

**GIFT report of activities for the Lead Stewards/General Stewards Meeting
Coordination Team & Network Director
November 30, 2015**

Introduction

This report was prepared for the General Stewards Meeting and the Lead Stewards Meeting taking place on December 1st and 2nd, 2015. Based on the work plan that was approved by the Lead Stewards in July 2015 (<http://www.fiscaltransparency.net/Workplan.pdf>), the report covers the period from July through November 2015 and details the activities, deliverables and engagements obtained over that period.

The Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency engages key stakeholders across sectors and around the world, from the local to international levels, to advance and institutionalize significant improvements on fiscal openness in all interested countries.

GIFT' s stakeholders have agreed that to move towards these goals, activities should be organized around work streams led by stewards with an expertise or a particular interest in each of these activities. GIFT's core work focuses on five main activity streams: 1) the institutionalization of a more coherent and comprehensive global architecture of norms on fiscal transparency and participation; 2) broadening the group of countries actively pursuing improvements in fiscal transparency and participating in the Open Government Partnership Fiscal Openness Working Group; 3) production and dissemination of an enhanced body of impact evidence as incentives for engaging and strengthening country efforts and the production of practical lessons and innovations in fiscal transparency approaches; 4) the use of new technologies and open data platforms to further help countries to disclose fiscal information and 5) the development and expansion of the current GIFT multi-stakeholder action network.

This reports contains five sections, one for each of the works streams listed above.

Work stream 1 – Global Norms

Increase harmonization of global architecture of fiscal transparency norms to address some of the gaps and inconsistencies in the current guidelines of the field

Action highlights of the work plan (2015-2016):

- 1) Facilitate and engage in discussions with stewards and stakeholders in order to facilitate the convergence of guidelines and principles of global fiscal transparency norms and standards;
- 2) Work with the Public Expenditure & Finance Accountability Program to produce an indicator on public participation in fiscal policies and test it in several countries;
- 3) Continue collaborating with IFAC in the *Accountability.Now* campaign;
- 4) Draft a proposal for a Convention on Fiscal Transparency, Participation and Accountability;
- 5) Continue building a normative instrument to encourage citizen engagement in fiscal policies, with practices and indicators.

Activities developed in the second semester of 2015

The Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Program and GIFT have continued collaborating to begin trials of a public participation indicator as part of the PEFA country assessments. The Department of Budget and Planning of the Philippines, a GIFT lead steward, have been very supportive of piloting the public participation indicator in the PEFA assessment that has been implemented recently by the World Bank. Once the experience is over, PEFA and GIFT will revise the indicator and GIFT will apply a revised version of the indicator in other countries, where governments might be interested in measuring this dimension in their public finance management systems. These countries might be chosen from the list of countries where the new PEFA indicators are being applied and from OGP countries that have included commitments for fiscal transparency and participation in their actions, like Tunisia, South Africa, Peru, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Colombia and Paraguay. As part of this effort, GIFT will also incorporate participation from local partners from the IBP network or other local CSO experts.

The International Federation of Accountants (GIFT lead steward) organized two important meetings related to its *Accountability.Now* Campaign, with the support of the GIFT network. The *Public Financial Management – Financial Reporting for Results* conference for the Francophone Africa region took place on October 29th and 30th in Dakar, Senegal, with the participation of Babacar Sarr, program officer of the Open Budget Initiative of the International Budget Partnership. At the event, where focus was devoted to public financial management reforms in the region, Dr. Sarr presented the Open Budget Survey results from 2015. An encouraging result of the conference was a Call to Action by the Finance Ministers in the region. A few days later, on November 1st and 2nd, a high level conference for the MENA region took place in Abu Dhabi: the Quality Financial Information, Quality Public Services MENA Public Sector Leadership Summit. Here, IBP and GIFT organized a session that explored the benefits of engaging citizens in the budget process and in the design and delivery of public services, and IBP held a meeting about the OBS-2015 in the MENA region with civil society organization representatives and OBI researchers in the region. The GIFT network will continue supporting as much as possible IFAC campaign to promote the adoption of high quality accounting systems around the world, as a strategic condition to ensure better quality in the disclosure of finance information.

