

Funding Report Form

Global Standard for CSO Accountability – Extension Phase 2019/20

SECTION 1: General Information

Name of organisation that received funds: Accountable Now

Project title: Resilience Civil Society in Times of Scrutiny, Stream I: Global Standard for CSO Accountability

Funding period (start and end date): 01 July 2019 to 30 November 2020

Grant Amount: € 150,036.41

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SECTION 2: Achievements and Impact

1. Summary of project accomplishments during grant period:

Accountable Now (AN) is a Global Standard Partner and since 2018, it has been hosting the Secretariat for the partnership. As the Secretariat, AN is the body that facilitates and supports the different activities of the Partners.

During the project delivery period, AN has accomplished the following:

- Contributed to enable the environment to shift the narrative on civil society in difficult contexts and make the case that civil society can self-regulate using the Global Standard

In difficult contexts, the public and governments may have certain predispositions and assumptions that can lead to strict regulations imposed on civil society. Recognising that civil society must remain independent in order to be able to hold governments to account and support democratic processes, the Secretariat introduced and provided the Global Standard as a framework for self-regulation. Through our outreach with the Turkish Delegation, and with Civil society in Ethiopia - we provided a practical tool for organisations that can guide them to showcase to governments and the public the ability of CSOs to be self-regulated, acting on the first steps to regain civic space in difficult contexts and gain independence. Moreover, in Central America, we have begun conversations with ICNL for a collaboration to counter the negative narratives that are present there.

- Engaged multiple sets of stakeholders like donors, international organisations and academics to involve them in meaningful conversations that help to enable the proper environment for dynamic accountability practices in order for CSOs to be able to shift the power towards the people who they work for and with.

Through our conversations with OSF, the Ford Foundation, holding workshops at the UN Data



Forum and at the Alice Solomon Hochschule, and supporting Welthungerhilfe in the design-thinking process for a framework for Afghan organisations to use dynamic accountability, we have been able to reach out to these stakeholders and demonstrate the use and importance of dynamic accountability via the Global Standard. In doing so, we have also sensitised these stakeholders to the need for CSOs to use dynamic accountability and become more people-centric in the decision making process. Regarding donors, the Secretariat has continued the conversations with donors, like Global Giving and our own donor Sida, on how the Global Standard and dynamic accountability could help guide organisations to be more community-led and that way shift the power

- Broadened the reach of the Global Standard, and increased the number of organisations who know about the Global Standard as a practical tool to guide their steps towards a different kind of accountability.

Through working with our strategic partners in convening workshops and participation in the UN World Data Forum, Global Perspectives 2019 and 2020, Forus Annual General Meeting, Accountable Now's Annual Workshop, the East African Philanthropy Network, Global Accountability Week 2019 and 2020, among others - we have been able to broaden the reach of the Global Standard internationally. Through these fora, CSOs and the civil society sector have learnt about the Global Standard and a different way to practice accountability that focuses on dialogue and meaningful engagement.

- Worked with strategic partners to adapt and use the Global Standard as the basis for their national and/or organisational Code of Conduct.

In Ethiopia, the Secretariat provided a tailored workshop for Ethiopian organisations about the Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability to then support to PHE Ethiopia Consortium and the Ethiopian Civil Society Forum to revise the Ethiopian National Code of Conduct for CSOs. As an end result, the final draft is informed by the Global Standard and all commitments are included and adapted to their context to guide organisations' behavior in the country. Moreover, through our strategic partnership with Forus, have supported NNNGO (Nigeria) to use the GS as the foundation of their revised Code of Conduct, being able to partner with them in our Forus General Meeting session to show in practice how Dynamic accountability and the GS can help build trust and mutual accountability within a network. The session closed with a collaboration with Rendir Cuentas to present the self-assessment for networks to their members.

- Solidified our relationship with core Dynamic Accountability Community of Practice Partners (including CIVICUS, Restless Development and Keystone Accountability)
- Nurtured, co-created and led the Dynamic Accountability Community of Practice.

Through broad consultations among civil society actors across the globe and after carrying on a pilot with the most interested organisations, together, the DACoP has learned from the pilot phase, and now has the right platforms to engage with our members. After the pilot phase, the DACoP team launched an adequate space for practitioners where they can share best practices, find synergies, and engage in dialogue, addressing the actual needs of members. After rounds of engagement and co-creation, the relationship between the Secretariat and Core DACoP partnership has been solidified. We now have a very robust and committed team behind DACoP that gathers efforts to showcase accountability and coordinate the space to make it available for



practitioners around the globe to use it according to their needs. The team continues to meet regularly to plan and coordinate the DACoP newsletter, the open conversations and Google Group, which are the platforms that the DACoP uses to communicate and interact.

Across all platforms, the number of members and subscribers are steadily increasing. With our open events, we have designed engaging and interesting topics that received a high volume of participants who are interested and attended. Furthermore, with our newsletters we have included useful resources, opportunities and practical working examples of dynamic accountability. Overall, we have successfully nurtured a DACoP where practitioners are interested in improving the dynamic accountability practice.

- Strengthened the financial and institutional sustainability of the partnership and fostered closer collaboration between Partners.
- Strengthened actions carried out by the Partnership by providing thought leadership and supporting Partners in implementing our common strategy.
- Successfully closed the feedback loop and included Partners' voices in the decision making process. Where the inclusion of Partners' voices were not possible, we have clearly identified and given reasons as to why not.

Internally, we have strengthened the Global Standard partnership by **embedding further internal communication mechanisms** like regular evaluation/survey of the Secretariat, monthly calls and internal newsletters with Partners to ensure that spaces for engagement and feedback are created. Partners now collaborate more frequently and understand each others' context well. A **new ExCo structure** was developed in order for partners to have another channel for communications while at the same time ExCo will be better informed to provide more accurate strategic advice.

