



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

USAID  
Higher Education  
Solutions Network

# HIGHER EDUCATION SOLUTIONS NETWORK – BI-ANNUAL REPORT (FY 2015)

AidData Center for Development Policy  
College of William & Mary  
AGREEMENT NO. AID-OAA-A-12-00096

SUBMITTED: APRIL 30, 2015  
REPORTING PERIOD: OCTOBER 1, 2014 – MARCH 30, 2015

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by the AidData Center for Development Policy, College of William & Mary.

## Contents

1. Executive Summary .....	2
2. Major Milestones and Events Completed .....	4
3. Key Activities .....	5
4. Engagement of Partners and Other Actors .....	14
4.1.1. Interdisciplinary Collaboration.....	14
4.1.2. Partner Engagement .....	16
4.2. Summary of Collaboration Across HESN.....	17
4.2.1. Data .....	17
4.2.2. Solutions (Creation, Testing, Scaling) .....	17
4.2.3. Student Engagement.....	18
5. USAID Engagement.....	19
5.1. USAID/Washington Interactions .....	19
5.1.2. Other (Non-Lab) USAID/Washington Interactions .....	19
5.2. USAID Mission Interactions.....	20
6. Monitoring & Evaluation .....	22
6.1. M&E Updates.....	22
6.2. Deviance from M&E Targets.....	23
7. Lessons Learned / Best Practices.....	24
8. Future Activities.....	26
9. Environmental Monitoring .....	28
10. Risks/Issues and Mitigation.....	28
11. Other – Annex A: USAID Mission and Operating Unit Collaborations To-Date .....	28

## I. Executive Summary

The first half of FY2015 represented a period of rapidly growing demand among USAID Missions and Operating Units for geospatial data, analysis and capacity building and a period of scaling up activities by AidData to meet that demand. During the reporting period, we engaged with three new geocoding partner countries- Niger, Philippines, and Bangladesh- at the request of the USAID Missions in those countries. AidData completed an assessment trip in Niger during the reporting period and is working in collaboration with the GeoCenter and USAID/Philippines to plan for the Philippines assessment in April. We are working with the Bangladesh Mission to plan an assessment trip in-country in July.

We also saw a significant increase in demand for AidData's research and evaluation services from USAID Missions during the reporting period. AidData is currently in the process of collaboratively designing geospatial impact evaluations of USAID programs with the Missions in three countries: Colombia, Niger, and Georgia. In Colombia, AidData researchers will evaluate a municipal governance program; in Niger, AidData is in discussions with DCHA/DRG and the Mission to design an evaluation of a governance program; and in Georgia, AidData and RST are working with the Georgia Mission to design a spatial evaluation of the iChange signature effort. In all three cases, the evaluation will be funded by a buy-in or cost share to the HESN cooperative agreement with contributing funds provided by AidData from the cooperative agreement to support the activity.

To source innovative geospatial research and solve pressing development questions, AidData, through the College of William & Mary (W&M), launched a Request for Applications (RFA) to support new research utilizing subnational georeferenced development finance data. The RFA was officially launched on November 21, 2014 and we received 46 competitive submissions from over 35 different universities/institutions. Among the finalists, two proposals involve an evaluation of a USAID program. Awards will be made in Q3.

During the reporting period, AidData also collaborated with USAID on technology development. AidData worked with the Management Bureau and the Global Development Lab to extract the text from 80,000+ PDFs in the Development Experiences Clearinghouse (DEC) from 1980-2013, allowing users to search through the full text of evaluations, project appraisals, and other documents for the first time. This dataset is now publicly accessible via the [Development Data Library](#) and is a key part of the USAID "LacHack" hackathon being held in Q3, with approximately 200 participants. AidData also kicked-off work with the Colombia Mission and the GeoCenter to enhance an interactive GIS portal as part of its MONITOR Mission Management Information System (MIS). The GIS portal will enable the Mission to generate geospatial analyses of its investments and results, overlaid with socioeconomic data.

AidData also provided capacity building support to several USAID Operating Units this reporting period. In October, AidData's Geospatial Scientist, Dr. Dan Runfola, visited the USAID GeoCenter GIS Specialist training to provide training on integrating quantitative data with local knowledge and provide individualized support including 1-on-1 trainings, with a number of the specialists. Continuing to build on collaborative efforts with the GeoCenter, AidData will be sending three AidData Summer Fellows to work with GIS Specialists in USAID/Uganda, USAID/Peru, and USAID/Indonesia in Summer 2015. The

GeoCenter is also working with AidData to co-create a new data science curriculum that will be launched at W&M in Fall 2015. AidData is also working with USAID PPL to place a Data Transparency Policy Fellow within the Agency for one year beginning in June 2015, which will be funded by a buy-in to the AidData award with contributing funding provided by HESN. This individual will work with senior USAID staff to support Agency open data and transparency objectives.

In the literature on the diffusion of innovations, the adoption of new technologies is often described as following an S curve. As we reach the halfway point of our HESN cooperative agreement, we are in the sharp upswing of that S curve with the diffusion of geospatial data, analysis, and technology to USAID missions and the broader development community. To date, AidData has worked with 24 USAID missions and operating units (please see annex A for full list) and in the next two and a half years, we will build upon this foundation to continue to scale our innovations and promote the uptake of geospatial data to improve aid allocation, coordination, and evaluation decisions.

## 2. Major Milestones and Events Completed

- During the reporting period, the AidData Center engaged with 20 different USAID operating units on geospatial data collection, technology development, analysis, and capacity building activities (please see annex A for full list). The substance and level of these engagements is described in greater detail below.
- We completed the geocoding work in our two FY2014 partner countries- Honduras and the Democratic Republic of Congo- and conducted wrap-up trips in each country to present the results of the geocoding work to key partners and discuss next steps.
- The AidData Center conducted follow-up trips to three FY2013 partner countries- Uganda, Nepal, and Timor-Leste- to assess the state of the ongoing geocoding operation, upgrade the Aid Management Platform (AMP) to the latest version with significant usability and functionality improvements, developed under HESN, and train government and donor partners on the new AMP platform.
- The AidData Center began preparations for geocoding work in our three FY2015 partner countries. This included the completion of a geocoding assessment trip in Niger, and planning for assessment trips in the Philippines (April 2015) and Bangladesh (anticipated July 2015).
- Through AidData's Open Request Geocoding Window, we took on a request from the USAID Peru Mission to geocode conservation development projects throughout the Amazon Region that was used to inform regional coordination efforts.
- AidData released five data sets during the reporting period, including two Level 1A data products, a new product developed during this reporting period aimed at data journalism and visualization of our geocoded data products.
- AidData, through the College of William & Mary, launched a Request for Applications (RFA) to support new research utilizing subnational georeferenced development finance data. The RFA was launched in November and we received 46 competitive submissions from over 35 different universities/institutions. We will review the submissions and make awards during Q3.
- We engaged with three USAID Missions around the design of spatial impact evaluations of USAID projects: in Colombia, we have begun work to evaluate a municipal governance program including signing a program description that is under review by OAA; in Georgia, we are in talks with RST and the Mission to evaluate the iChange Signature Effort; and in Niger, we are in discussions with DRG and the Niger Office to evaluate a governance program.
- The AidData Center created an in-house Research and Evaluation Unit (REU) at the College of William and Mary to undertake research using geocoded aid information and examining the impact of open data on development decisions and outcomes.
- During the reporting period, AidData extracted the text from 80,000+ PDFs in the Development Experiences Clearinghouse (DEC) from 1980-2013, allowing users to search through the full text of evaluations, project appraisals, and other documents for the first time. This dataset is now publicly accessible via the [Development Data Library](#), and is hosted by CIO.
- AidData kicked-off work with the Colombia Mission and the GeoCenter to develop an interactive GIS portal as part of its MONITOR Mission Management Information System (MIS) with a one-week TDY during the reporting period. The GIS portal will enable USAID/Colombia to generate geospatial analyses of its investments and results, overlaid with socioeconomic data.