With respect to plans concerning the international instrument (convention) on fiscal transparency, participation and accountability (FTPA), GIFT concluded the first draft and held a first discussion

on the subject at the Mexico workshop of the Fiscal Openness Working Group (October 29th and 30th). Danny Bradlow, SARCHI Professor of International Development Law and African Economic Relations at the University of Pretoria, was commissioned to review selected existing UN Conventions and other instruments for possible models or approaches that should be considered in a FTPA Convention. Bradlow’s report advises GIFT on the key options available under international law for structuring a new international initiative on FTPA that incorporates the GIFT High Level Principles. A useful exploratory discussion was held in Mexico City on October 29th and we will continue to analyze the options and ways forward during the December stewards meeting in Washington D.C.

Finally, GIFT has continued working on the draft of a normative instrument to encourage citizen engagement. These public participation principles were discussed in the FOWG workshops of Manila and Mexico, following a four-month public consultation process of the principles on GIFT’s website. The December stewards meeting will devote time to analyzing the eight country case studies of public participation in fiscal policy (see the research agenda report in this document), including more than 50 mechanisms of public participation, and to a discussion of the principles, which are in the final phase of a journey that included more than ten workshops and meetings on the matter with a broad range of stakeholders.

Work stream 2 – Learning at the OGP Fiscal Openness Working Group
Peer-to-peer learning and experience sharing at the Open Government Partnership-GIFT Fiscal Openness Working Group among OGP member countries on implementing fiscal transparency commitments, encouraging more ambitious country commitments, and potentially providing analytic or technical support.

Action highlights in the FOWG activities for 2015-2016:

- 1) Continue the engagement with Ministries of Finance and CSOs on work streams, like the GIFT principles on public participation and its measurement indicators (Mexico, South Africa, Indonesia, Supreme Audit representatives, the Philippines, etc);
- 2) Facilitate a dialogue between the Ministries of Finance and CSOs on fiscal transparency, in order to ensure implementation of OGP commitments: Tunisia, Mexico, Paraguay, South Africa, and Brazil;
- 3) Facilitate peer-to-peer learning within, and eventually among, regions (Latin-America on fiscal transparency portals and virtual schools; Asia on capacity building for disclosure, PFM and record keeping) and between practitioners and experts, through the use of the new Community of Practice;
- 4) Work with partners to implement measures to promote the domestic entrenchment of new policies on fiscal openness, for example through initiatives that consolidate the norm of consultation, and by raising the political costs of policy reversal (Guatemala, the Philippines);
- 5) Provide technical assistance on national OGP processes and help countries develop and implement stronger action plans.

For this work stream, most of GIFT’s effort in the second semester of 2015 centered on two main activities: the FOWG workshop in Manila for the Asia region and the Mexico OGP Summit that also included a global workshop.

For these meetings, the FOWG Background Paper was updated to serve as an analytical and policy contribution to OGP working groups (“Fiscal Transparency in OGP Countries, and the Implementation of OGP Commitments: An Analysis”). For the Meeting Summit, the update included the new results of the OBS-2015, with implications for recommendations on how OGP countries can implement their fiscal openness commitments more effectively as well as be more ambitious in their next National Action Plans.

Manila Fiscal Openness Working Group workshop (September 17-19)

The FOWG workshop in Manila was hosted by one of GIFT’s lead stewards, the Philippine’s Department of Budget & Management. OGP support unit and IBP provided funding. A central topic of the workshop was the launch of the Open Budget Survey 2015 in the Asia-Pacific region, but the sessions also addressed issues related to the advancement of fiscal transparency and public participation in the fiscal process. The workshop achieved a very good level of attendance: close to one hundred people attended the two day meeting, including more than 70 participants from the Philippines, of which approximately were 40 public servants from the DBM and other government agencies, plus civil society organization representatives, and academic and public finance management experts. High-level officials from the Ministries of Finance of Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia and Vietnam also attended, as did Open Budget Initiative researchers from those countries, plus India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. During the workshop Sabah Rashid, from the World Bank local office, presented on the PEFA-GIFT indicator on public participation mentioned in the previous section.

As part of the discussions about the OBS-2015, and in the context of a balanced dialogue between MoF and CSO representatives, each country established commitments to improve their OBS score and degree of fiscal transparency. Some of the agreements made at the meeting include plans to follow up with each country with specific proposals about activities where the network could engage and provide support (open budget data, portals, citizens budgets, peer learning, etc). The full report of the FOWG Asia region workshop is available upon request (and will be posted soon).

GIFT will soon start working on another workshop in the region, probably focusing on fiscal transparency portals, the open fiscal data package, and public participation, to be held in the first semester of 2016, if possible in coordination with the Ministry of Finance of Indonesia and the Ford Foundation office in Jakarta.

