



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

Aid is Becoming More Transparent, but Progress Is Slow, Study Says

Aid is becoming more transparent, but progress is slow and uneven, Publish What You Fund says in a [report](#) released in October 2012. Publish What You Fund is a global organisation that campaigns for aid transparency and monitors how transparent aid organisations are.

The report said that over the past decade, transparency has been driven up the political agenda in countries and organisations all over the world. Citizens can and should be able to hold governments to account and to know where and on what their money is being spent, it said.

“Open government initiatives are helping to promote aid transparency, partly driven by the possibilities of new technology, with much of the current momentum coming from the aid effectiveness agenda,” the report said. (The term “aid effectiveness agenda” refers to the Paris Declaration on Aids Effectiveness [2005] and the Accra Agenda for Action [2008], both designed to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development. See [here](#).)

In 2012, Publish What You Fund ranked the Global Fund fourth overall among 72 aid organisations. The organisations included bilateral and multilateral agencies, climate finance funds, humanitarian agencies, development finance institutions and private foundations. The table below shows the complete rankings.

Determining the rankings involved evaluating 43 indicators, grouped in three levels: organisation, country and project. Of the 43 indicators, one measured the quality of the Freedom of Information legislation; one measured engagement with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). The remaining 41 indicators assessed whether the organisation publishes specific data related to each project. Publish What You Fund used civil society organisations to measure these 41 indicators based on the information available on each organisation’s website.

The results were derived by assigning scores for each indicator, ranking the organisations and then grouping them by level from “good” to “very poor.”

Table: Overall Transparency Scores

Category	Rankings
Good	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UK Department for International Development (DFID) 2. World Bank International Development Association (IDA)
Fair	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs 4. Global Fund 5. European Commission Development and Cooperation (DEVCO) 6. Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs 7. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) 8. African Development Bank (AfDB) 9. US Millennium Challenge Corporation 10. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 11. Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) 12. Asian Development Bank (AsDB) 13. GAVI 14. European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) 15. UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. New Zealand Aid 17. Adaptation Fund 18. Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) 19. World Bank International Finance Corporation (IFC) 20. Finland Ministry of Foreign Affairs 21. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) 22. Czech Development Agency 23. Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) 24. Global Environmental Facility (GEF) 25. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) 26. Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs 27. US Agency for International Development (USAID) 28. UK Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) 29. US President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) 30. Belgium Development Agency 31. Hewlett Foundation 32. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) 33. Gates Foundation 34. US Department of the Treasury (Office of Technical Assistance) 35. Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs 36. European Investment Bank (EIB) 37. Korea Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) 38. Clean Technology Fund (CTF)

Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 39. Germany GIZ 40. Lux-Development (Luxembourg) 41. Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) 42. Austrian Development Agency 43. European Commission DG Enlargement 44. Agence Française de Développement (AFD) 45. Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation 46. US Department of State (INL Bureau) 47. European Commission Foreign Policy Instruments Service (FPI) 48. Lithuania Ministry of Foreign Affairs 49. Brazilian Cooperation Agency 50. Germany KfW 51. UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) 52. Poland Ministry of Foreign Affairs 53. Italy Ministry of Foreign Affairs 54. Irish Aid 55. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation 56. US Department of Defence (DOD) 57. Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs 58. UK CDC 59. Portugal Camões Institute 60. UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
Very poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61. Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation 62. Ministère des affaires étrangères (France) 63. UNICEF 64. Latvia Ministry of Foreign Affairs 65. Romania Ministry of Foreign Affairs 66. Bulgaria Ministry of Foreign Affairs 67. Hellenic Aid (Greece) 68. Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances (France–MINEFI) 69. Cyprus Planning Bureau 70. Hungary Ministry of Foreign Affairs 71. China Ministry of Commerce 72. Malta Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Some organisations made big improvements in 2012. DFID increased its score substantially, from 5th (out of 58) in 2011 to 1st in 2012. GAVI improved from 35th to 13th position. The Global Fund moved from 7th in 2011 to 4th in 2012. The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs improved its rank from 4th in 2011 to 3rd in 2012 after having been ranked 30th in 2010. In all, 36 organisations showed improvement in 2012.

The number of organisations categorized as “poor” or “very poor” declined in 2012, but these categories still included nearly half of all organisations surveyed, including some of the world’s largest donors – such as Germany’s GIZ, France’s AFD and the US Department of State. As a bloc, European Union nations performed poorly: Organisations from 12 member states were ranked in the poorly-performing group. Hungary, China and Malta were at the bottom of the list.

The report said that multilateral organisations tended to score reasonably well, with two-thirds of them categorised as “good” or “fair.” UNICEF is the only UN agency in the lowest performing group. As a group, bilateral agencies tended to perform poorly.

Publish What You Fund said that to be considered fully transparent, an organisation must meet the

publishing standards of IATI and also publish their information on the IATI Registry. The Global Fund first published to the registry in November 2011.

The report says that the Global Fund has automated publication of its data within two weeks of each grant disbursement. The data is also provided in a downloadable Excel database, which provides detailed project information.

The Global Fund received a low score on the quality of freedom of information legislation indicator. The intention of this indicator is to ensure the organisations' beneficiaries have the right to access all relevant information, and that this is enforceable by law. The Global Fund does have a "Documents Policy," which is mentioned in the report, but it is not a legally binding document. This appears to be the reason for the low score.

The Global Fund, the report says, "should continue to lead on aid transparency by systematically publishing tenders and contracts in its IATI feed and by exploring the publication of sub-national geographic information, and beginning to work with its partners to provide traceability throughout the chain."

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