Executive Summary

I, Micah Johnson, fulfilled my practicum through Water for People out of their Denver headquarters during the summer of 2014. The practicum concerned aid transparency. In addition to annually publishing their financials on their website through their Reimagining Reporting portal, Water for People wanted to publish through the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) which is an accounting database of international development aid flows through organizations and governments. During the summer I compiled their financial data, largely from the Reimagining Reporting data, and published it in the required format onto IATI. The process involved understanding IATI, its uploading portal, what information to include and how communicate with IATI’s support staff. Water for People’s data was successfully uploaded, however, not without complexity. A lengthy critique report of the uploading process was submitted to the IATI technical advisory group as a result.

It is likely that Water for People will not continue to update their financials on IATI in the future due to the complexity experienced during the initial upload. In addition, even several months since uploading, the data has not been viewed by anyone other than myself.

The practicum provided insight into the financials of a non-profit organization such as Water for People. Significant money is spent in fundraising, travel, training, salaries and coordination between headquarters, national offices and the communities impacted. I gained an appreciation for organizations such as Water for People that strive to be completely transparent in their finances. It not only gains trust from donors, but improves the overall accountability of the organization and ultimately increases their program effectiveness.