As part of its functions, the Secretariat has successfully provided thought leadership especially during the period when Partners were reshaping/strengthening their activities. With the Secretariat's comments and inputs, Partners were able to design and carry out activities that are inline with the strategic objectives of this Second Extension Phase. Furthermore, the Secretariat earned increasing trust from partners and became the go-to-point for **Partners** to contact when they **require further support with their GS related projects**. We have been involved with VANI to support the Bhutan Transparency Initiative, with DENIVA on their East African Regional Learning Platform, with CCC in terms of their outreach to Burmese organisations, with Rendir Cuentas in multiple engagement including their Virtual Course, with BCSDN in their effort to engage CSOs in Albania.

Not only so, the Secretariat has successfully facilitated the **co-creation of the institutional bases for the partnership**. In developing a strategic proposal that included new strategic objectives for the Partnership in the long term, the initiative established clear goals that strengthened the sustainability of the initiative beyond the project cycle. Also, a set of basic roles and responsibilities and values were developed to manage expectations and provide clarity of what it entails to be a partner. That will also enable a better mutual accountability within the partnership.

In terms of **fundraising**, the Secretariat has also made great strides in establishing relationships with donors, and put together a fundraising action plan that will enable the initiative to fundraise



through different levels, recognizing that these are the first steps, still to be advanced.

2. List of activities during the grant period:

Promote the use of and engagement with the Global Standard through its partnership

- a. Outreach: Establishing strategic partnerships with networks and CSOs that are interested in promoting CSO accountability and/or the Global Standard, and continue developing collaboration opportunities, with Forus and Ethiopia Consortium, for example

Participated in a meeting organised by Partners Albania. In September of 2019, Partners Albania, a member of BCSDN, organised an event titled “Strengthening accountability, transparency and sustainability of civil society organizations”. This event was held at a critical time in Albania because the government is intending to regulate their civic space. The Secretariat appeared on a panel to speak to CSOs about different types of self-regulation frameworks. Approximately, 50 people representing CSOs, and donors were present. The workshop allowed different stakeholders to consider accountability from different perspectives and approaches. This has sparked a conversation within the sector to adopt a national code of conduct.

Global Perspectives 2019 Workshop. On October 31st, the Secretariat carried out a workshop called “Accountability: An Essential Ingredient to Prove Integrity and Build Trust”. In this workshop, we discussed how organisations can use accountability mechanisms to become more effective and rebuild trust, and focused on the 12 commitments of the Global Standard as a tool to embed Dynamic Accountability practices. 25 participants were able to jointly reflect and share what their organisations are doing in regards to each commitment. The Rendir App was used to get participants to undertake a simple self-assessment exercise.

Supporting CSOs in Ethiopia. Continuing with the strategic relationship built between the GS Secretariat, PHE Ethiopia Consortium and the Ethiopian Civil Society Forum, and taking advantage of the context in Ethiopia where the government has allowed CSOs to engage more in public life, the Secretariat carried out the following activities:

- In collaboration with PHE and the Forum, the Secretariat carried out a one-day workshop titled ‘An Introduction to the Global Standard: How can Ethiopian CSOs become more accountable and to whom?’. Approximately 40 participating national CSOs reflect together about the role of accountability and co-created their own framework for Dynamic Accountability. Participants were introduced to the GS as a tool to guide dynamic accountability practices, and reflected on their current practices. Furthermore, the workshop was useful in identifying key roles for CSOs to play and their values to the country’s democratic structure.
- Introducing the Global Standard as a tool to practice dynamic accountability to Ethiopian CSOs proved useful in informing their new National Code of Conduct. After the workshop, the Forum requested support from the Secretariat to review the final version of their National Code of Conduct before being presented to the government. The Secretariat identified that the Global Standard and Dynamic Accountability could be found throughout the document. Furthermore, the Secretariat provided suggestions on how to further strengthen the document.

Visit from Turkish Delegation. Responding to the request made by an EU funded project titled: “Strengthening the Capacity of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services for Public-CSO Cooperation”, the GS welcomed a Turkish delegation of approximately 15 participants on the 17th of February. The Secretariat presented the GS to an audience of CSOs, Turkish representatives to the EU, and Turkish ministerial officials who are working together to strengthen the collaboration between the Turkish government and civil society. This workshop outlined tools and different perspectives on how stakeholder relationships can be carried out in a more engaging way, the importance of putting people at the core of the decision making process, continuous dialogue, and mutual understanding. The presentation was followed by a short Q&A session. The conversation allowed the Secretariat to



highlight the **importance of practicing dynamic accountability**, and raise awareness among the different stakeholders present, including government agencies, on the importance of **self-regulation in the civic space**. The workshop enabled participants to reflect on their accountability practices, and introduced the GS tools for CSOs to improve organisational processes.

Co-creating workshops with the Zambian Governance Foundation. The aim of these workshops are for national CSOs to advance their use of the GS. The Secretariat is currently in the process of redefining the workshop's approach since it was already co created to be a face to face workshop. Now, the collaboration will most likely involve two workshops (one online and one in-situ, if conditions permit) to assess their practices and to use the GS to develop improvement plans for participants. Additionally, to foster peer exchange within national CSOs, we have begun to identify the CSOs that had expertise on each one of the 12 commitments. Peer learnings will be a key component of the in-situ workshop. This will bolster solidarity among national CSOs while also guaranteeing sustainability. In September, the Secretariat was still in conversations with the Zambian Governance Foundation to adapt and carry out at least the first part of the training virtually in Zambia. After ZGF assessed the possibility of getting organisations on board with an introductory virtual session, we proceeded to coordinate with the ZGF to hold the introduction of this workshop at the beginning of next year, to hopefully be able to carry out the entire workshop in person.

Collaboration with FORUS. Continuation of the strategic relationship with Forus by aiding NNNGO (Nigeria) to use the GS as the foundation for its Code of Conduct.

