

# ACCOUNTABLE NOW ANNUAL REPORT



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# Closing the year...

2018 threw some considerable challenges our way. To mention but a few, our sector faced the safeguarding crisis, continued growth of populism all over the world alongside increased scrutiny, government control and restricted freedoms for CSOs. It is in this context that we have striven to work on advancing the Dynamic Accountability approach – a concept of accountability practice that has become increasingly important – and 2018 proved to be a great year in mainstreaming the concept alongside our Members.

This year we learned that it was essential to move away from the tick-box exercise of accountability to processes that involve and prove openness, transparency and responsiveness which in turn demonstrate how our Members are engaging with continuous dialogue that brings people to the heart of the work we are doing. This is what we at Accountable Now spent 2018 on developing and we are looking forward to continuing the process into 2019 with you, our Members.

It's time to use all we have learnt in 2018 at our AGM, Annual Workshop and webinar series and develop our knowledge on Dynamic Accountability further. Our recently approved Beyond 2018 strategy puts the Dynamic Accountability approach at its core and 2019 looks to be a busy yet rewarding year: we want to provide more support to our members when it comes to their accountability practices; we want to bridge the gap between the feedback that Members receive from our Independent Review Panel. Through the first half of 2019 we have made progress with the 100-day Challenge, helping the our Members to strengthen their complaints mechanisms. Importantly, we will also use this opportunity to strengthen Accountable Now's own mechanisms so that we too ensure we practice what we preach. In addition, we have planned a new webinar series that explores different ways of working towards complying with our 12 Accountability Commitments.

As part of the Global Standard, we are developing tool kits for organisations that wish to begin engaging with the network and we have also commissioned the development of a document that will explore the Dynamic Accountability concept and its implementation. This is just a little glimpse of what lies ahead for 2019 and we look forward to working with our Members on advancing accountability practices in CSOs.

Thank you for helping make 2018 an insightful and vibrant year.

**Brendan Gormley, Chair of the Board & Rocio Moreno Lopez, Executive Director, Accountable Now**

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# 2018 Highlights

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Hosted by Amnesty International in London, we brought together **40 participants** from **24 organisations** who joined us for a full day of panel discussions and breakout sessions on topics that dealt with Dynamic Accountability, reporting unethical behaviour, aligning with various accountability codes and standards and how we as CSOs can begin rebuilding trust through these accountability practices.

The input of knowledge and experience from our Members on these topics is always invaluable – only with such events where we can meet and discuss, can we learn more about the contexts we work in. We are looking forward to future opportunities where we can help our members understand and act upon Dynamic Accountability further and facilitate collaborative learning experiences.

[READ THE OUTCOME  
DOCUMENT](#)

As with every year, Accountable Now hosted its Annual General Meeting, bringing together our Members and those who work for Accountable Now for some discussions on CSO accountability.

In light of the revelations of organisational and individual abuse of power in CSOs, our 2018 AGM provided an important opportunity to bring together leaders of CSO accountability for some frank and open conversations.

