Aid Transparency Index 2026



Publish WhatYouFund

The Global Campaign for Aid and Development Transparency



Publish What You Fund is the global campaign for aid and development transparency. Launched in 2008, we envisage a world where aid and development information is **transparent**, **available**, and **used** for effective decision-making, public accountability and lasting change for all citizens.

This report was researched and written by Alex Tilley. Elma Jenkins led the Index data collection, supported by Henry Lewis, with software support from Mark Brough at Emergentally. Chapter 5 is based on a blog originally authored by Elma Jenkins and Alex Tilley. Publish What You Fund is grateful to the many people involved in producing this Index. We would particularly like to thank the 14 independent experts who reviewed individual donor assessments, including:

- Dr Paul R. Gilbert, University of Sussex
- Caroline Vesey, Bank Information Center
- Dr Catherine Weaver, University of Texas (who carried out reviews prior to appointment to the Publish What You Fund board of trustees)
- Marc J. Cohen
- Dong Hee Kim, Anai Ramos, and Som Kim, master's candidates at Korea University's Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS).
- Professor Cuz Potter, Korea University
- People's Initiative for Development Alternatives (PIDA)

The 2026 Aid Transparency Index was independently researched and written by Publish What You Fund. The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of Publish What You Fund. It was produced with financial support from the following organisations, which paid to be part of the formal Aid Transparency Index accreditation process:

- African Development Bank
- Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- France, French Development Agency
- Gates Foundation
- Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance
- Green Climate Fund
- Inter-American Development Bank
- New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Norway, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad
- Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Development Programme
- World Bank, International Development Association

Design by Steve Green.

Generative AI tools were used during the preparation of this report to assist with exploratory analysis, source identification and the drafting and editing of text. AI-generated outputs were not treated as evidence in their own right. All calculations, sources, findings and final wording were reviewed by Publish What You Fund staff, who retain full responsibility for the report.



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1. Executive summary

The 2026 Aid Transparency Index is published at a time of exceptional disruption to the international aid system. Official Development Assistance (ODA) fell by 23.1% in real terms in 2025 - the largest annual reduction recorded - with further cuts expected. Funding is also being reconfigured: grants, humanitarian assistance, health programmes, civil society and core contributions to United Nations organisations have been particularly affected, while development banks, loans and private-sector instruments are playing an increasingly prominent role.

These changes make transparency more important. Partner countries, civil society organisations and affected communities need timely information about which programmes are ending, what funding remains and how responsibilities are being transferred. As aid moves through increasingly complex delivery chains, transparent information is also essential for understanding who ultimately receives funding, on what terms and with what results.

The Aid Transparency Index assesses the quality, quantity, timeliness and accessibility of information published by leading aid and development organisations. It combines automated tests of structured, machine-readable data with manual checks of documents and randomly sampled data points. This allows the Index to assess not only whether information has been published, but whether it is sufficiently complete and meaningful to be useful.

For 2026, Publish What You Fund introduced Aid Transparency Index accreditation. Accredited organisations participated in a comprehensive process of feedback, capacity building and improvement. Non-accredited bilateral organisations that had been selected for the 2024 Index were included as comparators to maintain the Index as an independent assessment of leading aid providers. Both groups underwent the same final assessment at the same time, using identical indicators, tests, scoring rules and quality checks. Thirty-three organisations were included in the final ranking; two first-time accredited organisations opted to remain unranked in this edition.

Transparency remains strong, but collective progress has stalled

Twenty of the 33 ranked organisations - 61% of the total - were placed in the “good” or “very good” categories. Only three were rated “poor” or “very poor”. However, the average score remained relatively static – it was 62.7 out of 100 in 2024 and 62.1 in 2026, indicating broad stability rather than continued improvement across the sector.

Multilateral organisations continued to lead the Index. The African Development Bank retained first place for the third consecutive edition, scoring 98.8 for its sovereign portfolio. The Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank’s International Development Association shared second place with scores of 97.1, followed by UNDP, UNICEF and the European Commission’s Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

Several organisations made substantial improvements. Spain-AECID increased its score by 57.7 points, from 5.0 to 62.7 - the largest improvement between consecutive editions in the history of the Index. Australia-DFAT gained 32.2 points, while France-AFD, Japan-JICA and Belgium-DGD also recorded significant increases. Spain’s and Australia’s results demonstrate how renewed institutional commitment, regular International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) publication and investment in integrated data systems can rapidly rebuild transparency.

Other organisations moved in the opposite direction. UAE-MOFA recorded the largest decline, falling by 41.6 points after ceasing regular data publication. Finland-MFA, Germany-BMZ-GIZ, the Global Fund and UK-FCDO also experienced substantial reductions. These results show that established transparency gains cannot be taken for granted. Publication can deteriorate quickly when systems are disrupted, organisational responsibilities become unclear or transparency is deprioritised.



With the closure of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the US Department of State (US-State) is now the only US organisation included in the Index. Its score fell from 48.6 in 2024 to 42.6 in 2026, which is 23.5 points below USAID's score in the 2024 Index.

Important information remains missing

Performance information continues to be the weakest component of the Index. Organisations averaged only 7.5 out of 20, almost unchanged from 2024. Objectives were published more consistently, but results, reviews, evaluations and pre-project impact appraisals remained limited. Without this information, users may be able to see what was spent but not what an activity achieved, whether it represented value for money or what lessons should guide future decisions.

Transparency data is becoming more valuable

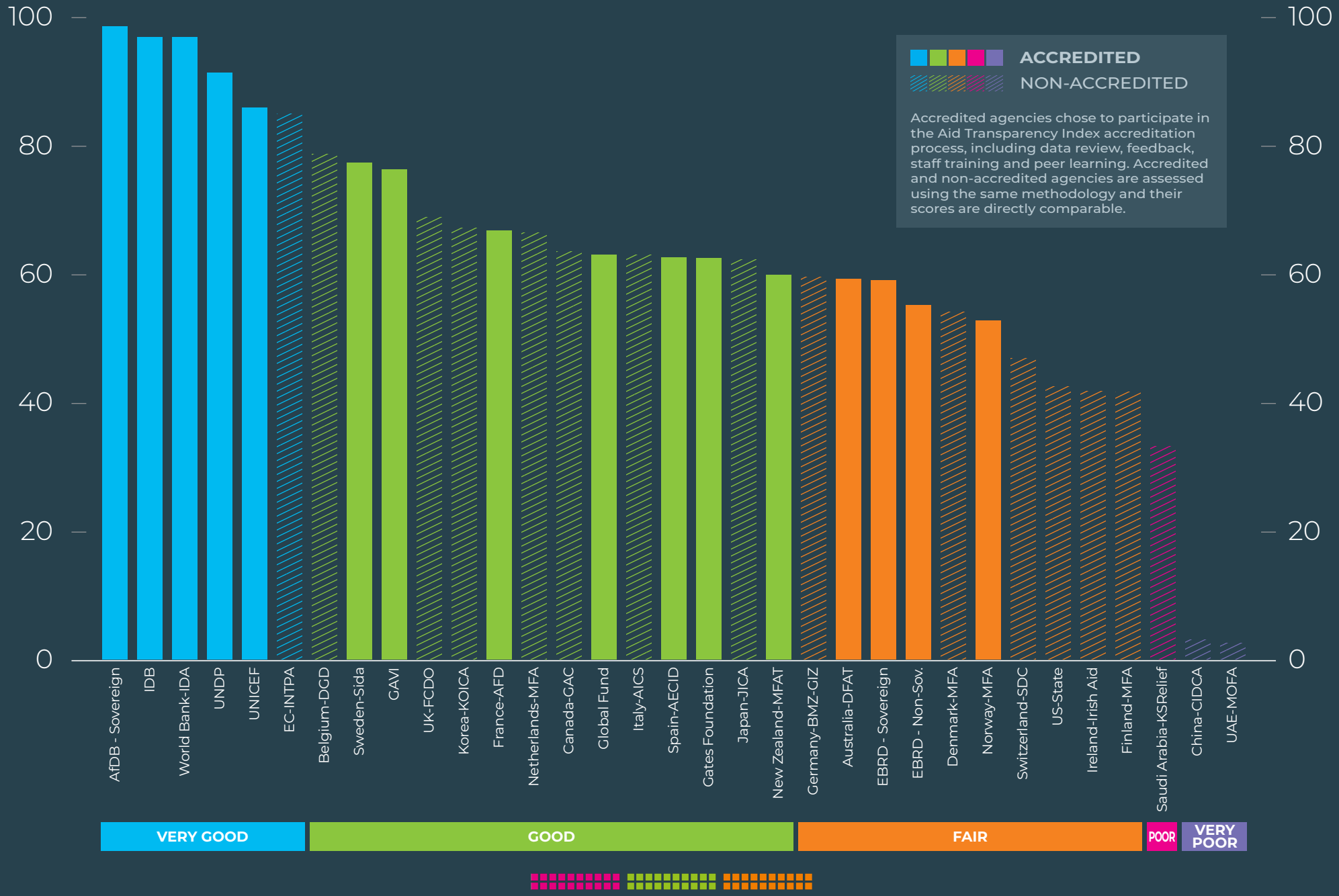
Rapid developments in artificial intelligence create new opportunities to make open aid data easier to access and analyse. Experiments conducted for this report showed that AI agents are becoming increasingly capable of querying raw IATI data, checking transactions, identifying duplication and distinguishing between funders, intermediaries and implementers. However, specialist judgement remains essential, particularly where publication is incomplete or funding is reported at multiple points in the same delivery chain.