GIFT interviewed more than 12 public servants, practitioners and experts at the workshop, in order to create video evidences of the lessons learned in their respective countries regarding challenges and opportunities for budget transparency; all the videos have already been posted on the GIFT website.

Finally, GIFT will continue working with the Philippines DBM to support the efforts of the department to institutionalize fiscal transparency efforts, including collaboration on the training materials that the Department has been developing lately in the framework of the Public Financial Management Institute (in the process of being created), which includes a certificate program on training public finance manager trainers to ensure that the contents of the program address fiscal transparency, accountability and participation.

Mexico OGP Summit and the FOWG workshop in Mexico City (October 27-30)

During the Open Government Partnership Mexico Summit, the GIFT action network, supported mainly by IBP, the World Bank and the Under-Secretary for the Budget of the Treasury Secretary in Mexico, was able to put together a set of OGP discussions, a very productive workshop and a peer-learning network about fiscal transparency portals.

At the OGP Summit, GIFT was in charge of organizing two sessions, both with more than 50 people attending. The first session was devoted to the introduction of tools that the GIFT network is developing on public participation, and to the discussion of different ways in which OGP countries are incorporating options for public engagement in fiscal policies. The second session presented a discussion of the benefits and challenges of collaboration between ministries of finance and civil society organizations in building a portal for proactive disclosure of fiscal information and to explore what others can learn from the Mexican experience. The point of the discussion was to detail some of the main elements of the process and contents of a fiscal transparency portal that responds to users' needs. This discussion was extended into the GIFT workshop that began that same day, and led to a discussion of peer-learning networks with the participation of Indonesia, Paraguay, Uruguay and the Dominican Republic, who engaged in a long, technical and very serious discussion about the lessons learned from the Mexican experience.

During the GIFT workshop in Mexico City (minutes of the meeting are available upon request and will be posted soon), GIFT was also able to begin a discussion about an international instrument on Fiscal Transparency, Participation & Accountability that could include GIFT high-level principles, its means for implementation and a system for enforcement. As mentioned before, the draft for such an instrument, formulated by Prof. Bradlow under the guidance of Murray Petrie, was also discussed in the Mexico meeting. Some of the participants, which included representatives from different countries and sectors (Government, Parliament, civil society), responded to the proposal with valuable, constructive, criticism and we had a very good discussion that we plan to continue in our December stewards meeting.

The meeting also provided updates on the GIFT Open Data Package, with assistance from the World Bank BOOST team and Open Knowledge representatives. The workshop was also the occasion for discussions about the results of the Open Budget Survey 2015 and the plans of some of the participant countries to improve their performance in the future. In addition, we hosted representatives from other working groups (Open Parliament), and other partners (Global Integrity, Publish What You Fund and Mexico's National Institute for Access to Information).

The workshop was also the occasion to close the public consultation of the GIFT public participation principles, which were open for comment on our website for over three months, as we mention above. In a very rich discussion, GIFT was able to take advantage of the diverse and experienced audience to collect final opinions, questions and suggestions for improvements of the principles. This will allow for a fruitful concluding discussion at the upcoming stewards meeting in Washington D.C.

Finally, GIFT presented the five winners of the GIFT Fiscal Openness to End Poverty-Open Forum, an initiative that called for ongoing projects that use public participation as a main component of a policy to enhance human development (a brief presentation of these projects is available on the website).

The level of attendance at the workshop was high, with representatives from the ministries of finance of Mongolia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Croatia, Montenegro, Tunisia, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, and Uruguay, with Mexico as the host. We had legislative representatives from Costa Rica and Tunisia; and civil society representatives from India, Indonesia, and Brazil, Cameroon, Croatia and Mexico; representatives of information commissions, control and audit institutions from Chile, Honduras and Costa Rica; and follow-the-money and fiscal transparency experts from around the world. We were able to engage in very useful discussions about peer learning networks on fiscal transparency portals with Mexico, Uruguay, Paraguay and Indonesia; a discussion about an international instrument for fiscal transparency, participation and accountability; discussions about the OBS-2015 findings; and a discussion and recommendations on the GIFT public participation principles.

As next steps, participants at the meeting identified the following:

1. GIFT will organize a workshop on Fiscal Transparency Portals and Open Fiscal Data in Mexico with selected countries during first quarter of 2016 (Indonesia, Paraguay, Tunisia, Uruguay, South Africa, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic might participate);
2. New countries will start working with BOOST and the Open Fiscal Data Package (hopefully El Salvador and the Dominican Republic);
3. GIFT will publish brochures and videos and help disseminate the experiences of the winners of the forum of openness to end poverty;
4. Public participation principles will be finalized in December; GIFT will produce close to 50 practices and might create a review committee for guiding on the pertinence of these practices and for the indicators to measure public participation in fiscal policies and budget making.

