ACCOUNTABILITY LAB STRATEGY 2020-2023

accountabilitylab

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. In the 2020-2023 period we will focus on: i) Shifting norms and behaviors- around issues of accountability to ensure that integrity becomes the expected behavior within societies (*campaigns*); ii) equipping reformers for collective action- inside and outside government- with the knowledge and tools they need to push for better governance through training and learning (*knowledge*); and iii) influencing policies, processes and practices- around critical accountability issues, through growing coalitions and advocating for change (*communities*). See the 1-page summary infographic of our strategy and approach.

Operationally, this 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 and our budget for this work here.

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.

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 dramatically and we have tried to adapt accordingly. Some important progress has been made in the places we work in terms of civic participation, community engagement and innovation in governance- and many lessons have been learned. But the trend overall has been largely negative. With the rise of nationalist politics, we have seen increasing threats to open societies; and despite rising fears about issues like immigration and climate change, there has been a continued lack of accountability of many in government. NGOs and civil society organizations have lost

credibility as a result of well-known scandals (read more about how we are thinking about issues such as gender equality here), and recent polls show a deep lack of confidence in the work of these kinds of organizations. Legitimacy- of all sorts- is declining. (Read more about how we are trying to ensure legitimacy in the face of elements of these trends here)

The gaps in understanding and practice within this field have become clearer over the past 8 years. The global youth population is growing rapidly but young people, women and other minority groups are still largely excluded from decision-making; citizens everywhere are losing the sense that they can play a role in changing these dynamics; and it continues to be very difficult to ensure laws are reflected in practices that support accountability. In our work, we see this manifesting itself in a number of interrelated ways

• Deep disillusionment among young people with political systems that have generated widely disparate outcomes for a small elite versus a large majority;

• An obvious disconnect between the incredible ideas, networks and creativity of citizens and the systems- local, national and international- through which processes of inclusive change can take place;

• A sense of isolation and an inability among change-makers to come together and collectively push for the reforms they want to see.

These challenges are serious and have real implications for people's lives. Our work in countries such as Mali and Niger indicates a direct link between a lack of accountability and insecurity that has been exacerbated by some donor interventions. And when we speak to people everywhere- through our Civic Action Teams for example- we continue to hear that it is a deficit of governance that drives problems ranging from migration to lack of public services to inadequate justice systems. All of this affects the way the Accountability Lab works- as outlined further below.

The field of accountability

In the past 8 years, the field of accountability, transparency and open government has also evolved dramatically. The initial optimism placed on the idea that greater transparency would lead directly to accountability has faded; the promise of technology for opening up decision-making and politics has been shown to be a double-edged sword; and many social accountability processes have proven unable to shift larger political systems.

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[1]. 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 faming" 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 in this field. We work to connect these agents in ways that allows them to build coalitions for change within organizations, shift norms among institutions and strengthen their collective identity and energy.
- *Unlikely Networks not just Usual Suspects-* the accountability and transparency field can at times be confused by overly technical language and approaches. This prevents, different, dynamic voices and people from becoming part of larger efforts to create change. We've learned that as we build "unlikely networks" among civil society,

government officials, musicians, creatives, technologists, film-makers and others, we can open up accountability work and generate much greater engagement around core issues.
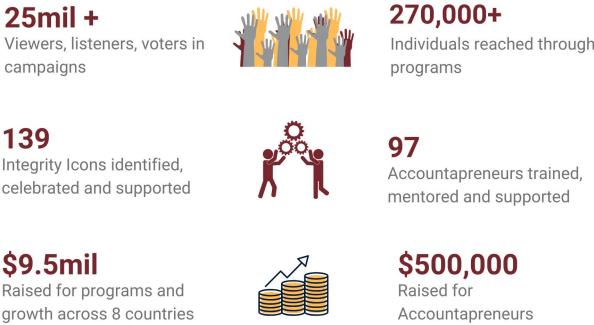
- *Inside Out not just Outside In-* our work to date has focused largely on civil society and young people outside government who have been working to push for greater accountability. But through Integrity Icon in particular, we have now developed a much deeper understanding of and support for reformers inside government- connecting them to each other and to those outside government to work together for reform. Accountability has to be a collective effort.