AI tools cannot compensate for missing, inaccurate or outdated information. Their growing capabilities therefore strengthen the case for comprehensive, timely and well-structured publication. Aid and development organisations should prioritise regular publication covering their full portfolios; improve objectives, results, reviews and evaluations; and consistently identify participating organisations and transaction recipients.

The first accreditation cycle produced encouraging results. Publish What You Fund invites other aid and development organisations to participate in the 2028 accreditation process, strengthening their own publication while supporting the continuation of the Aid Transparency Index as an independent global benchmark.



Overall scores and ranking



2. Introduction

The international context

The 2026 Aid Transparency Index comes at a time when the international aid system is undergoing an historic contraction and reconfiguration. Official Development Assistance (ODA) fell sharply in both 2024 and 2025, with the 23.1% real-terms decline in 2025 being the largest annual reduction ever recorded (total ODA fell from US$212.1 billion in 2024 to US$163.1 billion[1] in 2025, measured at constant 2024 prices and exchange rates). Further cuts are expected in 2026. These reductions have fallen particularly heavily on grants, humanitarian assistance, health, civil society and core funding for United Nations organisations. The poorest and most aid-dependent countries are among those most affected.

At the same time, the composition and allocation of aid are changing. Funding has become more closely aligned with donors' security, geopolitical and domestic priorities. Support for Ukraine has reached unprecedented levels, while aid to least developed countries and sub-Saharan Africa has fallen. Funding for the World Bank and regional development banks has proved more resilient than bilateral grants or UN contributions. This points towards greater reliance on loans, leveraged finance and private capital within a wider and increasingly complex development-finance system.

As traditional aid providers are stepping back, other actors are gaining greater prominence in the international aid system. These include "South-South" and other non-traditional donors – many traditional aid recipient countries now have their own international aid programmes, either working regionally or internationally to support activities financially or with expertise in-kind. Private philanthropy continues to contribute to international development programming in areas such as health, education, environmental protection and economic development. The most recent estimates made by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are that philanthropies contribute over US$17 billion per year, either cross-border or domestically in low- or middle-income countries.

Publish What You Fund has produced a series of reports covering these emerging actors in the aid system, as well as a more comprehensive review of the transparency of UN agencies in our Making Impact Visible series. A review of international aid contractors is forthcoming.

These changes to the funding landscape make comprehensive and timely transparency particularly important. Partner countries and civil society need information about where cuts are being made, which programmes are ending, how responsibilities are being transferred and what funding will remain. As aid is increasingly delivered through development banks, financial intermediaries and private-sector instruments, transparency is also needed to trace finance through delivery chains and understand its terms, results and development impacts.

The United States' unprecedented aid cuts

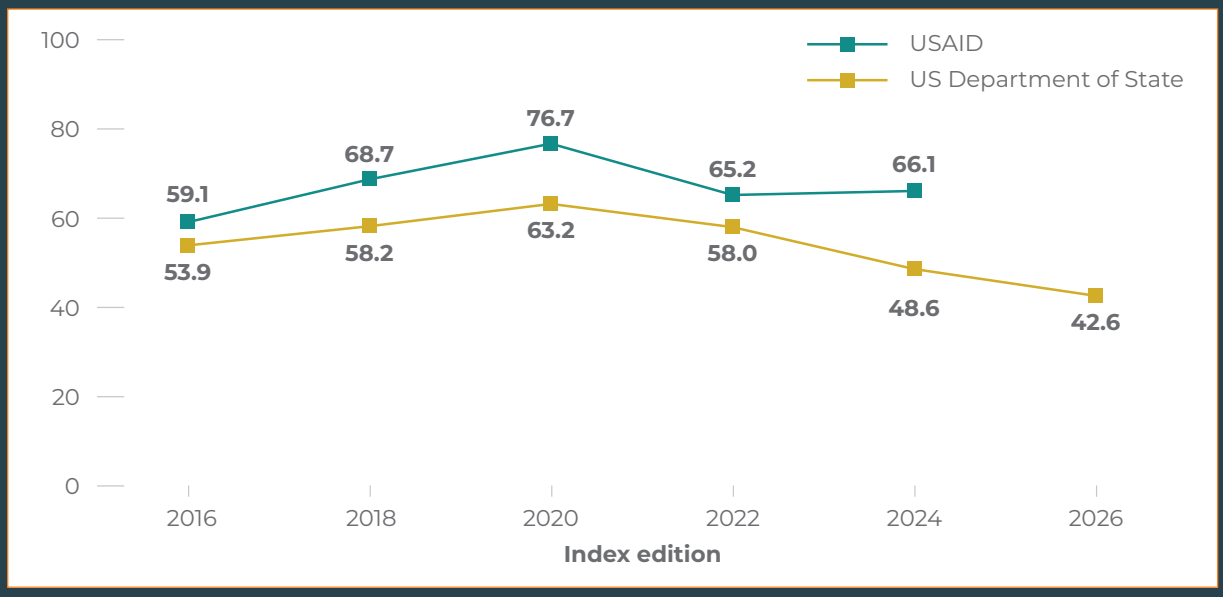
A key driver of the historic fall in annual ODA was the cuts made by the United States. Its ODA fell by 56.9% in 2025. This was the largest year-on-year decline on record by an individual provider, and the US cuts made up 75.1% of the overall decline in aid in 2025. On the ground, blanket stop-work orders and subsequent award terminations caused immediate disruption, leaving governments and aid organisations little time to secure replacement funding. Health facilities closed, food and nutrition assistance was reduced, and programmes providing HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, vaccination, maternal health and humanitarian services were suspended or scaled back.

1 This is an adjusted figure based on 2024 prices and exchange rates to facilitate comparison. The OECD's headline figure for 2025 ODA at current prices is US$174.3 billion.

