

# Toward Transparency 3.0: A Data Value Chain Assessment of Transparency 2.0

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Development Futures Lab

Global Research Institute at Korea University

for

IATI Members' Assembly and Community Exchange 2025

Nairobi, Kenya

# Development Futures Lab (KU DFLab)



## Description

Located within the Global Research Institute (GRI) at the Graduate School of International Studies at Korea University, [KU DFLab](#) works to **envision, evaluate, and engender future development** by predicting how future socioeconomic transformations will impact development and **by exploring the potential contributions of emerging technologies.**

## Mission

The core mission of the KU DFLab is to **forge innovative, data-driven policy solutions** that significantly **improve the efficiency, transparency, and overall impact** of global development initiatives.



<https://www.cuzproduces.com/dflab/>

# 1. Project Overview: Assess Transparency 2.0

## Data Availability and Usability in Data-Based Decision-Making for Development



*Funding:* LVG from [UNDP Seoul Policy Centre \(USPC\)](#)

*Dates:* 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

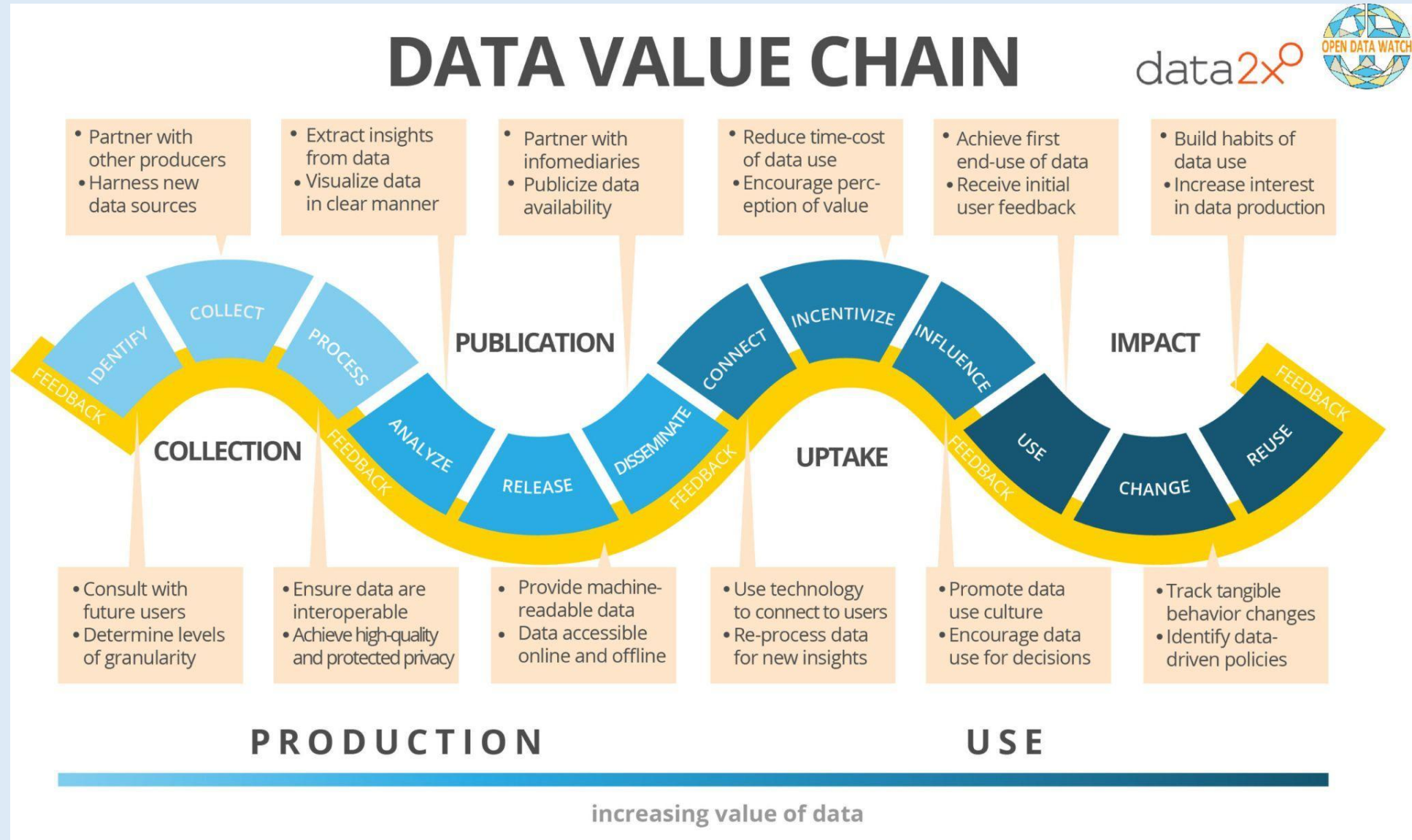
### Identified Challenges

- Anecdotal evidence of underperformance: difficulties in obtaining necessary information
- Challenges in user experience, data collection, and database design

### Research Objectives

- Assess the IATI data, its interfaces, and user experiences (focus on d-Portal)
- Identify areas for enhancement: data collection, data access, interface usability and training

# 2. Conceptual framework: Data Value Chain (DVC)



# 3. Methodology

## 1 Technical & Document Review

Reviewed IATI's published documents, such as official reports and meeting minutes, to identify patterns. With support from a data fellow, DFL examined IATI's data architecture using Python.

