Myanmar’s ‘Mohinga’ Aid Information Management System

By making information on aid flows more transparent, we have been able to unlock new partnerships with civil society, the media and even other partner countries.

U Tun Tun Naing
Permanent Secretary and GPEDC National Coordinator
Ministry of Planning and Finance

Mohinga is the first locally-built, IATI-compliant, mobile-ready, open-source AIMS

After decades of authoritarian rule, in early 2011 Myanmar embarked upon a remarkable path of political and economic transition. Following the lifting of EU sanctions in 2013, waves of new assistance began flowing into the country, and with Myanmar soon realising that the challenge of managing this assistance would be immense.

Having assessed other country experiences with Aid Information Management Systems (AIMS), the government identified a unique opportunity to innovate while avoiding obstacles faced by other countries. It was agreed from the start to develop the AIMS as an open-source system, in line with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) Standard, ensuring the AIMS was integrated with an internationally compliant data standard, helping to build trust in the system and incentivise use.

By developing the AIMS together with key stakeholders, Myanmar ensured the finished product would respond to Myanmar’s rapidly changing development context, while remaining flexible enough to contribute to related processes such as annual planning and PFM system strengthening.
In late 2013, Myanmar requested EU assistance to establish their AIMS called ‘Mohinga’ after a traditional fish noodle soup which is unique to Myanmar, to demonstrate ownership and context specificity. Catalpa International, a not-for-profit design and technology agency, was contracted through an EU Funded programme to develop the system together with the government.

Mohinga was launched in February 2015. The first import of IATI data from the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) was completed that same month. Subsequent imports of IATI data have been done for the EU.

Mohinga has been featured in local media, with data shared frequently to further incentivise development partners to keep the system updated. AIMS data is frequently used in preparation of some reports and data quality is regularly discussed in meetings with development partners. The government has also organised workshops with civil society groups and journalists to encourage these groups to take advantage of the rich data source Mohinga provides.

However, the development of Mohinga has not been without challenges. While the system had been originally designed to rely on data imported directly from the IATI Registry, many development partners are not yet reporting with sufficient accuracy or detail (or indeed at all) to IATI. In such cases the AIMS allows for manual data entry.

Yet, as more organisations begin publishing to IATI and as overall data quality improves, the AIMS is being enhanced to allow for repeated automatic/overnight imports from the IATI Registry for development partners that reach an agreed IATI data quality threshold.

Another issue to be reviewed as more data starts flowing is how to record multi-donor trust funds while avoiding double-counting. A new work-stream has been created by the Cooperation Partners Group (CPG), the primary donor coordination forum in Myanmar, to address such issues together with the government.

The German development agency GIZ and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) are committing funds to support for further development of the AIMS over the coming years.

For more information, visit the platform: http://mohinga.info/en/
Making reforms deliver results: Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework in Afghanistan

Funding partners: The EU, EU MS and other international donors

"The National Unity Government is committed to deliver on its ambitious reform agenda to expedite economic growth, strengthen good governance and create jobs so that especially the youth of our country can see a viable future for themselves. The EU’s incentive programme is an important building block for our efforts towards increased self-reliance through mutual accountability with our international partners."

Eklil Hakimi
The Minister of Finance of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

The EU support to Afghanistan

The relationship between development partners and Afghanistan has evolved over the years. With the continued assistance from development partners, the full responsibility for Afghanistan’s security and political, economic and social development will in the future lie in Afghan hands. This implies a more equal cooperation based on mutual responsibilities and obligations.

Afghanistan is the largest beneficiary of EU development assistance. Together with its Member States, the European Union contributes with more than EUR 1 billion in development assistance per year to Afghanistan and is its largest development cooperation partner. The co-hosting in October 2016 of Brussels Conference on Afghanistan is another example of the EU commitment to a close and long-term partnership with the country.

