

Highlights of semi-annual plans

Governance

Three important happenings should be outlined in the last year of GIFT activities: growth of membership, significant changes in the membership rules and the establishment of a system to incentive improvements in fiscal transparency and participation and strengthen technical collaboration among Stewards.

Membership

With the admission of seven institutions¹ in the last year, GIFT counts with 47 stewards, integrated as follows:

GIFT Stewards by Sector



47
Stewards

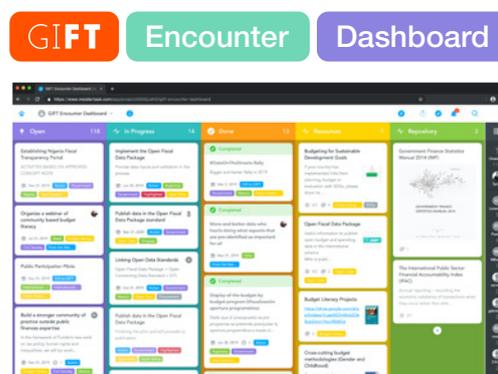
- 19 budget authority institutions
- 14 national or regional civil society organizations
- 6 expert organizations or technical networks
- 4 multilateral organizations
- 3 private non-profit foundations
- 1 international development institution

Raising the bar for the GIFT members in their fiscal transparency and participation objectives

All members will present a set of concrete and measurable actions to improve fiscal transparency and participation, and report back periodically on progress. This will facilitate the ability of Stewards to cooperate in particular topics and monitor results, as they are expected to continue encouraging and supporting the network peer learning and technical collaboration.

To monitor implementation and foster a closer collaboration among Stewards, GIFT Coordination Team has setup a community dashboard where all actions being implemented by the Stewards are registered and monitored.

To access the Dashboard please contact lorena@fiscaltransparency.net



We are also seeking to better link the fiscal transparency, open data and public participation agendas to achieve social impact. The following updates reflect this change of emphasis in the Network.

1. Ministries of finance of Argentina, Chile, Benin, Ukraine and Colombia; Asociación Civil por la Igualdad y la Justicia (ACIJ) and Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Secretariat (PEFA).

Opening Budget and Spending Data

GIFT has strongly encouraged publishing open data, and while some countries are still in the process of publication, in the last months some countries have started to make their open budget and spending data available as listed below. Since the end of 2018, the GIFT Coordination Team not only supports piloting and publishing the data through the Open Fiscal Data Package (OFDP), but in preparation for such step [provides feedback](#) on the data structure and comprehensiveness to achieve a better publication, even when the country is already publishing budget and spending open data.

Publishing through the Open Fiscal Data Package

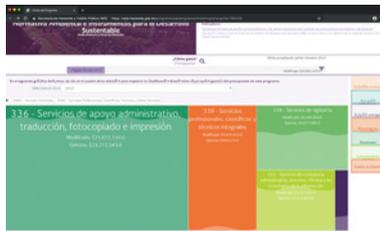
Dominican Republic (started in 2019)

The OFDP pilot was resumed, and the achieved a particularly fast publication. The data of spending and revenue is updated monthly and is produced directly from the internal systems.



Mexico (started in 2016)

Mexico has continued to publish quarterly updates of the spending data using the OFDP. We have continued to provide support to the new administration.



Paraguay (started in 2017)

Technical Secretariat of Planning & Economic & Social Development has been an active supporter of open data leading to the publication on the OFDP in 2017.



South Africa (started in 2019)

With the launch of Vulekamali, a site co-designed by the National Treasury and a civil society coalition, there is an emergent focus in open data.



South Africa Provincial data (started in 2019)

The National Treasury compiles the spending data of the provinces and has already published the tabled provincial budgets, which can be consulted [here](#).



Publishing and piloting adoption of the Open Fiscal Data Package

Argentina (Phase: in process of upload)

The MoF launched the “open budget” site. This includes daily updates of expenditures, license of use, visualizations and tutorials.



El Salvador (Phase: in process of upload)

The Portal covers the recently approved Fiscal Responsibility Law. While the Law does not indicate how to publish the information, the government decided to make it accessible in open data.



Uruguay (Phase: in process of upload)

Uruguay has continued to improve publication since presenting its fiscal transparency portal in 2017 at GIFT General Stewards meeting. The publication is monthly and is piloting the OFDP.



