GLOBAL INTEGRITY
Data, Learning & Action for Open Governance

Listening, learning & adapting: A strategy for uncertain times

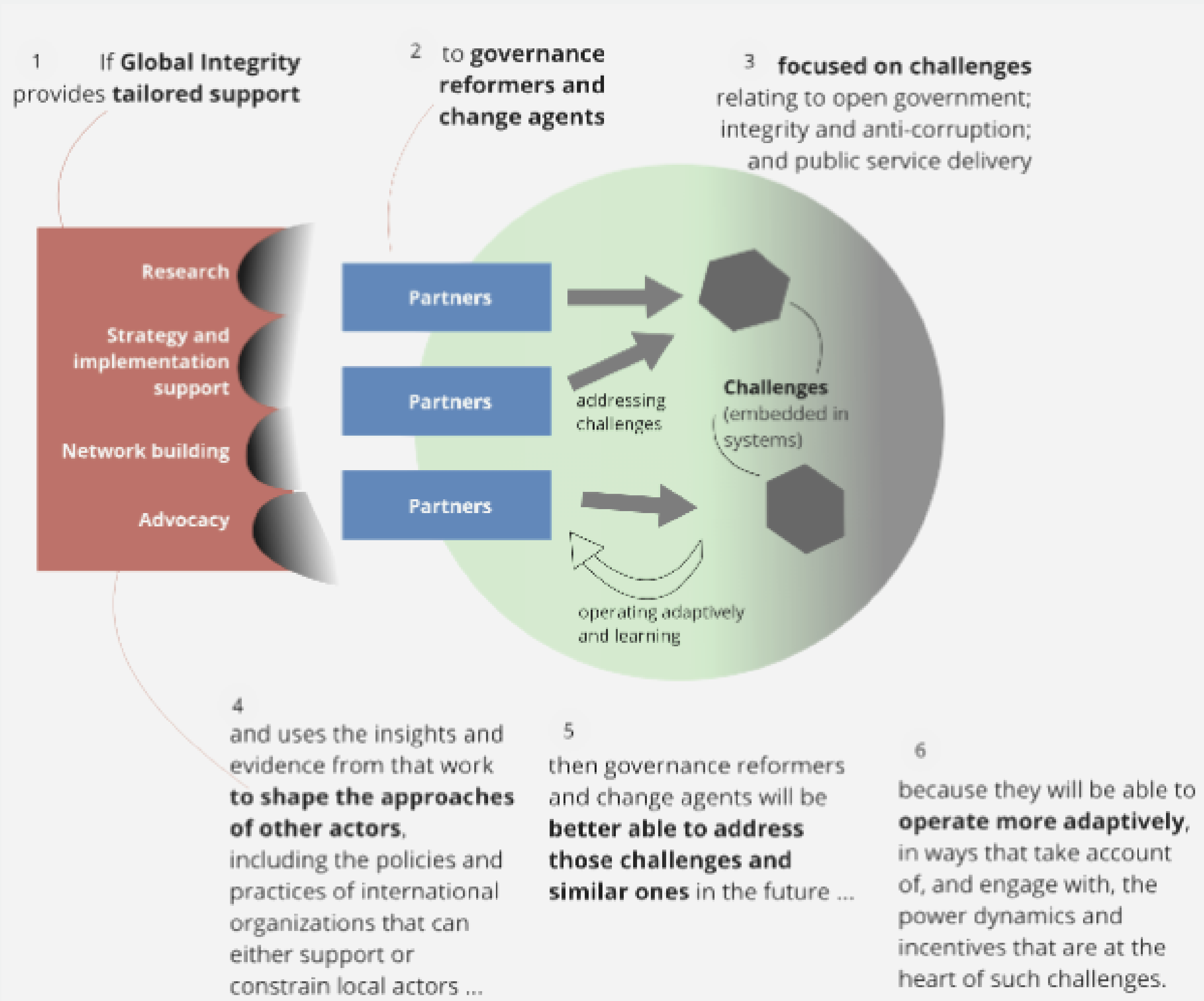
Executive Summary

Published in April 2020, our new strategy sets out our approach to enhancing the ability of governance reformers and change agents in countries and communities around the world to address challenges relating to corruption and the use of public resources.

Supported by Dave Algoso, we kicked off our strategy refresh process in September 2019 and shared the first draft for feedback in late January 2020. By early March we were nearly done, but delayed publication to review systematically the implications of COVID-19 for our projects, our priorities, and our finances.

Our revised strategy is informed by a review of our work over the last five years (section 2 of our strategy), enriched by extensive feedback from partners around the world, and guided by a new statement of our vision, mission, and values (section 3).

At the heart of our strategy is a theory of change which doubles down on exploring the value of locally-led, learning-centered and adaptive development, and commits us to explore more systematically whether and how such approaches can shift the power dynamics and incentives that drive behavior and shape patterns of governance (see section 4 and the diagram below). Our theory of change provides a framework to focus our explorations on key assumptions and causal mechanisms.



Driven by this theory of change, our revised strategy focuses on three thematic areas (section 5) that are central to ensuring that public resources are used effectively—Open Government; Integrity and Anti-Corruption; and Public Service Delivery—and sets out four strands of tailored support (section 6) that we provide to partners as they craft solutions to specific challenges relating to these thematic areas:

- We conduct research to help partners understand governance challenges and opportunities
- We provide strategy and implementation support to help partners set course, learn and adapt
- We engage in network building to strengthen collaboration and learning across systems of partners
- We engage in advocacy to improve the support other international organizations provide in-country partners.

