FAIR data in investments – what does good practice look like?

This document is for program officers and grantees to:

- Understand what good practice looks like for making data findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR) in investments and be able to self-evaluate their grant.
- Identify where there may be further action or support required to ensure the data generated and used in a grant is shared as widely as possible.
What ‘good’ good practice looks like for FAIR data implementation

The terms below refer to the investment. They indicate the current maturity of the investment in terms of implementing FAIR data principles with proper attention to ethics and privacy. There are three stages:

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Stage 01 – Data unintentional

The investment will generate, access, use or share data. It does not consider how it will ensure FAIR, ethical and equitable access to data that is as open as possible.

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Stage 02 – Data aware

The investment will generate, access, use or share data. There are limited plans for accessing, using and sharing data within the investment, and limited understanding of the data ecosystem. The investment recognises the need to work towards ensuring FAIR, ethical and equitable access to data that is as open as possible.

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Stage 03 – Data purposeful

The investment will generate, access, use or share data. There are clear plans to implement the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation open access policy and ensure FAIR, equitable and ethical access to data, making it as open as possible. The role of the investment in the wider data ecosystem is understood.
Does this investment build on and contribute to existing data from multiple sources?

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**Stage 01 – Data unintentional**
The investment does not consider existing data sources or other collaborators in the data ecosystem.

or

The investment talks broadly about data but it is not clear where the data comes from, whether they have rights to access and use it, and what they will do after.

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**Stage 02 – Data aware**
The investment shows awareness of some existing data from a limited number of sources (e.g. all public sector) and knowledge of the wider data ecosystem is limited. Interoperability needs are unclear. A small number of existing datasets has been identified but it is not clear what rights they have to access and use these datasets or whether they have engaged the data holders. It is unclear how they will contribute, work with or enhance existing data sources.
Stage 03 – Data purposeful

The investment looks to build on and contribute to existing data from a mixture of public, private and third sector sources. Interoperability needs are clear. The role of the grantee within the wider data ecosystem is clear and existing datasets have been identified.

The investment is clear how they will build on top of, and contribute to, existing data and best practice. Engagement with existing data holders has begun and rights and permissions to access, use and share the data are confirmed and inline with funder and in-country policies and regulations.