Learning to open governance

Strategy Document, July 2015

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Global Integrity's Strategy: A summary

Governance matters. The institutions or rules of the game that structure the relationship between citizens and the state make a difference to how societies function and to their ability to effectively address challenges such as corruption, poor service delivery, environmental degradation and persistent poverty. The rules of the game shape how priorities are set, how resources are used, how things get done and how societies evolve.

Effective governance does not emerge through the cookie-cutter application of "Good Governance" principles across diverse contexts. Politics and context matter. Effective governance emerges - or doesn't - as the result of ongoing processes of engagement between citizens and states. Our strategy is to increase the likelihood of that engagement leading to more effective governance by supporting processes of country-level learning that empower the champions of governance reform, strengthen their relationships, build their political capital and enable them to drive progress towards more open and effective governance.

We will support processes of country-level learning by providing richer evidence about policies and their effectiveness, and by helping to facilitate processes of structured reflection that - by bringing together government and civil society stakeholders to review evidence, to conduct joint analysis of the political landscape, and to collectively strategize about how to move things forward - enable country-level actors to better address the challenges that they face. By supporting processes of adaptive, exploratory, learning that focus on issues around open governance, we will help to strengthen and expand the virtuous circles, or open learning loops, that can lead to more effective governance.

We will develop and deploy an approach to supporting country-level learning which combines and integrates three strands of work:

- **Cross-country comparative research** will generate evidence about the policies that countries have in place to address governance-related challenges and how they are playing out in practice. This strand of work will build on our existing indicator-based research, but evolve to better meet the needs of country-level learning.

- **In-country engagement** will focus on facilitating joint learning and political analysis that informs collective action. We will do this by strengthening the cycle of learning: providing data, evidence and stories to inform structured reflection; facilitating analysis of the feasibility of various policy options; and, helping to put in place the monitoring systems that are needed to inform future reflection and action.

- **Advocacy** will help to ensure that the findings from our comparative research and in-country engagement feed into the international policy processes that - by setting norms and influencing practice - shape the space for learning and the prospects for open governance at country level.

We will use this integrated approach to make connections amongst key open governance issues. These will include fiscal governance - from aid and extractives, to budgets, contracts, and illicit financial flows, with open data and citizen engagement as common threads - and money in politics, an issue that has received insufficient attention but which helps to explain why governance, including fiscal governance, is often dysfunctional. By making connections amongst key open governance issues in our work, providing evidence and analysis about how various issues are interrelated, and the challenges and opportunities that this creates, we will help country-level actors to make the connections more clearly in theirs.

Our niche in the open governance ecosystem will be to support adaptive learning at country-level, bringing cross-country data, stories and evidence to bear, and facilitating processes of structured reflection and political analysis about how progress might be made towards more open - and ultimately more effective - governance. By occupying this niche, making connections across issues, and collaborating with partners in ways that complement their issue-based expertise, we will strengthen the open governance ecosystem as a whole and add value to an increasingly crowded space.

Global Integrity's experience in assessing systems of governance, our global network of researchers, our high-quality research processes and the rich data that they generate, our journalistic origins, our focus on policy in practice as well as on paper, our expertise and experience on money in politics and fiscal governance, our global perspective, our access to international policy processes, our position at the center of the open governance community in Washington D.C. and beyond, and our proven willingness to innovate, experiment and learn, make us uniquely well-placed to drive this agenda forward.

Our strategy is ambitious and exploratory. We will move forward incrementally, identifying opportunities to develop our current projects and to contribute to ongoing efforts by other initiatives and organizations. This might include, for instance: adding a country-engagement element to our work on money in politics; extending our work on mapping and strengthening the landscape of fiscal governance in Mexico; working to support the development and implementation of National Action Plans by members of the Open Government Partnership; and, supporting the learning function of the Effective Institutions Platform, including in relation to fiscal governance.

Our strategy builds on our core strengths in research and evidence, but points the organization in an exciting new direction. Now, we are known for our data. In five years' time, we will be known for two things. First, for our ability to use data, evidence and stories to support processes of country-level learning that drive progress towards more open and effective governance. Second, for the value we add to the work of others through our leadership on adaptive learning and open governance, and the connections we make amongst issues. As we move forward, ambitiously, but incrementally, we will practice what we preach, being transparent, participatory, accountable and open in everything we do, and learning as we go.

1. Introduction

1. Global Integrity's mission is to support progress towards open and effective governance. Established as an independent organization in 2005, Global Integrity has led the way in measuring and assessing governance. Our best-in-class research methodology, which employs a global network of researchers and strict quality control procedures to generate high-quality, comparable, and contextually rich data, is the foundation for our reputation.