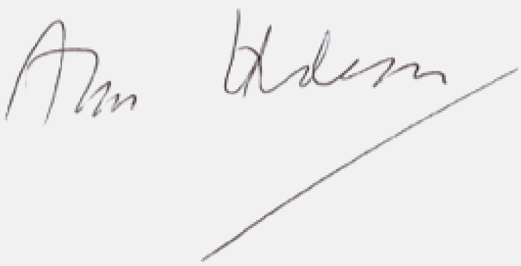
In implementing our strategy we will be guided by operating principles (section 7) focused on people, partnerships and processes, with these principles intended to ensure that our ways of working are fully aligned with our vision, mission and values. By operating in this way, we will ensure that resources invested in our work add real value to those on the frontline of addressing governance-related challenges, maximizing our impact and theirs, and responding effectively to the challenges of funding and sustainability (section 8).

The next steps for us—in addition to regularly reviewing how the COVID-19 crisis might shape our work over the coming months and years—involve strengthening our capacity in four areas: listening and engagement; learning and communications; fundraising and business development; and managing resources and knowledge (section 9).

Despite the global pandemic that emerged as we finalized our strategy, we are confident that it remains valid and relevant to the challenges that lie ahead. Indeed, we feel that our focus on supporting partners' efforts to address specific challenges relating to corruption and the use of public resources, and our adaptive approach to doing that, has considerable application to many governance-related issues that the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted.

If you have thoughts about our strategy, or would like to discuss how we might support your efforts to address corruption and improve the use of public resources, please drop us a line at info@globalintegrity.org - we are keen to receive your feedback and to explore potential collaboration!

Alan Hudson, Executive Director, Global Integrity



GLOBAL INTEGRITY
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Listening, learning & adapting: A strategy for uncertain times

1 Introduction

In September 2019, Global Integrity kicked off a strategy process that aimed to maximize our effectiveness and impact. While not crafting an entirely new strategy, this process sought to sharpen and refresh our approach. We reviewed our past work, held a series of full-team meetings, consulted partners through a survey and individual conversations, and drew on the best thinking of our board and other advisors.

This strategy document, finalized in April 2020, is the output of that process. It starts with a review of our work under our prior strategy, including what we learned and what we set out to do differently, and then shares the key elements of our new strategy: our vision, mission, and values; our theory of change; the thematic areas of our work and our approach to partnership; and our operating principles and funding/sustainability plan.

We will use this strategy to guide our work over the coming years, with regular in-depth reflection on how our strategy is used to inform how we implement our strategy and its possible evolution. As part of that process we will consider whether the strategy remains relevant or should be updated, in which case we'll do an update process. Realistically, that is likely to happen no sooner than 2022 and no later than 2024, with less significant adjustments made in the meantime.

While this document captures the details of our strategy, the true test is not how well the ideas are articulated on these pages, but how well they are understood by our team, implemented through our work, and shared by our partners. We invite you to reflect on how this strategy relates to your work, consider whether we might collaborate, and provide us with feedback.

Implications of COVID-19 for our strategy

In early March 2020 we were close to finalizing our strategy just as the severity of the emerging COVID-19 crisis became apparent. We continued working on our strategy, while also reviewing systematically the implications of COVID-19 for our projects, our priorities, and our finances (see our post from March 30)

We are confident that our strategy remains valid and relevant to the current times, and to the challenges that lie ahead. Indeed, we feel that our focus on supporting partners' efforts to address specific challenges relating to corruption and the use of public resources, by providing services that enable our partners to operate adaptively and in ways that shift the power dynamics and incentives that hold challenges in place, has considerable potential application to many governance-related issues that the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted.

Therefore, we decided not to delay publication of our strategy to take account of COVID-19, but instead to regularly review our strategy - as initially planned and its implementation in the light of changing circumstances. By implementing our strategy in an adaptive manner, and listening closely to our partners' needs, as planned, we hope to be able to respond effectively to the new issues and challenges that will emerge, and ensure that we are making an effective contribution to addressing governance-related challenges, including those that relate to COVID-19.

2 Plans, Action, Learning: 2015-19

Our strategy process started with a systematic review of our work since our 2015 strategy, which itself had marked a shift in our approach: away from assessing countries on a normative standard of "Good Governance", and toward a focus on supporting cycles of action and learning through which effective solutions to complex, context-dependent, and fundamentally political governance-related challenges emerge.

Five years on, the governance and development agenda has evolved. Early optimism about the transformative potential of transparency and open government has given way to more searching explorations, and learning-centered and adaptive approaches, many of which entail thinking and working politically, are becoming the new orthodoxy. Meanwhile, today's geopolitical context would be barely recognizable in 2015: polarization, populism and resurgent authoritarianism in many countries raise new, urgent priorities while also constraining the possibilities for governance reform.

With these shifts in mind, a review of our past five years highlights what we planned; what we did, including successes and failures; and what we learned, including implications for our new strategy.

What we planned

Our 2015-19 strategy aimed to contribute to putting locally led innovation, learning and adaptation at the center of the governance and development agenda.[1] We set out to do this by supporting cycles of country-level learning, political analysis and action around key open government issues, empowering the champions of governance reform, strengthening their relationships, building their political capital, and enabling them to drive progress towards more open and effective governance. And, importantly, by regularly assessing the effectiveness of this approach to supporting governance reform and sharing our lessons more widely.

