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## Transparent Impacts?

Aid transparency is a hot topic at the moment. Donors met in Paris in July to discuss the International Aid Transparency Initiative ([IATI](#)), with many agreeing to publish data in a more timely manner, in open, easily comparable formats. USAID recently announced plans for a “[major aid transparency initiative](#),” and the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID), has just launched an [online discussion](#) about how to implement its “Transparency Guarantee” for UK aid.

Much of the current debate though is focused on inputs. On who is spending how much, on what, and where. This is of course important information, but it clearly doesn’t tell the whole story. We also need transparency on outcomes. It is not truly informative to know that an NGO has low administration costs and diligently accounts for its spending, if its projects don’t actually deliver any results. Or as Scott Gilmore of Peace Dividend Trust [more colorfully puts it](#);

*I really don’t care if World Vision blew 90% of their budget on strippers and Grey Goose vodka. What I want to know is what did they deliver? What changed on the ground? How many people were helped? I want transparent impact. I couldn’t care less about transparent budgets.*

So. In order to be transparent about impact we need to do some sort of impact evaluation. And the best sort of impact evaluation, is a.....

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