



AiDA

The architecture of aid has changed as new actors have come onto the scene. Private foundations and individuals have joined multilateral institutions and large donor agencies in the effort to alleviate poverty. The presence of these players has made international assistance more complex and comprehensive information on development activities harder to find.

Accessible Information on Development Activities, AiDA, is a comprehensive database that provides information on who is funding what, where, when, and with what funds. The database includes more than 600,000 activities from over 20 sources. Development Gateway “harvests” information from traditional and non-traditional donors.

In 2008, the database acquired a new user interface. This interface has made it easier for the user to capture a complete picture of development activities as information can be grouped by country, sector, and donor. The site is visually more appealing, easier to use, and automatically updated, and it enables the user to save search results.

According to Marc Tocatlian, administrator of the statistics and monitoring division of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, “The ‘browse by’ function brings great value added, allowing users to easily identify the available records for a specific country, sector, or agency.”

Development Gateway launched AiDA in 2001. Its aid effectiveness steering committee, which is comprised of representatives from the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, guides the development of the tool.

AiDA is a valuable tool for those who support the aid effectiveness agenda. Publishing information on development activities helps donor coordination and harmonization. Users have the advantage of acquiring a broad perspective on activities of all the donors engaged in a particular region. This type of aid information reduces the incidence of overlapping programs and prevents the duplication of efforts by donors.

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International Development Markup Language

In 1998, a group of development agencies initiated a discussion on the creation of standard definitions and a data format tailored specifically to the development sector. Development Gateway’s aid effectiveness steering committee supported the idea of making an international language a reality. A framework for such a language allows organizations to establish their own sub-standards while adhering to an overarching standard. AiDA is based on this framework.

The international development markup language is universal coding that facilitates the exchange of information, allowing databases to talk to one another. It forms the basis of the Aid Management Platform and AiDA, making aid more transparent. IDML makes access to better information possible by allowing partners in development to speak the same language.

Partners providing information to AiDA on a regular basis include the OECD, the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the World Bank. The database collects information from non-traditional donors such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, OPEC, and the Soros Foundation Network.

All the information in AiDA follows the IDML standard. This standard includes information that describes a program or project, in other words, content-related information. It also includes process information, such as project activities, project results, and organizational and individual contact information.

Standards, such as IDML, provide a common format to exchange aid information. Access to this type of information will help donors better coordinate aid efforts.