- **Forus Annual General Meeting.** The Global Standard participated in Forus' Virtual Forum that took place from 22 to 28 October by carrying out a session on accountability. The session explores how accountability can deepen trust within a partnership, bringing some practical examples, tools & approaches to deepen dynamic accountability. Within the session, GS Partner Rendir Cuentas were invited to share their work on self assessment for networks, showcasing how to advance Dynamic Accountability within this particular dynamic. Organisations reflected on their practices and highlight key steps to improve the way they work in their own networks as well as within Forus.

Outreach to the International Center For Not-For-Profit Law (ICNL). The Secretariat identified a need and an opportunity for CSOs in Mexico and the Northern Triangle (Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador) to reclaim or maintain an enabling operating environment since their governments attempted to introduce new regulatory measures on CSOs that would put them at risk. For this reason, the Secretariat reached out to ICNL to identify opportunities for collaboration. Given the Covid-19 crisis, agreeing on a plan has taken longer than expected. However, after several conversations, the Secretariat has agreed to explore the possibility of carrying out a first workshop in Guatemala with around 70 organisations. Guatemala would be prioritized due to the state of urgency that CSOs are in: the government has introduced a new Development Law that is against freedom of expression and assembly. Given that this work takes place in Latin America, we have engaged Rendir Cuentas. This could become a pilot for the region to be carried out next year. At the moment ICNL and other organisations from Central America were invited to participate in Rendir Cuentas Virtual Course to start getting acquainted with the Global Standard and its tools.

Global Accountability Week 2019 The GS Secretariat also engaged during the Global Accountability Week 2019 in November and made a video that summarises the process of DA and its advantages. The video was viewed 295 times, and made over 3000 impressions on Twitter. Overall, the campaign was successful, with 6 Partners joining in with the campaign, and as a whole, the Secretariat has been able to reach over 50,000 contacts. On the Global Standard's Twitter platform, over 100 likes and retweets were received, including those from organisations outside of our network, which demonstrates that we have successfully elevated our profile through this process. **The Partnership's campaign served to put accountability as a priority on CSO's agenda**, since it highlighted a different perspective that helped organisations to be more successful by meaningfully engaging stakeholders and **putting people at the core of their actions**.



Accountable Now's Annual Workshop 2019. The Secretariat participated and co-led Accountable Now's Annual Workshop titled "Preparing for a power-shift towards people and communities we work for and with: exploring new ways of working in the donor-grantee relationship". At this year's Annual Workshop, local and international CSOs and donors gathered for a two-day meeting.

The purpose of this workshop was to assess and find solutions for the challenges that our sector is facing in shifting the power, so that advancing development is less top-heavy and more people-driven. This workshop served to create a safe space where different actors could gather and hold honest conversation on how the sector has not been successful to shift the power to people and why. Together, awareness was raised among participants about the different forms of power, and the dynamics created by the interaction of those who hold these powers. Furthermore, Participants identified different challenges/problems that these actors face in shifting the power and reflected on why the sector has not been successful to do so. These activities served to reach a better understanding and a holistic picture of the actual context.

Finally, participants were able to pose possible solutions to address the simple, more practical problems and we kept the door open to continue the conversation to work together and find solutions to the more complex issues. The Global Standard was able to promote the DACoP, and engaged many CSOs and donors alike through its presentation on Dynamic Accountability at this event.

East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN) Peer Learning Session: The Secretariat, in collaboration with VIWANGO co-developed and carried out a session within the East Africa Philanthropy Network peer learning group. Johnson & Johnson, Segal Family foundation and one of their grantees from the Girl Up Initiative Uganda formed the panel of speakers. The session was called "An Open Dialogue on Dynamic Accountability in Times of COVID-19: Challenges, Successes and Innovations in the GrantMaking Space". It had the purpose of sharing a different idea and local examples on how to practice a different kind of accountability that puts people at the core of decision making processes. Another purpose was to sensitise donors on their role to enable dynamic accountability, and seizing the opportunity for the Global Standard to influence and support the process of developing accountability standards for the philanthropy sectors in EA and contribute to enable the right environment for organisations to practice Dynamic Accountability

UN Data Forum. The Secretariat collaborated with Restless Development, Action for Sustainable Development and the Madagascar Initiatives for Digital Innovation to hold a workshop at the UN Data Forum to explore the dynamics of power and data from the perspectives and experiences of young people around the world. This session took place on the 21st of October 2020 and aimed to mobilise participants to take action at national, regional and global levels to challenge and change the power dynamics around data through an interactive format. Participants left this session with greater understanding of the powerful and strategic opportunities opened up through youth and community generated data, and practical recommendations for how to work with youth civil society to support a data power shift.

Global Perspectives 2020. The Secretariat, alongside colleagues from Accountable Now held a session at the Global Perspectives virtual conference titled "When inclusion gets real - Practicing Dynamic Accountability." The session focused on how dynamic accountability can enable an environment of better diversity and inclusion by putting people at the core of the decision making process. Around 20 participants, among them also donors, reflected on why civil society must do more to walk the talk and what it really takes to foster an equitable ground for people to participate in the CSOs work internally and externally. They explored how Dynamic Accountability and the Global Standar can guide the process to advance diversity and inclusion to be real, making sure that the often excluded voices are well represented.

Global Accountability Week 2020. The Secretariat worked with Rendir Cuentas (the communication team) to participate in the GAW2020, which this year is partnering with the Global Standard. The Programme Officer also wrote [an article](#) on meaningful engagement in partnerships as part of our activities for the week, contributing with reflections on how to practice dynamic



accountability in a practical way.

Workshop at the Alice-Solomon-Hochschule. Following an invitation from Karl Steinnacker (a colleague from the ICSC), the Secretariat and a colleague from Accountable Now gave a 90 minute workshop within the framework of a week-long seminar entitled “Living in A Camp” to Master Students at the ASH University of Applied Sciences Berlin. The in-person interactive workshop aimed to enable students to understand the need for a dynamic form of accountability, how the sector can self-regulate via mechanisms like the Global Standard and further grasp the working needs of organisations within the sector. The session concluded with a Q&A session with accountability experts from CIVICUS. Overall, it was important to showcase dynamic accountability and the Global Standard to students since mutual understanding between CSOs and academia can go a long way in creating interest for further studies which will strengthen the concept overall. An outcome blog that reflected on this experience can be found [here](#).