Our approach involved a combination of cross-country comparative research, in-country engagement, and advocacy around international policy processes. We aimed to incorporate an adaptive learning angle into our projects. We also planned to make connections across governance issues, for instance around contract transparency and extractive revenues transparency, to help country-level actors to address challenges in a joined-up manner.

Internally, we planned to strengthen our capacity for monitoring, evaluation and learning, and to capture evidence about our impact for use both in our engagement with international actors and policy processes, as well as for our own learning and adaptation. We also planned to invest in our communications capacity, including listening.

By the end of 2019, we hoped to be known: 1) for our ability to use data, evidence and stories to support country-level learning that drives progress towards more open and effective governance; and 2) for our leadership on adaptive learning and open governance. We also aspired to practice what we preach: being transparent, participatory, accountable and open in everything we do, and learning as we go.

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[1] Central to our notion of adaptive learning is that it addresses both the political and technical aspects of governance-related challenges. See p.9 of our 2015-19 strategy for a table contrasting simple and adaptive learning.

What we did

Overall, we delivered well on our ambition. We provided valuable support to our partners through a range of projects (see Annex 1). We used our country-level work to inform our engagement with international actors, including the World Bank, the Open Government Partnership, and key funders in the open government space. We helped to put learning-centered and adaptive approaches at the center of the governance and development agenda. We nudged the transparency and open government agenda beyond a focus on data availability, and toward a focus on exploring how learning cycles can use relevant data to address the dynamics of power and patterns of incentives that hold specific problems in place. And, we helped move the anti-corruption agenda beyond "best practice" approaches, in line with the recent evolution of the broader governance agenda.

On the organizational side, we made significant progress in effectiveness and sustainability. This included: developing long-term relationships with trusted partners including INAI (Mexico), BudgIT (Nigeria), and PSAM (South Africa); reversing a funding decline and diversifying our sources of funding; establishing and implementing a system for monitoring, evaluation, and learning to facilitate continuous reflection; improving our communications, including through a revamped website; strengthening the team's skills and diversity; and improving our Board's effectiveness with a new Chair, a Governance Committee, greater diversity, and stronger engagement.

There were challenges and failures too.

In terms of projects, we failed to maintain and strengthen the Follow the Money Network, a network which we felt had great potential to support organizations working on fiscal governance. Our efforts to persuade funders to give greater emphasis to data use and impact had mixed success. More broadly, we failed in our push to develop a new wave of governance indicators focused on meeting the needs of country-level actors. We were unable to make up for the absence of an effective coordination function in the TAP Learning Collaborative, with the result that the collaborative was little more than the sum of its parts. We shuttered our research support software product, Indaba, because it was unsustainable. We were unable to leverage the Governance Data Alliance, in part due to its lack of clear focus. Finally, we failed to generate significant funding for our work on money in politics and governance challenges in the US.

In terms of organizational challenges: we continued to over-rely on a small pool of funders; at times core funding was used to cover overheads rather than to pursue strategic priorities; and we struggled to convert interest and support for our approach into the resources needed to fully implement our strategy. Relatedly, we did not manage, learn, and communicate around our strategy and theory of change as effectively as we should have, which made it difficult to articulate our impact and to draw clear lessons; this indeed was one of the primary motivations for this strategy refresh. Finally, we struggled to fully integrate our finance/operations and our programs in ways that would ensure accountability, effective management, and space for adaptation.

What we learned

Our current strategy process has been informed by the successes and failures of the past period. One broad lesson was that our strategy not only needs to provide clarity about what we are going to do, why, and how, but also that we need to manage more clearly around that strategy.

Our experience also pointed to two major elements that should be better incorporated into our strategy and accompanying theory of change:

- First: to gain traction, governance work must focus on addressing specific issues that people care about (e.g. service delivery), and go beyond normative/intrinsic arguments; and

- Second: to change behaviors, our support must be designed to help partners to address the power dynamics, incentives and norms that drive behavior.

At the level of projects and partnerships, we need to: meet our partners where they are, seeking to understand the political challenges and opportunities that they face; be clear about the support we provide to partners and the issues we work on, to develop more effective partnerships; focus our support on enabling partners to operate adaptively in ways that shift the dynamics of power, incentives and norms around particularly problems; and, to better link our country-level work with our international advocacy and engagement.

This needs to include better communicating the evidence and insights that our work generates, and better integrating the Open Gov Hub and the emerging global network of affiliate hubs, with other aspects of our work.

Organizationally, a sharper theory of change should provide the basis for a more robust M/E/L approach. That approach should include greater emphasis on listening to partners and other actors in the contexts where we work, both to improve our support in a given instance and to refine our offerings over time. In addition, all of these components will help us better make the case for the value we add, and should be linked to a more systematic approach to fundraising and business development.

What this means for our strategy refresh

We carried these lessons forward into our strategy refresh process. In the sections that follow, you will find the following updates:

- Vision, Mission and Values: Updated and sharpened to better explain our role.

- Theory of Change: Clarified impact statement, and aligned the description of our support to partners with our understanding of how change happens.

- Thematic areas: Reframed the issues we work on, informed by our theory of change.

- Partnership approach: Defined the types of tailored support we provide, grounded in our theory of change.

- Operating principles: Outlined changes needed to ensure our operating model—people, partnerships, and processes—aligns with our strategy and values.

- Funding and sustainability: Charted a response to the challenges of financial sustainability by translating demand for our support into the resources needed to execute our mission.