- *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 "grasstops", 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 as 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 +
Viewers, listeners, voters in campaigns

270,000+
Individuals reached through programs

139
Integrity Icons identified, celebrated and supported

97
Accountapreneurs trained, mentored and supported

$9.5mil
Raised for programs and growth across 8 countries

$500,000
Raised for Accountapreneurs

In our previous strategy we outlined a three-pronged approach to building accountability through Values-Shifting Campaigns, the Accountability Incubator and Eco-System Building (read more about these and examples of each of these approaches in Annex I). The idea was that three broad objectives supported each other- the awareness and engagement campaigns helped us spark interest in accountability and began to change attitudes, especially among youth; the incubator allowed us to engage this group further, working with the best ideas and building communities around them; and supporting an ecosystem brought these groups together in communities and provided them with the knowledge and resources to collaborate over time.

Our most recent Learning Report indicated that our community feels our key strengths lie in our ability to build communities of changemakers and

"unlikely networks" for collective change; our ability to learn and share around accountability issues; and our ability to support advocacy and policy change efforts at the local level. Additionally, our increased learning capacity, ability to measure our impact and feedback from others in our field over the last 18 months has left us with more confidence in our focus on positive deviance and norm shifts. Read more about our impact and learning in our other annual Learning Reports here.

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 approaches; and 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 our assumptions were proven wrong. 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- we now know we have to be deeply intentional about supporting inclusion, which is absolutely central 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 can be real constraints to inclusion 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 lost opportunities 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

MAKING GOVERNANCE WORK FOR PEOPLE

WHAT WE BRING

WHAT WE DO

THE CHANGE WE MAKE

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Active Citizens
Responsible Leaders
Accountable Institutions

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

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new approaches around accountability but these have not always changed, yet, into more systemic reforms. This relates to learning too- we didn't always collect the data we wanted or needed or manage to explain why our work matters so much to the right people in the right ways. The day-to-day realities of management, systems-building, fundraising and delivery can at times prevent progress towards some of these larger goals.

Internally, we made huge progress in building Accountability Labs in 8 different countries, but we also fell short on some of our operational goals. Building local Boards of Directors is still a work in progress; we need to improve our database management; our staff performance management indicators require ongoing revision; and in terms of fundraising, we sometimes struggled imperfectly with the goals and demands of some less-flexible donors.

We see all of these challenges as a natural part of organizational growth- but in this strategy also want to make sure that we learn from our experiences to date in ways that will both help us improve what we do and inform the field more broadly (more on our learning approach below).

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 Icons - 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.[2] 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.[3] 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.

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

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.

GOAL	ACTIONS	SUCCESS (BY 2023)
Shifting Norms and Behaviors- around issues of accountability to ensure that integrity becomes the expected behavior within societies (active citizens)	Campaigns and Learning (Campaigns)	• 75% citizens we work with feel more actively engaged 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
Equipping Reformers for Collective Action- inside and outside government- with the knowledge and tools they need to push for better governance through training and learning (responsible leaders)	Training and Collaborative Spaces (Knowledge)	• 75% participants in training programs would 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.
Influencing Policies, Processes and Practices- around critical accountability issues, through bringing people together and advocating for change (accountable institutions).	Coalition-building and Convening (Communities)	• 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.

This 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*).

SHIFTING NORMS AND CHANGING BEHAVIORS

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

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 for corruption and towards one that also understands collective action as part of the answer. As one of our team members put it "we need to make accountability contagious".

Activities will include:

- **Campaigns**- that support positive narratives and create role-models for the younger generation.[4] In particular, we will build on 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 partnership with more established musicians.

The campaign then spread to Nigeria where it has grown- through partnership 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-out 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; 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.[5]

OUR NEW APPROACH COULD BE SUMMARIZED IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:

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

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.[6] 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 INTEGRITY ICONS

A core part of our efforts to support responsible leaders to date has been 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 Idols, shadowing their work over time, to learn how best to lead with integrity within government.

• *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.

