**2016 Working Group Activity Report**

Each working group is required to submit a brief progress report to the Support Unit (SU) biannually for review by the Peer Learning and Support subcommittee (PLS). The purpose is to map and track working group activities in work plans to actual outputs delivered by the working group as well as identify challenges faced by the working group that prevents it from delivering on its work plan. The report should include:

* Updates on the progress of activities listed in the working group’s action plan
* Updates on the working group’s budget, including expenditures for the period
* Challenges preventing the working group from achieving their work plans that would need to be addressed by the PLS or SU.

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| **Working Group Name** | **Fiscal Openness Working Group** |
| **Co-anchor Name** | **Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency** |
| **Date of Submission** | **02/03/17** |
| **Reporting Period** | **January-December 2016** |

**I. Update on Working Group Activities**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Participating Countries** | **Description** | **Outputs** | **Status of implementation** | **Budget spent** |
| Date(s) of engagement  ALL 2016 | Countries involved in the activity. List both providers and beneficiaries of assistance. Include both government departments and civil society organizations. | Briefly describe activities performed by the working group and results. Please be specific in terms of nature of the work performed, role of the working group, location, etc. | Please list outputs, for example in-person meetings, research report, workshop report, written feedback, etc.  Include links to webpages, documents, blog posts, etc. | Completed - implementation of the activity has been completed  In progress-implementation of the activity has started, is in progress and has not been completed yet  On hold – implementation of the activity is on hold. Please briefly explain why. | Amount spent on the activity in $. |
| **Assistance with Action Plan Development** (e.g. Technical assistance in drafting commitments, feedback on draft action plans, etc.) | | | | | |
| June | Georgia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay and the City of Buenos Aires | The experience of technical assistance and peer-to-peer learning within the OGP Fiscal Openness Working Group has allowed the GIFT network to provide assistance to various OGP countries that have been working on their NAP in the first semester of 2016. Among the list of more than 50 countries engaged in that process, some GIFT stewards have been in a good position to work with the ministries of finances and civil society organizations. In particular, the IBP network of civil society expert budget organizations has been pushing for an increasing number of governments to engage in practical commitments to implement the High Level Principles on Fiscal Transparency for the period 2016-18. This development has given GIFT an opportunity to look for governments willing to engage in fiscal transparency actions.  As part of this effort, high-level representatives of ministries of finance and of civil society organizations from ten countries and one city met in a FOWG workshop in Washington DC (June 20-21) to engage in an in-depth conversation about ambitious fiscal transparency commitments in their NAP, and to identify areas of collaboration and peer exchange to development and design fiscal transparency commitments. The countries represented were Georgia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, South Africa, Uruguay and the City of Buenos Aires [(the materials are here).](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/fowg/#toggle-id-1) | In all of the presentations of countries’ NAPs, there were one or two experiences that were particularly addressing the importance of citizen engagement. As a network, GIFT offered to continue facilitating learning from each other about where and what kind of experiences have had an impact. To do this in a significant way, participants agreed that the documentation process could be done by peers, having the champion of the practice explain it to a peer from another country. Participants identified in their NAPs, which action points they would like be followed up by GIFT with this perspective. This effort would seek to demonstrate that public participation is an important component of public resource decision-making.  The working group on fiscal transparency portals had a meeting. | In progress  Minutes, conclusions and materials of the meeting available at fiscaltransparency.net | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| May | Macedonia | FOWG/GIFT provided critical comments and suggestions on the fiscal transparency commitments of their NAP and offered peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance for the implementation of the plan in the future. | The comments can be found here: http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/fowg/ | In progress | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| August | Guatemala | FOWG/GIFT provided critical comments and suggestions on the fiscal transparency commitments of their NAP and offered peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance for the implementation of the plan. Guatemala is to become a GIFT steward and will benefit from the FOWG network for assistance on open contracting, public participation and fiscal open data. | The comments can be found here: http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/fowg/ | In progress | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| August | Tunisia | FOWG/GIFT provided critical comments and suggestions on the fiscal transparency commitments