

AID DATA NEEDS AND USE CASES IN NEPAL

*An initial assessment of selected user needs
for data and information on aid flows
and suggestions for action*

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Discussion Paper

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Acronyms

AIMS	Aid Information Management System
AIN	Association of International NGOs in Nepal
AMP	Aid Management Platform
API	application programming interface
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CSR	Country Strategy Framework
DCR	Development Co-operation Report
DFID	The UK's Department for International Development
DI	Development Initiatives
DP	development partners
FGD	focus group discussion
FY	fiscal year
GDP	gross domestic product
GIZ	German development agency–Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GoN	Government of Nepal
GNI	gross national income
HMIS	Health Sector Information System
IDPG	International Development Partners Group
IECCD	International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (MoF)
I/NGOs	International and National NGOs
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KII	key informant interview
LMBIS	Line Ministry Budget Information System
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
NCR	National Census Reports
NDHS	National Demographic and Health Survey
NDRRP	Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal
NFN	NGO Federation of Nepal
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NPPR	Nepal Portfolio Performance Review
NPC	National Planning Commission
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SWC	Social Welfare Council Nepal
TA	technical assistance
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive summary

Background

In recent years there have been increasing efforts, both locally in Nepal and on an international level, to improve how data and information on financial resource flows, including aid, is collected and shared. These initiatives are critical for ensuring transparency, accountability, and development effectiveness. In Nepal, the government, with support from development partners (DPs), has made significant efforts to establish the [Aid Management Platform](#) (AMP), including its public website. Multiple other platforms and initiatives have also been implemented by various actors to provide access to specific aid-related and humanitarian information, especially following the 2015 earthquake. This has taken place against a background of growing interest and involvement of actors within and outside of government in increased production, sharing and use of other types of data required to meet and monitor development aspirations.

Internationally, availability of aid data has also increased, especially with the growth of the [International Aid Transparency Initiative](#) (IATI). More than 600 bilateral, multilateral, non-government and private sector DPs are now publishing data on their projects to the open IATI standard. More broadly, the Data Revolution agenda has heightened the development community's attention to the role of data in meeting and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). High quality, timely and comprehensive data on financial resource flows that can support sustainable development is a critical element in this agenda.

Though availability and accessibility of aid data has undoubtedly grown, it is less clear to what extent, how, and by whom, it is being used, especially for the purposes of improved coordination and accountability that motivated transparency efforts in the first place. As debates have shifted from aid to development effectiveness, it is also important to understand aid data use in this wider context. Exploring current information practices and unmet needs is critical to shaping future efforts to collect and share aid data in ways that support its use by decision-makers, implementers and accountability actors.

This paper

Research on this topic in Nepal is timely. The integration of the SDG agenda in national development plans and indicators, the federalisation process, and the continuing importance of aid and other international flows in the national financing mix all drive interest in data on people's needs, financial resources and intervention results. Of particular relevance is the process of redesigning the AMP, which was recently initiated by the Ministry of Finance (MoF). While not formally associated with this effort, some of the findings of our research can support it. For the authors, understanding the potential for Nepal's growing community of open data activists to make a contribution to increased aid data use was also an important concern.

The objectives for this paper were to 1) highlight information needs of different stakeholder groups to assist user-centred approaches to providing data on aid finance; 2) consider the potential role of data published to the IATI standard in this context; and 3) build interest in increased use of data on aid finance among key stakeholder groups. A qualitative research approach was used that combined desk research with key informant interviews during October–November 2017. Due to the scope of the issue and practical constraints, efforts were focused on selected user groups among government, non-government organisations (NGOs) and DPs. An important limitation of the findings concerns the specific data and information needs of the different fiscal management stakeholders within government. With the aim of encouraging further discussion and collaboration among stakeholders, the result of the research is presented in the form of a discussion paper.

Research findings

Aid management processes, stakeholders and information sources

Aid management in Nepal involves numerous actors among government, DPs and civil society. At present, key discussions are under way to amend policies and procedures for aid mobilisation and management in the federalised context. The National Planning Commission (NPC) and the MoF's International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (IECCD) play central roles at the national level, with line ministries leading sectoral efforts. DPs and the government engage in various regular overall and sector coordination processes, but significant bilateral exchange between donors and government agencies, as well as among donors, also takes place. IECCD maintains the AMP and produces the annual Development Co-operation Report (DCR) as key aid information tools. In addition to these, numerous national fiscal and sectoral data management systems, issue-specific data platforms (e.g. on earthquake related assistance), stakeholder websites and reports exist. International and National NGO (I/NGO) contributions are managed separately, with the Social Welfare Council (SWC) as the regulatory body and the Association of INGOs in Nepal (AIN) and the NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN) as key forums for exchange and coordination. However, in recent years INGO reporting to the AMP has also become mandatory.

Stakeholder interests, information and data needs

Our research indicates that with regard to financial information on aid, many stakeholders share common interests and needs. A cross-cutting concern for government, DPs and civil society is ensuring development effectiveness through better coordination and accountability. In this context, stakeholders share a motivation to understand how aid is allocated, spent and what results it contributes to. Core needs in this regard are for data on: on- and off-budget support from all DPs, including better data on humanitarian finance, I/NGO contributions and technical assistance; forward-looking data; and project-specific data on objectives, sectors, locations, timelines, duration, donors, implementers, and budgets (planned, committed and spent).

Key unmet needs are for more analytical information, in particular on a) needs, resources and results of development interventions in the federalised context, indicating an underlying need

for disaggregated, geo-coded data, b) aid in relation to national SDGs and other indicators, and c) aid in relation to domestic resources, highlighting the need for joined-up data across aid and fiscal management systems. Stakeholder priorities for improvement of current data and information are around comprehensiveness and completeness of off-budget data on technical assistance and INGO contributions, humanitarian assistance and increasing the availability of forward-looking data.

Overall, there is a strong sense that stakeholders require more analytical information than they feel is currently available to them. It is therefore important to recognise distinct needs for data that can be processed by machines and analysed by experts, and for analytical information that is generated through interpretation and contextualisation of data. Both better data and better information are critical but distinct. Quality, reliability, interoperability and openness of data are all essential to enabling analysis, but without use of data for analysis much of its value will not be realised.

Information sources, practices and challenges

All stakeholders rely on data and information beyond aid and other financial flows. In particular, respondents pointed to key national statistical products of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), UN and World Bank reports as well as their own internal organisational and programme management data systems and analytical production as key sources of information. Many use cases are for aid data in conjunction with data and/or information on other, related issues. Among the stakeholders consulted, we find only minimal use of the AMP, in particular outside government. The key use case of the AMP data within government is the production of the comprehensive annual DCR.

Respondents reported heavy reliance on formal coordination processes, published reports, individual organisations' websites and use of interpersonal networks (use of email, phone and bilateral meetings), to access the aid information they needed. Stakeholders articulated interest in principle of having access to a comprehensive, centralised and authoritative source of aid data on Nepal, but their day-to-day information preferences do not presently reflect that.

While data use capacity was not a major focus of the assessment, our research indicates that among the audiences covered here, donors are most confident about their ability to generate analysis relevant to their activities. For other actors, available evidence suggests that capacity is a key constraining factor for increased data use.

A critical challenge is perception, awareness and use of existing aid data sources. The AMP appears to be mostly perceived as a tool for the government, specifically the MoF. IATI as a potential source of aid data is largely unknown, and where stakeholders are aware of it, they perceive it as an international effort with limited relevance at the national level. As IATI was designed to address key needs articulated by stakeholders (e.g. for forward-looking data), the AMP redesign, which already references IATI integration, presents an opportunity to assess and realise added value from already available data.

Recommendations and issues for further exploration

To better meet the needs for data and analysis identified through our research, the following recommendations are made for consideration by government, DPs, and other interested stakeholders.

Overall, greater efforts are needed to increase awareness of aid data availability from the AMP and IATI, as well as capacity to use it effectively. There are various actors that could contribute to increased production of analytical information, in particular on key issues such as aid in the federalised context, and in relation to the SDGs and national indicators. To these ends, strengthened partnerships for transparency, accountability and development effectiveness and regular interaction between publishers, managers and users of aid information are important.

Specific actions to be considered in the context of the AMP redesign include a need to maintain and increase openness of AMP data to enable use; more in-depth user needs assessment (especially within government) and user responsiveness; a specific assessment of added value of IATI integration (especially on forward-looking and non-traditional donor data); and a review of pre-set reports and dashboards to respond to key user interests (e.g. on geographic allocations, against national and SDG indicators), and to simplify navigation and improve loading speeds. During and after the redesign and roll-out process, regular engagement with publishers and users should be expanded to include support for AMP data use. Ideally, the redesign of the AMP would be accompanied by the development of a data use strategy, involving the contribution of multiple stakeholders in and outside of government.

1. Introduction

Nepal has a population of about 29 million, with gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$21.14 billion (2016) and gross national income (GNI) of US\$730 per capita.¹ Based on the most recent data, 28.6% of Nepal's population are considered multi-dimensionally poor.² Nepal is currently undergoing a transition to a federal democratic system of government based on the Constitution of Nepal 2015. In 2017, local elections were held for the first time in 20 years, followed by provincial and federal parliamentary elections. Nepal's federalisation process will involve significant adjustments to the government structure over the coming years. This includes the amendment of existing acts, restructuring the civil service at all levels, devolvement of fiscal governance, and the reallocation of funds, functions, and functionaries between the three spheres of government.

Development efforts in Nepal are guided by medium-term periodic plans formulated by the NPC. These are operationalised in Sector Development Plans and Local Development Plans with an overarching results framework. Nepal is committed to the SDGs and aims to become a middle-income country by 2030.³ In this context, the effectiveness and efficiency with which all available resources, both domestic and foreign, are used to achieve concrete development results are critical concerns for citizens, decision-makers and Nepal's international partners.

Many factors emphasise the importance of aligning investments with Nepal's development aspirations, coordination of effort and monitoring of results. The ambitious SDG agenda brings both growing financing needs as well as the potential to engage new actors and resources to contribute to it. Nepal's federalisation process represents a significant opportunity to enhance responsiveness to local needs, but will inevitably pose new challenges in policy and practice, for example with regard to resourcing and capacity of local and provincial government structures.