Supporting Welthungerhilfe by participating in a series of virtual design workshops for an accountability initiative in Afghanistan. Following an invitation by David Tholen, the Head of Project of Welthungerhilfe’s Afghanistan Accountability Initiative, the Secretariat alongside with Accountable Now participated in the workshop to support and inform the project design process. Through our participation, we introduced the lens of dynamic accountability and the Global Standard to the project, ensuring that the accountability initiative considered how to practice accountability in a horizontal and sustainable way.

Inspire and nurture a global community of practice on Dynamic Accountability

Dynamic Accountability Community of Practice. The Dynamic Accountability Community of Practice (DACoP), which is a collaborative effort between the Global Standard, CIVICUS, Keystone Accountability and Restless Development, carried out consultations among organisations that showed interest in previous forums on the need to create a space where practitioners could exchange knowledge and collaborate. In December 2019, the DACoP team kicked off a pilot phase on Tribe with around 45 participants. From January to April 2020, the team ran a Happy Friday scheme, where resources and questions to be discussed were posted on the platform every Friday.

While members would visit the site every Friday, they were reluctant to interact and actively participate with the platform. After a meeting in March 2020, where all the CoP core partners came together to reflect and evaluate our actions, the team decided that a change of format for the DACoP was needed. In keeping with dynamic accountability, the core partners collaborated on a Flog (a failure blog), which includes our own internal reflections and self-evaluations. This [Flog](#) was made publicly available.

From the DACoP learnings, the team decided to launch the DACoP in two new formats: one being a newsletter and the other being a Google Group, as well as holding open conversations where practitioners could exchange in honest conversations about challenges and knowledge. Since many of the DACoP members are interested in receiving resources and are less inclined to share their thoughts - a newsletter would be a good starting point for them to learn about dynamic accountability and its practices. The door to joining the Google Group will always be open, the link will be featured with each issue of the newsletter, and members who feel more comfortable having discussions and asking questions can then join. Google Group members will receive the newsletters as well. Furthermore, the DACoP will continue carrying out public dialogues on relevant current topics, always linking it to accountability to enable a common space where practitioners can get together for an open discussion.

Since June, the DACoP has transitioned to a Google Group and has been releasing monthly newsletters to further endow the community with useful resources for practicing dynamic accountability. Since then, the DACoP newsletter has seen a steady increase in subscribers (over 100 subscribers). You can read the previous issues of the newsletter [here](#). The [Google Group](#) has also grown steadily, with now over 100 members from around the world. In June, the DACoP offered



its platform as a space for CIVICUS members to continue the conversation for its Global Learning Exchange events; since then, the CoP has been piloting a multilingual scheme where all messages in the platform are translated into the three common languages (English, French and Spanish) to ensure inclusivity.

To further provide facilitating spaces for practitioners to exchange ideas and knowledge, the DACoP has been holding open conversations for the public to come together to share issues, reflect on challenges, and possible solutions. In April, the community held an event on “Accountability in the Times of COVID-19”. Following up on this, in September, the DACoP held an event titled “Digital Dilemma: How to Ensure Accountability and Inclusivity during COVID-19”. The event was attended by over 50 participants who exchanged learnings and inputs on ensuring inclusion during this difficult time where vulnerable communities are becoming increasingly excluded.

In December, after this phase has wrapped up, the DACoP will be looking to hold another open event ensuring continuity and sustainability of the community.

Strengthen the financial and organisational sustainability of the Global Standard.

- a. General coordination: Facilitate the online or offline meetings and activities of all the governance bodies, as well as leading the internal communications of the partnership

Project management. During the kick off of the Second Extension Phase, the Secretariat provided support to partners to design their activities in line with pre-established priorities, and followed up on any further questions that partners had when revising and finalising their proposals.

To evaluate the initiative and the governance bodies, the Secretariat carried out **consultations** in the forms of surveys and conversations. These have been useful in addressing intra-partnership challenges and improving the governance structure to answer to current partnership needs.

Monthly calls between the Secretariat and each Partner. In these calls, the Secretariat collected Partners’ achievements, learned about their context, received updates on progress and future plans, and tracked activities outside of the Partnership. Hence, the Secretariat has been able to map out activities, find synergies, capture participation and gather useful information that benefits the partnership.

Coordinating meetings and administration of the governance body. The Secretariat coordinates bi-monthly ExCo meetings. In these meetings, the strategies and oversight of the initiative are reviewed. They are important tools and channels for mutual accountability. All ExCo meetings are minuted.

From a survey circulated to GS Partners in August 2019, it was recorded that the ExCo structure needs to change in order to adapt to the new phase of the GS initiative. Furthermore, Partners asked for a structure that is more conducive to instilling trust and cooperation throughout the Partnership.

In March 2020, the Partners passed a new **Terms of Reference for ExCo** so that it is a more consultative and representative body; with mechanisms in place to ensure that ExCo’s relationship to Partners is enhanced, and that Partners will have opportunities to input into ExCo’s work. ExCo will be a body that has oversight on whether or not Partners’ projects are in line with the strategic importance as outlined, and agreed by the entire Partnership. Feedback from Partners indicated that they enjoyed the consultative process and the new structure.

In April, Partners also elected a new ExCo body (with two new members) to govern and it now consists of Jocelyn Condon (ACFID), Anabel Cruz (Rendir Cuentas), Carolyn Aeby (InterAction), and the Secretariat.



Virtual Global Standard Partners' F2F. Originally, the Secretariat had planned for the meeting to take place in Bangkok, which had to be in late February due to the rapidly escalating COVID-19 crisis. We then rescheduled the meeting to take place in Berlin in early March, however by then the pandemic had spread to Europe and once again we had to cancel our plan. Funds were recovered whenever applicable, and the Secretariat decided to carry out these meetings virtually to ensure that the strategic planning of the initiative could continue without further delays.

