



TRANSPARENCY &
ACCOUNTABILITY
INITIATIVE

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

NAVIGATING A FAST-CHANGING LANDSCAPE FOR TRANSPARENCY,
ACCOUNTABILITY, AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION AROUND THE WORLD

For more information contact: Transparency and Accountability Initiative
OpenGov Hub, 1110 Vermont Ave NW #500 Washington, DC 20005.

www.transparency-initiative.org

Copyright © 2018 Transparency and Accountability Initiative

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this report or portions thereof in any form.

Annual Report 2017 designed by Luigi Barraza

Photography Credits: CODE/KC Nwakalor, TAI

Connect with TAI



TRANSPARENCY &
ACCOUNTABILITY
INITIATIVE

ANNUAL
REPORT
2017

CONTENTS

<u>ABOUT TAI</u>	2
<u>WHY A COLLABORATIVE?</u>	3
<u>OUR APPROACH</u>	4
<u>2017 - NAVIGATING A CHANGING LANDSCAPE</u>	5
<u>LEARNING FOR IMPROVED GRANTMAKING</u>	7
<u>DATA FOR ACCOUNTABILITY</u>	10
<u>TAXATION AND TAX GOVERNANCE</u>	13
<u>STRENGTHENING OF CIVIC SPACE</u>	16
<u>OPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS</u>	19
<u>WHERE WERE WE IN 2017?</u>	21
<u>FINANCIAL SUMMARY</u>	22
<u>LOOKING AHEAD</u>	23

ABOUT TAI

The Transparency and Accountability Initiative (TAI) is a collaborative of leading funders of global TAP programming. Its main purpose is to enhance members' collective impact through improved grant-making and to facilitate collaboration toward ambitious targets on four focus areas. These focus areas, outlined below, have been recognized by all the member donors as critical to strengthening the impact of TAP funding in the next ten years.



Learning for Improved Grantmaking

Building greater impact of TAP funding through thoughtful, evidence-based, and adaptive donor and grantee practices.



Data Use for Accountability

Assuring more and better use of data by citizens and governments in support of accountability, while addressing concerns around data privacy, especially those associated with new technologies.



Taxation and Tax Governance

Supporting the development of more inclusive and equitable tax governance.



Strengthening of Civic Space

Fostering a plurality of independent and legitimate civil society voices.



**TRANSPARENCY &
ACCOUNTABILITY
INITIATIVE**

MISSION & VISION

TAI's members envision a society where citizens are informed and empowered, governments are open and responsive, and citizen engagement with government advances the public good.

CORE MEMBERS



ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

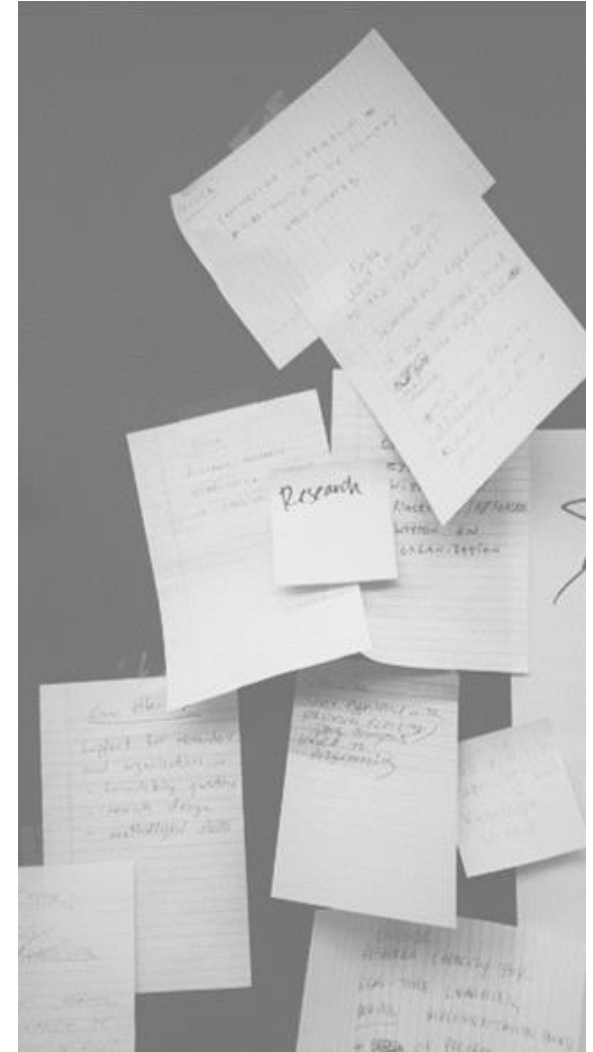




WHY A COLLABORATIVE?

The transparency, accountability, and participation (TAP) space has evolved significantly over the past decade. Practitioner experiences around the world point to the value of building a more strategic, integrated, long-term approach to enhance the impact of transparency and accountability in any context—what Thomas Carothers of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace suggests forms the basis of a more sophisticated “second generation” approach within the TAP field.