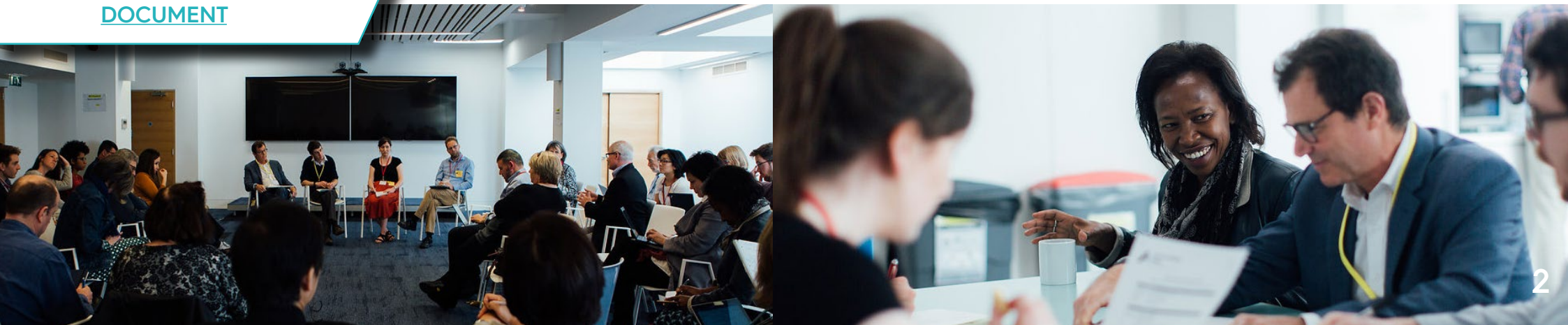
### WHERE WE AIM TO IMPROVE

We ask you to walk the talk but we also recognise that we need to do the same in our own work. This is why we will ensure to listen to and act upon the feedback we received for the 2018 AGM.

*We need more challenging voices and diversity as well as better gender balance and representation of members based in developing countries in our panels.*

*We will strive to improve the way in which working groups compiled results from discussions, to make outcomes practical and usable.*

*We will up the interactivity during sessions and offer more space for discussions with participants.*



# DEVELOPING OUR BEYOND 2018 STRATEGY

As we move into the next three years Accountable Now has developed a strategy that addresses our ambitions and aims for the coming years. Through the Board and Secretariat working closely together with our members through holding calls to discuss draft versions of the strategy, we have developed and fine-tuned a three-strategy-goal approach that will form the basis of our future work across all areas.

With this we hope to mainstream accountability practices in CSOs and move away from focusing purely on success stories, to finally put Dynamic Accountability into the limelight.

With numerous standards and codes for CSOs to work with, we are aware this can cause a lack of meaningful engagement in accountability practices. When developing our strategy, we kept in mind that we need to facilitate processes that reduce the costly exercises of accountability practices and promote useful reporting that that enables us to build more trusted relationships with our stakeholders - critical to countering the growing threat of shrinking civic space.



## REACHING OUR GOALS

Continual, meaningful conversation with our Members, other CSOs and the wider public will be key to generating uptake with Dynamic Accountability: through the dissemination of member accountability reports, the development of our Good Practice Library and through increasing the support we offer our Members, we will ensure the conversation on accountability advances.

Going back to the basics, we will define and revisit accountability definitions and benchmarks to promote learning and further development around Dynamic Accountability. With more webinars, Peer Advice Groups and workshops planned for 2019 these will provide the perfect opportunity to link CSOs, engage people with Dynamic Accountability and support our Members in developing their accountability practices.

[READ OUR BEYOND 2018 STRATEGY](#)

# 1

**STRATEGIC GOAL 1**  
ENCOURAGE THE ADOPTION OF  
DYNAMIC ACCOUNTABILITY  
PRACTICES TO ENHANCE TRUST

# 2

**STRATEGIC GOAL 2**  
PROMOTE A CULTURE OF  
DYNAMIC ACCOUNTABILITY

# 3

**STRATEGIC GOAL 3**  
FOSTER INTERNATIONAL  
EXCHANGE ON ACCOUNTABILITY  
TOOLS AND PRACTICES

# Dynamic Accountability

## ANNUAL WORKSHOP

### DEFINING DYNAMIC ACCOUNTABILITY:

2018's Annual Workshop was our chance to work through key definitions of Dynamic Accountability to get our Members to begin thinking about what it entails and how they may already be using it in their work. Our instincts may be to work on the concept until a full working definition is made, but for our workshop it was important to not have a definition set in stone – Dynamic Accountability after all is, well... dynamic! However, we did begin to *characterise* the concept and during our Annual Workshop, certain keywords and characteristics were identified:

*Inclusive; participatory; bottom-up approach; going beyond transparency and static forms of accountability; driven by meaningful stakeholder engagement through two-way-feedback streams and closed feedback loops; continuous conversations; learning from stakeholder feedback; consulting a wide range of stakeholders; redressing unequal power dynamics; building mutual partnerships.*

### MAINSTREAMING DYNAMIC ACCOUNTABILITY:

*Acknowledging the mammoth task ahead, we were able to extrapolate some first steps for Members to take and use to implement Dynamic Accountability principles into their work.*

1. Start mapping current accountability practices. What is currently being done?
2. What is the current understanding of key Dynamic Accountability concepts? What can we do to increase this understanding?
3. Identify allies who can start the process of change.
4. Share successes, ideas and inspiration - show that it is valued.

Over the course of two and a half days, Accountable Now welcomed Members and accountability enthusiasts from our network for a conversation on Dynamic Accountability in relation to the SDGs. It was a fantastic way to kick-start our conversation on how we can define Dynamic Accountability and how our Members can begin to integrate the concept into their daily and project work.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

*Loosening hold on power is crucial:* Feedback and participatory approaches have been used in practice for a long time but what is necessary in terms of practicing Dynamic Accountability is that we move away from a vertical to a horizontal feedback loop.

This means that instead of pre-defining what kind of information we need from our stakeholders, we need to understand what they need from us, how they want to communicate with us and what questions they need answers to.

We need to let people speak for themselves and ask them how they would expect us to be accountable to them.

[READ THE OUTCOME DOCUMENT](#)

5. Start bringing in young people because they have the power to bring about change in the future.
6. Start being accountable internally first towards staff and bring them on board.
7. Build consortia with co-creation phases to work with and bring in different stakeholder voices.



# ANNUAL WORKSHOP

## BUILDING UPON WHAT WE LEARNT

Throughout 2019 we will address these key takeaways across a variety of formats and learning opportunities with our Members to begin the process of mainstreaming Dynamic Accountability:

1. [100-day challenge Peer Advice Group on Feedback and Complaints Mechanisms](#).
2. Annual General Meeting Workshop in May 2019 and Annual Workshop in October 2019.
3. A new 2019 webinar series addressing all of our accountability commitments with particular focus on advancing Dynamic Accountability.



## LOOKING FORWARD

Using the feedback we received from participants on the Annual Workshop we learnt a great deal about how we can help our Members integrate Dynamic Accountability into their work in the future:

We will be striving to co-create the concept of Dynamic Accountability together with our Members on an ongoing basis as we work on constructing a definition of Dynamic Accountability.

In our future learning activities and events (workshops, peer advice groups, webinars) we will further explore the practical implementation of Dynamic Accountability in different contexts (including issues relating to policies, compliance, monitoring of implementation).

Recognising the importance of widening the range of stakeholders we bring on board, we will implement new strategies for including new voices and expertise, particularly by young people and southern partners.

Lastly, we will survey our Members around these topics at our AGM to get a feeling for what they are struggling with and what would be the most interesting topic to further explore for everyone.

# WEBINAR SERIES

## REDEFINING FAILURES

In 2018 our webinar series focused on CSOs opening up on the F-word - *failures* - and the struggles faced in daily work.

It can be difficult for individuals and organisations to admit to failures. In the past, there has been pressure for CSOs to focus on presenting their successes, which in turn has led to CSOs acting as saviours with an unquestionable mandate. It is high-time that CSOs actively change the culture of their organisations and start admitting to and embracing their moments of failure as opportunities for reflection and change rather than something that disgraces the work they do.

Admitting to failure is the first step towards change, but the hardest part comes afterwards with establishing effective mechanisms to deal with failures. In the Accountable Now webinar series we explored the different mechanisms and tools that organisations can apply to become transparent and accountable to the failures that occur at an individual professional level, and at the more structural, organisational level. This included questions related to [dealing with failures](#), ensuring adherence to codes of conduct, to [establishing effective complaint mechanisms](#) and [working together and openly with donors on these issues](#). This is important in relation to **Dynamic Accountability** because only if we are fully open about our work can we make progress in becoming dynamically accountable.

