



## Including geo-localisation information in the TOSSD framework

*TOSSD Task Force Issues Paper<sup>1</sup>*

*Paris, 30 January – 1 February 2019*

*For discussion under agenda item 2*

### I. BACKGROUND

1. The availability of geo-coded data has transformed the way in which economies and societies work. Thanks to mobile technologies and geo-localisation, new services and economic activities have emerged. New analytical tools have increased the understanding of society and helped to develop targeted solutions to existing challenges. In the field of development co-operation, the increased availability of geographical information facilitates the fine-tuning of policies and projects to local needs, and the monitoring of their effectiveness and results. In recent years, national and international development finance institutions have started to produce and share geo-localisation data for their projects, and several countries publish their SDG indicators with granular geographical information.
2. This paper provides a few examples of the utilisation of geo-localisation information from both development co-operation providers and countries receiving support, briefly describes possible methodological approaches for collecting such information and requests Task Force members' views on whether they would support the inclusion of geo-localisation information in the TOSSD framework where relevant and available.

### II. GEOCODING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

3. Geographical data are being used by development co-operation providers and recipients in many innovative ways. In some countries, for example Brazil<sup>2</sup>, SDG indicators produced at the subnational and local levels are plotted on national maps, allowing a clearer understanding on where the needs are the most urgent (Figure 1). In some other countries, for example Costa Rica<sup>3</sup>, national sustainable development projects, whether funded nationally or internationally, are plotted on a map and individual fiches can be opened to obtain detailed information and provide feedback (Figure 2).

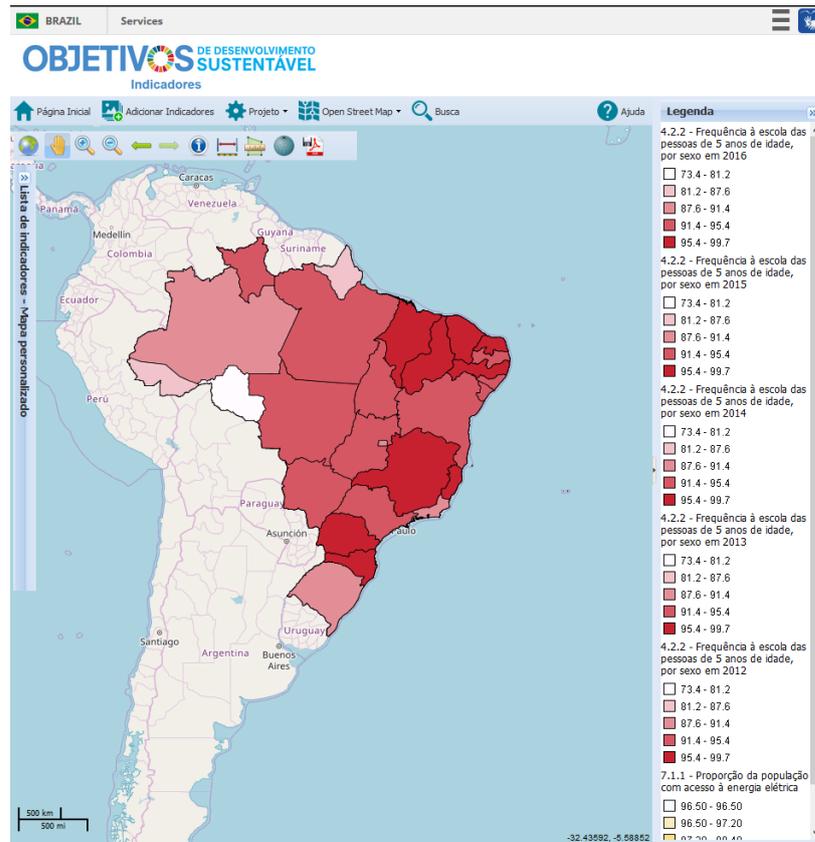
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<sup>2</sup> See: <https://indicadoresods.ibge.gov.br/>