2. The governance agenda has evolved considerably since 2005. On the one hand, the importance of governance is more widely recognized, by citizens, by governments, and in international policy processes, for instance around the Sustainable Development Goals. On the other, the idea that the "Good Governance" agenda provides a blueprint for governance reform that can be applied regardless of context, is increasingly, and rightly, questioned.[1] Instead, effective governance is increasingly understood as something that emerges over time, in specific political contexts, as a result of citizens' engagement with the state.

3. Organizations working to improve governance need to reflect regularly on the impact of their activities if they are to maintain and maximize their effectiveness. What's working? What isn't and why? And what might be done differently? The evolution of the governance agenda adds to this imperative. Over the last few months, we have taken the opportunity to reflect on these questions, in order to ensure that we remain at the leading edge of efforts to support progress towards open and effective governance and deliver on our mission. Our revised strategy, resulting from that reflection, will guide Global Integrity's work over the next five years.

4. The strategy builds on our core strengths in research and evidence, but points the organization in an exciting new direction; using evidence to support adaptive learning processes that, by empowering the champions of open governance at country-level, and setting in motion virtuous circles of adaptive learning and open governance, will drive progress towards more effective governance.[2] By taking this direction we will be better able

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[1] See, for instance, these pieces by Brian Levy, Matt Andrews and Mushtaq Khan and this short blog-post by Alan Hudson.
[2] We believe that open governance has intrinsic value; citizens have the right to craft the rules to which they are subject. But our strategy is based primarily on the argument that open governance has instrumental value,

to deliver on our mission and drive the evolution of the governance agenda in ways that move squarely beyond the "Good Governance" agenda.

Strategy process and outline

5. The strategy process has involved the whole Global Integrity team as well as in-depth consultation with approximately 150 of the leading thinkers and practitioners in the governance and development space. We are very grateful for the generous response to our requests for feedback and the warm encouragement we have received for our efforts to implement an open strategy process. The Board of Directors has overseen the process of reviewing and revising the strategy, through bilateral discussions with the Executive Director, bi-weekly updates from the Executive Director and Board meetings in March and June. Finally, regular updates on the strategy process have been shared via Global Integrity's blog (here, here, here, here and here).

6. This strategy document proceeds as follows:

    ● Chapter two outlines our theory of change, centered around the role that country-level learning can play in empowering the champions of open governance, the virtuous circles that can be put into play when adaptive learning is about open governance, and the role that external actors can play in supporting country-level learning.

    ● Chapter three does two things. First, it describes how we intend to support processes of country-level learning: through a combination of cross-country research, in-country engagement and advocacy; and, through an approach that makes connections across key open governance issues, including fiscal governance and money in politics. Second, it explains how we will add value to a crowded open governance space.

    ● Chapter four explains how we will put the strategy into practice, outlining how we will strengthen the adaptive learning element of a number of our existing projects, for instance, by adding more country-engagement to our cross-country research on money in politics, and how we might work with partners to strengthen the adaptive

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providing a better environment - a richer informational environment - for adaptive learning and the emergence of governance processes that more effectively meet citizens' needs.

learning element of existing initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership or the Global Initiative on Fiscal Transparency.

- Chapter five provides some initial thinking about how we will move forward with our revised strategy - ambitiously, but incrementally, and with greater emphasis on monitoring, evaluation and learning - and sets out the next steps in moving from strategy to implementation.

7. Our strategy provides a clear sense of direction. It also allows for the flexibility that will be needed to respond to unexpected challenges and opportunities, and provides a framework for the reflection and learning that will be required to progressively strengthen our ability to support country-level learning. Strategy is not the final word; implementation is what matters. But our strategy provides a map and sets a course, essential prerequisites for course correction and learning during the journey to come.

2. Open and Effective Governance: A learning-centered approach

8. Governance matters. The institutions or rules of the game that structure the relationship between citizens and the state make a difference to how societies function and to their ability to address effectively challenges such as corruption, poor service delivery, environmental degradation and persistent poverty. The rules of the game shape how priorities are set, how resources are used, how things get done and how societies evolve.

9. But as is now widely recognized by leading thinkers and practitioners in the governance and development community, effective governance is not produced by the cookie-cutter application of "Good Governance" principles across diverse contexts.[3] Politics and context matter. Effective governance emerges, or doesn't, as a result of ongoing engagement between citizens and the state - engagement that is fundamentally about power, politics and trust.