of their NAP and offered peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance for the implementation of the plan. Tunisia is a GIFT steward and will continue benefiting from the FOWG network for assistance in public participation and fiscal open data. | The comments can be found here: http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/fowg/ | In progress | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| August | Italy | FOWG/GIFT provided critical comments and suggestions on the fiscal transparency commitments of their NAP and offered peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance for the implementation of the plan in the future. Among others, GIFT welcomed Italy’s general commitment on public participation in public policy: Commitment 14 will see development of tools to support participatory decision-making through guidelines for consultations and appropriate technological solutions. | The comments can be found here: http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/fowg/ | In progress | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| November | Nigeria | FOWG/GIFT provided critical comments and suggestions on the fiscal transparency commitments of their NAP and offered peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance for the implementation of the plan in the future. GIFT’s main suggestion is that, in the specification of these commitments, Nigeria consider drawing on some of the tools GIFT has developed to support public participation in fiscal policy | The comments can be found here: http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/fowg/ | In progress | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| **Assistance with Action Plan Implementation** (e.g. Technical assistance, peer exchange and learning, etc.) | | | | | |
| April | Paraguay | GIFT Director met with Minister José Molina, Viceminister Jorge Galeano, and their team at the STP in order to identify what technical support GIFT will provide for the public presentation of their citizen control panel. Steps taken so far were presented and recommendations discussed. GIFT and STP agreed to link the STP with peers at the Ministry of Finance (SHCP) in Mexico for assistance in technology and in the creation of indicators. A summary of the meetings and next steps can be found [here](http://fiscaltransparency.net/presentations/STP_PY_tsa(26may16).pdf). |  | In progress  A summary of the meetings and next steps are at Fiscaltransparency.net |  |
| May | Uruguay | GIFT’s team held a full day meeting in Montevideo at the Uruguay Planning & Budget Office in charge of implementing the commitment to build a fiscal transparency portal (as part of the NAP). The purpose of the meeting was to explore how GIFT/FOWG could support such efforts. OPP’s vision and steps taken so far were presented and recommendations discussed. GIFT offered to present the experience of other countries with similar portals, as well as assist in the design process. | FOWG has put together a working group on fiscal transparency portals with the technical assistance of Brazil and Mexico and the active participation of Uruguay, Paraguay, South Africa and Indonesia (more activities to come in Washington DC and Jakarta) | In progress; a summary of the meeting is at fiscaltransparency.net | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| **Peer Learning Network Events / Workshops / Study tours** (These are distinct from panels organized at OGP events) | | | | | |
| January | Vietnam, The Philippines | Technical assistance visit to Vietnam (IBP & GIFT) on a five-day mission to explore possibilities for collaboration to improve fiscal transparency in the context of a new State Budget Law. Various meetings with relevant stakeholders, a workshop on citizens’ budgets and a conference on budget transparency, among other activities. | The mission included the presence of Leila Rivera and Nenita Faylon, representatives of the GIFT Lead Steward Department on Budget and Management of the Philippines, as part of the technical assistance provided. As a follow up of these meetings, Ministry of Finance representatives from Vietnam are very likely to be part of the GIFT/FOWG workshop planned in September for the Asia-Pacific region, in Jakarta, Indonesia. | Completed | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| March | Guatemala, Chile, the Dominican Republic and Mexico | GIFT steward ICEFI, the World Bank and GIFT-FOWG organized a high level international meeting in Guatemala, where the minister of finance engaged strongly to promote fiscal transparency and develop in the FOWG ambitious commitments of fiscal transparency in the country’s NAP. | High level representatives from Mexico (Head of the Integrity Unit Benjamin Hill), Chile (Congressman Patricio Vallespín) and the Dominican Republic (Deputy Budget Minister Luis Reyes Santos) were part of the discussion that addressed the issues of fiscal transparency and accountability systems. | Completed | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| April | Colombia, Indonesia, Morocco, Paraguay, Peru, South Africa, Tunisia, Uruguay and Mexico | FOWG workshop on Fiscal Transparency Portals and Open Data in Mexico City was organized by GIFT and the Under-Secretariat of Expenditures of Mexico’s Ministry of Finance and Public Credit, a GIFT steward. It was aimed at public officials from 9 countries in charge of the implementation of fiscal transparency policies, as well as those related to information technologies and open data, along with civil society experts in these issues from 6 countries, all of whom can use and replicate the workshop exchanges, lessons and experiences in their countries. | Throughout the three days of workshop, representatives of the ministries of finance from Colombia, Indonesia, Morocco, Paraguay, Peru, South Africa, Tunisia and Uruguay engaged in breakout group discussions about fiscal transparency improvements through intensive use of information technologies. Participants were able to clearly fulfil the objectives of promoting peer-to-peer learning and strengthening collaboration among the members of the GIFT action network. The [summary report](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/presentations/Summary_MX_Workshop.pdf) underlines the main commitments on fiscal transparency proposed by the ministries of finances representatives and devotes special attention to the conclusions about the fiscal data package work. | Completed  Report available at:  Fiscaltransparency.net | Sponsored by OGP Support Unit  US$ 25000  Financial report and summary of the meeting were submitted in July to OGP Support Unit |