Work stream 3 – Impact evidence as incentives for enlarging and strengthening the fiscal transparency agenda

Advance research on evidence of impacts, practical approaches and innovations in fiscal openness as incentives for implementation of fiscal transparency policies and enlargement of the action network
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Action highlights for the period July 2015 – June 2016:

- 1) Produce evidence-based research about the links between fiscal transparency and public engagement, experimental research on the way public participation impacts development and governance indicators, and initiate a discussion about the quality of fiscal information, as a way to increase the incentives to endorse this agenda;
- 2) Continue researching incentives for fiscal transparency, addressing the question in international financial institutions and with high-level decision makers;
- 3) Start exploiting the research agenda deliverables, including 11 case studies, establishing typologies for fiscal information disclosure and public participation, and developing strategies for dissemination, technical assistance material, and peer-to-peer learning tools on the practices and lessons learned, as incentives for policy implementation;
- 4) Commission jointly with IBP a paper for agenda setting on tax transparency, including the break down of information from revenue and expenditure in the budget analysis to identify the minimum conditions for independent analysis and establish the basic elements for a comparative perspective on the issue;

- 5) Complete initial exploratory research on the interface between fiscal policies and natural environment;
- 6) Conclude the research based on a survey on the demand and uses of fiscal open data.

The lines below resume advances on our research on evidence of impacts and innovations in fiscal transparency and indicate the publications that have been posted in the GIFT website:

Evidence of impact of fiscal openness

- *The Impacts of Fiscal Openness: A Review of the Evidence*, Joachim Wehner and Paolo de Renzio.

The stewards meeting in December will briefly discuss the main findings of this document.

Incentives for Fiscal Transparency

- 1) *Promoting Fiscal Openness*, Alasdair Roberts;
- 2) *Why Policymakers Commit to Transparency: Legitimacy, Insurance, Monitoring and the Importance of the News Media as Mediator*, Gregory Michener;
- 3) *On Incentivizing Useful Budget Transparency*, Stephen Kosack;
- 4) *Surmounting Obstacles to Fiscal Transparency*, David Heald;
- 5) *Fiscal openness to make government work better: are we doing enough?* Alta Folscher;
- 6) *Synthesis note on GIFT incentives think pieces*, Paolo de Renzio.

One of the follow-up components of the incentives works implies conducting interviews with former senior politicians and public officials. Paolo de Renzio, Senior Research Fellow at IBP, has been interviewing to people like Jorge Hage from Brazil, Trevor Manuel from South Africa and Florencio Abad from the Philippines, among others. By the beginning of 2016, GIFT will use this body of research to develop a set of dissemination tools, technical assistance components, peer-to-peer learning material and an agenda for further research about the mechanisms and the incentives that favor the openness agenda in fiscal policies. The incentives research component and ways forward will be presented and discussed at the stewards meeting in December.

Case studies on public participation

- 1a) GIFT Country report: Brazil, Gabriela de Brelàz, Gustavo Andrey de Almeida Fernandes et al.;
- 1b) Expanding National-Level Participation. Update on Brazil, Brian Wampler;
- 2) GIFT country report, South Korea, Wonhee Lee and Jong-sung You;
- 3a) GIFT country report: the Philippines, Francisco Magno;
- 3b) Public Participation and Fiscal Transparency in the Philippines, an update by F. Magno;
- 4) Comparative Case Study Research on Public Participation in National-Level Government Fiscal Policy and Budget Processes: Mexico, Michael Touchton;
- 5) A right to be heard: Citizen Participation, Democratic Rights and the Budget, Steven Friedman;
- 6) Public Participation in Fiscal Policy and Budget Processes in Croatia, Katarina Ott and Mihaela Bronic;
- 7) Comparative Case Study Research on Public Participation in National-Level Government Fiscal Policy and Budget Processes, the Case of Kenya, Jason Oyugi;
- 8) Public Participation in Canada's Federal Fiscal Policy and Budget Processes, Kevin Page.

