EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Accountability Lab makes governance work for people everywhere by supporting active citizens, responsible leaders and accountable institutions. We are reimagining how to build accountability to support a world in which resources are used wisely, decisions benefit everyone fairly, and people lead secure lives.

This strategy outlines why we care about accountability, what we have learned from all of this, where we are going and how we’ll get there over the next 3 years. It was endorsed by the Accountability Lab Global Board of Directors in November 2019 and finalized in December 2019.

VISION AND MISSION

We have sought to reimagine how to build accountability. Our vision is a world in which citizens are active, leaders are responsible and institutions are accountable. It is a world in which resources are used wisely, decisions benefit everyone fairly, and people lead secure lives.

Our mission is therefore to make governance work for people through supporting active citizens, responsible leaders and accountable institutions.

CONTEXT EVOLUTION

Global shifts

Accountability Lab began in 2012 at a time of exciting movements within the field of accountability and transparency- new approaches were developing, new tools seemed to herald the potential for large-scale change and international initiatives like the Open Government Partnership and the Global Partnership for Social Accountability were generating greater buy-in to these issues.

Since our work began almost 8 years ago, the global political and economic context has evolved in ways that support accountability. In this strategy, we lay out our understanding of these shifts and how we want to build on them.

BACKGROUND

The Accountability Lab was founded in early 2012 as an effort to work with young people to develop new ideas for accountability, transparency and open government. It has evolved into a global network of Local Accountability Labs that are finding new ways to shift societal norms, solve intractable challenges and build “unlikely networks” for change. Our 2017-2020 strategy outlined our understanding of accountability challenges and our positive, citizen-driven efforts to address these issues. The strategy was matched with an operational plan that laid out how we would work to achieve these goals; and a learning agenda highlighting the core questions we hoped to answer through our efforts.

This strategy for the 2020-2023 period is based on our almost 8 years of experience working on accountability around the world; was catalyzed by a strategic retreat with all of our Country Directors in May 2019; and was finalized with significant inputs from our teams, stakeholders and peers through an open, online consultation process on the draft. We also built on feedback received through our annual learning reports over the past 3 years. The strategy outlines why we care about accountability, what we have learned from all of this, where we are going and how we’ll get there over the next 3 years. It was endorsed by the Accountability Lab Global Board of Directors in November 2019 and finalized in December 2019.
The idea of building movements has risen to the fore, but difficult questions about the legitimacy and roles of NGOs and donors in this process are yet to be fully answered.

At the same time, the broader landscape has become dramatically more crowded since 2012, with a variety of organizations doing everything from promoting participatory budgeting to monitoring contracting to supporting grassroots legal efforts. Many are doing fantastic work - but organizational incentives still tend to mitigate against the shared efforts we need to push for collective change. Where larger frameworks and collaboratives (which themselves have proliferated) have sought to bring disparate actors together there have been questions about inclusivity, reach and legitimacy.

**WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

Within this changing context, we have learned several overarching lessons that have informed our thinking around this new strategy. For us, we now understand that Accountability Lab should focus on:

- **Positivity not Negativity** - approaches to accountability, transparency and anti-corruption tend to focus on the problems and the perpetrators. This can reinforce collective perceptions of widespread wrong-doing and perpetuate disengagement. We take a positive approach - “naming and shaming” rather than “naming and shaming” - lifting people up and supporting solutions wherever we can.

- **Individuals then Organizations** - building accountability cannot be simply a process of creating and enforcing laws. It requires a focus on accountability agents, as well as accountability organizations or actions - which is very different to traditional approaches. We work to connect these agents in ways that allows them to build coalitions for change within organizations, and as a result, less effective than it could be.

- **Bottom Up and Top Down** - we have worked from communities upwards, mobilizing citizens - armed with knowledge and ideas - to push for reform from the local level. This remains an incredibly important part of how change happens - but it needs to be matched with coherent strategies for change from the top-downwards too. If we, along with partners, can bring together new ideas and energy from the grassroots and the “grassstops”, we can shift the ways decisions are made.

- **Them not Us** - we spent the first 5 years or so of our efforts building the structures, approaches and brand around the Accountability Lab, positioning ourselves as a leading organization working on these issues. Now, we understand more clearly that our role is not about the Lab itself - it is about creating the space for others, collaborating in meaningful ways, crowding in other people and ideas, leading from behind where we can and acting as a convener and facilitator of change.

- **Partnerships not Isolated Actions** - work in this space is too often disparate and uncoordinated, and is a result, less effective than it could be. In keeping with the above, we work to map where others intervene and link our efforts to those that are working at different points in accountability systems to amplify change. For example, in Nepal and Liberia our Civic Action Teams collect information from citizens and coordinate with local governments, but we also work with a network of problem-solving NGOs who find solutions to specific problem for citizens. Or in Nigeria and Mali, through our Accountability Incubator, we source local ideas for accountability but then connect them to donors and government officials who can partner with them to ensure scale-up over time.

- **Long-term Efforts not Quick-Fixes** - we understand there are no quick fixes. Building accountability takes time - it is a generational effort. We have made important progress in building trust in communities and deep networks that can provide the basis for sustained engagement over time. The challenge is maintaining these in the face of other incentives (including funding, in many cases) that tend to focus on short-term, output driven measures of success.

**PROGRESS TO DATE**

In 7 years, we’ve expanded to 8 countries:

- 25mil+ members, voters in campaign
- 139 integrity losses identified, celebrated and supported
- $9.5mil raised for programs and growth across 6 countries
- 270,000+ individuals reached through programs
- 97 upstanding youth trained, mentored and supported
- $500,000 raised in Accountability Incubator

In our previous strategy we outlined a three-pronged approach to building accountability

**OUR 2017-2020 STRATEGY: WHAT DID WE NOT ACHIEVE?**

We are a values-based organization and hope during our previous strategy that we lived our values and practiced our principles. We seek to build trust from the bottom-up, try to be radically transparent about all our funding, policies and approach. We hope to treat everyone within our community with dignity, respect and trust. We see our efforts to uphold our values as most important - an intentional breach of these values would be our biggest failure.