10. Our strategy is to increase the likelihood of that engagement leading to more effective governance by working with government and civil society partners to support country-level learning. By doing this in a way that builds the political capital of pro-reform actors, that strengthens relationships amongst those actors, that builds trust, and that harnesses the two-way relationship between open governance and adaptive learning, we will help to strengthen and expand the open learning loops that can lead to more effective governance.

Country-level learning and empowerment

11. Our theory of change has three components. The first component - our core hypothesis - is that country-level learning can contribute to progress towards more open and effective governance. Our hypothesis, to be clear, is not that learning is a magic wand that can quickly shift incentives and transform the political landscape. Rather, our hypothesis is that when country-level learning is adaptive instead of simple, and when it brings stakeholders together to conduct joint analysis of the political dynamics, and to collectively strategize about how to move things forward, it can empower the champions of governance reform,

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[3] Matt Andrews' work on the limits to institutional reform in development has played a key role in challenging the "Good Governance" agenda and outlining an alternative learning-centered approach. This blogpost by Alan Hudson provides a summary.

strengthen their relationships, build their political capital and enable them to drive progress towards more open and effective governance.[4]

12. By adaptive learning we mean learning that: involves political as well as technical analysis; takes a systemic approach to understanding problems; asks not only what works, but also where, why and how; looks for best-fit rather than best-practice solutions; is iterative, rather than one-off; and involves and is intended to inform country-level actors (See Table 1). Adaptive country-level learning - deploying participatory techniques and tools for assessing evidence, conducting analysis and considering options that can turn joint learning into collective action - can make a difference to the politics of governance reform.[5]

Table 1: Simple and adaptive learning

Dimensions of Learning	Simple Learning: Learning as research & knowledge transfer	Adaptive Learning: Learning as empowerment in context
What sorts of problems can it address?	Simple problems that have transferrable solutions	Complex problems, which require tailored, emergent, solutions
What aspects of a problem does it focus on?	Technical aspects	Political and technical aspects
How does it see problems?	As isolated issues	In systemic terms
What questions does it ask?	What works	What works, where, how and why
What sorts of solutions does it aim for?	Best-practice, one-size fits-all	Best-fit for context
What is its timing?	One-off	Regular, continuous, iterative
Who is involved in the learning? Who is it for?	External actors	Internal (e.g. domestic) actors
How are the findings presented?	As solutions to be applied	As insights to be considered

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[4] Brendan Halloran's recent piece on "Political analysis for citizen-led accountability" is a great entry-point into the literature about the potential of country-level learning and political analysis and a useful reminder that - to be effective, particularly where governments are resistant to reform - learning needs to inform, support and strengthen political action, including by civil society campaigns and citizens' movements.
[5] The recent work of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) on Adapting Development and by ODI and the Asia Foundation on Development Entrepreneurialism are particularly useful on adaptive development. For a short introduction, see this blog-post by Dave Algoso on Adaptive Management in northern Uganda.

How does it make a difference?	Transferring knowledge	Empowering actors
What priority is given to organizational learning?	Low. Priority is assessing what works.	High. Attention is given to organizational effectiveness.

13. For instance, an adaptive process of country-level learning and political analysis, applied to the challenge of improving maternal health in Ghana, could help to strengthen relationships amongst key actors, build trust amongst them, enable more effective and politically-informed action, and contribute to faster progress towards improved maternal health. Crafting effective processes of country-level learning and political analysis is an art rather than a science, but an effective process would likely involve bringing together public officials, medical professionals and citizens to reach a common understanding of the challenge, to systematically review evidence about the effectiveness of different approaches to improving maternal health, to conduct joint analysis of the political challenges and opportunities, and to jointly strategize about ways forward.

Open Contracting: Sprinting towards openness

An example of a country-level learning process

Governments around the world spend an estimated US$9.5 trillion every year through contracts. Yet contracting information is often unavailable for public scrutiny, and money spent through these contracts is often poorly managed or misappropriated. Open contracting (OC) promotes increased disclosure and participation in public contracting to address these challenges.

As the OC movement began to take root in 2013, there was an identified need to learn from the experiences of OC champions from around the world. As part of a long-term engagement to facilitate learning around open contracting, the OC team decided to convene a book sprint to initiate the process.

The OC book sprint brought together 17 practitioners from 12 different countries, ranging from Mexico to Uganda to Afghanistan, to collaboratively write and publish a guide to open contracting in five days. The book includes collective inputs from diverse OC champions on best practices, and serves as guide and inspiration to others in their own OC activities.

The book-sprint helped share and capture knowledge, experiences, and learnings that often remain tacit and are rarely shared or written up. The structured process, involving elements of adaptive learning, required strong facilitation skills and creativity to manage interpersonal dynamics.

