Aid Transparency Index 2022

United States, Department of State (US, State)

SCORE: 58
POSITION: 32/50
2022 FAIR

OVERVIEW

The US Department of State (State) is responsible for implementing US foreign policy and supports US foreign assistance programs, including those of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). A joint State Department and USAID team hosts the website ForeignAssistance.gov, which reports data from a range of US government agencies involved in the implementation of US foreign assistance. The data from this website is used to report to US Congress and the OECD. State became an IATI member in 2011 and first published to the IATI Registry in 2014.

2020 GOOD
2018 FAIR
2016 FAIR
2015 FAIR
2014 POOR
2013 POOR

Organisational planning and commitments
14.3 / 15

Finance and budgets
14.5 / 25

Project attributes
11.7 / 20

Joining-up development data
17.5 / 20

Performance
0 / 20

ANALYSIS

State has slipped back into the ‘fair’ category for this year’s Index, ranking last of the four US agencies in this assessment. It moved back to quarterly publication to the IATI Registry, a step down from the 2020 Index when it was a monthly publisher.

State published data for all organisational planning and commitments indicators, providing good quality data to the IATI Registry for this component. It ranked in the top five across all donors for this component.

For joining-up development data, State did well in providing aid type, flow type, finance type, tied aid status, and implementers networked data. It improved on key procurement documents by disclosing tenders and contracts in its IATI data. However, the contracts indicator failed our IATI data sampling because activities did not link to a relevant contract, although there were contracts in another format.

State published most of its finance and budget indicators in the IATI Standard format but did drop points from the 2020 index because it was missing project budgets and project budget documents. Total organisational budgets were still only two years forward-looking. The commitments and budget alignment indicators were not always available in the IATI data.

State published all project attributes in the IATI Standard. However, sub-national locations and titles failed quality checks because they were not detailed enough or could not be found. Conditions also failed checks as State only disclosed general conditions.

State performed poorly for the performance indicators, scoring no points for this component. Although it disclosed data for three of the four indicators in this component, all failed our data quality checks. Most activities sampled contained no objectives and it published the same evaluation document for the reviews and evaluations indicator. State published some results documents in the IATI Standard (for less than one percent of activities), but they did not contain any actual results information, so they failed quality checks. State did not publish any results data or pre-project impact appraisals.
RECOMMENDATIONS

- State should ensure that project titles are clear and understandable with all acronyms explained.
- State should improve the publication of sub-national locations by providing precise locations of projects, so stakeholders know where projects are taking place.
- State should improve the transparency of contracts by publishing relevant documents for individual projects and activities.
- It should publish project budgets and project budget documents to IATI.
- State should improve its performance related data by disclosing objectives, results data, and pre-project impact appraisals.
- It should ensure that results documents, and reviews and evaluations documents are current and project specific.
- State should publish project-specific conditions and/or provide a statement where a project does not have any conditions.
- State should continue to improve the publication of recognised organisation references for its partners using the latest guidance from the IATI community.

DEEP DIVE

Organisational planning and commitments
Score: 14.3 / 15

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component looks at the overall aims and strategy of an organisation. We check for any public commitments to aid transparency. We also make sure audits are published and if planning documents have been published, including by parent organisations (including national governments) where applicable. We make note of any Freedom of Information laws and critically, we make sure that organisations have tried to make their information easy to access and understand. You should not have to be an expert in open data to be able to find and use this information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of FOI legislation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation strategy</td>
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<td>Annual report</td>
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<td>Allocation policy</td>
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<td>Procurement policy</td>
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<td>Strategy (country/sector) or Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
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Finance and budgets
Score: 14.5 / 25

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component is critical to allow you and anyone else to follow the money. We expect to find the total budget of the organisation being assessed, right down to individual transactions for each development activity. In particular, forward-looking budgets from donors are important for partner country governments to be able to plan their own future finances.

Project attributes
Score: 11.7 / 20

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component refers to descriptive, non-financial data, including basics like the title and description of a project. Information like this is important as it is often the entry point for data users to quickly understand what a project is about. We also look for other information that helps to put a project in context, such as its sub-national location or the sector that the project deals with, for example, education or agriculture.
Joining-up development data

Score: 17.5 / 20

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component looks at how well an organisation's data is able to be linked and connected with other bits of information. There is a diverse nature of flows, activities and actors within the development sector. Aid and development finance data needs to be effectively linked and connected with the rest to provide a full picture for the user. This can be particularly important for partner country governments, which need to integrate information on aid with their own budgets and systems.

Performance

Score: 0 / 20

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component refers to the essential data and documents that assess whether a project is on track or has been achieved. This includes things like baseline surveys, progress against targets, mid-term reviews and end of project evaluations. This information is important to hold aid organisations to account and also to share knowledge with others on what worked and what did not during a project.