At the Brussels Conference, the EU and its Member States committed to EUR 5 billion out of the EUR 13.6 billion pledged by the international community, to ensure continued international political and financial support for Afghanistan over the next four years. The combined pledge of the European Union confirmed at the conference makes the EU, as a whole, the largest development cooperation partner of Afghanistan. This level of funding will ensure that Afghanistan remains on a firm path to political and economic stability, state-building and development. This support is in line with the commitments given by the development partners to provide the Afghan Government with more flexible funding linked with progress on specific achievements as enshrined in the ‘Self-
Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework (SMAF).

What is the Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework?

At the 2012 Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, development partners committed to provide the Afghan Government with more flexible, on-budget funding in conjunction with progress on specific economic development achievements. The initial ‘Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF)’ enshrined these commitments and specified a set of reform targets for the Afghan Government, allowing donors to incentivise measurable achievements in a coordinated manner.

In September 2015, the TMAF was replaced by the ‘Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework (SMAF)’, which was refreshed at the Brussels Afghanistan Development Conference in October 2016. The Brussels Conference recognized the progress made under the SMAF and endorsed the new set of SMART SMAF indicators for implementation in 2017/18.

In Afghanistan, the SMAF forms the basis of all development cooperation between the government and development partners. It provides a structure for mutual accountability, where donors and the Afghan Government can hold one another to account. The SMAF does not itself impose any conditionality but it contains indicators of progress for both the government and donors. It also provides commitments for specific reform deliverables including on anti-corruption, governance, rule of law and human and gender rights, as well as fiscal sustainability and public finance management. Progress against those jointly formulated targets is regularly assessed. The EU and some EU MS (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, the UK) participate in planning and formulating of the SMAF, including defining the SMAF deliverables and indicators.

As the Afghan government continues to deliver on its commitments as part of this renewed partnership under the mutual accountability framework, the EU, EU MS and international partners remain committed to providing significant financial support towards Afghanistan’s social and economic development priorities throughout the Transformation Decade. In response to the Afghan Government request of an increasing on-budget assistance, the EU has just signed its first State Building Contract, which also builds on SMAF indicators to measure progress on reform and make payments.

In Afghanistan, the deliverables included in SMAF contribute to SDG indicators and the National Priority Programs that are currently being designed will be aligned with the SDGs. Several donors, including the EU, are including SDG indicators into their programs. Given the high profile nature of the SDGs, and of course the level of support being provided to Afghanistan, there may well be advantages to at least mapping how objectives and associated indicators of performance map on to the SDGs, so one can see the degree of alignment (and also, crucially, spot gaps). A key issue with regard to tracking progress towards the SDGs in Afghanistan continues to be the availability of reliable data, also due to the worsening security situation in several provinces.

FURTHER READING
The Brussels Conference on Afghanistan:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2016/10/05/
In Laos, ‘Joint Programming’ is done by European partners – the Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland, Switzerland and the UK.

‘Joint Programming’ is a joint response from the EU and its Member States to the partner country's development strategy, developed at the partner country level. Joint Programming aims to fill gaps and address overlaps in actions in line with the Vientiane Declaration on Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2016-2025). The Declaration was adopted by the Government of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and its Development Partners on 27 November 2015 with a view to further deepening policy and political dialogue and cooperation amongst them.

Laos is a global best practice example and the first case of Joint Programming that has successfully been able to replace the EU’s own country strategy document. It is built upon an efficient ‘Division of Labour’ – i.e. allocation of a sector per Member State, along with indicative multi-annual financial allocations.

Laos is in transition from a closed one-party state to an open economy (WTO accession in 2012), and is becoming increasingly integrated into its region. Graduation from LDC status by 2020 is one of the Laos government’s prime priorities. However, Laos still ranks as 141 on the Human Development Index.
The Government of Laos has long been a supporter of efforts to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation. The 8th National Social and Economic Development Programme (NSEDP) runs from 2016 to 2020. European Joint Programming follows the Government’s lead by using the NSEDP timetable 2016-2020, pursuing its goals, adopting its sector definitions and promoting the use of government reporting, monitoring and evaluation contributing to one single benchmark for success.