For these virtual conversations, the Secretariat has chosen to schedule conversations in a way that enables partners to look back on the Partnership, setting the ground to evaluate how to move forward (F2F Agenda). In doing so, it was ensured that every Partner has a common understanding of our past, reflects on the initiative and carries out contextual analyses. Partners voiced that they found the Working Group exercise very useful and that they would want to do it more often because it helped them to better know each other's operating environment, challenges, concerns and thinking.

After the F2F, the Secretariat put together a set of strategic documents that followed up directly from the conversations held. In September 2020, the Global Standard Partners came together virtually to approve the 5-year Strategic Plan, Charter of Values, and the Roles and Responsibilities Charter. These documents serve to strengthen the Partnership's work and lay the ground for the initiative going forward.

- **Strategic Plan.** During the Virtual F2F Partners came together to reflect and discuss the future of the initiative. These reflections helped to identify the long term goal and four specific objectives with tangible outcomes that showcase how success will look like in 5 years. Given the fast changing environment, the Strategic Plan will be reviewed in early 2021.
 - **Charter of Values.** The Global Standard Partnership's work is guided by the values and principles outlined in this document. These values define the way in which Partners engage within the partnership and externally. These values will be posted on the initiative's website as a first step towards our commitment to external stakeholders.
 - **Roles and Responsibilities Charter.** As the Global Standard Partnership evolves, it becomes essential to clearly outline what it means to be a Global Standard Partner. This means that there's a need to specify what is the role that Partners are expected to play and also to agree on what are the minimum responsibilities that each Partner has. Through this document, the Secretariat aimed to strengthen each Partners' commitment to the initiative, and establish mutual accountability. Furthermore, this document is a first step towards establishing the basic requirements for new Partners joining the initiative.
 - **Fundraising Action Plan.** Since the beginning of the initiative, the GS has been funded by SIDA and through the ICSC. After 6 years, the Partners have agreed to come up with a fortified strategy with national, regional and global approaches which will strengthen the Secretariat's efforts to diversify our sources of income and to obtain funding directly. By adopting a new way of fundraising that is co-created and co-led, we will help the GS initiative to maximize and diversify resources that help us achieve our long term goal and guarantee continuity in their actions.
- b. *Fundraising efforts: Coordinate and lead on fundraising, with the purpose of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Global Standard. This task involved mobilizing resources to fund the activities of the Global Standard at different levels*

The Secretariat had been in touch with the **Open Society Foundation**, the **Ford Foundation**, and the **Department for International Development** (DFID UK) among other donors to advance multiple fundraising initiatives. Conversations with these funders began in 2019, and continued throughout the Second Extension Phase. So far, these conversations have been very positive, and in the Third Extension, the Secretariat will submit concept notes again to these funders to find cooperative pathways ahead. Please note that in April 2020, the UK Prime Minister announced that DFID will soon be merging with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; therefore in the next phase,



the Secretariat will be alert to any developments with this particular funder.

Moreover, taking into account the Fundraising Action Plan, the Secretariat was included in Partners' proposal in Latin America (Rendir Cuentas) and the Western Balkans (BCSDN). The Secretariat also provided strategic advice and supported partners in East Africa (PHE Consortium, DENIVA, TANGO and VIWANGO) in developing a concept note and applying to the first phase for a call of proposal from the **European International Development and Human Rights fund**.

c. *External communications: Ensuring central online communication and promotion of the Global Standard and its partners through maintenance of the website and social media channels*

External Communications. The Secretariat regularly participates in the External Communication Task Force to support the planning of communication efforts. The Secretariat also contributed by submitting communication outputs (blog posts) to the External Communication Team. Furthermore, through our internal newsletters we provide good sources of information and inputs that help coordinate and complement the Communication Team work. In the same line, the Secretariat also held monthly calls with them to coordinate for successful implementation of the communication strategy.

Strengthen CSO capacity at the national, regional and international levels to adapt the Global Standard to their needs and contexts

Eastern Africa Regional Accountability online platform - The Secretariat has been supporting the design of the EA platform that held its first meeting at the end of September. This platform has the aim to provide a space for regional CSOs to share experiences on accountability mechanisms in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda as well as to explore the use of the Global Standard to help inform/strengthen, and unite the sector creating a coordinated regional approach to NGO accountability in the region.

Connecting CSOs from Myanmar - CCC identified an interest from organisations in Myanmar to create a membership organization and/or a National Accountability Standard in Myanmar. The Secretariat provided support to CCC by coordinating with USIP to put CCC in touch with local CSOs that would be interested in advancing the conversation to develop an accountability/self regulation mechanism that can leverage the position and independence of the sector with the government but also with donors in the region.

Bhutan Transparency Initiative (BTI) - After their first contact with VANI and the Global Standard in 2018, BTI requested support to advance dynamic accountability within the sector in the country. BTI recognized the importance of localizing and adaptation of the Global Standard for CSOs in the country. Therefore, the Secretariat in coordination with VANI is in conversations with BTI to co-develop a series of workshops requested by BTI, where CSOs can start getting deeper knowledge on the GS so they can adapt it to their own context and needs. Currently the content of the workshop is being agreed and advances will be reported in the next phase.

Rendir Cuentas' Virtual Training Course. The Secretariat attended the Course entitled "Transforming power relationships: Dynamic Accountability for civil society organizations". During the course the Secretariat supported the process of developing next steps for participants to put in practice the knowledge acquired in the 7 sessions. Furthermore, the Secretariat looks to develop a more general training based on what partners have done locally to support organisations around the world to advance accountability.

Create a knowledge pool on how the Global Standard enhances the impact and resilience of CSOs

Internal Newsletters. With the information collected through monthly calls with Partners, the



Secretariat put together monthly internal newsletters (with the only exception of February and March as partners were due to meet at the F2F). These newsletters actively contributed to enhance internal communications, strengthen institutional memory of the partnership, and provided insights for the External Communications team's effort. These newsletters informed partners on each other's activities, and provided a space to identify synergies and opportunities for collaboration. Moreover, they are a useful mutual accountability mechanism since they share how organisations are advancing their project activities. In the future, we seek to add thematic learnings in these newsletter so they can be spaces where partners exchange knowledge.