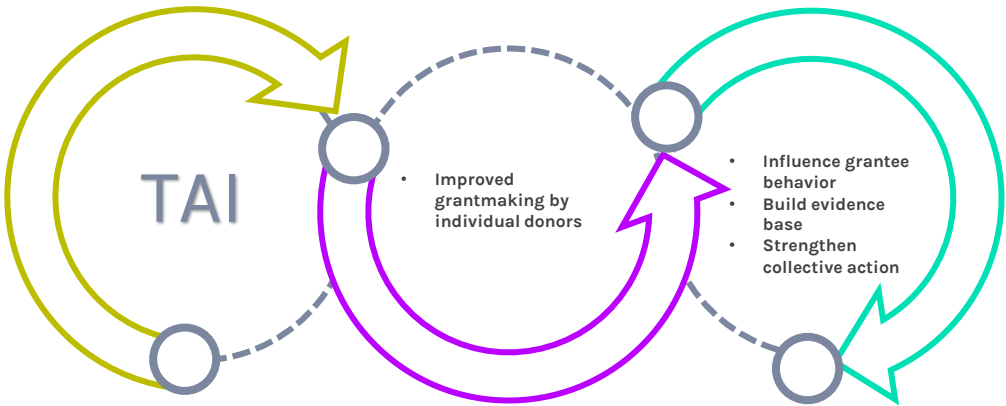
A donor collaborative can scale the impact of limited TAP funding around the globe by clarifying the most effective evidence-based learning approaches to addressing messy governance problems. A stronger orientation toward serving donor members directly supports alignment of resources (i.e. money, knowledge, and leadership) that can move the needle on critical areas in the TAP field.



OUR APPROACH

TAI anticipates making progress on the four work streams by leveraging evidence and TAP field relationships to support member learning on shared strategic priorities, which will then strengthen individual member practices and strategies and facilitate collaboration. Better grantmaking practices and collaboration will influence grantee behavior and possibly that of other donors, practitioners and researchers. Ultimately, TAI and its members will contribute to field-level progress toward positive transparency, accountability, and participation outcomes on the ground.

TAI'S THEORY OF CHANGE



LEARNING

- Consolidate TAP evidence base
- Facilitate knowledge exchange
- Generate new insights on content and practice

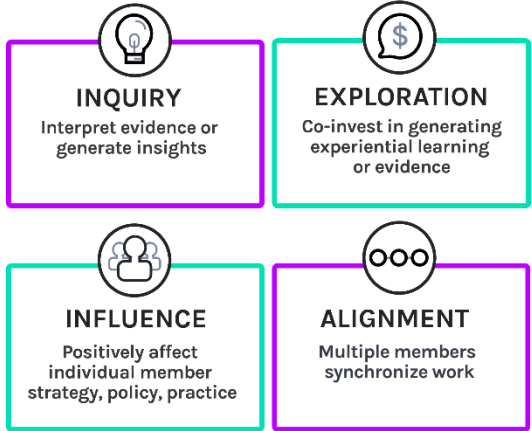
COLLABORATION

- Align strategies and funding
- Leverage rapid response and collective voice/resources
- Reduce transaction costs and test new approaches

IMPACT

- Field-level progress toward impactful transparency, accountability, and participation

TAI MEMBER COLLABORATION



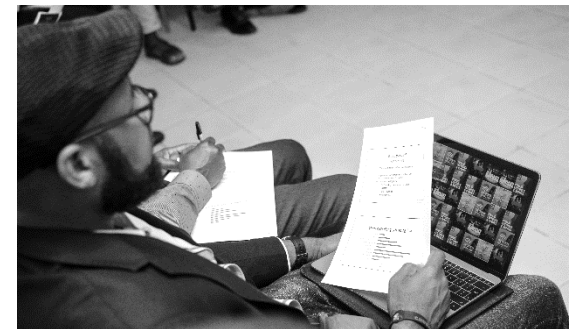
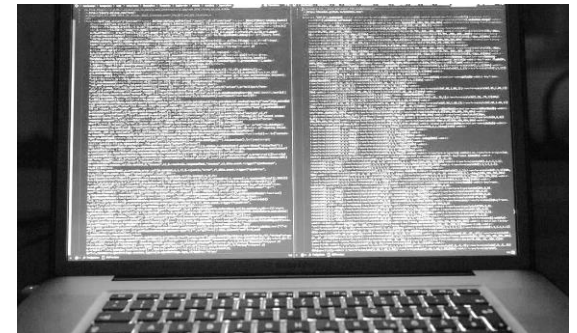
Collaboration between and among members is a critical element of TAI's overall purpose and an explicitly expected outcome of our work. TAI anticipates that member collaboration will occur in each of our strategy workstreams in a variety of ways: through inquiry, exploration, influence, and alignment. Simply increasing the quantity of collaboration is not TAI's aim, and collaboration itself is simply a means to pursuing our strategic outcomes.



2017 - NAVIGATING A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

The past year was the first year of implementation of TAI's [2017-2019 strategy](#). We focused on building the TAI team, strengthened our external communications, and laid building blocks for progress toward the members' ambitious shared goals. We have a new infrastructure to understand the basics of who is funding what, where, and why. There is a clearer understanding of how each member connects its own strategies to the TAI shared priorities and conversations. We have a learning, monitoring, and evaluation plan, and the resulting data tracking ensures we can systematically assess our value to TAI members.

Of course, the world has not stood still, and we believe the shifting global context has reinforced the relevance of member priorities. Leaks of information continue to reveal abuses of the international tax and financial systems (and the value of responsible investigative reporting). There have been encouraging pockets of progress—for example, further movement toward open contracting and beneficial ownership disclosure. Yet the bigger picture suggests any trend toward greater transparency is slowing or even reversing, adding to the urgency to demonstrate the utility of publicly disclosed information, especially amid declining trust not just in governance institutions but also in information and evidence itself. At the same time, more governments (including democratically elected ones) are finding increasingly sophisticated (and at times still all too brutal) ways to constrain civil society's ability to operate.