## LOOKING FORWARD

**Join us for our 2019 webinar series!**

Strong accountability principles and practices are essential for civil society organisations' legitimacy, the quality of our work and to maintain the trust we depend on.

Our accountability commitments are at the core of what we regard as good practice in CSO accountability and form the value basis of Accountable Now. All Members have signed these [12 Accountability Commitments](#) and seek to respect and promote them. Wherever we operate, we want to ensure that the high standards which we demand of others are also respected in our own organisations.

But what does this mean in practice? In our 2019 webinar series we will lead you through the year with good practice examples of how organisations translate these commitments into actions. Get inspired and discuss with your peers your experiences in your own organisations.

Sign up through our website to get a reminder throughout the year for our 12 webinars.

**[REGISTER TO OUR NEW  
WEBINAR SERIES](#)**



# Dynamic Accountability in action

## THE GLOBAL STANDARD FOR CSO ACCOUNTABILITY



Accountable Now, as Secretariat of the [Global Standard](#), has been working closely with [Project Partners](#) to advance the project into a fully-fledged community of civil society networks that promote Dynamic Accountability. 2018 proved to be a year of progress and new experiences where Project Partners closely collaborated to expand the presence of the Global Standard around the world.

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### INTERNATIONAL CIVIC FORUM OCTOBER 2018

Accountable Now participated in the International Civic Forum, an activity of the Securing Civic Rights project, with the objective of promoting CSO accountability as a way to become more resilient to shrinking civic space.

#### DYNAMIC ACCOUNTABILITY WEEK NOVEMBER 2018

As part of the Global Accountability Week, Project Partners carried out a variety of outreach activities to promote a discussion on Dynamic Accountability globally and in their regions.

#### DONOR MEETING NOVEMBER 2018

Accountable Now had an insightful discussion with donors who were practicing elements of Dynamic Accountability in their grant-making already and are seeking to be more involved with their partners' work on the ground.

# THE GLOBAL STANDARD FOR CSO ACCOUNTABILITY

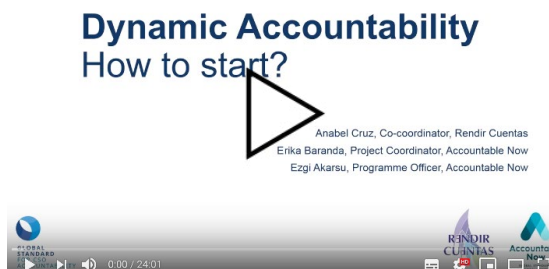
## WEBINARS

Webinars play a crucial role in the dissemination of knowledge and learnings from the Global Standard. During Dynamic Accountability Week, the Global Standard hosted two webinars:



### **Dynamic Accountability: a people-powered approach**

An introduction to the concept of Dynamic Accountability and how it is transforming accountability processes into an ongoing dialogue that drives learning and change and enhances the legitimacy and credibility of CSOs.



### **Dynamic Accountability: how to start** (co-hosted with Rendir Cuentas)

A practical application of Dynamic Accountability, demonstrating how the Global Standard has used alignment and self-assessment tools to become dynamically accountable.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Throughout the first half of 2019, the Global Standard looked to continue building on the objectives and developing the foundations of the initiative further.

During this period there has been a coordinated effort to draft a document on Dynamic Accountability to understand, in a detailed way, what the approach entails. A starter toolkit for organisations that wish to begin engaging with the Global Standard is being developed and a project partner meeting in February 2019 paved the way for Project Partners to define their roles and ambitions for the Global Standard further.

We are looking forward to consolidating and reporting on all efforts of the past months to understand the progress made under the Global Standard.