DACoP Newsletter. As mentioned above, as part of our partnership with CIVICUS, Restless Development and Keystone Accountability through the DACoP - we co-create, write articles for and curate a monthly newsletter for dynamic accountability, which frequently features the Global Standard's work. The newsletters help practitioners to identify best practices, learn from experts and receive useful opportunities for organisational development.

The Secretariat wrote an article for Viwango on Dynamic Accountability (please find it [here](#)) to be published in a first of its kind development magazine that is initially targeted for the Kenyan market, with the intention to later roll out to the East African region. The article explained the concept of Dynamic accountability in a simple way and challenged the reader to put it in practice to address some issues within the sector.

Contributions through articles and blog posts. Throughout the year, the Secretariat contributed to the knowledge pool of the GS by writing many articles that showcase how the GS enhances the impact and resilience of CSOs. A list of these articles can be found below:

- [Dynamic Accountability and COVID-19](#)
- [When Inclusion Gets Real... An Opportunity to Act Differently](#)
- [Meaningful Engagement within Partnerships](#)
- [Diversifying Our Audiences - Why it Matters](#)
- [Self Regulating Initiatives: Accountability Measures in Times of Scrutiny](#)
- [How a holistic approach to accountability could help reposition civil society in the renewal of the civic space in Ethiopia](#)

3. Progress of outcomes (refer to original outcomes proposed in the application):

Outcome	Achieved? (Yes/No)	Achievements and measurements of success
Workshops carried out, in Ethiopia, East Africa	Yes	Workshops carried out in Ethiopia and other various online platforms as listed above. Participation and co-creation of workshops in East Africa.
Outreach to strategic partners	Yes	Outreach to strategic partners including Forus, ICNL, PHE Ethiopia Consortium, Ethiopian Civil Society Forum, Global Giving.
Nurture a Dynamic Accountability Community of Practice	Yes	CSOs join the Dynamic Accountability Community of Practice. Steadily grown members in active platform
Support GS Partners in their activities	Yes	Supported Global Standard partners in their delivery of project activities through multiple channels as listed above.



Identify peer-learning opportunities between GS Partners	Yes	Convened working groups and encouraged partners to collaborate further on online platforms and at each other's events.
Knowledge management	Yes	Created internal newsletters, set up a common drive to enhance Partners' institutional knowledge, and contributed in the forms of articles and blogs upon request.
Coordinated the strategic partner's meeting/F2F event	Yes	The F2F meeting was carried out in a virtual manner due to pandemic restrictions. Strategic planning concluded with mutually agreed long-term objectives and documents.
Coordinate and lead on fundraising	Yes	Fundraising Action Plan created and Partners have agreed to a multi-level approach to fundraising.
Facilitate the online or offline meetings	Yes	Convened bi-monthly remote partner's meeting to discuss challenges and solutions.
Facilitate the functions of the governing body of the GS	Yes	Created a new Term of Reference for the ExCo, which was approved by all Partners. Convened bi-monthly ExCo meetings to engage their strategic inputs. Ran an election for two vacant ExCo positions. Facilitated the co-creation of Roles and Responsibilities for GS Partners, furthering mutual accountability.

4. Who has benefited from this project? Direct and indirect?

Directly benefited were Accountable Now's 26 members of international CSOs, as well as the 10 GS Partners and at least its strategic partners. Strategic partners (in Ethiopia, Latin America, Bhutan, Zambia, Nigeria, and Afghanistan as well as organisations in other countries where key networks the Secretariat worked with are present) have directly benefited from this project since the Secretariat always aims to co-create and collaborate with organisations who are supported. As one of the Secretariat's goals is to promote dynamic accountability vis-a-vis the Global Standard, the project has supported partners and CSOs around the world to use the GS as a tool to engage more with their stakeholders, and gain capacities.

Another group of direct beneficiaries are the DACoP members who have benefited from the resources and conversations that were held, thus widening their perspective of an issue that affects the sector because we use the right channels to communicate with them.

Indirectly, AN's members' federated chapters, GS Partners' members and their chapters, and members of the DACoP and their organisations have also benefited from our approach to dynamic accountability and use of the Global Standard.

Moreover, the civil society sector and the communities that those organisations serve in many countries have indirectly benefited. By CSOs adapting and using the Global Standard to their needs, they have



taken the first steps towards fostering further trust with the public and putting the people who they work for and with at the core of decision making processes. Additionally, through our engagement with donors and governments, these institutions were also able to strengthen their practices by taking into consideration CSOs' inputs in their legislation and thus having a more robust set up for civil society.

5. How were different stakeholders engaged?

In line with Global Standard's ethos, the Secretariat tries to put in practice dynamic accountability to strengthen stakeholder engagement in a meaningful way throughout different organisational processes. We are a responsive organisation that adapts our engagement method dependent on the stakeholders. Our stakeholders are:

- The Global Standard Partners: The Secretariat engaged partners individually on regular bases through monthly calls. Also, the Secretariat further engaged partners on their programmatic experiences and became more able to gain understanding of their context and work, this is also a space for them to raise any questions that they might have. Furthermore, the Secretariat solicits frequent evaluations to receive feedback from Partners and understand where we can improve/change. The Secretariat also convened Remote Partners' Meetings to provide spaces where Partners can discuss relevant issues for the partnership, provide inputs and feedback.
- AN Members: The Secretariat engaged with AN Members in two main ways. Through the participation of the Secretariat in the Annual Workshop and Annual General Meeting, the members deepened their knowledge in DA and the GS. Secondly, AN members also frequently attended events put on by the Secretariat and learnt more about the GS.
- Civil Society Organisations: The Secretariat engaged with CSOs that requested the GS support to guide their steps towards practicing a different kind of accountability by tailoring support to their needs and context.
- Donors: The Secretariat engaged donors that are interested in promoting CSO accountability and strengthening civil society. When engaging with donors, the Secretariat always ensured that donors understand and empathise with the importance of an independent and robust civil society, one which is capable of self-regulation and embraces accountability mechanisms. Moreover, it make clear the important role of donor on enabling the environment for CSOs to actually practice dynamic accountability, and work with flexible funds that can allow them to input people's voices along their work
- Core Partners of DACoP: AN, as the Secretariat of the GS, invited CIVICUS, Keystone Accountability and Restless to create the CoP. The Core Partners of the DACoP meet regularly (2-3 times per months) to discuss thematic focuses, materials, and co-create the newsletter and events for the DACoP. The group embraces a collaborative spirit.
- Members of the DACoP: With the members of the DACoP, the team always provided channels for suggestions and improvements. Prior to setting up the DACoP, the team ran surveys and consultations to truly validate the needs and objectives for our community. Through these evaluation mechanisms, the team was able to improve the DACoP platform and found the right channels to communicate with members. Each monthly newsletter includes links for suggestions at the bottom, as well as leaving spaces open for comments. The team also held evaluations at the end of each open conversation to enable feedback.
- Workshops and webinars participants: Throughout all the workshops and webinars, AN has promoted spaces where participants can share their experiences and together build further their individual and collective knowledge on the GS and DA. Also a quick evaluation is run at the end of each webinar/workshop to ensure to receive feedback from our participants.



- **Strategic partners:** The Secretariat has engaged with platforms, such as ZGF, PHE Consortium, ICNL, Forus, and others. The Secretariat considers them as strategic partners, since they are networks of CSOs that amplify our outreach efforts. As with GS Partners, the Secretariat always provides spaces for collaborative engagement, and always seeks to co-create whenever possible.

Acknowledging that stakeholder engagement is not a one-way process, we always remind partners that they can come to us for further information and support. We also have a contact form on our website to ensure that the general public can reach the Secretariat for engagements.

6. Which steps have been taken to ensure the sustainability of the project?

To ensure the sustainability of the project - Accountable Now's Board have decided to keep the two Global Standard Secretariat staff on board using AN's own unrestricted funds for the month of December 2020. As SIDA has already agreed to a Third Extension with the Global Standard project (starting January 2021), keeping staff on board means that institutional knowledge and capacity of the GS Secretariat will not be lost, and that the transition from one extension to another will be seamless.

As mentioned earlier, the Secretariat has also taken steps to strategically plan with the Partners, and produced strategic documents that will allow our vision to live on beyond our project cycle and further institutionalise our partnership.

Not only so, since AN uses the GS's 12 Commitments as its framework for reviewing members, ensuring that the GS is part of its core work and its activities. Also, AN has been collaborating with the Partners to ensure the sustainability of the project. It has done so in the following ways:

- As donors are more interested in funding projects at national and local levels, Partners have agreed to a multi-level (local, national and international) approach to fundraising, thus ensuring that the initiative can receive funding at different levels and opening up the range of donors that the initiative can approach. This will ensure that the Global Standard is financially sustainable
- The Secretariat has continued to approach donors for funding within this phase, establishing relationships with the Ford Foundation, OSF and DFID.
- Through co-creating the strategic plan with GS Partners, we have set the long-term goal for the initiative, thus enabling us to work towards a common goal beyond the project cycle.

7. How were gender-specific objectives achieved in the implementation of the project? What worked well, what did not?

One of the GS's 12 Commitments is Women's Rights and Gender Equality. Therefore, we put this in practice and strive to always provide spaces for women of all backgrounds to participate and lead as well as encourage organisations that we work with and for to do so.

The Secretariat is hosted by AN and we have a robust [Code of Conduct](#) that values gender equality and women's rights. Our leadership team is also female, and the same applies to most of the GS Partners' leadership. The ExCo is completely women-led.

Since AN was an entirely female organisation, AN has taken steps towards a gender-balanced recruitment process - recruiting a Membership and Reporting Manager who is a man.



8. How did you manage the environmental implications of the project? What worked well, what did not?

AN has an [Environmental Policy](#) that guides our actions in terms of the environment. We have taken the follow steps to minimise our impact on the environment:

- CO2 Compensation for Flights: AN pays for CO2 compensation for all work-related flights in order to off-set our carbon footprint.
- Meetings: GS Partners always meet online for bi-monthly remote partners' meetings due to the geographical distribution of each Partner. Furthermore, this year due to COVID-19, the F2F meeting has been taken online (it is usually held in person), thus further mitigating our environmental footprint for this period.
- Use of public transportation: AN staff and the Partners are always encouraged to use public transportation on work trips. However, this was not always possible given that some participants have reduced mobility.
- Printing: AN encourages its staff to not print, and mostly uses a shared drive to minimise our paper usage.
- Food: If catering is required at our event, we will always opt for vegetarian-only. However, in some instances, we did offer non-vegetarian options, to be culturally sensitive.
- Banking: All our accounts are in GLS Bank, a German ethical and social bank.

9. Identify any risks that did occur during the implementation phase, how you dealt with them and any impact on the organisation and team as well as on the outcomes of the project. Please refer to the risks identified in the project proposal as well as any risks that may have come up during the implementation of the project.

10. Identify and discuss any challenges related to the project funded and how you dealt with them.

The global pandemic was an unforeseeable event and did not only affect AN and the Secretariat of the Global Standard but also GS Partners, members, strategic partners and donors. The following are some risks and challenges that we have encountered during the pandemic:

Partnership

- Since many states and countries have imposed lockdown restrictions, the work of our GS partners too have been affected.
- **Risk:** Partners and the Secretariat not being able to carry out their activities as planned and deliver the expected results for this year.
 - As Secretariat, we asked the ICSC (the Centre) to provide Partners with a chance to reallocate their budget and be more flexible towards objectives and deliverables. Through different engagements, the Centre submitted a no-cost extension proposal to Sida and for all GS Partners until the end of November 2020, extending the project for two more months.
 - With Partners, the Secretariat worked to support them in revising their activities in line with the new context.
- **Challenge and responses:** Having to revise activities due to the new context
 - As Secretariat, had to revise many of its activities and reallocate its budget. Since the project period was extended, savings from the F2F meeting and outreach activities were



reallocated to pay staff to continue its lines of work virtually throughout November, in order to innovate, find new methods of working and meet our set objectives.