The sprint served as an opportunity for OC champions to think through how they might promote open contracting in their countries. In addition, the process helped build consensus around major elements of OC among a diverse group of practitioners and helped to strengthen the OC community by building a sense of trust, ownership, and belonging.

Immediately after the 5-day sprint, the book was published online under creative commons license, and remains a living document open for others to contribute. This has engaged the broader OC Community, which helped translate it to French, Mongolian and Spanish. In addition this community collaborated on a second version of the book, contributing their own experiences and knowledge of OC.

Sprinters also took on individual projects to support broader dissemination and uptake of the Guide as a tool for learning on the ground. They documented and shared the various mechanisms used to support learning on a longer term basis, contributing additional knowledge and experiences.

Results from these engagements include:

- Capacity building and learning activities: a workshop in Côte d'Ivoire focused on the extractives sector, and engagement in Uganda which improved the ability of the Uganda Contracts Monitoring Coalition (UCMC) to interact with government agencies, leading to more contracts being disclosed and building greater trust among stakeholders;

- Advocacy and awareness raising tool: this included a multi-stakeholder forum in Ghana hosted by the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition where key players spoke about the importance of OC, and radio shows in Nigeria to raise awareness among the general public about open contracting and to demand greater accountability in public contracting;

- New formats to communicate and facilitate learning: this includes the development of multi-media materials such as a video on OC 101 based on the OC guide.

Open learning loops

14. The second component of our theory of change is the idea that when adaptive learning is applied to governance issues, it can have a snowball effect.[6] Open processes of governance enable adaptive learning: transparency helps to enrich the informational environment in which learning takes place; participation helps to ensure that learning incorporates citizens' feedback; and smart accountability mechanisms can help to ensure that learning leads to effective action. Conversely, learning and reflection by country-level actors about how policies intended to promote more open governance are working out in practice, can accelerate the process of opening governance, with subsequent positive impacts on the scope for future cycles of learning. (See figure 1: Expanding open-learning loops leading to more effective governance).

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[6] Open governance and adaptive learning are both fundamentally about information and how it is used. This is why there is the potential for open governance and adaptive learning to have a snowball effect.

Figure 1: Open-Learning loops leading to more effective governance
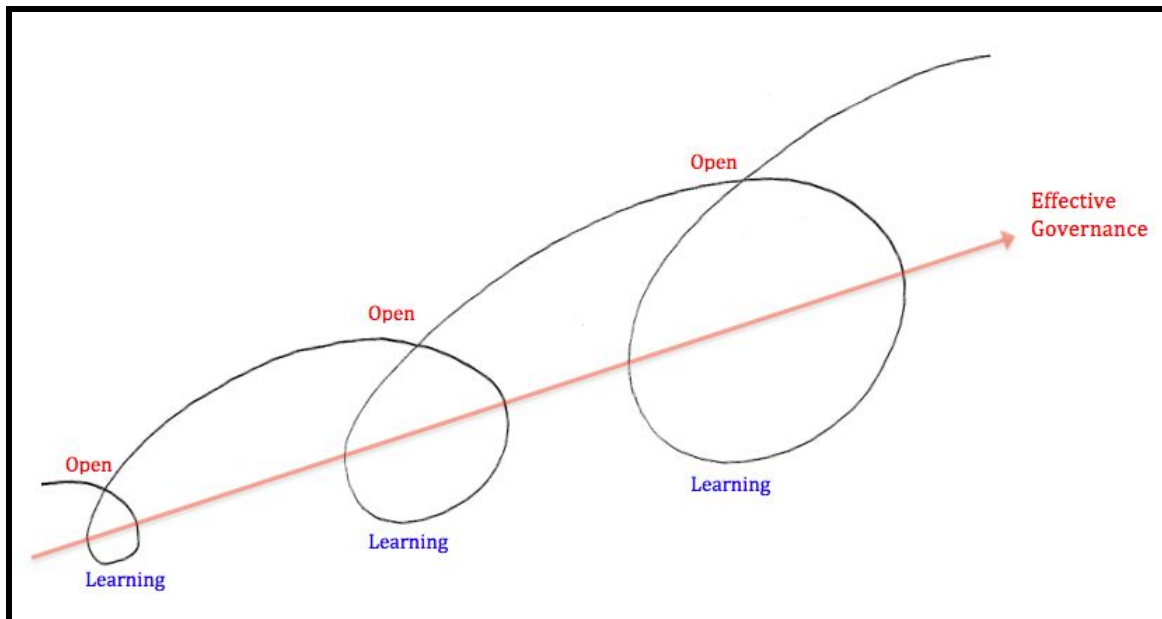
15. For instance, greater transparency about the flow of revenues in the extractives sector in Peru provides a richer informational environment for country-level actors to assess the challenges of extractives governance and to develop proposals about how to make improvements. Openness enables learning. And structured reflection on the effectiveness of a particular approach to enhancing transparency in the extractives sector - the Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative, for example - plays an important role in identifying the obstacles that need to be addressed, and the actions that should be taken, to increase its effectiveness, given the political dynamics at play in the Peruvian context. Learning can foster greater openness. Adaptive learning about open governance has the potential to drive virtuous circles, or learning loops, which lead to governance processes that are more open and - because they are better adapted to context - more effective at meeting citizens' needs.