| May | Legislative branch representatives from Paraguay, Uruguay, USA, Canada, Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Colombia, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala. | As part of the collaboration between OGP-FOWG and the Open Parliament Working Group, GIFT participated in the Parl-Americas conference on accountability in the legislatives branch in the Americas. Further collaboration with that working group will be taking place in September through a training course on budget analysis for members of the parliament (Santiago, Chile). | Planning Secretary and MoF will continued to receive peer learning assistance in Washington (June) and Jakarta (September) | In progress  A summary of the meetings and next steps are at Fiscaltransparency.net | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| June | More than 20 countries from Central, Eastern and Shout Eastern European countries. | OECD Senior Budget Officials and the FOWG held, for the first time, meetings in joint session in Slovenia. It represented an opportunity for the community of budget practitioners, as represented by the OECD and PEMPAL delegates, to exchange views directly with the community of budget transparency practitioners, experts and advocates, as represented under the umbrella of the FOWG. | The sessions allowed for a series of dialogues on how to improve budget transparency in light of country-specific challenges. Thus, discussions resulted in a high-level overview of the current issues and priorities facing the region, and the global community, in advancing fiscal transparency and understanding how transparency has evolved, highlighting the tools and instruments that can help in shaping an open, inclusive budget process. | In progress  The SBO network is one of the oldest and most successful of the OECD’s various networks. It is a group of high level officials that focus on technical issues from a practical approach based on empirical evidence. It has been credited by a number of countries as having been influential as a source of ideas and advice leading to Public Finance Management reforms. GIFT will continue to engage with SBO meetings, especially when the discussion points are related to transparency, accountability and public participation, as part of the OECD work on trust in government. | Activities sponsored by GIFT, OECD, WB, IMF and PEMPAL |
| September | Government and CSO participants from Benin, Brazil, Canada, Indonesia, Mexico, Paraguay, Philippines, South Africa, Uruguay & Vietnam. | The workshop was organized by Seknas Fitra, the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia and GIFT, with the support of the Ford Foundation-Indonesia and the OGP Support Unit. It was aimed at government representatives from four countries (Indonesia, Paraguay, Uruguay and Vietnam) who work on issues related to the implementation of fiscal transparency policies and the use of information technologies and open data for budget information disclosure, along with civil society experts in these matters from six countries (Benin, Brazil, Canada, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa, and Vietnam). The main objectives of the workshop were to provide a platform for peer to peer sharing and learning; familiarize staff of the ministries of finance with the implementation strategy, contents and operation of successful Fiscal Transparency Portals, looking at the experience from Brazil and Mexico, and contributing to the improvement of fiscal transparency contents and tools at the international level. | A key factor for the workshop’s success in achieving its goals was to have very high level and engaged representatives from the Mexico and Brazil ministries in charge of the transparency portals in their countries. This allowed for a better understanding of good practices of fiscal transparency and innovative tools at the international level. A high point of the exchange was the soft launch of the Indonesian Fiscal Transparency Portal, with the presence of Prof. Mardiasmo, Vice Minister of Finance, Purwiyante Pranoto Suwiryo, Assistant Minister for State Expenditure, Kunta W.D. Nugraha, Director of Budget Formulation, and all of the staff in charge of budget and fiscal policies at the ministry. This launch was the beginning of a countdown for the Ministry to present publicly the portal before the end of year. | Completed | Activities sponsored by GIFT & Ford Foundation |
| **Panels at OGP Global Summit, Regional events, and external (non-OGP) events** | | | | | |