We believe these shifts have only reinforced the relevance of TAI priorities. How do we bridge the data-for-accountability gap? How can donors better support the resiliency of civil society organizations (CSOs, especially those working on transparency and accountability) against closing civic space? How can donors help connect and support those networks working on public revenue mobilization and spending? With so many demands, where should all-too-scant funding be targeted? These are useful questions. In the search for answers, TAI combines a field-wide perspective with infrastructure for shared donor learning, improved grantmaking practice, and joint investment to enhance funding impact.

It has been rewarding to track instances of member collaboration over the past twelve months, from information sharing and collective sense-making to co-funding a new initiative. Yet not everything went as we had hoped in 2017. Far from it. We are learning as we go. For example, we have not been able to make even progress across all the workstreams, and the nuts and bolts of coordination absorbed more TAI team and member time than anticipated. In this report, we share our highlights, lowlights, and key learnings from our intermediate outcomes (those anticipated over three to five years); some operating basics; and what we are looking forward to in 2018.



LEARNING FOR IMPROVED GRANTMAKING

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- TAI members adapt grantmaking practices for improved grantee learning and impact.
- There is adequate infrastructure to support learning among TAP practitioners, researchers, and funders.
- There is increased evidence of collaboration among donor members.

Our members expressed a clear interest in TAI's work supporting the testing and adaptation of their grantmaking practices. This feedback helped us to begin to clarify what we mean by “grant-making practices” and to document this in the Learning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (LME) Plan drafted in 2017. In that plan, we frame these practices to include member grant-making strategies, grantee sourcing, granting mechanisms, and learning practices embedded throughout the grant-making cycle.

In 2017, TAI supported members in identifying common goals and problems across their portfolios and we saw several examples of member collaboration emerge.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Examples of TAI collective influence on individual members are emerging, including [Open Society Foundation’s Fiscal Governance Program](#) addressing closing civic space in its new strategy, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation’s sourcing of a new grantee through TAI connections.
- The Ford and Hewlett foundations aligned their grantmaking work to co-fund the TAP Learning Collaborative, comprising six organizations that will work to advance their learning and monitoring and evaluation practices to be more effective organizations. TAI incubated the concept and will continue to be an active participant during the two-year grant period.
- Member engagement on TAI’s draft LME Plan raised useful questions, particularly around the types and purpose of member collaboration, and TAI staff began to collect performance monitoring data.

LOWLIGHTS

- A backlog in the pipeline of TAI learning products delayed planning for dissemination with members and the TAP community.
- Unclear consensus among members on what constitutes “grant-making practices” clouded pursuit of the related outcome in TAI’s strategy.

LEARNINGS

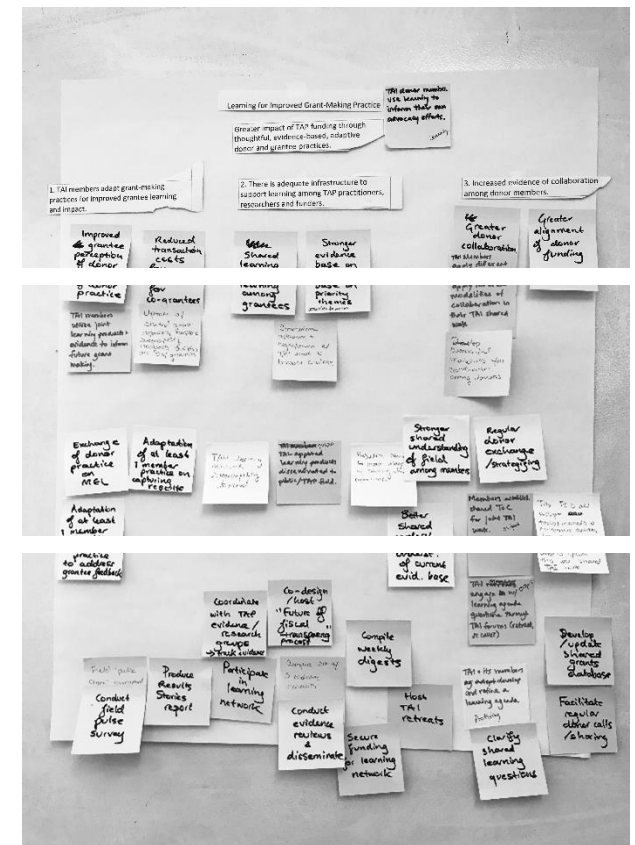
- We have found that deepened TAI engagement within member organizations (beyond the steering committee and other principal points of contact) is providing value for members and should be strengthened around forthcoming TAI learning products, including through member site visits.
- Although members share a desire to strengthen grant-making practices to benefit grantee learning and effectiveness, there are barriers to shifting institutional practice, as TAI has experienced itself in aligning its grant cycles and reporting across members. This merits a stronger collective push in 2018.
- Storytelling is a powerful tool to better communicate the importance of transparency and accountability (or lack thereof), but current donor and grantee practices do not adequately support the development and dissemination of stories. We have a clearer sense of the opportunities in this area and plan to engage members in testing new practices in 2018.

DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION

What types of organizational learning practices will be useful for a funder collaborative? How will we know if TAI is making progress? How might we build an evidence base for TAI’s contributions to our strategic learning outcomes? Building on TAI’s strategy document, we have developed a learning, monitoring, and evaluation (LME) plan that lays out a way forward as we try to answer these questions.