- Based on feedback provided by government partners, AidData completed the development of the new Aid Management Platform (AMP) GIS module, which is designed to be more user-friendly for government staff and the general public, more responsive to the specific types of geospatial analysis governments have expressed a desire to perform, and easier to use in low-bandwidth environments.
- AidData is working with Cornerstone Partner, Save the Children, to develop the Hunger Information Portal, a decision support tool designed to allow practitioners to access a long-term record of humanitarian response and development-related data to facilitate better decision making across a variety of developmental sectors.
- AidData is currently working with support and input from the GeoCenter to create data science courses to be offered at W&M beginning in the Fall 2015 semester. These courses, to be integrated with W&M's new curriculum structure, will cover a broad set of skills related to the collection, processing, visualization, and analysis of data.
- AidData is working with USAID PPL to place a Data Transparency Policy Fellow within the Agency for one year beginning in June 2015. This individual will work with senior USAID staff to support Agency open data and transparency objectives.
- From a pool of over 80 applicants -- including from 4 HESN universities -- the AidData Center selected 19 AidData Summer Fellows from 7 universities (including the University of California at Berkeley). These individuals will be placed in 17 organizations in six countries this summer: Uganda, Nepal, Indonesia, Ghana, Philippines, and Peru. This includes placing fellows in USAID's Indonesia, Uganda, and Peru Missions.
- AidData began a collaboration with the Makerere University Geomatics Department to engage their third year students to work on a project for AidData to create information products using the geocoded Uganda AMP data to demonstrate the value of precise sub-national data for policy-making.

### 3. Key Activities

#### Objective 1: Gather Geocoded Data

During the first half of FY2015, AidData wrapped up the primary geocoded data collection in our two FY2014 partner countries, conducted follow-up work in three of our FY2013 partner countries, and initiated work with three FY2015 partner countries. This work is described below by country:

**Honduras:** During November 3-7, 2014, a team from AidData completed a wrap-up trip to Honduras. This trip resulted in five key outcomes. (1) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores) recently signed an agreement with AMOHN (Asociación de Municipios de Honduras) to train individuals who work for the municipalities to use and report geocoded aid information. (2) The National University of Honduras (UNAH) will undertake a geocoding pilot in 2015 to assess the feasibility of their contributing to the continued geocoding effort. (3) The AidData team presented the results from geocoding mission to USAID Honduras staff. (4) The Central Bank of Honduras is now using the Aid Management Platform (AMP) to track international aid for their own reports about donations and balance of payments. (5) A Development Program Specialist at USAID/Honduras has indicated they intend to include a clause in future contracts to require implementing partners to systematically report subnational project location information.

**DRC:** Between October 27 and October 31, 2014, a team from AidData conducted a wrap-up trip to DRC. The team prepared the PGAI (Plateforme de Gestion de l'Aide et des Investissements) team to take over geocoding management, and identified action items that need to be addressed ahead of the follow up trip scheduled in six months. Key outcomes of this trip were: (1) the training of 8 PGAI team members on the upgraded GIS module; (2) a presentation of the results of the geocoding exercise to the PGAI team, the Ministry's Secretary General and the Minister's Cabinet Director; and (3) discussions with the Ministry aimed at addressing outstanding issues. The lack of internet connectivity (due to the Ministry's inability to pay internet fees) continues to impede further progress on the geocoding work and means the follow-up trip has been postponed. Meanwhile, AidData is working on to provide donors with a spreadsheet-based dataset of geocoded data in early Q3. IATI and GIS module upgrades are expected once the connectivity issue has been addressed.

**Timor-Leste:** A team from AidData completed a follow-up trip to Timor-Leste and were able to upgrade the Aid Management Platform (AMP) to the new version (2.10) developed with HESN support (discussed further under objective 3). Staff held two sessions to train 13 development partners on the new features of the system and trained the Ministry of Finance's Development Partner Management Unit (DPMU) team on the new features. Staff also had sessions to demo to civil society organizations (CSOs) and line ministries. Representatives were present from four CSOs and approximately three line ministries. Additionally, staff met with 2014 AidData Summer Fellow host organization Seeds of Life to demo the GIS feature and to discuss possible ways to continue collaboration in the future.

**Uganda:** In November 2014, Uganda's Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) launched a public AMP [portal](#). Many representatives from government, media (7 outlets) and civil society were present. During the event, the World Bank Country Manager for Uganda commented on the importance of the data to strengthen coordination and planning among all Development Partners and MoFPED's Permanent Secretary discussed the importance of AMP for improving accountability and transparency and for exposing areas where development projects are not having desired effects. A team from AidData completed a follow-up trip to Uganda in March 2015 and were able to upgrade the Aid Management Platform (AMP) to the new version (2.10) developed with HESN support (discussed further under objective 3). During the trip, the AidData team trained nearly 50 representatives from government agencies (including the Ministry of Finance and Line Ministries) and the donor community on the new AMP, emphasizing hands-on, practical approaches for using the data and tools to inform real-world reports and processes. Interviews or surveys were conducted with nearly 25 government, donor and CSO representatives; this information will be synthesized into a Year 1 Evaluation Report that will recommend next steps for moving AidData efforts forward in Uganda.

**Nepal:** In December, AidData upgraded Nepal's Aid Management Platform to version 2.10. Other HESN countries will be upgraded to the latest version in the coming months (DRC, Senegal, Haiti, and Honduras). Following the upgrade, and during the same time period as the AMP Good Practices Workshop, the AidData team conducted a follow-up training on the new tools provided via AMP 2.10 for Nepal's Ministry of Finance. The training focused on helping participants understand real-world ways for using the tools and data provided by AMP to improve their work.

**Niger:** From March 9-20, 2015, a team from AidData conducted an in-country geocoding assessment trip. The purpose of this trip was to: (1) evaluate the current processes and procedures in place within the Government of Niger and the broader aid community regarding aid information management; (2) conduct interviews with key stakeholders and actors with regards to aid information in Niger; (3) evaluate and assess the current "status quo" of the AMP and gain remote access to the AMP server(s) (both old and new) for the DG development team; (4) discuss and present the upcoming USAID-funded geocoding work with a broad range of stakeholders to assess both the demand and feasibility for uptake

of this type of data within Niger; and (5) sensitize stakeholders on the prerequisites of the geocoding activity and their level of involvement. With the support of USAID and other donors which have contributed to the AMP project, the next steps will focus on upgrading the AMP software and geocoding aid information in-country.

**Philippines:** Following up on discussions had with the USAID/Philippines mission in March 2014, AidData was invited by the mission and the Government of the Philippines (GoPH) to conduct a feasibility study of the possibility of working with the GoPH to create a multi-donor geocoded data set and implement a public GIS tool to visualize development activities in the Philippines. The feasibility study will be completed in April 2015 over a 2-week period.

**Bangladesh:** After discussions at the 2014 TechCon with Jeff DeGraffenried from the USAID/Bangladesh mission, the AidData team has been planning to conduct a similar feasibility assessment in Bangladesh. The assessment is planned for July 2015.



On December 10-12, 2014, the 2014 AMP Good Practices Workshop was hosted in collaboration with Nepal's Ministry of Finance in Kathmandu, Nepal. This workshop provided the opportunity for three days of engaging dialogue, interactive sessions, and knowledge sharing between delegates from ten different countries. Each country took the opportunity to share good practices in data management; discuss challenges to fostering a data culture; explore how some have created incentives for on-time reporting; participate in hands-on data analyses; and provide feedback on areas of technical and policy interest. AidData led an exercise demonstrating how GIS can be used to make allocation decisions based on maps with AMP data and other statistical information.

Through AidData's Open Request Geocoding Window, we took on a request from the USAID/ Peru Mission to geocode conservation development projects throughout the Amazon Region. The initial pilot included geocoded data for the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank covering activities in Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia. An interactive web map visualization of the first two donors was delivered in April 2015 for use in a regional planning conference. An expansion of the projects to additional key donors is expected to continue this upcoming summer. After meeting with YALI (Young African Leaders Initiative) fellows that William and Mary hosted, AidData geocoders piloted a geocoding exercise with the health sector projects outlined in the 2013 Ugandan government budget. In total roughly 3,900 health sector projects were geocoded across all administrative levels in Uganda, which will

be shared with the USAID Global Health team at their request, following quality assurance by the Data team.