# RESILIENT ROOTS

Coordinated by CIVICUS and funded by the Ford Foundation with support provided by Keystone Accountability and Accountable Now, the [Resilient Roots](#) initiative tests whether organisations who are more accountable and responsive to their roots - namely, their primary constituents - are more resilient against external threats.

We are working with a number of CSOs around the world to help them design and roll out year-long accountability pilot projects. We are creating mechanisms and tools for ongoing peer-learning between these pilot projects where pilots are exchanging progress and learnings with each other as well as partaking in webinars and peer advice calls based on common needs and challenges.



By collating lessons learned in various blog posts we have been able to gather resources that support other organisations to develop and adopt their own constituent accountability feedback mechanisms, to achieve scale far beyond the original pilot projects of Resilient Roots.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Watch out for more detailed learnings from the Resilient Roots pilots throughout 2019, including updates on their project impacts and how they have approached the feedback loop process from start to finish, in a variety of different contexts all over the world.

We will also update you on what we learn about the link between Primary Constituent accountability and resilience.



[VISIT THE RESILIENT ROOTS BLOG PAGE FOR MORE INSIGHT INTO LEARNINGS MADE SO FAR](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO THE RESILIENT ROOTS NEWSLETTER TO STAY UP-TO-DATE!](#)



# DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

The Development Alternative consortium has been building a model for change in partnership with young people, southern CSOs and development partners with the aim to build a fully tested model that can be replicated at scale and applied to big development challenges, whether tackling maternal and child deaths, responding to the impact of rapid urbanisation across the African continent or ensuring all young women and girls can access an education.

At Accountable Now we are looking forward to bringing our expertise on Dynamic Accountability to the table. With our wide network of ICSOs and involvement in projects with local CSOs we will be providing the project a means to access and work together with organisations from around the world and begin to do development differently.

A new and exciting project, the Development Alternative, has kicked off with a programme that is designing solutions to bridge the imbalance of power between the people, organisations and decision makers involved in development work.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Once the co-creation phase is over in 2019, we will host a webinar for the Accountable Now network to present lessons learned from the unique way of working in the consortium.

We are further using various communications mechanisms and events to disseminate lessons learned. This includes our AGM in May 2019 and our Annual Workshop in October 2019. We will also use the lessons learned in further discussions with donors via a donor round table.

Internally we are discussing key takeaways with the whole team to make sure the learnings from the Development Alternative are streamlined into all aspects of Accountable Now's work.



# Reporting

## DEVELOPING THE NEW FRAMEWORK

### CHANGES AND UPDATES

During 2017 Accountable Now adopted a new reporting framework and 2018 saw the first set of Members use these new questions in their reporting rounds. After having Members provide feedback on their experience, the Independent Review Panel and Secretariat discussed the improvements and changes needed to make the reporting experience as streamlined and responsive to Members' needs as possible.

#### WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

1. Clearer emphasis on safeguarding processes and policies
2. Stronger link to Dynamic Accountability
3. Strengthened involvement of Members' CEOs in the reporting process with a more detailed opening statement
4. Follow-up calls to discuss the Panel's feedback

NEW REPORTING  
FRAMEWORK

NEW REPORTING  
QUESTIONS

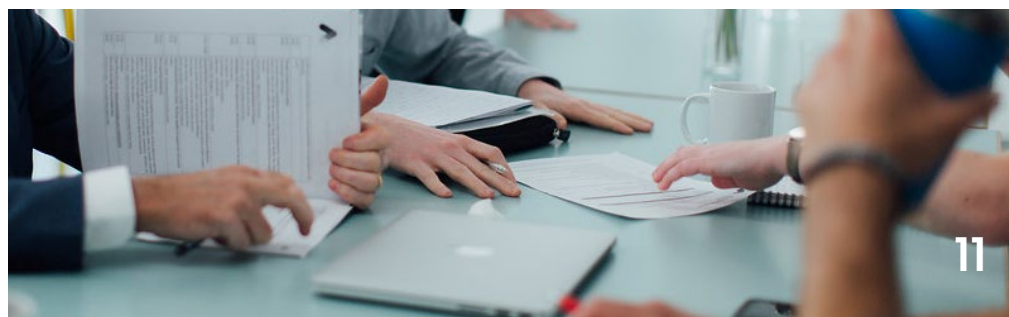
In 2018 Accountable Now began its work with the Independent Review Panel to adapt [our reporting framework](#) in light of changing member needs.