| May | OGP Africa Regional Meeting. Participants included South Africa (GIFT Steward), Kenya, Liberia, and Egypt | The workshop in Cape Town brought together representatives from the ministries of finance of four African countries to share their experiences, challenges and lessons learned on fiscal transparency. South Africa’s Budget Office of the National Treasury, in coordination with the IBP Cape Town office, shared their experience on working together on improving budget transparency, and in particular in building a fiscal transparency portal where the supply of information meets the demand of potential users. A summary of the meeting results is [here](http://fiscaltransparency.net/presentations/CT_SA_Workshop_summary_16May16_VF.pdf). These organizations also participated in the OGP African Regional Meeting, where a FOWG session was organized. | Participants included high-level representatives from the ministries of finance of South Africa (GIFT Steward), Kenya, Liberia, and Egypt. The following organizations also participated: International Budget Partnership (GIFT Steward), Afro-Leadership (Cameroon), the Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative, Financial Accountability and Transparency-Ghana, Global Integrity (GIFT Steward), Public Service Accountability Monitor, Alternative Information and Development Centre, the World Bank (GIFT Steward), and Open Contracting Partnership. | Completed. | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| May | Uruguay, Guatemala, the city of Buenos Aires | The FOWG held a session at OGP’s Americas Regional Summit, on June 1, with representatives from the agency in charge of planning and budget performance evaluation in Uruguay (OPP), ICEFI-Guatemala (GIFT Steward), and a representative from the city of Buenos Aires, who talked about their OGP plans on fiscal transparency. |  | Completed. A summary of the meeting is at Fiscaltransparency.net | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| December | Global Summit in Paris, panelists from Mexico, South Africa, the Philippines (the three, GIFT Stewards) Uruguay, Tunisia, Paraguay | Fiscal Openness Working Group/ GIFT, in collaboration with the International Budget Partnership and the World Bank, convened a series of activities at and around the OGP Global Summit to discuss the ambitious commitments that OGP countries are making to raise civic participation in the budget formulation, information disclosure, execution and service delivery, as the next frontier of fiscal openness. During the morning, within the Summit’s program, the panel Public participation in fiscal policies featured Budget High Level government representatives of six countries that have recently advanced public participation in the budget process and experienced positive impacts on service delivery, resource efficiency and trust in communities. This conversation was further continued during the afternoon at a parallel event, that finalized with the presentation of the Guide on Principles and Mechanisms of Public Participation in Fiscal Policy. |  | Completed. A summary of the meeting can be found in GIFT Dec 2016 newsletter | Activity sponsored by GIFT and WB |
| Research/ Toolkits/ etc. | | | | | |
| Throughout the year |  | Following an extensive public consultation process in 2014-15, the GIFT stewards approved and launched the Principles of Public Participation in Fiscal Policy at the beginning of 2016. This is a unique effort to systematize the conceptual and practical knowledge of public participation in the budget process at the global level. The next step was for the GIFT coordination team to produce the Guide, with the primary goal of providing orientation and assistance on how to integrate public participation into fiscal policy. Thus, GIFT developed a very practical manual with several graphic and learning tools, categorizations and illustrations in a modular electronic document that will contain presenting menus ordered by the different phases of the budget cycle and according to the different branches of government. The Guide also geo-locates the practices on a world map, with the goal of providing examples about how the GIFT principles can be successfully put in practice. These mechanisms could serve as source of inspiration for policy-makers interested in incorporating public participation in decision-making processes. The goal is to provide examples about how the GIFT principles can be successfully put in practice. These mechanisms could serve as source of inspiration for policy-makers interested in incorporating public participation in decision-making processes. | See http://guide.fiscaltransparency.net/  The GIFT principles on public participation have been framing and influencing the discussion about this topic of international institutions which normative work is a reference at the global level.   1. The International Budget Partnership has engaged in a process to revise the participation questions that were included in the latest edition of the 2015 Open Budget Survey. In February 2016, IBP organized an expert workshop to discuss the revised questionnaire, with the objective of contributing towards the development of 15-20 budget participation indicators that are agreed to be useful and measurable, following the GIFT principles. 2. Another significant discussion on the public participation Principles took place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, where GIFT co-hosted an OECD meeting with ministry of finance high level representatives from Central, South and South-Eastern Europe, and civil society budget experts (June). Again, an important component of the meeting was the presentation of the GIFT principles, where public participation was presented as an important new horizon in budgeting, and the Principles as a tool aimed at facilitating a structured, meaningful process of engagement between governments and civil society (the agenda of the meeting is attached and the materials of this workshop are available upon request). 