



CONTENTS

- 1 *Overview*
- 2 *Translocal Highlights*
- 3 *HackCorruption*
- 4 *Youth Engagement in Nepal & Bangladesh*
- 5 *Strengthening Governance in DRC*
- 6 *Accountability Incubator Updates*
- 7 *Civic Training in Belize*
- 8 *Somaliland's Local Heroes*
- 9 *Integrity Icon Expands*
- 10 *Budget Highlights*

GLOBAL ANNUAL REPORT 2023

The Lab launched our new strategy at the beginning of 2023, laying out our goals until the end of 2026. It was the result of a year-long development process for us to collectively renew commitment to our values; build a shared contextual understanding for our work; and to ensure a mutual understanding of who we are and where we are going.

We also made the big leap to co-leadership in 2023 with AL founder, Blair Glencorse, being joined by Jean Scrimgeour and Cheri-Leigh Erasmus as the organization's three new Co-CEOs. Co-leadership will allow our joint leaders to align complementary skills and to provide stability at a time of multiple transitions and increasing threats against civic space.

On the programming side, our work expanded in the Democratic Republic of Congo with the release of our first Voice2Rep album. In Somaliland, we supported the launch of the Good Governance Heroes campaign and in Belize, we grew our civil service training offering in collaboration with five ministries. The year also saw exciting growth for the HackCorruption campaign - we share updates from our hackathons in South Asia and Latin America. Enjoy the read!

TRANSLOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

With the different results we have achieved, our biggest learning this past year is that the bad political system, bad beliefs, knowledge and practices, as well as the damaging behavior of decision-makers can change. All it takes is a good approach to community and political engagement, and a strong mechanism for citizen pressure on the authorities. This way, systems can be reformed.

LOKETO EVARISTE OURS
COUNTRY DIRECTOR:
AL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The translocal network provides a platform for us to communicate with colleagues, and share ideas and processes. Engaging with diverse experiences from different regions has enriched my understanding of accountability issues and informed more nuanced strategies. The translocal network has also opened opportunities for joint programs, especially across similar thematic areas.

SADIA KHAN
INTERIM COUNTRY DIRECTOR:
AL SOUTH AFRICA

I'm proud about building AL's work in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa through the establishment of a regional office. This led to a few opportunities to expand work in South Africa, Francophone Africa and Zambia. We have plugged into extensive regional and international networks in ways that support growth in the accountability ecosystem, placing us in an interesting place that allows for ways of connecting dots from local to global levels.

MCDONALD LEWANIKA
COUNTRY DIRECTOR:
AL ZIMBABWE

We helped digitize processes for the Public Accounts Committee of Balochistan, improving a backlog of 35 years! We also helped establish new departments - such as the Financial Investigation Unit (FIU) in Balochistan - and have trained thousands of civil servants on modern problem-solving tools such as design thinking. We've been able to scale the Lab's work to the South Asia region and built a great team in the process.

FAYYAZ YASEEN
COUNTRY DIRECTOR:
AL PAKISTAN

HACKCORRUPTION - FROM LATIN AMERICA TO SOUTHEAST ASIA

2023 was a year of immense growth for the HackCorruption programme. In collaboration with our two partner organizations, the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) and Development Gateway: An IREX Venture (DG), we hosted two regional hackathons in South Asia and Latin America. Having completed a pilot in 2022, 2023 allowed us to better define the project based on learning, which led to outcomes both in terms of the technology and the network.

The project is built on three pillars that encompass more than the technology participants are creating. They also rely heavily on the networks and expertise of all three partner organizations. First, we cultivate multistakeholder engagement with CSOs, governments and the private sector to identify entry points and incentives for change to improve digitization at the policy and uptake level. Second, we ground all programming in inclusive design that creates space for bottom-up, locally-owned interventions through diverse and multi-skilled

collaboration. Finally, we strengthen and build regional and global ecosystems around emerging technology and bring new innovators into anti-corruption conversations.

While our pilot hackathon in 2022 allowed us to experiment with the framework and design of the project, 2023 was the year in which we ultimately started seeing the results in the form of functional prototypes built by participants. HackCorruption Nepal, which brought together 50 people from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, unearthed three prototypes.



Explore Your Representatives From State to Constituency

Know Your Parliamentarian is the first web platform in Nepal that provides information about serving parliamentarians in one place, allowing voters to make informed decisions about their representatives.

ePMS (e-Procurement Monitoring System) monitors Bangladesh's national e-procurement system in real time and flags potential corruption using a series of indicators, enabling civil society to monitor procurement more effectively.