This knowledge base has continued to inform GIFT's development of norms on public

participation, since it is the main input for the enumeration of best practices that are referred to in the principles for public participation. However, it also nurtures GIFT's technical assistance and peer-learning activities, especially through the OGP FOWG. GIFT has developed, for each case study, a practical abstract of the mechanisms of public participation and a set of info-graphics for a broader public dissemination among practitioners. In the first half of 2016, GIFT will be developing webinars and online discussions about each of the info-graphics and practical abstracts, involving decision makers, public servants and practitioners from CSOs. GIFT will also develop broader strategies for dissemination, technical assistance material, and peer-to-peer learning tools on the practices and lessons learned with respect to public participation in fiscal policies. The info-graphics will be presented at the steward meeting in December that will include a seminar on the case studies involving academics and practitioners.

Research on open data practices

- 1) Open Budget Data: Mapping the Landscape, Jonathan Gray;
- 2) Opening Lanes: budget transparency and innovation in Mexico, Miguel Salamanca and Tamon Takahashi;
- 3) Use of Open Budget Data in Social Auditing of Constituency Development Funds in Kenya, David Adieno;
- 4) Chicago and New York City Use of Open Budget Data, Aaron Feinstein.

GIFT will develop strategies for dissemination of innovations and lessons learned in this research pieces, as it was done with the public participation case studies.

Tax transparency

- 1) Transparency in Mexican Revenues, by Hector Villarreal et al. from *Centro de Investigación Económica y Presupuestaria (CIEP)*.

The author will be presenting his research and discussing ways forward with the GIFT stewards at their meeting in December.

Open data: trends in uses and demand

This evidence research activity, coordinated by IBP, the World Bank and GIFT, includes the development of a survey on the demand and uses of fiscal open data. The final output of the research phase will be a comprehensive report highlighting overall trends; and emphasizing common needs, barriers, and current uses of budgetary information across specific categories and systematic knowledge gaps needing further intervention. An update of the project will be discussed at the GIFT stewards meeting in December.

Measuring and publishing on the quality of published fiscal information

As part of the collaboration with IFAC, IBP, the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountability and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board, GIFT will continue to explore the convenience of developing a methodology for measuring the quality of the fiscal information that countries disclose.

Related to the questions of the quality and the usefulness of the information, GIFT and its private sector partner, the Alliance, has been producing country briefs that focus on the status of

fiscal transparency, in order to encourage investors in emerging markets to get more engaged in lobbying the government to advance on this goal. The key objectives of preparing the country briefs are to identify if there are gaps in macro-economic monitoring in public finances. The country briefs would thus focus on how countries report their finances, including how they classify revenues and expenditures, whether the data is available on a centralized or consolidated basis, the frequency in reporting, transparency of budgetary assumptions, the availability of amortization and redemption schedule including availability of a debt sustainability analysis, the accounting system and availability of data to the public. The methodology for these briefs and the country briefs for India, Brazil and Mexico are available upon request.

A discussion and bibliography research on social audits

GIFT has also produced and published a "Literature Review and Conceptual Discussion on Social Audits", to continue its engagement with external audit institutions; this document was written by Maylí Sepúlveda (organization *Controla tu Gobierno*) and Atzimba Baltazar (*Colectivo Meta*). It includes a general overview of the literature on social audits and presents selected cases that are relevant for GIFT's public participation principles. The review also includes a preliminary assessment of the relevance of publishing a new handbook on fiscal transparency and social control.

Work stream 4 – Global Open Fiscal Data
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Improve the opportunities for public engagement in fiscal policies and budget making, with the use of new technologies and open data tools and activities
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Action highlights of the work plan for the period 2015-2016:

- 1) Establish the GIFT Community of Practice;
- 2) Develop the Global Open Fiscal Data Package, engaging more than 15 countries in the next year

The Community of Practice platform was launched in July 2015 to become GIFT's principle mechanism for supporting all forms of training and communications, including online seminars, virtual meetings, online discussions, webinars to share good practices, online training courses, discussions, blogs, and other community communication. Posts on this site include seven blogs, 16 videos on fiscal transparency activities, 44 documents, and 1 special FOWG section has been made available with information regarding the GIFT meetings and workshop and all materials derived from them. The community has more than 100 registered members that use the platform regularly. The number of sessions in the website has increased from an average of 900 monthly in the first quarter of 2015, to 1200 in the second quarter, 1800 in the third quarter and almost 2000 monthly visits in September and October.

Related to the platform, the number of followers on GIFT's twitter account @fiscaltrans has grown exponentially, from 500 in May, to 1100 in July, to 3,170 in November.