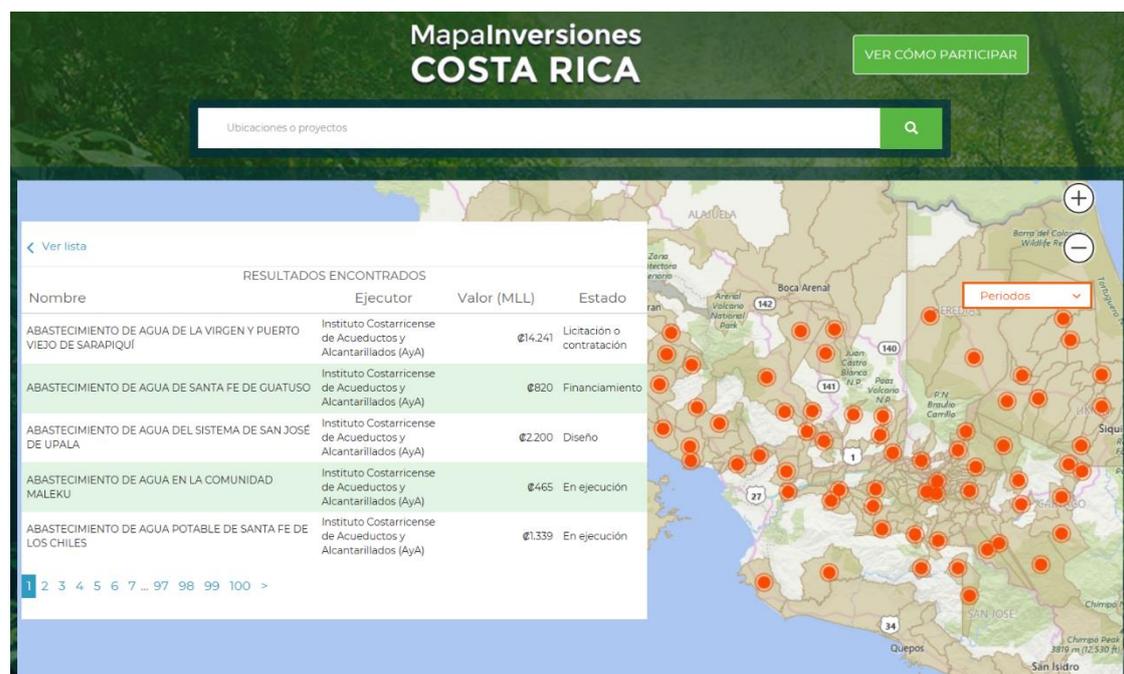
<sup>3</sup> <http://mapainversionescr.mideplan.go.cr>

Figure 1 - Map of selected SDG indicators for Brazil



Source: <https://indicadoresods.ibge.gov.br/objetivo5/indicador541>

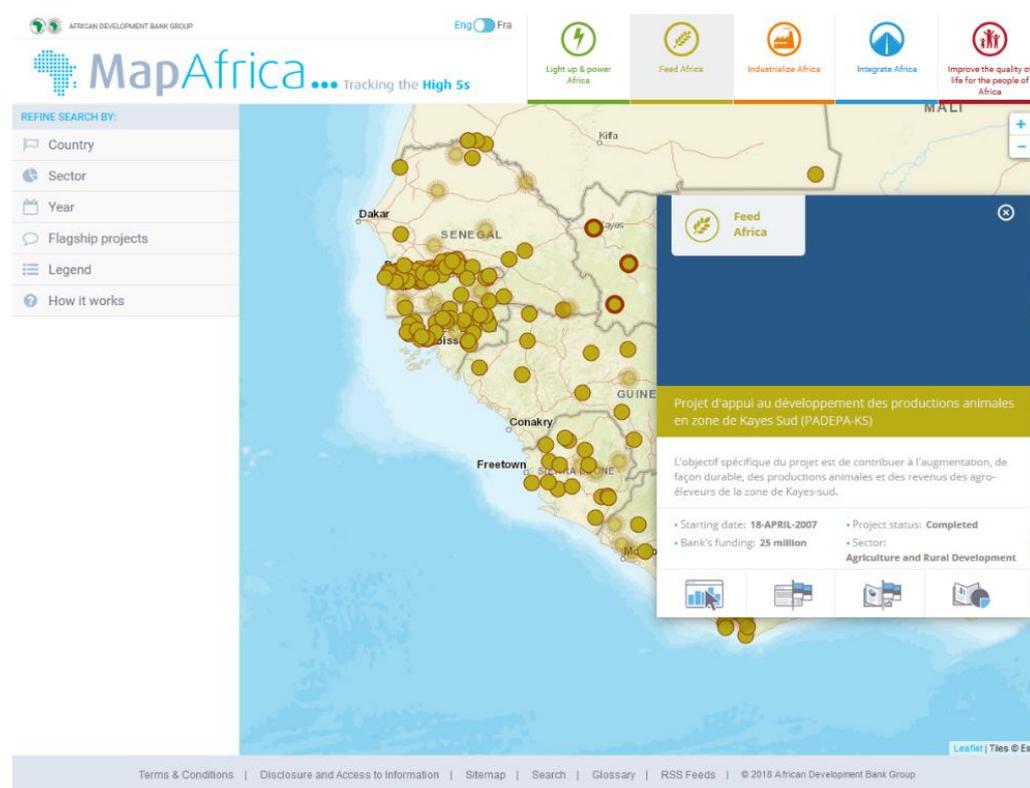
Figure 2 – Costa Rica’s investment mapping and citizens’ participation tool.