• *Integrity Fellowship-* we have seen that the Icons play an important role in inspiring the younger generation to join government. To support this process, we have created a program 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.[7]

"WE HAVE SEEN THAT THE ICONS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN INSPIRING THE YOUNGER GENERATION TO JOIN GOVERNMENT. TO SUPPORT THIS PROCESS, WE HAVE CREATED A PROGRAM THROUGH WHICH STUDENTS CAN SERVE AS FELLOWS WITH THE ICONS"

OUR NEW APPROACH COULD BE SUMMARIZED IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:

2017-2020	2020-2023
What we did previously…	*…What we'll do now*
Developed and codified incubators for civic activists	Roll-out a broader set of training programs in more places, for both civic activists and reformers within government
Focused trainings broadly on accountability and civic participation, drawing on best practices	Create dynamic peer-learning networks among reformers to provide ongoing support and feedback
Built out co-working and innovation spaces across multiple countries	Work to more meaningfully make these diverse spaces backbones for the accountability movement

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 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.[8]

• *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 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.

2017-2020	2020-2023
What we did previously…	*…What we'll do now*
Worked to support new ideas that can influence decision-making	Get more strategic about this process to close the gap between policy and practice
Played a key role in coalitions working on accountability and open government	Deepen our engagement in these coalitions and find ways to make then more inclusive and effective over time
Built out and tested a methodology for community feedback focused on migration, natural resources and justice	Evolve and adapt the Civic Action Teams with communities in new ways and contexts and with additional areas of focus

ACCOUNTABILITY LAB SCALING LEVELS

LEVEL OF SCALE	DESCRIPTION	CURRENT EXAMPLE (JANUARY 2020)
LOW	• "Thin" engagement; emphasis on positive messaging and bringing people into the movement. • Partnership with local organizations; small core team of volunteers. • Activities: Campaigns, learning.	Sri Lanka, United States, Morocco, Ukraine
MEDIUM	• "Medium" engagement; emphasis on developing ideas, structured exchanges and coalition building. • Local registration of the Accountability Lab; core team built-out. • Activities: Campaigns, learning, training.	Mexico, Niger
HIGH	• "Thick" engagement moving towards vertical integration; emphasis on engagement at multiple-levels and on system-change. • Established team, systems, partners and funding streams. • Activities: Campaigns, learning, training, collaborative spaces, coalition-building and convening.	Liberia, Nepal, Nigeria, Mali Pakistan, South Africa

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 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 globally- we will support them where we can instead doing this actively ourselves;

- *Widening the definition of accountability-* we focus primarily 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.

We see governments and businesses at all levels as critical partners in our efforts to scale our work in a variety of ways- from working with us to develop campaigns and integrity trainings to building partnerships with our citizen engagement platforms.[9] Although we will work in a limited number of places, we will partner with others and seek to influence the work of our allies all over the world. We see this as a core part of our efforts to become a field-catalyst.

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 much more 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 they 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- or 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 failure); 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 outline 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 organogram 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 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 accountapreneurs; 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).[10] 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.

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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 eco-system for accountability around the world.

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In the 2020-2023 period we are looking to better monitor and track progress in terms of our own accountability through the Accountable 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 Accountable 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 Accountable 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-

RISK TYPE	POSSIBLE EXAMPLE	EXAMPLES OF MITIGATION MEASURES
FINANCIAL	Lack of funds to support programming	Diversify funding sources; create strategic reserve fund.
PLANNING	Inadequate planning of programs, undermining potential impact/ effectiveness	In-depth pre-programming work sessions; regular reporting on deliverables;
HUMAN RESOURCES	Employee under-performance or misdeeds	Robust hiring processes; screening of all hires; orientation for staff on all policies and procedures along with onboarding support.
REPUTATIONAL	Partnership with an organization that is caught up in corruption	Robust partnership evaluation process; ongoing development of learning culture; crisis communications plan.
GOVERNANCE	Board does not provide sufficient oversight	Quarterly Board meetings and governance committee discussions; careful on-boarding of new board members; D&O insurance.
REGULATORY	The Lab does not remain compliant with all regulations and laws	Annual regulatory/compliance reviews; partnerships with leading law firms.
PHYSICAL SECURITY	Lab staff suffer from physical insecurity or violence	Robust security policies; trainings around security/disasters; safety and security fund; ongoing political-security analysis at the country level
EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	Lab staff suffer burnout or abuse	Robust policies and procedures; workplace wellness programs; flexi-work schedules where feasible
DIGITAL SECURITY	The Lab's systems are hacked or monitored	Ongoing digital security mentoring and support.; 2 factor identification for all accounts.
ENVIRONMENTAL	Potential hazards in office spaces	Regular checks of policies and procedures; liability insurance.