Support My School holds schools accountable for infrastructure projects by enabling community members to measure and track the progress of publicly funded development projects. It also tracks critical budgetary needs in schools.



e-PMS

**E-Procurement
Monitoring System**

Summary and Findings

Procurement Component Profiling



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN DEMOCRACY - NEPAL & BANGLADESH

Accountability Lab Nepal (ALN) and the Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) are collaborating to promote youth engagement in democracy in Nepal and Bangladesh. The programme is building pluralistic networks of youth leaders through targeted support, collective learning, and shared best practices.

Community Engagement and Advocacy

ALN and MJF both hosted youth-led community engagements to hear about concerns, which were later presented in discussions with local government representatives to inform policy. Gender equality emerged as a common theme in both countries. On the advocacy front, youth-led organizations in Bangladesh disseminated videos on issues ranging from climate change and migration to cyber threats, bullying, and discrimination against persons with disabilities and transgender communities. In Nepal, youth have been using podcasts as a medium to hold decision-makers accountable on democratic and human rights issues, including the abuse of political clemency, digital rights, and menstruation taboos.

Engaging Government Counterparts

MJF engaged with Bangladesh's national government to ensure buy-in for the program, while ALN's Community Frontline Activists (CFAs) engaged local government units to identify youth-specific policies to build on outreach and advocacy efforts. Both MJF and ALN's efforts yielded impressive results. In response to the Government of Bangladesh's call for recommendations for a National Youth Policy review, MJF partnered with the Dhruvotara Youth Development Foundation (DYDF) and led the consultation for the review process to engage youth participants from the program and provide feedback on the policy. They then organized a series of consultations with different marginalized youth groups to gather recommendations for the National Youth



Policy. In Nepal, CFAs have led the way for meaningful youth participation in local government. By continuously advocating for youth representation in local decision-making, local governments have committed to reforms.

Skills Building and Mentorship

Youth-led organizations in Bangladesh received barefoot research training to gather community-level data and analysis, enabling them to engage in their communities to gather data and stories. Some of the topics they engaged on include the accessibility of clean water in slum areas, impacts of climate change on the livelihoods of migrants, and challenges faced by sex workers.

Learning and Reflection

ALN organized an end-of-year reflection session internally with team members and externally with youth participants on the progress, achievements, learning outcomes, challenges encountered, and the way forward for the upcoming year. The goal is to highlight significant outcomes from our cross-country programming in innovative ways.



STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE IN THE DRC

We launched our inaugural Voice2Rep conscious music campaign in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2023, culminating in the composition and production of 3 songs and concerts. Hosted in North and South Kivu provinces, artists benefited from training provided by experienced music industry instructors such as Maître Thomas Lusango, Director of the Delia Ndaro Cultural Center. They were coached in writing, composing, recording in studio and producing music videos. Some of the song themes included the need for political and economic transparency, citizen participation and electoral integrity, particularly in the context of the recent elections in the DRC. The videos are available [here](#).

In parallel, the fourth cohort of the Accountability Film Fellowship supported 5 young filmmakers who produced short films to raising advocate for open, transparent governance, political and civic accountability and the fight against corruption in the electoral process.

The Civic Action Teams programme has meanwhile facilitated social and political dialogues and strengthened trust between citizens and authorities. Concrete solutions were found to overcome a diversity of challenges encountered in various local entities such as the Bagira commune, Ibanda, Kadutu, the town of Uvira, the city of Kiliba, and amongst the Kigongo and Makobola groups. We've found a growing commitment to collaboration on the part of the authorities and the communities, including the formation of small traders' associations who raise awareness among shopkeepers and vendors about how to avoid tax harassment, fraud and corruption.

In 2022, in the city of Bukavu, only 51.2% of citizens paid their taxes regularly. Today, 55.5% of citizens pay their taxes each month, representing an increase of 4%. The population of the Bagira central market also has access to drinking water thanks to the payment of invoices by the commune. This was the result of close collaboration between the representatives of the vendors of the large market and communal authorities, enabling transparent management of the stall tax.

The team also hosted the Third Regional Integrity Summit under the theme of electoral integrity and reform. The summit brought together key players from civil society, government, business and academia in South Kivu province to discuss the challenges and opportunities related to the integrity of the electoral process in the DRC. AL DRC has helped facilitate the resolution of various problems linked to voter enrolment, the erasure of identities on voter cards, corruption in the process of issuing new voter cards, logistical problems and corruption in voting centers.