The gutting of the US aid apparatus is reflected in the 2026 Aid Transparency Index. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) was previously the principal US agency to feature in the Index - it had been scored and ranked in every edition since the 2011 Pilot. Over that time, USAID's score rose overall from 40.3 ("fair") in 2014 to 66.1 ("good") in 2024, peaking at 76.7 in 2020. USAID's IATI publication - previously updated on a monthly basis - was the largest dataset published in the Standard, with over 50,000 activities making up 1.9GB of data. After the closure of USAID, all activity-related documents were taken offline, including evaluations and other project documentation that would have been a rich source of learning.

The US Department of State (US-State) is now the only US organisation assessed in the Index. US-State's performance has declined in 2026 compared to its previous score (down six points from 48.6 to 42.6) and is 23.5 points below USAID's score in the 2024 Index. The decline was driven mainly by weaker organisational information: US-State received no points for an allocation policy, annual report or disaggregated organisational budget, and only partial credit for its audit, organisation strategy and country or sector strategies. Its activity data continued to omit project budgets and budget documents, objectives, results, reviews and evaluations, and information identifying participating organisations. These gaps make it difficult to connect spending to plans, delivery partners and results precisely when the US aid system is undergoing its most significant restructuring in decades.

FIGURE 1: USAID and US Department of State scores, 2016–2026



AI and aid transparency data

As the importance of aid transparency is being underscored by the dynamics in global aid, we are seeing the widespread adoption of powerful new tools that can be used to access and process aid data. Generative artificial intelligence (AI) - often using large language models (LLMs) trained on vast collections of digital information - is entering widespread public and professional use.

Advances in computing power, model design and training methods have rapidly extended what these models can do. They can also be connected to databases, search systems and analytical tools, allowing them to retrieve and analyse information beyond their original training data.

This presents a significant opportunity for the operationalisation of aid transparency data and for greater use by stakeholders to monitor and respond to the major shifts that are taking place. LLMs are particularly useful for analysing large, well-structured datasets to identify patterns and produce findings. The IATI dataset contains millions of records describing development and humanitarian activities, including their finances, sectors, locations, participating organisations and results. Because organisations publish this information using a common, machine-readable standard, it can be combined and analysed at scale.



Current AI agents can already connect to the IATI Datastore to answer questions about where aid goes, what it supports, who delivers it and how it is spent. This could allow users to produce analysis that would previously have required specialist technical skills.

However, outputs from AI tools will only be as dependable as the underlying information used to produce them. These tools may miss data gaps or misinterpret unusual reporting practices, for example. And the type of research that is possible will depend on how detailed the information is. This strengthens the case for comprehensive, timely and high-quality aid data.

The 2026 Aid Transparency Index

The Aid Transparency Index encourages the world's leading aid and development organisations to publish more and better information as structured, machine-readable open data. It scores and ranks organisations based on the quality, quantity, timeliness and accessibility of the information they publish.

The assessment combines automated tests with manual checks. Automated tests measure whether organisations publish comprehensive information and whether their data meets the relevant technical requirements. Publish What You Fund then undertakes manual checks: selecting random samples of individual data points and documents to determine whether the information meets the required quality standards.

These manual, qualitative checks are particularly important as more people turn to AI tools to analyse aid data. A data field may be present but contain vague, incomplete or poor-quality information. Automated tests alone cannot distinguish between a meaningful description and text that provides little useful information. By assessing the quality as well as the presence of published information, the Index helps to ensure that aid data is useful to people and AI tools.

As well as assessing the quality of data published by leading aid organisations, the Aid Transparency Index provides strong incentives for these organisations to improve the quality, timeliness and completeness of their data. A public ranking creates reputational risk for those that publish poor-quality data and may score badly, alongside the potential reward of recognition and endorsement for those that publish high-quality, timely information. Over the years we have seen the effect of these incentives as agencies have improved or maintained the quality of their data. We have also gradually increased the stringency of the assessment - most recently with AI-relevant adjustments - adding to an overall cumulative incentive to continuously improve data quality.



Index accreditation

For the 2026 Aid Transparency Index, Publish What You Fund introduced an accreditation scheme. Organisations can now pay to participate in a comprehensive capacity-building, feedback and improvement process prior to the Index assessment. Throughout this process, Publish What You Fund provided participating organisations with detailed, iterative feedback to help them improve their transparency and data publication. Organisations that participated in and completed this process receive Aid Transparency Index accreditation. Additionally, Index accreditation demonstrates a commitment to supporting aid transparency by publishing good-quality open data.



To ensure that the Index remains an objective assessment of the world's leading aid and development organisations, we also assessed the bilateral providers selected for the 2024 Index that did not participate in the 2026 accreditation process.[2] These comparator organisations were assessed at the same time, against the same indicators and using the same scoring approach as accredited organisations. However, they did not receive the detailed feedback and capacity-building support provided to organisations participating in the accreditation process. See the Methodology section for more information about how we ensured that the scoring and ranking remained an objective, fair assessment for all organisations included.

In total, 17 organisations signed up to be accredited (with one organisation assessed for two separate portfolios) and we added 17 comparators. Two accredited organisations that were assessed for the first time opted to be excluded from the rankings on this occasion, resulting in a total of 33 organisations scored and ranked.

2 We selected the largest agency from each country as comparators.

3. 2026 Aid Transparency Index Results: highlights and key findings

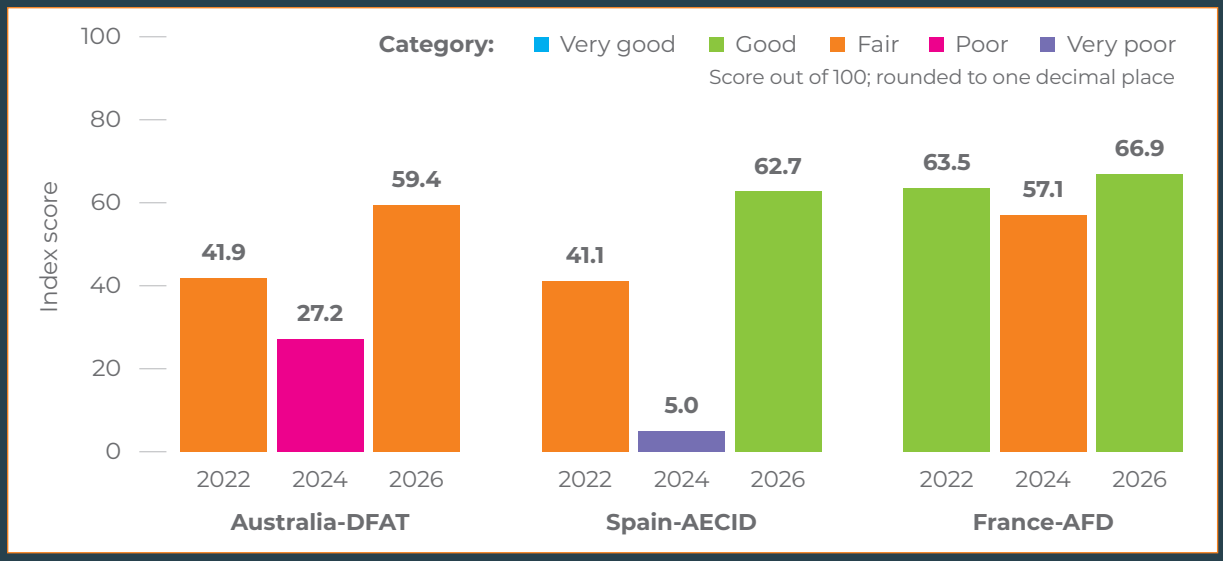
Transparency remains relatively strong, but progress has stalled

Twenty organisations - 61% of the total - placed in the "good" or "very good" categories, reflecting the publication of high-quality, structured open data by the majority of the organisations we assessed. Only three were rated "poor" or "very poor". However, the results broadly show stasis in overall levels of transparency, rather than continued improvement across the sector. Among the 33 organisations assessed in both 2024 and 2026, the average fell slightly from **62.7 to 62.1** out of 100. Beneath this overall stability, there were substantial gains and losses by individual organisations.