## 2 Structured Interviews

Conducted interviews with IATI users, gaining qualitative insights into their experiences with the platform and its data ecosystem.

## 3 Scenario Walkthroughs

Under the guidance of practitioner partners, DFL devised potential use cases of IATI d-portal to assess its viability as a decision support system.  
*Primarily d-Portal.*

# User base: Different motivations

UNDP HQ	UNDP CO	Development Providers	Development Partners	Other users
Enhance aid planning and transparency of aid related activities	Utilize IATI data as a supplementary tool to enhance project planning and informed management decisions	Tracking budgetary expenditures, ensuring transparency for stakeholders	Facilitate informed decision-making and improve coordination with donors and development partners (aid implementers)	Data integration, reporting, investigative journalism, and transparency monitoring

# Walk-through scenarios

## Scenario One

- **(Actor)** Health Official
- **(Topic)** Vector-borne Disease Aid Assistance
- **(Scenario)** I am a government official in the CDC equivalent of a country in Latin America. I need to find an NGO with a track record of working in Latin America, with experience dealing with infectious disease transmission. Ideally, the NGO should have a track record of not going over budget and completing projects on time.

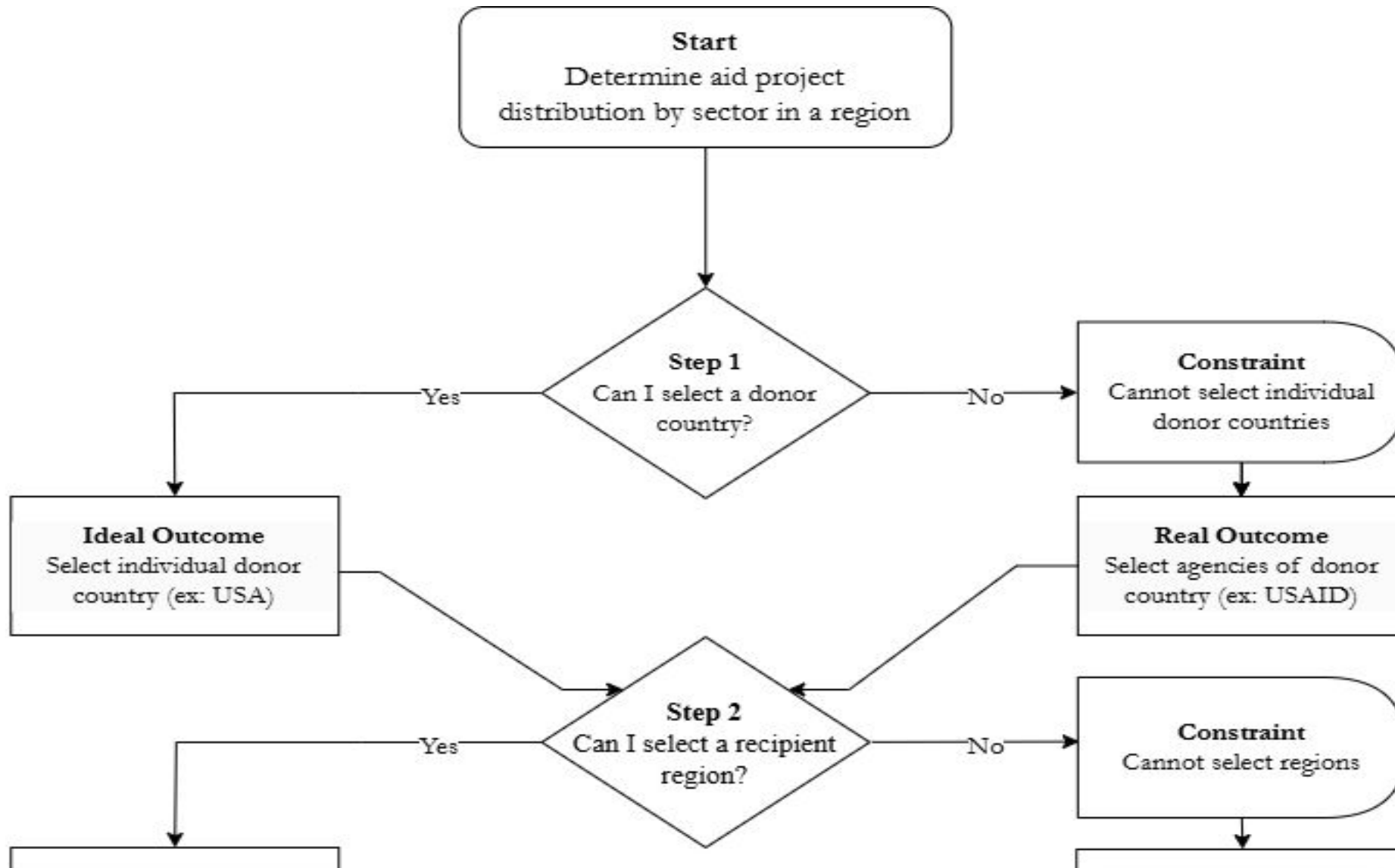
## Scenario Four

- **(Actor)** Policy Maker in a Donor Country
- **(Topic)** Aid Portfolio
- **(Scenario)** I am a policy maker from a donor country evaluating the allocation of our country's aid to South America. I use IATI to analyze our aid's distribution across different sectors (health, education, infrastructure) and its alignment with our strategic goals, ensuring that our international aid portfolio is balanced and effective.

## Scenario Six

- **(Actor)** UNDP Analyst
- **(Topic)** MEA Gender Equality Initiatives
- **(Scenario)** As a UNDP analyst, I am tasked with preparing a comprehensive report on gender equality projects funded in the Middle East. I use IATI to gather data on the scope, funding, and outcomes of these projects to assess trends and prepare recommendations for future funding directions.

# Walk-through scenario flow chart sample



# Analytical framework: Evaluation criteria (Wang and Strong 1992)

Dimension(s)	Component
Intrinsic Quality	Accuracy <small>(reflects real-world conditions and free from errors or inconsistencies)</small>
	Objectiveness
	Credibility
Contextual Relevance	Completeness <small>(captures all necessary information)</small>
	Timeliness <small>(current and up-to-date)</small>
	Appropriateness <small>(aligns with the specific needs of its users)</small>
Representational Clarity	Interpretability <small>(clarity and coherence)</small>
	Consistency <small>(follows uniform formats, definitions, and structures)</small>
Accessibility	Ease of use

## 4. General findings

- Major improvement over time
- Moving target
- Better for transparency than aid planning
- Project documents probably an underutilized asset
- Voluntary nature will remain a challenge
- Positioned to take IATI to another level