Why develop an LME Plan? We know that each of our members supports the TAI strategy but also does work independent of it. We expect our work to adapt to changes in our context or assumptions during the strategy period. We are uncertain about many of the specific results we are likely to achieve along the way. Given this reality, we chose to document an LME Plan to focus our LME practices, and to provide a framework for learning from our efforts.

How will we use our LME Plan? The document will help us to track TAI work, learnings, and value added within the parameters of our strategy. We will adapt LME efforts depending on their use and usefulness in practice for our members and, ultimately, their grantees. We will prioritize answering learning questions that target information gaps and can inform current and future strategy and approaches, drawing on learning efforts of TAP field actors as well as our own performance monitoring data. We look forward to sharing our LME efforts with you in 2018.





DATA USE FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- There are more effective, inclusive, and user-centric interventions that promote uptake of data for greater accountability.
- New understandings and evidence inform the development of norms, practices, and standards around the use, control, and protection of data, safeguarding personal privacy and public interest.

Information uptake is central to TAI members' theories of change—a fact brought home even more clearly through the learning activities and efforts to make those theories explicit in 2017. Accordingly, the work on harnessing data for accountability is cross-cutting, with clear spillovers with the tax and learning workstreams. The data “results chain” framework, developed with Open Data Charter in 2017, further clarified the complexity of factors that contribute to impactful data use. Furthermore, the framework underscored that to meet our goal of empowering citizens and governments with the data necessary to promote accountability, we must go beyond a simple supply and demand framework. This lesson was reinforced in dialogues organized with grantees that pinpointed shared challenges in harnessing data for accountability and exposed an appetite to share experiences in a more substantive way.

Conversations with program officers were initiated, with the goal of developing guidance for reviewing proposals within their portfolios that are data-centric or have data components. The findings and resulting tips for more effective governance data investments will be ready in early 2018.

Progress on the issue of data privacy was slower than anticipated in 2017. In part, this was a bandwidth issue, but also reflected the varying levels of member engagement on this agenda and the need to build a stronger understanding of the players, issues, and relevance to member strategies. TAI started simply, offering a training on data security in the grantmaking context; scaled up coverage of developments in this area in its weekly briefings; and leveraged its relationships with players focused on the opportunities and risks around “big data” use and the intersection with new technologies, including blockchain and machine learning.



HIGHLIGHTS

- A shift to country-level exploration of barriers to effective data use has made conversations more concrete and led to the design of an insightful scoping visit in Nigeria. This visit provided a chance to clarify needs and opportunities to promote usage with grantees and a mix of stakeholders (in this case, for anti-corruption purposes).
- There was strong grantee/field engagement on clarifying what we mean by “data for accountability.” A new TAI [framework](#) developed with Open Data Charter helped spark conversation and demonstrated an appetite for sharing among groups struggling to show the impact of demand-side data use.

LOWLIGHTS

- There was a lack of clarity on next steps on the data privacy front. This was reflective of the different levels of engagement and knowledge among TAI members, the need for the TAI team to build up its understanding of the field and connect to relevant players, and bandwidth constraints.
- As demonstrated through planning the Nigeria scoping visit, the challenge of collective calendaring among members and grantees should not be underestimated.

LEARNINGS

- There is value in the hands-on design and process with members in planning the Nigeria data deep dive, but to be replicable for future country engagements, this time- and resource-intensive model will need to be adapted to ease the demands on members and the TAI team.
- The data conversations are creating positive spillovers to other TAI collective priorities, notably tax (more on data use) and civic space (more on data privacy). These, we can amplify in 2018.
- The relevance of the data work to multiple strands of member strategies and other parts of the member organizations is both an opportunity and a challenge. It has institution-wide implications, but such extension to institutional goals, too often, also risks creating a lack of clear ownership of the agenda within any one funder. There tends not to be a “data lead” program officer in the same way as there might be a lead for tax issues or for an anti-corruption portfolio.
- Raising awareness of data security risks is necessary among grant makers and grantees alike. Conducting audits and fixes need not be resource intensive (as TAI found in its own case), but it is not simple for groups to find the right support.

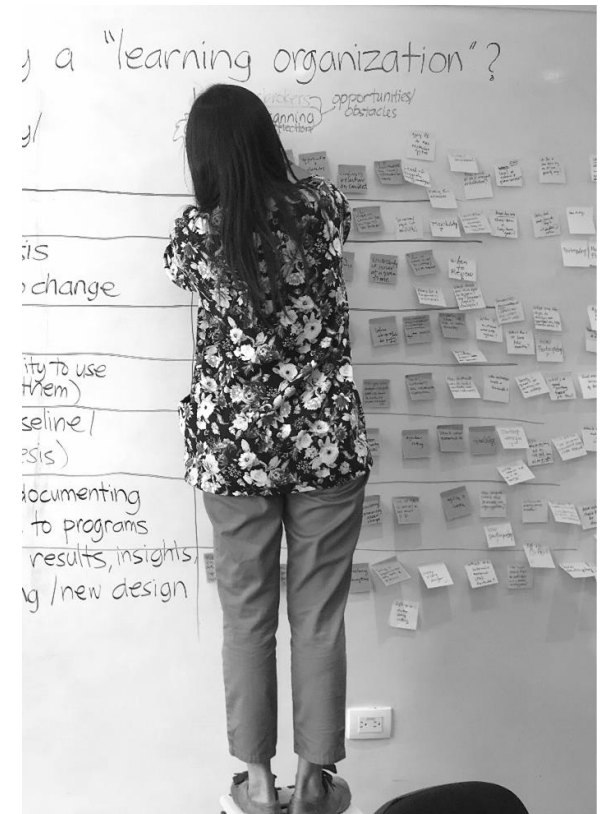
LEARNING FROM AN EVOLVING BODY OF EVIDENCE

We have many big questions across the TAP field, such as “when does data disclosure contribute to accountability?” But how can we engage in evidence-based work when our time is limited, and we may not have access to a broad range of evidence. TAI and its members worked with Dr. Varja Lipovsek of Twaweza East Africa and Dr. Lily Tsai of the MIT Governance Lab to dig into evidence from the past decade.

