Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

Australia-DFAT (41.9)
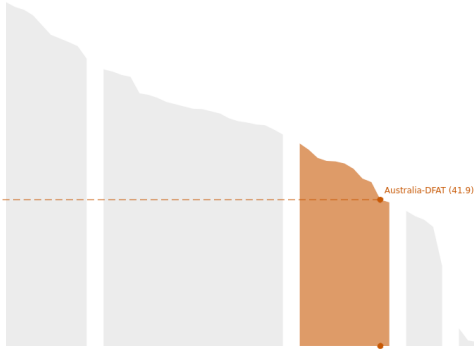
SCORE: 41.9	POSITION: 41/50	2022 FAIR

OVERVIEW

In November 2013, Australia integrated the Agency for International Development (AusAID) into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), which is now responsible for implementing Australia's aid programme. It aims to advance Australia's security interests internationally and raise living standards by reducing poverty in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia became a member of IATI in 2008 and first published IATI data in September 2011.

2020 FAIR	2018 FAIR	2016 FAIR	2014 FAIR	2013 FAIR

Organisational planning and commitments
6.9 / 15

Finance and budgets
7.7 / 25

Project attributes
9.7 / 20

Joining-up development data
12.5 / 20

Performance
5.1 / 20

ANALYSIS

DFAT has remained in the 'fair' category for the sixth consecutive edition of the Index, dropping nearly ten points since 2020. As a result, DFAT now sits near the bottom of the 'fair' category. DFAT's frequency of publication to the IATI Registry has dropped to a less than quarterly basis.

Of the organisational planning and commitments indicators, DFAT performed poorly and below average for its grouping. It only published its annual reports to the IATI Registry. It did publish its organisation strategy, procurement policies, allocation policies, and audits in other formats. We could only sometimes find DFAT's country strategies which were not always up to date.

DFAT also performed significantly below average with regards to finances and budgets. DFAT scored well on only three of the seven indicators. Budget alignment, commitments, and disbursements and expenditures were published in the IATI Standard. DFAT published organisational and disaggregated budgets one year forward looking, but we could not find any activity level project budgets or project budget documentation.

DFAT dropped the most points (nearly six) compared with the 2022 Index for project attributes. DFAT published all indicators to the IATI Registry except for sub-national locations, which was not available consistently in any other format. The conditions indicator failed data quality checks as there was no clear statement to say why conditions were not attached to projects.

Joining-up development data was DFAT's highest performing component, even though it dropped five points on 2020 and scored below average. DFAT did not publish any IATI data for tenders, contracts, or the networked data - organisational references indicators. However, while we did find contracts and tenders consistently in other formats.

DFAT improved its performance score after not scoring any points in the 2020 Index. DFAT has started to publish objectives data but only for about nine percent of its activities. It has also started to publish reviews and evaluations but these often had broken links. However, it still did not publish pre-project impact appraisals or results data to the IATI Registry or in any other format.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- DFAT should prioritise the publication of organisational documents such as organisational strategies, audits, procurement policies, and allocation policies to the IATI Registry as they are already available in other formats. This would significantly improve its score for the organisational planning and commitments component.
- DFAT should publish timely country strategies to inform stakeholders of its focus and objectives.
- It should review its approach to project performance and impact and make pre-project impact appraisals and results available.
- DFAT should regularly update its data to ensure that dates are correct and links to key documents (including review and evaluation documents) remain intact.
- It should improve its financial and budgetary transparency by including line item budgets at the activity level for all projects and providing at least three year forward-looking budgets.
- DFAT should look to improve the frequency of its publication by moving back to publishing on at least a quarterly basis, or if possible, monthly.
- It should start consistently publishing sub-national locations of its projects, so stakeholders know where projects are taking place.
- DFAT should start to publish recognised organisation references for its partners using the latest guidance from the IATI community to help stakeholders identify who is implementing and/or participating in its projects.

DEEP DIVE

# Organisational planning and commitments

Score: 6.9 / 15

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component looks at the overall aims and strategy of an organisation. We check for any public commitments to aid transparency. We also make sure audits are published and if planning documents have been published, including by parent organisations (including national governments) where applicable. We make note of any Freedom of Information laws and critically, we make sure that organisations have tried to make their information easy to access and understand. You should not have to be an expert in open data to be able to find and use this information.

Quality of FOI legislation — Score: 1.25

Accessibility — Score: 0
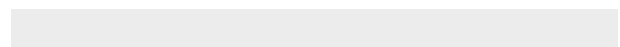
Organisation strategy — Score: 0.94

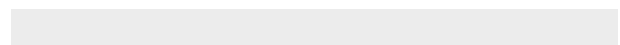**Annual report** — Score: 1.87

Allocation policy — Score: 0.94

Procurement policy — Score: 0.94

Strategy (country/sector) or Memorandum of Understanding — Score: 0

Audit — Score: 0.94

Finance and budgets

Total organisation budget — Score: 0.23

Finance and budgets

Score: 7.7 / 25

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component is critical to allow you and anyone else to follow the money. We expect to find the total budget of the organisation being assessed, right down to individual transactions for each development activity. In particular, forward-looking budgets from donors are important for partner country governments to be able to plan their own future finances.

