

EUROPE'S WIDENING GAP ON AID TRANSPARENCY

BRUSSELS – Despite making several international transparency commitments, the vast majority of Europe's aid donors are still not sharing enough data about their development activities.

The Aid Transparency Index (ATI), released today by Publish What You Fund, is the industry standard for assessing transparency among the top 68 aid-giving organisations, from countries including the U.S. and Germany, to influential organisations such as the World Bank and the Gates Foundation.

The United Nations Development Programme came first, knocking the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation off last year's top spot, and China finished last for the second year in a row.

In Europe, the gap between high and poor performers is widening. There is growing group of European "transparency champions" that are publishing more information about their aid in accessible and comparable formats, but the majority of EU donors have made little or no progress to-date.

Rachel Rank, Publish What You Fund, said:

"A lot of progress was made at the political level in the early days of aid transparency, including a promise to publish aid information to an internationally-agreed common standard by the end of 2015. But with a year to go until that deadline, progress has stalled. The ranking shows that no matter how many international promises are made, and no matter how many speeches there are around openness, a startling amount of organisations are still not publishing what they fund."

TBC Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Nigerian Minister of Finance, said:

"From Malawi to Moldova, we've seen some clear-cut country successes since the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011, but the ATI results show that more needs to be done. With the clock ticking towards the 2015 deadline, and the next global development

framework now well underway, we must all work to make aid transparent with a shared sense of urgency and determination.”

Linda McAvan, Chair of the European Parliament’s Development Committee said:

“ Greater transparency on aid flows is absolutely critical to enabling parliamentarians and civil society organisations to hold policymakers to account. We need to ensure we are able provide European taxpayers with assurances that their money is being spent in the most effective way possible.’

The EC’s Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), DGs Enlargement and Development and Cooperation-EuropeAid are among the biggest improvers this year, joining consistently high-ranking performers UK and Sweden in the top two categories.

Finland, Ireland and Spain also made progress in 2014, together with France’s Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Development (MAEDI), which began publishing information about its aid to selected countries for the first time.

However, these efforts are being undermined by those EU donors that are failing to deliver on their commitments.

Nineteen EU member states appear in the poor or very poor categories. These are a mix of old and new agencies, with varying aid budget sizes ,and include the EU presidency trio of Italy (incumbent) and Latvia and Luxembourg, future hosts of the presidency during 2015, European Year for Development.

Greece remains in the bottom slot as the least transparent European donor, ranking 67th of the 68 organisations, just above China. As the newest member of the EU, Croatia was ranked in the ATI for the first time and finished in 56th place

In order to realise the transformative potential of open data in improving development effectiveness, the EU needs to work together to drive forward collective action on aid transparency and learn from best practice on data publication and use.

To see all the findings of the 2014 ATI, visit: <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org>

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Notes:

1. Publish What You Fund is the global campaign for aid transparency, advocating for a significant increase in the availability and accessibility of comprehensive, timely and comparable aid information. The organisation monitors the transparency of aid donors in order to track progress, encourage further transparency and hold them to account. The ATI is the only global measure of aid transparency.
2. At the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011, the world's largest aid providers committed to publishing their data to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) by the end of 2015. IATI is the only global common standard for publishing aid information that ensures data is timely, comprehensive, comparable & accessible.
3. Watch the event live on 8 Oct @ 9am EST: <http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/livestream/>