First, through an exploratory process, the research team worked with TAI to articulate the [pathways to change](#) common across member strategies in their work to support more accountable governance. Then, the team helped TAI translate our “big” questions into more specific questions and to consider the available evidence from the past 10 years.

What did we find? The quantity and quality of evidence is quite uneven across the topics explored, ranging from a lack of quality evidence for our questions around taxation and international norms and standards - to better quality, but somewhat limited quantity of evidence for our questions around information transparency and accountability.

What have we learned so far? The way a question is shaped is deeply connected to our ability to use available evidence to answer that question. Just as with strategy or program design, it is equally important to be specific about the outcome(s) of interest, and the actors or mechanisms involved in bringing about the change we hope to see. TAI and the research team will continue this collaboration into 2018 to disseminate the various learning products that emerged from this effort, including an online, interactive tool that allows users to consider available evidence in the context of their own work.





TAXATION AND TAX GOVERNANCE

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- There are more effective, inclusive, and user-centric interventions that promote uptake of data for greater accountability.
- New understandings and evidence inform the development of norms, practices, and standards around the use, control, and protection of data, safeguarding personal privacy and public interest.

To kickstart our work, the tax leads for TAI’s core members expressed a desire to review each of their theories of change regarding tax-related investments—in some cases, documenting them explicitly for the first time. By clearly understanding how each foundation envisaged their individual pathway to affect change, and how their grantees advanced different parts of that process, TAI became a platform to identify shared strategic interests. This work is now captured in an online [tax webpage](#) which will launch publicly in the first quarter of 2018. This webpage depicts each donor’s individual pathway to change, the strategic elements each of our members share, and the details of related grantee investments.

During the year, TAI and its members explored issues that could merit additional support, including assessing needs around the creation of beneficial ownership registers, mapping civil society and media options for tax trainings, and better linking those communities working on tax and spending issues.



HIGHLIGHTS

- The members' investment in articulating their respective theories of change clarified our collective thread and is starting to inform future programming. The new member website comprehensively maps funder goals, different entry points to the tax ecosystem, core grants, and complementarities—information useful to donors, and current and prospective grantees alike. (This is also an illustration of proactive donor transparency that we hope incentivizes all our members to continue to practice what they preach.)
- There is active interest from bilateral and multilateral funders to partner on this agenda. This work clarified the potential to better align flexible philanthropic funding with higher volume, but often more restricted, public funding at a national level.

LOWLIGHTS

- There was a delay in building out a detailed approach toward ending anonymous shell companies. That is now a priority for the first half of 2018, and will include drawing together anti-corruption and tax rationales and needs.
- There was slow progress in going beyond information sharing, due diligence, and recommitting to the current pool of grantees, and moving forward to identifying new co-investments.

LEARNINGS

- A mix of motivations for funder and grantee engagement around international tax issues is reflected in siloed programming and the rehashing of familiar debates (for example, on the boundaries of tax avoidance and illicit financial flows). A “fiscal sector” approach holds promise and would enable investments to be more effectively mutually reinforcing. Activities in 2017 affirmed the value and need to better connect across activist and research communities (such as those working on tax justice and tax transparency) and, at a met level, link revenue and expenditure programming. The latter is one prompt for the planning of a scenarios process on the future of fiscal transparency and accountability in partnership with International Budget Partnership and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. This planning will kick off in early 2018.
- Having a dedicated group of member program officers in the tax space has made collaboration much easier—from scheduling to idea generation—and should speed the testing of new ideas in 2018.

UNPACKING WHAT WE FUND AND WHY ON TAXATION AND TAX GOVERNANCE

The year 2017 saw much introspection and collaborative strategizing on tax issues among TAI core members. It was an appropriate moment to reflect. Bilateral and multilateral funding is set to double in size at least from those donors committed to the [Addis Tax Initiative](#). How can TAI members best complement those efforts?

The result of this strategizing was a comprehensive effort to lay out each member's approach to tax issues and in turn build [a collective pathway](#) to change towards a more inclusive and equitable tax systems and practice, for example around closing international tax loopholes. The TAI team worked with the members to map [how a core group of member grantees](#) could advance the vision of a more transparent and equitable international tax system, highlighting how each featured grantee links to specific threads of programming. Recognizing the variety of motivations within funders and grantees alike, we sought to map entry points into a complex [tax ecosystem](#). Whether we are battling corruption, improving social service delivery, or addressing corporate social responsibility, we're all committed to ensuring public resources support the public good. Through visualizing how seemingly unrelated parts of the ecosystem connect to one another, we are better situated to address gaps in evidence, actors, and support.

We are delighted that all this thinking will be captured as a public good on a dedicated website (www.transparency-initiative.org/tax). By showing who TAI members fund and why they fund them, perhaps we can spark new conversations and partnerships between organizations who didn't realize (until now) how much their interests connect.