3 Vision, Mission, and Values

Our strategy and our work stem from three core elements: the world we want to see (our vision), our role in bringing that world about (our mission), and the ideals that guide how we fulfill that role (our values).

Vision

We envision a world in which public resources are used effectively to deliver services, meet people's needs, and reduce poverty in countries and communities around the world.

Mission

We provide tailored support to governance reformers and change agents, strengthening their ability to address challenges relating to corruption and the use of public resources.

Values

We are curious, collaborative, inclusive, and humble, and aim to operate in line with these values.

4 Theory of Change

Governance challenges are fundamentally about who has what power, how that power is used, and the incentives and norms that shape the use and distribution of power. Given that the dynamics of power and incentives are context-specific, governance challenges are best addressed when local reformers and change agents lead the way, collectively crafting solutions that work in their context through cycles of learning and adaptation that engage with those dynamics. Such efforts can be inspired and informed by insights and evidence from other contexts, and can make good use of tools and approaches developed elsewhere. However, the evidence on governance reform and our own 15+ years of experience demonstrate that change only happens when driven by local leaders.

This understanding of how change happens is fundamental to how we see our role and to our intended impact. As noted in our vision statement, we aim for the effective use of public resources, better services, and poverty reduction; however, because our contribution to this vision is indirect, our mission and impact focus on increasing the ability of governance reformers and change agents to bring these about.

Impact statement: Governance reformers and change agents are better able to address challenges relating to corruption and the use of public resources.

Our focus on strengthening the ability, or capacity, of our partners is fundamental to everything we do, shaping our approach to working with partners, and informing the operating principles that translate our strategy into action. Driven by this understanding of how change happens, the action we take to support progress toward more effective governance is based on, and tests, the following logic and assumptions:

- If Global Integrity provides tailored support to governance reformers and change agents focused on challenges relating to open government, integrity and anti-corruption, and public service delivery

- ...and uses the insights and evidence from that work to shape the approaches of other actors, including the policies and practices of international organizations that can either support or constrain local actors

- ...then governance reformers and change agents will be better able to address those challenges and similar ones in the future .

- ...because they will be able to operate more adaptively, in ways that take account of, and engage with, the power dynamics and incentives that are at the heart of such challenges.

This theory of change aims to convey the thinking behind our work in its clearest form, in order to provide a framework for planning, learning, and holding ourselves accountable. However, we remain realistic and humble about how change happens. Progress is messy and nonlinear, driven by power dynamics and patterns of incentives as much as it is by evidence and learning, and we are only one small actor in the system.

Defining our terms

Governance reformers and change agents

We take a broad view of the actors and organizations that might contribute to addressing challenges related to corruption and use of public resources. We work with public sector actors inside governments; civil society partners at national, subnational, regional, and global levels; media, journalists, and academics; private sector actors; and others. Many of our partners are civil society groups focused on issues like governance reform, anti-corruption, or open government. Others are focused on related issues, such as specific service delivery sectors; they may not identify as governance reformers, even though their work entails shifting governance dynamics.