In the first half of FY2015, AidData released the Level IA data product through the data publisher tool developed in FY2014, a new product aimed at data journalism and visualization of our geocoded data products. It is easily ingested into desktop and online GIS platforms (including ArcGIS Online), and enables (with some predefined assumptions about the data) beginner to intermediate GIS users to quickly see geospatial patterns in the data and to produce web and print ready visualizations of same. All of AidData's geocoded products will now include a Level IA product. Current datasets with this product included are: Uganda AMP, Senegal AMP, World Bank IBRD-IDA, DRC AMP and Timor-Leste AMP.

The AidData team released several new datasets in the first half of FY2015. These new data sets, all available on <http://aiddata.org>, are detailed below. Level I datasets have been post processed and quality assured. These datasets may include ancillary data that is not quality assured by AidData. Level IA is a joined product of Level I tables or data with provided assumptions. v1.0 denotes the first release of a dataset. v1.1 denotes a re-released dataset with quality improvements.

**Senegal AMP Level I v1.0:** Released November 2014; Contains all projects from the Aid Management Platform (AMP) managed for Senegal, of which 406 projects have been sub-nationally geocoded. This dataset includes projects from 79 donors with 1100 locations reported between 2000 and 2012.

**World Bank IBRD/IDA 2000-2011 Level I v1.0:** Released January 2015; Contains all projects approved from 2000-2011 of the World Bank IBRD/IDA lending lines. 3534 projects with 41307 locations have been sub-nationally geocoded.

**Timor-Leste AMP Level I v1.0:** Released January 2015; Contains all projects from the Aid Management Platform (AMP) managed for Timor-Leste, of which 907 projects have been sub-nationally geocoded. This dataset includes projects from 79 donors with 3565 locations reported between 1995 and 2015.

**Uganda AMP Level I v1.1:** Released March 2015; Contains all projects from the v1.0 release and also includes a CKAN compatible data package as well as the new Level IA product to use in web maps and quick visualizations.

**Nepal AMP Level I v1.1:** Released March 2015; Contains all projects from the v1.0 release and also includes a CKAN compatible data package as well as the new Level IA product to use in web maps and quick visualizations

During the reporting period, approximately 40 geocoders at W&M and 15 geocoders at BYU worked to code projects for upcoming dataset releases. Coders at W&M completed the following workspaces: Uganda Budget (~3800 projects), USAID Peru (~170 projects), and USAID DRC (~400 projects). BYU geocoding efforts have focused on coding World Bank projects from the late 1990s. Of the 1363 projects, roughly 770 have been completely coded. Another 200 projects are in progress.

## **Objective 2: Create a Global Network of Scholars Using Geocoded Aid Data to Inform Policy**

To encourage the uptake of subnational geocoded development finance data, enhance the quality of scholarship on aid distribution and impact, and solve pressing development questions, AidData, through the College of William & Mary, launched a Request for Applications (RFA) to support new research that makes good use of subnational georeferenced development finance data. The RFA was officially launched on November 21, 2014 and AidData received 46 competitive submissions from over 35 different universities/institutions. Most awards are expected to fall in the \$50,000-\$200,000 range, with special consideration given to exceptional projects. AidData sought applications that fit within at least 1 of the following categories: (1) Development Finance Targeting & Allocation; (2) Development Finance Effectiveness & Impact; (3) Transparency for Development; and (4) Developing and Testing Spatial Methods.

AidData is in discussions with three USAID missions regarding potential buy-ins to AidData's award to complete geospatial impact evaluations. Details of these three evaluations are provided below:

**Colombia:** AidData and 2 members of the ARC (Dr. Michael Findley and Dr. Joseph Young) are collaborating with USAID /Colombia around conducting an impact evaluation of USAID /Colombia's Regional Governance Activity (RGA), which aims to improve subnational governance in 40 conflict-affected municipalities of Colombia over the period 2015-2019. Using a quasi-experimental, spatial matching methodology, Dr. Findley and Dr. Young plan to create a treatment group of municipalities that are exposed to RGA interventions and a control group of otherwise similar municipalities that are not exposed to RGA interventions using statistical matching algorithms. This will allow for a rigorous evaluation of programmatic impact. AidData is in final discussions with USAID/ Colombia on a 5-year, \$1.44 million buy-in; a program description has been signed by the Mission, AidData, and our AOR and is under review by OAA.

**Georgia:** AidData is in early discussions with USAID/ Georgia and RST to conduct an impact evaluation of Georgia's iChange Signature Effort. The iChange portal is a web-based, e-democracy tool with three components: e-petition, e-consultation, and e-discussion. Dr. Maliniak, ARC member at William & Mary, will conduct the evaluation and focus on the best way to promote uptake of the iChange platform and measure the effects on public perception of the democratic process, trust in government, and efficacy. The evaluation will rely on change over time and across regions to draw causal inferences about the effects of the iChange platform and educational campaigns. If these conversations are successful, it is anticipated that these discussions will result in a 5-year, ~\$500k buy-in to AidData's award.

**Niger:** AidData is in early discussions with USAID/ Niger and DCHA/DRG to conduct an evaluation of Niger's Participatory and Responsive Governance (PRG) program. The proposed impact evaluation will focus on post-electoral activities that focus specifically around the degree to which increasing multi-stakeholder coordination and collective action leads to change in the coverage and quality of public goods that meet citizen priority needs. A proposed randomized roll-out of the PRG activities across different communities in Niger will allow for a causal estimate of the effect of the PRG project using panel surveys and measures of public goods provision and access. The funding buy-in to AidData's award will be dependent on agreed upon research design.

AidData is no longer hosting one annual convening of the AidData Research Consortium (ARC), but instead hosting and cosponsoring smaller workshops that are designed to advance knowledge frontiers related to aid distribution and impact. The first of these new workshops was held on February 11, 2015 in Berlin, Germany in coordination with SFB 700 at the Free University of Berlin. The workshop's theme

was “Foreign Aid and Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood.” Workshop participants prepared memos describing their past and present work in this area and identifying promising avenues for future research. The workshop brought together current ARC members and other researchers in the field to solicit feedback on research-in-progress and to scope out new projects.

At UT-Austin, 18 MA students from the LBJ School of Public Affairs have been participating in a yearlong project (Sept.2014-May 2015) to study the awareness, demand for and use of open aid data. This work has included an extensive literature review and primary research (based on semi-structured interviews) with aid donors, CSOs, think tanks and government officials in Nepal and Uganda. The team also carried out semi-structured interviews with Congressional members and members of the international development community in Washington, DC in February 2015. In sum, the team conducted over 90 interviews with over 110 people. The PRP team is also completing an experimental survey assessing the effects of information about aid transparency on public opinion regarding foreign aid.

One key component of AidData’s Transparency for Development (T4D) research agenda -- understanding the impact of maps and data visualization on decisionmaking -- made significant progress during the first two quarters of FY2015. During the 2014 AMP Good Practices Workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal (see Objective 1), AidData led an exercise demonstrating how GIS can be used to make allocation decisions based on maps with AMP and statistical information. One component of this exercise included a pilot test of experimental treatment materials focused around decision making using maps. During the Spring 2015 semester, UT-Austin ran a full experiment with about 600 students as subjects. This experiment, informed by findings from the 2014 AMP Good Practices Workshop and a previous experiment at W&M, will provide further evidence for taking this suite of experiments to the field in Uganda and Nepal during Summer 2015, where real decision-makers will participate in these evidence-based decision making experiments.



AidData is collaborating with UNICEF Uganda to design a study to evaluate the impact of access to real-time data on citizen development priorities on the development resource allocation and prioritization decisions of district-level sectoral officials. The real-time data will come from UNICEF’s U-Report SMS-crowdsourcing system which currently has more than 600,000 Ugandans enrolled. AidData will embed a Summer Fellow with UNICEF this summer to support this study.