Multilateral development banks continued to perform particularly well in the Index. The African Development Bank (AfDB) maintained the top spot for the publication of its sovereign portfolio data. This is the third consecutive first place for the AfDB, which continues to consistently publish high-quality, comprehensive and timely open data about its activities and financial flows. Joint second place was held by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA). Other multilaterals also performed well. The two assessed UN agencies – United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) - took the fourth and fifth spots. Rounding off the "very good" category was the European Commission Directorate-General for International Partnerships (EC-INTPA).

Several organisations made strong recoveries following dips in scores in 2024. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the French Development Agency (AFD) all moved up categories, with Spain-AECID jumping from "very poor" in 2024 to "good" in 2026. Both Spain and Australia resumed IATI publication following a hiatus and made significant gains in scores as a result. Spain's increase from 5 points in 2024 to 62.7 points is the largest recorded improvement by an organisation between two consecutive editions of the Aid Transparency Index. This was a significant achievement (see Box 1 for more details). Australia-DFAT increased its score by 32.2 points, moving from the "poor" category in 2024 to the top of the "fair" category (see Box 2). France-AFD also made significant improvements and increased its score by just under 10 points, moving from the "fair" to the "good" category.

FIGURE 2: Aid Transparency Index scores, 2022–2026. *Bar colours show the category achieved in each Index.*



BOX 1: Spain-AECID: rebuilding transparency through digital transformation

Spain-AECID registered the largest improvement in the 2026 Index. Its score increased by **57.7 points**, from 5.0 in 2024 to 62.7 in 2026, moving from the "very poor" to the "good" category. In 2024, AECID had paused its IATI publication while it renewed its data and information-management systems. Its return to IATI was therefore not simply a resumption of reporting through its previous systems.

AECID explained that the improvement formed part of a wider institutional reform programme in which transparency and accountability were central priorities. Its Digital Transformation Plan 2022–2025 supported the renewal and integration of information systems, processes and data-management practices. The programme also aimed to place data more firmly at the centre of decision-making, strengthen evidence-based management and improve the quality, consistency and traceability of institutional information.

In May 2026, AECID launched its new Open Data Portal and resumed publishing information on its activities through IATI. The two initiatives were designed as complementary parts of the same transparency strategy, making information on Spanish development cooperation more accessible and usable while aligning it with international open-data standards.

This work is continuing under AECID's Digital Transformation Plan 2026–2029, in which data and transparency form one of four strategic pillars. Javier Chicote Mendarozqueta, Head of Area in AECID's Sub-directorate for Technology and Digital Transformation, described the renewed IATI publication as "not only a technical achievement, but also a clear institutional commitment to openness, accountability and better development effectiveness." AECID's experience illustrates how political buy-in alongside investment in integrated systems and institutional data practices can produce rapid improvements in transparency.

BOX 2: Australia rebuilds its aid transparency

Australia-DFAT recorded the second-largest improvement in the 2026 Aid Transparency Index. Its score increased from 27.2 in 2024 to 59.4 in 2026, moving it from the "poor" to the "fair" category. This represents a substantial recovery following several years of declining performance.

Australia resumed regular publication of IATI data after a pause in 2024 while systems were being upgraded and the AusDevPortal - which allows users to explore Australia's IATI data through its own web portal - was developed.

These improvements followed commitments in Australia's 2023 International Development Policy and its Development Performance and Delivery Framework. Australia also published Development Partnership Plans and participated in the Index accreditation process, receiving iterative feedback on its data and publication practices.

Dr Anne Aly, Australia's Minister for International Development, said participation reflected a willingness to subject the programme to external scrutiny:

> *"We signed up to the Aid Transparency Index because we are willing to put our work under the microscope. We want to learn from others, listen to feedback, and improve the information we share."*

Australia's improved score demonstrates the effect of restoring regular IATI publication and embedding transparency more firmly within policy, systems and institutional responsibilities. However, important gaps remain, particularly in performance information. Further progress will require Australia to publish more complete information about objectives, results and reviews and evaluations so that users can assess not only where funding goes, but also what it achieves.

For Dr Aly, usefulness is the central test:

> *"There is no point publishing a mountain of data if people can't find it, understand it or use it."*

She also emphasised the wider value of transparency at a time when international development resources are under pressure:

> *"When development budgets are under pressure, every dollar must work harder and people rightly want to know what we are achieving. Pressure makes transparency more important, not less."*

Other significant improvers include Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Belgium's Directorate-General International Cooperation (DG INT, formerly DGD), which increased their scores by 7.6 and 4.6 points respectively. Japan-JICA moved up from "fair" to "good" for the first time, and Belgium-DGD was the highest-scoring bilateral agency assessed in 2026.

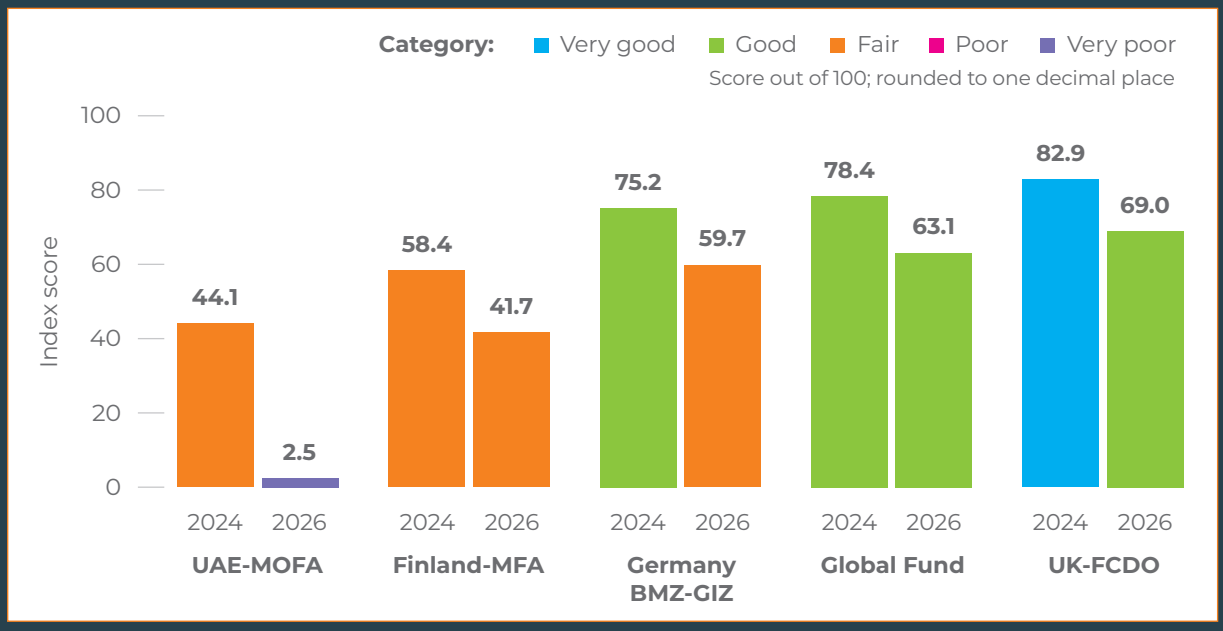
While we saw encouraging improvements made by these agencies, elsewhere we saw progress stall or reverse.

Several established publishers recorded substantial declines

The largest fall was recorded by the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), whose score decreased by **41.6 points**, from 44.1 in 2024 to 2.5 in this edition. We found no current IATI data for UAE-MOFA and no updates made since January 2025. The result illustrates how quickly transparency can collapse when an organisation no longer maintains regular, up-to-date publication.