ACCOUNTAPRENEURS SPREAD THEIR WINGS

Accountability Lab launched the Accountability Incubator a decade ago with a vision to train and support young people with innovative ideas around accountability, participation, and open government to build sustainable, implementable tools for change. Over 300 Accountapreneurs in 12 countries have joined us on this journey with a collective vision of a world where governance works for all.

Damaris Aswa, founder of [Youth4IntegrityBuilding](#) (YIB), was awarded the 2023 Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani International Anti-Corruption Excellence Award under the Youth Creativity and Engagement category. She is also a founding member of Democracy Moves, a global movement for democracy led by young people. She has directly provided training on integrity issues for over 100 teachers, 500 integrity club members, and 1000 students in secondary schools across Kenya and has developed an integrity handbook and student guidebook. In 2022, she participated in the Community Solutions Program in the United States, where she met a fellow accountapreneur from Zimbabwe, Darlington Mafa. Participating in a 2022 Accountability Lab hackathon in South Africa, she was inspired to use technology to drive deeper civic engagement.

"I had the idea of using civic tech to engage citizens but I had no experience in programming, developing, coding, or anything. The learnings from the room sparked something in me to be more creative. When I came out of the Hackathon I was booming with ideas to use technology to curb corruption," she shared. She harnessed the power of regional networks and Darlington connected her to Lazarus in Zimbabwe, a person with the right background to help her build these ideas and make them a reality. The [IntegrityLink - Tuwajbike!](#) mobile application was launched in 2023. It gives community members a safe and secure space to report corruption cases, track



their progress, and access crucial government budget and expenditure information.

Meanwhile in Nepal, Pooja Bista's work as an accountapreneur focuses specifically on taboos around menstruation. In the Western part of Nepal, Chaupadi remains a form of menstrual taboo. Pooja has created a digital platform to shift attitudes and behaviours around menstruation, using inclusive storytelling.

We have learned many enduring lessons in our work with the Incubator since we started:

- 1. Ideas take time to grow. While working with participants through the Incubator course is essential, we realise that it takes many more years (and experimentation) for programs to mature. Learning happens when implementation starts, a helpful time to be part of a learning network.**
- 2. Ideas can only grow if you build a collaborative network across focus areas and methodologies. Connecting individuals and other programs can be a strategic boost to their work. Being a change agent can be emotionally and physically draining, and having an international support network reminds you that you are not alone.**
- 3. The initial idea remains the most valuable capital. Change-makers are facing ever-increasing resource scarcity. We must remind each other that our vision, skills, networks, and creativity are essential to sustaining activities. There is also an understanding that the Incubator alumni can be a resource to each other.**



GROWING OUR CIVIL SERVICE TRAINING IN BELIZE

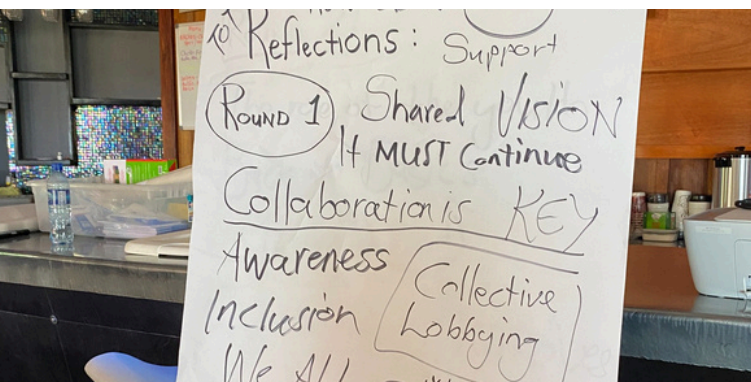
In 2023, our programmes in Belize - the Integrity Innovation Lab and the Accountability Incubator - achieved notable successes in strengthening civic engagement. The Integrity Innovation Lab was managed in partnership with the Ministry of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform, and Religious Affairs, and included a group of ambitious civil servants in Belize. We've developed a comprehensive curriculum which was integral in shaping our approach, which focuses on practical, community-oriented solutions over traditional bureaucratic processes.

We recruited ten reformers from five critical ministries, including the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology; the Ministry of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries; the Ministry of Infrastructure and Housing; the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Transportation; and the Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform. These participants engaged in a structured program consisting of two intensive boot camps in Belmopan and Belize City,

designed to apply human-centered design principles. Reformers developed and shared insights on overcoming obstacles, adapting strategies, and leveraging networks to achieve their goals. The final workshop included a fundraiser event which connected the civil servants with a wide range of stakeholders and potential allies.