The availability and use of robust data is critical for all stakeholders to understand need, mobilise, direct and monitor investments for sustainable development. Disaggregated, timely and comprehensive data on people, resources and results is required from sustainable sources – high-quality censuses, surveys, civil registration and administrative, geo-spatial and financial data among others. Government plays a central and indispensable role in collecting, sharing and using these types of development data. In addition, many other actors can play important roles in broadening data availability and use, for example, civil society organisations through citizen-generated data and private companies by enabling the use of satellite, telecoms or social media data.

Following a landmark UN Report in 2015, these aspirations to increase the availability, quality and use of traditional and new data to drive development have become referred to as the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development.⁴ In Nepal, the importance of investing in the strengthening of the national statistical system to deliver robust SDG data has been underscored in the recent [Development Finance Assessment for Nepal](#).⁵

As we focus on the comparatively narrow issue of need for aid data and information in this paper, it is important to keep this broader context in mind.

Development cooperation in Nepal

Nepal has been a recipient of foreign aid since joining the Colombo Plan for Cooperative, Economic, and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific in 1952. Aid makes up a substantive part of Nepal's annual government budget. In fiscal year (FY) 2016/2017 approximately 29% of the annual budget expenditure was aid-supported in the form of grants (10%) and loans (19%).⁶ According to the MoF's Red Book of budget details this proportion has grown in recent years, with 25% of the annual government budget expenditure supported by foreign aid in FY 2015/16⁷, and 20% in FY 2014/15.⁸ The volume of foreign aid disbursed in FY 2016/17 was US\$1,581.14 million. Of this, US\$186.54 million (12%) was from INGOs and US\$1,394.6 million (88%) was Official Development Assistance (ODA). Of the total ODA disbursement US\$830.27 million (60%) was provided by multilateral DPs, while US\$564.33 million (40%) came from bilateral DPs. The five largest DPs – the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, USAID, United Kingdom and the UN Country Team – provided 71% of the foreign aid. ODA disbursements also included a significant amount of South-South cooperation, particularly from China and India.⁹

Nepal has endorsed and participates in global development effectiveness processes, including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. The Paris Declaration (2005) laid out five principles: 1) country ownership; 2) donor alignment; 3) harmonisation of procedures and information sharing; 4) managing for and measuring of results; and 5) mutual accountability between donors and developing countries.¹⁰ The Paris Declaration (2005) was further developed in 2008 by the Accra Agenda for Action, in particular with regard to the coordination of aid from multiple actors and the publishing of timely, comprehensive and forward-looking aid information.¹¹ Further conferences reiterated the importance of transparency and accountability.

Endorsement of aid effectiveness principles by Nepal is reflected in the 2014 Development Cooperation Policy, and significant effort to collect and share data on aid flows has been made through the AMP, which was first established in 2010 and then made public in 2013. A recent example of the Government of Nepal's (GON) work to increase effectiveness in development financing is the [Development Finance Assessment](#) (DFA) which was recently carried out. This was led by the MoF, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and delivers data and analysis to guide resource mobilisation and programming.¹² In addition, various other government and non-government actors have been implementing approaches to the collection and sharing of data on needs as well as aid and humanitarian resources, for example, through the Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal,¹³ the Inter-Agency Common Feedback Project,¹⁴ and the Earthquake Transparency Response Portal.¹⁵

Beyond financial data on aid, various other efforts are under way in Nepal that are relevant to the production, improvement, sharing and use of data to drive development. This includes,

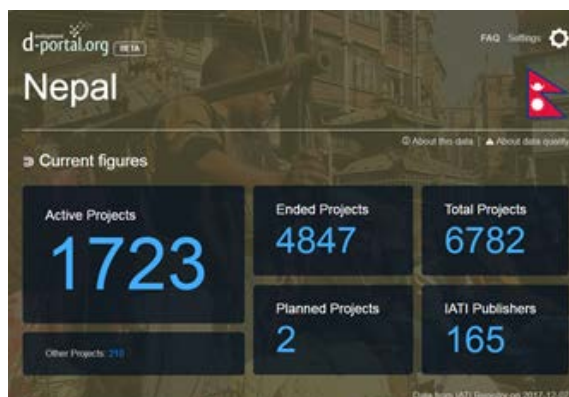
among others: the localisation of the SDG framework by the NPC, supported by UNDP; ongoing core statistical data production by the CBS, the Nepal Rastra Bank, the MoF and line ministries; ongoing work to improve key administrative data systems such as the Health Sector Information System (HMIS) with GIZ's support and improvements to Nepal's civil registration systems to create a national population register aided by a World Bank loan; and the emergence over the last few years of a vibrant ecosystem of open data actors spanning civil society, the private sector and government.¹⁶ More recently, the 'Evidence for Development' programme funded by DFID provides support to "strengthen Government of Nepal's capacity to generate data and use evidence more effectively."¹⁷

International context

Internationally, the Accra Agenda for Action outcomes were key drivers for the launch of the IATI to improve planning, transparency, accountability, and coordination in international foreign assistance. Aid recipient countries in particular had articulated strong calls for more timely and forward-looking donor data, which IATI was designed to deliver. Since then, more than 600 government and non-government organisations (as of December 2017) have started to make their aid data available in the open IATI standard.¹⁸ This includes data on more than 6,500 Nepal-related projects by 165 publishers (see Figure 1). Recently, major humanitarian actors have made a significant commitment to increasing their transparency by publishing to the IATI standard.¹⁹

At least 50 countries have – similarly to Nepal – established different types of aid management systems to support coordination and transparency of aid. This includes the AMP technology supported by Development Gateway and currently used in Nepal, Synergy International's Development Assistance Database, as well as bespoke systems in various countries. The integration of these systems with national financial management systems, and with IATI data, has been a key agenda item for the aid data community in recent years.²⁰ Myanmar²¹ and Bangladesh,²² using custom-built aid management systems, have been leading the way in integrating IATI into their platforms, with Myanmar being the first to design the system for integration of IATI data.

Figure 1.
Overview of Nepal-related projects published to the IATI standard (from www.d-portal.org, accessed 7 December 2017)



From data availability to use

Nationally and internationally, there have been significant efforts to increase aid transparency. Availability and accessibility of data from bilateral and multilateral donors, development finance institutions, foundations, non-governmental organisations, and businesses has grown.

While transparency of data on aid flows is an important principle, gains in terms of effectiveness depend on how the data is being used by various stakeholders in decision-making and accountability efforts. Encouraging and supporting the use of data is therefore a key concern for the impact, sustainability, and value of data transparency initiatives. However, evidence on data use remains limited.

The potential use cases for aid data typically include informing policy, resource allocation, project planning, monitoring and evaluation. Key users are usually identified as decision-makers in government and donor agencies and accountability actors, such as civil society and media organisations. In addition, it is often assumed that information intermediaries will use aid data to produce analysis for end users.

There are a number of factors likely to play a role in the limited use of data for the above purposes. This might include the lack of awareness of data availability among potential user groups, limited integration of aid data with other key sources of data (e.g. domestic budget management systems, socio-economic data), limited data scope and disaggregation, limited capacity of different actors to analyse and interpret data, and the lack of incentives to use data. In addition, the portals that share data have often been built without a full understanding of the needs and information practices of different intended audiences.

Building on related efforts internationally and in other developing countries²³ this paper explores who the key current and potential users of aid flow data in Nepal are, what they could be using this data for, what their needs around this data are, and how aid data can be made available to them in a way that meets their needs. The goal of this research was to inform future efforts to grow the use and usefulness of the supply of data on aid flows to decision-makers and accountability actors.

On this basis, The Asia Foundation, Development Initiatives (DI) and the various partners in the Evidence for Development Programme will seek to develop further dialogue, research and action to grow interest in and use of open aid data in Nepal. This will be done by sharing the findings and encouraging their uptake in key processes such as the redesign of Nepal's AMP and future efforts to increase accessibility and use of data related to the funding of the earthquake response. The findings presented here will also contribute to the wider, international evidence base on aid information needs and approaches to addressing them.

2. Methodology

The assessment was conducted using a qualitative research approach. Its objectives were to: 1) provide insights on the information needs of different user groups to inform user-centred provision of data on aid finance; 2) consider the potential role of data published to the IATI standard; and 3) build interest in increased use of data on aid finance among key stakeholder groups.

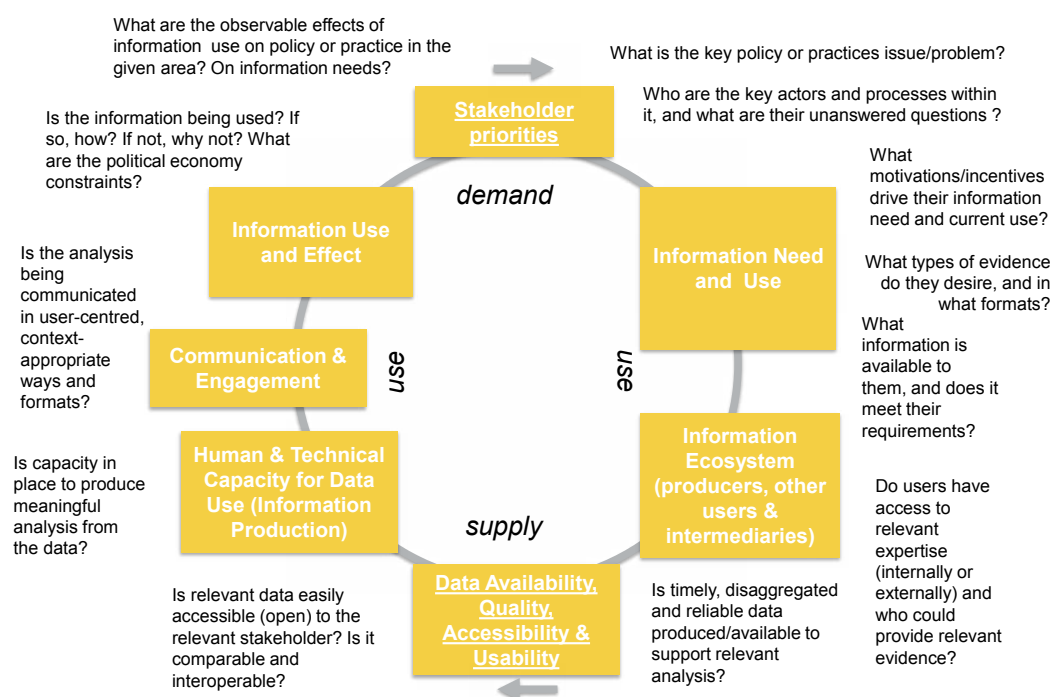
While not formally associated with the processes concerning the redevelopment of Nepal's AMP, the research was also expected to provide useful insights for consideration in support of the government's efforts in this area.

