



Publish What You Fund

The Global Campaign for Aid Transparency

Why transparency is the key to Accra

Greater transparency is central to aid delivering on its promise. Aid transparency is key to making aid accountable and responsive to the needs of people. Citizens and their representatives in both recipient and donor countries must be involved in aid planning, tracking and evaluation.

While greater transparency alone will not result in more effective aid, better governance or enhanced development outcomes in recipient countries, it is fundamental to their success. While clearly not sufficient, aid transparency is a necessary condition for country-led development to emerge. Without transparency, other aid effectiveness gains cannot be achieved.

Weak aid transparency is a problem of knowledge: too often neither recipients nor donors know how much aid is coming in, when and for what purpose. Nor do they know how and where it is being spent. It is also a problem of power: citizens in the South cannot hold to account large swathes of public expenditures funded by aid. Citizens in the North cannot hold their governments accountable for the promises they have made to give more and better aid.

At the mid point to the MDGs, this year is a major opportunity to make significant progress on improving the transparency of aid. The issue of transparency in aid processes has not been properly addressed at international or country level. However improved transparency is the bedrock for any progress in aid delivery. Donors and the aid sector more broadly need to ensure that serious commitments and advances are made at the Accra High Level Forum (HLF) on Aid Effectiveness (2-4 September 2008), the UN meeting on the MDGs on 22 September 2008 and the Financing for Development Conference in (Doha, 29 November-2 December 2008).

A coalition of leading CSOs will be launching the **Publish What You Fund** campaign at the HLF in Accra in September. An increase in the availability and quality of information is essential to delivering on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness commitments. Aid transparency cuts across and contributes to a wide range of key elements the Paris agenda.

Publish What You Fund Principles

Publish What You Fund has brought together leading NGOs and NGO coalitions to draft a first set of consultation materials – the Publish What You Fund principles, which were released in July 2008. These principles are designed to be signed up to by all public and private bodies engaged in funding and delivering aid. The five draft principles are:

1. Information on aid should be published proactively
2. Everyone can request and receive information on aid processes
3. Information on aid should be timely and accessible
4. Information on aid should be comparable
5. The right of access to information about aid should be promoted

The principles will be reviewed in the run-up to the Accra High Level Forum, following an initial consultation period.

The need for Publish What You Fund

- Lack of comprehensive and timely information on aid flows means less informed policy and spending choices are made by both donors and recipients
- Inability to track aid weakens the monitoring and evaluation of development efforts
- Lack of information makes it hard for CSOs and citizens in the South to hold donors and governments to account on the quantity and quality of aid
- Lack of predictability of aid seriously undermines government planning and implementation capacity
- Inaccurate aid flow estimates inhibit macroeconomic planning and stability
- For donors, lack of information makes it harder to identify aid ‘orphans’ and aid ‘darlings’ both between countries, as well as within countries and sectors.

Transparency in aid could enable more effective planning and implementation of donor, government and non-governmental resources. It allows for more efficient decision-making and implementation, as well as decreasing the risk of corruption. Aid transparency can strengthen the relation between citizens and the state in recipient countries, and increase public support for aid in donor countries. Transparency enables participation and democratic engagement by citizens in the aid process– in both donor and recipient countries.

Publish What You Fund- what we will work towards:

- Opening up political space at national and international level to ensure the prioritisation of aid transparency, including on key issues such as allocation criteria, conditionalities, as well as aid flows and activities

- Ensuring the right information is available at the right time and in the right format for all aid actors (public, civil society, recipients governments and donors)
- Ensuring the automatic and timely disclosure by donors of aid documentation including programming documents, monitoring and evaluation data and procurement procedures, criteria, tenders and decisions
- Presenting country-level information in comparable formats, in line with national budget cycles and classifications, which allow all aid activities to be compared with national level plans and policies
- Securing the rights of stakeholders' to request and receive information on aid
- Encouraging the coordination and facilitation of related aid transparency initiatives

Looking ahead – the future for Publish What You Fund

The Publish What You Fund campaign sees transparency as a necessary prerequisite for effective country-led development to take place. Accurate, reliable information on aid flows must be made available to civil society, citizens, as well as the donor community and recipient governments if we are to ensure that all development efforts are channelled in the most effective ways. Publish What You Fund will be crucial in helping to provide the knowledge that will empower all aid stakeholders to move towards country-led development.

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