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Global Integrity Insider

The last few months - from the sweltering heat of a DC summer to the first blasts of winter - have been a busy time for Global Integrity, with much progress made and many lessons learned.

A particular highlight for me - in addition to our team away-day on a sailing boat in the [Chesapeake Bay!](#) - was [the event](#) we hosted with Professor Yuen Yuen Ang at the Open Gov Hub in September. Yuen's work on "How China Escaped the Poverty Trap" points the way toward a governance agenda which moves beyond the idea that openness is always good, or that adaptation is the path to effectiveness, towards a serious exploration of how learning and adaptation that leads to better outcomes can be fostered, including in political environments that are not so open. We were thrilled to have Yuen join us at the Open Gov Hub, and to meet with our Board - including our newest board member, [Gertrude Mugizi](#) - the following day.

For those of you who have not yet seen, the latest iteration of our 2-pager on "[What we do and why we do it](#)" sets out our latest framing, with less jargon, more examples, and a strong focus on supporting locally-led innovation, learning and adaptation. Feedback always welcome!

Ann Blodgett

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Integrity and Anti-Corruption

What We've Been Doing

Our research on the 6th round of the [Africa Integrity Indicators](#) is in full swing, with local researchers in 54 African countries and our team in Washington hard at work collecting, cleaning and collating data. In parallel, we are in discussions with the Mo Ibrahim Foundation about how this data collection project might in future years be supplemented by country-level work to explore how governance data can be used to address governance-related challenges.

Relatedly, we are excited to be taking forward conversations with colleagues from the World Bank's World Development Report 2017 team about a third wave of [governance assessments](#) which would focus on function more than form, making headway toward measuring things that count instead of counting things that can be measured - to paraphrase the famous Einstein quote. Last but not least, we are finalizing our report on the question of [how citizens decide to act against corruption](#) and what the implications are for both domestic and external actors' efforts to foster and harness citizen action against corruption.

Key Learning Moment

Over the past few months, we've had a number of productive conversations with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the Center for Global Development, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation and the World Bank about the nature of governance data (specifically, indicators). These conversations have focused on the need to better understand when, why, how and for whom these indicators are actually useful, with our emphasis being on ensuring that governance data is actually useful for domestic stakeholders' efforts to address governance-related challenges. We've learned two things from our recent conversations. First, that we need to take the time needed to understand the incentives and interests of external actors that produce and consume governance data, such as the World Bank and the MCC. And second, that we need to do a better job of tracking the impact of the time we spend engaging

with external actors.

Related Blogs

Populist Plutocrats: Lessons from Around the World



Defending Democracy:
Lessons from Around
the World

Upcoming event 9/23

Interesting Reads

Mark T. Buntaine, Bradley C. Parks, and Benjamin P. Butch: [Aiming at the Wrong Targets: The Domestic Consequences of International Efforts to Build Institutions](#)

CDA Collaborative (Paul M. Heywood): [Why We Need to Kill the 'Corruption is Cancer' Analogy](#).

N.K. Jemisin: [The Fifth Season \(The Broken Earth\)](#) - tis all about governance!

Multi-Stakeholder Governance Initiatives

What We've Been Doing

In September, we held the fourth (and final) [reflective learning workshop](#) in our [Learning to Make All Voices Count](#) (MAVC) project, spending four jam-packed days at the Institute of Development Studies with project partners and MAVC staff reflecting on, and attempting to capture, our respective learning journeys over the past year. Since the workshop, we've been hard at work synthesizing the experiences of our project partners, identifying lessons and collating insights on how they've pursued open governance in their contexts, and how external actors can more effectively support the locally-led processes of learning and adaptation through which reform emerges. We also joined MAVC's final learning event at the end of October, where we presented draft findings from the project alongside a number of the project partners.

We've also been working with the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT) - including through participating in, and presenting at, GIFT's recent General Stewards Meeting - the Open Data Charter, and the Open Government Partnership, working out whether and how we can help these initiatives

strengthen their effectiveness, and that of their partners, by giving additional emphasis to learning and adaptation.

Key Learning Moment

Our final MAVC workshop, and the lessons and insights that have begun to emerge as we analyze and synthesize our work, suggest that the adaptive learning journeys undertaken by our partners, with Global Integrity's support, has helped them be more effective. This encouraging finding will shape how we approach much of work on multi-stakeholder governance initiatives, including with respect to OGP, moving forward.