While we are proud of our values-driven work, our previous strategy was ambitious, and there were areas where we fell short or where we could have done better. For example, we thought that our work would naturally draw in diverse types of people and that we would easily be able to reach the most marginalized. That was wrong - now we know we have to be deeply intentional about sustainability - that we are at a central core to building accountability. The kind of language we use matters; and the kind of listening we demonstrate affects who joins our efforts and who remains on the sidelines. Logistics and costs kept us from inclusive in some places; and we realized when we were able to overcome these that our Labs did not always have the capacity to bring in the right people in meaningful ways, and we realized that we hoped to create the change we hoped to bring about.

We also could have done better at translating and communicating our work at the community level into larger changes at the national and international level. We managed to generate excitement, engagement and
What we bring

- Positive narrative-building
- “Unlikely networks”
- “Insider-outsider” coalitions
- South-South feedback and learning

What we do

- Campaigns and Learning
- Training and Collaborative Spaces
- Coalition Building and Convening

The change we make

- Collective action for systems change
- Norm shifts and behavior change
- Influence policies, processes & practice

Making Governance Work for People

What we bring

- Positive narrative-building
- “Unlikely networks”
- “Insider-outsider” coalitions
- South-South feedback and learning

What we do

- Campaigns and Learning
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- Coalition Building and Convening

The change we make

- Collective action for systems change
- Norm shifts and behavior change
- Influence policies, processes & practice

Theory of Action

Our work to date and the insights above have informed a new Theory of Action for the Lab’s work, which we developed over the course of 2019. Previously, we preferred to understand a Theory of Change (ToC) not just as a way to map inputs, outputs, and outcomes but as a way to understand in practical terms the causality between them; and to support double loop learning (learning that recognizes that the way a problem is defined and solved can be a source of the problem itself). As a result, our theory of change was not an agreed, defined diagram but a living document that we amended and refined over time as we learned on the ground (see our evolving ToCs here).

What we realized over time, however, was that in fact what we needed was a Theory of Action. We began to understand that there can be Theories of Change for how to build accountability as a whole, but that our part of that change required a focus more specifically on our own understanding of the change we can create - embodied in our Theory of Action (ToA) diagram shown below. We realize this ToA is not perfect and we fully expect to adapt it over the next 3 years - but it provides a starting point for understanding why and how we do what we do. As a general approach, we find it important to pause and reflect on our mission, vision and programs as often as possible, and recalibrate where necessary. This not only helps us understand whether we are still doing valuable work, it also mitigates potential mission creep and aids us in prioritizing how we allocate our resources.

If the Accountability Lab Did Not Exist...

We spoke to our teams and partners globally and asked them to highlight our strengths. They told us that without the Accountability Lab, the communities in which we work would miss:

- A partner who is willing to innovate, try new ideas, and move beyond the “business as usual” accountability approaches. We bring in new players and work with them in new ways to bolster this movement. In Nigeria for example, we partnered with the largest music platform in Africa - Chocolate City - to use music as a tool to push for positive engagement around the elections. This led some of the most popular rappers in Africa to publicly use their voices to emphasize the need for candidates with integrity.

- A global team that is able to act as a bridge and join-up the dots between local, national and international accountability thinking and practice. We are able, through our Labs around the world, to be part of conversations in communities as well as discussions in ministries and board rooms in Western capitals. This means we can make connections between people, ideas and practices in ways that are both unusual and valuable.

- An organization that truly lives by its values, models the behaviors it hopes to support and sets new standards for organizations of all types in the places in which we work. We believe in radical transparency and update all of our income and expenses in real time on our website, for example, so anyone can tell exactly how we are funded and how effectively we are using our resources.

Our work to create an enabling environment in which accountability can be built over the long-term, rather than focusing on shorter-term tactical projects. As individuals move across sectors and organizations, and windows of opportunity for accountability open, we find ways to build their capacity to take advantage of these and to generate collective action. For example, we are working with our Integrity Labs - as they are promoted- to develop the skills they need to manage change and build coalitions.

Teams that are pushing for concrete and creative engagement around critical international initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership - translating their purpose and localizing their efforts within specific contexts. In Liberia, for example, we have led the OGP coalition, bringing new voices into open governance and shaping new, more creative open government commitments.

A deep understanding of the political-economy of accountability in the countries in which we work, spearheaded by teams of citizens that live these issues and understand how to build movements for change. In Pakistan, for example, through our incubator we have supported the development of one of the most popular citizen journalism websites in southern Punjab - a critical tool that is now being used by Pakistanis to support the inclusion of minorities and generate critical debates.
THE NEXT PHASE

Building on the Theory of Action outlined above, this strategy represents a step towards changing our understanding and practice of building accountability - that positions us at the cutting edge of this work in a variety of ways. Now, we will strive to build on our progress to date, integrate learning from our previous work and find new ways to build accountability systems. The table below highlights the changes we'll be making, which relate directly to the changed context we outlined above, and our learning over the period of the previous strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017-2020</th>
<th>2020-2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where we've come from...</td>
<td>... Where we're going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thinking...</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting with an understanding of collective action problems</td>
<td>Focusing on a lack of accountability as a system-level problem with systems-thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing on research on issues of accountability, transparency and open government</td>
<td>Collaborating to build the evidence base for our work and that of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive learning as a core part of our organizational thinking</td>
<td>Adaptive learning deeply informs organizational practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working to live by our values</td>
<td>Actively modeling and sharing behaviors that can shape the way the field operates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish the Lab as an entry point for changing accountability practices</td>
<td>Level the playing field and help open-up access to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Testing...</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing and supporting Network Labs around the world</td>
<td>Better connecting and sharing learning within and across Network Labs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing ideas for advocacy and participating in coalitions around policy change</td>
<td>Leading collective efforts to influence decision-making at multiple levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in meetings and conferences around accountability</td>
<td>Becoming a convener within certain contexts around critical accountability issues, and ensuring the inclusion of marginalized voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on joint work with like-minded partners</td>
<td>Meaningful coalition building and efforts to build accountability eco-systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in a specific set of contexts</td>
<td>Influencing work by others in a much broader range of contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doing...</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting directly to build transparency and accountability</td>
<td>Acting directly but also working to influence the actions of others to move beyond transparency and build accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working largely outside government to support citizens to push for greater accountability</td>
<td>Also supporting reformers within government systems and building inside-outside coalitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale through organizational growth</td>
<td>Additional reach through codifying, licensing and scaling content to work towards becoming a field catalyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally-led work with surge support from US/Europe as needed</td>
<td>Locally-led work supported by meaningful South-South learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global staff based in DC, with sister country teams</td>
<td>Development of key regional hubs with local and global staff supporting our work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to set new standards in terms of operational transparency and values</td>
<td>Integrating our values into every aspect of our work and leading the movement around internal accountability and duty of care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working to survive in contexts where space for accountability may be limited</td>
<td>Using our approaches to actively learn and push back against closing civic space globally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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OUR NEW STRATEGY

