PROGRAMS & LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS

2019

Our Learning Approach

We understand that our ability to experiment, implement programs that are agile and use resources effectively relies on our ability to learn and course-correct on an ongoing basis. 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 are improving the quality and utility of the data we collect as we continue to codify our core programs. While creating our new Theory of Action (see diagram below), we also identified three core questions that are helping us to better understand the impact of our programs:

AL Campaigns - The extent to which we are able to grow the reach and engagement with our public engagement campaigns.

AL Knowledge - The extent to which participants are better equipped to influence accountability challenges in their community or country.

AL Communities - The extent to which program participants grow their networks and continue to push for reforms collectively.

In our efforts to strengthen learning across the countries where we work, we built better centralization of knowledge into the operational plan for 2020-2023 strategy. Building the capacity of team members beyond those who are specifically responsible for MEL activities gives us the opportunity to gather more feedback and impact stories as there is greater buy-in and shared ownership for this within teams. While there is a lot more to be done, we believe that we have built the foundation for a culture of learning within teams and across the Lab through regular reflection sessions, ongoing opportunities to share learnings, and global knowledge sharing and skills development.

MAKING GOVERNANCE WORK FOR PEOPLE

WHAT WE BRING → **WHAT WE DO** → **THE CHANGE WE MAKE** = **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

accountabilitylab

NEW FRONTIERS FOR INTEGRITY ICON

We launched our rebranded Integrity Icon campaign in two new spaces - Niger and Mexico City. The first iteration in Niger marks an expansion within the Sahel region, while Mexico allowed us to experiment with running the campaign in a single city, as opposed to the nationwide format we have followed in other places. The start-up in two spaces taught us a few valuable lessons and highlighted new opportunities.

"*Integrity Icons across countries continue to report increased motivation to push for positive reforms as a result of their participation in the program.*

26
Men

19
Women

5 mil+
Individuals

9
Countries

45
Icons

260+
Youth volunteers

Read more at: www.integrityicon.org

In Mexico City, we pivoted from finding nominations within communities and found that we had more success gathering nominations from within the civil service, where nominators chose to honor their peers and superiors. Normally, the first round of Integrity Icon leads to a large number of nominees who are frontline civil servants, such as teachers, policemen, and nurses - the people ordinary community members interact with regularly. In contrast to this, we found that nominators within the civil service are more likely to nominate people in less community-facing positions, such as those at a directorate level or in positions that don't involve direct community engagement. Anecdotally, we've gathered this may also be a result of running the campaign in a metropolis, where community members may not be as familiar with the civil servants in their area as in a smaller city or rural area. This presents us with opportunities to explore creating campaigns with a more nuanced goal, such as a focus on sectors or specific levels within the civil service.

A more rapid and lean roll-out in Niger led to a new way of showcasing nominees and sparking participation during the voting portion of the campaign. Ordinarily, Icons' stories are shared through short documentary films. The first iteration consisted of more detailed written biographies, audio content and photographs. A divergence from the normal modality, experimenting with these lower bandwidth efforts that successfully led to widespread engagement highlights new ways of working in spaces where internet access is either limited or expensive.

REACHING NEW AUDIENCES THROUGH ARTS PROGRAMS

Through 4 filmmaking programs in Nepal, South Africa, Nigeria, and Liberia, we've grown the network of socially conscious storytellers in these countries. The programs' rigorous and hands-on curriculum delivered by seasoned filmmakers consisted of technical training covering all filmmaking elements, from interviews and storyboards to post-production activities. Additionally, all participants received accountability training to be better equipped to use their films as tangible advocacy tools beyond the project.

Elizabeth Kollison from Liberia shared that, *"The benefit of the project is that you can tell the stories of the women in the community and send it to organizations that can support them*."

The Voice2Rep and Rap2Rep music projects in Nigeria and Liberia exposed a new, diverse cohort of musicians from different genres to use their talent and platform to spread awareness on critical challenges while catalyzing civic participation. Our partnership with Chocolate City in Nigeria led to Accountability Lab's first professionally produced studio album, In These Present Times, which is streamed online.

Follow-up after these programs has taught us that the majority of participants seek opportunities to use their skills after the project. Some have gone on to investigate issues and tell more stories, or use their skills as citizen journalists. We have also seen ongoing collaboration between musicians. In Liberia in particular, past participants of Rap2Rep are not only serving as mentors to new cohorts but have also gone on to create new songs that continue to reflect the values of the program. Artists are also reaching larger audiences and increased recognition as a result of the programs. Lagos-based musician, Cill, also won the 2019 Accountability Music Awards, which featured artists from across the African continent.

67 Visual storytellers

100 + Film screenings

20 Musicians

10 mil + Listeners

83 % Female Participants

BUILDING SKILLS & NETOWKRS THROUGH INTEGRITY TRAINING

Our engagement with public servants, civil society professionals and activists across the countries where we work consistently highlights the need for increased training centered on integrity, and how individuals or groups of actors can change corrupt systems. We've had the opportunity to craft - through learning and adapting - a unique and targeted training curriculum aimed at giving participants a new outlook on problem-solving. We've piloted this curriculum with 20 participants at our Integrity School which brings together young civil servants from across a variety of sectors in Nepal. In Pakistan, we've trained more than 275 new public servants through a partnership with the Civil Service Academy, giving us the opportunity to ensure that these individuals start their careers with the skills needed to push for reforms and build networks for change in their agencies. A civil servant shared that, "The training provided [crucial] information required by civil servants to operate in a complex environment such as Pakistan."

While adaptable to the needs and context of participants, our curriculum is grounded in key values and equips participants with a framework to unpack challenges using human-centered design methodology; and the technical skills to plan and build networks for meaningful reforms. 40 Civil society actors who've participated have crafted resource and network maps, problem analyses, budgets, and detailed actions for accountability-related interventions in their communities.

Across the board, more than 70% of participants have indicated an increased understanding of how to influence systems. Additionally, the majority of participants see the growth in their network as a result of the training as a positive outcome.

CATALYZING ENGAGEMENT THROUGH CITIZEN-GENERATED DATA

Equipping trusted community members with data collection skills, supporting them to analyze and disseminate the information gathered, and working with them to co-create relevant solutions has long been a central part of the Lab's work with the Civic Action Teams (CivActs). Through opportunities in new spaces and around new themes, we've been able to scale this work dramatically. In 2019 we applied this model to better understand service delivery (Pakistan and Liberia), gender disparities and access to justice (Liberia), migrant labor (Nepal), safety and security (Mali), fiscal transparency (Nepal), and natural resource management (Nigeria). **We heard from more than 15,000 respondents through surveys and focus groups.**

Learning from past interventions, we were able to improve the diversity of the Community Frontline Associates (CFAs) that gather data, which also greatly improved the diversity of the respondent pool. Additionally, we saw a real breakthrough in terms of buy-in to this process among ward-level elected officials in Nepal, who have used the data and conversations with communities to make budget adjustments that reflect the needs highlighted. One municipality has also allocated funds to continue this data gathering, while officials in another ward have started a door-to-door campaign to hear from constituents directly after seeing the value and increased efficiency as a result of this work. These efforts have proven that collective action and real-time feedback can change government processes and practices and lead to more evidence-based decision-making that benefits communities.