Elsewhere, the declines were less severe but still noteworthy. Finland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) fell by **16.7 points**, mainly due to a drop-off in its regular, up-to-date publication of data. Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ-GIZ) score dropped by **15.5 points**, with weaker performance particularly evident in the publication of descriptive, financial and forward-looking information. The Global Fund's score fell by **15.3 points**, reflecting less frequent data updates and reduced availability or quality across several organisation- and activity-level indicators, including budgets and performance information. The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) score was **13.9 points** less than in 2024, falling from "very good" back to the "good" category. UK-FCDO lost points for its lack of comprehensive forward-looking country and organisational budgets and strategies, and project objectives. Gavi's smaller decline - from "very good" to "good" - was driven principally by weaker financial and performance information rather than a wholesale deterioration across its publication (see Box 3).

FIGURE 3: Several established publishers recorded lower scores. *Aid Transparency Index scores, 2024 and 2026. Bar colours show the category achieved in each Index*



BOX 3: Gavi's transparency affected by transition in operating model

Gavi's score fell by **4.8 points**, from 81.3 to 76.5, moving it from "very good" to "good". The decline occurred during a major reform of its operating model. Gavi is replacing rolling applications for individual programmes with a single five-year application from each eligible country. According to Gavi, countries will be developing and submitting new grant applications, planning documents and budget documents for the upcoming five-year period between August 2026 and August 2027. This meant that Gavi was not able to publish some forward-looking strategic and planning documents in time for the 2026 Index assessment.

Its overall decline therefore appears to reflect the disruption and changed data structure associated with a transitional period, rather than a withdrawal from transparency. The effect of the new grant management system on the accessibility and coherence of Gavi's data should become clearer once the new programmes begin in 2027 and results reporting starts in 2028.

These results show that strong past performance cannot be taken for granted. In several cases, losses were concentrated in precisely the information needed to understand how resources will be used and what they aim to achieve: forward-looking budgets, strategies and objectives. Transparency can deteriorate quickly when publication systems are disrupted, responsibility for maintaining data becomes unclear, or organisational priorities and disclosure practices change. Regular publication therefore requires sustained institutional ownership and investment, not simply the establishment of a functioning system at one point in time.

For the 2026 Index we introduced a new approach to assessing timeliness. We assessed regularity of publication across the 24 months between Indexes, precisely to incentivise consistent, regular publication as an embedded practice (see Methodology section). Frequent publication is strongly associated with better transparency. The 20 organisations publishing monthly data achieved an average final score of 73.4. This compares with 51.4 for quarterly publishers and 52.6 for those publishing less frequently than quarterly. Some of this relationship is built into the Index's timeliness scoring, but a gap of around 20 points also suggests that regular publication is associated with stronger data-management systems more generally.

Networked data: following aid through delivery chains

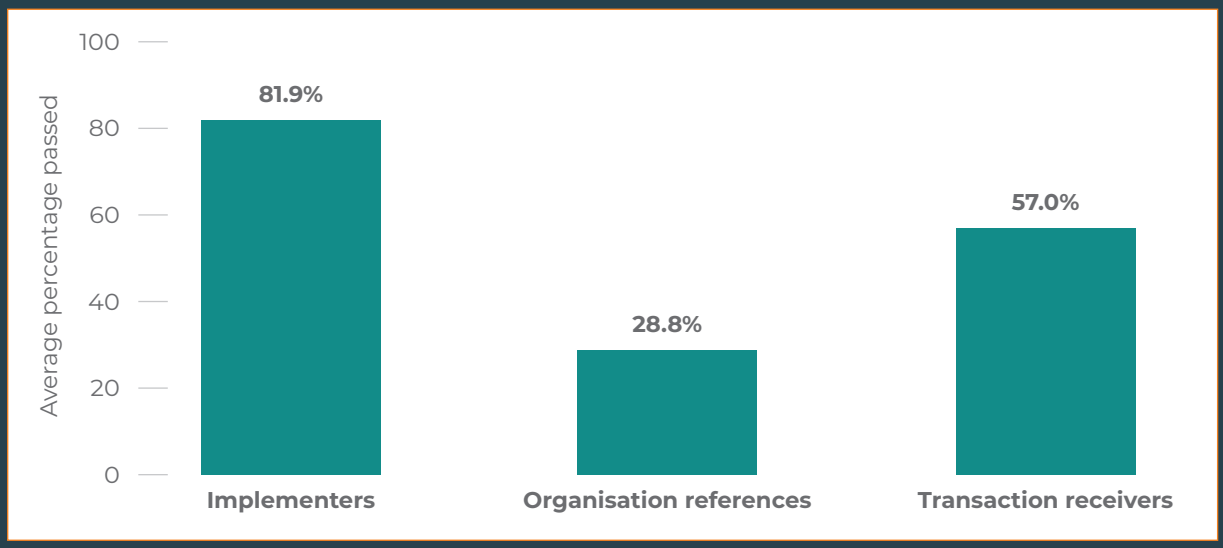
Publish What You Fund introduced the Networked data indicator to the Index in 2022 to encourage publishers to use common references to identify the organisations they are working with. In 2024 we added the transaction receiver test, assessing how organisations publish the recipients of transactions, providing further visibility of financial flows between organisations. This information helps users connect the nodes in the network of aid delivery.

We continue to see improvements in the publication of network data. The average score for the indicator increased by 15% compared with 2024, from 2.8 to 3.2 out of 5. Italy-AICS and Belgium-DGD recorded the highest scores for all parts of the indicator, receiving almost perfect scores (4.9), followed by Sweden-Sida (4.8). 24 of the 33 organisations scored at least half of the points for the indicator.

Several organisations struggled with the publication of recognised references for partner organisations. This partly reflects the limited availability of recognised references for partner-country ministries, local NGOs and private companies. The World Bank-IDA invested significant work in developing sets of references for its government partners, and improving the quality of these references remains an ongoing effort.

Transaction recipients were reported more consistently. 16 organisations published receivers for over 95% of their transactions. Nevertheless, 13 organisations - including Australia-DFAT, France-AFD, Germany-BMZ-GIZ, Japan-JICA and UNICEF – published no valid transaction recipient data. Without this information, users can see that money has left the publisher but not which organisation received it, leaving a significant break in the visibility of the aid-delivery chain.

FIGURE 4: Average percentage passing for each Networked data test, 2026



Incomplete portfolio coverage reduced three organisations' scores

Since 2024, the Index has applied a coverage assessment to check whether an organisation's IATI data covers a sufficiently large proportion of its aid or development portfolio. We spent considerable time developing an approach to assess coverage and settled on a comparison between official expenditure figures and total expenditure recorded in IATI. There are several challenges that can make measurement imprecise, including the availability of up-to-date official expenditure totals, and mismatches between the expenditure that is recorded as official aid and activities included in IATI publication. Because of this, we apply coverage thresholds with some leeway and share findings with publishers to establish reasons for discrepancies. Where historical coverage is below 85% and current coverage remains below 65%, a coverage penalty is applied to the IATI activity-data scores.

In 2026, this penalty was applied to the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Saudi Arabia's King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSRelief) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) non-sovereign portfolio after comparisons with OECD DAC data and further checks of their current publication. KOICA's assessment was complicated by its practice of removing older data and by the difficulty of separating KOICA expenditure from the wider Korean IATI publication. Saudi Arabia-KSRelief's IATI disbursements remained substantially below its reported annual spending, while EBRD's published private-sector disbursements covered only a limited proportion of its comparable portfolio. The penalty reduced KOICA's overall score by approximately **6.4 points**, EBRD's non-sovereign score by **5.0 points** and Saudi Arabia–KSRelief's score by **3.7 points**. This ensures that organisations are not rewarded for publishing high-quality information on only a limited portion of their activities.