Laos is still highly dependent on international development partners for public investment funds. Almost two thirds of public investment funds come from this source.

European development cooperation contributes much needed financial and, more importantly, technical and human resources. European donors have a combined budget of €508 M (KIP 4.5 trillion) aiming to improve the quality of life in Laos. European Joint Programming concentrates on seven sectors, all of which are priorities for the Government and people of Laos.

The Government of Laos has long been a supporter of efforts to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation. The 8th National Social and Economic Development Programme (NSEDP) runs from 2016 to 2020. European Joint Programming follows the Government’s lead by using the NSEDP timetable 2016-2020, pursuing its goals, adopting its sector definitions and promoting the use of government reporting, monitoring and evaluation contributing to one single benchmark for success.

**KIP 4.5 Trillion in combined Development Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU INSTITUTIONS</th>
<th>FINLAND</th>
<th>FRANCE</th>
<th>GERMANY</th>
<th>IRELAND</th>
<th>HUNGARY</th>
<th>LUXEMBOURG</th>
<th>SWITZERLAND</th>
<th>UNITED KINGDOM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
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**European Development Cooperation Investments by Sector**

- Agriculture & Rural: 14%
- Education: 18%
- Environment & Natural Resources: 11%
- Governance: 14%
- Health: 8%
- Nutrition: 18%
- Private Sector Development: 15%
- Other/Not Yet Identified: 2%

**Lessons Learnt from Joint Programming in Laos**

Consultations with the government should be held early on in the process.

Implementation and Joint Programming, including Division of Labour, are becoming more and more interlinked processes.

Apart from the EU partners and the Government, the exercise should also encourage other development partners to join up and work together – including Civil Society and the Private Sector.
‘Budgeted Aid’ - a new modality implemented by the Luxembourg Development Cooperation in the Republic of Senegal

Funding partners: Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg

"Strengthening national systems while ensuring that everything is traceable..."

When it comes to the use of country systems, Luxembourg aims to continuously move towards a more flexible mix of modalities and tools. “Budgeted aid”, which is being piloted in Senegal since 2013, is an example used to promote alignment and progressively strengthen the use of national systems.

The Commission provides budget support to Senegal and works closely with Luxembourg on economic governance and policy dialogue on public finance management through Joint Programming.

Senegal and Luxembourg have enjoyed strong relations for nearly thirty years now. Senegal is one of the 7 priority partner countries for the Luxembourg Government. The current Indicative Cooperation Programme, the 3rd ICP, aims to align to the Senegalese National Development Plan and increase ownership and capacity building of national institutions including through the use of the ‘budgeted aid’ modality.

The ‘budgeted aid’ modality was developed and introduced as a new implementation tool designed to use national systems and procedures for managing public finances and procurement while retaining the ability to track expenditures derived from Luxembourg’s contributions. It facilitates alignment with sector-based policies and strategies and is currently being implemented in health, vocational training, decentralisation and water and sanitation.

Resources are allocated and executed through the Senegalese State’s budget, procedures and tools. The design, implementation and monitoring of the ‘budgeted aid’ modality are conducted through a specific cross-sectoral capacity strengthening programme (PAEX) in support of national execution with the aim to progressively deepen and fine-tune mechanisms for transferring responsibilities and resources to the national partner.

The programme has already led to a marked improvement of the administrative management of the partner ministries such as in Human Resources management, national plans for capacity reinforcement, institutional communication and quality
control for example. A net increase in the level of implemented contracts demonstrates results in terms of capacity building achieved, inter alia, through the accreditation of procurement management specialists and the strengthening of institutions carrying out ex-ante and ex-post controls.