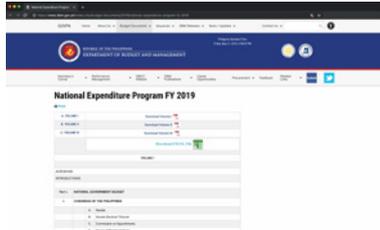
Indonesia
(Phase: data feedback)

The MoF of Indonesia has continued to improve its fiscal transparency portal, launched with GIFT in 2016. The portal includes budget but no spending data yet.



The Philippines
(Phase: data feedback)

Some complication in the whole government open data policy are still being dealt with. We have received an initial dataset and sent feedback on the structure and completeness.



Brazil
(Phase: pilot yet to resume)

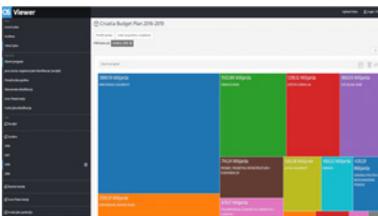
Brazil decided to launch a new version of their transparency portal with open data and a workshop for other GIFT members.



Piloting the Open Fiscal Data Package

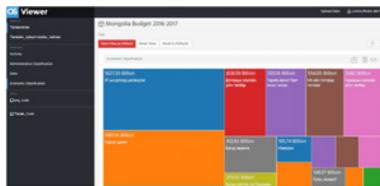
Croatia
(Phase: to be launched 2019)

Minor adjustments are being finalized for the public launch, programmed for July 5th, but the data can already be consulted [here](#).



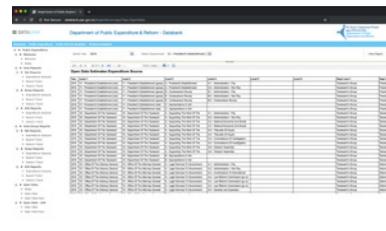
Mongolia
(Phase: in process)

After some exchanges we have receive the data structured as expected, although the certainty of the quality is still in question.



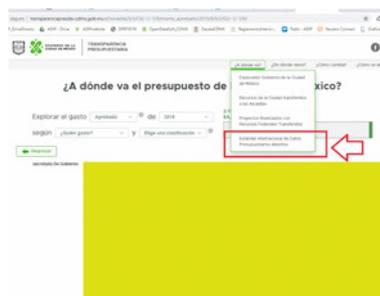
Ireland
(Phase: data feedback)

The pilot has initiated, with the pre-phase of improvement of the expected characteristics of the data, which is now taking place.



Mexico City
(Phase: to be launched 2019)

The new Agency for Digital Innovation has decided to publish the spending data through the OFDP. We have piloted and are waiting date of launch.



Bearing in mind the importance of facilitating the process of publication for our different partners, last year we developed the [Open Data Tutorial](#), which got great interest by the Stewards, reason why it was developed in [Spanish](#) and [English](#). It is worth noting that the tutorial videos have been watched more than 12 thousand times.

Public Participation Principles and Mechanisms in Policy Agendas

At this point, we can start observing results taking root in some countries. For instance, the introduction of public participation in the budget cycle in the National Development Plan in **Colombia**, where GIFT will be part of the design of the practice to implement; the inclusion of public participation as a strategic institutional planning component in the **Dominican Republic**; a Budget Modernization Act which institutionalizes transparency and citizen participation in the budget process in the **Philippines**; legal attribution to the MoF on public participation in **Mexico** which it previously did not have; participating in the public participation pilots with GIFT over the next year in **Nigeria**.

GIFT Stewards and partners creating public participation opportunities

GIFT has also offered ways in which MoF can adopt public participation practices by inviting Stewards and partners to take part of network activities. In 2019, these activities were the #DataOnTheStreets Rally and the Better Budget Dataquest for Sustainable Development. By taking part, Stewards and partners get an introduction into public participation mechanisms without undertaking overwhelming activities, which helps breaking barriers, while simultaneously building links between transparency and public participation.

#DataOnTheStreets Rally

An initiative convened jointly by civil society and the government, to promote the public use of open data on public investment projects, as well as the budget transparency platforms, to research, check and verify in situ progress on the construction projects. Ultimately, participants are expected to tell their stories and share the findings on social networks. As such, the Rally has become a mechanism for social audit of public works. This feedback has triggered corrections or improvements as ministries of finance and other authorities the information otherwise unnoticed. It is an initiative of public participation in the budget execution phase by digital.