The AidData Center is designing a study to understand how to best present geocoded aid information to local-level policy makers for use in decision-making. AidData will work with five organizations hosting AidData Summer Fellows in Nepal, Uganda, and the Philippines to produce information products using geocoded aid information and work with their local policy-maker networks to test and receive feedback on these products.

During the Fall 2014 semester, students at W&M interested in academic research were able to join the Research Support Team to work with AidData affiliated researchers and ARC members through credit-bearing independent study courses. These students worked collaboratively with faculty on projects ranging from identification and integration of geospatial data to developing a field experiment on the impact of information about different kinds of performance on voting in Uganda. During the Spring 2015 semester, this program has continued with students engaged in projects including examination of the cross-country experiences of economic growth, poverty distribution, and political economy in Pakistan, Egypt, Mexico, and Nigeria. Additionally, nine AidData students participated in the State Department Diplomacy Lab program during Fall 2014, working in teams with faculty members through credit-bearing coursework to address challenges identified by State Department units.

Ten undergraduate students are working with two faculty at BYU on nine different aid-related research projects. These projects include an experiment on the types of email prompts that induce NGOs to provide data about their projects, a statistical analysis that breaks down and restructures the debate between donor interests and recipient need in aid allocation decisions, and a survey experiment on the relative importance of stories and data in increasing support for U.S. international aid, among others.

At UT-Austin, 40 undergraduate and graduate students are working with 9 research fellows under the direction of Dr. Mike Findley and Dr. Catherine Weaver. The students prepared two sets of mapping briefs for AidData and Development Gateway. One brief was to answer the question on what amount of projects fall in urban areas in the Philippines. The brief included an analysis on different sectors and on specific districts. The other brief mapped health projects in Senegal.

### **Objective 3: Develop and Disseminate Analytic Tools for Visualizing and Analyzing Geocoded Aid Information**

During the reporting period, AidData extracted the text from 80,000+ PDFs in the Development Experiences Clearinghouse (DEC) from 1980-2013, allowing users to search through the full text of evaluations, project appraisals, and other documents for the first time. This dataset is now publicly accessible via <http://usaid.gov/data>. AidData has also created a sub-set of these documents in preparation for the “LacHack” being organized by the Management Bureau and Foreign Assistance Dashboard teams.

AidData is working with the Colombia Mission and the GeoCenter to develop an interactive GIS portal as part of its MONITOR Mission Management Information System (MIS). The MONITOR GIS tool was scoped during a one-week TDY and will enable USAID/Colombia to generate geospatial analyses of its investments and results, overlaid with socioeconomic data stored in the GeoCenter’s ArcGIS Online portal.

AidData has completed dramatic improvements to its internal data management tools, which will significantly increase the speed with which it can produce and disseminate new data in the AidData.org web portal. Key improvements include streamlining geocoding into the core technical module for AidData, and improving the ability of AidData to import data from a variety of sources, most notably

increasing the speed with which data from country systems can be made available through the AidData dashboard and GIS.

AidData completed the development of the new Aid Management Platform (AMP) GIS module, built in direct response to feedback provided by host country governments during AidData follow-up trips after the completion of the geocoding exercise. The tool is designed to be more user-friendly for government staff and the general public, more responsive to the specific types of geospatial analysis governments have expressed a desire to perform, and easier to use in low-bandwidth environments. To-date, HESN countries Nepal, Uganda, and Timor-Leste have been upgraded to the latest version of AMP with the new GIS module. Other HESN countries will be upgraded in the coming months.

AidData is working with a Cornerstone Partner, Save the Children, to develop the Hunger Information Portal, a decision support tool designed to allow practitioners to access a long-term record of humanitarian response and development-related data – including high resolution satellite imagery, market, agricultural and livestock data, project output and evaluation data, and household survey data – to facilitate better decision making across a variety of developmental sectors. To achieve this broad goal, we will initially focus on the hunger and livelihood sector, thereby narrowing the scope and required resources to facilitate an initial foray into this space. This will not only serve to provide a much-needed tool to the community, but also lay the groundwork for the scaling of this activity to other sectors.

AidData's Research and Evaluation Unit is in the early stages of developing another prototype decision support tool (DASH) to enable decision makers to quickly aggregate multiple layers of information, weighted on importance and predicated upon their own local knowledge. The development of tools like DASH is a first step towards enabling rapid and rigorous analysis by development practitioners who must make consequential decisions within compressed periods of time.

#### **Objective 4: Catalyze Scientific and Technological Innovation**

AidData continued engagement with the Blum Center at Berkeley to bring Big Ideas to the College of William and Mary for the second year. In addition to promoting HESN categories on campus, AidData also co-sponsored and developed a category in "Open Data for Development." Several teams from William and Mary successfully moved to the finalist round of the competition.

Throughout March and April 2015, AidData staff provided a series of trainings in GIS and data management in preparation for our annual Map-Off event. This year the competition was reformatted as a 1-day open working session with predetermined mapping prompts available to students that focused on new datasets or research questions of particular interest to AidData staff and partners. Participants will continue to refine their visualizations in consultation with AidData staff over the coming weeks and months. Initial plans to start a student mapping working group to continue to facilitate student skill-building and collaboration are in progress.



AidData is currently working with support and input from the GeoCenter to create data science courses to be offered at W&M beginning in the Fall 2015 semester. These courses, to be integrated with W&M's new curriculum structure, will cover a broad set of skills related to the collection, processing, visualization, and analysis of data.

AidData's Chief Economist, Ariel BenYishay, taught two new courses at W&M during the Spring 2015 semester. One of these courses, ECON400: Empirical Microeconometrics, has trained 17 upper-level undergraduate economics students in cutting-edge causal inference methods. The other course, PUBP651: Economic Development Policy, was a graduate public policy course focused on designing causal studies and evaluating evidence in the context of policymaking in developing countries.

AidData is working with USAID /PPL to place a Data Transparency Policy Fellow within the Agency for one year beginning in June 2015. This individual will work with senior USAID staff to assist with the implementation of international and domestic aid reporting requirements, build awareness of aid transparency efforts both internally and externally, and create briefing materials which communicate the importance of transparency and open data to external audiences. PPL will buy-into the AidData cooperative agreement to support this fellowship with contributing funding from AidData's HESN award. A signed program description is currently under review by OAA.

On February 25, 2015, AidData co-hosted the research and policy event "Do More with Data: Moving US Government Aid Transparency Forward" with the State Department's Office of Foreign Assistance Resources, the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, and the Global Development Lab. Kim Smith (USAID PPL) led one of the breakout sessions at the event.

### **Objective 5: Build Partner Country Capacity**

During the reporting period, the AidData Center recruited for its 2015 cohort of AidData Summer Fellows and paired these fellows with host organizations. The AidData center received over 80 applications for the AidData Summer Fellows program, including applications from 4 HESN universities (Duke, Makerere, Michigan State, and Berkeley). Host organizations were identified through a competitive expression of interest process. Ultimately we selected 19 AidData Summer Fellows from 7

universities (including University of California, Berkeley) who will be placed in 17 organizations in six countries this summer: Uganda, Nepal, Indonesia, Ghana, Philippines, and Peru. This includes placing fellows in the Indonesia, Uganda, and Peru USAID Missions. We also received expressions of interest to host a fellow from USAID Missions in Timor-Leste, Bangladesh, Senegal, and Haiti, but were not able to place fellows in these Missions due to security clearance constraints. AidData also began to plan for the summer fellow training boot camp which will bring the fellows to Williamsburg for a week-long intensive training in May, 2015.



The AidData Center also began working with two of our in-country university partners -- Makerere University and Kathmandu University -- to develop programs to engage their students in AidData's work to promote use of geocoded aid information by development practitioners. In collaboration with HESN Lab Resilient Africa Network (RAN), AidData began a collaboration with the Makerere University Geomatics Department to engage their third year students to work on a project for AidData to create information products using the geocoded Uganda AMP data to demonstrate the value of precise sub-national data for policy-making. This engagement will serve as a pilot to assess the feasibility of connecting the geomatics students with AidData Center partner CSOs in Uganda in subsequent years.