source : <http://mapainversionescr.mideplan.go.cr>

4. National and international Development Finance Institutions have also embraced geo-localisation, and initiatives have been taken to set common methodologies and standards. The OECD-CRS database has a free-text field to indicate sub-national geographical data, but it is not widely used. AidData<sup>4</sup> tried to fill the gap working on geocoding of the activities contained in the CRS ex post, and developed methodologies to standardise geocoding practices in collaboration with international institutions such as the World Bank. IATI<sup>5</sup> incorporated geocoding in its registry using AidData methodologies, and provides online maps<sup>6</sup> and an Application Program Interface (API) to access information of geocoded projects.
5. Several multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank<sup>7</sup> and the African Development Bank<sup>8</sup> (Figure 3), and bilateral donors such as the UK<sup>9</sup> (Figure 4) and France<sup>10</sup> provide access to geocoded information through their websites and dedicated portals.

Figure 3 - Map of selected projects of the African Development Bank



Source: <https://mapafrica.afdb.org/en/>

<sup>4</sup> See: <https://www.aiddata.org/>

<sup>5</sup> See: <https://www.iatistandard.org/en/>

<sup>6</sup> See: <http://www.d-portal.org/ctrack.html#view=search>

<sup>7</sup> See: <http://www.projects.worldbank.org/>

<sup>8</sup> See: <https://mapafrica.afdb.org/en/>

<sup>9</sup> See: <https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/location/country>

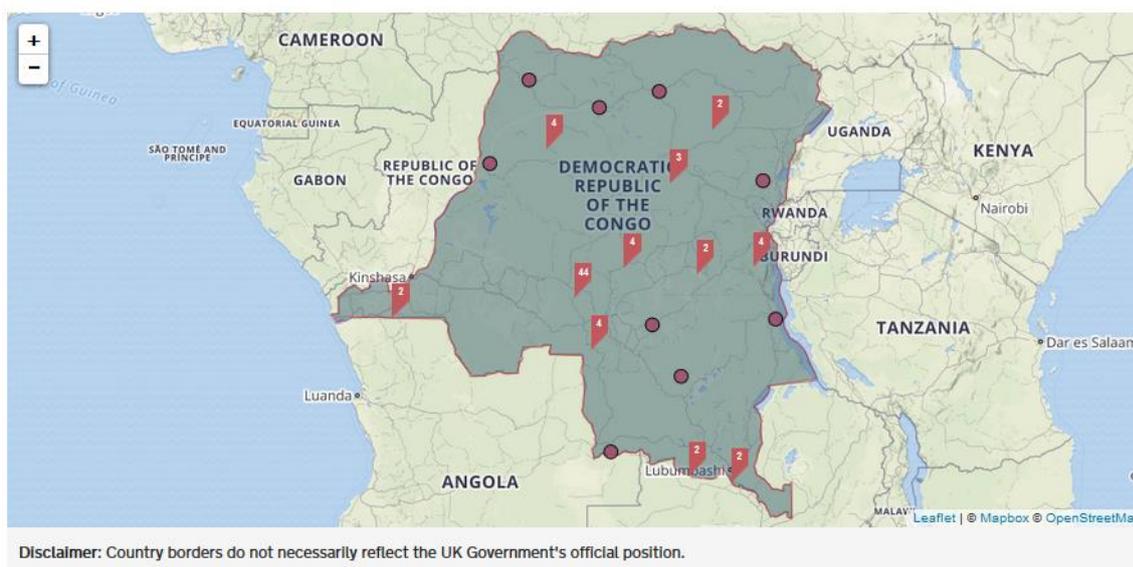
<sup>10</sup> See: [https://www.afd.fr/fr/recherche?query=\\* &page=all &view=map](https://www.afd.fr/fr/recherche?query=* &page=all &view=map)