**BUDGET INFORMATION AND OTHER DONORS INVOLVED**

The budget for this capacity strengthening programme is EUR 3.5 million while the bilateral cooperation programme has a total budget of EUR 49.63 million of which nearly 50% are implemented through the ‘budgeted aid’ modality.

Several other donors have shown an increased interest in this modality which is perceived as a potential model in the field.

**LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE ‘BUDGETED AID’ EXPERIENCE**

- **Promotes national ownership and allows for enhanced alignment and upgrading of national systems, procedures and institutions in close partnership with national counterparts.**
- **Is easily reproducible. One of the key prerequisites is the existence of a robust and reliable public finance system to be accompanied by risk mitigation and capacity building plans.**
- **Ensures the eligibility of activities in relation to a programme-based framework. As such, it is an ongoing learning exercise for public financial management reforms and in line with Western Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) directives.**

**BUDGETED AID - HOW DOES IT WORK?**

1. **PLANNING/ BUDGETING**
   - Integrated support to sectorial planning, but specific programmatic framework
   - Creation of specific chapters in the law on finance
   - Registration of resources at the central and deconcentrated level
   - Financing of capital transfers

2. **IMPLEMENTATION**
   - Validation of activities according to the programmatic framework
   - Ad hoc management dialogue
   - Possible specific measures (VAT exemption, compensations, imprest fund)
   - Physical and numerical identifier
   - Non-fungible treasury with the state’s funds (special accounts)

3. **REPORTING AND M&E**
   - Monitoring of public finance and procurement applications (observer status for TFP)
   - Possible specific technical and financial monitoring
   - Integration to sectorial monitoring

4. **INSPECTION**
   - Support and valorisation of the procurement and public finance inspection bodies
   - Specific inspections and reports
   - Specific archiving in order to facilitate inspections
Youth unemployment is a growing concern in Uganda, with the majority of its population under 18. Providing youth with the right skills should contribute to their social and economic integration. The “Skilling Uganda” strategic plan (2012-2021) was developed to support Vocational Education and Training (VET) towards employment, enhanced productivity and growth.

Belgium, Ireland and the European Union support the Skilling Uganda (SSU) Strategy through a EUR 24 million grant over 5 years, implemented by the Belgian Development Agency (BTC) and the Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports. The programme aims to improve the quality of skills’ development and to make it more responsive to labour market needs. The support requires a close partnership with the private sector to initiate systemic change at the policy level, stimulate bottom-up PPPs with the private sector and training institutions and advance the national reform agenda as well as ensure equitable access to training for vulnerable youth, girls and refugees communities.

“\nThe skills I am being trained in today are going to earn me a living for the future and give me the power to protect my parents and siblings financially\n
Viko Gloria, 20 years,
Siripi Village in Rhino Settlement, Arua District

Belgium support for Public-Private-Partnerships: Making skills development relevant for Ugandan youth

Funding partners: Belgium, Ireland, European Union

Viko Gloria, a 20 years old female student in carpentry at the Welthungerhilfe training center in Rhino Settlement, Arua District
The SSU programme supports the structural integration of the private sector in VET at policy level through the setup of a tripartite national skills development authority and at grassroots level, by actively involving local economic actors in updating of training according to local labour market intelligence. In parallel, the project empowers 7 public and private training institutions.

BTC is piloting a Skills Development Fund (SDF), in close collaboration with the World Bank to address the challenge of VET financing. A diversification of the approach for skills development is required to ensure more (sustainable) resources. The learning and experience from the pilot will feed into the development of a future national fund, with a major role for the private sector in terms of management and funding and accountability. The fund stimulates bottom-up initiatives and partnerships between the VET institutions and the labour market, and will as such facilitate the transition from the world of training to the world of work. The fund intends to create a testing environment by making skills development relevant in the different economic contexts of three intervention regions.