We are also working with the Kathmandu University (KU) School of Arts to develop an internship program to place KU students who receive training from AidData Summer Fellows with local CSOs during the academic year. We will work with KU to recruit for the interns to participate in this program in the beginning of Q3 and will initiate this program in summer 2015. Selected interns will receive training from the AidData Summer Fellows during the summer and then will be placed with interested organizations in the fall.

## **4. Engagement of Partners and Other Actors**

### **4.1.1. Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

The AidData Center created three new academic courses during the reporting period. AidData's Chief Economist, Ariel BenYishay, taught two new courses at W&M during the Spring 2015 semester: ECON400: Empirical Microeconometrics and PUBP65I: Economic Development Policy (see Objective

4). At UT-Austin, Kate Weaver is teaching 18 MA students from the LBJ School of Public Affairs in a yearlong Policy Research Project capstone course to study the awareness, demand for and use of open aid data (see Objective 2).

The AidData Center worked with the W&M administration to support the design of new programs and curricula. In Fall 2014, W&M's Provost requested that AidData engage in a collaborative brainstorm with leadership of the university's MPP program to explore the expansion of the MPP program to include an international track, including a significant development component. The program expansion was approved by the Provost spring of 2015 to start in fall of 2016, and will include an AidData Fellow as part of its inaugural class.

AidData is also working with the College administration with support and input from the GeoCenter to create data science courses to be offered at W&M beginning in the Fall 2015 semester. These courses, to be integrated with W&M's new curriculum structure, will cover a broad set of skills related to the collection, processing, visualization, and analysis of data. The College is providing over \$200,000 in cost share to support these courses.



The AidData Center is also engaging across our three university campuses to provide applied research opportunities for our students. Nine AidData students participated in the State Department Diplomacy Lab program during Fall 2014, working in teams with faculty members through credit-bearing coursework to address challenges identified by State Department units. One of these teams worked with AidData researcher and ARC member Carrie Dolan to create a geodatabase of health-focused NGOs in Malawi for the Secretary's Office of Global Health Diplomacy.

As discussed under objective 2, the AidData Center provided extensive student-faculty research opportunities during the reporting period. At UT-Austin, 40 undergraduate students are working with 9 graduate research fellows and AidData PIs Kate Weaver and Mike Findley on development related

research, including to develop analytical products using the geocoded aid information to be used during AidData's assessment trips to make the case for precise sub-national data to government and donor partners.

At BYU, ten undergraduate students are working with two faculty on nine different aid-related research projects. Several of these students have received course credit while working on their aid-related research projects.

During the reporting period, students on the Research Support Team received independent study credit to work collaboratively with AidData affiliated researchers and ARC members on projects including identification and integration of geospatial data, developing a field experiment on the impact of information about different kinds of performance on voting in Uganda, and examination of the cross-country experiences of economic growth, poverty distribution, and political economy in Pakistan, Egypt, Mexico, and Nigeria.

#### **4.1.2. Partner Engagement**

The AidData Center has developed several new formal partnerships in the reporting period. This includes 4 formalized or developing partnerships with USAID operating units to buy-into AidData's HESN cooperative agreement. The AidData Center is working with three different USAID Missions on buy-ins or cost shares for spatial impact evaluations of USAID projects. This includes an impact evaluation of USAID/Colombia and USAID/Niger governance programs and of the USAID/Georgia iChange signature effort. As of the submission of this report, all three of these partnerships were in the process of being finalized. AidData also signed an agreement with the USAID/PPL Donor Engagement group to buy-into the award to fund the placement of an aid transparency fellow within PPL to support Agency open data and transparency initiatives. This brings the total number of operating units buying-into the HESN cooperative agreement to 5 with the buy-in to support the DEC work in the last reporting period.

AidData began working with a Cornerstone Partner, Save the Children, to develop a decision support tool to help Save the Children pre-position resources to respond more effectively to famine outbreaks. The combined expertise in data for development policy and hunger and livelihoods provide an optimal partnership for the development of data-driven tools for effective food security decision-making, including the Hunger Information Portal (HIP), described under Objective 3.

AidData also developed partnerships with a number of key in-country partners to collaborate on activities that involve the use of geocoded aid information. During the reporting period, the AidData Center established partnerships with its 2015 cohort of AidData Summer Fellow host organizations. This cohort includes 17 organizations in 6 countries, including 10 first-time Summer Fellow hosts. We also developed a partnership with the Makerere University Geomatics Department, discussed under objective 5, to engage third year students in the project management course in a project to use the Uganda geocoded AMP data to produce analytic products.

During the reporting period, AidData began discussions with Esri on the development of software to allow non-technical audiences (such as students or communications and policy professionals) to do

dynamic, online mapping to visualize spatial data. This tool will facilitate basic analysis of AidData's data and ancillary data.

AidData continues to closely engage the partners within our implementing consortium on the implementation of our work plan and identification of best practices. One example of this high-level of engagement is the convening of a consortium-wide working group to respond to challenges encountered in fostering the uptake of geocoded aid information by our in-country government, donor, and civil society partners, discussed in more detail in Part 7 below. This group meets on a monthly basis to identify innovative solutions to these challenges, discuss progress made, and document lessons learned.

## **4.2. Summary of Collaboration Across HESN**

AidData continued engagement with the Blum Center at Berkeley to bring Big Ideas to the College of William and Mary for the second year. In addition to promoting HESN categories on campus, AidData also co-sponsored and developed a category in "Open Data for Development." Several teams from William and Mary successfully moved to the finalist round of the competition.

AidData collaborated with the Resilient Africa Network team to set-up the ongoing collaboration with the Makerere University Geomatics Department. They helped to facilitate the connection and contributed to the design of the pilot data analysis activity. Two RAN students that were trained by the AidData Summer Fellows working with RAN in 2014 are providing mentorship to the Geomatics students working on the activity this semester.

Beginning in early February, the AidData Policy and Communications team has been in conversation with the Global Center for Food Systems Innovation lab (GCFSI) at Michigan State University on developing a potential multi-part First Tranche series bridging the survey data research the team at GCFSI has compiled in locations such as Malawi and tying it in with AidData's focus on sub national data. The planning stage is at very early brainstorm status.

### **4.2.1. Data**

As discussed under Objective 1, the AidData Center released five data sets to the development community during the reporting period: 1) Senegal AMP Level 1 v1.0, 2) World Bank IBRD/IDA 2000-2011 Level 1 v1.0, 3) Timor-Leste AMP Level 1 v1.0, 4) Uganda AMP Level 1 v1.1, 5) Nepal AMP Level 1 v1.1. These data sets are available to the HESN Labs, and the ConDev at Texas A&M is using the Nepal geocoded data in ongoing research on conflict in Nepal.

As discussed above, AidData is currently in discussion with MSU regarding a co-authored blog post series that bridging the survey data research the team at GCFSI has compiled in locations such as Malawi and tying it in with AidData's focus on sub national data.

### **4.2.2. Solutions (Creation, Testing, Scaling)**

As discussed above, the AidData Center collaborated with the Berkeley Big Ideas Competition to facilitate participation on campus at the College of William and Mary and AidData co-sponsored the

“Open Data for Development” category for the competition, which challenged students to develop a plan that leverages publicly available datasets to innovate solutions and address important development challenges. AidData served an advisory role for the development of the category criteria, recruitment of judges and mentors, and assessing student submissions.

During the reporting period, AidData launched a Request for Applications (RFA) to support new research utilizing subnational georeferenced development finance data. Of the 46 applications AidData received to the RFA, 6 of the RFA applications came from 4 HESN University Labs. Two applications were received from William & Mary, 2 from Texas A&M University, 1 from Duke, and 1 from Berkeley.

### 4.2.3. Student Engagement

In November 2014, several AidData students and staff members attended the second annual HESN Technical Convening in San Francisco and Berkeley, California. In total, seven individuals making up six AidData teams participated in the Innovation Marketplace at UC-Berkeley. Innovation Marketplace submissions included topics such as “GIS Off-the-Grid: Offline Data for Development” and “In the Loop: Smarter Decision-making Combining Feedback & Investigation.”