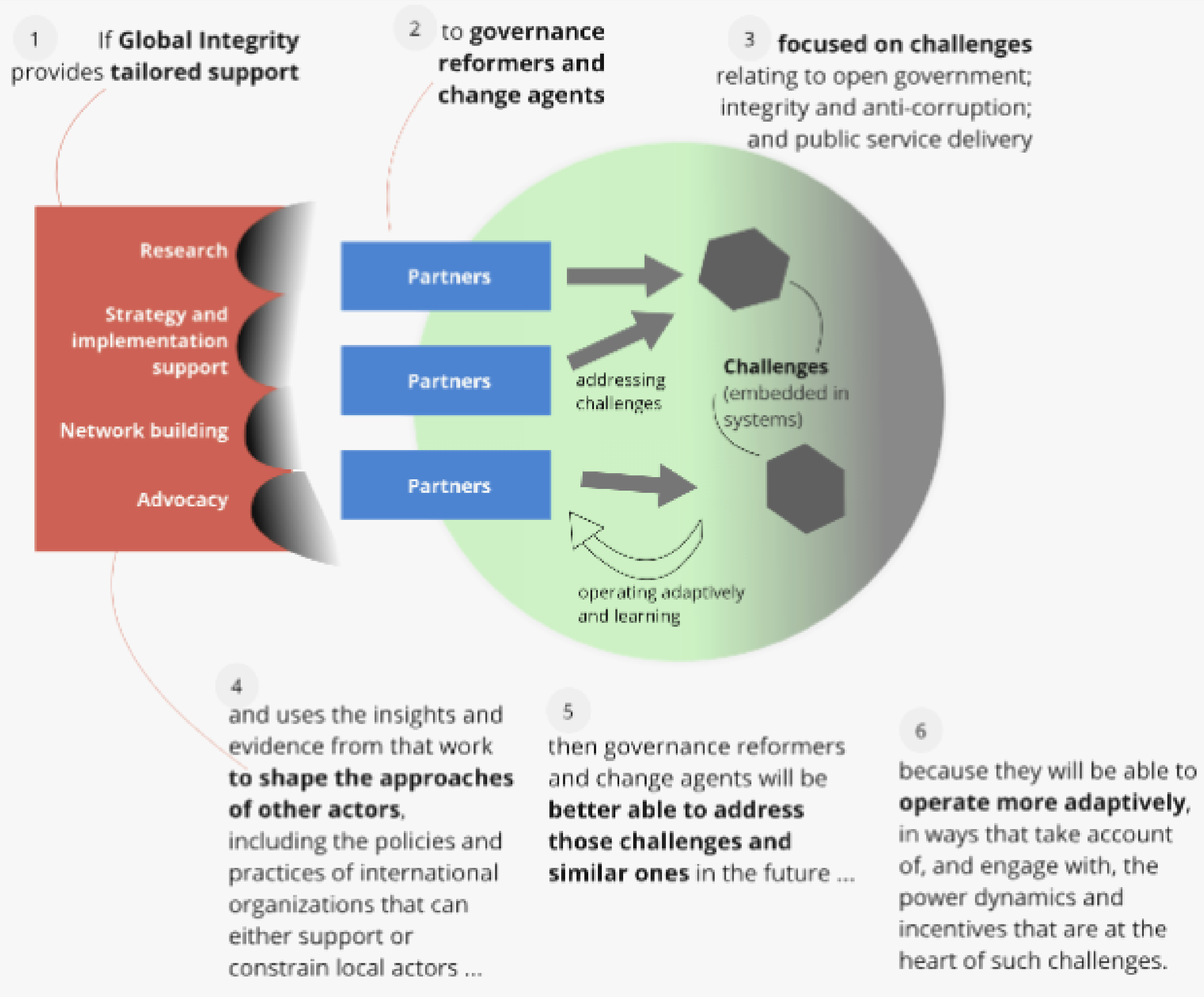
Tailored support

We design support specific to the needs of our partners and the challenges they face. This support can include producing research, supporting strategy design and implementation, building networks among reformers and change agents, and conducting advocacy around governance issues. Each of these forms of support is described below, under “Partnership Approach”.

Working adaptively

Our support aims to help our partners work more adaptively, which we see as critical to addressing complex, context-specific and fundamentally political governance-related challenges. Working adaptively means they can apply the best evidence and data to design strategies appropriate to the challenges they face, then learn from their efforts and adjust their work as they proceed with implementation. Working adaptively is not only a capacity of individual organizations, but of networks of actors—both inside and outside of government—to learn and adapt together in addressing governance challenges.

Figure 1: Visualizing our theory of change



5 Thematic Areas

Our work focuses on three thematic areas, each of which relate to the allocation of public resources to deliver public services, meet people's needs, and reduce poverty: open government; integrity and anti-corruption; and public service delivery.

These areas overlap—e.g. open government work often addresses corruption or aims to improve public service delivery—but we find it helpful to emphasize our work in all three because each has a slightly different focus, takes a slightly different tack, and involves a slightly different constellation of potential partners.

Our approach in each area is informed by our overall theory of change, in that we focus on supporting governance reformers and change agents to work more adaptively, in ways that engage with power dynamics and incentives.

Open Government

Our work in this area focuses on supporting and exploring the application of open government principles—of transparency, accountability and civic participation—to challenges relating to corruption, the use of public resources and public service delivery. Our approach centers on supporting the use of data, in cycles of action and learning, to address particular problems. This thematic area builds on our longstanding experience of critically constructive engagement with the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and other multi-stakeholder governance initiatives, a number of cross-country comparative action-research projects around how open government initiatives have played out at national and sub-national levels in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It also includes a U.S.-focused project on Defending Democracy, our stewardship of the Open Gov Hub, and our support for an emerging global network of affiliate hubs focused on open government.

Integrity and Anti-Corruption

Our work in this area focuses on supporting partners' efforts to understand and shift the power dynamics and incentives that drive corruption and entrench vested interests. Our work on integrity and anti-corruption centers on ensuring that efforts to tackle corruption are informed by meaningful data and ongoing learning, to support the emergence of effective approaches in particular places and sectors. This thematic area builds on our many years of experience in assessing governance and supporting efforts to tackle corruption, while aiming to help move the sector beyond moralistic and one-size-fits-all approaches. Our work on this theme includes the Global Integrity Anti-Corruption Evidence (GI-ACE) research programme, the Africa Integrity Indicators project, and a number of projects focused on the use of open data to understand and address corruption in Latin America and Africa.

Public Service Delivery

Our work in this area focuses on support efforts to strengthen systems of actors addressing particular service delivery challenges and shifting the patterns of incentives that hold them in place. This thematic area builds on, and extends, our prior work on governance, including fiscal governance and service delivery. Our work on this theme includes a major project on strengthening health systems, and a project on the institutional architecture for food security policy in Africa. It also builds on our innovative, problem-focused, and user-centered approach—using our field-leading "Treasure Hunts" methodology—to supporting the use of data about budgets, contracts, and results to explore and improve the use of public resources, at both national and subnational levels.

We expect most of our work over the coming years to fall into these three thematic areas. To better support our partners' efforts to address challenges in these areas, we also plan to give greater attention to two sets of cross-cutting issues. Firstly—mindful that the impact of policies in these three areas are felt differently by various social groups, including women—we plan to incorporate a stronger gender lens into new projects and partnerships, in order to consider how policy design and implementation might take better account of gender and other differences. Secondly, we plan to explore the value and limits of applying new and emerging technologies to address challenges that are about both information and power.

6 Partnership Approach

As described in our theory of change, our primary partners are governance reformers and change agents. We provide tailored support to help them to operate adaptively, in ways that engage with power dynamics and incentives, as they craft solutions to specific governance-related challenges. In providing this support, we aim to strengthen our partners' capacity—both as individual organizations and as systems of actors—to address future challenges.

