

The Aid Management Program:

Results in Brief

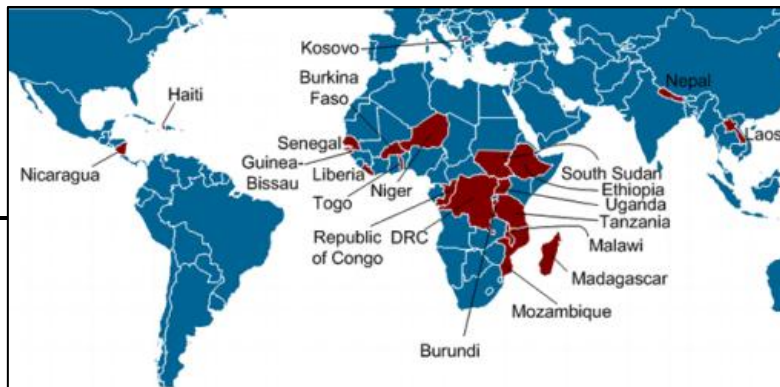
Introduction

Development Gateway’s Aid Management Program provides technical assistance and capacity building to improve the availability of aid information at the country level. Through a combination of process analysis, training, and information technology tools, Development Gateway (DG) works with clients to create a customized package of support for better aid information management. The Aid Management Program was created by Development Gateway in collaboration with the OECD, World Bank, UNDP, and governments of Ethiopia and India. Anchored in the principles of the global aid effectiveness agenda, the program improves aid coordination and harmonization, enabling governments and their donor partners to make more informed investment decisions.

This paper outlines DG’s programmatic approach to aid information management, and describes the results that our partner governments have achieved in managing foreign aid resources.

Program Overview

The Aid Management Program is active in 20 countries on 4 continents with support from major multilateral and bilateral donors. The cornerstone of the program, the Aid Management Platform (AMP), is used by 5 of the top 10 recipients of Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a percentage of gross national income (GNI). Nearly 18,000 individual aid projects and programs are recorded in AMP systems, accounting for an estimated 15-20% of ODA worldwide. Many governments use AMP to produce regular reports on development aid and donor coordination, and several governments have developed features to integrate development aid data with budget information and national statistical information. Over 500 government and donor staff have been trained to use AMP, improving internal capacity for aid information management. Finally, AMP governments have indicated strong ownership of the system engaging in south-south collaboration and international knowledge-sharing on aid management issues.



The Aid Management Program covers 20 countries on 4 continents.

Programmatic Approach

As the Aid Management Program benefits from valuable experience in a range of country contexts, Development Gateway has identified lessons learned and good practices that are now central to the program. The Aid Management Program is implemented through an intensive multi-year process involving technical support, institutional strengthening, and knowledge-sharing opportunities. Although each implementation is unique, DG has developed a programmatic approach centered on the following six practices:

1. Use an incremental approach
2. Invest in country ownership
3. Address technical capacity and infrastructure challenges
4. Regionalize operations
5. Promote south-south collaboration
6. Work with international partners

1. Use an incremental approach

Many countries implementing the Aid Management Program lack technical capacity and critical IT infrastructure at the onset of the program. Government staff may use simple Excel spreadsheets to record aid information, requiring months of communication with donors before comprehensive reports can be produced. Under such circumstances, complex information management systems cannot be transferred overnight; they must be installed incrementally, increasing in complexity as government capacity expands.

The Aid Management Program is typically implemented over a multi-year period in three phases: 1) an initial technical assessment, 2) one year of training and program installation, and 3) two years of institutional strengthening. Throughout these phases, DG carries out repeated visits,

training sessions, and data management forums, ensuring that governments maintain momentum and build capacity over time to sustainably manage the program.

During the first phase, Development Gateway evaluates the government's initial technical and institutional capacity for hosting AMP, helping DG develop a workplan for implementation. Following this assessment, DG technical staff install an AMP prototype and provide training for an initial group of users. Upon completion of the pilot program, DG installs a fully operational version of AMP, configured to meet the technical requirements identified in the assessment phase. During and after installation, DG continues to train users and provide various forms of technical and institutional support. In Liberia, for example, DG assisted in the development of data templates through which donors report expected aid disbursements every quarter. In all AMP countries, DG helps design Data Management Plans, key documents that define administrative roles and responsibilities.

