



College of William and Mary *AidData Center for Development Policy*

Connecting to Accelerate Global Development

The Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) is a partnership between USAID and seven world-class universities to create a constellation of Development Labs. This network harnesses the ingenuity and passion of university students, researchers, faculty, and their innovative partners to incubate, catalyze and scale science and tech-based solutions to the world's most challenging development problems.

Through support to the university-led Development Labs, HESN taps into a global pool of expertise to accelerate innovation through the discovery, creation, testing and scaling of efficient, cost-effective, accessible and sustainable solutions to global development challenges.

With \$137 million over 5 years from USAID, and leveraging nearly equal investments from the institutions, the universities form a collaborative and vibrant network that extends beyond 100 partner institutions in academia, civil society and government across 38 countries.



The Challenge

How do we connect the dots between development dollars to accelerate development impact through transparency?

The Innovative Approach

AidData makes information about international development assistance more accessible, so that anyone can see how much is being spent, where, and on what. To date, AidData has collected and published information on over \$5.5 trillion in foreign aid projects available in a searchable online data portal, www.aiddata.org.

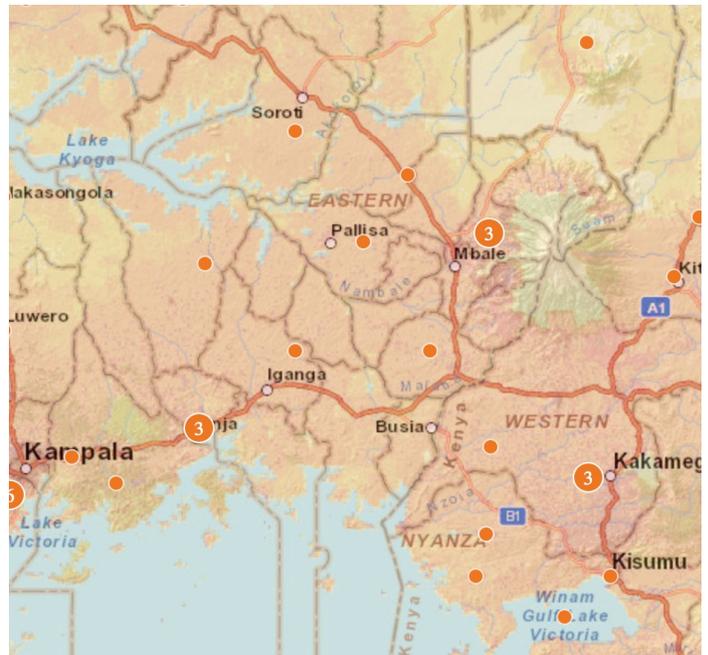
Using detailed information on project activities, AidData pinpoints their specific locations so that users can analyze gaps in service and identify duplication of efforts with interactive maps. That helps donors such as USAID better plan projects, allocate resources, coordinate with other donors, and evaluate impact. Easy access allows citizens and civil society organizations to obtain up-to-date information and hold governments and donors accountable.



Believing that these methods can increase the impact of aid programs while reducing costs, USAID is helping expand this initiative and share its advantages with the world. USAID’s Higher Education Solutions Network enabled the AidData partners – the College of William and Mary, Brigham Young University, the University of Texas at Austin, Development Gateway, and Esri – to establish the AidData Center for Development Policy, based at the College of William & Mary. The AidData Center is sending experts and students around the world to work with governments and civil society to gather comprehensive data about development projects in their countries, apply locations to each aid activity and build their capacity to use mapping tools to analyze this information.

In its first year, the Center has sent teams to Haiti, Nepal, Senegal, Timor-Leste and Uganda to “geocode” donor-funded development projects. Anchoring a consortium of geographers, economists, epidemiologists, political scientists, computer scientists and statisticians, the Center helps donors and developing country governments use the data to make policy and allocate resources based on evidence.

In Nepal, for example, the Center trained more than 350 people in AidData geocoding methods, including representatives of the Nepalese government, civil society organizations, universities, and donors. Students participated in “hackathons,” brainstorming how to use geocoded aid data to address local challenges. Thirty-five undergraduate students helped input data for over 600 aid projects funded by 45 donors in Nepal since 2010. The Center then helped Nepal’s Ministry of Finance put the database online.



In partnership with USAID, the Center will continue to scale this work with additional countries in the coming years.

The AidData Center is a partnership of the College of William & Mary, Brigham Young University, the University of Texas-Austin, Development Gateway, and Esri.

For more information

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