Access to information policy assessments

Indicator 1 in the Index assessment - Quality of Freedom of Information legislation - scores organisations based on the policy or legal framework governing public access to their information. Strong access to information policies are essential because they establish what information organisations should proactively publish, give the public a right to request information that is not already available, and provide a route to challenge decisions to withhold it.

For bilateral aid organisations, the scoring is based on their results in the Global Right to Information (RTI) Rating, which is a sophisticated tool for assessing national freedom of information laws. For multilateral and non-governmental organisations, Publish What You Fund carries out its own scoring of institutional access to information policies, using standards based on the RTI Rating scoring approach.

One third of the indicator's points is awarded for each of the following three elements:

1. Presumption of disclosure
2. Limitations on the redaction of commercially sensitive information and sensitive internal deliberations information
3. Independent appeals process

Taken together, these are three elements of best practice in access to information policies that maximise disclosure, while recognising that some information should remain restricted. A policy that meets these criteria assumes information should be available to the public, with a limited set of exceptions (information that, if released, would harm a legitimate interest) and a right to appeal refusals to provide information to an independent panel.

Organisations often lose points for this indicator when the presumption of disclosure is undermined by an arbitrary power to restrict access to information beyond the specific exceptions in the policy (a "negative override"), when exceptions to disclosure fail to identify the harm being protected or include blanket restrictions on information provided by third parties as confidential (thereby circumventing the requirement of harm) or when appeals panels are not independent from the organisation.

These are the scores for the multilateral and non-governmental organisations in this edition of the Aid Transparency Index:

TABLE 1: Scoring of multilateral/non-governmental organisations' access to information policies

	Presumption of disclosure	Limitations	Independent appeals
AfDB	✓	✗	✓
EBRD	✓	✗	✗
Gates Foundation	✗	✗	✗
Gavi	✓	✗	✓
Global Fund	✓	✗	✗
IDB	✓	✗	✓
UNDP	✗	✓	✓
UNICEF	✓	✗	✗
World Bank-IDA	✗	✗	✓

Three organisations introduced new or revised access to information policies after the 2024 Index and improved their scores. EBRD's 2024 policy removed its negative override and so scored for presumption of disclosure. Gavi and IDB each moved from meeting one criterion to meeting two: their current policies satisfy the tests for a presumption of disclosure and an independent appeals process.

IDB's new policy, which took effect in September 2025, represents a substantial revision of its previous framework. It explicitly recognises access to information as a human right, strengthens the principles of maximum access and proactive disclosure, and reduces the number of exceptions from ten to six. It also removes the Bank's previous power to withhold information when it considered disclosure more harmful than beneficial - the "negative override" - and introduces a documented harm test and positive public-interest override.

None of the nine multilateral and non-governmental organisations assessed received full marks. Most commonly, policies failed to place sufficiently narrow and harm-based limits on exceptions for commercially sensitive information and internal deliberations. However, the results do show that each element can be met with a suitably robust policy. The overall trend is nevertheless encouraging - access to information policies are improving as organisations revise and update them.

Performance data continues to lag behind

Performance information remains the weakest area of aid transparency. Across the 33 organisations, the average score for the performance component was **7.5 out of 20**, compared with 7.6 in 2024. The limited change since 2024 suggests that publishers made little collective progress in showing what their activities are intended to achieve and whether they are delivering results.

Where done well, agencies such as AfDB, World Bank-IDA, IDB and EC-INTPA publish high-quality evaluations, detailed and time-bound results, and clearly substantiate their impact. This enables learning, coordination and continuous improvement. 15 organisations published results for at least some of their activities, and we found evaluation documents published by 18 of the assessed organisations. Objectives were published most consistently, with 28 organisations scoring for the indicator – 11 of those published objectives for between 95% and 100% of their activities.

The gap in impact reporting matters because financial transparency alone cannot show whether aid is effective. Without objectives, results and independent assessments, partner governments, affected communities and taxpayers can see what was spent but not what it achieved or what lessons should inform future decisions. There is a huge opportunity for AI tools to extract learning and identify patterns of successful approaches from the large volumes of performance documentation produced by aid agencies. To contribute to this endeavour, publishers should treat the timely release of results, reviews and evaluations as a core part of routine publication.

Performance of accredited and non-accredited organisations

Organisations participating in the full accreditation process performed better on average than non-accredited comparators. Accredited organisations achieved an average final score of 72.9, compared with 51.9 for non-accredited organisations. Three-quarters of accredited organisations were rated "good" or "very good", compared with just under half of the non-accredited group. Accredited organisations also made substantial improvements during the assessment process. Their average score increased from 66.1 in the indicative first round to 72.9 in the final assessment, an increase of 6.8 points.

These findings are consistent with the feedback, engagement and capacity building offered through accreditation helping organisations to improve their publication. There is no equivalent round-one comparison for non-accredited organisations, which were assessed only during the common final round.

The comparison of final scores should be interpreted carefully. Organisations choosing accreditation may already have had stronger commitments, systems or capacity for transparency. The accredited group includes several historically high-performing multilateral organisations, while the non-accredited group includes the lowest scoring bilateral agencies - China-CIDCA and UAE-MOFA. There were also strong non-accredited performers, including EC-INTPA and Belgium-DGD, showing that accreditation is not a prerequisite to performing well in the Index.

4. Methodology

The Aid Transparency Index assessment approach is set out in full in the 2026 Technical Paper, available on the Publish What You Fund website. Organisations are assessed against 35 indicators covering the availability, quality and timeliness of information about the organisation and its development activities. The indicators are grouped into five components:

FIGURE 5: The Aid Transparency Index components



The principal scoring method uses automated tests of information published in the IATI Standard. These tests assess whether the information required for each indicator is present, comprehensive and sufficiently up to date. Organisations receive the highest scores when they publish complete, consistent and timely information across their portfolios. Scores are lower when information is available for only a proportion of activities, is incomplete, or is updated infrequently.

Publish What You Fund also carries out qualitative checks for indicators where the presence of a data field or document is not sufficient to establish its usefulness. Researchers select random samples of activities and review the associated data and documents against defined quality criteria. Organisational documents are also reviewed manually. This process tests, for example, whether descriptions are meaningful, documents contain the information claimed and results or evaluations relate to the relevant activity.

Where information is not available through IATI, the assessment may consider information published on an organisation's website. Website publication generally receives fewer points because it is less standardised, less comparable and less accessible than information published through IATI.

Final scores are calculated using published indicator and component weightings. These balance the importance and usefulness of the information with the difficulty involved in publishing it. Higher weights are assigned to information such as forward-looking budgets, performance data and networked data, while basic project attributes such as titles, dates and activity status receive lower weights.

Accredited organisations and non-accredited comparators

The 2026 Aid Transparency Index introduced a paid accreditation model to support the long-term sustainability of the Index. Accredited organisations participate in a structured assessment, engagement and capacity-building process. This includes training and peer-learning opportunities, an initial diagnostic assessment and detailed feedback from Publish What You Fund.

Accredited organisations are assessed through two rounds of data collection. The first is an indicative round carried out earlier in the assessment period. Publish What You Fund downloads and tests the organisation's data, reviews sampled information and provides feedback on the findings. Organisations can use this feedback to correct publication problems, strengthen their systems and improve the quality and completeness of their data before the final assessment. The support does not change the indicator definitions or scoring rules, and organisations remain responsible for deciding whether and how to act on the findings.

To preserve the Index's role as an independent assessment of the world's leading aid and development organisations, Publish What You Fund also included major bilateral donors that were assessed in the 2024 Index but did not participate in the 2026 accreditation process. Without these comparators, the Index would cover a smaller, self-selected group and would provide a less representative picture of the transparency of major aid flows. Including them allows users to compare accredited organisations with other leading donors and ensures that the Index continues to perform its wider accountability function.