Our tailored support draws on a modular set of approaches and methodologies that can be delivered in various combinations, as appropriate to the partners and context. The support we provide falls into the following four categories, each of which addresses a key challenge facing governance reformers and change agents: research to help partners understand governance challenges and opportunities; strategy and implementation support to help partners set their course, learn, and adapt; network building to strengthen collaboration and learning across systems of partners; and advocacy to encourage other international organizations to operate in ways that support locally-led innovation, learning and adaptation. (See table for more.)

These approaches form the basis of both our donor-funded projects and our fee-for-service engagements: regardless of funding source, we align our support with the needs of governance reformers and change agents to build future capacity through addressing present challenges. We aim for longer-term engagements, taking an accompaniment approach to working in strategic partnership with organizations who share our values and endeavour to work adaptively in ways that engage with power and incentives. (See "partnerships" under Operating Principles, below, for more.)

Approach	What	How
Research to help partners understand governance challenges and opportunities.	Our partners are better able to address the challenges they face in opening government, addressing corruption and improving public service delivery, when they are able: first, to analyze the power dynamics and incentives around those challenges; and second, to access insights and evidence about how others have tackled similar challenges in other contexts.	We help our partners to do this by producing high-quality, actionable evidence and insights, conducting problem-focused political economy analysis, undertaking cross-country comparative research, and managing programs of research involving multiple partners. We have a strong preference for participatory and problem-focused research that involves and supports the actors who are addressing those problems.
Strategy and implementation support to help partners set course, learn, and adapt.	Governance reformers and change agents in the midst of tackling complex governance-related challenges benefit from being able to operate in a learning-centered and adaptive manner. This entails starting with a clear problem analysis, developing clear strategies, and then using good data to reflect on progress being made, and to select the most appropriate tactics to make progress in the face of shifting circumstances.	Supporting our partners' efforts to work adaptively is the common theme across the four elements of our partnership approach, but is seen most clearly in the approach we take to strategy and implementation support. This work includes support for problem analysis, strategy development; theory of change workshops; the design and implementation of monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems, and support for the effective use of data about progress with implementation, and emerging challenges and opportunities.
Network building to strengthen collaboration and learning across systems of partners	Governance-related challenges cannot be addressed by a single organization or actor. As a result, our partners' efforts are more effective when they leverage and strengthen systems of actors working collaboratively on particular issues, at subnational, national, and international levels.	We strengthen connections and collaboration, across both organizations and contexts, through a variety of means. This includes facilitating learning exchanges designing and conducting workshops, leading the Open Gov Hub in Washington D.C., and supporting an emerging global network of Open Gov Hubs.
Advocacy to improve the support other international organizations provide in-country partners.	The ability of our partners to work adaptively and effectively to shift the dynamics of power and incentives around governance-related challenges is shaped not just by their capacity and that of the systems they are part of, but also by the policy and practice of external actors. This includes bilateral and multilateral development agencies, multi-stakeholder initiatives, such as OGP, foundations, and international NGOs.	Leveraging our networks and location in Washington D.C., we use the evidence and insights from our work around the world to encourage and support external actors to operate in ways that put locally led innovation, learning, and adaptation center stage. We do this through direct engagement; commentary on these actors' strategies; formal and informal involvement in program design, and convening conversations that aim to inform the agenda.

7 Operating Principles

People and partnerships are at the center of everything we do. Working in partnership, as outlined above, involves significant time from team members: their time is our primary resource for executing this strategy. To ensure their time is spent well, we need clear internal processes and systems that keep our work focused, effective, and efficient. This enables us to operate in a learning-centered and adaptive manner. These three elements—people, partnerships, and process—are the core of our operating model, a model that puts our strategy and our values into practice.

People

- **Lean, flat, and flexible team.** Our team is lean, flat, and flexible, with programmatic staff encouraged to exercise their creativity and entrepreneurial spirit in line with our theory of change, mission, and values. We provide team members with clarity on their priorities and roles, enabling them to effectively focus and collaborate, while also deliberately adjusting priorities and creating new project teams as new opportunities for impact arise. We maintain this flexible capacity through a combination of a core, full-time team and regular associates/consultants, with whom we will increasingly build longer-term and formal relationships.

- **Mix of functional and thematic expertise.** Global Integrity's team has a mix of capacities and expertise across functional and thematic areas. We invest both in the skills needed (e.g. in relation to systems analysis; monitoring, evaluation and learning; facilitation; communications and more) to implement our approach to working in partnership, and in the team's ability to engage at the leading edge of our thematic areas. Our multinational team has experience in dozens of countries, but we never see ourselves as the experts on local context: the in-country governance reformers and change agents who we support are always the experts.

- **Increasingly global, representative, and inclusive team.** Our team must operate in ways that value the diversity of experience and perspective that our staff bring to the team and reflect and connect to the partners we work with around the world. While our team has been mostly based in Washington, D.C. to date, we plan to gradually decentralize our staffing footprint through future hires, remote working, and potentially co-locating or sharing staff with partner organizations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. We will adjust our internal systems and processes to accommodate the inevitable challenges of an increasingly distributed team.

Partnerships

- **Listening and responding to partner needs.** Our partnership model hinges on our ability to listen and respond to the needs of governance reformers and change agents—especially those working in-country. To do this better, we will continue to invest in long-term relationships with strategic partners and pilot new approaches to gathering feedback from existing and potential partners.

