Dear Friends,

Two words characterize this year that ends with good results for the GIFT network: **cooperation and support**.

Cooperation refers to the multiple road crossings that we favored or profited from, which allowed several of our members and partners to work together. This happened in several events organized by OGP, IBP, the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund, among several others. We had the opportunity to continue collaborating, learning and generating technical support on several occasions, as the December newsletter illustrates.

The support refers to the formidable endorsement that the GIFT network received from its lead stewards (IBP, WB, IMF, IFAC, national budget authorities from the Philippines, Brazil and Mexico), during the transition it is undergoing. The commitment of these key stakeholders to the Network was crucial to rethinking the way in which GIFT will evolve towards a sustainability model that allows it to continue supporting its members in their transparency and participation efforts, while adapting to the new preferences from the donor community.

Special attention deserves the strong support of the Board of IBP, where GIFT has been administratively housed since its birth. The Lead Stewards and the IBP's Board will work more closely, ensuring greater alignment in the pursuit of the network's mission, and coordinating better in defining strategic objectives. Fortunately, there is strong agreement about the irreplaceable nature of GIFT. As a forum that coordinates and leads progress in fiscal transparency norms and standards, and as a peer learning network that provides collaborative support for strengthening the capacities of governments for sustainable fiscal transparency and public participation in the use of public resources.

Public participation deserves special mention. During 2019, trust in fiscal policies and justice as a result of budget allocation and execution, have been at the core of national debates in many countries. Within that framework, the GIFT/IBP project on building capacities for the implementation of mechanisms for public participation in budgetary processes acquires the greatest importance. We have been honored and inspired by the fact that 9 national budget authorities have expressed the strong interest in joining the GIFT / IBP public participation project: Benin, Philippines, Indonesia, Liberia, Nigeria, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Senegal and South Africa. In 2020, you will have frequent news and updates about this project. Please considerer it is open to more stewards, partners and participants to engage and become part of it.

Per now, I express our best wishes for the festive period, and I thank you once more for your very valuable commitment to working for more transparency and increasing trust in the use of public resources.

**Juan Pablo Guerrero**

Network Director