Interesting Reads

Blavatnik School of Government University of Oxford (Martin J. Williams): [External Validity and Policy Adaptation - From Impact Evaluation to Policy Design](#)

Making All Voices Count (Vanessa Herringshaw): [Are You Doing What's Needed to get the State to Respond to its Citizens? Or are You Part of the Problem?](#)

Open Fiscal Governance

What We've Been Doing

We had an active quarter on our [open fiscal governance](#) program. As part of our [Follow the Money work in Mexico](#) we launched the project in Veracruz, Durango, and Zacatecas, where we had the opportunity to strengthen our relationships with local partners from government and civil society. We have been able to begin conversations to explore how we can more effectively support our local partners as they identify and address the challenges that matter for them in their contexts.

We also participated in Condatos in Costa Rica leading a [session](#) with the Open Contracting Partnership about the challenges of opening and using fiscal data to address local problems, while also co-hosting – with colleagues Hivos and Development Gateway – a [meet-up](#) for governments and civil society organizations working to [Follow the Money in Latin America](#).

Key Learning Moment

Launching our project at the state level in Mexico provided us with good opportunities for learning and reflection. Getting the opportunity to start a

dialogue with diverse partners – from civil society, government, and access to information institutes – allowed us to get a better idea of the incentives and barriers these actors face. Insights from this process will allow us to adapt our strategies to support state level actors in getting and using fiscal data to address local problems in ways that matter in their contexts.

Related Blogs

Following the Money in Latin America: Reflections from Condatos



Following the Money and Opening Government at the Subnational Level in Mexico



Interesting Reads

Open Contracting Partnership: [Paraguay's Transparency Alchemists - How Citizens are Using Open Contracting to Improve Public Spending](#)

AidData (Samantha Custer, Matthew DiLorenzo, Takaaki Masaki, Tanya Sethi, and Jessica Wells): [Beyond the Tyranny of Averages](#)

Money in Politics

What We've Been Doing

We're still in discussions with various potential partners, including Hivos and International IDEA, about how we might support efforts to map and shape political finance systems. We're also gearing up for a trip to Brussels in December, where we'll join anti-corruption campaigners and experts from across the world at an event organized by Transparency International, to explore how to more effectively support reforms that improve the transparency and accountability of money in politics.

Key Learning Moment

Our work on money in politics has remained in a holding pattern as we explore opportunities for funded collaboration with a variety of partners. The challenge we're facing and the lesson we're learning, is that no funding and no projects,

means little action, and limited learning!

Interesting Reads

European Research Centre for Anti-Corruption and State-Building (Alina Mungiu-

Pippidi and Roberto Martínez Baranco Kukutschka): [Can a Civilization Know its own Institutional Decline? A Tale of Indicators](#)

European Research Centre for Anti-Corruption and State-Building (Álavaro Lopez, Mario Rodríguez, and Mariano Valentini): [How Does Political Finance Regulation Influence Control of Corruption? Improving Governance in Latin America](#)

Open Gov Hub

What We've Been Doing

We had another busy quarter at the Open Gov Hub, where we averaged three collaborative events and activities per week. Much of our efforts culminated in our [Annual Open House](#) in September, which showcased the growth and progress we've made as a community and where we're headed together. Several Hub leaders gave rapid talks on the efforts of working groups and more. To better support our member organizations and capitalize on opportunity for shared learning and impact, the Open Gov Hub also grew our team by launching a new [Community Catalyst](#) work-trade pilot program and welcoming our first Atlas Corps [international fellow](#).

Finally, this fall we were excited to launch a timely new collaborative program called [Defending Democracy: Lessons from Around the World](#). Working closely with our friends at the Sunlight Foundation, the purpose of this effort is to support American democracy organizations and journalists responding to democratic challenges in this country by facilitating exposure to lessons on defending democracy and dealing with closing governments from around the world. This program will run for 1.5 years and include a series of Democracy Dialogues convenings, and a parallel series of short written articles/case studies. Please contact us if you are interested in getting involved.

Key Learning Moment

In August we convened the 15 individuals who have been leading Hub collaborative efforts - from working groups and skillshares, to monthly potlucks and film screenings - to appreciate their efforts and solicit feedback. This key learning moment reminded us to think about leadership transitions and support

people who are making extra efforts to promote collaboration above and beyond their job descriptions to help them avoid burnout. We were also encouraged to continue refining how we pilot, experiment and iterate a plethora of Hub activities, ramping up those that obtain significant buy-in and and sunseting others that don't seem to get sufficient traction.

Related Blogs

Launching the "Defending Democracy: Lessons from Around the World" Program



Interesting Reads

Open Government Partnership: [Trust - The Fight to Win it Back](#)

Feverbee: [Big Goals vs. Daily Relevance](#)

David Bornstein: [A How-to Book for Wielding Civic Power](#)