3. Finally, a number of Mexican stewards and partners (Fundar, Mexican Federal Treasury, GESOC, CIEP, and several Congressmen) will be participating in a conference at the Federal Chamber of Deputies on public participation in fiscal policies in Mexico, taking stock of these policies from an international comparative perspective, and having as a conceptual framework the GIFT principles. Besides experts and law makers involved in the bill on public participation and fiscal policy, GIFT will ensure the participation of the Deputy Auditor from Slovenia (Jorg Petrovic), an expert on public participation from the Brazilian Secretary General of the Presidency (Daniel Avelino) and a Regional Director on public participation from the Philippines Department of Budget and Management. It is expected that this September meeting will make significant use GIFT’s work on public participation and of the international experience gathered on the matter by the network. | The Guide’s electronic platform has been completed and launched at the OGP Summit in Paris. .  Populating the Guide with new cases and promoting it is in process. | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| 1st Semester |  | GIFT produced two new videos, featuring Grazielle David, presenting the INESC's winner project "Thematic Budget" and a second video about "Workshop summary video: OGP-FOWG / GIFT Stewards Meeting". GIFT has also produced six newsletters since November 2015 to inform stewards and partners on a regular basis about the main activities of the action network. | And GIFT launched five new blog posts:  • How well did OGP countries implement the commitments on fiscal transparency in their first Action Plans?  • Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability - PEFA: Past, Present and Future  • What steps to increase fiscal transparency and participation should OGP countries take in their next Action Plans?  • The Role of Fiscal Transparency in Combating Corruption – Joint Statement to the International Anti-Corruption Summit  • How open are budgets in OGP member countries and what are the trends? | Completed | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| 2nd semester |  | Developing the Open Fiscal Data Package (OFDP), a tool for publishing micro-level budget and fiscal information in open data formats and with data visualization and data analysis tools to help non-experts use the data. The development of the OFDP is based on the budget data developed by BOOST (World Bank), which now includes information for close to twenty countries, and on the technical specification developed by Open Knowledge. The key benefits of such a specification include ensuring budget information publication in a high-quality open data format; reliability of the published budget information disclosed; comparability of the data, both between different periods and between national, sub-national and international data.  2016 was a productive year for the OFDP. In April, Open Knowledge, World Bank and GIFT teams presented the status of the OFDP standard and tools at the workshop that took place in Mexico City. The package raised interest among participants as a relevant tool to help government in advancing more fiscal transparency by publishing expenditure and budget files in an open format. Based on the feedback collected then, the technical team (OK-WB-GIFT) identified a set of features that were relevant for the first pilot that was tested in Mexico. Based on the experience of the Mexico pilot, the OFDP created a generic "pilot scope" document/template which would be used for other pilots. | In September 2016, Mexico became the first country to formally adopt the package for publishing budget data. The publication was part of the official presentation of the Executive’s Budget Proposal for 2017 by the Treasury. The Treasury Secretariat also revealed that it published the 2008-2016 Federal Budgets on its website on open sources, using the OFDP.  The data package, embedded on the Treasury Department’s web page, enables users to analyze the 2008-2017 budgets, to create visualizations on all or selected spending sectors and share their personalized analysis. All data is available for download in open format. Following the Mexican Government adoption of the tool, the finance ministries of Croatia, Guatemala, Uruguay and Paraguay decided to follow suite.  In the case of Croatia, Guatemala and Uruguay, the piloting has included, on the part of GIFT:  working closely with the pilot country to clearly identify the overall requirements, draw up a scheme for the pilot, specifying pilot objectives, timeline and deliverables; identify, collect and validate the national budget dataset(s) which would be useful to be modeled and select the classification scheme that will need to be supported; implement the pilot scheme, which includes uploading and analyzing the data, and getting feedback from country authorities.  In the case of Paraguay, the Technologies and Information Director of the Technical Secretariat of Planning and Budget was present in the Fiscal Openness Working Group workshop in Indonesia, where the OFDP was presented. On that opportunity, the technical team from Paraguay was able to upload the data without further assistance. | The development of the standard and the first four pilots have been completed. Enhancing the tool and its use to publish data is in process. | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| 2nd semester |  | In the communications area, GIFT produced ten new videos, 5 in English,, and five new videos in Spanish. GIFT also launched five new blog posts (3 in English and 2 in Spanish):  • [Mexico became the first country to formally adopt the Open Fiscal Data Package!](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/blog_open_public.php?IdToOpen=4510)  • [How are the GIFT Principles on Public Participation in Fiscal Policy being incorporated in international fiscal openness instruments?](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/blog_open_public.php?IdToOpen=4570)  • [Transparent Budget and Service Charters in Provincial Papua New Guinea.](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/blog_open_public.php?IdToOpen=4610)  • [¿Cómo impulsar la participación pública en el ciclo presupuestario en México?](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/blog_open_public_es.php?IdToOpen=4472) (How to promote public participation in the budget cycle in Mexico?)  • [México, pionero en el Estándar de Datos Presupuestarios Abiertos](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/blog_open_public_es.php?IdToOpen=4531) (Mexico, a pioneer in the Open Budget Data Standard). | See http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/publish/  • Sanjay Pradhan, Chief Executive Officer from the Open Government Partnership, “[GIFT + OGP Fostering Ambitious Commitments on Civic Participation in Fiscal Policies](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/eng/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20160830103)”.  • Zukiswa Kota -Researcher, Public Service Accountability Monitor and Raquel Ferreira - Expenditure Planning, Department of National Treasury, South Africa. “[3 fast Q&A about Public Participation](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/eng/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20161026104)”.  • Lorena Rivero del Paso - Deputy Director General. Ministry of Finance, Mexico. “[GIFT #CallForBestPractices Winning project - Education Reform Program](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/eng/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20161031105)”.  • Jean-Noé Landry Executive Director Open North, “[Online Budget Simulator](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/eng/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20170125106)”.  • Victoria Vlad - OpenSpending Team. Open Knowledge International. “[GIFT's Open Fiscal Data Package](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/eng/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20170131107)”.  Álvaro García - Director of Planning and Budget Office, Presidency, Uruguay. [“¿Es importante la participación pública en la gestión presupuestaria?](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/esp/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20160906209) (Is public participation important in budget management?)”.  • Lorena Rivero del Paso - Deputy Director General. Ministry of Finance, Mexico. “[GIFT - Llamado a las Mejores Prácticas / Proyecto ganador. Programa de la Reforma Educativa.](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/esp/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20161031201) (GIFT #CallForBestPractices Winning project - Education Reform Program)”.  • Martín Mura - Minister of Finance. Government of the City of Buenos Aires, Argentina. “[Participación pública para mejorar políticas públicas](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/esp/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20161214202) (Public participation to improve public policies)”.  • Ricardo Barrientos. Economista Senior - Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Fiscales (ICEFI), Guatemala. [“¡Beneficios de la participación pública!](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/esp/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20161215203) (Benefits of public participation!)”.  • Rafael Palau. General Director - Information and Communication Technologies. Technical Secretariat for Planning for Economic and Social Development. Presidency of the Republic of Paraguay. “[Beneficios de la colaboración entre pares en portales de #transparencia](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/esp/webinar_open_public.php?IdToOpen=20170201204) (Peer collaboration benefits on # transparency portals)”. | Completed | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
|  | 2nd semester | Mapping Civil Society Uses and Needs around Budget Information in Developing Countries (P. de Renzio/M. Mastruzzi)  As part of the discussion among the stewards on the need to know more about the uses and needs of budget information by users, Paolo de Renzio (IBP) and Massimo Mastruzzi (WB) concluded their work on a pioneer research project to deepen learning in the field of demand side of fiscal transparency. The [document](http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/resources/) published in December brings together the findings from a global survey of civil society groups that use budget information for their analysis and advocacy activities, to come to a better understanding of how CSOs use budget information, the challenges that they face when accessing it, and the improvements they would like to see in the way governments disseminate budget information. | See http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/resourcesfiles/files/20161215147.pdf  The conclusions show that there is great demand from civil society for better and more organized budget data, and great opportunities for governments to stimulate meaningful uptake of such data through relatively simple interventions. This includes the need for governments to improve the level of detail of the budget information that they publish – for example by releasing more local-level and sector-specific, facility-level information, and information on investment projects – but also to review disclosure practices in terms of data formats, quality of online portals/websites, and cross-referencing of different types of data. | Completed | Activities sponsored by GIFT |
| **Other** (Micro-grants and other miscellaneous activities to advance peer learning) | | | | | |
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**II. Other Updates**

