

FROM: Abbey Wemimo
RE: The Open Aid Initiative

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today we lack answers to simple questions like: how many non-profits are operating in Africa? What percentage of non-profits work on water and sanitation issues compared to HIV/AIDS? Evidently, we don't have enough information on non-profits if we can't answer these questions. The **Open Aid Initiative (OAI)** aims to gather a comprehensive database of non-profit organization working in Africa to improve aid transparency, foster collaboration and information sharing. Our goal is to collect and open up non-profit data to engage other stakeholders in evidence-based conversations on development.

PROBLEM

There's too little information on non-profit organizations working in Africa. Africa's dilapidated states attract foreign aid and a plethora of groups working on development projects. In 2011, public charities in the United States reported over \$1.59 trillion in total revenue and in 2010, bilateral aid to Africa, adjusted for inflation, more than quadrupled over the past decade, from \$1.4 billion in 2002 to \$8.1 billion (Congressional Research Office, 2012). Organizations with good intentions travel to African countries with hopes of impacting lives, but get overwhelmed by the magnitude of problems encountered in the landscape. These groups still manage to implement projects; yet comprehensive and effective development will increase with the availability of information about organizations with similar or complementary missions.

IMPORTANCE

The lack of an information-sharing platform makes non-profits working in Africa inefficient, opaque, and lacking productive and sustained collaborations. We need to answer simple questions, including: How many non-profits are there in Africa? What percentage of non-profits work on water and sanitation issues compared to education? Presently, we do not have adequate information on these non-profits. The basis of this project is to develop an understanding of the root causes for the inadequacies, expose findings and most importantly create a platform where information on non-profits can easily be retrieved.

OPEN AID INITIATIVE

It's evident that organizations working in Africa can't solve problems alone without strategic partnerships and information sharing. The problems that organizations encounter are complex and multifaceted, and the inability to share information regarding lessons learned or potential partnerships cripples many organizations' missions in Africa. To ameliorate this problem, we are introducing the Open Aid Initiative.

MISSION

Open Aid aims gather a comprehensive online database of non-profit organization working in Africa.

VISION

To improve aid transparency, foster collaboration and information sharing.

GOAL

Our goal is to collect and open up non-profit data to engage other stakeholders in evidence-based conversations on development.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Collect and publish non-profit data in an open and accessible machine-readable format.
- Develop a map to visualize the locations of non-profits and their projects.

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- Build capacity for non-profits and help disseminate information to the world.
- Customizability of non-profit data.
- Encourage the standardization of non-profit data dissemination around Africa.
Create a unique electronic identification number for non-profit organizations.

PILOT PROJECT

Create an online database of local and international non-profits organizations working in Ghana.

FUNCTIONS

The **Open Aid Initiative's** data points quantitatively measure and disseminate impacts organizations are having in communities. Additionally, this platform will connect various non-profit organizations with comparable interests and projects. It can also allow non-profit organizations working in Africa to maximize their resources by strategically collaborating, communicating, and sharing information to help move the frontiers of their missions forward. Above all, it will help foster non-profit collaboration, increase social benefits and help organizations maximize their resources through effective synergies.

TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION

The bedrock of this platform is rooted in free and available machine-readable data. The tech initial implementation of The Open Aid Partnership can be divided into three subsystems:

1. **Registration of Non Profits (Self Register or Opt In Methodology):**
This functionality of this system is designed to collect information about non-profit organizations. This will contain the data points that were established as necessary for instituting an identity for non-profit organization on the platform. The information collected will be used to create a record or profile.
2. **Searchable Interface for Searching for Non Profits**
The search criteria will be based on the different filter criteria available such as geographical location, area of interest/outreach, size of organization etc. This functionality will be key for member organizations to connect with each other.
3. **Communication Module**
This function will enable member non-profit organizations to communicate with each other. This functionality will provide a channel for member organizations to interact with each other. This will enable them to potentially form partnerships on projects or share valuable information when appropriate.

INCENTIVES FOR NON-PROFITS

- Free online profile non-profit organizations can login and update.
- Online depository to upload important documents for public access.
- Free and easy connections to other organizations with similar or different mission.
- Opportunity to advertise and build a strong donor base.
- Capacity building and data analysis workshops.

SCALABILITY

We understand one size doesn't fit all in international development or aid disbursement. However, we are confident that by building a strong data architecture that encourages the standardization of non-profit data dissemination, this approach can therefore be easily adopted by non-profits in Africa and eventually around the world.

COSTS

The projected costs for the pilot project is \$10,500.