The Global Open Fiscal Data (OFDP) Package

BOOST (World Bank) in coordination with by Open Knowledge and GIFT has continued work on a global open fiscal data package based on budget data. As part of these efforts, they recently developed an application that functions as an interactive interface to navigate the datasets to

create a fiscal data packager, as well as a library to validate the package, and visualizations to ensure accessibility of the data. In addition, an Advisory Group has been formed to assist and guide the development of the OFDP. The first meeting of the Advisory Group will take place in Washington D.C. in December 15, 2015.

The Advisory Group is comprised of experts in fiscal management and/or open data, who have experience developing technical standards. These experts will help guide the development of open budget data standards by sharing previous experiences on elaborating a specification on open data formats. The Advisory Group members include Amparo Ballivian (The World Bank), Claire Schouten (IBP), Tim Davis (consultant), Lindsey Marchessault (Open Contracting), Mauro Santos (Brazil Secretary of the Federal Budget), Thomas Iversion (US Treasury), Mark Brough (Publish What You Fund), Anders Pedersen (Natural Resource Governance Institute) and Jean-Noé Landry (Open North).

Work stream 5 – GIFT Governance framework
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Develop and adopt a comprehensive GIFT governance framework and sustainable funding strategy, and strengthen GIFT program coordination arrangements and outreach

Action highlights of the work plan (2015-2016):

- 1) Approve the documents entitled *Network Governance, Legal Structure and Operating Procedures Proposal* and *GIFT Operating Procedures Proposal* at the General Stewards meeting (July 2015);
- 2) Initiate the second phase of fundraising for the action network (first semester of 2016);
- 3) Continue the outreach effort and collaboration with the private sector.

The *Network Governance, Legal Structure and Operating Procedures Proposal* and *GIFT Operating Procedures Proposal* were approved in July in the General Stewards Meeting in a significant step forward in defining the GIFT governance framework and advancing its institutionalization. These documents define the rules of engagement for the stewards, the lead stewards, the coordination team and the ways in which these bodies can discuss and decide on the action network. They also address issues of resource mobilization for institutional sustainability, for the active engagement of the members of the network, bodies, functions and responsibilities within the governance system, the expansion and the internal dynamics of the network, and considerations concerning the legal structure of GIFT in the near future.

To begin with, GIFT was able to identify and confirm its list of stewards. Indeed, in accordance with the operating rules adopted in July 2015, GIFT confirmed as GIFT stewards all organizations engaged as such in January 2015. Thus, the following institutions who were GIFT stewards in January 2015, were confirmed:

1. The International Budget Partnership
2. The World Bank
3. The International Monetary Fund
4. The Federal Secretary of Budget and Planning of Brazil
5. The Department of Budget and Management of the Philippines
6. The International Federation of Accountants
7. The US Treasury Department
8. The Organization of Economic Co-Operation and Development

9. Fundar, Center for Research & Analysis, Mexico
10. The Institute of Public Finance of Croatia
11. Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos, Brazil (taking the place of the Global Movement for BTAP)
12. The Omidyar Network
13. The National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights
14. The Ford Foundation
15. The UK Department for International Development
16. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
17. The Center on Budget & Policy Priorities
18. The Unit for Transparency and Evaluation of the Secretary of the Treasury in Mexico
19. The Budget Department of the National Treasury of South Africa

Some organizations that were considered stewards by May 2014 (when the Network Director took office), like Green Peace, the ONE Campaign and the Center for Public Integrity were no responsive to communications or calls for meetings during 2014. A short document about the origins and the configuration of the network is available upon request (and will be posted soon).

The section of the governance proposal concerned with the expansion of the network addresses the conditions for becoming a member of the network. The governance program proposed increasing the membership of GIFT to 24 total stewards including eight governments in total in 2015. Since the end of 2014 and during 2015, GIFT have been integrating new partners, in an increasing engagement that makes them eligible to become GIFT stewards before the end of 2015. It is therefore expected that the following five (maybe six) government institutions and five civil society organizations might continue the collaboration and formalize their partnership with GIFT while becoming stewards of the network in the coming months.