- The Secretariat also pivoted many of our activities, which are listed below.

F2F Meeting

Risk: Being unable to strategically plan for the Partnership due to our inability to meet

Challenge and responses: Having to take the meetings online to accommodate for the new context.

End outcome: Strategic documents developed therefore proposal objectives were accomplished

- Originally the F2F meeting was set to take place in February 2020 in Bangkok, a location chosen due to its low cost and potential in terms of engagement with CSOs and donors. Preparations were already in motion when it was announced that COVID-19 cases were rapidly rising in the region. Since the risk to partners was high, a week prior to the event, the Secretariat held an emergency meeting to enable Partners to speak frankly about their concerns and to decide together whether the meeting should go ahead. In this meeting, Partners agreed to cancel the F2F in Bangkok and asked the Secretariat to explore other options. We were also in agreement with Partners since we prioritise their health and well being first and foremost.
- With Partners' directions, we cancelled all made arrangements and in doing so incurred some losses due to booked flight, visa and hotel. With a lowered budget, we took careful consideration and engagements with Partners, and decided to relocate the meeting to Berlin. Berlin was chosen because it would not incur flight or hotel costs for 4 persons and the venue would be provided for free as well. The new meeting dates were set for the second week of March.
- However, by early March, COVID-19 had spread throughout the world. The WHO had declared it a pandemic and most countries began to impose strict lockdown measures. In these circumstances, the Secretariat of course followed international and national guidelines and cancelled our meeting. Fortunately, the Secretariat was able to receive refunds for all flights and hotels due to the new context.
- To reconcile the effects of the pandemic with the need to strategically plan as a partnership, the Secretariat decided to hold the F2F virtually. Taking into account the restraint of an online environment and differences in time zones, we carried out 2-hour long sessions twice a week, for two months. Despite many challenges, the F2F concluded with a clear set of strategic objectives for the Partnership - as referred to above.

Outreach

Risk: Lost of opportunities for outreach

Challenge and responses: Adapting activities to a virtual environment
End Result: Successful adaptation of activities into virtual format, and continual engagement with organisations to ensure future collaborations remain possible.

- As part of the Secretariat planning for this year, it was intended to take some outreach activities in person - including but not limited to a visit to Zambia to meet with ZGF, a visit to Cambodia to further support our partners in Cambodia, a side meeting to the F2F event in Bangkok with ICVA and further engagements in Latin America alongside ICNL.
- To minimise the effects of the inability to travel, we pivoted moved activities online. For Zambia, we were able to co-create and plan an online workshop for next year. Partnership event with ICVA was cancelled, but the door is left open on both sides to continue working together in the future. With ICNL, the Secretariat is holding follow-up conversations on how we can co-created a concept note with them and will continue the collaboration in the next phase.



- With many other organisations also adapting to the online environment, the Secretariat found that more opportunities were present to us to engage in more platforms. For example, the Secretariat was able to participate in the UN Data Forum, Global Perspectives and other forums that are quite close together in terms of date since it was no longer needed to account for travel time.

Fundraising

Risk: Donors having to refocusing their activities due to the pandemic. Lack of fundraising coordination due to inability to meet and plan with GS Partners.

Challenge and responses: Donors less interested in civic space due to the global pandemic. Having to agree virtually on an action plan with partners

- Since the pandemic started, many donors have had to pivot their focus away from the civic space and towards emergency relief. Therefore, it had become increasingly more difficult to fundraise in this context. However, we are still in conversation with many donors and have sought support from the International Civil Society Centre to further enhance our internal capacity in terms of fundraising.
- Despite not being able to meet in person, the Partnership still came together to strategically plan and agreed to a new Fundraising Action Plan. The plan takes advantage of donors becoming more interested in funding national and local initiatives, we have worked with Partners to create a new fundraising plan.

Staff changes

Risk: Unable to find an appropriate Interim Executive Director

Challenge and responses: Interim ED has to take over in a challenging context

Besides the pandemic, AN also underwent an important staff change towards the end of the project cycle. In October, the Executive Director went on maternity leave and a new Interim Director was appointed. However, the new Interim Director only joined with two months left in the project cycle, and she is a person who is very familiar with the initiative. Prior to joining AN as Executive Director, Iliana Nesik worked as the Executive Director for BCSDN, a Global Standard Partner. Iliana brings a wealth of experience in fundraising and growth to the organisation and we believe that she's the best fit for the organisation and initiative at this time.

11. Are you satisfied with your current results? What would you like to do differently in the future?

The Secretariat is very satisfied with the results that were achieved, especially since so much of the achievements took place during a global pandemic. The Secretariat was able to go beyond requirements as the Secretariat of the GS to reach out to strategic partners in many countries, co-created a diverse set of webinars, and promoted the GS to CSOs and networks around the world. The Secretariat has used the Global Standard and dynamic accountability to get the results expected, being resilient and able to adapt to a rapidly changing global context.

In the future, the Secretariat would like to achieve further results in terms of fundraising for the Partnership. With the new Fundraising Action Plan - the Secretariat hopes to diversify the funding pool and strengthen the financial sustainability of the initiative.



Lastly, since the pandemic many of the strategic partners also had to pivot their work, and we would like to deepen and reconnect with those strategic relationships in the future.

SECTION 3: Financial Reporting

Please provide us with

- a detailed a financial report based on the budget provided with the project proposal
- a narrative to the financial report, explaining key changes, challenges or highlights that affected expenditures

SECTION 4: Comments

Please share any additional information you believe is relevant to this grant.

N/A