Our new strategy has three core goals, to support active citizens, responsible leaders and accountable institutions. We work to connect these goals meaningfully to one another in specific contexts through actions which we broadly classify as campaigns, knowledge and communities. A summary results framework is below - you can see the larger version in Annex II. This is a work in progress and will evolve in 2020 based on a grant we have received to develop it further over time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>SUCCESS (BY 2023)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHIFTING NORMS AND CHANGING BEHAVIORS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Too often in work to build accountability or fight corruption, the international community and governments focus on institutions, rules and procedures. These are important, but if they do not reflect the social norms that exist within...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The strategy more explicitly brings together the elements of the work we do in mutually reinforcing ways - as we know that even innovative approaches to accountability are far less useful in isolation than they are together. This is already beginning to happen - for example, in Nepal, one of our winners of Integrity Icon (Campaigns) was promoted to be the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Labor and Migration in Nepal. He is now working with is to develop training resources and to provide mentorship for incoming civil servants (Knowledge); including for local level officials who are engaged in work to improve accountability of migration with our Civic Action Teams at the local level (Communities).
societies, they will be ineffective in the long term. Social norms can help to explain why negative, normalized behaviors such as corruption endure over time. Building on the work of Cristina Bicchieri, Cheyanne Church and others, the Lab is working to better understand how we can shift norms to change complex, unaccountable systems and build greater integrity into these systems. This moves us away from the principal-agent model and build greater integrity into these systems. This

**Activities will include:**

- **Campaigns**—that support positive narratives and create role-models for the younger generation. In particular, we will build on the Integrity Icon, growing it into a global effort to generate conversations and actions around integrity and shift the way publics understand norms related to issues of accountability; grow our work around music as a tool to shift thinking among citizens in partnership with organizations such as the ONE Campaign, and build-out our visual storytelling work, using film to engage communities in conversations and actions on governance issues.

**VOICE2REP IN NIGERIA**

In 2016, Accountability Lab Liberia began a campaign called Rap2Rep (now known as Voice2Rep) which mobilized 1st time music artists around accountability issues in their communities. Our team organized a national competition—now an annual campaign—to find the best of these artists and support them to use their voices to influence social norms in partnerships with more established musicians.

The campaign then spread to Nigeria where it has grown through partnerships with the largest music platform in Africa, Chocolate City —into a large-scale, ongoing national conversation through music. The winning artists have sung about everything from corruption to accountability for gender rights; and have partnered with some of the biggest music acts in Africa. Ahead of the Nigerian election in 2018, we saw clearly that this approach was beginning to shift the way some of the most famous artists in Nigeria understood their role within society, and the way they understood the importance of integrity. Over the next 3 years we will build on our work with musicians across multiple contexts, supporting them to find authentic, creative and solutions-oriented ways to message integrity.

- **Learning**—We see ourselves as a learning organization and in the next three years want to engage in deeper research and learning—in conjunction with partners—into the processes of shifting norms and behaviors. The goal is to further build the evidence base for supporting creative approaches to accountability that work in practice. We are partnering with some of the leading research organizations around these issues including the Building Integrity Programme at the University of Oxford, the Accountability Research Center at the Stanford King Center on Global Development, the MIT GovLab and the Leir Institute at Tufts University.

- **We** will also share what we find, organizing events, speaking at conferences, developing learning outputs (such as podcasts) and engaging reformers inside and outside government around ideas for change.

**OUR NEW APPROACH COULD BE SUMMARIZED IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017-2020</th>
<th>2020-2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What we did previously...</strong></td>
<td><strong>What we’ll do now</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked to understand how to change behaviors and attitudes</td>
<td>Focus more directly on shifting social norms as a means to change outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tested and codified the Integrity Icon campaign in varied contexts</td>
<td>License Integrity Icon to partners and grow the campaign in key strategic contexts globally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked to engage young people around accountability through music and film</td>
<td>Build large networks of musicians and visual storytellers across countries who can collectively advocate for greater accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carried out research on an ad-hoc basis to support elements of our work</td>
<td>More rigorously work to build the evidence base for shifting norms and use this to inform our efforts and those of others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EQUIPPING REFORMERS FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION**

Too often, efforts to build accountability are disparate, uncoordinated and isolated. The reformers—inside and outside government—who are trying to do the right thing, are often not connected in ways that can allow them to generate larger, collective impact. The Lab is in a position to bring these change-makers together by acting in some ways as a field catalyst. We are working to support new ideas at strategic points within accountability systems, working with them to grow and influence other parts of the system. While we work globally, we place an emphasis in particular on South-South learning, where we feel significant learning across countries can be drawn out and built-upon even further.

**Activities will include:**

- **Training**—that takes a variety of forms, depending on the context, including incubators (longer and shorter-term support programs for accountapreneurs), innovation challenges (competitions to source new ideas from the bottom up around issues such as SDG16), integrity schools and workshops (focusing on peer-learning and innovation), and bootcamps with civil society, businesses, students, the media and reformers within government (such as our Integrity Icons and incoming civil servants). These efforts will be evidence-based through programs like the Civic Action Teams we will collect data that can inform decision-makers as they come through our programs. The Lab has now developed and codified a significant basis of knowledge around how to build accountability and will work to roll this out in new ways across the contexts in which we work in partnership with leading organizations within government (such as civil service training schools) and civil society (such as Ashoka). In the 2020-2023 period, we also anticipate working further with the private sector in terms of skills-building and peer-learning around accountability issues.