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 out 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,

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.

- *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 I- 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.

- *Values-Shifting Campaigns:* efforts to change mindsets, highlight positive deviance (or

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 a greater focus on natural resource management through our strategy; and in Mali, one focus will continue to be on the intersection of accountability/governance and insecurity.

- *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

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.

INTEGRITY ICON

Integrity Icon (ormerly Integrity Idol) is an effort to find, celebrate and support the world's most honest government officials. Approaches to anti-corruption tend to be largely negative, focusing on enforcement and compliance. Integrity Icon flips the script by moving away from "naming and faming" wrong-doers, to "naming and faming" the do-gooders. In this way it restores hope, builds positive energy and creates role-models for others to emulate. Read more about the selection and outreach process for Integrity Icon here; and about the campaign as a whole here; and watch our TED talk about Integrity Icon here.

The Integrity Icons are incredible - from Alphonso the uncorruptible Drugs Enforcement Agency officer in Liberia; to Batool, the pioneering young tax collector in Pakistan; to Yassama, 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 to institute new 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, Liberia, 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).

The ideas and people that have come through the Accountability Incubator are now beginning to show real impact. For example, Maliha Kayani, an accountapreneur 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 Krua founded *The Bush Chicken*, now one of his 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, Tanzila Khan a disability rights advocate, and Madeeha 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 "Amaze" Toe and justice advocate John Kamma 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 Helpdesks); developing thematic co-working spaces (including OpenGov Hubs in Nepal, Mali and Pakistan; and an affiliate hub, called iCampus, 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 HELPDESKS- NOW REBRANDED AS THE CIVIC ACTION TEAMS (CIVACTS)

An example of our ecosystem building work is the Citizen Helpdesks (Civic Action Teams) - a pioneering citizen voice, trust building and governance tool. The Helpdesks 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 Helpdesks 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 Helpdesks have helped solve issues related to everything from inefficient legal systems, to lack of service delivery to corruption within police forces. The Citizen Helpdesks provide an alternative, bottom-up and grassroots process of development, that solve immediate problems and build legitimacy of decision-making over time.

The Helpdesks 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 Helpdesks 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 Helpdesks.

The Helpdesks build the accountability ecosystem by supporting citizens to understand their rights, creating a shared basis of understanding among 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

GOAL	ACTIONS	SUCCESS/TARGET (BY 2023)	MEASUREMENT TOOLS
Shifting Norms and Behaviors- around issues of accountability to ensure that integrity becomes the expected behavior within societies (active citizens)	Campaigns and Learning (Campaigns)	• 75% citizens we work with feel more actively engaged 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	• Ongoing surveys of those engaged in our campaigns; • Small-scale learning reviews with key stakeholders; • Research with partners around how norm shifts occur.
Equipping Reformers for Collective Action- inside and outside government- with the knowledge and tools they need to push for better governance through training and learning (responsible leaders)	Training and Collaborative Spaces (Knowledge)	• 75% participants in training programs would 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.	• Ongoing surveys of training participants; • Real-time feedback and data collection from Hubs; • External evaluations of knowledge activities.
Influencing Policies, Processes and Practices- around critical accountability issues, through bringing people together and advocating for change (accountable institutions).	Coalition-building and Convening (Communities)	• 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.	• Ongoing surveys of coalition and community members; • Real-time feedback and data collection from communities; • Social media influence analyses.

[1] 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.

[2] 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.

[3] 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.

[4] 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.

[5] 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.

[6] As one reviewer of this strategy told us: "In this way you will play the role of the platform not the 'app'"

[7] 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.

[8] 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.

[9] 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.

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

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