The Rally was implemented in **Chile**, **Colombia** and **Mexico**, involving four GIFT Stewards. During the last two weeks of February 2019, **1,011 persons** participated and **447 construction projects** were supervised.



#DatosEnLaCalle #RallyMx @TPresupuestaria

Entrevistando beneficiarios y participando con los datos en la calle. Parque Cerro de Amalucan y Parque Benito Juárez Junta Auxiliar La Libertad. Equipo Salvando el Cerro de Amalucan iniciativa REAFCA

[Translate Tweet](#)



9:43 AM · Feb 26, 2019 · [Twitter Web App](#)

Better Budget Dataquest for Sustainable Development

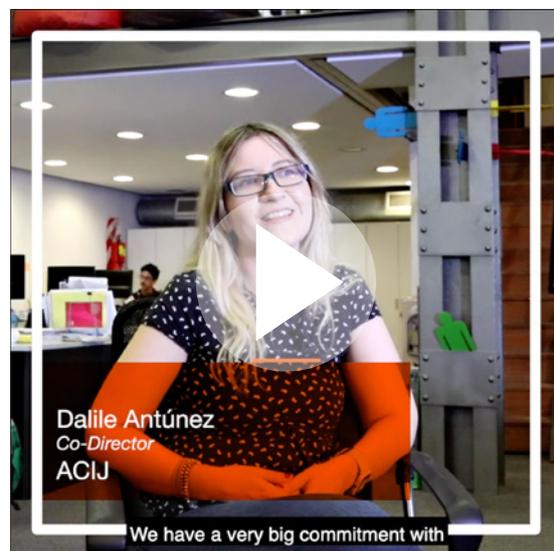
A data expedition aiming to generate innovative and independent proposals for improving budget for sustainable development. GIFT stewards and partners invite the public to an open event in which teams explore the data of public spending and compare it with other relevant data (social indicators, statistics, etc.) and contextual information. The objective is to present findings on the implications of budget allocations and implementation on one of the following categories: **gender**, **inequality** or **environment**. Besides incentivizing independent analysis and proposals, the dataquests provide an opportunity to expand budget and data literacy.



Differently from the Rally, the dataquest targets a sector of intermediate to advanced knowledge in data science, economics or journalism (or similar). **Indonesia**, **South Africa**, **Mexico**, **Colombia**, **Costa Rica**, **Argentina** and **Uruguay** organized dataquests 2019, including 14 GIFT Stewards.



The complete report of these activities can be read [here](#), and testimonials can be watched in the videos below.



From Fiscal Transparency to Social Impact

One important highlight is that we are starting to see the theory of change showing some initial results, in some cases user-centered publication through better government civil society communication and in some cases already deeper impact in a specific sector, policy or marginalized group. The following stories provide elements that describe and illustrate GIFT theory of change in different contexts and topics.

Budget Allocations for HIV in Indonesia

The MoF of Indonesia was among the first countries to introduce a [budget open data portal](#) as part of their fiscal transparency efforts, in which GIFT was part of in 2016. With more accessible budget information, CSOs such as Seknas-Fitra (GIFT Steward), have been able to engage in constructive conversations with the MoF and local governments on budget issues.

With new and relevant information, Seknas-Fitra has also been able to promote budget literacy of grass-roots organizations to facilitate their understanding of the published information and how it can be used to better focus their agenda. A specific result of these actions has been changes in the allocation of budget directed to HIV in different regions of the country. In this [video](#) Yenti Nurhidayat explains this chain of events that have led to better protection of vulnerable groups.



Gender Based Violence Spending in Argentina

The Asociación Civil para la Igualdad y la Justicia (ACIJ), an organization with a specialized track record of analyzing public policies to guarantee human rights, joined the GIFT network in 2017. Meanwhile, another GIFT steward, the MoF of Argentina, opened a significant amount of disaggregated fiscal data in a new user-centered fiscal transparency portal called "[Presupuesto Abierto](#)". In this [video](#), Renzo Lavin, Co-Director of ACIJ, explains how the accessibility to this data has facilitated their work and enabled them to hold an informed discussion with the MoF. Among other benefits it has led to corrections in the proposed allocations for gender-based violence policies by identifying and publicly exposing the mismatch between the political promise to invest in programs to help address gender violence and its consequences, and the actual budget allocations.



More can be consulted [here](#).