Non-accredited comparators do not receive the bespoke feedback, capacity building or peer-learning support provided through accreditation. They are assessed once, during the final scoring round. However, they continue to have access to the published methodology, the open-source Data Quality Tester (which replicates the Index automated tests) and their recommendations and results from previous Index assessments.

The distinction between the two groups concerns the support available before final scoring, not the assessment used to determine the final results. At the final assessment point:

- data for accredited organisations and comparators is downloaded at the same time;
- the same website data-collection survey is applied;
- the same indicator definitions, tests, scoring rules and weightings are used;
- the same data-quality sampling procedures are applied;
- and assessments are subject to the same verification and independent review processes.

Both groups are therefore assessed on what they publish by the same cut-off date and against the same published scoring approach. The Index measures transparency outcomes rather than participation in the accreditation process.

Organisations in both groups can submit evidence relevant to the manually assessed indicators and raise concerns about scoring decisions. Independent reviewers provide an additional check on the consistency and impartiality of assessments. The review process is designed to identify differences in interpretation, support the assessment of documents published in different languages and ensure that researchers apply the criteria consistently.

Non-accredited organisations appear in the overall ranking and receive overall and component-level scores. Detailed indicator-level results and the more extensive feedback associated with the accreditation process are reserved for accredited organisations. This difference affects the level of analysis and support provided, but not the calculation of scores or ranking positions. Detailed indicator-by-indicator breakdowns for the accredited organisations are available on the 2026 Aid Transparency Index website.

Measuring the timeliness of IATI publication

Timeliness assesses both how regularly an organisation publishes information and how current that information is. It consists of two measures:

- **Publication frequency:** how often the organisation updates its IATI activity data.
- **Time lag:** the interval between the end of the reporting period and the publication of the data.

Timeliness is applied as a multiplier to the points awarded for IATI activity data. It does not apply to manually assessed website information because IATI provides machine-readable publication records that allow update patterns and data currency to be measured consistently.

For the 2026 Index, Publish What You Fund changed the period used to assess publication frequency. Previous assessments examined updates over one year. The 2026 approach examines up to two years of publication history, covering July 2024 to June 2026. The longer period provides a more reliable measure of whether organisations publish regularly between biennial Index assessments and reduces the extent to which a short burst of publication immediately before data collection can determine the frequency score.

Methodology development and review

Aid transparency and data-publishing practices continue to evolve. Publish What You Fund reviews the assessment approach before each Index to ensure that indicator tests remain relevant, technically robust and capable of distinguishing between different levels of transparency.

Changes are developed through consultation with assessed organisations, data users and members of the IATI community. Indicator definitions, test logic and scoring rules are published so that organisations can understand what is being assessed and external users can scrutinise and reproduce the approach.

The main methodological changes for the 2026 Index were the introduction of the accredited and non-accredited assessment model, the extension of the publication-frequency assessment from one year to two years, and the redistribution of points within the Networked data indicator (the Participating organisation references test points were reduced to reflect the challenges in the availability of registration numbers of some organisation types). These changes preserve the core structure of the Index while responding to its funding needs, changes in publication practice and practical limitations in the availability of organisation identifiers.

5. An experiment in using AI to analyse IATI data

THIS IS AN UPDATE TO THE 2 JULY 2026 BLOG: "CAN AI SOLVE OPEN AID DATA'S ACCESS PROBLEM?" BY ELMA JENKINS AND ALEX TILLEY

Extracting insights from data has often been compared to the process of extracting natural resources from the ground – metaphors like 'mining data', 'harvesting insights' or 'data scraping' are often employed in discussion around using data for evidence and analysis, and data has been called the new oil. The comparison is driven by the high levels of skill needed to store, clean, query, parse and analyse data, which has created a bottleneck by limiting its raw use to 'data intermediaries'. In this chapter, we explore how raw data can be mined using the latest technology.

Accessing open aid data

As discussed earlier in this report, data published in the IATI Standard is a rich source of open, structured data, including both qualitative and quantitative information that can be extracted and processed by AI models to generate valuable insights about aid and development. There is now 13.6GB of data available in the Standard – equivalent to approximately 2.4 billion words in plain text. In addition, approximately 250,000 documents are linked from the structured data.

There have been many uses of IATI data so far including tracking funding flows, mapping aid cuts and analysing aid effectiveness. Some data access tools have been built for the general user but these have limitations. To improve accessibility, they apply their own processing and cleaning rules to the data which limits how data can be searched and viewed. In response, Publish What You Fund, the only organisation independently measuring aid transparency, began providing training on how to access and use the data. But using raw IATI data has, until recently, been limited to skilled intermediaries who firstly understand the structure of IATI data and secondly, know how to access and manipulate the raw data.

The potential of using artificial intelligence with IATI data

AI offers an opportunity to remove data use barriers and help new and experienced users alike to access data in new ways. Publish What You Fund has been investigating the use of AI agents to search and analyse raw IATI data directly.

The scope of AI tools is broad so when using them to access IATI data Publish What You Fund has focussed on a subset - specifically large language model (LLM) agents. When using an online LLM chatbot, such as ChatGPT, replies are generally based on secondary sources that have used IATI data for their analysis. Chatbots can also produce programming code that can be used to query the IATI dataset, but this would need to be operationalised by the user themselves. The AI agent adds an extra dimension to the LLM as it is able to read files, edit and run code, and iterate towards a goal.

The quality of the data which LLMs are trained on defines the quality of their outputs. There is a strong connection between high-quality open aid data and the success of LLMs. With an AI agent, users can start to ask questions like "Which donors are increasing climate finance in East Africa?" The agent can then produce and analyse a tailored dataset, providing a written response to the question, without the user needing to know the specific structure of IATI data, to interpret IATI code lists or to write any programming code.

Limitations of AI

While AI tools can play a significant role in reducing barriers to entry for data use, there are important limitations. LLMs are not built for accuracy; instead, they are designed to produce the most probable response based on a synthesis of the training data, which creates unique issues when conducting research. In particular:

1. **Hallucinations:** LLMs are renowned for generating false insights
2. **Identifying outside-of-data knowledge gaps:** agents struggle with identifying data incompleteness or errors
3. **Complexity of the dataset:** due to the breadth and variety of organisations publishing IATI data, specialist knowledge is required to understand how the data is reported and how it can be interpreted, which may cause issues as the LLMs try to analyse the data

A trial run in mining IATI data with an AI agent

To get a sense of how AI agents can use IATI data to answer questions about aid and development activities, Publish What You Fund ran some experiments. We used Claude Code - an agentic command-line tool - to conduct several queries using raw IATI data. We selected this tool because it had the best chance of connecting directly to the IATI Datastore to access raw data. We started with a set of tasks:

1. **Calculate the total official development assistance (ODA) disbursed by a specific major bilateral donor in calendar year 2025**. We were aware that the donor's IATI spending for 2025 was significantly under-reported and wanted to see if the agent would pick this up
2. **Calculate the total food aid funding to Ethiopia in 2025**. One of the major challenges to producing spending totals using IATI data is the risk of double counting, as the same funds are reported multiple times as they are spent down the delivery chain. We wanted to see whether the agent would pick this issue up
3. **Provide the full list of funders reporting food aid to Ethiopia in that year**. We felt that this would be a useful and relatively easy task and wanted to see how the agent performed

The findings from these queries were triangulated against outputs from other data tools including d-portal, donor-published financial statements, and OECD DAC statistics, to check for consistency and discrepancies, while also being wary of the AI-specific issues listed above.

Update: repeating the experiment in September

We first ran these experiments in June 2026 and wrote about our findings. Because this technology is developing rapidly, we repeated the same three queries in September 2026, using a newer model, to see how things had changed.[3] This was not a fully controlled comparison: the underlying IATI data had been updated, the operating environment had improved, and the second exercise benefited from lessons learned during the first. Nevertheless, the results suggest that the agent's analytical capabilities have improved in the space of three months.

