



## COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY AIDDATA CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) accelerates research and innovation in development. With HESN, USAID brings the ingenuity and passion of world-class universities to the front lines of international development.

### AIDDATA'S GOAL

To help the development community gain a sophisticated understanding of where funds and efforts are flowing in order to make better decisions about aid allocation, coordination, and evaluation.

### AIDDATA'S CHALLENGE

Policy-makers with limited resources need to use them effectively to maximize impact, but they often lack access to the high-quality data necessary to make efficient allocation decisions.

### AIDDATA'S INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Funding from USAID's Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) enabled a consortium of partners to grow the AidData Center for Development Policy at the College of William & Mary. Working with USAID missions, donor partners, governments, and civil society groups, the Center pinpoints and maps the geographic locations of development projects, a process called geocoding. Using this spatial data, development professionals can view where resources are flowing in comparison to different areas' measures of development progress, then use this information to more effectively target, coordinate and evaluate aid. The AidData Center collaborates with diverse partners from academia, the private sector, and nonprofits to identify innovative applications of spatial data to support them to do their work more effectively. Anchoring a consortium of geographers, economists, epidemiologists, political scientists, computer scientists and statisticians, the Center's innovative methodology uses spatial data to deliver rigorous evidence on what works in development -- often with less time and expense than traditional testing methods.



## HELPING PRACTITIONERS AROUND THE WORLD

The AidData Center sends experts and students around the world to enable governments and civil society groups to sustainably supply and manage information about aid projects. By 2015, the Center had engaged with 16 partner countries and geocoded more than 3,000 aid projects representing more than 23,000 project locations. For example:

- The Center sent teams of experts, researchers, and student fellows to Mexico, Honduras, Haiti, Colombia, Ghana, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Peru, Senegal, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Nepal to build capacity and to geocode donor-funded development projects. AidData has trained over 1,000 development professionals to date. Additional geocoding scoping trips are planned to Bangladesh and the Philippines, and research collaborations are under discussion with Georgia and Niger.
- In Nepal, the Center trained more than 350 people in government, civil society, universities, and donor agencies while helping Nepal's Ministry of Finance integrate geospatial data into its Aid Management Platform.
- In Colombia, the Center is helping the USAID Mission integrate geographic information into its management information system and evaluate the spatial impact of its governance projects.

To increase the capacity of different types of practitioners in partner countries, the Center has:

- Trained over 1,000 professionals in data management and analysis as of 2015.
- Conducted outreach to civil society organizations and journalists in partner countries around the world to raise awareness and demand for geocoded aid data.
- Fostered collaboration across sectors of society. In Nepal, for example, the Center worked with Kathmandu University, Freedom Forum, and Open Nepal to create the Nepal Open Data Working Group, which brings together civil society, government, and donors to discuss current opportunities and challenges to apply geospatial data to development.

## AIDDATA RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

The AidData Center has mobilized a consortium of over 100 scholars to provide cutting-edge research on how the location of projects affects aid outcomes. Teams of scholars focus on economic growth, climate change, food security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, democracy and governance, and conflict mitigation. Through this network, the Center has piloted evaluations of spatial impact that have allowed rigorous identification of cause and effect. These evaluations have measured the outcomes of conservation efforts for USAID in Ecuador and are being designed to examine governance and conflict-mitigation activities for USAID in Colombia, Georgia, and Niger.

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The AidData Center prioritizes opportunities for students to participate in innovation with geocoded aid information through fellowships, field experience, courses, and competitions. Fellows have traveled to countries including Senegal, Timor-Leste, and Uganda to work with local organizations and train development professionals to use geocoded aid information. By 2015, the Center had created 25 trainings and academic courses on international development and trained nearly 700 students through those courses at William & Mary.

## ABOUT HESN

Since 2012, HESN has supported Development Labs at seven universities that engage students, researchers, faculty, and their partners in innovating scientific and technological approaches to the world's most challenging development problems. By evaluating and field-testing approaches in partnership with local institutions, HESN Development Labs identify solutions that are efficient, cost-effective, accessible, and sustainable, then strategize how to apply them on a large scale. With funding over five years from USAID and matching investments from the universities, the HESN network has grown into a vibrant collaboration among more than 650 partner institutions in academia, civil society, and government in more than 65 countries.

Learn more about AidData: <http://www.aiddata.org/> Learn more about HESN: <http://www.usaid.gov/hesn>