- **Long-term, strategic relationships.** Global Integrity's work over the past decade has allowed us to foster a strong network of collaborators, both within countries and at the global and regional levels. Many of these collaborators have been partners on projects—either as clients or funders of Global Integrity, or as co-grantees or sub-grantees—often spanning multiple project cycles as we continuously build and strengthen our relationships. We increasingly are exploring ways to formalize these long-term relationships in order to advance programmatic impact and organizational sustainability for both Global Integrity and our partners.

- **Supporting the Open Gov Hubs.** Co-founded in 2012 with Development Gateway, the Open Gov Hub in Washington, D.C. is a co-working space and meeting place where we support collaborative action and learning amongst a vibrant community of more than 50 organizations. In recent years, we have been pleased to support the emergence of similar spaces in a number of countries, first in Nepal, and most recently in Albania, Liberia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Tunisia. We plan to continue supporting this global network of Hubs, providing advice and assistance and working collaboratively as these Hubs—individually and collectively—support the implementation of open government principles in their countries.

Processes

- **Data, decisions and learning.** The use of good data to make smart decisions about whether and how to adapt when addressing complex challenges in shifting circumstances is an important part of our strategy. This applies to Global Integrity in the same way it applies to the partners whose work we support. Building on our experience of operating as a learning organization, and practising what we preach, we plan to strengthen our capacity for monitoring, evaluation, and learning, and improve our knowledge management systems to ensure that we are able to make smart decisions and the best use of our resources, maximizing our impact and that of the partners we support.

8 Funding and Sustainability

Our current business model

Our current business model has two distinct elements. The first element is the Open Gov Hub, a self-sustaining social enterprise that—run in partnership with Development Gateway—generates approximately half of Global Integrity's overall revenue. The second element consists of all our other programs and projects, funded by a mix of core support and project-specific grants.

For the Open Gov Hub, the link between the value provided and revenue generated is direct: the revenues from membership fees cover the coworking space, services, programs, and operations of the Hub, with a small fraction of programming supported through grants. For Global Integrity's other programmatic work, our current funding comes from the UK's Department for International Development, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Mo Ibrahim Foundation, National Endowment for Democracy, World Bank, and Transparency and Accountability Initiative. We are excited to continue working with these funders in ways that support their priorities and which inform policy and practice on open government, integrity and anti-corruption, and public service delivery.

Our challenge

In order to both generate the resources needed to finance Global Integrity's programmatic work and diversify our funding, we need to demonstrate the value that we add and generate revenues to fund our work based on that value. This is a challenge for all nongovernmental organizations, especially when the intended beneficiaries of the work may not be in a position to pay directly for the support they receive. In these circumstances, there is no effective market that can convert demand for support into supply of resources to provide that support.

This challenge is made starker as some funders increasingly and rightly ask whether and how organizations such as Global Integrity, based in the Global North, can add real value to addressing governance challenges in specific contexts, often in the Global South. Related questions are being asked about how international NGOs can best support ecosystems of actors. [2] Given our focus on locally led change, we applaud these questions and take them seriously. In fact, the work described in this strategy is intended to contribute to shifting power to organizations at the frontline of addressing governance-related challenges, even while this shift presents a challenge to our financial sustainability.

[2] See, e.g., Ruth Levine on the relationship between INGOs and local partners.

Our response

Our response to the challenge of financial sustainability is three-fold.

- Our first response is described throughout this strategy: sharpening our approach to working with partners, ensuring that we are listening to their needs and responding in ways that provide value. If we were not adding value, the rest of our efforts to ensure our sustainability would have no purpose and would risk diverting funds that could be better invested elsewhere.

- Secondly, we will continue pursuing funding directly from northern funders for our work as a convener and facilitator of field-building, agenda-shaping, and cross-country initiatives. This work may be in direct support of funder strategies, or it may aim to produce public goods, such as research and evidence. As part of this, we will continue exploring outside funding for Open Gov Hub programming to supplement revenue from membership fees.

- Finally, where we see demand from potential partners in the Global South, we will increasingly seek to translate that into funding for collaborative work with those partners. We see the strongest potential through joint funding proposals submitted in partnership with in-country reformers and change agents. We also will explore the possibility of generating revenue from in-country actors directly, including fee-for-service engagements. In both joint proposals and fee-for-service, we recognize the increased need to demonstrate how our tailored support contributes to our stated impact.

We believe we play a useful role in strengthening the ability of governance reformers and change agents to address corruption and improve the use of public resources, and doing so in ways that strengthen the ability of those actors to address future challenges. That belief is supported by feedback from our partners and repeat requests for our support. In addition, we can state with some confidence that our field-leading approach to supporting partners' efforts to address governance-related challenges by operating adaptively, in ways that shift the dynamics of power and incentives, has helped to shape the agenda on transparency, open government, and anti-corruption.

A key test, for us and for any organization, is whether we can translate the demand for our support and the role we play in shaping the field into the resources we need for financial sustainability. There are some encouraging signs, with new projects and funding agreements coming online, but we are not complacent. Updating our strategy and identifying a number of steps we will take in the coming months to improve our effectiveness is an important step forward in our efforts to respond to the challenge of financial sustainability and impact.

9 Next Steps With Implementation

The process of reviewing and revising our strategy has been a very useful one. The feedback we have received from partner organizations, the engagement from our Board, and the intensive team discussions have generated a wealth of ideas and steps that we might take to enhance the effectiveness and impact of our work. Our reflections on COVID-19 and how we might respond to that set of challenges are adding, and will continue to add, more food for thought and additional urgency to the task of ensuring that we are well-placed to support the work of partners around the world seeking to address challenges relating to corruption and the use of public resources.