**PEER LEARNING AND ROLE-MODELING AMONG INTIMACY ICONS**

A core part of our efforts to support responsible leaders does it through Integrity Icon. The campaign is a way to shift norms more broadly— in the 2020-2023 period we want to find ways to support the Icons and their teams more specifically to build coalitions, share ideas and support each other to push for integrity within government. We will build on the following activities we began in the 2017-2020 period:

- **Integrity Summits**—we will continue to bring together the Integrity Icons at the national
and regional levels in the countries in which we work to brainstorm on new approaches, develop solutions to challenges and support each other. Just as corrupt networks protect each other, we hope to build networks of integrity that can provide the collective determination and energy to push back against a lack of accountability. In 2020 we also hope to host our first international Integrity Summit, bringing together Icons from across the countries in which we work.

• **“Meet the Icons” Events**- through which we host the Icons for discussions with citizens at the local and national levels, to prompt conversation about what integrity means and why it is important. These events are often hosted at schools and universities, with an emphasis on conveying to young people the idea that you can be a person of integrity and serve within government.

In the 2020-2023 period we also want to build out an Integrity Fellowship- piloted in Nepal- through which students can serve as fellows with the Icons and learn how to build integrity within government. This began in Nepal and in the 2020-2023 period we hope to expand it across countries, building on the clear impact to date.

• **Collaborative Spaces**- building out our co-working and innovation communities as part of the OpenGov Hub network, with a particular focus on using them as places to develop new thinking, shift norms (making accountability the default expectation) and nodes for new relationships among change-makers. The Hubs will also be vehicles to share knowledge and ideas; provide tools for creative accountability outputs that can influence norms, including audio and film production facilities; and continue to be places where we encourage experimentation and learning.

We will also work more closely with the teams of the Icons, hosting mini-retreats whenever we can- to build buy-in to the process of change, demonstrate the rewards of integrity and support shared accountability goals.

• **Integrity Retreats**- while we celebrate Integrity Icons, we realize that building accountability is a collective process and we are working to change individual integrity into shared shifts in organizational practice. To do this, we will work more closely with the teams of the Icons, hosting mini-retreats whenever we can- to build buy-in to the process of change, demonstrate the rewards of integrity and support shared accountability goals.

• **Integrity Trainings**- the Icons are seen within their countries as role-models for the next generation. We will continue to build out our integrity trainings, through which the Icons serve as mentors for younger, incoming civil servants who are beginning their careers in government. The trainings support integrity as a core value within the civil service, and the Icons play a role in sharing ideas, highlighting best practices and encouraging values-based decision-making.

**OUR NEW APPROACH COULD BE SUMMARIZED IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we did previously</th>
<th>2020-2023</th>
<th>What we’ll do now</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed and codified incubators for civic activists</td>
<td>Roll-out a broader set of training programs in more places, for both civic activists and reformers within government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused trainings broadly on accountability and civic participation, drawing on best practices</td>
<td>Create dynamic peer-learning networks among reformers to provide ongoing support and feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built out co-working and innovation spaces across multiple countries</td>
<td>Work to more meaningfully make these diverse spaces backbones for the accountability movement</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**INFLUENCING POLICIES, PROCESSES AND PRACTICES**

Over the past 8 years, we have worked to connect our efforts at the ground-level to larger reform processes at the local, national, regional and international levels. For example, we have worked with local government officials in Nepal to build accountability; with the government of South Africa to develop a new strategy for anti-corruption; and provided guidance and advice to the African Union on issues of integrity and accountability. Going forwards, we would like to get even more intentional about this process, pushing for reforms based on what we are learning and working to close the “implementation gap” between policy and practice. The goal of this element of our work is not to become a global level advocacy organization- there are many of those already- but to complement the work of these kinds of partners where it makes sense, drive coalitions for change at the local level and connect dots in ways that can lead to long-term change in communities.

**Activities will include:**

• **Coalition Building**- this work has to be collective process. We will actively work to participate in and build relevant coalitions and communities around accountability, transparency and open government at the local, national and international levels. This will allow us to channel upwards the ideas we are surfacing from the bottom-up to inform and influence policies, practices and procedures, and ultimately shift power. We have both excellent networks in communities and access to rooms where policy decisions are made- and we want to make sure we use these together and effectively. These efforts will include a particular focus on the Open Government Partnership as a process for the co-creation of goals related to accountability and open government between citizens and government; and a variety of work around SDG16 with partners from across government, business and the media.

• **Convening**- efforts within communities to find innovative solutions to stubborn governance challenges, support citizen engagement and develop people-driven feedback loops, such as our Civic Action Teams. We will build on our work with communities- on everything from the accountability of migration to the transparency of natural resource contracts- to better integrate the idea of citizen feedback into development more broadly and ensure people’s voices are used to inform decision-making. Our convening, when it happens will not be big and flashy- there are already conferences and workshops at which we can meet with and learn from others.

We will also work to convene the right people in catalytic, low-key ways at the local level around the accountability issues that matter to them, and to find opportunities for our Network Lab staff to feed their voices into discussions that matter. We will also work to create opportunities to convene in partnership with others including our accountapreneurs and organizations such as Feedback Labs.
THINGS WE WILL NOT DO

For us, a strategy requires choices, and an understanding of what we will not do as an organization. In the 2020-2023 period, programmatically there are a variety of approaches we will avoid that we have touched upon/considered in the past, including:

- **Developing civic technologies**- we are not technologists and the evidence is not clear enough for us around the impact of civic technologies on accountability. We understand there are such tools that work but we will not be investing our time and energy heavily in tech-based approaches. We will, however, use technology where it is useful, particularly as a tool for inputs (eg data collection);

- **Engaging in large-scale global advocacy**- we will work at the local, national and even regional levels to influence power, as outlined above, but there are organizations who already advocate well around the issues we care about more globally- we will support them where we can instead doing this actively ourselves;

- ** Widening the definition of accountability**- we focus particularly on the accountability of people in power currently (across government and the private sector in particular) for everyday issues. We will not begin to work on larger issues of accountability, such as legal accountability for war crimes, for example.

SCOPE AND SCALE

We understand clearly that accountability comes through proximity- we have to be close to the challenges we hope to address, in order to understand them and develop possible solutions. This does not mean we will work everywhere- we specifically target countries where we feel there is room for our work to have a meaningful impact over time; and in which we can learn useful lessons that can be shared to inform our work and the accountability field as a whole. We will continue to make decisions about where and how to engage around the world using our context selection matrix.