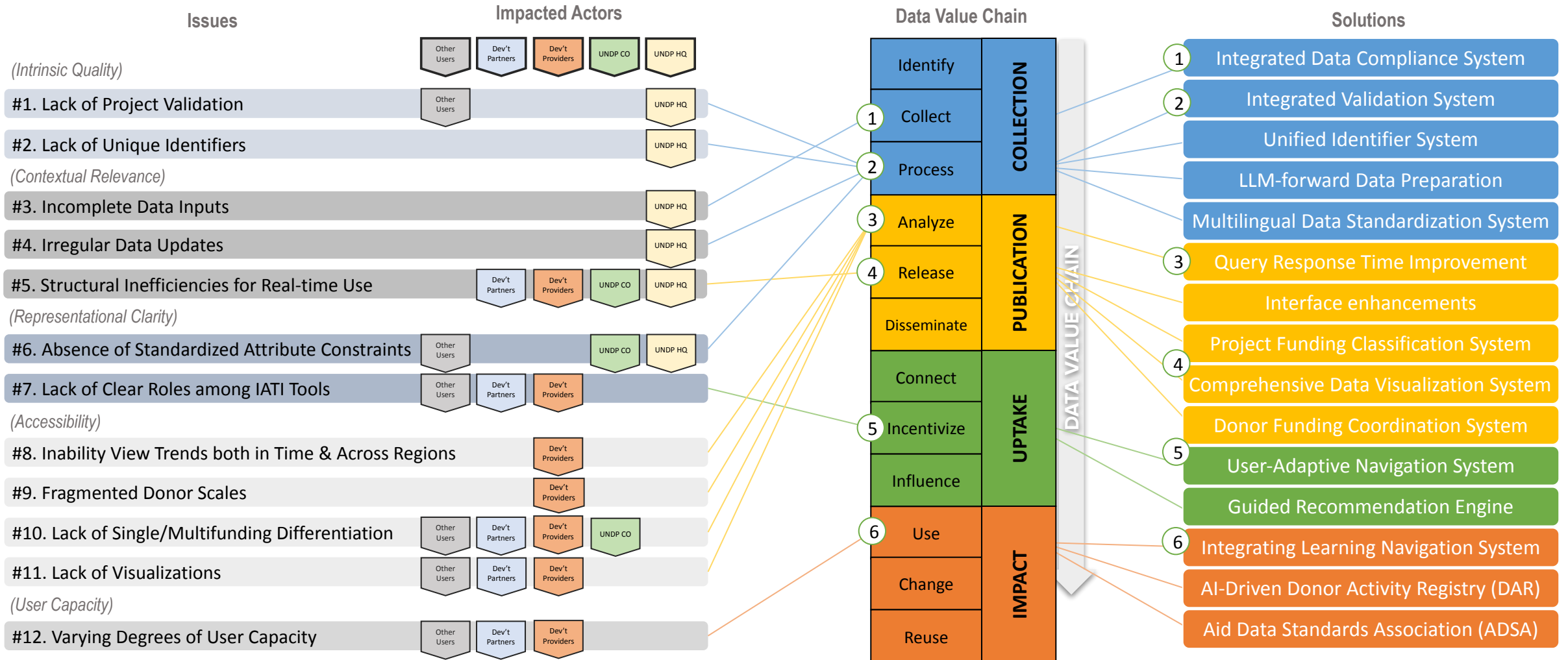
# Specific findings

Dimension(s)	Problem	Observable as...
Intrinsic Quality <i>Accuracy</i>	Lack of project validation	Mismatch between budget and expenditure in CDFD (e.g., new funding or carryovers?)
	Lack of unique identifiers	Duplicate identifiers
Contextual Relevance <i>Completeness</i>	Incomplete data inputs	Missing data
Contextual Relevance <i>Timeliness</i>	Irregular data updates	Outdated data
Contextual Relevance <i>Appropriateness</i>	Structural inefficiencies for real-time use	Delayed responses for queries using SQL/API

# Specific findings

Dimension(s)	Problem	Observable as...
Representational Clarity <i>Interpretability</i>	Absence of standardized attribute constraints	Inputs in different languages
Representational Clarity <i>Consistency</i>	Lack of clear roles among IATI tools	Inconsistent query responses between tools
Accessibility <i>Ease of use</i>	Inability to view trends both in time and across regions	Only individual countries/years selectable
	Fragmented donor scales	Lack of linkage between multiple donor agencies in same country
	Lack of single/multifunding differentiation	Projects reported an individual basis
	Lack of visualizations	Non-interactive visualizations
User Capacity	Varying degrees of user capacity	Varying demands on IATI

# Compiled findings and suggestions



# 5. Toward Transparency 3.0

## Centralized, AI-forward management, analysis and prediction

### 1 Centralization

1. Robust validation → higher data quality
2. Structured database and robust backend → faster response time
3. Lower publishing costs → true DPG

### 2 LLM-assisted input

1. Convert project documents to text → better searchability and analysis
2. Pre-populate fields from project documents → lower publishing costs
3. Flag discrepancies and missing data → higher quality data

### 3 Predictive modeling

1. Integrated ML and statistical models → better forecasting → better aid planning
2. Robust data visualization → stronger communication tools + uptake by less sophisticated users