During the reporting period, the AidData Center recruited for its 2015 cohort of AidData Summer Fellows. The AidData Center actively promoted this opportunity to the other HESN Labs and received over 80 applications for the AidData Summer Fellows program, including applications from 4 HESN universities. Ultimately we selected 19 AidData Summer Fellows from 7 universities (including University of California, Berkeley).

As discussed above, the AidData Center worked with the Resilient Africa Network team to facilitate a collaboration with the Makerere University Geomatics Department around using the Uganda geocoded AMP data for policy-relevant analysis.

## **5. USAID Engagement**

### **5.1. USAID/Washington Interactions**

During the reporting period, the AidData Center deepened coordination with the GeoCenter to facilitate efficient sharing of data, both at the dataset level and the platform level. In the beginning of Q3, AidData and GeoCenter technical staff will meet to begin to illuminate where these interface points might best happen.

In October 2014, AidData's Geospatial Scientist, Dr. Dan Runfola, visited the USAID GeoCenter GIS Specialist training to give a lecture on a method which enables integrating quantitative data with local knowledge. During this visit, Dr. Runfola also engaged in a number of ad-hoc Q&A sessions, including 1-on-1 trainings, with a number of the specialists. Continuing to build on this, AidData will be sending three students into the field to work with GIS Specialists in USAID/Uganda, USAID/Peru, and USAID/Indonesia in Summer 2015. In February 2015, AidData staff met with GeoCenter staff to discuss current GeoCenter and AidData initiatives, identify critical data gaps, and discuss action items for future collaboration.

During this reporting period, AidData has continued to play an active role in USAID's Data Working Group. AidData provided a list of datasets that are of interest to AidData Research Consortium (ARC) members and others in conducting research utilizing subnational information. In addition, on the monthly calls, AidData has shared best practices, data challenges, and upcoming work that may be of interest to USAID and other HESN labs.

In the first half of FY2015, AidData has begun work with Cornerstone Partner Save the Children to develop data-driven tools for effective food security decision-making. We are currently constructing prototype decision making tools and spatially-enabled real-time databases are being constructed as proofs-of-concept. The first deliverable to come out of this partnership is the Hunger Information Portal (HIP), described under Objective 3.

AidData is in early discussions with USAID/ Georgia and the Regional Support Team to conduct an evaluation of Georgia's Signature Effort. It is proposed that Dr. Dan Maliniak, ARC member at William & Mary, will conduct the evaluation. If discussions are successful, this evaluation will be funded through a 5-year \$500k buy-in to AidData's award (see Objective 2).

### **5.1.2. Other (Non-Lab) USAID/Washington Interactions**

During this reporting period, AidData has engaged widely with USAID Bureaus and Missions to share lessons learned and technical expertise in various areas of data management and use. In particular, AidData has had productive conversations with the Office of the CIO around its AidTracker Plus program, including (1) sharing lessons learned on key functionality and data quality concerns from discussions with Missions; and (2) implications of evolving IATI standards for AidTracker Plus data collection and storage. AidData has also provided assistance in extracting meaningful text from 80,000+

PDFs hosted in the DEC, and has frequent discussions with the GeoCenter and USAID Missions around geocoding data standards and other data management challenges.

AidData is working with USAID/ PPL to place a Data Transparency Policy Fellow within the Agency for one year beginning in June 2015. This individual will work with senior USAID staff to assist with the implementation of international and domestic aid reporting requirements, build awareness of aid transparency efforts both internally and externally, and create briefing materials which communicate the importance of transparency and open data to external audiences (see objective 4).

USAID/Global Health Deputy Assistant Administrator Jennifer Adams and Adrian Ngasi in PPL visited the AidData Center in Williamsburg in February 2015. While in Williamsburg, Jennifer and Adrian participated in several meetings with AidData staff, including the USAID HESN team to brief them on AidData's partnership with USAID. Jennifer also delivered a public talk on the US Government response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa. This meeting led to a follow-up meeting with the USAID/Global Health team in April during the HESN Lab Director's Convening.

On February 25, 2015, AidData co-hosted the event "Do More with Data: Moving US Government Aid Transparency Forward" with the State Department's Office of Foreign Assistance Resources, the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, and the Global Development Lab. Kim Smith (USAID PPL) led one of the breakout sessions at the event.

## 5.2. USAID Mission Interactions

**Bangladesh:** After discussions at the 2014 TechCon with Jeff DeGraffenried from the USAID/Bangladesh Mission, the AidData team has been planning to conduct a geocoding feasibility assessment in Bangladesh. The assessment is planned for July 2015 (see Objective 1).

**Brazil:** During the 2014 TechCon Convening, members of the AidData team meet with Lawrence Hardy, USAID/Brazil Mission Director. The Mission is interested in AidData's approach to spatial evaluations, and have had several follow-up calls as the Mission prepares to engage in its Signature Effort.

**Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):** During the geocoding wrap-up trip in DRC in Q1, the AidData team met with the DRC Mission to present the main outcomes of the geocoding exercise, brief the team on the status of the DRC Aid Management Platform (PGAI) and the outstanding issues to be monitored closely in the coming months (see Objective 1).

**Ghana:** During a non-HESN TDY to Accra, Ghana, AidData staff met with the Ghana Mission Program Office leadership to present on AidData's work. Following this initial meeting, the Ghana Mission reached out to AidData's AOR to discuss the possibility of hosting an AidData Feasibility Study to determine the likelihood that a multi-donor geocoding exercise in Ghana could be successful and of interest to the Government of Ghana.

**Honduras:** During the geocoding wrap-up trip in Q1, the AidData geocoding team met with the USAID/Honduras Mission, including Mission Director James Watson, to present the results of the geocoding work. After the presentation Watson mentioned that the geocoded data could improve the Mission's targeting and evaluation methods and requested for a short training for the technical and M&E staff on how to use QGIS. The training took place the same week and the aim was to motivate the personnel to create their own maps for analysis with the geocoded data from Honduras (see Objective 1).

**Nepal:** In December 2014, the USAID/Nepal GIS Specialist Indra Sharan KC spoke about GIS visualizations of aid information at the AMP Good Practice workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal. Other USAID/Nepal staff were also in attendance at the event.

**Niger:** The AidData team undertook a feasibility study in Niger in March 2015 to assess the feasibility of implementing the geocoding work. During the feasibility study, the AidData team worked extensively with USAID/Niger staff and met individually with USAID staff and travelled with USAID to meetings with the Ministry of Planning (see Objective 1).

**Peru:** AidData is working with USAID/Peru to collect and analyze data on biodiversity conservation investments in the Amazon Basin for their spring 2015 regional coordination meeting (see Objective 1). This summer AidData will be placing a Fellow with the Mission to support data collection for its CDCS (see Objective 5).

**Philippines:** Following up on discussions with USAID/Philippines in March 2014, AidData was invited by the Mission and the Government of the Philippines (GoPH) to conduct a feasibility study of the possibility of working with the GoPH to create a multi-donor geocoded data set and implement a public GIS tool to visualize development activities in the Philippines. The feasibility study will be completed in the beginning of Q3 (see Objective 1).

**Timor-Leste:** During the geocoding follow-up trip, the AidData team met with the Timor-Leste Mission to introduce them to the upgraded AMP GIS portal and to provide training on the new GIS features of the AMP. A follow-up interview was conducted with the USAID reporting focal point to get feedback on the use of geocoded aid information (see Objective 1).

**Uganda:** In March 2015, the AidData team met with the Uganda Mission Economist and GIS Specialist during the geocoding follow-up trip to discuss Mission use of geocoded aid data. In particular, AidData and the USAID staff discussed how the geocoding effort and AMP system should be used in the future to inform USAID/Uganda's forthcoming "District Operational Plan," an effort to empower local government leaders with more information about development activities (see Objective 1).