We will continue to deepen our work in the places we already operate (Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Niger, Pakistan and South Africa) in the ways outlined above and grow the Lab’s presence into 3 other key, strategic contexts where we feel the potential for these approaches exists. In the 2020-2023 period, we also expect to begin work in the Global North, particularly the United States. Issues of accountability are interconnected and we feel they cannot be solved by focusing only on those places- usually in the Global South- where the effects are most deeply felt. There is a great deal that the Global North can learn from the innovation, energy and new approaches that we see in parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

We will scale the Lab’s work through licensing our content to others to implement with our support (such as the Integrity Icon campaign); partnering with like-minded organizations; and open sourcing as much of our knowledge as we can through online modules and courses.

Countries in which we have already partnered to roll-out our content include Sri Lanka (Integrity Icon); and we are in active discussions with a number of other partners elsewhere to do the same in at least 5 additional countries over the three-year period. In our 2017-2020 strategy we understood scaling as a low, medium and high-touch process- this will continue to guide our efforts, as outlined below.

MEASURING IMPACT AND FOSTERING LEARNING

Building accountability is a difficult, long and non-linear process. It is highly political and requires a deep understanding of contexts, relationships and incentives. We also understand progress towards better governance as a collective process- we are just one part of a much larger effort to shift norms, equip reformers and influence policies, processes and practices.

We hope to learn in an adaptive way- meaning developing an understanding not just of what works but where and why; and then understanding how successful approaches can be used to inform activities. In the 2020-2023 period we will continue to cultivate a culture of learning to create a space where continuous feedback, skills development and curiosity around our work is infused into daily operations, decision-making and programming. We will foster this intentionally through ongoing opportunities for staff to broaden their knowledge and skills through peer learning, structured training, reflection and sharing. We know this leads to improved risk-assessment and course-correction around our work, and more meaningful engagement with our program participants.

We hope to measure progress against our own goals and our contribution to wider changes. In the 2020-2023 period, we will do that in the following four ways:

- **Our results framework**- for this strategy (see Annex II below). The idea for this framework is not to be exhaustive in any way, or to try to measure too much. For each specific piece of our strategy we will develop in-depth measurement goals and indicators as we progress. Rather the summary framework provides a set of indicators that broadly help us understand if we are making progress towards the outcomes outlined above and in our Theory of Action. We have made these indicators quantitative where we can, with an understanding that what we are doing is not always easily measurable in numbers, nor is this always the best way to measure progress. In early 2020 we will work to adapt and build-out this results framework further with support from the Open Society Foundations.

- **Real-time feedback and data collection**- from across our Network Labs, partners and other
stakeholders in our work in order to understand how we are doing and course correct as necessary. Adaptive learning is at the center of everything we do at the Accountability Lab and is a core part of how we measure our impact. We operationalize this learning in our work by using this real-time data to try new things and figure out what works and what does not. We then document learnings and make sure that we inform our next round of experimentation.

- **Small-scale learning reviews** - meaningful internal studies to understand how and why our work may or may not be making a difference (see our Contribution Tracing report here for example). We will also conduct annual learning surveys, all of which can be found here. These surveys, which gather data from six key sets of stakeholders in our work: our teams, Boards of Directors, partners, participants in our programs, peer organizations and donors- allow us to understand the progress we are making towards the goals set out in this strategy, our adherence to our Theory of Action and how we may need to shift our efforts in the medium-term to achieve our vision.

- **External evaluations** - including a mid-term review of our work as a whole in 2021, and ongoing reviews of elements of our strategy. These reviews are tied closely to relationships we are building with the academic community that works on accountability and integrity issues (as outlined in the learning section above) and other partners such as the Accountability Research Center. In these reviews we want to focus on concrete examples of how the change we seek is happening; and not- and what lessons this yields both for our own work and for the field more broadly.

In terms of communicating our impact and learning, we strive to follow impact reporting best practices: clarity, accessibility, transparency, accountability, verifiability, and proportionality. We produce accessible learning and impact survey reports annually; organize public events around learning and impact issues, including "Fail Faires" (events to celebrate and learn from failures); host monthly Open Board Calls; update social media daily with articles, photographs, success stories (blogs, videos and photos) and challenges we face; and we engage in broader conversations around these issues both locally in the countries we operate and globally through conferences and events.

**OPERATIONALIZING THE STRATEGY**

We understand that we may need to adapt our programming as our work evolves during the next three years. And we agree that a strategy is not something you “have” it is something you “do”. We commit to setting aside sufficient time for critical analysis of this strategy process and to carrying out strategic reviews on an annual basis, to understand how closely we are working towards our strategy and if elements of it might need to be refined; annual debriefs and strategic learning sessions with our Network Labs around their experiences adapting and implementing this strategy across contexts; and more regular strategy meetings with our Country Directors, Open Board Calls and learning events as outlined further in the Measuring Impact and Learning section below.

Beyond the activities outlined above, in the next three years we also commit as an organization to:

- Ensure constructive engagement with governments at all levels around these issues; and greater partnership with private sector organizations;
- Better share ideas and allocate resources across our country teams and communities to help ensure networked-learning;
- Continue to ensure a focus on bringing in marginalized, excluded and otherwise less heard communities into our work to ensure the process of building accountability is inclusive;
- Coordinate national strategies in the countries in which we work in support of this larger organizational strategy and with a deep understanding of local contexts;
- Broaden our support base to ensure that we are bringing in a diverse set of donors to support both our work and that of our accountapreneurs and partners;
- Communicate our work as far as we can to reinforce the importance of these efforts and build traction around them;
- Continue to recruit diverse staff into the organization at all levels to lead the representative, generational change we want to see;
- Continue to provide our team members with every opportunity to develop their skills, networks and knowledge at the national and international levels.

**Organizational Structure**

We are organized as a decentralized, flat organization, with Accountability Lab Global registered as a 501c3 organization in the United States; and our Network Labs registered as local, legal entities in the countries in which they work. Each Accountability Lab is overseen by a local Board of Directors (see the full list of Boards of Directors by country on our website). We have put in place collaboration agreements between AL Global and the Network Labs, which are generally 3 years in duration but are renewed annually based on an internal evaluation process with correlates closely with the Accountable Now principles outlined below. We have teams of between 2 and 20 staff in each country team- see our latest orgaigram and staff profiles here. In everything we do at the Lab, we embrace diversity and we are proud to say that we outperform our peers in almost every category related to diversity and inclusion. You can read more about how we are thinking about gender, for example, here; and diversity more broadly in our most recent learning report.