Learning, evidence and structured reflection

16. The third component of our theory of change is the idea that country-level learning can be improved, throughout the cycle of trying, reflecting and adapting, by bringing to bear richer evidence and supporting processes of structured reflection. For instance, cross-country evidence about different approaches to addressing similar challenges can play an important

role in informing country-level learning, and, combined with structured reflection about the feasibility of different policy options, can enable country-level actors to find better solutions to the challenges that they are looking to address. Insights and lessons from other places can provide inspiration about how best to move forward.

17. Global Integrity is well-placed to support and strengthen processes of country-level learning by providing data, evidence and stories, and helping to structure processes of reflection and political analysis. Chapter three explains how we intend to do this. Chapter four outlines a number of opportunities we might take to put this into practice. And chapter five - acknowledging that our theory of change is a hypothesis - outlines how as an organization we will learn about whether, how, why and where country-level learning, and our support for more adaptive country-level learning, can contribute to more open and effective governance.

3. Supporting Country-Level Learning: Combining approaches and making connections

Combining three strands of work

18. We will develop and deploy an approach to supporting country-level learning which combines and integrates three strands of work: cross-country comparative research; in-country engagement; and advocacy. By designing these strands of work in ways that put learning at their heart, and that focus their fire on supporting country-level learning, the integrated approach will be more than the sum of its parts.

19. **Cross-country comparative research** will generate evidence about the policies that countries have in place to address governance-related challenges and how they are playing out. This strand of work will build on our existing indicator-based research, but evolve in four important ways to better meet the needs of country-level learning.

20. First, we will increasingly design our research in ways that incorporate feedback from users and potential users - particularly at country-level - about what issues we should cover and how we should cover them.[7] Second, we will increasingly focus on generating evidence not only about what policies are in place and whether they are enforced, but also about whether and how they are contributing to the results that they are intended to achieve. Third, we will invest additional resources in generating stories that are contextually-rich to supplement the scorecard-based data for which we are currently known. And, fourth, we will increase our investment in communicating the findings of research, helping to ensure that it reaches the people whose behavior it might influence, and who might make use of it, at country-level and in international policy fora.

21. **In-country engagement** will focus on facilitating joint learning and political analysis that informs collective action. The nature of our in-country engagement will vary, by design, depending on the country and issues in question, and as we continually learn about how to best to support adaptive learning and political analysis at country-level. For instance, in contexts where progress towards open governance is limited, the mix of actors involved in

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[7] On this, see "Measuring governance: What's the point?" and "The marketplace of ideas: From 'external assessments' to country-level learning", by Alan Hudson.

country-level learning may be more weighted towards civil society organizations, with our role being to support their learning and help build the capacities that they need to navigate the political terrain and to open up the space for learning. But no matter the context, core to our approach will be close collaboration with trusted local partners - local think tanks or research institutes, for example - to facilitate processes of country-level learning and political analysis that are designed appropriately for the context in question.

22. Working around the cycle of learning, we will: enrich reflection, by providing data evidence and stories generated through cross-country comparative research, and by helping to facilitate processes of structured reflection; improve adaptation, by providing information and evidence about approaches that have been implemented in other contexts, and facilitating discussion of the feasibility and fit of alternative policy options; and focus trying, by helping to put in place monitoring systems that will generate the evidence needed to inform future reflection and action.

23. **Advocacy** will help to ensure that the findings from our cross-country comparative research and from our in-country engagement feed into the international policy processes that shape the space for learning and the prospects for open governance at country level. This might include policies relating to fiscal transparency, civic space or civic engagement, where policy changes within the G20, at the UN, or the World Bank could lead to the development of global norms and practices on transparency or participation that will ultimately have an impact at country-level. We do not intend to play a leading role in such advocacy, but can help to shape advocacy messages - making sure that they are informed by evidence of how principles play out in practice - and judiciously lend our support to campaigns led by partners in the open governance space.