Our Accountability Incubator focused on strengthening Belizean civil society by supporting civic activists in addressing governance and service delivery issues. Training sessions cover civic engagement tactics, project design, values, finance, operations, fundraising, learning, and storytelling.

Thirteen female accountpreneurs participated in the Incubator, working on resonant local issues including mental health awareness and advocacy for sexual and reproductive health. Participants have made good progress with three of them formalizing and registering new NGOs, including Citizens for Good Governance (CGG) which is quickly growing its footprint.





UNEARTHING CIVIC HEROES IN SOMALILAND

The Lab launched the Good Governance Heroes Campaign in Somaliland in 2023 to shine a light on public servants and community activists working collectively to build the country's public service. In a few short months, we have seen the impact of positive narratives about values-driven governance. The campaign has succeeded in making heroes out of ordinary people doing the right thing, in a way that has begun to shift norms around corruption.

The campaign is aligned with Somaliland's national development policy under its good governance pillar, and works hard to deliver a storytelling-based approach to amplify extraordinary tales of service to the public. It is also building a network of honest, capable civil servants.

Through a widespread nomination process, the Lab works with volunteers who help collect nominations of social change-makers, activists and civil servants.

Volunteers are given training around governance and civic impact to help them identify Good Governance Heroes. This process also equips these young people with the energy and skills to push for integrity across Somaliland.

One of the Heroes celebrated was Anab Mohamed Ismail, a midwife who has volunteered her time and expertise at several public maternity centers in Somaliland. She has so far dedicated 31 years of her life to working on maternal and child health and played a significant role in reducing maternal deaths.

The Heroes have had the opportunity to participate in dialogues and workshops to speak about their work and share some of their experiences. In particular, the Lab has worked with winners on a number of ideas around better civic engagement, including building community knowledge via ongoing advocacy and education campaigns.





NEW INTEGRITY ICONS IN KOSOVO, SRI LANKA & PHILADELPHIA

Accountability Lab works with three incredible partners in Kosovo, Sri Lanka and Philadelphia, United States, to run the Integrity Icon campaign. In Philadelphia, we collaborated with The Philadelphia Citizen for the fourth consecutive campaign in 2023. Icons were named and famed for exceeding their job descriptions to foster a more just and equitable city. The celebration, featuring former Philadelphia city Mayor Michael Nutter, highlighted the paramount importance of integrity in public service and daily life. The Integrity Icons shared their insights on integrity, emphasizing the commitment to doing the right thing even in the face of adversity. Each year, short films are made about each winning Icon to support conversations about ethical governance and honest civil servants.

In Sri Lanka, a high-profile panel of independent judges helped choose our final winners, including medical superintendents and divisional secretaries. The campaign is implemented in partnership with Transparency International Sri Lanka and 2023 marked its fifth year. Speaking at the awards ceremony for the Icons, Finance Commission Chairman, Sumith Abeysinghe, said that integrity remained the cornerstone of effective governance. “Events like Integrity Icon underscore the vital role it plays in shaping our nation’s progress. It is heartening to witness these exemplary public servants, who stand as beacons of moral leadership,” he said.

The Integrity Icon Kosovo campaign, run by the Lab in collaboration with UBO Consulting, honors public servants who exemplify honesty, accountability, and dedication. The campaign highlighted integrity champions in Gjakova and Prishtina municipalities, including a diverse group of teachers, paediatricians and construction inspectors.

IMPACT BY NUMBERS

10 000+

Nominations

52

Icons

52

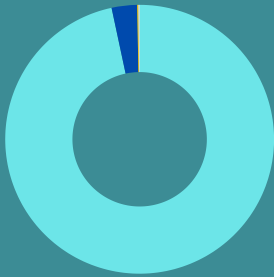
Short films produced

ANNUAL BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Total Revenue

Corporates & Foundations

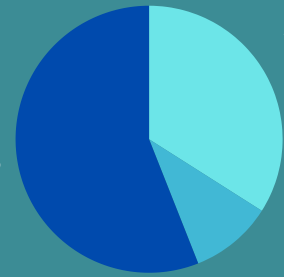
\$142 102



Government Grants
\$4 489 731

Spending Breakdown

Programs
56%



Staff
34%

Direct Costs
10%



CONTACT US

In the USA, contact us at the OpenGov Hub
1100 13th Street NW, Suite 800,
Washington DC

Email us: info@accountabilitylab.org