DI provided overall guidance for the assessment. Its implementation was supported by a national consultant, who led initial background/desk research, identification of key informants and interviews as well as drafting of the discussion paper. The national consultant was hired for 20 days to conduct the research and prepare the draft report, during the period 15 September–10 December 2017, with the bulk of the work taking place in late October and early November.

The study included a review of relevant literature on aid and aid data use nationally and internationally, as well as key informant interviews with stakeholders in Nepal. Research questions and a generic questionnaire were developed on the basis of DI's data use learning framework (Figure 2), and also built on previous research supported by USAID in Zambia, Ghana, and Bangladesh.²⁴ Research questions covered the following categories: i) Stakeholder priorities;²⁵ ii) Information need; iii) Information availability, providers and current use practices; iv) Data availability and use; v) Data accessibility and usability; vi) Capacity; vii) Data requests; and viii) Future needs. The questionnaire is included in Annex 1.

Figure 2. DI's Data Use Framework

Data use analytical/learning framework



Key data user groups were identified based on previous literature and practice, and included: i) government; ii) donors (bilateral and multilateral); iii) I/NGOs; and iv) media. The questionnaire was administered through key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). A total of 30 people took part in the KIIs and FGDs. See Annex 2.

Due to the scope of the issue, short time frame and the resources available for this research, there were certain limitations to the assessment. Firstly, not all potential user groups could be covered here. Specific limitations relate to coverage of government stakeholders, as it was not possible to consult key MoF officials and other key fiscal management actors in-depth for this research. Likewise, community-based organisations and individual citizens, private sector actors and others who may be using aid data (or could potentially benefit from doing so), could not be covered here. Finally, the federalisation process raises many new policy questions and information needs. While we comment on these where possible, much more in-depth exploration of the diverse needs and perspectives of actors at local and provincial levels will be required in the future. Also, while we received feedback on experience publishing to AMP, this was not a focus of our assessment.

For these reasons, key findings are primarily indicative of different user groups' needs. The results of the work are therefore presented as a discussion paper, in the hope of providing useful insights on the basis of the available evidence, as well as sparking interest for further exploration with other stakeholders.

3. Key findings

In this section we draw on the interviews conducted with key informants in Nepal. Where relevant, we also reference previous reports on related issues, including both evidence specific to Nepal, as well as studies from other country contexts.

3.1 Aid management processes and information systems

According to the MoF's DCR,²⁶ development planning and financing are led by the NPC which reports to the National Development Council headed by the Prime Minister. Implementation of the periodic development plans is monitored by action committees at the central, ministerial and district levels. In terms of core processes and systems to collect, share and use aid information, the DCR highlights the Local Development Partners Meetings, sectoral planning and coordination meetings as well as the annual high-level Nepal Portfolio Performance Review (NPPR).

As the MoF is currently developing relevant policies,²⁷ it remains to be seen how these processes will evolve during the federalisation process. In principle, Nepal's 2015 constitution mandates three spheres of government (federal, seven provinces and 753 local governments).²⁸ Constitutionally, the federal level has the primary right and responsibility to mobilise and manage aid, with the provincial governments being able to mobilise donor funding with consent from the centre. According to the 2015 constitution, the local level has no specified role with regard to aid. There is, however, significant responsibility for development-critical service delivery (e.g. in health and education) for provincial and local governments, and shared responsibility for disaster management.²⁹ However, future policies for aid mobilisation and management will be defined and implemented, and government, civil society actors and development partners will require detailed information on needs, resources and results along federal, provincial and local dimensions to plan, coordinate and monitor key interventions.

Nepal's AMP is emphasised as the core aid data system and information tool used by the government, and the annual DCR is based on AMP data.³⁰ First established in 2010, the AMP is operated by the MoF's IECCD. Developed by Development Gateway, it has over time received financial support from UNDP, DFID, DANIDA, USAID and the Australian government. In 2017, a process of redesigning the AMP was initiated, led by the IECCD with support from UNDP and DFID. The redesign will have a particular focus on interoperability of foreign aid data with other fiscal management systems.³¹ As part of this process the IECCD has solicited feedback from development partners on their experiences of supplying and using the AMP.

Nepal's Development Cooperation Policy 2014 specifies both a government commitment to ensuring public access to aid information through the AMP, as well as requirement for development partners to report to it.³² In recent years, the MoF has increased efforts to ensure INGO reporting to AMP as well as to provide technical assistance to publishers.³³ Though the DCR considers the AMP to be comprehensive, noting its inclusion of South–South cooperation,

the report acknowledges challenges for the government to adequately capture all finance, particularly in the area of humanitarian aid.³⁴

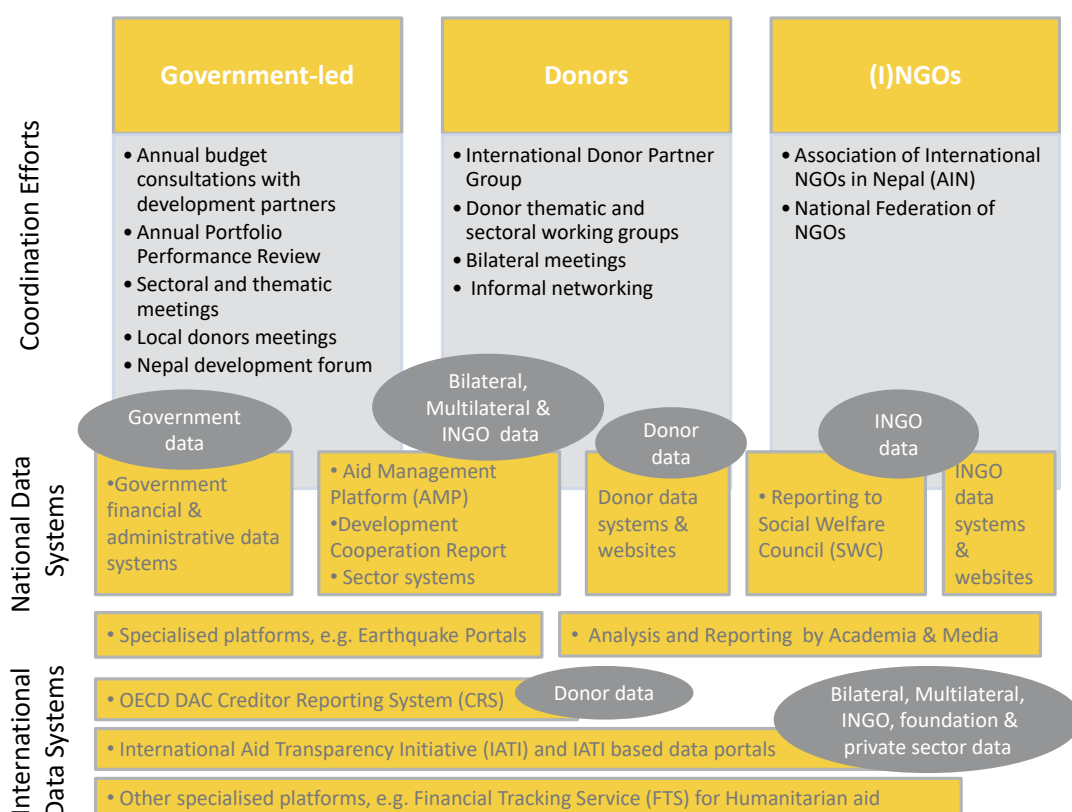
The AMP has a public, web-based interface (<http://amis.mof.gov.np/portal/>) which provides searchable access to qualitative and quantitative project data,³⁵ summary aid statistics, news, an aid distribution map as well as a series of pre-configured dashboards and downloadable reports, including in XLS format.³⁶ Within the AMP website, a separate section on assistance related to the 2015 earthquake exists (www.earthquake.mof.gov.np/portal). Repeated access to the AMP website by the authors of the study both from inside and outside of Nepal was often extremely slow, in particular to the dashboards.

In addition to the formal government–donor coordination processes and the AMP, a multitude of other channels, platforms and data systems exist. As shown in the overview (Figure 3), this includes internal and multi-stakeholder efforts, as well as national and international systems.³⁷

This includes other foreign aid-related information systems and processes based on specific governance arrangements, e.g. the oversight role of the SWC with regard to INGO involvement in development efforts in Nepal. Given this variety of processes and sources, it is important to understand different needs and information practices of users. On this basis, some observations concerning possible efficiencies and improvements can be made.

Ultimately, the role of aid needs to be seen in this larger context of national public financial management. For users to be able to understand the contribution of all available resources to sustainable development, interoperability of aid data and public financial management systems is therefore critical. Some of the relevant systems in use in Nepal include the Public Enterprises Management Information System (www.pemis.mof.gov.np), Budget Monitoring and Evaluation System (www.monitoring.mof.gov.np/node/48), the Line Ministry Budget Information System (www.lmbis.gov.np) and specific data management systems for government departments and agencies. Given the importance of interoperability to the uses of aid data by government and other stakeholders, it is excellent to see the focus on this issue in the terms of reference for the AMP redesign.

Figure 3. Aid coordination processes and information sources in Nepal



3.2 Stakeholder motivations and interest

In our research, we were interested to understand the needs for aid data and information as they arise from job-related concerns of different stakeholders. To this purpose, we first explored respondents' professional motivations and interests with regard to aid.

Across the different stakeholder groups, there is a common concern with ensuring development effectiveness and the overall planning, implementation and monitoring and development interventions. Stakeholders share a motivation to understand how aid is allocated, spent and what results it contributes to.

In particular, stakeholders noted an interest in understanding aid in the context of Nepal's federalisation process, its alignment with and impact on the SDG agenda.

Holding aid providers and implementers accountable did not come out as strongly in our interviews compared to previous research elsewhere. This may be related to the limited number of I/NGOs or other actors such as the media consulted by the research. However, there was strong interest among INGO respondents in demonstrating their own accountability, transparency and contribution to Nepal's development objectives.