In June, the agent was strong at retrieving data but weak at interpreting it. It often produced plausible explanations before investigating the underlying discrepancy and depended heavily on specialist prompting to recognise incomplete reporting and double counting. In September, it behaved more like a data analyst. It selected appropriate sources, constructed more precise filters, used authoritative monthly exchange rates, identified refunds and duplicate transactions, and tested its results against official statistics. It also produced reusable scripts and transaction-level files through which its calculations could be checked, going some way to resolving the "black box" issue of not knowing exactly how findings were reached.

3 See this Annex for a more detailed log of the prompts and replies from the AI agent



These improvements materially changed the results. For the bilateral donor query, the September analysis reached accurate conclusions. For Ethiopian food aid, it examined 229 transactions from 18 publishers and identified duplicate reporting.

The agent also became better at distinguishing between original funders, intermediary organisations and implementing agencies. This produced a more accurate picture of who was publishing the data and where transactions sat within the aid delivery chain. In June, all reporting organisations had largely been treated as funders. In September, the agent recognised that expenditure published by the World Food Programme or an NGO could represent funding originally supplied by governments or other organisations. This was one of the central weaknesses we previously identified, which is now significantly improved.

Important limitations remain. Combining donor disbursements with expenditure reported by implementing organisations can mix different stages of the same funding chain. Apparent duplicates still need to be checked against transaction references and source records, and the agent sometimes expressed greater confidence than the evidence justified. Further prompting was also needed before it identified every major duplication. Specialist judgement therefore remained essential for defining what should be measured and deciding which transactions could legitimately be combined.

Will AI replace data intermediaries?

The September results move the dial but do not change the answer. The agent had progressed from being primarily a fast technical assistant towards carrying out largely complete pieces of analysis. It could retrieve, process, test and document large volumes of raw data with less technical intervention than was possible only three months earlier.

It is not yet a replacement for expertise. Questions involving incomplete publication, aid delivery chains and differences between disbursements and expenditure require methodological decisions that cannot be resolved through code alone. However, the rapid improvement suggests that AI agents could make raw aid data accessible to a much wider group of users, while specialists concentrate increasingly on methodology, validation and interpretation.

This reinforces the importance of data quality. AI agents can only follow funding through delivery chains when organisations publish consistent identifiers, transaction references and links between related activities. Complete, timely and well-structured IATI data will determine how effectively these emerging tools can generate credible insights.



6. Conclusion and recommendations

The 2026 Aid Transparency Index demonstrates the continued strength of aid transparency across much of the sector. Twenty of the 33 ranked organisations were placed in the “good” or “very good” categories, and the average score remained broadly stable despite significant disruption and reconfiguration across the international aid system. Strong improvements by organisations including Spain-AECID, Australia-DFAT and France-AFD show that institutional commitment and investment in publication systems can deliver rapid and substantial progress. The results also confirm the importance of sustaining that investment so that established transparency gains are maintained.

There are clear opportunities to build on this progress. Aid and development organisations should prioritise:

- Maintaining regular, timely publication that covers their full portfolios, including forward-looking budgets and plans.
- Improving performance information so users can understand what activities aim to achieve, what results they deliver and what lessons have been learned.
- Publishing consistent information about participating organisations and transaction recipients so funding can be followed through delivery chains.

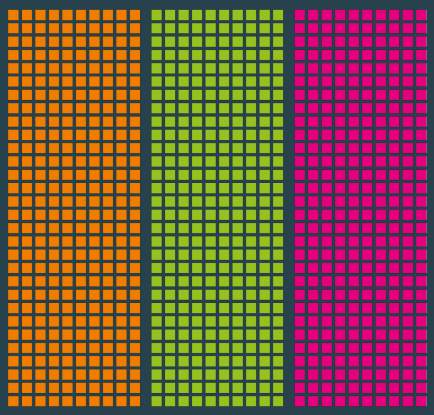
The first Aid Transparency Index accreditation cycle also produced encouraging results. Accredited organisations performed better on average than non-accredited comparators, and their average score increased by 6.8 points between the initial and final assessments. Differences in organisations’ starting points, capacity and existing commitment to transparency mean that these results should be interpreted carefully. Nevertheless, the improvements made during the process demonstrate the value of combining independent assessment with detailed feedback, capacity building and peer learning. Applying the same final assessment and scoring approach to accredited and non-accredited organisations ensured that this support was provided without compromising the independence of the ranking.

Publish What You Fund encourages other aid and development organisations to join the accreditation process for the 2028 Aid Transparency Index. Wider participation will help organisations improve the quality and usefulness of their information while supporting the continuation of the Index as an independent global benchmark. As new technologies make aid data easier to access and analyse, comprehensive, timely and reliable publication offers an important opportunity to strengthen accountability, learning and development effectiveness.

Annex: 2026 Aid Transparency Index ranking, scores and comparison with 2024 scores

Rank	Organisation	Accreditation	2026 score	2026 category	2024 score	2024 category
1	African Development Bank – Sovereign Portfolio	Accredited	98.8	Very Good	98.8	Very Good
=2	Inter-American Development Bank	Accredited	97.1	Very Good	96.3	Very Good
=2	World Bank, International Development Association	Accredited	97.1	Very Good	92.2	Very Good
4	United Nations Development Programme	Accredited	91.5	Very Good	91.5	Very Good
5	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Accredited	86.1	Very Good	86.2	Very Good
6	European Commission, Directorate-General for International Partnerships	Non-accredited	85.1	Very Good	82.9	Very Good
7	Belgium, Directorate-General International Cooperation*	Non-accredited	78.8	Good	74.2	Good
8	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	Accredited	77.5	Good	75.4	Good
9	Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance	Accredited	76.5	Good	81.3	Very Good
10	United Kingdom, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	Non-accredited	69.0	Good	82.9	Very Good
11	Korea International Cooperation Agency	Non-accredited	67.3	Good	71.8	Good
12	France, French Development Agency	Accredited	66.9	Good	57.1	Fair
13	Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Non-accredited	66.6	Good	63.5	Good
14	Global Affairs Canada	Non-accredited	63.6	Good	60.1	Good
=15	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	Accredited	63.1	Good	78.4	Good
=15	Italy, Agency for Development Cooperation	Non-accredited	63.1	Good	61.4	Good
17	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation	Accredited	62.7	Good	5.0	Very Poor
18	Gates Foundation	Accredited	62.6	Good	64.3	Good
19	Japan, International Cooperation Agency	Non-accredited	62.4	Good	54.8	Fair
20	New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Accredited	60.0	Good	60.4	Good
21	Germany, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ-GIZ)	Non-accredited	59.7	Fair	75.2	Good
22	Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Accredited	59.4	Fair	27.2	Poor
23	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development – Sovereign Portfolio	Accredited	59.2	Fair	67.1	Good
24	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development – Non-Sovereign Portfolio	Accredited	55.3	Fair	68.4	Good
25	Denmark, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Non-accredited	54.2	Fair	50.9	Fair
26	Norway, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad	Accredited	52.9	Fair	50.5	Fair
27	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	Non-accredited	47.0	Fair	46.6	Fair
28	United States, Department of State	Non-accredited	42.6	Fair	48.6	Fair
29	Ireland, Irish Aid	Non-accredited	41.8	Fair	47.9	Fair
30	Finland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Non-accredited	41.7	Fair	58.4	Fair
31	Saudi Arabia, King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre	Non-accredited	33.2	Poor	43.8	Fair
32	China International Development Cooperation Agency	Non-accredited	3.1	Very Poor	2.2	Very Poor
33	United Arab Emirates, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Non-accredited	2.5	Very Poor	44.1	Fair

* Formerly the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and assessed under the short name Belgium-DGD.



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