In the final phase of the program, DG focuses on institutionalizing the program through two years of technical support and institutional capacity building. The specific components of this phase vary depending on each host country's unique circumstances. The phase may include regular analyses of aid management practices, refresher training, extending AMP to line ministries, donors, and provincial governments, integration with other government systems, and best-practice knowledge-sharing opportunities. In Burkina Faso, for example, DG worked with the government to optimize production of the annual development cooperation report. These activities aim to build the capacity for local maintenance of the system, both on the technical and policy sides. Over the two year period, the need for external support gradually phases out, as government staff and/or local IT firms become increasingly capable of managing the system without external assistance.

2. Invest in country ownership

Country ownership, the first pillar of the Paris Declaration, is key to the sustainability of the Aid Management Program. Information technology projects cannot succeed unless host institutions commit internally to the project and build capacity to manage IT infrastructure once consultants leave. Governments must define their own national development strategies, and take advantage of AMP to achieve these strategies. Development Gateway creates an

enabling atmosphere for ownership by putting government staff in the driver's seat – they shape the design of the project and the overall functionality of AMP.

Development Gateway invests in country ownership by respecting partner country leadership and providing technical support to strengthen this leadership.

The countries that achieve the most success through the program are those that express high-level commitment prior to and throughout implementation, along with strong ownership from government aid experts who use AMP daily. The more visibly a government commits to AMP, the better coordinated are the diverse actors involved in aid information management. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) exemplifies this lesson. DRC's Minister of Planning made AMP the top priority for the first semester of 2008, publicly expressing this commitment to donors

and the press. DRC's government has taken the initiative to adapt and reconfigure AMP by organizing workshops to refine aid sector coding classifications and assessing the feasibility of extending AMP to provincial governments. This internal ownership over the program has allowed the government to advance on aid management issues and incorporate aid information into the budget planning process. To date, 200 government staff and 40 donor partner staff have received AMP user training and certification (the majority by DRC's own trainers), and the platform records nearly 6,000 aid projects.

We have a close collaboration and relationship with Development Gateway. DG is always providing training to users, and they are certifying trainers. In that process, [DG] builds trust and capacity [among] individuals interested in using AMP.

-Mesfin Tilahun, AMP Administrator for the Government of Ethiopia

Country ownership also drives the ways in which AMP is configured and adapted to local needs and priorities. AMP features can be added or modified to suit government interests, but government staff must take the initiative to identify the features most pertinent to national development strategies. Many countries, for example, request that AMP data be integrated with budget data and important development statistics. Data integration provides government staff a more complete picture of the resources at their disposal and helps them identify the regions and development themes most in need of aid investment. The Government of Senegal worked with DG to link AMP to the country's Integrated System of Public Financial Management (SIGFIP), a national budget info system, allowing government staff to view budget information alongside aid information. Because AMP is open-source and license-free, such new features can be developed by internal government technical staff, and the

platform can be extended to donors, line ministries, and provincial governments with no additional licensing fees.

3. Address technical capacity and infrastructure challenges

As previously highlighted, many governments have limited IT infrastructure prior to implementation of the Aid Management Program, and lack the technical capacity to install the required infrastructure without external support. DG works in several post-conflict and post-disaster countries – including Liberia, Haiti, and Southern Sudan – with large receipts of international development aid but inadequate IT infrastructure and technical capacity to manage information on this aid. To address these challenges, DG provides technical support for basic infrastructure and network setup. In some cases, the pilot installation uses a temporary setup with a few laptops, until the network infrastructure is ready. Technical support and software upgrades are provided to ensure full system functionality. DG provides training for technical administrators to build government capacity to sustain the program.

4. Regionalize operations

Development Gateway carries out capacity building and institutional strengthening activities in each partner country, with repeated visits based on demand from the government. To maintain such a high level of contact, DG has regionalized its operations, establishing offices in Nairobi, Kenya and Dakar, Senegal. Software developers based in Argentina, Burkina Faso, the Republic of Georgia, and Romania also participate in missions. These regional offices reduce travel costs and time, helping DG respond more fluidly to requests. In addition, this regional presence has enabled DG to establish partnerships with local IT firms, NGOs, and aid agencies.