While there was only a limited focus on the media in our study, previous research indicates that journalistic motivation lies in the broader area of contributing to government transparency and accountability, and development effectiveness in a wider sense.³⁸ However, overall interest in reporting on aid seems to be relatively limited in practice, perhaps as it does not constitute a regular beat for most media organisations. In a survey and content analysis of 13 national print dailies carried out by an NGO Freedom Forum in 2012, of the total 182,340 news items published by the papers, only 262 items (less than 1%) related to foreign aid, with the clear majority of these being based on donor or government press releases.³⁹ A recent example of such reporting followed the release of the 2017 DCR, without, however, attributing the source.⁴⁰

“We consult the donors whether it is on-budget or off-budget when we prepare our Annual Work Plan to provide an indicative commitment. The data or information on the indicative commitment is managed through the specific sector donor coordination forum. In some cases we directly contact a donor or an INGO by email or phone for their indicative commitment. However, having regular and accurate access to off-budget data or information related to the sector is a problem as there is no regular tracking system of data or information on foreign aid of the I/NGOs. There is no proper mechanism to track or have access to data or information on foreign aid to the respondent’s sector through technical assistance, which are directly administered by donors and are off-budget.”

(Government ministry respondent)

Table 1. Summary of stakeholders' interests regarding aid

Stakeholder	Key motivations and interests
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development effectiveness • Mobilisation, management and reporting of external cooperation (on- and off-budget) • Management and results of aid in federalised context • SDG alignment of aid and its results • Budgeting and planning processes, including forecasting, formulation and decision-making • Design, implementation and monitoring of development interventions
Donors (bi- and multilateral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development effectiveness • Strategy and programme planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation • Management and results of aid in federalised context • SDG alignment of aid and results • Dialogue with government • Donor coordination
I/NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and programme planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation • Resource mobilisation (fundraising) • Accountability: Holding government and donors to account (e.g. through resource tracking)⁴¹ in particular at local or community level^{42;43} • Advocacy: Producing evidence-based analysis⁴⁴ (e.g. at sector level)⁴⁵ • Management and results of aid in federalised context • SDG alignment of aid and results
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid as part of general economic news reporting • Reporting on aid as related to current news of strong interest (e.g. hydropower, climate change, suspected misuse of aid) • Management and results of aid in federalised context • SDG alignment of aid and results • Specific interest in data use among newer generation of data journalists⁴⁶

3.3 Information and data need

For all stakeholders, more specific needs for data and information derive from these overall motivations and interests. A number of these are common to different groups of actors, but there are also particular requirements.

A key distinction needs to be made in this context between data and information. While detailed data needs to be collected and be accessible in order to produce information, not all stakeholders will be using data in the strict sense. In fact, while respondents did not necessarily distinguish clearly between the two in their answers, there was a strong indication that multiple

stakeholders in fact desire more analytical information, which places available data in context and provides interpretation relevant to policy and practice.

A common need is for information about on- and off-budget support from all development partners, including humanitarian actors; forward-looking data; and project-specific data on objectives, sectors, locations, timelines and durations, donors, implementers, and budgets (planned, committed, spent).

There are also common interests in data on aid allocation and results of on- and off-budget aid in the federalised context and with regard to the SDG agenda. Repeatedly, stakeholders pointed to the need for better data on off-budget assistance (primarily on technical assistance and I/ NGO contributions), as well as more forward-looking data.

Donors in particular highlighted a desire for more analytical information on aid allocations and results⁴⁷, while I/NGOs emphasised detailed project and location-based data, including data on results, as a key priority.

These findings broadly align with those from other contexts. In a three-country study (Zambia, Ghana, Bangladesh) supported by USAID⁴⁸, stakeholder needs likewise related to: a) more current and off-budget data, information on sub-national geographic location and results data; and b) more detailed information about project activities: sub-national geographic location of projects, project descriptions, activity details as well as project goals, strategies and results including evaluation results and details on how much money was spent and for what purpose. A recent report on Tanzania and Benin found that government actors prioritised gaining an overview of all funds, while donors were especially keen on project lessons learnt.⁴⁹ For primarily sector-based actors, work on the information needs of agriculture funders emphasised the need for detailed information on what is being funded, the location of activities, the populations being served, which organisations are involved, how much is being provided and spent, and the results achieved.⁵⁰

In this context, it has been suggested that in particular formal aid management systems need to strike a careful balance to ensure that the priority needs of most stakeholders can be served while not overburdening data providers with excessive data entry requirements.⁵¹

Table 2. Summary of information and data need

Stakeholder	Information and data need
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-and off-budget support from all development partners, including better data on humanitarian finance⁵², I/NGO contributions⁵³ and technical assistance; forward-looking data, project-specific data: objectives; sectors; locations, timelines and durations; donors; implementer; budgets (planned, committed, spent) • Interlinked (joined-up) data on socio-economic indicators and foreign aid data to understand impact on poverty reduction and other development goals, especially in the SDG context • Aid allocation and results of on- and off-budget aid in federalised context, i.e. needs, funding, and results at provincial and local government levels
Donors (bi- and multilateral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical information, especially on sector spending, needs and results and relationship between aid and SDGs • Understanding aid allocation and results of on- and off-budget aid in federalised context • Government needs for grant and loan financing • Other donor contributions
I/NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On- and off-budget support from all development partners, including humanitarian actors; forward-looking data, project-specific data: objectives; sectors; location, timelines and durations; donors; implementers; budgets (planned, committed, spent) • Understanding aid allocations and results of on- and off-budget aid in federalised context • Local (community) level, disaggregated data on resources and projects⁵⁴ for accountability purposes • Joined-up data on domestic and international resources⁵⁵
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of aid in national budget • Project-specific information • Understanding aid allocations, management and results of aid in federalised context • Local (province and local government) level data

In our interviews, we also consulted stakeholders on the requests for data which they receive on a regular basis. Such requests point to wider external demand for aid information. The new federalised system of governance may trigger more local level demand for aid data and information.

Table 3. Information requests received by different stakeholders

Stakeholder	Requests received
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audiences: Development consultants, development partners, researchers, students, and media • SWC specifically highlighted demands for data and information from academics, researchers, media, I/NGOs and others on: i) sectoral contributions; ii) geographical distribution; iii) baseline and results data⁵⁶; and iv) sustainability⁵⁷. SWC noted limited capacity to provide such information.
Donors (bi- and multilateral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key audience: Line ministries requesting indicative aid commitments to prepare work plans and budgets • Other audiences: Development consultants, development partners, researchers, students, and media⁵⁸ • One mention that AMP had led to decline in frequency of information requests • Requests typically handled by donors' external relation units and answered with reference to key publications (annual reports, project reports, country websites)
I/NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audiences: Development consultants, development partners, researchers, students, and media • Typical requests: Number of I/NGOs working in which sectors, funding. Typically answered with references to websites and publications (e.g. annual and project reports).

3.4 Information sources, practices and capacity

Given these needs, we then explored how different stakeholders currently access and use information in their work. Importantly, all stakeholders rely on information and data beyond financial issues and aid in their work. Government and donors in particular emphasised their use of key national development statistics, especially those produced by the CBS. This includes the National Census Report (NCR), National Living Standard Survey, National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS). UN and World Bank reports were also cited as key resources. DPs also complement these sources with sectoral data from government (notably, one donor representative mentioned having access to sector management data systems), commissioned data collection and own (project) data sources.

With regard to aid data in a narrower sense, stakeholders reported a strong reliance on interpersonal networks and formal coordination processes to access information and data on aid-funded development interventions, confirming earlier research in Nepal⁵⁹ and in other country contexts⁶⁰. In terms of day-to-day information practices, most respondents cited accessing and receiving data and analysis through direct exchange (email, phone and meetings) and formal published reports, with a preference for digital formats.

At present, the AMP is seen primarily as a tool for the government, and external usage among donors and I/NGOs appears to be almost exclusively for the purposes of reporting to the system. Even among government stakeholders consulted here, the AMP does not appear to be a primary information source on foreign aid information. However, the DCR itself is a key information product based on AMP data.

IATI as a source of aid data is largely unknown among the stakeholders we consulted. Again, this is similar to findings in other countries.⁶¹

“All these development programmes and projects are happening. And there is data, but there is no practice of consolidating the inter-linked data, multivariate data analysis showing what is contributing to what [at the macro level]. We do sectoral reviews, but we do not do multivariate analysis and I don't think there are data platforms to support such requirements. I see the need to strengthen the capacity and awareness for that at the MoF, related government agencies, and sectoral ministry levels. I don't think we have the capacity for managing and analysing inter-linkage data from various projects at the sectoral ministries and [the] MoF is also not doing that. [...] There are thousands of aid projects in Nepal and what they have brought about that should be managed by the concerned government agency. MoF only manages the aid received and expenditures. We don't see a mechanism to do aid impact analysis contributing to sectoral and national level impacts. Nor capacity. [...] These are the things that we may have to look into in the future.”

(Government respondent)

With regard to data use capacity, donors were the only group of stakeholders to express confidence in their own data analysis capacity. For government, capacity was pointed out as a key challenge in a previous study.⁶² Data awareness and literacy among media actors was likewise commented on as being limited in previous research.⁶³ In I/NGO discussions, capacity was primarily referred to in relation to managing and uploading financial data to the AMP, which was considered sufficient. Other data analysis capacity tends to be located in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning units.

Table 4. Information sources and practices by stakeholder

Stakeholder	Information sources and practices
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider development data and information • CBS's NCRs, National Living Standard Survey, NDHS, UN and World Bank reports • Line ministry sectoral management information systems (e.g. HMIS, EMIS) and public financial management systems (LMBS, PEMIS, Budget Monitoring and Evaluation System) • Aid data • Bilateral agreements between MoF and donors • Direct contact with donors (email, phone, meetings) and in donor coordination fora (IDPG) • MoF relies strongly on AMP for DCR • With some exception, otherwise very limited awareness or use of AMP • No awareness of IATI
Donors (bi- and multilateral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider needs • CBS and other national data, MoF Economic Surveys, UN, World Bank⁶⁴ • Official GoN policy and planning documents • Direct contact with government counterparts⁶⁵ • Own analysis, e.g. at sector level⁶⁶ • For aid data • Direct contact with other donors and donor coordination forums (IDPG) • Direct contact with government counterparts • Own needs and resources mapping efforts with other donors and government counterparts • Internal programme and project management information (financial, monitoring and evaluation) • Use of AMP primarily for data upload, not typically as information source⁶⁷ • Only one donor reported (strong) awareness of IATI. Assumption that IATI is a head office issue • Capacity • Most donors report in-house capacity for data analysis

Stakeholder	Information sources and practices
I/NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National data sources, UN, World Bank reports • Donor websites, reports and strategies • See SWC as central information source for non-state actors • INGO respondents were aware of AMP, and reported regular uploads
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct contact with government • Use of official data and press releases by donors and government • Limited use of non-government data • Limited awareness of AMP • Very limited awareness of IATI

3.5 Key challenges

There are numerous challenges to producing timely, disaggregated and sustainable data to meet and monitor national development aspirations in Nepal. These have been explored elsewhere in more detail, and various recent reports have called for a strengthening of national statistical data production and use capacities.⁶⁸ Key challenges pointed out include poorly coordinated data production⁶⁹, limited sharing of government data in open formats (most data is released in PDFs)⁷⁰, and lack of centralised access to government data through designated information officers.⁷¹

This is likely to limit access by those without the necessary interpersonal networks, especially in a context where data is often shared through direct, personal contacts.⁷² Other challenges include limited resources, capacity and incentives for data use within the public sector, as well as low levels of articulated demand for data among key stakeholder groups.⁷³

“I am not personally aware of the AMP or IATI. I have never used AMP, maybe colleagues from other divisions like Budget Division may use the AMP. When I am required to access data/information on development cooperation particularly when I need to prepare the Annual Work Plan (AWP), I seldom use information sources like the AMP, Development Cooperation Reports, and others. I am satisfied with the most convenient and reliable sources of information (on foreign aid) by directly contacting the donors through e-mail, or phone, or through the donor’s sectoral forum meetings.”