STRENGTHENING OF CIVIC SPACE

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- There are improved TAP donor and grantee practices sensitive to the constraints on civic space.
- TAP CSOs have more robust organizational capacity to resist government pressures

In 2017, TAI focused on developing and rolling out products to augment our collective understanding of what “limited civic space” actually means. There is a robust and ongoing global conversation on shrinking civic space, but the wide range of conversations has diluted both the urgency and careful nuances of how to ensure civil society actors can do their work around the world. Throughout 2017, TAI sought to clarify why limited civic space matters both to donors and to grantees on the frontlines of transparency and accountability efforts.

In 2018, TAI intends to leverage these insights to pinpoint where our collaborative can add the most value to this conversation and to ensure that TAI grantees can conduct their work freely and safely. A commissioned survey of TAI member grantees will offer more comprehensive data on how grantees are (or are not) experiencing this phenomenon around the world, and where donors can provide useful support. We are also investigating the evolving role of nontraditional forms of civic engagement as conduits for citizen voice. A partnership with United States Institute of Peace is already yielding new insights on governance-related social movements that will shape TAI’s work on building resilient CSOs.



HIGHLIGHTS

- TAI's new research on how [governments are using transparency and accountability rhetoric](#) to justify restricting CSO operations is sparking useful conversations with other funder groups and a range of civil society actors. Interestingly, the conversations have surfaced divergent views on appropriate levels of CSO transparency. How can the TAP community walk the talk of transparency while protecting space for participation by organizations and citizens alike? TAI will continue shepherding this debate, as it offers important insights for our forthcoming work on bolstering CSO resilience.
- As TAI switches from analysis to piloting interventions with our members in 2018, we're excited to tap into the rich network we've cultivated, of funders, activists, government officials, and private sector actors who care about civic engagement. Throughout 2017, TAI staff deepened engagement with various stakeholders, ranging from discussions among CSOs developing the International Non-governmental Organization Accountability Charter ([Accountable Now](#)), to dialogue among CSO support providers, to conversations with like-minded groups of funders ([Funders' Initiative for Civil Society](#)). This engagement has made us more aware of the opportunities and challenges in this space, and has helped us better identify where collective TAI member action may have the greatest impact.

LOWLIGHTS

- Unfortunately, there were delays in finalizing and fielding our survey of more than 200 TAI member TAP grantees, the results of which will help evolve TAI's strategy on how best to focus collective efforts. This was one of TAI's first experiences in intensive member collaboration, and we experienced growing pains while collecting information and soliciting comprehensive member feedback. We're happy to report that as of March 2018, the survey is live, and we are eagerly awaiting the insights of TAI grantees.

LEARNINGS

- The response to our [Distract, Detach, Divide](#) research report has revealed an important conversation around reasonable levels of transparency for grantees. TAI will continue to have this conversation within our collaborative but realize the TAP perspective is not the only point of view in this exchange. Thus, we'll be connecting with other donor collaboratives, such as those focused on human rights, to better understand the dynamics underpinning this question.
- Despite many conferences, conversations, and navel-gazing on how to authentically connect with citizens, funders and capital-based CSOs alike struggle with forging a strong relationship with the grassroots. TAI staff participated in a workshop that was well attended by social movement leaders fighting for better governance in Nigeria, and even they confessed to being among the CSO elites. With this in mind, how can TAI better understand new forms of civic engagement? How could (or should) TAI engage with grassroots activists? This is an open question but one we will return to throughout 2018 to inform our thinking and work.

CROSS-CUTTING EFFORTS



TAI is always actively seeking ways to support member collaboration where demand arises in a “light touch” way. As all TAI members have investments related to the good governance of natural resources, in 2017 TAI began chairing quarterly calls among relevant leads for extractive industries programming to improve coordination and flag emerging developments in the field. This collaboration facilitated commitments around several new projects, such as the Project on Resources, Development, and Governance led by University of California, Los Angeles, and an Extractive Industries Executive Session to be shepherded by the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment. The first global gathering of the open contracting community in several years was an opportunity to complete a funding scan that would serve as an input to a donor dialogue convened with the Open Contracting Partnership. Coordination around both extractives and open contracting tracks will continue in 2018.



OPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

HIGHLIGHTS

- TAI created a new Associate Membership category and welcomed the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to the collaborative fold.
- TAI recruited a senior learning officer and an Atlas Corps Communications Fellow, providing a much-needed boost in team capacity and diversity.
- TAI launched our revamped brand and public website, and expanded our social media presence across Twitter, Facebook, and Medium.
- TAI's weekly digest, *In Case You Missed It*, went public and receives consistent positive feedback from members and field practitioners alike. Many cite it as “essential reading for my team” and highlight its value for providing a “gatekept view of what’s interesting in the field, which we would have otherwise missed” in this age of information overload.
- Staff and members contributed to the development of TAI's LME plan, a rare asset among donor collaboratives, and staff collected its first quarter of monitoring data.
- We have greatly improved our knowledge management infrastructure and also have taken steps to protect the information we collect and share with members, following a digital security audit of all our systems.

LOWLIGHTS

- The team has been stretched thin. Despite members' general consensus that TAI should seek to scale back commitments, with many competing and ambitious priorities, it proved hard to maintain momentum across all.
- There were scheduling challenges. Calendar coordination is a human resource drain for members and the TAI team alike. We need regular meetings with key member points of contacts on priorities.