To direct our energies and to ensure that we are taking forward the most important insights generated through our strategy process, we intend to focus on four clusters of activities. We will work out the details of how we will move forward with these clusters in the coming weeks and months. For now, we set out the broad areas or clusters and the elements that we see as important for us to take forward.

Listening and engagement

The first cluster of issues that we plan to take forward relates to partner engagement, with listening, systematically and empathetically, an increasingly important element. The purpose of moving forward on these fronts is to improve our ability to understand our partners' needs, to design products, services and projects to meet those needs, and to ensure that we listen carefully to our partners' feedback about whether or not we have met those needs, and how we might better support their efforts in future.

This will entail a number of elements, including: developing clearer criteria for partner selection; designing and piloting better processes for listening to our partners and understanding their needs; and, refining our offer of products and services. It will also involve developing longer term strategic partnerships with key organizations, leveraging the emerging global network of affiliate hubs, and exploring the potential both of sharing staff with strategic partners, and, of employing staff based in the regions—Latin America, Africa, and Asia—where many of our activities are focused.

Learning and communications

A closely linked second cluster of issues that we plan to take forward relates to monitoring, evaluation and learning, and communications. This will entail recruiting for a new role—a Director for Listening and Learning—which will focus on strengthening our capacity for listening to partners' feedback, and for monitoring, evaluation and learning, in and across all of our projects and through our internal operations.

We also plan to recruit a new communications lead. With better evidence generated through a strengthened M/E/L function, our communications lead will help us to more effectively share the evidence, insights and stories generated through our work with partners around the world, informing policy and practice and showcasing Global Integrity's work to potential partners and funders. This will include updating our communications products, including our website, so that they better reflect our revised strategy.

Fundraising and business development

A third cluster of issues that our strategy review process has highlighted as needing additional attention relates to fundraising and business development. We have done a reasonable job of attracting investment over recent years, and have made good progress year on year, but to fully implement our ambitious strategy we need to make some significant improvements. The starting point for this cluster of work will be greater clarity about the scale of our ambitions, a plan for scaling our impact, and an estimate of what resources will be needed to meet our ambitions.

Greater clarity about our resource needs will provide the basis for a fundraising plan, to be implemented through sharper business development processes, including more systematically scouting for new opportunities, building on relationships with existing funders, and engaging with new potential funders. We will also put additional emphasis on crafting joint funding proposals with partner organizations, exploring earned income possibilities, including through the Open Gov Hub and its global affiliates.

Managing resources and knowledge

A fourth cluster of issues to take forward is more internal and will build on the considerable progress we have made in recent years; ensuring that as a team we have the resources, capacity and skills that we need to effectively implement our strategy. This—supported by our recently hired Director for Operations and Programs—will include further improving the integration of our finance and operations functions with our programs and projects.

It will also entail improvements to our human resource management, with greater clarity about roles and organizational structure, and additional attention to our performance management systems. Last but not least, to ensure that we are able to manage closely around our strategy and theory of change, it will entail making investments in our knowledge management systems, so that our decisions about whether, how and when to make adaptations to our work are informed by high-quality and timely data.

Annex 1: Major projects 2015-19

- OGP in 5 countries - demonstrated that we could play a useful role in exploring how OGP played out in particular places, generating useful lessons for participants in OGP.

- Learning to Make All Voices Count - provided valuable support for partners working through OGP at sub-national levels, demonstrating that we could play a useful role in supporting peer learning.

- Follow the Money Mexico - provided valuable support for partners' efforts to follow the money as regards particular service delivery challenges in five states, informing local OGP action plans, and demonstrating the value of the Treasure Hunts methodology.

- Mobilizing citizens against corruption - demonstrated that we can do participatory action research on citizen engagement in anti-corruption initiatives, encouraging local actors to carefully reflect on their practice and adapt, while nudging funders to support adaptation at country level.

- GI-ACE - demonstrated our ability to effectively manage a major research program, strengthening links between researchers and practitioners, and making the program more than the sum of its parts.

- Open Data for Accountability - demonstrated that we can play a useful role, working with local partners to generate evidence and translate that into insights and lessons that can influence global actors.

- Open Data for Anti-Corruption - demonstrated our ability to work collaboratively to explore political and technical challenges faced by frontline partners in the co-creation and implementation of OGP commitments related to the use of open data for anti-corruption and use this evidence to produce guidance and support about commitment design and implementation.

- State Integrity Investigation - generated a wealth of robust data & evidence that received significant uptake by journalistic outfits (in the hundreds) and by formal institutions and politicians across many US states pushing for ethics reform.

- Defending Democracy - generated useful lessons for the US context from international experience, leveraging the convening power of the Open Gov Hub and our location in Washington DC.

- Open Gov Hub and Hubs - made the self-sustaining DC Open Gov Hub into an active space for collaborative learning and action, and supported a growing network of affiliate hubs.

- Africa Integrity Indicators - generated high-quality governance data across all 54 African countries, highlighting its usefulness at the global level while raising questions about whether and how country-level actors can meaningfully use the data to drive reform.

- Anti-Kleptocracy in Central Africa - demonstrated that we can play a useful role in supporting strategy design, learning and advocacy efforts by front-line partners who grapple with complex and underexplored issues such as conducting anti-kleptocracy work at grassroots level.