**Colombia, Niger, Georgia Evaluations:** AidData is engaging with the USAID/Niger, USAID/Colombia, and USAID/Georgia Missions on spatial impact evaluations of USAID programs. In Colombia, AidData and the Mission have finalized the evaluation design and a program description for the Mission to buy-into the AidData cooperative agreement to fund the Evaluation, which is currently under review by OAA. ARC researchers expect to begin work to evaluate a USAID/Colombia municipal governance strengthening program in Q3. In Georgia, AidData and RST are in early discussions with the Georgia Mission to design a spatial evaluation of the iChange signature effort and in Niger we are in early discussions with DCHA/DRG and USAID/Niger to design an evaluation of a governance program. In both cases, if the discussions are successful the evaluation will be funded by a buy-in or cost share to the HESN cooperative agreement with contributing funds provided by AidData from the HESN cooperative agreement to support the activity (see Objective 2).

**AidData Summer Fellow Placements in Uganda, Indonesia, and Peru:** During the reporting period, the AidData Center reached agreements with the Uganda, Indonesia, and Peru Missions to place an AidData Summer Fellow within each of these Missions to support the GiS Specialist and Program Office to use geocoded aid information in their work. The summer fellows will work from May-August 2015 (see Objective 5).

## 6. Monitoring & Evaluation

### 6.1. M&E Updates

During the reporting period, the AidData Center utilized \$1,139,873 in outside resources to support the HESN work (Gin1).

During the Timor-Leste and Uganda follow-up trips, the AidData Center conducted surveys and key-informant interviews to assess the extent to which key government and donor stakeholders are using the geocoded aid information in their work. We conducted a similar evaluation with our partner civil society organizations during the 2015 summer fellow host identification process. Of the 23 organizations that were surveyed, 12 responded that they currently use geocoded aid information in their work (Gin5) representing 52% of organizations surveyed. 8 of the surveyed organizations responded that their use of geocoded data and/or geospatial analysis had increased following their engagement with the AidData Center, representing 35% of organizations surveyed (Gin7).

During the reporting period, the AidData Center engaged 66 organizations in problem solving (IR3.2in1). This includes 4 USAID Operating Units that are using geographic analysis in their work either as reported to AidData in the follow up surveys or in direct collaboration with AidData: the Nepal, Timor-Leste, Peru, and Colombia Missions (Gin6).

AidData also conducted 15 data related analyses or consultations during this period (O2in1). This includes the consultations between AidData Research Consortium (ARC) members and the USAID/Colombia, USAID/Niger, and USAID/Georgia Missions to design impact evaluations of USAID programs (see Objective 2). As of the submission of this report there are 81 members of the ARC (IR2.1in3). Research publications using geocoded aid information received 14 new citations in peer reviewed journals this reporting period (Gin3).

One of our problem solving engagements includes our collaboration with Save the Children to develop the Hunger Information Portal (HIP), a decision support tool designed to allow practitioners to access a long-term record of humanitarian response and development-related data to facilitate better decision making across a variety of developmental sectors (see objective 3). This innovation is one of the two new transformative innovations under development reported this reporting period. Our other transformative innovation reported is the prototype decision support tool (DASH) under development to enable decision makers to quickly aggregate multiple layers of information, weighted on importance and predicated upon their own local knowledge (see objective 3).

AidData provided two new data sets to the development community this reporting period: the Uganda and Nepal geocoded AMP IA data sets described further under Objective 1 (IR1.1in1).

## **6.2. Deviance from M&E Targets**

The AidData Center is currently on track to place 19 US Students abroad as fellows in developing countries (Gin4) through our AidData Summer Fellows program. This will represent a significant deviation from our FY2015 target (10) and will bring the total number of fellows placed abroad to 52, which is a 73% increase over our projections. This is a result of increasing demand for fellow placements from development organizations and has been achieved by opening up the program to students from all universities and leveraging funding sources at those universities to expand the program.

We are not currently on track to meet our year 3 target of 60 citations of publications using geocoded aid information (Gin3). This is a result the fact that we did not begin ARC activities until FY2014 and thus have produced fewer publications than originally projected. However, with the restructuring of the ARC and the RFA awards expected to be made in Q3 (see Objective 2), we anticipate an increase in published research in the coming years.

Finally, at the time of this submission 35% of our partner institutions surveyed report that they use geospatial data in their work more frequently following engagement with the AidData Center, which is below our FY2015 target of 60%. As discussed in greater detail in Section 7 below, the AidData Center has made great progress to identify innovative solutions to promote uptake of geocoded aid data in our partner-countries. We will continue to implement and iterate on these solutions in the coming months to promote greater uptake of geospatial data among our partners.

## **7. Lessons Learned / Best Practices**

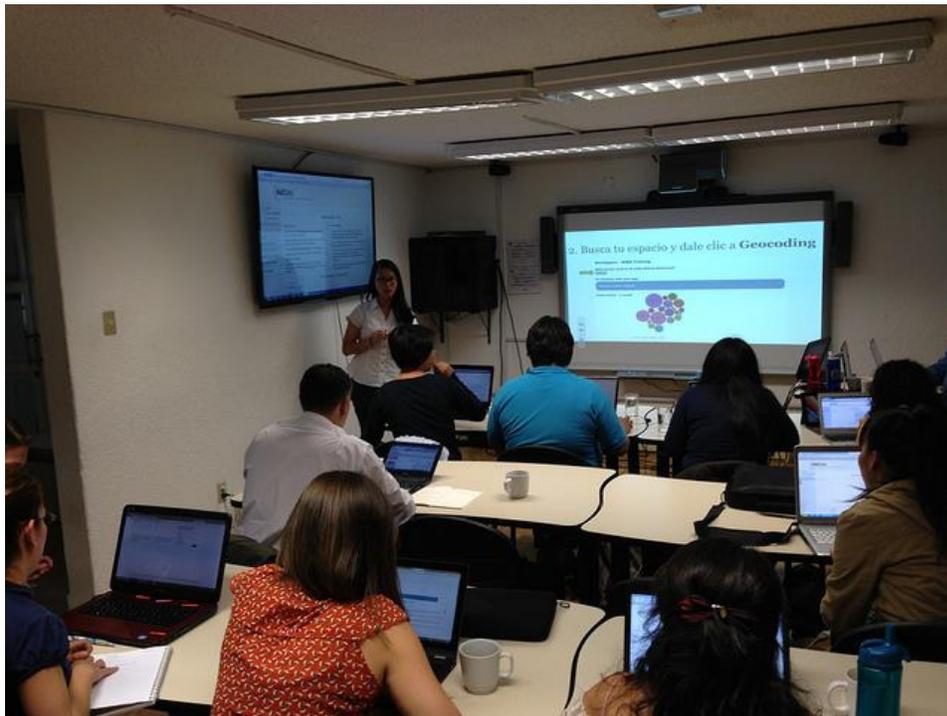
In order to catalyze innovative research using subnational geocoded aid data, AidData restructured the ARC at the end of FY2014 to free up more resources for researchers to apply for and then use to conduct their research. The restructure eliminated the team leader positions, consolidated funds for research, and created the opportunity for Research Awards through the RFA and Strategic Research Response Funds. This new model has thus far proved more successful than the previous model. By consolidating resources for research, AidData has been able to launch a Request for Applications (RFA) which resulted in 46 high quality submissions and to begin conversations with 3 USAID Missions to collaboratively design impact evaluation projects.

While the AidData Center has seen some promising early adopters in our partner countries using the geocoded aid information to date, we recognize that more uptake is needed to truly mainstream the use of geocoded aid information in development decision-making. To identify innovative solutions to promote uptake of geocoded aid data in our partner-countries the AidData Center has convened a cross-consortium working group to discuss challenges and identify, test, and iterate on solutions to these challenges. We have already begun to implement several course corrections to promote greater uptake of geocoded data in our partner countries.