(Government ministry respondent)

While these wider challenges are important and relevant, we focus here in particular on those related specifically to access and use of aid data. It is important to acknowledge that, in particular through the AMP, a range of key data on development finance in Nepal has become more transparent and accessible, including through downloadable statistics and visualisations. However, stakeholders noted challenges with regard to comprehensiveness (especially with regard to off-budget support such as technical assistance and I/NGO contributions as well as

humanitarian support), detail and accuracy of aid data, lack of sufficient forward-looking data, and an unmet need for joined-up data on domestic and international financing. A further priority need not easily met through current information systems is for detailed project data relevant to and accessible at the local or community level. There were also various challenges noted with regard to providers' experience of reporting to the AMP.

Of particular note were issues raised around I/NGO data, where stakeholders indicated potential mismatches between different registration processes and information sources. For example, SWC lists 260 affiliated INGOs⁷⁴, while 144 INGOs are associated with AIN.⁷⁵ While INGO reporting to the AMP is now mandatory and needs to be demonstrated to SWC, a more detailed assessment would be needed to determine data availability in practice. When a random set of 26 INGOs⁷⁶ from the SWC list⁷⁷ were checked against the AMP database, 17 INGOs were found to be registered in both (65%), 8 were missing from the AMP (34%) and 1 was unclear.⁷⁸

Table 5. Challenges identified by stakeholders

Stakeholder	Challenges identified by stakeholders
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completeness and comprehensiveness of data on off-budget support, especially on technical assistance and I/NGO data as well as humanitarian data • Data disaggregation, capacity and resources required for SDG-related data collection and data systems⁷⁹
Donors (bi- and multilateral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty about completeness, comprehensiveness and consistency of other donors' AMP data • Inaccuracies in representations of their data in DDCRs • Donors see AMP primarily as government tool, which does not provide sufficient richness and detail, forward-looking and evaluation data⁸⁰ • Various challenges relating to reporting of AMP (formats, classifications, FY alignment)
I/NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty about completeness and comprehensiveness of other INGOs' AMP data • (Potential for) mismatch and/or duplication of I/NGO reporting and data between AMP/DCR, SWC and AIN⁸¹ • Detailed project progress data uploaded to AMP only accessible to publisher, not peers⁸² • Significant gaps in NGO data, and limited comprehensiveness of NGO specific databases (see Annex 1) • Accessing and comparing project data relevant to the community level⁸³, which also requires joined-up data across domestic and foreign funding⁸⁴

4. Discussion of key issues

Overall, among the interlocutors we interviewed, there was a general sense that a one-stop portal, providing authoritative and non-overlapping access to aid data is seen as a key information tool. In principle, this suggests an important role for the AMP and its public interface. However, actual information practices currently centre on formal coordination processes and interpersonal networks. Despite significant effort to collect and share aid information through the AMP over recent years, use of its data beyond the production of the annual DCR appears to be minimal, certainly outside government. As an international initiative and data source, IATI faces even greater challenges in this regard.

This is not only a reflection of specific shortcomings in the data provided or the technology used (though these matter), but also a reflection of awareness, information preferences and perceived added value. In particular, there appears to be a disconnect between data collection and publishing efforts and the formal processes and interpersonal networks through which stakeholders currently access and use aid information.

The further development of the AMP and other efforts to increase availability and use of aid data therefore need to go beyond improvements to the technical systems. A lot of data and information is already available in the AMP and its ongoing use within coordination processes and beyond should be promoted and supported more actively. More, and ongoing engagement between and with users, publishers and information intermediaries such as the media, are necessary. Ideally, such outreach efforts to raise awareness and build capacity for use of existing data will connect to existing stakeholder processes, as well as build new partnerships around aid transparency, accountability and data use.

In addition to raising awareness, value needs to be demonstrated in response to diverse and evolving information needs. Beyond a number of common data points which can be delivered through the core components of an improved aid information management system, user demand extends to analytical information that will need to draw on a variety of data sources. It is unlikely that this demand can be met through standardised reports for more than

“There is a need for standardisation of data entry, mandatory on AMP. Because if it is not mandatory then users don’t get complete data. We don’t know about all the donors [who] are uploading their data, so the ministry can look into this to make it complete. [Another issue] is how to take it [AMP] a steering tool in terms of monitoring impact level changes [and] how the role of NPC, MoF and the sectoral ministry can be further facilitated, including programme people, not looking at it [AMP] just as finance platform, but [as an] overall programme platform, how to build, facilitate that interface/ interaction.”

(Donor respondent)

a limited number of use cases. Involving and empowering more actors to produce relevant analysis is also critical to meeting these needs. Without such efforts, the desired benefits of aid transparency – greater accountability, efficiency and effectiveness – will remain elusive. Addressing aid information needs therefore has two complementary aspects: firstly, it is critical that data needed to produce relevant information is available, accessible and interoperable. Secondly, data management systems and analysis need to join-up with existing information processes.

There are a number of key information needs that have been identified:

- **Understanding needs, resources and results of development interventions in the federalised context.** It goes beyond the scope of this paper to provide a comprehensive proposal in this area. However, improved geo-referencing and improved disaggregation of public AMP data will be relevant here. In addition, there is likely to be a need for analytical work to which various stakeholders can contribute, using the AMP and other data.
- **Understanding the relation between needs, resources and results and national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other indicators.** This suggests that both aid data collection and reporting against relevant indicators and ongoing analytical efforts will be relevant.
- **Integrating (joining-up) data across domestic and international resources.** The terms of reference for the redesign of the AMP already place an important focus on interoperability with other financial management systems.⁸⁵ Existing experience suggests that while technical solutions such as application programming interfaces (APIs) and other data import and export tools matter, sustainable benefits are much more likely to be derived from joined-up ways of working across all public financial management stakeholders.⁸⁶
- **Increasing comprehensiveness and completeness of off-budget data on technical assistance and INGO contributions, humanitarian assistance and increasing availability of forward looking data.** In addition to streamlining existing reporting practices in Nepal, it is in this area in particular that it would be worth focusing efforts to explore the potential integration of IATI based data alongside the core AMP data.

Two further issues are worth considering here in light of these findings.

Users' needs and AMP-related efforts

In line with findings of similar efforts in other countries, current and potential users share a number of priority needs. Overall, these are for comprehensive data concerning on- and off-budget support from all DPs, including better data on humanitarian finance, I/NGO contributions and technical assistance, and forward-looking data. Important specific needs of most stakeholders then relate to project-specific data: objectives; sectors; locations, timelines and durations; donors; implementers; budgets (planned, committed, spent).

There is, however, also a great diversity of needs for specific use cases beyond these. For example, various actors desire information on beneficiaries, results and lessons learnt.

A critical challenge for any aid information system is therefore the balancing of scope with practicality. That is, the more fields required, the greater the challenges of reporting compliance, data entry errors, and ultimately quality and usefulness of the data. Recent studies on Mozambique's⁸⁷ and Somalia's⁸⁸ aid management systems have recommended a focus on gathering and making available quality data from all providers on a limited number of key data fields. These have been included in Annex 2 with some suggested modifications.

In terms of key automated reports provided on the public AMP platform, stakeholder feedback indicates that reports and (ideally dynamic) visualisations of past, current and future aid allocations along the following variables would be helpful:

- Central, provincial and local government areas
- Sustainable Development Goal indicators
- Technical assistance
- INGO contributions
- Humanitarian contributions

In this context, the current distinction between reports and dashboard visualisations should be reviewed. Positive mention was made of the mapping function, so investment into visualisation of as granular as possible data in this way is likely to be helpful.

Of course, many specific information requirements of many stakeholders will go beyond these. For these purposes, the following will be relevant:

- Further detailed assessment of other user needs
- Maintained and expanded access to AMP datasets in open data formats
- Provision of APIs to enable external developers to build applications drawing on AMP data
- Maintained XLS and PDF download functions for key reports
- Establishment of core user group(s) involving key government and external stakeholders

“Yes, we have problem[s] with off-budget project information. For example, recently a project was completed supported [...] under the [...] Embassy in Nepal for supporting local development projects under US\$500,000. The DDC (District Development Committee) came to us to get the approval letter but after that we have not received or have [sic] access to any information on where and how the project was implemented and the aid was spent. The DDC and VDC (Village Development Committee) after getting the approval letter from the ministry directly worked with the [...] Embassy and submitted the reports on the project and finance to the [...] Embassy. This is just an example I am giving to tell you about the problem with off-budget or off-treasury foreign aid. We have been discussing now not to do agreements like that and the government has not decided yet. If it is off-budget like this then we will not be having any information on it.”*

(Government ministry respondent)

*Reference to specific donor removed by authors.

- Strengthened and expanded additional data management routines, e.g. publisher training, data user helpdesk and support functions
- Collaboration with interested stakeholders, especially I/NGOs, open data actors and DPs to raise awareness of availability and encourage use of aid data

Including other data sources

In addition to the above, efforts to increase accessibility and use of aid data in Nepal should consider making use of other available data sources. There are several reasons why integration of IATI data, as already referenced in the terms of reference for the AMP redesign,⁸⁹ should be a priority alongside interoperability with other domestic public financial management systems.

