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IS661 – Independent Study

Financial Foreign Aid

Development Gateway created the Aid Management Platform (AMP) in collaboration with the OECD, World Bank, UNDP, and governments of Ethiopia and India to better support aid information management. There are two primary components to the AMP: 1) tools to enable governments and donor staff to collect, report and monitor information on development assistance and 2) institutional strengthening activities. For the purpose of this independent study, the tools of the AMP will be used exclusively and a thorough analysis of country’s financial foreign assistance from various regions around the world will be studied.

Governments are pursuing aid transparency by publishing aid information online through open data portals, Moldova’s Public Portal can be found here: <http://amp.gov.md/portal/> as an example. While many countries are now publishing data, there is a deficiency in analysis done on the open data. Open data for the sake of being open tends to not lead to results. The following countries have open data and their data will be examined following an OSEMN model:

* Burkina Faso
* Cote d’Ivoire
* Chad
* DRC – (might be removed due to political issues with Dutch Government)
* Haiti
* Honduras
* Kosovo
* Laos - (might be removed due to technical issues, server is down)
* Madagascar
* Moldova
* Malawi
* Nepal
* Tanzania
* Timor Leste
* Uganda

There are several avenues for possible studies due to the lack of analysis on any financial foreign assistance. Three possible studies include: 1) predicting the amount of money inflow into a country, 2) which project amounts have a higher probability of corruption (Benford’s Law), and 3) Project sector clustering based on donor activities. These three avenues all have limiting factors and are as follows: 1, 3) data quality and 2) project amounts are not random and from initial planning are human generated. Though these are limiting factors, this is the most granular and rich dataset of foreign aid known right now. Alternative sources of data include AidData.org and the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

The next step in this project is to do an exploratory data analysis of the datasets and determine data quality. This quick analysis will result in a full project plan with deliverables and project question that will be answered over the course of the independent study.