**Funding**

We have received generous support from a variety of governments, multilateral organizations, foundations, companies and individuals over our first 8 years of operations (find our complete list of supporters here). Our budget for 2019 was $1.3 million- and has grown by an average of 35% year-on-year. We maintain our income and expenditures publicly as part of our commitment to radical transparency. These can be viewed through the Open Budget section of our website (under development). This has allowed us to grow our staff and fill key positions- including a Director of Learning and a Director of Communications; while also building out our programs and systems.

The budget for the 2020-2023 period can be seen here. We anticipate that our budget will grow to around $1.9 million in 2020; $2.5 million in 2021; and $3.1 million in 2022. We anticipate reaching our fundraising goals as we improve what we do, although we also have a scenario planning process in place to adapt in response to possible external factors that might affect funding levels.

In the next three years we will hire a full time Finance Manager and two program officers to coordinate campaigns and other programming, while also growing our footprint globally. Overall, we anticipate that we will continue to spend an average of 24% of our budget on staffing, 13%
on direct costs and 62% on programming (see our budget breakdown [here]). This positions us as an organization that we feel provides real value for money to donors and supporters. In the next three years we will also formalize a fund to support our accountants; and we will continue to support the next generation of non-profit leaders through our non-profit management fellowship. Finally, we will aim by 2023 to create a reserve of six-months’ operating expenses.

Operationally, the work outlined above means that by 2023, the Accountability Lab will work in 12 countries globally, and with partners in an additional 5 countries; with a global budget of $3.1 million; and a team of 100+ staff. Please refer to our 2020-2023 operational plan for more details.

**OUR ACCOUNTABILITY**

As outlined above, we see ourselves as a values-driven organization; and we see our values as central to everything else we do in terms of both hard elements (strategy, systems and structure) and soft elements (skills, style and staff). We have developed a robust ethical understanding and see accountability not just as a theme of our work, but as a core part of who we are and how we show up in the world.

**ACCOUNTABILITY LAB’S VALUES**

We work hard to live by and model our values in everything we do. We have collectively developed the following core values that guide our efforts:

- **Integrity**: We set an example for honesty and transparency and we are directly accountable to all our stakeholders;
- **Innovation**: We foster creativity in every possible way. We are always open to new ideas; we acknowledge and learn from our failures; and we adapt to changing circumstances;
- **Humility**: We begin by listening, ensure we build trust over time and know that local problems require local solutions;
- **Practicality**: We emphasize useful tools that are sustainable and scalable over time. We ensure cost-effectiveness and make every dollar go as far as it can;

**Collaboration**: We strive to collaborate wherever possible. We believe in the power of community, and are building an ecosystem for accountability around the world.

In the 2020-2023 period we are looking to better monitor and track progress in terms of our own accountability through the Accountability Now framework. This is a global platform that supports CSOs to be transparent, responsive to stakeholders and focused on delivering impact. In adhering to the framework we will sign up to the 12 accountability commitments, which aim to institute an inclusive, participatory and bottom-up approach to development that goes beyond transparency and static, traditional forms of accountability.

On an annual basis we will publish our Accountability Now self-assessment and update how and where we have improved on the previous year. Additionally, we are making a commitment to work actively with Accountability Now and other CSOs to deepen understanding within the field of these issues, support further commitments that make sense and push for broader acceptance of these kinds of approaches among civil society globally. We also commit to open-sourcing as much as we can in terms of our policies, procedures, systems and data, so that other organizations within the accountability space and beyond can avoid reinventing the wheel and can improve what they do in practical ways with much less effort than otherwise. We want to build a robust, accountable civil society eco-system in as many ways as we possibly can.

As it relates to funding, we will also use the opportunities we have to work with donors to try and set (and share) new standards in terms of value for money, duty of care (as outlined above) and accountability to communities. More on our thinking around these issues can be found [here].

**RISKS**

The Accountability Lab works in some difficult parts of the world, which makes it all the more important that we are risk-averse operationally. We are working hard to develop strategic risk-awareness across our network; to understand risks to implementation of this strategy. But we are also thinking about the potential risks that might arise even if this strategy is executed flawlessly.

In 2020 we build our risk management plan and checklist, which will expand on the summary outlined below.

**Drawing on the important work of our partner Global Press, we also understand our duty of care to everyone involved in our work. In the next three years we will continue to prioritize the wellbeing of everyone within our organization and who participates meaningfully in our work. We have developed a series of protocols and processes governing the physical, emotional, digital and legal security of our staff and partners as summarized in the table above. We have also set up a Safety and Security Fund (totaling $20,000 as of January 2020) which we hope to grow to over $100,000 by the end of 2023. This fund sits in an easily accessible account and can be drawn down immediately in the case of any serious threat or emergency related to any of our staff around the world.**

As we grow and improve, we are also bringing our Boards through the governance committees and the full bodies; into deeper conversations about risk, and how best we can manage and mitigate the risks outlined above. Risk management is a team effort and one that we feel requires ongoing and constant attention from the top to the bottom of the organization.

**WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?**

This strategy is the product of conversations with many people and organizations working in development, governance, management and social change. The team will now work to implement this strategy— in partnership with these stakeholders—and put in place the systems needed to ensure its success. Immediate next steps for this this strategy in the 1st six months of 2020 are three-fold:

- **Localization by Network Labs**— our Network Labs around the world have been closely involved in the co-creation of this strategy.

  Now that the strategy has been approved by the Accountability Lab Global Board of Directors,
they will work in their local contexts to adapt and localize it to fit their realities, and have their versions of this strategy approved by their own Boards of Directors. The content of those strategies and the focus of programming in each country will vary depending on the context—although the parameters are already emerging. In Nigeria, for example, we see the potential for accountabilitylab.org with any thoughts. You? What are we missing? Where have we got it wrong? Feel free to reach out to us at info@accountabilitylab.org .

INTTEGRITY ICON

The Integrity Icons are incredible role-models for others to emulate. Read more about the Integrity Icons here and about the campaign as a whole here and watch our TED talk about Integrity Icons here.