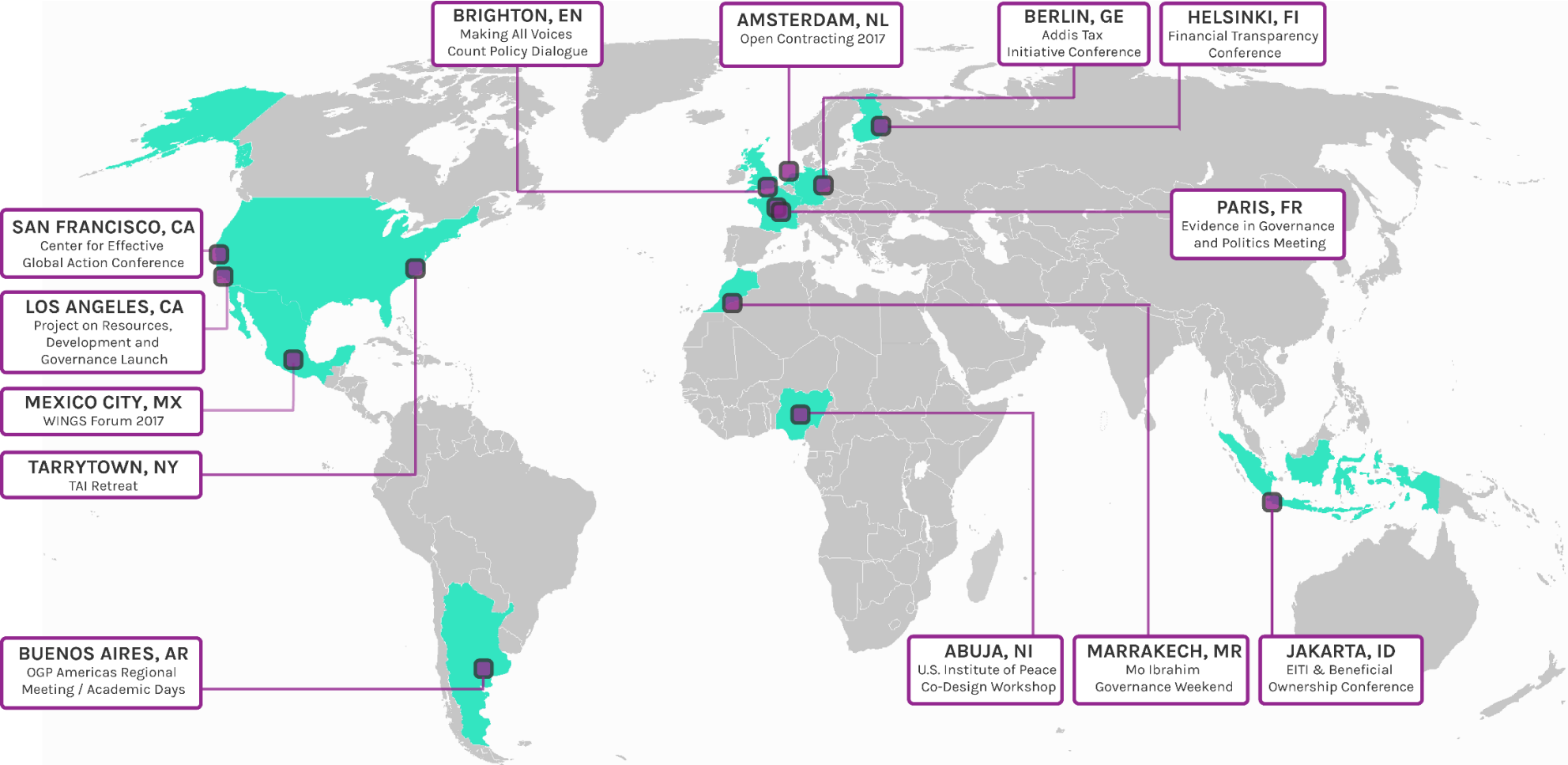
- Paperwork was a drain on our time. Despite a shared strategy, TAI staff still tailored content for five interim and two final narrative reports and three quarterly financial reports. We supported two renewal proposals to fulfill individual member reporting and grantmaking timelines. We are excited that TAI will be a “guinea pig” for testing shared reporting (providing one annual report and a half-year update) in 2018, a practice we will encourage donor members to extend to other co-grantees of our members.

LEARNINGS

- We’ve learned the importance of consistent and timely feedback loops between executive director and chair(s), and with all members via monthly calls, to reflect on and advance TAI performance and progress.
- Our experience in 2017 suggests we need a better balance between direct development and delivery of work, and project management of outsourced support. We anticipate shifting more to the latter for more intense projects in 2018, to retain time for making connections, testing funding ideas, etc.
- Making TAI Weekly public has helped build awareness of member priorities (and is an asset to the field), but we have found that we need to proactively explain TAI’s shift to a more donor-facing model at every opportunity.
- While there is value in TAI presence at major conferences and events (for visibility and credibility, and identifying ideas and opportunities), that often does not outweigh the opportunity cost in time and resources. We propose a scaled-back presence in 2018 and a leveraging of the membership to cover events. (Traditional conference design also limits the utility of the gatherings—no more panel presentations please.)
- Hubs and networks can deliver tangible benefits. Being part of the [OpenGovHub](#) community is more than just a cost-effective office space solution (e.g., the hallway conversations and more orchestrated collaborations), TAI is part of several Hub committees that are useful on a daily basis. Similarly, TAI has benefited from linkages fostered as a sponsored project of Proteus Fund, including to fellow projects: [Solidaire](#) (on grassroots movement building) and the international [Human Rights Funders Network](#) (on civic space and funder model). Of course, it helps to reciprocate, and we are glad to have provided advice to more than five groups on transitioning to a fiscal sponsor model and the variations, potential pitfalls, and constraints, and to many more on positioning their work (several organizations have cited the TAI strategy as a model for their own strategizing).