*Please list any other key achievements and other relevant updates such as change in the working group’s governance.*

**III. Budget Update**

*Please provide a summary of the working group’s outstanding budget. Please be specific so as to link expenses to the activities in the table above.*

The OGP support grant was completely used for the Mexico City Workshop (April 2016). A full report (narrative ad financial) was submitted to Abhinav Balh on July 6th

**IV. Challenges & Next Steps**

*Please describe challenges you face in delivering the working group’s work plan for this year. This includes constraints and bottlenecks that you face in implementing the work plan as well as recommendations and concrete requests for the Support Unit, working group members, and other key stakeholders on how the challenges can addressed. Please be as specific and constructive as possible. Also, please briefly describe* planned activities for the remainder of the year.

For 2017, the FOWG has planned several activities and peer to peer workshops to continue providing technical assistance to countries formulating their National Action Plans, as well to countries that are in the process of implementing their fiscal transparency commitments; promoting peer-to-peer learning; and creating synergies with other OGP working groups.

The GIFT network will continue providing assistance to various countries that will be working on their National Action Plans in the first semester of 2017. The goal is to get countries to define and adopt commitments on fiscal transparency and simultaneously sign onto principles on fiscal transparency and public participation. This assistance seeks to generate a conversation with governments, based on the FOWG’s experience of engaging OGP countries in technical assistance and peer-to-peer learning continuously over the last couple of years, that leads to improved action plans, with practical commitments to implement the High-Level Principles on Fiscal Transparency, as well as the Principles of Public Participation in Fiscal Policy. GIFT is in a position to offer deeper support to national public finance authorities in the development and detailed design of fiscal openness commitments in their next Action Plans and to move further up-stream with this support. This support would take the form of technical inputs, drawing on the expertise and cross-country experience in the GIFT network, and/or facilitating interactions with in-country CSOs working on budget transparency. The challenge here is to work out a way with the Support Unit for the FOWG to engage in the process at an earlier stage than it has in the past. Experience suggests that technical inputs at an earlier stage will be more useful and effective, and that peer learning and networking can support this assistance. GIFT has expressed this concern to OGP’s Support Unit and is looking forward to discuss a mechanism that allows an earlier collaboration in the NAP drafting process.

In terms of peer learning activities, GIFT has planned at least 6 regional events for the first semester in different regions of the world (Americas: Colombia, Paraguay, and Uruguay; Asia: Sri Lanka; Europe: Slovenia; Africa: at a TBD francophone country). In this area, challenges have to do with limited resources, but also developing a working way to better document the learning that takes place in these activities.

An additional challenge is finding the opportunities to join efforts with other OGP Working Groups, in order to collaborate on projects where the groups can logically overlap and increase impact on issues, research, and workshops. An active role of the Support Unit identifying such opportunities and facilitating collaboration could help create and increase synergy among working groups.