

## Annex 3 – Data Quality

1. As outlined in Annex 2, data for this publication comes from the following sources:

- The DFID “ARIES” database that records financial transactions relating to DFID payments and receipts. Amongst other fields, the database records financial amounts, dates of transactions, where they took place, and in which sectors. This information is primarily inputted by programme and project managers, with some quality assurance carried out centrally to ensure spend is in line with OECD definitions of ODA. DFID spending makes up over 85% of total Official Development Assistance (ODA)
- Similar databases for other departments. For non-DFID departments, there is an assessment of whether their spend is in line with OECD definitions of ODA.

2. The data for this publication is based on an extract of the ARIES database taken in July 2013, well after the end of the calendar year 2012 and financial year 2012/13. This is to ensure that, as far as possible, any revisions to the database have taken place.

3. The strengths of the publication is it is drawn from, and therefore consistent with, DFID financial management systems. By also providing information on spend by other departments, the publication gives information on total government spending on development aid. The publication is also based on all financial transactions in the database, and so is not subject to sampling error.

4. The ARIES database is subject to input error from programme and project managers. The risk of input error is relatively low for estimates of total spend, and spend by country/region; and relatively higher for spending by sector (where there is sometimes ambiguity, especially for programmes that cut across several sectors), and by funding channel.

5. To reduce the risk of error, DFID statisticians have introduced greater quality assurance, specifically for some sectors such as Environment Protection, through

liaison with policy officials and across departments where necessary. DFID statisticians have also begun to test recoding of spending by funding channel with individual project managers.