Disaggregated budget — Score: 0.46

Project budget — Score: 0

Project budget document — Score: 0

Commitments — Score: 2.32

Disbursements and expenditures — Score: 2.5

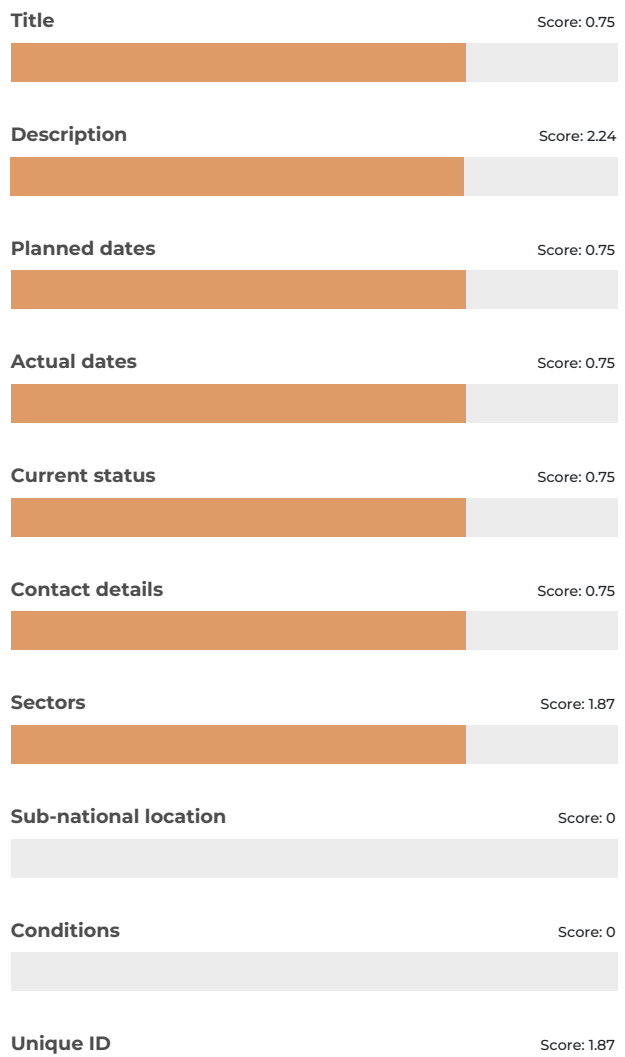**Budget Alignment** — Score: 2.18

Project attributes

Score: 9.7 / 20

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component refers to descriptive, non-financial data, including basics like the title and description of a project. Information like this is important as it is often the entry point for data users to quickly understand what a project is about. We also look for other information that helps to put a project in context, such as its sub-national location or the sector that the project deals with, for example, education or agriculture.

Title — Score: 0.75

Description — Score: 2.24

Planned dates — Score: 0.75

Actual dates — Score: 0.75

Current status — Score: 0.75

Contact details — Score: 0.75

Sectors — Score: 1.87

Sub-national location — Score: 0

Conditions — Score: 0

Unique ID — Score: 1.87

Joining-up development data

Score: 12.5 / 20

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component looks at how well an organisation's data is able to be linked and connected with other bits of information. There is a diverse nature of flows, activities and actors within the development sector. Aid and development finance data needs to be effectively linked and connected with the rest to provide a full picture for the user. This can be particularly important for partner country governments, which need to integrate information on aid with their own budgets and systems.

Flow type — Score: 2.25

Aid type — Score: 2.25

Finance type — Score: 2.25

Tied aid status — Score: 2.25
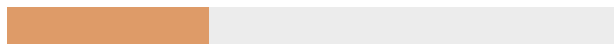
Networked Data - implementers — Score: 2.5

Networked Data - organisation references — Score: 0
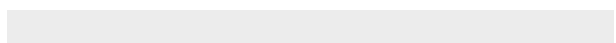
**Project procurement** — Score: 1

Performance

Score: 5.1 / 20

ABOUT COMPONENT

This component refers to the essential data and documents that assess whether a project is on track or has been achieved. This includes things like baseline surveys, progress against targets, mid-term reviews and end of project evaluations. This information is important to hold aid organisations to account and also to share knowledge with others on what worked and what did not during a project.
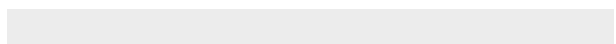
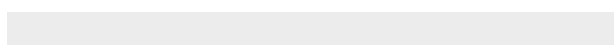**Objectives** — Score: 1.85
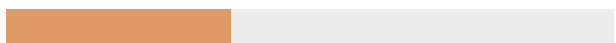
Pre-project impact appraisals — Score: 0

Reviews and evaluations — Score: 3.28

Results — Score: 0