IATI is the largest source of standardised, forward-looking, transaction level open data on development finance flows. As of early 2018, more than 600 bilateral, multilateral, I/NGO and private sector development actors publish their data to the IATI standard. As part of the Grand Bargain processes, major humanitarian actors have also committed to publishing to the standard.

IATI data therefore represents a large and growing potential source of sustainable data on international development finance flows, in a format specifically designed to address key needs articulated by Nepalese stakeholders for forward-looking and more comprehensive data including from I/NGO and humanitarian actors.

Existing experience of IATI integration in national aid management systems indicates the potential benefits. For example, a pilot IATI data import into Bangladesh's Aid Information Management System (AIMS), highlighted potential for capturing greater volumes, granularity and detail for financial data.⁹⁰ Development Gateway reported additional aid flows of hundreds of millions of US\$ through IATI import in a series of other countries, largely from non-traditional donors.⁹¹

There are of course, challenges to integrating IATI data. Typically, these have included inconsistent data quality across publishers (from very strong to poor), and not insignificant technical and human effort to import and validate data, at least at initial stages.

However, a growing body of guidance (e.g. on IATI integration in country systems),⁹² open source data import tools, and approaches to support IATI capacity within aid management units are also becoming available. IATI partner countries and other experts within the IATI technical community have significant experience and expertise to share. Under its new data use strategy, IATI is committed to promoting integration efforts into partner country systems alongside data quality improvements, better tools and user support.⁹³

In this context, the current redesign of the AMP presents an opportunity to ready the system to benefit from further advances in IATI data availability, quality, and its ecosystem of tools and expertise. In fact, it is critical not to miss the opportunity to do so at this time, not least as other countries are moving ahead with IATI integration into their systems.

Initial steps in this direction can be closely aligned with the user needs identified here. For example, a systematic assessment of IATI data from non-traditional donors and funders without a presence in Nepal (and therefore not reporting to AMP), could indicate where IATI data can complement AMP data. A very initial look at data reported to IATI by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation shows nine currently active projects relating to Nepal. Only one of these, implemented by Save the Children, appears to be captured in the AMP.⁹⁴ Of course, this does not mean that these projects are definitely not captured in Nepal's systems. However, it indicates the nature and relevance of a detailed assessment.

Detailed comparisons could also be undertaken to compare IATI and AMP data on technical assistance and INGOs who report to both systems. Further, comparing availability of forward-looking data from both systems would be useful.

Figure 4. Overview of active Nepal-related projects funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (from www.d-portal.org, accessed 9 January 2018)

Project title	Date ending	Total commitments
1. ATAI: Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative (DFID DF) Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2018-03-31	5,772,570 USD
2. Track20 - Capacity Building to Monitor Progress in Family Planning Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2018-03-31	15,692,800 USD
3. Saving Newborn Lives (SNL3) Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2018-03-31	40,509,100 USD
4. Evaluation of Small-Scale Decentralized Sanitation Systems Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2018-03-31	537,865 USD
5. RENEWAL of OPP1098551: Rice Monitoring System for South Asia Phase II (RMS-SA II) Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2018-04-30	3,358,910 USD
6. MAL-ED: Analysis and Publication of 25-60 month Data including Anthropometry and Cognitive Development #HBGD Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2018-06-30	2,996,270 USD
7. Adoption of Paromomycin Intramuscular Injection by the Governments of Bangladesh and Nepal for the Treatment of Visceral Leishmaniasis Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2018-10-31	7,965,300 USD
8. Establishing specialized technical support and field research center for FSM and non-sewered sanitation Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2019-12-31	4,013,780 USD
9. Renewal: Delivering Genetic Gain in Wheat (DFID DF) Reported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	2019-12-31	24,000,000 USD

5. Recommendations

This paper provides an initial assessment of selected user needs with regard to aid information. As such it does not comprehensively cover all use cases, or all technical aspects of a complex agenda. Notably, the authors were not able to explore needs and requirements of key fiscal governance stakeholders in government. The suggestions put forward here therefore take a discursive form and are meant to further discussion and exploration with various stakeholders among government, DPs and non-government actors.

Increase awareness of aid data availability and capacity to use it

As shown, aid information and data are used in a variety of formats alongside other development data on need, resources and results. However, there is a strong indication that available sources of standardised aid data (AMP and IATI) are currently underutilised. Targeted efforts are required by government and DPs to raise awareness of these – especially through existing coordination fora – to explore and address capacity and technical needs for increased use as well as opportunities for integration of data and information use. Nepal's growing community of non-governmental (open) development data experts could play a key role as contributors and intermediaries in such efforts, as could aid data practitioners from other countries to share practical experience, e.g. on the use of IATI in country systems.

Strengthen partnerships for transparency, accountability and development effectiveness

Related to this, particular consideration should be given to establishing a regular forum to bring together multiple government, DP and non-government stakeholders to share analysis and experiences in data use for development effectiveness. This could help connect publishers, users and intermediaries, showcase use of existing data sources, articulate evolving demand

“AMP is not publicly accessible or open. Only those including ministries, donors, and I/NGOs who have been allowed to open an account and are provided with user IDs and passwords by the ministry can access and use it. AMP data on specific donors or I/NGOs is not accessible to each other and not even to all government agencies. It is important for the urban and village municipality authorities to have direct access to foreign aid data especially of I/NGOs besides the government's Red Book data. The local elected authorities will be increasingly asking for information on how much foreign aid through I/NGOs is invested in the development administrative areas under their jurisdiction. Urban and village level aid data of I/NGOs should be made conveniently available and accessible to the local authorities to uphold transparency and accountability.”

(Government agency respondent)

for data and analysis in an agile fashion, and engender new collaborations to address diverse needs. For example, this could be done under the leadership of MoF and alongside processes such as the International Development Partners Group (IDPG), the annual DCR release, or a future re-launch of the AMP.

Increase production of cross-cutting analysis and evidence

Stakeholders are articulating a common need for analysis on issues such as aid in the federalised context, relations between aid and national and SDG indicators, beneficiary needs as well as results. While some of these needs should ideally be addressed through the AMP, not all of them can be. This offers an opportunity in particular for intermediary actors at the intersection of development data, analysis, technology, media and communications. Academics, development consultants, I/NGOs, journalists and open data experts, working with established actors in new ways, can all make important contributions to this. However, such efforts need to go beyond development of web-based information tools (especially avoiding duplication), and bring co-produced, actionable evidence to users in the formats and processes that they require.

For AMP redesign stakeholders

The terms of reference for the redesign of the AMP system outline a good and ambitious agenda for improvements, in particular with regard to data interoperability and exploration of IATI data use.

Project stakeholders may find it useful to consider the following elements, ideally as part of a **strategy to increase usage of AMP** data that would engage a wider community of publishers, intermediaries and users:

- **Maintain and increase openness of AMP data.** Data accessibility is a key condition for increased data use by publishers, as well as by external actors who can contribute to providing analytical information. As part of the redesign process it would be important to enable easy access to and download of full datasets, in open formats for all stakeholders.
- **Conduct more in-depth user needs research,** in particular to understand data and information requirements, current use practices and data challenges of other government actors involved with the production, management and use of fiscal data. This should ideally go beyond technical interoperability needs for the use of aid data in other systems, to also cover the management and decision-making processes in which different government actors collaborate and use fiscal data and information.
- **Strengthen user-orientation throughout,** for example through baseline and ongoing assessment of AMP usage statistics across the multiple components of the AMP, and strengthening user and publisher feedback mechanisms, e.g. through a helpdesk that can receive, track and respond to specific queries and inform continuous improvement.
- **Conduct an assessment of value add of IATI datasets relating to Nepal,** with an initial focus on forward-looking data and non-traditional donors to guide efforts for IATI integration.

- **Review pre-set reports and dashboards** to respond to key user interests, e.g. on detailed geographic allocations, against national and SDG indicators. Improve loading speed of visualisations and simplify navigation.
- **Build and expand on previous publisher training** to encourage and support use of data by publishers.

Annex 1

Overview of aid information processes and data sources

Process/Platform	Description
Formal government and donor coordination processes and meetings	<p>Annual budget consultations – To synchronise budget information between IECCD, DPs and the Red Book, discuss budgetary support and donor commitments. Both pre- and post-budget consultations between IECCD and DPs take place.⁹⁵</p> <p>Annual portfolio performance review meeting – Annual meeting organized by the GoN to review programs implemented by DPs. Participation by DPs is voluntary.⁹⁶</p> <p>Sectoral review and Thematic group meetings – Led by IECCD and sectoral ministries, these coordinate sectoral planning, policy and programs between government and DPs⁹⁷. They include updates on thematic or cross-cutting issues such as public financial management, public procurement, governance, corruption, transparency, decentralization, gender, etc.⁹⁸</p> <p>Local donors meetings⁹⁹ and Joint local review meetings¹⁰⁰ – Meetings every two or four months for coordination between GoN and the DPs working at local level, with IECCD acting as secretariat.</p> <p>International development partner group (IDPG) meetings – This is the apex platform for Nepal’s traditional bilateral and multilateral donors/partners. These meetings are held regularly to exchange information on development cooperation and to coordinate joint efforts. Government representatives are regularly invited to join.</p> <p>Nepal Development Forum – High level dialogue hosted as and when required on issues such as the periodic plan, policies and action plans for development, national development result frameworks, resource estimation and pledging from the donors. Hosted every 18–24 months.</p> <p>Donor sector working groups – Groups established by DPs to update on and coordinate sector-focused issues.¹⁰¹</p>