Paraguay

In July 2014, GIFT provided technical assistance to the Paraguay OGP point of Contact Team regarding the country's National Action Plan: the institutions engaged in the exchange were the Technical Secretariat of Planning & Economic & Social Development of Paraguay and the Ministry of Finance of Paraguay. In October 2014, Eduardo Galeano Robledo, Deputy Minister of the Technical Secretariat of Planning & Economic & Social Development, attended the GIFT second workshop on Public Participation, held in Washington D.C. Other representatives from Paraguay's Ministry of Finance have been present in follow-up meetings and activities organized by GIFT in the framework of the OGP Fiscal Openness Working Group. Amanda M. Silguero Ruiz (Control and Monitoring Department at the Ministry of Finance) attended the GIFT workshop held in San Jose, Costa Rica, in November 2014, and also the learning tour and workshop in Brasilia in March 2015, where Mr. Galeano Robledo and Sebastian Codas Salinas were also present. Francisco Ogura, lead consultant at the Ministry of Finance participated to the June GIFT meeting in open fiscal data package, as part of the engagement of the Paraguayan MoF in the World Bank BOOST initiative and the GIFT Open Fiscal Data Package; furthermore, Mr. Ogura attended the international meeting of open data in Santiago, Chile, Condatos, in order to share the his country's experience in open budget data. Finally, Sebastian Codas participated in the OGP Mexico Summit and the GIFT two-day workshop for peer-to-peer learning. In particular, Paraguay was part of the group that engaged with the Mexican Treasury Secretary in a peer-learning network on fiscal transparency portals that included Indonesia, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay. In several occasions, these Paraguayan government representatives have expressed their interest in continuing taking part in GIFT activities.

Republic of Indonesia

Thanks to the support and engagement of Senkas FITRA, the Indonesian Forum for Budget Transparency, who is IPB's local partner for the Open Budget Survey, the Ministry of Finance of Indonesia has been increasingly engaged in GIFT technical assistance, discussions and peer-to-peer learning. In April 2015, GIFT, IBP and FITRA hosted a workshop in Jakarta on the GIFT Public Participations Principles, attended by Wawan Sunarjo, the Head of Sub-directorate of Data & Technical Support of the Ministry of Finance. GIFT held follow-up meetings in Jakarta with Kunta W.D. Nugraha, Director of Budget Formulation of the MoF-Indonesia. Both officials participated at the Manila FOWG workshop organized by GIFT in September 2015 and a delegation including Sunarjo and adding Sri Moedji Sampurnanto, Gustaf Kasfin Kasmiri and Made Arya Wijaya from Indonesia's MoF participated in the OGP Mexico Summit and the GIFT two-day workshop for peer-to-peer learning. In particular, Indonesia was part of the group that engaged with the Mexican Treasury Secretary in a peer-learning network on fiscal transparency portals that included The Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Paraguay. These Indonesian government representatives have expressed their interest in continuing taking part in GIFT activities.

El Salvador

Representatives of El Salvador's Ministry of Finance engaged with the General Comptroller of the Union of Brazil in a peer-to-peer learning workshop on fiscal transparency portals in 2014. Out of this exchange, Miguel Santeliz and Carlos Valladares, from El Salvador's Ministry of Finance, participated in the OGP Regional Meeting and GIFT workshop in San Jose, Costa Rica, in November 2014. For the Brasilia GIFT learning tour, in March 2015, Denis A. Moreno from the MoF participated. Finally, Ana Guadalupe Rivera, representing the Budget Department of the MoF, participated in the Mexico OGP Summit and in the GIFT workshop. These Salvadoran government representatives have expressed their interest in continuing taking part in GIFT activities.

The Dominican Republic

High-level representatives from the Dominican Republic's Ministry of Finance have engaged in a number of GIFT workshops and peer-to-peer learning experiences in 2014 and 2015: San Jose in November 2014, Brasilia in March and Mexico in November 2015. Alejandro Mercedes Ilich represented the Dominican MoF in Costa Rica; the Deputy Minister of the Budget, Luis Reyes Santos, and Gonzalo Ibarro and Carlos Martinez Portes, also of the MoF, were present in the Brasilia FOWG workshop. Following this peer-to-peer experience, a Dominican delegation visited Mexico City, to learn more from the Treasury Secretary about the fiscal transparency portal. More recently, Carlos Martinez participated in the Mexico GIFT workshop. At this workshop, the Dominican Republic was part of the group that engaged with the Mexican Treasury Secretary in a peer-learning network on fiscal transparency portals that included Indonesia, Uruguay and Paraguay. These Dominican government representatives have expressed their interest in continuing taking part in GIFT activities.

Tunisia

GIFT has been working with Tunisian civil society organizations, the World Bank and Ministry of Finance representatives on the use of the BOOST open budget data. Several meetings have

been held to follow up on pledges to engage SCOs in the process of using and analyzing that information, under the aegis of the OGP Fiscal Openness Working Group and as part of the increasing engagement of Tunisia in the process. As part of this process, Tunisia MoF representatives participated at the FOWG that took place in Dar es Salaam at the OGP regional meeting on May 21-22 (Aicha Karafi, General Director and Public Services Consellor, MoF; Riadh Abbes, General director, Budget, MoF). The engagement of the MoF has been increasing, with presence of high-level budget officials in GIFT stewards meetings Washington (July 2015) and the Mexico OGP Summit and workshop in Mexico City. These Tunisian government representatives have expressed their interest in continuing taking part in GIFT activities.