5. Promote south-south collaboration

Five years after the inception of the Aid Management Program, many governments have gained invaluable experience managing aid information using AMP. New AMP countries benefit significantly from developing relationships with existing AMP users, and DG accordingly provides several opportunities for south-south collaboration. Before implementing the program, for example, prospective countries are encouraged to undertake “study tours” with governments that have experience using AMP. These tours provide prospective AMP countries with an opportunity to observe and learn from the ways in which their counterparts in other countries use AMP.

DG also hosts the annual AMP Best Practices Workshop, during which countries deliver presentations on their experiences, best practices, and innovations; Development Gateway staff discuss new and important AMP features; and visiting organizations present their work and how it pertains to aid management. At the 2010 Best Practices Workshop in Nairobi, AMP host countries discussed practices ranging from centralized donor data entry in Burkina Faso to Burundi’s use of AMP data to monitor the indicators of the Paris Declaration. These sessions have proven to be a useful opportunity for participants to learn about practical, hands-on approaches to aid information issues. For all three past workshops, over 90% of participants indicated in surveys that they were “very likely” or “likely” to apply the lessons learned from other countries to their own usage of AMP.

6. Work with international partners

In addition to fostering partnerships between AMP governments, DG works with aid agencies and NGOs to identify ways to improve AMP features and bolster the aid effectiveness agenda. For example, DG serves on the Technical Advisory Group and Steering Committee for the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). For the past three years, IATI has worked to establish a universal standard format for aid information reporting, prescribing the specific fields of information that donors must report for each aid project they fund. By participating in the dialog on the IATI standard, DG has been able to incorporate best practices in aid information reporting into the Aid Management Program. DG reinforced these lessons learned by piloting programs in Burkina Faso and Malawi to import aid data into local AMP systems in IATI standard format. These international partnerships help anchor the Aid Management Program in the global dialog on aid transparency and effectiveness, and facilitate the transfer of best practices.



Delegates from 14 governments attended the 2010 AMP Best Practices Workshop in Nairobi.

Managing for Results

After six years of evolution and 20 implementations, the Aid Management Program has begun to produce results in aid information management. Governments are able to more efficiently locate accurate information, generate reports using this information, and align aid information with national development goals. With better information and reporting capabilities, government agencies can coordinate activities with donors, make better investment decisions, and achieve national development goals. This section outlines some of the measurable and qualitative results of the Aid Management Program.

Better Data

The Aid Management Program has helped governments produce more data of higher quality, and made this data easier to access and analyze. AMP systems worldwide currently contain over 18,000 completed, ongoing, or proposed development aid projects and programs. After less than two years of implementation, the Government of Haiti recorded nearly 2,000 projects in AMP, accounting for over \$7 billion in aid commitments. The Government of DRC has recorded nearly 6,000 projects, totaling over \$13 billion in disbursements or planned disbursements between 1999 and 2015. These are significant achievements for countries that recently emerged from conflict or natural disaster with limited IT capacity and aid reporting mechanisms.

These data are perceived as more credible due to DG's focus on data validation. During the institutional strengthening phase of program implementation, DG helps government and donor staff set up internal data validation processes to ensure data quality and completeness. Using AMP, government staff can keep track of the completeness and reliability of donor data, and send task reminders to ensure that data are updated. In follow-up surveys conducted in three countries following AMP implementation, respondents indicated that AMP had significantly improved their ability to find information, as well as the accuracy of the information they found. In DRC, 80% of respondents indicated that it takes an hour or less to collect comprehensive data on annual donor disbursements, as compared to only 15% in the baseline survey. The Government of Ethiopia reported similar results – according to surveys, data entry time was reduced by half, reports could be created more than three times as

quickly, and information on ongoing projects could be located about seven times faster than by prior methods. With more accessible, accurate, and credible data, decision-makers are more capable of evaluating the resources at their disposal and coordinating aid with national development strategies.

Report Production

A key feature of the Aid Management Program is report production – the generation of detailed analyses of aid flows, their distribution by donor, region, sector, financial instrument, and progress in achieving national development goals. Many governments use AMP data and analytical tools to produce regular reports on official development aid flows. Burundi, for example, uses AMP to collate data for an annual report on development aid, and Malawi uses AMP to produce a monthly report on aid project implementation. The Government of Madagascar used AMP to produce the 2009-2010 Report on Development Cooperation, which had not been released since 2001. The average time taken to produce these reports has dropped significantly due to AMP's report-generation modules and DG capacity-building activities. In Burkina Faso, for example, the average report production time dropped from 12 to 6 months. These improvements catalyze political action related to aid information, and ensure that decision-makers have access to the most current analyses of the foreign aid resources at their disposal.