Process/Platform	Description
Other information practices of donors	<p>Donors in Nepal have long carried out mapping efforts by collecting data directly through contacts in other donor agencies and existing mechanisms such as the donor coordination meetings, thematic and sectoral forums.</p> <p>Donors' reliance on, and often preference for, non-formal information sources has been attributed to concerns over quality, comprehensiveness and detail of data in platforms such as the AMP.¹⁰²</p>
Development Co-operation Report (DCR)	<p>Compiled annually by the MoF's IECCD, this publication provides an annual overview of key aid statistics and related analysis. Alongside regular shorter updates and newsletters it is published on the AMP.</p>
Aid Management Platform	<p>First established in 2010, the AMP is operated by the MoF's IECCD. Developed by Development Gateway, it has over time received financial support from UNDP, DFID, DANIDA, USAID and the Australian government. The AMP continues to be developed in line with evolving needs. Nepal's Development Cooperation Policy 2014 specifies both a government commitment to ensuring public access to aid information through the AMP, as well as a requirement for DPs to report to it.¹⁰³ In recent years, the MoF has increased efforts to ensure INGO reporting to the AMP as well as to provide technical assistance to publishers.¹⁰⁴ Though the DCR considers the AMP to be comprehensive, noting its inclusion of South–South cooperation, the report acknowledges challenges for the government to adequately capture all finance, particularly in the area of humanitarian aid.¹⁰⁵ Nepal's DCR itself is based on data from the AMP.</p> <p>The AMP has a public, web-based interface www.amis.mof.gov.np/portal/ which provides (searchable) access to qualitative and quantitative project data,¹⁰⁶ summary aid statistics, news, an aid distribution map, and a series of pre-configured dashboards and downloadable reports, including in XLS format.¹⁰⁷ Within the AMP website, a separate section on assistance related to the 2015 earthquake exists (www.earthquake.mof.gov.np/portal/).</p>

Process/Platform	Description
I/NGO data management processes and practices	<p>Coordination between the government and INGOs is situated under the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, and oversight is carried out by the SWC.</p> <p>INGOs are required to adhere to a general agreement for permission to operate in Nepal, followed by specific project agreements. Every INGO registered at the SWC is required to submit bi-annual organisational progress and audited financial reports. The SWC carries out mid-term and project completion final reviews of the projects implemented by the INGOs.</p> <p>INGOs registered with the SWC are trained by MoF on publishing to the AMP and are expected to regularly publish information on their projects.</p> <p>INGO coordination takes place in the ambit of the AIN. AIN maintains basic open data on member INGOs at https://www.docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1J82B000YHvm6fSVespz1WbfZ52XKpzFPzGMIOdXzyfM/edit#gid=1541954739 (accessed 22 December 2017), and produces a membership report with additional data.¹⁰⁸</p> <p>At present, 144 INGOs are associated with AIN,¹⁰⁹ compared to 260 that have entered into agreement with the SWC.¹¹⁰</p> <p>The SWC recently made it mandatory for INGOs to publish projects to the AMP and provide a copy in the project approval process to the SWC. However, some data on INGOs can also be accessed on the SWC website.¹¹¹</p> <p>The SWC provides basic visualisations of I/NGO data per fiscal year, country, region, sector activity at www.swc.org.np/?page_id=203 (Accessed 22 December 2017).</p> <p>For Nepalese organisations, the NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN) maintains open data of its members, and development activity by region and district, accessible at www.ngofederation.org/. However, this data source does not contain data and information on foreign aid contributions.</p> <p>A separate interactive database maintained by NFN seeks to capture detailed information, including on foreign aid funds used by member INGOs. This database (www.database.ngofederation.org) does not include data of all NFN member INGOs. Data publishing on it is the responsibility of the member INGOs.</p>

Process/Platform	Description
Earthquake or disaster related portals	<p>The Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal (NDRRP) (www.drrportal.gov.np) was created after the Nepal 2015 earthquake to manage the Prime Minister Disaster Relief Fund. It is a multimedia online portal which integrates data, and information related to disaster management, on funds received by the Prime Minister Disaster Relief Fund, commodities received and distributed at the local level by administrative bodies (district and village development committees) and data on distribution of earthquake relief funds.¹¹²</p> <p>The Earthquake Transparency Response Portal (www.earthquake.opennepal.net) is an independent effort led by Young Innovations, a private information technology firm. It seeks to establish a holistic picture of the earthquake response by capturing transaction data on funds given and received by various national and international organisations, including private organisations, government, multilateral donors, NGOs and UN agencies. The data is taken from a variety of primary and secondary sources.¹¹³</p>
IATI and d-portal	<p>Under IATI's open data standard, many donors publish information related to financing of activities in Nepal.</p> <p>The d-portal (www.d-portal.org/), which visualises IATI data, enables a search of projects by country. Currently, more than 1,700 Nepal-related projects are contained in the database.</p>
Other relevant systems related to fiscal information	<p>There are several other data management platforms that exist in Nepal that are related to aid and financial management. This includes PEMIS (www.pemis.mof.gov.np), and the Budget Monitoring and Evaluation System (www.monitoring.mof.gov.np/node/48). Both are closed internal data management systems.</p> <p>The MoF also operates a separate internal Integrated Financial Management Information System called LMBIS or Line Ministry Budget Information System. It works on an intranet within Singha Durbar (government premise), and with the ministries have regulated external access (www.lmbis.gov.np).</p> <p>Various line ministries and government agencies also operate data management systems. This includes the Ministry of Agricultural Development's Management Information System (www.namis.gov.np/index.php), the National Forest Information System under the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (www.mfsc-nfims.gov.np/#) and the Health Management Information System (HMIS) (http://nhsp.org.np/tag/hmis)</p>

Annex 2

Potential priority fields for aid data collection and reports

Core data needs of multiple stakeholders relate to similar issues and can likely be addressed through a focus on collection and reporting of quality and comprehensive data on a limited number of data fields.

For reference, the following table has been adapted from a recent World Bank assessment in Mozambique.¹¹⁴ Suggested modifications are highlighted in italics.

Core needs		Relevant AMP fields
Who	Who provides funding?	Funders
	Who is involved in implementation?	Implementers
What	What is the project name?	Project title
	What is/are the objectives?	Project objectives
	Which sectors are targeted?	Sectors
	Which SDGs are targeted?	SDG coding
	Who are the beneficiaries?	Beneficiaries
Where	Which projects are active at national, provincial, local level?	National
		Provincial
		Local
When	What are the project implementation timelines?	Start date
		End date
How much	What is the overall budget?	Project value
	How much has been spent to date?	Amount spent to date
	How much was spent during the last reporting period?	Spending during the last reporting period
	How much will be spent during the next reporting period?	Spending expected during next reporting period
		Project currency
		Exchange rate
More	Where can I find more information?	Document uploads and links Project contact details

Annex 3

User profile – Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Nepal

The Japan International Cooperation Agency has been working in Nepal since the late 1970s. It is one of the largest bilateral donors in Nepal with its development cooperation focused on: i) Earthquake Recovery and Disaster Risk Reduction; ii) Infrastructure; iii) Poverty Reduction; and iv) Governance. According to the AMP¹¹⁵, JICA was the second largest donor to Nepal in 2016 with an amount of US\$206,870,747.

JICA needs aid data when conducting its periodic sectoral studies to develop its Country Strategy Framework (CSF), which is aligned to the periodic development plans of the GoN. Under the rubric of the CSF they develop the Annual Work Plan (AWP). The AWP is supported by JICA's annual "request survey" with the sector ministries.

From the list of requests for cooperation through mutual interest with the government, and consultations with other donors, JICA makes its foreign aid commitment in the AWP, which is then shared with the GoN.

Regarding access to information and data on foreign aid from other donors, Nanako Tsukuhara, Advisor for Post-Earthquake Programme Formulation, said, "We have donors' coordination forum and meetings, and sometimes with particular donors, for specific information we approach them bilaterally." Nanako has used the Nepal Earthquake Portal for checking aid data but was and is not confident about its reliability. To clear her doubts she consulted and crosschecked with fellow donors on certain post earthquake aid data.

Ram Bhandari, Programme Manager for Aid Coordination and the AMP Focal Point regularly uses the AMP to upload JICA's aid data and also to check information on other donors. Ram said, "I use AMP to check sectoral aid data of donors and INGOs. I download the list of donors and INGOs who are working on a specific sector. I also regularly use the donor coordination window on the AMP." Ram added, besides the AMP he refers to the DCR published by the MoF and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) aid data in his work.

Both Nanako and Ram are of the view that the current form of aid data provided by the AMP is useful. But, if there is a demand then it can be ideally improved by having more forward-looking aid data. Ram further said, "Aid data management has improved and is getting better in Nepal due to initiatives like AMP", and that "mechanisms like the government's periodic Nepal Portfolio Performance Review (NPPR) have been useful in upholding aid management for transparency and accountability". However, Ram found that after the earthquake the momentum of the NPPR has slowed down.

Request for information and data mostly relate to JICA Nepal's foreign aid contribution. For the most part, these come from researchers, academics, students, consultants, and sometimes

representatives of the Japanese business sector who come to visit Nepal to explore business opportunities.

Both Nanako and Ram are of the view that since there is now a global convention of measuring and monitoring development in terms of the 17 SDGs, and the GoN has adopted this in its planning, then the AMP being modified to align aid data with the SDGs would be good for everybody.

Source: Joint interview with Ram Prasad Bhandari, Programme Manager, Aid Coordination, Climate and Disaster Risk, & Emergency Housing Reconstruction, and Nanako Tsukuhara, Programme Formulation Advisor on Earthquake Rehabilitation and Recovery, JICA Nepal; 30/10/2017, JICA Office, Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Annex 4

User profile – NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN)

NFN is an umbrella organisation of NGOs working in various development sectors in Nepal. It was established in 1991 for the promotion and protection of social justice, human rights and pro-poor development. It is registered as an association and is run by a team of NGO professionals who volunteer their services to achieve the vision of NFN. It has prepared and enforced an NGO Code of Conduct to increase the accountability and transparency of NGOs.¹¹⁶ Currently NFN has more than 6,000 NGO members.¹¹⁷

“One of the main activities of NFN is aid monitoring,” said Daya Sagar Shrestha, Executive Director, NFN, in the focus group discussion (FGD). “We regularly conduct aid monitoring through occasional studies and surveys of foreign aid effectiveness, and we monitor national compliance with international foreign aid conventions”. Daya added, “NGOs need data and information on both on-budget and off-budget and which donor and INGOs are working where, on which sector, for what purpose, with how much of budget etc. Such data and information on NGOs are required amongst themselves as well as by the NFN.” Daya sees that a reliable NGO database with data and information on foreign aid received by the NGOs would be important for transparency and accountability, but he feels there is not sufficient and reliable data and information on NGOs in Nepal. NFN conducts surveys of NGOs but it is not comprehensive as it is a resource intensive endeavour.

Jitram Lama, Treasurer of NFN, shared that with the technical support of Young Innovations, NFN has developed an online database for collecting and storing accurate data about NFN’s members. However, due to issues such as weak internet connectivity in the districts and lack of resources to further build the data entry capabilities of NFN’s members, information on only 200 NGOs has been uploaded to the database so far.¹¹⁸ In addition to this database NFN has published on its website a downloadable Excel list of NGOs in each district that are registered with them.