Figure 4 - Map of selected projects of DFID

The screenshot shows the 'Development Tracker' interface. At the top, there is a search bar and a 'Search' button. Below that, the breadcrumb trail reads 'Home > Aid by Location > Congo (Democratic Republic)'. The main heading is 'Congo (Democratic Republic)' with the UKaid logo to the right. A navigation bar at the bottom of the header shows 'Summary' and 'Active Projects (20)'.

The DRC matters to the UK. It is one of the poorest countries in the world and will have 15% of the world's poor by 2030. It has also suffered from decades of conflict. The Congo wars, which ended in 2003, cost 5 million lives and drew in 8 other countries. Violence and insecurity continue to displace over 4.5 million\* Results less than 1 million are rounded to the nearest thousand. Results over 1 million are rounded to the nearest hundred thousand. people from their homes – the highest number in Africa. DRC is prone to large public health emergencies, including seven Ebola outbreaks since the 1970s, a large yellow fever outbreak last

[Read more about Congo \(Democratic Republic\)](#)



Source : <https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/countries/CD>

### III. GEOCODING METHODOLOGIES

6. Geocoding methodologies can use different approaches and different levels of geographical precision<sup>11</sup>, for example:

- The location(s) of the projects can be precisely pin-pointed with geographical coordinates.
- Areas can be constructed with polygons made with a set of geographical coordinates.
- Location can be indicated by the name of the locality or region, using first-order or second-order administrative division names, the name of a structure (e.g. a bridge) or other

<sup>11</sup> See for example: AidData geocoding methodology 2.0: <https://www.aiddata.org/publications/geocoding-methodology-version-2-0>

topographical features (e.g. a river, a national park). Several geographical names vocabularies exist, including the ISO standard 3166<sup>12</sup>.

- The location can be precise or approximate.
7. The IATI standard allows different methods to indicate the geographical coordinates of the project<sup>13</sup>. Although this approach maximises flexibility, it also limits the comparability between data from different organisations. A curated database, such as TOSSD, works better if a “backbone” common standard and homogeneous reporting practices are adopted, eventually exploring if mechanisms can be developed to translate data submitted using alternative methods in the common standard. In any case, the methodology will need to take into account the actual landscape of geo-localised data production and emerging standards.
  8. A decision on the methodology to adopt for geo-localising activities in TOSSD is highly technical, and will require extensive consultations with experts and data providers. These could be organised if the principle of adding geo-localisation data in TOSSD is supported by the Task Force.

#### Issues for discussion

- **Should TOSSD include information on the subnational geo-localisation of projects, when relevant and available?**
- **Are Task Force members aware of use of geo-localisation for the SDG indicators in their countries? Do their agencies track the geo-localisation of inflows or outflows of development finance?**

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<sup>12</sup> See <https://www.iso.org/iso-3166-country-codes.html>

<sup>13</sup> See: <http://reference.iatistandard.org/203/codelists/GeographicVocabulary/> and <http://reference.iatistandard.org/203/activity-standard/iati-activities/iati-activity/location/>