AMP reports also enable government officials to monitor and evaluate progress in achieving national development strategies and international indicators of development. AMP includes robust data analysis tools to generate charts, graphs, and tables that can be easily inserted into ODA reports as visual aids. These reports help governments put development aid on budget and identify the financial gaps that exist in their public development programs. For fiscal year 2009/2010, for example, the Liberian government used AMP data to produce its Annual Donor Fiscal Outturn Report, analyzing aid commitments and disbursements by donor, sector, and pillar of the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy. Amongst other findings, the report shows a 21% shortfall in actual donor disbursements as compared to commitments made at the beginning of the year. Based on these findings, the report recommends

“Before AMP, different ministers, to gather data and information related to public aid for development, would speak directly with donor partners. Now, everything is centralized in the platform, under the Ministry of Planning. To acquire information [on external financing], the unique official source is AMP.”

- Yvon Mombong, AMP Coordinator for the Democratic Republic of the Congo

making budget support the primary aid modality, reviewing donor partner aid strategies, and finalizing a government aid management policy and mutual accountability framework.

Donor Coordination and Transparency

Producing timely, accurate, and comprehensive information on foreign aid activities requires close coordination between recipient governments and their donor partners. AMP facilitates this coordination by providing an accessible, virtual workspace for donors. Governments can save time and resources by enabling donors to enter data themselves. In addition, governments can define donor workflows and timelines, and evaluate donor progress in entering data. Development Gateway helps institutionalize these processes by organizing donor-government workshops on data entry and by training donor partners to use AMP. To date, DG has trained over 150 donor staff, and has helped governments establish efficient donor coordination processes. In Burundi, Kosovo, and Madagascar, DG assisted in designing individual AMP workspaces for donor partners, through which they can view information on individual projects, produce aid reports, and edit part of the data in their own portfolio.

AMP's reporting features have enabled governments to better analyze the degree of coordination between development actors in executing aid projects and programs. Aid coordination is essential to improving aid effectiveness, helping reduce transaction costs, prevent duplication of work, and align donor activities with government development strategies. In March 2011, the Democratic Republic of Congo, in cooperation with the Government of France and the UNDP, released a report analyzing the division of labor between actors involved in the country's development cooperation program. The report uses AMP to build donor profiles that detail the sectors they focus on, the thematic groups of which they are members, and the overall amount of development aid they provide. Based on these profiles and in-depth analysis of aid strategies, the report identifies operational and political obstacles to donor coordination, and makes concrete recommendations for surmounting these obstacles to maximize aid effectiveness.

AMP countries can also encourage donor transparency and accountability by publicizing development data online. In October 2010, the Government of Kosovo became the first to do so, releasing the AMP Public View website (accessible at www.amp-mei.net) with assistance from the European Commission (EC). On the Public View website, any user can access donor profiles, download ODA reports, and view maps of aid allocation by province. Several other

AMP governments are working to take advantage of the Public View feature – including the governments of Burundi, DRC, and Ethiopia. By publicizing regular information on donor activities, these governments hope to encourage donors to produce more timely and accurate information.

Moving Forward

By implementing the Aid Management Program, governments around the world have made considerable progress in improving aid information management practices. Government staff can now access more timely, accurate, and comprehensive data, produce reports to monitor public development goals, and enhance donor coordination and transparency. These successes have been achieved through a programmatic approach that enables sustainable management through incremental institutional strengthening and technical capacity building. AMP governments display strong ownership of the platform, and have configured AMP features to their specifications. AMP Best Practices Workshops continue to foster knowledge-sharing and networking amongst these governments.

Nonetheless, challenges remain in ensuring the sustainability of the program in each country. Many AMP governments with mature systems still require some form of technical support from DG, due primarily to a high turnover rate of IT staff and difficulties ensuring that donors provide timely and accurate information. Having established a strong international presence and close relationships with partner governments, DG can respond to these challenges as they emerge, devising solutions customized to government needs.