Making connections amongst governance issues

24. The second front in our approach to supporting country-level learning will be to make connections amongst key open governance issues. This might include making connections amongst fiscal governance issues; from aid and extractives, to budgets, contracts and illicit financial flows, with open data and citizen engagement the threads that make the connections. This is an agenda that the Follow the Money Network has played an important

role in advancing in recent years, led by our Executive Director. It might also include making connections between issues of fiscal governance and money in politics, an issue that has received insufficient attention but which helps to explain why fiscal governance is often dysfunctional. And, it will include continued attention to the core issues of public integrity which have historically been the focus and foundation of our work.

25. By making connections amongst key governance issues in our work, providing evidence and analysis about how different domains link together, and the challenges and opportunities this creates, we will enable country-level actors to make the connections in theirs. This might be about how contracting processes - the extent to which they are open or closed - have an impact on the quality of governance in the extractives sector; or how, in the absence of open budget processes, aid transparency may have limited impact; or, how a failure to regulate campaign finance effectively, or to require politicians to disclose their assets, can perpetuate weak governance across the flow of public resources; or how enhancing transparency about the beneficial ownership of companies can help to improve the contracting process.

Leading the way on adaptive learning and open governance

26. The open governance space is an increasingly crowded space. There are many organizations that focus on specific issues such as aid, extractives, budgets, contracts, illicit financial flows or money in politics, and a handful, such as Transparency International whose expertise covers the piece. Similarly there are many organizations that conduct cross-country comparative research, or support country-level learning and capacity development, or engage in international advocacy, with a number of organizations - including major players such as the International Budget Partnership and the Natural Resource Governance Initiative - combining these approaches.

27. Our niche in the open governance ecosystem will be supporting adaptive learning at country-level, bringing cross-country data, stories and evidence to bear, and facilitating processes of structured reflection and political analysis about how progress might be made towards more open - and ultimately more effective - governance. By occupying this niche, making connections across issues, and collaborating with partners in ways that

complement their issue-based expertise, we will strengthen the open governance ecosystem as a whole.

28. Global Integrity's experience in assessing systems of governance, our global network of researchers, our high-quality research processes and the rich data that they generate, our journalistic origins, our focus on policy in practice as well as on paper, our expertise and experience on money in politics and fiscal governance, our global perspective, our access to international policy processes, our position at the center of the open governance community in DC and beyond, and our proven willingness to innovate, experiment and learn, make us uniquely well-placed to drive this agenda forward.

Table 2: Building on our core competencies and characteristics

Competencies & Characteristics	Why this matters
Systemic approach to governance	We are well-versed in approaching governance in terms of systems and frameworks for learning
Global network of researchers in countries around the world	We have a well-developed network of researchers and a track-record of understanding governance from the perspective of local actors
High-quality research processes that generate rich data	We have the infrastructure needed to generate high-quality data and the reputation for doing so
Journalistic origins	We appreciate the importance of using data to tell engaging stories
Focus on policies in practice as well as on paper	We appreciate the importance of tracking not only what governments say they will do, but what they actually do
Expertise and experience on money in politics and fiscal governance	We are up to speed and well-connected on key open governance issues
Global perspective	We know that corruption and governance challenges exist in developed as well as developing countries. We don't assume that we have the answers
Access to international policy processes	We are well-positioned to engage in international policy processes that affect the scope for country-level learning
Position at the center of the open governance community in DC and beyond	We are well-placed to play a lead role in the development of the open governance agenda
Proven willingness to innovate, experiment and learn	We are an innovative organization that can lead the way, including on support for country-level learning

4. Putting the Strategy into Practice

Moving forward ambitiously, incrementally and with partners

29. Our strategy is an ambitious one, and, an exploratory one. As such, our plan is to move forward incrementally, [starting](#) [from](#) [where](#) [we](#) [are](#) (See our [Annual](#) [Report](#), which includes a description of our existing projects), identifying opportunities to develop our current projects and to contribute to ongoing efforts by other initiatives and organizations to support progress towards more open governance, and learning as we go.