Looking ahead our future vision for VET in Uganda will require a new focus on digital education, technical skills for manufacturing etc. In parallel, curriculum development, will require the retraining of the teaching staff, accreditation and certification so that the bearers of a VET certificate to ‘broker’ their qualifications, may travel across borders and work among industries.

LESSONS LEARNT

- The national Skilling Uganda reform is supported by unlocking Uganda’s productivity potential and growth, through a comprehensive, modern, demand driven skills development co-led by the private sector.
- The divide between the world of training and world of work is narrowed by actively brokering bottom-up public private partnerships, including work-based learning and continuous vocational training.
- Flexible fund mechanism allows for testing, piloting and preparing a future national skills development fund diversifying the financing of technical and vocational training.
- Humanitarian aspects are addressed while aligning to government policy and adapting government mechanisms to respond to vulnerable pockets of concern.
After more than 20 years of sustained economic growth, Colombia has reached upper middle-income status and is now the third Latin America economy. As a result, development cooperation with Colombia has decreased in terms of financial volume. Nevertheless the EU remains strongly committed to accompany Colombia in its process of democratic ownership that accompanies the peace process, which it is doing through the Forpaz programme.

Forpaz provides an interesting example of the importance of actively involving local authorities (LAs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) in democratic processes, enabling them to undertake a more active role in service delivery, participation and accountability to foster effective development.

RELEVANT COUNTRY BACKGROUND/
THE CHALLENGE
Over the past few years, the peace talks between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) reached a stage of unprecedented progress and thus entered in a crucial phase in the country’s history. It was felt, at the time, that for the peace process to succeed, reconciliation from the internal armed conflict required decisive peace building efforts across territories. The State remains weak in many regions and municipalities of the country. In parallel, the coexistence between victims and demobilized persons present a regular challenge to governability and sustainable socio-economic development. In addition, a number of additional challenges include: the low technical capacity of local public and private actors for territorial planning; a general low level of consensus between local actors to develop a collective vision; and a deficient process of decentralisation, with limited information about the territories and a blatant lack of capacities and resources at the local level.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE AND EU (MS) CONTRIBUTION
The EU contributes (EUR 11 million) through Forpaz to the bottom-up construction of a peaceful nation. It provides support to the creation of participatory solutions that strengthen the local capacities of public institutions and civil society in Colombia and encourages common spaces for inclusive territorial and development planning for peace building.

Forpaz is also a very good example of how to support the role of inclusive partnerships through Development Assistance, in this particular case, by strengthening the capacity and potential of the local level (involving both LA and CSOs) in partner countries.
KEY STRENGTHS OF THE PROGRAMME

Establishes a point of reference for restoring governmental services in vulnerable areas, promoting the ownership of local actors.

Encourages the active role of civil society groups, which participate in local development.

Engages all actors in the reconciliation process, linking conflict resolution with the developmental potential of the region.

Takes stock of different territorial experiences and connects them with the debate at national level, ensuring the sustainability of the peace process.

Forpaz demonstrates the ongoing commitment of the EU to support the peace process in Colombia and the importance that it confers to LAs and CSOs as essential actors in the process towards long term stability and sustainable development. Forpaz springs from both the experiences and lessons learned in previous programmes such as the Peace Laboratories, Peace and Stability programmes and the New Peace Territories programme. These have promoted broad participatory movements that, in turn, have facilitated development processes, peace building, and better governance. The German Cooperation has recently launched the initiative ProPaz that complements Forpaz. The main objective of this programme is to provide technical assistance for the implementation of the national, regional and local peace building policies, including a strong participatory approach.

Jardín town and municipality in the southwest department Antioquia, Colombia.
F2F cooperation in governance: support to democratic elections in Guinea-Bissau

The experience in Guinea-Bissau showcases how fragility can be included as a new dimension in South-South cooperation. It demonstrates how the principles of “Fragile to Fragile” (F2F) cooperation (solidarity among members, self-reliance in fragile countries’ “expertise” and fast and pragmatic response to a concrete need) can be applied in an experience that includes not only financial support but also the sharing of knowledge.