Several of DG's current projects include:





























- Working with governments of DRC, Senegal, and Tanzania to develop methods of integrating aid information with financial and budget information
- Working with the Government of Haiti to improve AMP's ability to track humanitarian aid
- Acquiring and contributing to best practices in aid information management through participation in IATI and international conferences on open data
- Building government capacity through advanced training and regional knowledge-sharing workshops

These new projects and partnerships will help DG respond to new difficulties as AMP is extended to governments in new and evermore challenging environments.

About Development Gateway

Development Gateway increases the impact of international development through innovative, sustainable information management solutions and services. An international non-profit with projects and programs on five continents, Development Gateway works to empower people to accelerate change and transform their societies. Development Gateway was founded in 2000 by World Bank President James Wolfensohn, and has for over a decade provided global development information services and worked with international partners to develop custom IT solutions to development problems.

Examples of Country Achievements through the Aid Management Program

Country	Achievements	Funding Partners
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,425 projects recorded, totalling \$4.2 billion in actual commitments - 37 government staff and 20 donor partners trained - Three editions of the annual Report on Development Cooperation (RDC) produced using AMP data - Average report production time dropped from 12 to 6 months 	  
Burundi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 521 projects recorded, totalling \$3.2 billion in actual commitments - Two reports on Trends in Public Aid for Development produced, one of which tracks progress in achieving the indicators of the Paris Declaration 	 
Democratic Republic of the Congo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5,700 projects recorded, totalling over \$13 billion in disbursements or planned disbursements between 1999 and 2015 - AMP used for preparation of the 2010 and 2011 state budget - over 200 government staff and 40 donor agencies trained – the majority of them by DRC government trainers 	    
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 624 projects recorded, totalling \$17.7 billion in actual commitments - hosted knowledge-sharing workshop in 2007 for delegates from Tanzania, Malawi, and Burkina Faso 	 
Haiti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,936 projects recorded, totalling \$7.5 billion in actual commitments - AMP information is available to the public at the following online address: https://haiti.ampsite.net/ 	
Kosovo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 679 projects recorded, totalling \$1.5 billion in actual commitments - launched AMP public view website (www.amp-mei.net) - over 20 donor agencies and 10 line ministries trained - produced 2009 Report on Donor Activities within two weeks 	 
Lao PDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 780 projects recorded, totalling \$1.4 billion in actual commitments - 40 government staff have been trained - Government using AMP to monitor commitments to priorities of the National Development Plan 	 
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 285 projects recorded, totalling \$2.2 billion in actual commitments - produced an Annual Donor Fiscal Outturn Report for FY 2009/2010 	
Madagascar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 396 projects recorded, totalling \$4.6 billion in actual commitments - AMP has been aligned with the Madagascar Action Plan 2007-2012 - AMP used for preparation of 2010 and 2011 budgets - Report on Development Cooperation 2009-2010 published in September 2010 using AMP data – this was the first ODA report produced since 2001 	 
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 964 projects recorded, accounting for the country's entire portfolio of ongoing activities, and totalling \$7.7 billion in actual commitments - in 2008, government produced annual report on ODA using AMP - uses AMP to produce monthly reports on aid project implementation 	
Mozambique (ODAmoz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2,276 projects recorded covering the years 1990-2019, covering \$14 billion in actual commitments - Released ODAmoz, an online portal for information on ODA to Mozambique - ODAdata team has released two editions of the Donor Atlas using ODAmoz 	
Niger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 225 activities recorded, accounting for \$727 million in actual commitments - Can now produce in half an hour the same ODA report that, before AMP, took two days to generate 	
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 184 projects recorded, totalling \$4.6 billion in actual commitments - Over 50 government staff trained, the majority of them by Nepali government trainers 	 
Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 482 projects recorded, totalling \$28.2 billion in actual commitments – includes all projects incorporated in the 2011-2013 triennial budget - Has linked AMP to the Integrated System of Public Financial Management (SIGFIP), a national budget info systems - Donors are able to record off-budget ODA in AMP 	 
Southern Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 327 projects recorded, totalling \$1.7 billion in actual commitments - 15 government staff trained - 42 donor agencies captured in system 	
Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 986 projects recorded, including disbursements from FY 2006/07, totalling \$7.8 billion in actual commitments - 30 AMP users and 40 donor partner staff (representing 28 agencies) trained - Developed AMP feature to track compliance with Joint Assistance Strategy for Tanzania (JAST) 	