30. As we move forward, we will develop partnerships and collaborate where we can contribute our skills and experience, where others can complement what we bring to the table, and where we can learn about how best to support processes of adaptive learning that have the potential to move the needle on open and effective governance. We will make decisions about which partnerships to develop and which opportunities to pursue based on the flexible application of a number of criteria or guiding questions:

    ● Is there the potential to support country-level learning about progress towards open governance?
    ● Is there evidence of country-level demand for assistance with strengthening country-level learning?
    ● Is the political environment - specifically, the degree of openness - one that holds out the possibility of better country-level learning kick-starting open-learning loops?
    ● Is there scope for Global Integrity to add real value, through a combination of cross-country research, in-country engagement, and advocacy?
    ● Is there scope for Global Integrity to add real value, by making connections across key open governance issues?
    ● Is it possible to identify suitable partners with whom we can work, especially at country-level?
    ● Is there an opportunity for us to learn about how country-level learning can best be supported?

Strengthening the adaptive learning element of our existing projects

31. We are in the process of reviewing and discussing with partners how our existing projects might evolve - perhaps by adding an element of country engagement, or extending to cover multiple issues - so that they can better support country-level learning. In some cases this would be about incorporating a stronger focus on country-level learning. In others it would be about building on a project that already includes a strong focus on country-level learning.

32. Possibilities that we are exploring include:

- Adding country-level engagement or advocacy to our cross-country comparative research on money in politics (or to the US-focused State Integrity Investigation which we conduct in partnership with the Center for Public Integrity). We are in discussion with the Sunlight Foundation about building on our existing collaboration, and with the National Democratic Institute as regards the role we might play as part of a wider programme of work on elections and political transitions;

- Building a stronger country-level engagement element to complement the data collection focus of the Africa Integrity Indicators project. We have had preliminary discussions with the Mo Ibrahim Foundation (the funders) about how this project might evolve as part of a broader evolution in the Foundation's thinking - and ours - about how to make the most of the data that is collected;

- Revising the Global Integrity Report so that it is focused on generating data that makes stronger connections amongst key open governance issues - including fiscal governance and money in politics - and that can be used to support country-level learning. We are in preliminary discussions with AidData about how assessments such as the Global Integrity Report can best support country-level learning, an issue that we hope to explore under the auspices of the Governance Data Alliance;

- Extending our research on fiscal governance in Mexico, helping to develop a template and methodology for mapping the landscape of fiscal governance and

assessing the ability of citizens to follow the money, and piloting a user-centered approach to assessing the value of open fiscal data. We are closely engaged with a number of organizations including Development Gateway, Development Initiatives, the International Budget Partnership, ONE, Open Knowledge, Oxfam, and Publish What You Fund, and are coordinating discussions amongst various organizations about how to assess and improve the ability of citizens to follow the money, including by supporting country-level learning;

- Exploring how the innovative work we are leading about how the Open Government Partnership (OGP) is playing out in practice in Albania, Costa Rica, Mexico, the Philippines and Tanzania might develop. This research project could extend to consider whether and how the OGP can help to join the dots amongst various multi-stakeholder initiatives in countries where multiple initiatives are operating, an issue which we have begun to discuss with Jonathan Fox and Brandon Brockmyer at American University.

Strengthening the adaptive learning element of governance initiatives

33. We are also in discussion with a number of multi-stakeholder governance initiatives and associated organizations about the role we could play in strengthening the adaptive learning element in their work. This could include systematic analysis of how various initiatives deal with the relationship between principles and practice, and between the global and the national, in their theories of change and in their learning, and how they make connections with other initiatives focused on different aspects of governance. Initial conversations on this theme have taken place with a number of organizations including MSI-Integrity, informed by recent discussions about the workings of multi-stakeholder initiatives.[8]

34. More specific conversations have begun about:

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[8] A blog-post by Alan Hudson, summarizing some of these discussions - "Governance in context: Putting principles into practice" - is available here.

- engaging with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and the Natural Resource Governance Institute on extractives governance to strengthen the learning function, and accelerate the cycles of learning, around extractives governance;

- supporting the the Global Initiative on Fiscal Transparency and the International Budget Partnership, by collaborating on cross-country research to generate evidence about how principles of participation - and other high-level principles of open fiscal governance - play out in practice in particular places;

- helping the Open Contracting Partnership to design their "showcase and learning pilots", and to analyze, synthesize and communicate the findings that they generate about the implementation of open contracting, to maximize the learning and make connections with learning processes in related multi-stakeholder governance initiatives such as the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative;

- working with the OGP Support Unit, the World Bank and local partners to support the process of developing, implementing and monitoring National Action Plan commitments on key open governance issues by conducting research, supporting country-level learning and building on the Open Government Guide; and,

- supporting the work of the Effective Institutions Platform - an initiative that developed out of the development effectiveness agenda and which is managed by a joint OECD-UNDP Secretariat - to develop Peer to Peer Learning Alliances, including on fiscal governance.

