Beyond Theories of Change: Working Politically for Transparency and Accountability, with Brendan Halloran

Participants, Related Materials and Participants’ Questions

This webinar was held on June 23, 2014 by Fundar, Center for Analysis and Research and the GPSA. It was moderated by Gina Chacón, investigator in Fundar, and the presenter was Brendan Halloran, from the Transparency and Accountability Initiative and coordinator of the TALEARN Community of Practice. There were 25 participants:

- **Renata Terrazas**, Fundar, México. She works in the Transparency and Accountability department. She recently coordinated the Right to Access information Index in Mexico.
- **Sabina Taralunga**, Center for Health Policies and Studies, Republic of Moldova.
- **Touré Aboubacar**, member of the Junior Chamber International (JCI), Mali.
- **Mayli Sepúlveda**, ControlaTuGobierno, Mexico. This organization offers training, support, advice and consultancy to marginalized groups in transparency, accountability and social audit.
- **Olive Moore**, GPSA, Washington D.C.
- **Blair Glencorse**, Accountability Lab, Washington, DC. He has been working in West Africa and South Asia.
- **Monique van Es**, Director of the Pan Africa Programme with Oxfam, Nairobi, Kenya.
- **Samuel Dare**, CHESTRAD, UK.
- **Jorge Romero León**, researcher and independent consultant working on applied budget work and accountability in Latin America.
- **Sylvia Szankay**, Development Communications Specialist, Washington DC.
- **Marieke Deville**, partner and consultant for HERA (Health Research for Action), currently working on a Theory for Change on Mutual Accountability.
- **Alan Hudson**, Global Integrity's policy lead, working closely with T/AI, MAVC, GPSA and others on citizen-centred approaches to improving governance.
- **Albert van Zyl**, International Budget Partnership.
- **Lizzy Solano**, Field Manager Assistant for the GPSA Project in Dominican Republic.
- **Victoria Vlad**, an economist with the Expert-Grup. Coordinating the GPSA education project in Moldova.
- **Lucy von Sturmer**, Communications Officer from Making All Voices Count.
- **Jay Colburn**, International Budget Partnership, USA.
- **Lola Dare**, CHESTRAD, Nigeria.
- **Tenzin Dolker**, Ford Foundation, USA.
- **LeoDevillé**
- **Ana**
- **Carlo**
Several interesting links were shared by participants during the webinar:

**Victoria Vlad** shared a link on the Moldovan GPSA project on education: [http://expert-grup.org/en/proiecte/item/916-gpsa-moldova/916-gpsa-moldova](http://expert-grup.org/en/proiecte/item/916-gpsa-moldova/916-gpsa-moldova), which has recently put together a draft of ToC. She also shared a link to post feedbacks on their ToC: [https://drive.google.com/a/expert-grup.org/file/d/0B-I5XXxRfBopSWx4WUR5YTZzeFE/edit?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/a/expert-grup.org/file/d/0B-I5XXxRfBopSWx4WUR5YTZzeFE/edit?usp=sharing).


The Following links were shared by Fundar:

- Brendan's blog on politics, governance and development: [http://politicsgovernancedevelopment.wordpress.com/](http://politicsgovernancedevelopment.wordpress.com/).

**Questions made during the Webinar:**

**Blair Glencorse**: The links and resources provided by Brendan are very useful- but all produced by donors/Western orgs. On the ground in developing countries who is producing useful ideas and thinking on this?

**Alan Hudson**: +1 for Blair's question. It might be a useful way of moving the discussion around these issues on.

**Blair Glencorse**: To what extent can we apply this same thinking to working politically within NGOs and donor organizations themselves? Or what further considerations would be involved from that perspective?
**Samuel Dare** (CHESTRAD): How does this lend itself to political negotiations in fragile state where most theory/evidence are educated guesses at best?

**Alan Hudson**: What would you say are the key practical takeaways for working to support improvements in governance?

**Monique van Es**: Brendan, could you explain a bit more about the Short Routes and Long Routes for demanding political accountability? Could you give an example of each? Why is "short" suitable mainly for service delivery? Does political survival of politicians themselves play a role in this?

**Renata Terrazas**: Brendan, you are suggesting working politically but I also believe you are suggesting working socially. I mean, it is not only working on an informed and wider political perspective but you are also including citizen interaction/practices with the government and so on, am I right?

In my experience I also struggle when working at the local level yet public servants, decision makers not always last too much so you sometimes decide to address more "institutional" changes that usually take longer to have some impact.

**Alan Hudson**: If politics and power is everywhere, then the scope of working politically is massive. How would you go about working out which bits of the system to work on politically?

**Monique van Es**: Are there examples of involving the Politicians (as targets of our influencing) in Learning?

**Olive Moore**: Thanks for an excellent presentation with lots of useful resources for follow up. On learning we are working hard to be a donor/partner who encourages and incentivizes learning and adaption, very much along the lines of what you outlined. One of the biggest challenges I see is how very time intensive this is. I wonder about better integrating learning into everyday processes, rather than stand-alone initiatives? What is a reasonable expectation of an organization regarding time and resources for learning? On thinking politically (and echoing Blair’s point), having worked previously in the NGO sector, it itself is very politicalized, and also donors too. How do we ensure we ourselves are part of our political economy analysis? I am very interested in the idea of ‘isomorphic mimicry’ where the policy/structure/institutions might be in place, but in practice it does no work. This is also possible a product of replication, where we replicate, without attention to very different cultures and contexts, and also donor/funding driven initiatives. Who coined the term and is working on this?