# Thank you!

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Find us at <https://cuzproduces.com/dflab>

# Appendix

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# A. Suggestions

Phase	Solution	Description	Complexity
Collection	Integrated Data Compliance System	Standardizes data entry across platforms, ensuring consistency and reducing redundancy.	Low
	Integrated Validation System	Enhances IATI's Validator to enforce data quality and prevent missing values.	Low
	Unified Identifier System	Introduces unique project identifiers to improve data traceability.	Medium
	LLM-forward Data Preparation	Converts project documents to plain text to pre-populate fields and to improve searchability and analysis.	Medium
	Multilingual Data Standardization System	Uses AI-powered translation to ensure data interoperability across languages.	High

# A. Suggestions

Phase	Solution	Description	Complexity
Publication	Query Response Time Improvement	Optimizes platform performance to reduce response times for user queries.	Low
	Interface enhancements	Adds filtering and identifies related projects	Low
	Project Funding Classification System	Adds metadata tagging and financial breakdown tools for project funding clarity.	Medium
	Comprehensive Data Visualization System	Expands visualization tools, including interactive charts and regional comparisons.	Medium
	Donor Funding Coordination System	Uses AI to detect funding overlaps and improve aid coordination.	High

# A. Suggestions

Phase	Solution	Description	Complexity
Uptake	User-Adaptive Navigation System	Directs users to the most relevant tools based on their skill level and needs.	Medium
	Guided Recommendation Engine	Automates tool recommendations to improve user onboarding.	Medium
Impact	Integrated Learning Navigation System	Embeds guidance and tutorials within the platform to enhance data analytics.	Medium
	AI-Driven Donor Activity Registry (DAR)	Automates aid flow categorization to reduce redundancy and improve funding efficiency.	High
	Aid Data Standards Association (ADSA)	Establishes a forum for standard-setting and improving IATI data applications.	High