The FGD indicated that NGOs frequently need data and information about donors and INGOs, the sectors they are working with and the funds that may be available from them. NGOs keep track of donor and INGO country strategies by accessing hardcopies or downloading them from the relevant websites. NGOs also directly ask the donor/INGOs for information on their areas

of work and the funds available. NFN's data on NGOs are frequently demanded and used by INGOs and representatives from District Development Committees. Regarding the AMP, the FGD participants said it contains only top line data/information on foreign aid, such as how much was donated and how much was disbursed. They felt it lacks detailed, sequential and analytical data as well as the forward-looking data that would give them useful information on implementation and impact levels. The FGD concluded that there is a need for regular updated data on NGOs but neither NFN nor the SWC have been able to manage this. NFN believes that this is the key responsibility of the government's SWC.

Source: Focus Group Discussion with Daya Sagar Shrestha, Executive Director, NFN; Jitram Lama, Treasurer, NFN; Bhawana Bhatt, Central Committee Member, NFN; Anil Upadhaya, Information Officer, NFN; 31/10/2017, NFN Office, Budhanagar, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Annex 5

User profile – Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN)



AIN¹¹⁹ was established in 1996. It is a membership-based network of INGOs working in Nepal. At present, AIN has 144 members who work on a wide range of development and humanitarian efforts. AIN has been a vehicle for transferring knowledge and information about and between INGOs, sharing experiences and learning about member organisations, and safeguarding the interests of member INGOs in Nepal. Though AIN is not a registered body, it is formally recognised by the government, SWC, and the line ministries as a

standalone, independent entity representing the INGO community in Nepal. For INGOs to work in Nepal they are required to register with the SWC under the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare. The majority of foreign aid that comes through AIN's INGO members is off-budget.

During the discussion it was noted that when INGOs carry out project planning and programming, they rely on data and information published by the CBS and NPC, such as the Nepal Livelihood Standards Survey and National Demographic Health Survey, as well as from other sources like the World Bank or UNDP Development Reports. In addition, specific INGOs require specific data related to the sector they work in. Some of the larger INGOs undertake their own socio-economic and sectoral surveys to collect data for planning and programming.

Recently the SWC made it mandatory for INGOs to upload their project data/information (both technical and financial) to the AMP and to include a printout of the entry in their project approval file submitted to the SWC. AIN members were provided with training by the MoF on using the AMP when it was started.

The FGD participants indicated that though the INGOs have been uploading their foreign aid data to the AMP, the



completeness of it is not certain. They believed not all INGOs are doing that and the MoF's DCR has also not included the full extent of INGOs' foreign aid in Nepal. One participant indicated that they regularly upload their technical and financial data to the AMP. They find it helpful that the AMP serves as an archive for them, however they were not sure whether the details they upload to the AMP are accessible to others.

The AIN respondents were strongly of the view that there is a need for improving the coordination between MoF and AIN on aid data. The INGOs felt that the project information and data on budgets submitted by them to the SWC should be linked to the aid data management by the MoF. They stated the need for a one-stop platform for data and information on foreign aid in Nepal.

Source: Focus Group Discussion with Shibesh Chandra Regmi, Chair, AIN/Country Director IPAS Nepal; Ujwal Pokharel, AIN Steering Committee Member, Country Director, Room to Read Nepal; Nirmala Sharma, AIN Steering Committee Member, Fair Med; Lucky Sherpa, AIN Secretariat Manager; Suresh Mehta, M&E Senior Adviser, IPAS Nepal; Krishna Shrestha, M&E Manager, Plan International Nepal; and Silvan Casabilca, Business Development Manager, Plan International Nepal; 03/11/2017, IPAS Nepal Office, Baluwatar, Kathmandu, Nepal

Annex 6

Questionnaire used for Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Topics	Questions
<i>Stakeholder concern</i>	<p>1. What is your primary professional objective (role of your organisation/department)?</p> <p><i>Sub-questions:</i></p> <p>How would you describe your primary focus of work and the key challenges you are trying to address?</p> <p>Where is your main focus? On national or sub-national, sectoral or cross-sectoral issues?</p> <p>What is your interest as [STAKEHOLDER] in issues related to foreign aid/development cooperation?</p>
<i>Information need</i>	<p>2. What are the main issue areas that you need information on in your work? For what purpose?</p> <p>3. To what extent is information about public financial data of relevance for you?</p> <p>4. To what extent is data on foreign aid/development cooperation information a special concern for you?</p> <p>5. What are the key things you need to know about when it comes to foreign aid?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On-budget support• Off-budget support• Forward-looking• Projects• Objectives• Location• Timelines/Duration• Donor• Implementer• Sector• Budget

Topics	Questions	
<i>Information availability, providers and use</i>	6. How often do you access information on development cooperation? For what purpose?	
	7. How are you accessing this information? E.g. online, print, in person, meetings, press etc.?	
	8. Are you familiar with, and do you use, the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nepal's Aid Management Platform? • The Development Cooperation Report? • The NRA Earthquake platform (www.nra.gov.np/)? • The Nepal Earthquake Portal (www.earthquake.opennepal.net/)? • International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)? • d-portal (www.d-portal.org/)? • Any other platforms? 	
	9. How satisfied are you with the information channels that you use?	
	10. How satisfied are you with the completeness and quality of the information?	
	11. Is there information on foreign aid that you need but do not have access to?	
	<i>Data availability and use</i>	12. In your work, do you primarily use analysis (e.g. prepared reports, visualisations) or raw data on aid (to conduct your own analysis)?
		13. What is your preferred format (online, offline, pdf, Excel,) to work with aid data?
	<i>Data accessibility and usability</i>	14. How important is it to you that aid data is comparable with other types of data you use? If so, which other sources do you use?
		15. What are the priority data fields you need? E.g. location, amounts, providers, implementers, beneficiaries, results?
		16. How important is the accessibility of data in open formats to you?

Topics	Questions
<i>Capacity</i>	<p>17. How do you assess your and your organisation's ability to use foreign aid data in its work?</p> <p><i>Secondary questions:</i> Do you have access to analytical capacity in-house to work with financial data? What type of support in using aid data would you find helpful?</p>
<i>Data requests</i>	<p>18. What explicit requests for aid data or information do you receive, and by whom?</p>
<i>Key future needs</i>	<p>19. How interested in aid information are the following stakeholder groups in your view?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central government? • Local government? • Development partners? • Civil society organisations? • Citizens? • Media? • Academia? • Private Sector? • Others?

Annex 7

List of people interviewed (KIs and FGDs)

Name	Title	Gender	Affiliation	User Type
Key Informant Interviews				
Prakash Panthi	Section Officer	Male	Foreign Aid Coordination Division, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, GoN	Central government
Dhruba Raj Regmi	Under Secretary	Male	Aid Coordination Division, Ministry of Education (MoE), GoN	Central government
Yeshoda Aryal	Under Secretary	Female	Planning and Aid Coordination Division, Ministry of Health (MoH), GoN	Central government
Prabhu Budathoki	Member	Male	NPC, GoN	Government agency
Durga Prasad Bhattarai	Deputy Director	Male	M&E Division, SWC, GoN	Government agency
Ram Prasad Bhandari	Program Manager, Aid Coordination/AMP Focal Point	Male	JICA	Bilateral donor
Nanako Tsukuhara	Project Formulation Advisor, Post Earthquake	Female	JICA	Bilateral donor
Arjun Neupane	Finance Control Officer	Male	Asian Development Bank	Multilateral donor
Shreejana Rajbhandari	Program Analyst	Female	Asia Development Bank	Multilateral donor
Roshan Darshan Bajracharya	Senior Economist	Male	World Bank Nepal	Multilateral donor
Sahina Shrestha	Online Editor	Female	Nepali Times	Media (print/online)
FGD 1				
Daya Sagar Shrestha	Executive Director	Male	NFN	Non-state actor/NGO
Jitram Lama	Treasurer	Male	NFN	Non-state actor/NGO
Bhawana Bhatta	Central Executive Board Member	Female	NFN	Non-state actor/NGO

Name	Title	Gender	Affiliation	User Type
Anil Upadhaya	Information Officer	Male	NFN	Non-state actor/ NGO
FGD 2				
Pramesh Shrestha	Finance Head and Controller	Male	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Nepal	Bilateral donor
Pramila Shrestha	Deputy Finance Head/AMP Focal Point	Female	SDC, Nepal	Bilateral donor
Yamuna Ghale	Senior Program Officer	Female	SDC, Nepal	Bilateral donor
FGD 3				
Shibesh Chandra Regmi	Chair, AIN/Country Director IPAS Nepal	Male	AIN /IPAS Nepal	Non-state actor/ INGO
Ujwal Pokharel	Steering Committee Member, AIN/ Country Director, Room to Read	Male	AIN /Room to Read	Non-state actor/ INGO
Lucky Sherpa	Manager, AIN Secretariat	Female	AIN	Non-state actor/ INGO
Suresh Mehta	M&E Senior Adviser	Male	IPAS Nepal	Non-state actor/ INGO
Nirmala Sharma	Steering Committee Member, AIN/Country Coordinator	Female	FAIR MED	Non-state actor/ INGO
Krishna Shrestha	M&E Manager	Male	Plan International Nepal	Non-state actor/ INGO
Silvana Casabilca	Business Development Manager	Female	Plan International Nepal	Non-state actor/ INGO
FGD 4				
Craig Irwin	Statistics Adviser	Male	DFID	Bilateral donor
Anjaly Tamang Bista	Commercial Adviser	Female	DFID	Bilateral donor
FGD 5				
Shailee Manandhar	Senior Programme Manager	Female	DFID	Bilateral donor
Kavindra Subba	Senior Programme Manager	Male	DFID	Bilateral donor
Pratima Ranjit	Senior Programme Manager	Female	DFID	Bilateral donor

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Development Coordination Report is not accurate. This is because there are about 150 INGOs registered with AIN, whereas according to the SWC there are about 250 INGOs in operation. The MoF report does not capture the complete data and information on INGO's contribution to foreign aid in Nepal.

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The Data for Development in Nepal Program aims to ensure that more and better data is available, accessible and usable by a range of government, civil society, and private sector actors at the national and subnational level to inform decision making, implementation and monitoring of development efforts. It is a 2.5 year program implemented by The Asia Foundation in partnership with Development Initiatives with the support of the UK government's Department for International Development.

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