The g7+ is a voluntary association of 20 countries that have been affected by conflict and are in transition to longer-term development. This group aims to support each other in addressing their own fragility through a new platform for knowledge transfer and peer learning. The best example of this is the concept of F2F cooperation. Although still new, the F2F cooperation is an important evolution within the global development context and notably South-South cooperation. It has emerged partly in response to the perceived deficiencies of traditional forms of cooperation with fragile states and the notion that the g7+ countries are the “experts” in their own development path. In this regard, the g7+ ambition for F2F aims at making it an independent, fully-fledged model of cooperation with a different narrative of fragility. In a similar vein to South-South cooperation, it has no conditions and few rules attached and aims at being more aligned to the concept of country ownership and leadership promoted by the New Deal.

One of the best examples of F2F has been the assistance of Timor-Leste to Guinea-Bissau in preparation for the critical elections in April 2014 that ended the transitional period following the 2012 coup d’état.

**GUINEA-BISSAU KEY COUNTRY INDICATORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>1,530,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>1973, Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP (2014)</td>
<td>$1.02 billion; per capita (2014): $1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI (2015)</td>
<td>0.42 (Rank 178 out of 188)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragile states index</td>
<td>17 (“alert”) out of 178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth</td>
<td>55.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Population living below income poverty line, PPP $1.25 a day (%) 48.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GUINEA-BISSAU COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Following an initial period of relative stability after independence in 1973, a series of coups caused widespread political and social unrest, human rights violations and extreme poverty. The most recent coup in April 2012 and subsequent political and economic crisis further destabilized the country, but elections held in April 2014 were successful. In March 2015 the Government of Guinea-Bissau presented its 2015-2020 Strategic and Operational Plan at the International Conference in support of Guinea-Bissau in Brussels organised by the EU, UNDP and the Government of Guinea-Bissau. The plan, called “Terra Ranka” (“new start”), highlights national reconciliation and political stability as key priorities for development. The Conference strongly supported the Strategic Development Plan and pledges exceeded €1.3 billion, including €160 million pledged by the EU, after the definitive lift of Article 96 restrictive measures on the eve of the conference.

TIMELINE OF TIMOR-LESTE SUPPORT TO GUINEA-BISSAU

- **March 2014** Launch of the Guinea-Bissau Fragility Assessment: Following the principles of peer learning and transfer of knowledge, a joint g7+/International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State building (IDPS) mission to Guinea-Bissau took place in March 2014 to assist with the preparations for the official launch of the Guinea-Bissau Fragility Assessment. This initiative aimed at sharing lessons learned by fellow g7+ members about the Fragility Assessment process, and fostering the F2F cooperation between Guinea-Bissau and Timor-Leste.

- **April 2014** Support to general elections: After the joint g7+/IDPS mission, the g7+ Secretariat arranged for former Prime Ministers of Timor-Leste H.E. Xanana Gusmão and H.E. Dr. Mari Alkatiri to lead a delegation to support Guinea-Bissau in preparing successful and transparent elections. The general elections were held on 13 April 2014 and were conducted with USD 6 million funding provided by the Government of Timor-Leste. The UNDP and EU have been partners during Guinea-Bissau’s transition to a constitutional order.

  During the 2014 general elections, both institutions also provided electoral support to the country.

- **September 2014** Post-elections support to Guinea-Bissau: Assistance after the general elections has continued over time in order to consolidate precedent efforts. In September 2014 Timor-Leste granted the Guinea-Bissau government funding of USD 6 million to pay a month’s salary to all Guinean civil servants as a strategy for good governance as well as for the maintenance of peace and national stability. In early February 2016 Timor-Leste disbursed half of the donation of USD 500,000 committed at the International Conference in support of Guinea-Bissau held in Brussels in March 2015.