WHERE WERE WE IN 2017?

The TAI team greatly valued the chance to engage with members and partners around the world in 2017. This included TAI convened conversations on specific topics, participating in major events, and building new organization relationships. See a sampling below.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

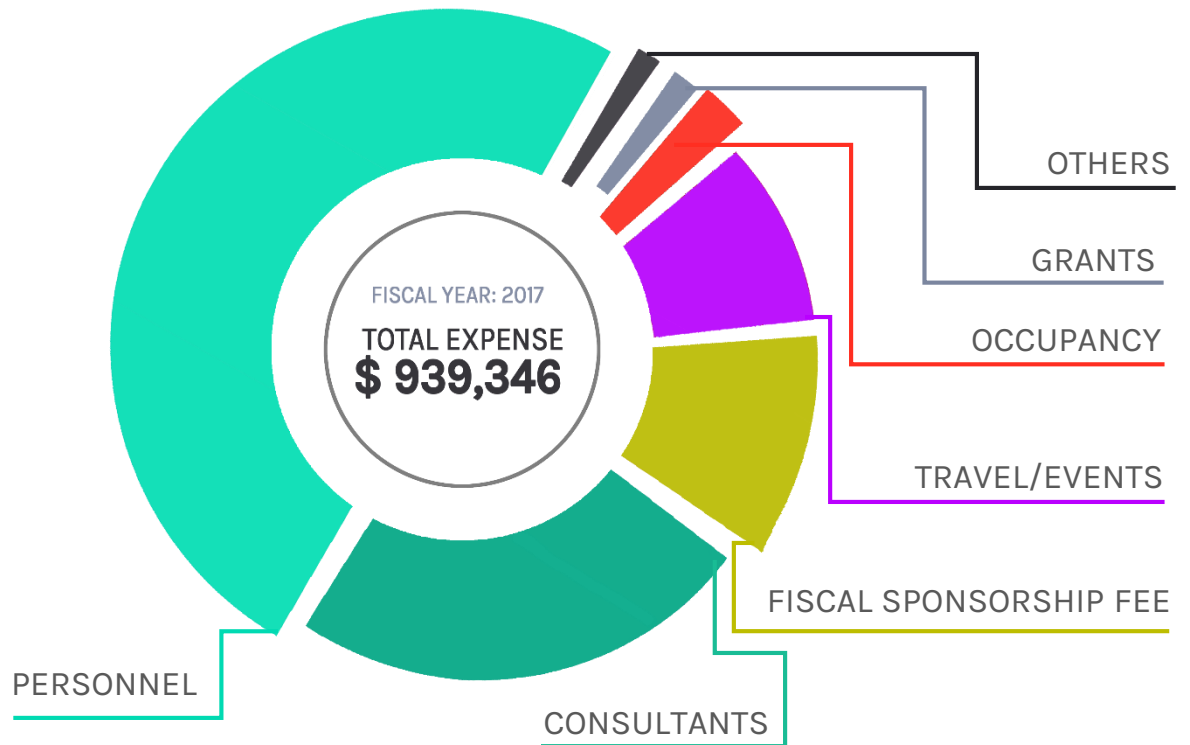
IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: READERS' FEEDBACK

"We encourage you to subscribe if you don't already! We don't know any other weekly update that is as rich and comprehensive, with all the latest news and reflections on open government globally."

"I really can't think of any other comparable regular full download on all the latest global news in TAP/OpenGov - It's an amazing source. So, thank you!"

"Thank you so much - Loving your newsletter!"

"I realized just now I've become a regular reader of the *In Case You Missed It* as it's great to zoom out and get a bird's eye view, and get a gatekept view of what's interesting in the field..."



REVENUES - \$758,733

EXPENDITURES - \$939,346

CLOSING BALANCE - \$619,880

Spending breakdown

Grants	15,000	Office Expenses	2,008
Personnel	466,003	Communications	3,242
Consultants	233,700	Travel/Events	91,105
Professional Fees	1,488	Furniture/Equipment	4,904
Occupancy	21,896	Fiscal Sponsorship Fee	100,000

TOTAL

939,346



LOOKING AHEAD

What are we excited for in 2018? So much, including...



ALISON

Applying original TAI research on grantee experience with closing civic space to inform member grantmaking practices; and a full year of TAI performance monitoring data to feedback into our management and learning practices.



AVA

Further updates to our website, regular blogs from staff and members, communication products in multimedia format, closer coordination with the members' communication teams, and monitoring and assessment of TAI's outreach.



LAUREN

Aligning efforts around ending corporate anonymity and, following the results of our survey, identifying opportunities to support grantee resilience.



MICHAEL

Developing scenarios on the future of fiscal transparency and accountability to prompt not just new thinking but new approaches

transparency-initiative.org

[@TAInitiative](https://twitter.com/TAInitiative)

Transparency and Accountability Initiative (TAI) is a collaborative of leading funders of transparency, accountability and participation efforts worldwide. Our members envision a world where citizens are informed and empowered; governments are open and responsive; and collective action advances the public good. Towards this end, TAI aims to increase the collective impact of donor interventions through deeper learning and collaboration, influencing grantmaking practice. TAI focuses on the following shared priorities: data use for accountability, strengthening civic space, taxation and tax governance, and learning for improved grantmaking.



TRANSPARENCY &
ACCOUNTABILITY
INITIATIVE

ANNUAL
REPORT
2017