The Transparency Council of Chile

The GIFT Network director visited the Council in August 2015. Raul Ferrada, General Director of the Council, expressed his interest in getting involved in the network activities and in joining the network in a formal way.

ICEFI (based in Guatemala)

The Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Fiscales, a lead think tank in Central-America for their work on fiscal analysis, has been a civil society representative for the dialogue with MoF representatives in at least two GIFT workshops: Costa Rica in November 2014 and Brasilia in March 2015. In August 2015, ICEFI invited GIFT to be part to an international conference on fiscal policies for development and transparency, put together in the tenth anniversary of the organization. As a result of these exchanges, ICEFI has expressed interest in establishing a more permanent engaging by becoming a GIFT steward.

Senkas Fitra (Indonesia)

A long time partner of IBP in Indonesia, FITRA has been particularly engaged in a dialogue with the MoF to advance fiscal transparency, in the OGP framework and as part of a long term institutional goal on the matter. With IBP and GIFT, FITRA co-organized a workshop in Jakarta on the GIFT principles for public participation in which national and subnational authorities were engaged. FITRA has been also quite engaged in pushing the MoF in creating a fiscal transparency portal that takes into account the needs and perspectives of civil society organizations. With the support of the Ford Foundation, IBP and GIFT, the Mexican civil society organization Fundar engaged in technical assistance in Jakarta on this subject. Later, FITRA was part of the Indonesian delegation that attended the GIFT workshops in Manila and Mexico City for peer to peer learning on fiscal transparency. Fitra has also been invited to general stewards meetings and had expressed interest in becoming a member of GIFT on a more permanent basis.

Funde (El Salvador)

Funde if the IBP partner in El Salvador for the OBS and other projects. This organization has played the role of the civil society counterpart in the engagement of the MoF in GIFT activities, described above. Funde representatives have been present in the San Jose (November 2014) and Brasilia (March 2015) meetings, and have also expressed interest in continuing this engagement with GIFT in a more formal basis.

The Alliance (Emerging Markets Investors)

Since the end of 2014, IBP and GIFT have undertaken a collaborative partnership with a group of professional emerging market investors who support good governance, promote sustainable development, and improve investment performance in the governments and companies in which they invest. This group, called the Alliance (of emerging market investors), has provided a basis for engaging on a permanent basis with private sector investors, with the goal of making this group one of the stewards of GIFT. These were presented to over 100 emerging markets investors and professionals in joint Alliance-GIFT event held at Bloomberg in early December 2014. Since then, GIFT has developed a research effort introducing a series of short pieces or notes that systematize the specific recommendations that investors (and GIFT) can make to countries that are about to issue bonds. The Alliance has confirmed its interest in continuing a productive engagement with GIFT.

Global Integrity (USA)

Increasing collaboration between GIFT and Global Integrity has emerged since the end of 2014. Global Integrity has attended stewards meetings and has expressed interest of being part of the GIFT fiscal openness work group at OGP and a to continue the collaboration with the network.

The GIFT Coordination Team

On another topic, the coordination team underwent in 2015 an unavoidable transition process that gave GIFT the opportunity to move towards consolidation. During the summer, Randall Kemp departed in order to join Sanjeev Khagram in new global endeavor that includes the creation of a new global open data charter. Lorena Rivero also left GIFT in order to join back the Ministry of Finance in Mexico as Assistant General Director for Performance Evaluation at the Sub-Secretary of the Budget at the Mexican Treasury. Brian Mullally (Program Assistant) also left the network looking for an alternative closer to his development experience. In the period September-October, the team was recomposed to its full capacity.

Hazel Feigenblatt, former Research Managing Director at Global Integrity, joined GIFT to engage in the areas of research on evidence of incentives, open data package, peer learning through the community of practice, coordination and outreach for the action network. Tarick Gracida became GIFT new Technology and Communications Coordinator, and has been of implementing the community of practice and disseminating GIFT activities in social media, in addition to producing learning multimedia materials. And Albertina Meana joined GIFT as Technology and Program Assistant.

With this engaged and strong new support, Murray Petrie, Lead Technical Adviser and the Network Director, have been able to continue the work to ensure that GIFT delivers and surpasses its goals.