The Integrity Icons are incredible - from Alphonso, the incorruptible Drugs Enforcement Agency officer in Liberia; to Batool, the pioneering young tax collector in Pakistan; to Yasamina, the tireless nurse from Mali. Integrity Icon has grown dramatically since it began more than 6 years ago - the show is now seen by millions of people across 9 countries on three continents. We have received hundreds of thousands of votes for the winning Icons; mobilized hundreds of volunteers behind the cause; and partnered with numerous civil society and media organizations around the world. Read more about it in the Economist and watch more on the BBC.

But the campaign itself is just the starting point - we are working hard now to support the winning Icons. The trust and credibility the campaign creates - and our support - has led to promotions for many of the Icons, including to Ministerial positions, from which they can work to build integrity from the top-down. Additionally, the recognition that comes with the campaign has not only heightened Icons’ motivation to advocate for change in their agencies but in some cases has also given them the respect and leverage to convince power holders in their respective policies and processes that foster greater accountability.

We have brought together the Icons to share ideas and collaborate through Integrity Summits; supported their work as mentors for incoming civil servants through collaborations with civil service training schools; developed Integrity Innovation Labs through which upcoming bureaucrats develop new ideas; and created fellowships through which young people can learn from the Icons about accountability within government. The ultimate goal is to shift norms within institutions; and move from individual integrity into broader institutional integrity.

• Accountability Incubator: Akin to a business incubator for the private sector, the accountability incubator helps young civil society change-makers (or “accountapreneurs”) to develop the tools, skills, networks, outreach efforts and funding streams they need to build sustainable, effective programs for accountability, integrity and open governance. The incubator allowed us to re-balance assistance for civil society in the accountability space towards bottom-up, highly localized ideas for change.

ACCOUNTABILITY INCUBATOR

The Accountability Incubator began as an ad-hoc way to support young people with good ideas. It has now evolved into a highly competitive annual program across 5 countries (Nepal, Pakistan, Lebanon, Nigeria and Mali) for the best accountapreneurs to develop, test and grow their ideas. It begins with an open call, with the 5 to 10 selected accountapreneurs in each country beginning their program in January every year. This involves quarterly training/ meet-up sessions for 3 days, ongoing mentoring, design and communications efforts, seed funding and a variety of additional assistance from our teams on the ground (access to our co-working and innovation spaces, access to trainings and conferences etc).

In our previous strategy we outlined a three-pronged approach to building accountability. Read more about examples of each of these approaches below.

• Values-Shifting Campaigns: efforts to change mindsets, highlight positive deviance (or accountability champions) and create a cultural environment for accountability through popular, constructive campaigns inside and outside governments. We did this through efforts including Integrity Icon (formerly Integrity Idol); the Honesty Oscars; and music competitions such as Voice2Rep. The idea was to catalyze a positive movement to build accountability and shift discussions around accountability from negative conversations to constructive actions.

• Planning for a Strategic Retreat- in 2019 we held the first Accountability Lab strategic retreat for Country Directors from around the world. In the first half of 2020 we will begin to plan the 2nd strategic retreat, to take place in the second half of 2020. This will focus on how to further collaborate to develop the capacity, systems and support we need to implement this strategy; and sharing lessons among Network Labs on implementation.

As the Accountability Lab experiments, learns and grows, we are looking to bring in additional capacity in key areas, including programs, finance and development. Our Operational Plan (to follow) will guide our efforts to build the structures, resources and systems necessary to make this strategy a reality.

CONTACTS

We are very open to ideas, suggestions and feedback on this strategy- what resonates with you? What are we missing? Where have we got it wrong? Feel free to reach out to us at info@accountabilitylab.org with any thoughts. You can keep up-to-date with our progress at www.accountabilitylab.org and on Facebook and Twitter.

ANNEX 1- EXAMPLES OF OUR 2017-2020 APPROACHES TO BUILDING ACCOUNTABILITY

In our previous strategy we outlined a three-pronged approach to building accountability. Read more about examples of each of these approaches below.

• Initial Review of Progress- we will more formally review progress against our strategy on an annual basis but will initiate an informal global review of progress during the 1st six-months of implementation, towards the end of June 2020. As the new strategy begins and is localized, this will allow us to course-correct in response to any initial challenges or feedback. The annual review and informal review will be led by the Accountability Lab Global team with the support of the Global Board of Directors. The Network Lab’s Boards of Directors will also provide support to ongoing reviews with respect to the progress of their Labs. Any changes needed will be carried out collaboratively by Network Lab teams and the Global team.

• Accountability Incubator: Akin to a business incubator for the private sector, the accountability incubator helps young civil society change-makers (or “accountapreneurs”) to develop the tools, skills, networks, outreach efforts and funding streams they need to build sustainable, effective programs for accountability, integrity and open governance. The incubator allowed us to re-balance assistance for civil society in the accountability space towards bottom-up, highly localized ideas for change.

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The ideas and people that have come through the Accountability Incubator are now beginning to show real impact. For example, Malika Kayani, an accountant-entrepreneur from Pakistan, whose website Doctory, addresses the lack of transparency in the healthcare sector by providing information on the nearest healthcare facilities to residents in urban, peri-urban and rural communities. This addresses the critical challenge of equal access to quality, life-saving services. In Liberia, Jefferson Kuna founded The Rich Chicken, which is one of the country’s foremost sources of digital news that is free, ethical, and includes coverage on rural communities while other newspapers focus primarily on urban spaces.

We are also beginning to see the accountapreneurs coming together to build dynamic coalitions around the issues they care about. For example, in Pakistan, Tanzeela Khan a disability rights advocate, and Marleaza Raza a film-maker, met through our incubator and developed a film-school around accountability for rights for women with disabilities. And in Liberia, musician Henry “Amaz,” Tor and justice advocate Dagg Kamara have teamed up to develop audio content around rule of law issues.

**Ecosystem Building:** We promoted collaboration around accountability and open governance by supporting community feedback loops (through Citizen Helpdeks); developing thematic co-working spaces (including OpenGov Hubs in Nepal, Mali and Pakistan); and an affiliate hub, called Campuses, in Liberia) and sharing learning among organizations and individuals within our networks. The idea was to build greater capacity for joint action and a collective identity for accountability agents of change.

