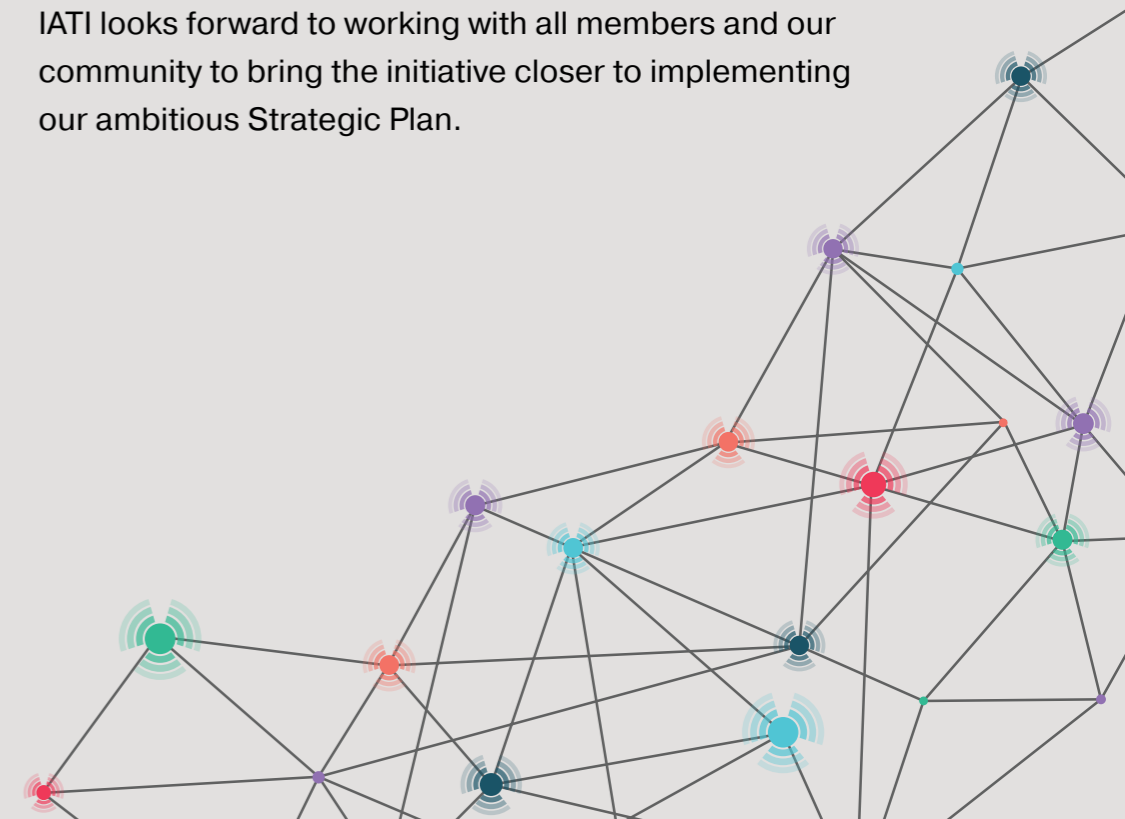
In 2022, there is an ambitious plan to further update and improve IATI's technical services. This includes building a new IATI publishing tool to support small and medium-sized organisations to publish their data easily. During the year, a new user interface will be launched for the Datastore version 3 and the IATI Secretariat will begin developing a new version of d-portal to help meet the diverse needs of IATI data users. IATI's Technical Team will also work on the implementation of the new Data Quality Index.

## **Governance, membership and community**

The IATI Governing Board will continue to consult closely with members including through the Institutional Working Group to secure future hosting arrangements for IATI. The Board will also begin planning for a mid-term review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025 with members to inform planning for the remaining years in the Strategic Plan's implementation. In the first quarter of 2022, the two year term of the current Governing Board will come to an end, and the Secretariat will facilitate a nomination and election process leading to the establishment of a new Board in the second quarter.

In 2022, IATI will continue to provide its community with opportunities to collaborate through the Virtual Community Exchange meetings. New 'IATI Talks' sessions will be launched to virtually engage the community on specific open data topics throughout the year. A new 'roadmap' of enhancements will be delivered on IATI Connect to ensure it is user friendly and engages a global audience. The Board and Secretariat will also continue to actively recruit new IATI members and will implement a new protocol to familiarise them with the initiative.

IATI looks forward to working with all members and our community to bring the initiative closer to implementing our ambitious Strategic Plan.



# Annex: IATI Annual Report statistics and methodology

Data presented was accessed from the IATI Registry on 1 February 2022. Data was processed using both Python and R studio. The number of organisations publishing to IATI presented in the report was counted as of 31 December 2021.

**Budgets:** Activity budget data has been analysed in the report. When an original and revised budget has been reported for the same period, only the revised budget has been used. Data for budgets commencing in 2022 reported as of 1 February 2022 has been analysed. Only budgets with recipient countries reported at the activity level have been included.

**Spend:** For the spend analysis, transaction types (3-disbursement and 4-expenditure) with transaction dates in 2021 have been analysed.

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** For the SDG analysis, SDGs reported at the sector tag, and result indicator levels have been used. All activities including SDG data as of 1 February 2022 have been counted.

**Humanitarian:** Activities have been classified as humanitarian if the humanitarian flag has been used at activity level. For the analysis of GLIDE and HRP, any activities that have used the humanitarian scope element and humanitarian scope vocabulary 1-2 (GLIDE) and 2-1 (HRP) were included. Emergency and appeal activities numbers have been counted by using the humanitarian-scope type.

**COVID-19:** Activities or transactions are included in the analysis if they follow the guidance on Publishing data on COVID-19 using the IATI Standard.

**Climate action:** Data for activities pertaining to climate change adaptation and mitigation were collected with d-portal. Activities were included in this classification if they included the policy marker code 6, "Aid Targeting the

Objectives of the Framework Convention on Climate Change - Mitigation", or policy marker code 7, "Aid Targeting the Objectives of the Framework Convention on Climate Change - Adaptation" as a "principal" or "significant" objective.



# Acknowledgements

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