34. Finally, we are part of ongoing discussions with the Accountability Lab, Feedback Labs, the GovLab, Keystone Accountability, the Overseas Development Institute, Reboot, the Transparency & Accountability Initiative, Transparency International, the World Bank's Global Partnership for Social Accountability, the World Resources Institute and others about how best to strengthen the feedback and learning agenda throughout the transparency, accountability and open governance community.

5. Next Steps: Learning as we go

35. The hypothesis that country-level learning and political analysis can play a useful role in the emergence of effective governance is an idea that is at the leading edge of the governance agenda. This is a hypothesis that merits and requires further exploration and is one that Global Integrity is well-placed to explore. By exploring and experimenting around this hypothesis, with a focus on continually learning and adapting our approach, we will not only sharpen our own effectiveness in supporting adaptive learning at country level, but also generate valuable lessons and guidance for others.

36. We intend to explore this hypothesis in ways that strengthen rather than sideline our current work. To do this we aim to secure funding to hire additional members of staff focused on learning, communications and in-country engagement, as well as ensuring that we have the senior staff we need to support the Executive Director in relation to strategy, funding and partnerships. This additional capacity will enable us to implement a learning agenda across the organization, to develop pilot projects with selected partners, and to build on our cross-country comparative research.

37. We will develop smart systems for monitoring, evaluation and learning, to harvest the insights from our explorations. These systems - based on a clear theory of change along with associated metrics - will be designed to enable structured reflection about the extent to which our inputs and our activities are leading to the desired outputs and outcomes. Our approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning will be open and participatory, involving staff, partner organizations and funders. By giving proper weight to monitoring, evaluation and learning - right from the initial planning phase of each project and across all projects - we will strengthen the learning culture and foster evaluative thinking across the organization.

38. Learning, without communication, has limited impact. Therefore, we will invest in communication to share our learning and that of our country-level partners, to maximize its impact and to strengthen the open governance ecosystem as a whole. Our approach to strategic communications will be to listen and learn first, and then to contribute, helping to

strengthen conversations about how principles play out in practice, rather than defaulting to the production of "best practice" guidelines. We intend to take full advantage of our position at the OpenGov Hub, using it as the starting point for increasingly wide circles of collaborative learning and action.

39. While this strategy represents a bold new approach to achieving our mission, the way forward is through incremental steps, learning as we go. Initial conversations with potential partners and funders suggest that our strategy is heading not only in the right direction, but in a direction that has a good chance of attracting investment. Our next step will be to prepare a more detailed implementation plan and look for resources from funders that share our vision and enthusiasm for putting country-level learning at the center of the open governance agenda and the development agenda more broadly.

40. As we move forward, ambitiously, but incrementally, we will practice what we preach, being transparent, participatory, accountable and open in all that we do. We look forward to sharing successes, failures, and insights, learning together to drive progress to more open and effective governance. This is the next step in an exciting journey for Global Integrity. We hope that you will join us. Table 3, below, outlines some immediate next steps. Table 4 provides some thoughts on where this journey might take us in the years ahead.

Table 3: Immediate next steps

Timing	Tasks
July	Incorporate feedback and revise strategy
July	Review capacity needs and outline resource requirements
July - August	Reach out to funders and develop investment & implementation plans
July - August	Deepen conversations with potential project partners to plan pilot projects in more detail
August - Sept.	Finalize investment commitments
October +	Hire staff and begin new exploratory projects

Table 4: The evolution of Global Integrity

What we're known for...		
	… today	**... in 2020**
Our reputation is based on	- High quality, indicator-based comparative research	- Supporting in-country adaptive learning - High quality, comparative research
What we work on	- National and subnational transparency and accountability frameworks - Money in politics	- On-demand, customized research on key open governance issues - Cyclical national and subnational participatory assessments of fiscal governance (i.e. Global Integrity Report 2.0)
Who we work with	- International actors	- Country-level actors - International actors
How we seek to make a difference	- Generating and transferring knowledge	- Empowering actors - Collaborative learning at country level
How we communicate results	- Through external actors - Public availability	- Strategic, targeted communication to country-level & external actors - Customized information - Public accessibility
How we measure success	- Use of our data	- Usefulness of our data for country-level learning - Effectiveness of our support for adaptive country-level learning
How we approach organizational learning	- Focus on improving data quality and efficiency	- Maintained quality and efficiency - Sharper focus on effectiveness - Regular refinement of both process and approach

Approximate % of our programs...		
	… today	**... in 2020**
Comparative research	85%	40%
In-country engagement	3%	40%
Advocacy	12%	20%