**Citizen Helpdeks—Now Rebranded as the Civic Action Teams (CIVACTs)**

An example of our ecosystem building work is the Citizen Helpdesk Civic Action Team—a pioneering citizen voice, trust-building, and governance tool. The Helpdeks began after the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal through Accountability Lab Nepal, as a way to gather information, validate decision-making and connect citizens to people in power. The process involves local volunteers who collect data on community needs and feed that up to decision-makers at all levels. The teams then feed decisions back down to communities and work with citizens to solve problems around these decisions with local power-holders. This creates a powerful feedback loop that ensures citizen voice, holds decision-makers to account, and builds trust. Read more about the Helpdesk model in this presentation.

In the aftermath of the earthquakes in Nepal, the Helpdeks reached hundreds of thousands of people and solved 500+ problems at the local level. The effort has now expanded to Liberia, where it focuses on natural resource governance and service delivery issues; Mali, where it focuses on justice and security issues in the center and the north of the country; and Nigeria where it focuses on infrastructure issues. The Helpdeks have helped solve issues related to everything from inefficient legal systems to lack of service delivery to corruption within police forces. The Citizen Helpdeks provide an alternative, bottom-up and grassroots process of development, that solve immediate problems and build legitimacy of decision-making over time. The Helpdeks are working in tandem with our other strands of work: for example, one of our Integrity Icons in Nepal has now been made the Director General of the Department of Foreign Labor and is working with our Helpdeks network to address issues related to migration. And in Liberia, our incubator in 2018 focused on recruiting citizens with good ideas from natural resource concession areas, allowing for collaboration to solve problems identified by the Helpdeks. The Helpdeks build the accountability ecosystem by supporting citizens to understand their rights, creating a shared basis of understanding between critical stakeholders in communities, mobilizing the media and private sector to solve problems, and working with local government officials to build trust and a sense of forward progress on accountability over time.

Over the last four years we have adapted our CHD program to specific communities and have strengthened the way in which we bring stakeholders together. While the CHD in Nepal has predominantly been focused on migration, we have also developed programming aimed at enhancing fiscal transparency and communities’ participation in budget-making at the ward level, which has shown impact in closing the gap between constituents and local government. Trained local enumerators collected feedback on communities’ most critical needs, and relayed this to groups of local government officials. Exposure to feedback from their constituents prompted government officials to launch a door-to-door campaign. They are now regularly meeting with community members at their homes, and hearing needs first-hand has led to tangible examples of co-created solutions. For example, money has been committed to improving wells, roads and providing adequate lighting to improve community safety. In a number of these cases, where the ward could not provide 100% of the funding needed, community members are collaborating to contribute the remaining funds or provide labor to complete projects.

**ANNEX II—PRELIMINARY ACCOUNTABILITY LAB RESULTS FRAMEWORK 2020-2023**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>SUCCESS/TARGET (BY 2023)</th>
<th>MEASUREMENT TOOLS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shifting Norms and Behaviors: around issues of accountability to ensure that integrity becomes the expected behavior within societies (active citizens)</td>
<td>Campaigns and Learning (Campaigns)</td>
<td>75% citizens we work with feel the Civic Action teams are more active in work to build accountability; 65% partners feel our work better helps them understand the role of norms in supporting integrity; 60% partners report that learning resources are useful</td>
<td>Ongoing surveys of those engaged in our campaigns; Small-scale learning reviews with key stakeholders; Research with partners around how norms shift occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipping Reformers for Collective Action: inside and outside government—through the knowledge and tools they need to push for better governance through training and learning (responsible leaders)</td>
<td>Training and Collaborative Spaces (Knowledge)</td>
<td>75% participants in programs we fund recommend the training to others; 70% of participants in our programs feel they receive peer-support from others in our networks; 70% of change-makers in our Hubs are more willing to collaborate with others.</td>
<td>Ongoing surveys of training participants; Real-time feedback and data collection from Hubs; External evaluations of knowledge activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencing Policies, Processes and Practices: around critical accountability issues; through bringing people together and advocating for change (accountable institutions)</td>
<td>Coalition-building and Convening (Communities)</td>
<td>70% of members of coalitions we lead feel we provide meaningful support to changes in policies, processes and practices; 70% participants at convenings feel part of a larger community that can push for changes on accountability issues; 80% of targeted community members feel the Civic Action teams improve accountability.</td>
<td>Ongoing surveys of coalition and community members; Real-time feedback and data collection from Hubs; Social media influence analyses.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
We have also learned a huge amount about the process and outputs of a strategy process from strategies put out by organizations including: Open Society Foundations Fiscal Governance Program, the Transparency and Accountability Initiative, the Open Contracting Partnership, Luminate, the Hewlett Foundation, Transparency International, CIVICUS, Mercy Corps and many more.

We drew inspiration for this strategy from a variety of places, movements and organizations such as the Transparency and Accountability Initiative (TAI), Restless Development, BudgIT, Operation Libero, and many more.

The word system is important here- we appreciate clearly that a problem like poor governance is a function of power dynamics, competing incentives and social norms. We are thinking systemically about how accountability problems are defined and where we as an organization can play a role in addressing these. This does not mean that we expect to change these systems entirely, but that we hope to identify opportunities for change, where we can seed new ideas, connect inspiring individuals and support coalitions to grow and influence other parts of the system.

As Jonathan Fox has pointed out, a strategic, campaign approach to accountability can also create more space for the organic involvement of diverse actors, bolstering sustainability.

This work will allow us to become more of an “evidence-action lab”- to scale up the solutions that are emerging in our own- and others’ work; and delineate the connections between relevant stakeholders- including governments, NGOs, civil society groups, funders, the media and others- to see how collective norm change can come about.

As one reviewer of this strategy told us: “In this way you will play the role of the platform not the ‘app’”

In this, we hope to provide in some ways what Kania and Kramer have called backbone support for the larger accountability movement in the places in which we work.

We also expect to continue our work within the World Economic Forum’s Partnering Against Corruption Initiative, the World Bank’s Global Partnership for Social Accountability and the Transparency, Accountability and Participation (TAP) Network among other international efforts around these issues.

We are using the Scaling Pathways materials to guide our thinking on these issues, particularly on identifying evidence needs and maintaining the quality of our impact.

See the McKinsey 7-S Framework, which we feel remains one of the best models for understanding organizational effectiveness.