One such course correction is the upgrades to the AMP GIS Module, discussed under Objective 3. AidData performed extensive usability testing with government staff and other users throughout the development of the new AMP features, constantly updating designs and functionality to ensure that AMP is as easy-to-use as possible. For example, government staff have wanted to be able to generate their own statistical base layers (e.g. poverty, malnutrition), but lack GIS skills. In response, AidData developed the functionality for users to import spreadsheet data at the region or district level, with AMP converting the spreadsheet data into GIS format and automatically generating the statistical layer in the GIS. This allows government staff and other AMP users to perform geospatial analysis that would have been previously impossible without external technical assistance. The AidData Center has implemented many similar improvements to AMP functionality, as well as use of cutting-edge, high-

performance tools to ensure that AMP is capable of handling the large influx of geospatial data at high speeds on low-bandwidth internet connections within host countries.

Additionally, we have begun to build out prototypes of decision support tools to enable higher-power users to analyze large amounts of spatial data for rapid decision making informed by rigorous data analysis. Many users who are faced with the need to make data-driven decisions within a short time frame do not have the technical capacity to standardize and aggregate multiple layers of spatial data efficiently. AidData's work in partnership with Save the Children to create the Hunger Information Portal (HIP) and internally to begin prototyping another decision support tool (DASH) is focused on addressing this fundamental constraint to efficient spatial decision making by creating tools that can quickly aggregate this data and providing a platform for analysis.



We are also working to develop curricula and resources that will be provided to our in-country partners following AidData-provided trainings to support continued learning and the independent use of geocoded aid information. To accomplish this task, we are leveraging the expertise of partner Esri to develop intuitive self-guided modules. Development of these resources will kick-off in full during Q3. Upon completion, these modules will also be made available to the public.

Finally, while we've received feedback in most cases that our in-country government and donor partners are collecting more sub-national data following their engagement with AidData than they were prior- a significant achievement- we recognize that there is still progress to be made to institutionalize the ongoing and systematic collection of sub-national location data to the most precise level. After final release of the geocoded datasets, we've assessed that a large percentage of donors and projects did not provide as spatially precise data as possible for geocoding. In order to mitigate this, during the

assessment phase, we are making a strong case for spatially precise data and being upfront about the investment needed to collect this data, as well as providing stakeholders with examples of the types of analysis that is possible with spatially precise data.

## 8. Future Activities

In the coming reporting period, AidData will initiate feasibility studies for multi-donor geocoding in the Philippines (April) and Bangladesh (June/July). The feasibility studies will consist of meetings and working sessions with government institutions, development partners, and and CSO's and will seek to assess whether the institutional environment exists for a successful implementation. During the second half of FY2015, AidData also expects to conduct follow-up monitoring TDY's to Senegal, Haiti, DRC, and Honduras.

On April 30-May 1, 2015, AidData will co-facilitate USAID's "LacHack" hackathon, which aims to combine the dataset of extracted text from the DEC, created by AidData, with Foreign Assistance Dashboard data and data from other sources. The LacHack is expected to draw approximately 200 software developers, regional and technical experts, and policymakers to the OpenGov Hub (a thematic co-location office space co-created by AidData partner Development Gateway) and through online participation. The goal of the Lac Hack will be to generate new knowledge on how USAID programs contribute to improved security in Latin America.



This summer, the AidData Center will place 19 AidData Summer Fellows in 17 different development organizations in 6 countries. This includes three fellows placed with the Uganda, Peru, and Indonesia Missions. Prior to heading to their placements, all of the summer fellows will come to Williamsburg for a week-long intensive training boot camp from May 25-29. During the boot camp, fellows will receive

training in data management, GIS, data visualization, strategic communications, and partnership development.

In the second half of FY2015, final preparations will occur for the launch of new data science courses at W&M. These courses, developed in collaboration with the USAID GeoCenter, will begin in the Fall 2015 semester (starting August 2015). During the first year of these new course offerings, approximately 200 students will be trained.

Beginning in June 2015, AidData will have approximately 100 student research assistants working at W&M for the summer. During this summer research session, students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of training and professional development sessions with AidData staff members. In the past, summer skill building activities have included trainings in GIS and R, monitoring and evaluation, data science, and policy writing. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in a field trip to Washington, DC to meet with development professionals and learn about career opportunities in the DC area.

It is anticipated that during the second half of FY2015, AidData will begin evaluation projects with USAID Colombia, Georgia, and Niger, should the discussions around these projects proceed successfully (see Objective 2). These research projects would be funded through USAID buying-in to AidData's award with contributing funding provided through AidData's HESN program. The Colombia work will focus on evaluating USAID Colombia's Regional Governance Activity (RGA) with ARC members Dr. Michael Findley and Dr. Joseph Young conducting the evaluation. Dr. Daniel Maliniak, ARC Member at William & Mary, is expected to conduct an evaluation of Georgia's Signature Effort and Dr. Ariel BenYishay and Dr. Phil Roessler are expected to evaluate Niger's Participatory and Responsive Governance (PRG) program.

AidData launched a Request for Applications (RFA) to support new research utilizing subnational georeferenced development finance data during the reporting period. The RFA was officially launched on November 21, 2014 and we received 46 competitive submissions from over 35 different universities/institutions. Most awards are expected to fall in the \$50,000-\$200,000 range, with special consideration given to exceptional projects. AidData plans to make award notifications at the end of April or the beginning of May 2015.

This summer, the AidData Center will implement three transparency for development (T4D) studies to investigate how access to open data impacts development policy-maker decisions. The first experiment will be a continuation of the mapping experiments discussed under Objective 2 and will take the refined experimental protocol to the field in Uganda and Nepal during Summer 2015, where real decision-makers will participate in these evidence-based decision making experiments.

AidData will also collaborate with UNICEF Uganda this summer to implement study to evaluate the impact of access to real-time data on citizen development priorities collected from UNICEF's U-Report SMS crowdsourcing system on the development resource allocation and prioritization decisions of district-level sectoral officials. AidData will embed a Summer Fellow with UNICEF this summer to support this study.

AidData Summer Fellows in Nepal, Uganda, and the Philippines will also support a study to understand how to best present geocoded aid information to local-level policy makers for use in decision-making. AidData will work with five organizations hosting these fellows to produce information products using geocoded aid information and work with their local policy-maker networks to test and receive feedback on these products.

## 9. Environmental Monitoring

Not Applicable

## 10. Risks/Issues and Mitigation

All of AidData's in-country work is contingent on the presence of a stable operating environment in each of our partner countries. In the instance of high political instability or unrest or a natural disaster, AidData would likely be unable to operate successfully. Additionally, if such instability leads to regime change or significant cuts in the operating budget of the aid information management unit in a partner country, our work may be compromised. To mitigate this risk, the AidData Center works with our USAID Mission and government partners to monitor the political situation and operating environment prior to beginning work in a country. During our assessment trip, we take stock of the political climate and the willingness of the key partners in the government and donor agencies to participate in this initiative. However, there is always the possibility of an unexpected complication or a situation over which the AidData Center has no control. For example, our work in the DRC was challenged by the Ministry of Planning losing their internet access due to budgetary shortfalls. In these situations, we work closely with our partners to mitigate the impact of these challenges as best as possible and adjust our work plan in partnership with our AOR if necessary.

## 11. Other – Annex A: USAID Mission and Operating Unit Collaborations To-Date

\*= Engaged with during the reporting period

### Data Collection

- Uganda\*
- Nepal\*
- Timor-Leste\*
- Senegal
- Haiti

- Honduras\*
- DRC\*
- Mexico
- Niger\*
- Philippines\*
- Bangladesh\*
- Ghana\*

### **Research/Analysis**

- Colombia\*
- Niger\*
- Georgia\*
- Peru\*
- Armenia\*
- DCHA/DRG\*
- GDL – RST\*
- GeoCenter\*
- Ecuador
- GH/PEPFAR

### **Technology Systems**

- Colombia\*
- GDL – Open Data Team\*
- CIO Office\*
- GDL – Prizes Team\*
- GDL Data Working Group\*
- GeoCenter\*

### **Capacity Building**

- PPL\*
- Indonesia\*
- Timor-Leste\*
- Peru\*
- Uganda\*
- Nepal\*