### LOOKING FOR GUIDANCE?

To help Members through our new reporting process we have developed a [guiding document of reporting recommendations](#). With the aim to help our members create consistent and insightful accountability reports, this document provides minimum expectations for each question, examples of good practice from past reports and links to further resources – all to help those reporting under Accountable Now's new framework get a clearer idea of what we are looking for.

### EMBED DYNAMIC ACCOUNTABILITY INTO YOUR REPORTING!

We hope these changes will make our reporting mechanism increasingly useful for our Members. As we continue to strengthen the focus on Dynamic Accountability our new reporting framework should help your organisation focus on process, impact and stakeholder engagement much more than before.



# MEMBER'S REPORTS

Each of our Members have their own accountability reporting page where we make each accountability report available and public. See how many views these pages are getting to see the reach and impact these reports have.

Member	2017	2018
ActionAid International	367	256
ADRA	42	44
Amnesty International	405	423
Article 19	78	63
CARE International Secretariat	241	232
CBM International	67	134
CIVICUS	108	159
Educo	110	106
European Environmental Bureau	47	33
Greenpeace International	456	857
MIO-ECSDE	21	17
Oxfam International	267	451
Plan International	315	360
Restless Development	37	77
Sightsavers International	103	400
SOS Children's Villages International Secretariat	311	310
Taiwan Fund for Children and Families	110	144
TECHO	20	39
Terre des Hommes International Federation	83	105
Transparency International	82	96
World Vision International	395	632
World YWCA	40	44



# Outreach & Collaboration

Throughout 2018, Accountable Now attended a variety of events and meetings: forming new and stronger relationships with CSOs from around the world and increasing the knowledge of Accountable Now by those working across the civil society sector.

## **IATI Member's Meeting 2018** *Copenhagen, Denmark*

The IATI Members Meeting provided a great space to connect and explore possibilities of collaboration with new and familiar CSOs and networks.

## **International Civic Forum 2018** *Copenhagen, Denmark*

The Global Standard joined the third International Civic Forum to reach out and connect. Furthermore, to promote the Global Standard.

## **Global Perspectives 2018** *Berlin, Germany*

With 2018's Global Perspectives reshifting the focus upon young people and the critical role they play across the civil society sector, Accountable Now facilitated a session on Dynamic Accountability and why it is an essential method of engaging youth.

## **Humanitarian Quality Assurance** *Geneva, Switzerland*

We participated in two HQA working group meetings with the purpose to share the work we are doing with our Members on accountability as well as learn about the work and initiatives of other organisations dealing with CSO accountability.



## **Open Government Partnership Summit 2018**

*Tbilisi, Georgia*

We organised and facilitated a session on CSO accountability at the OGP Summit 2018. Bringing together different CSO actors for a conversation on challenges often faced, we used this as an opportunity to showcase the Global Standard as a means to advance accountability practices.

## **Concord Learning & Exchange Forum** *Prague, Czech Republic*

Accountable Now was invited to facilitate a workshop on accountability and participate in a session on the sustainable development sector and the how to kickstart a *cultural shift*.

## **VENRO Transparency Working Group Meeting**, *Berlin, Germany*

During this Working Group meeting, we showcased our work done on the 12 Accountability Commitments and Dynamic Accountability.

# Governance

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES



**Alex Sardar**  
CIVICUS



**Bettie van Straaten**  
Treasurer - Independent



**Betty Su-Chiou Ho**  
Taiwan Fund for  
Children & Families



**Brendan Gormley**  
Chair - Independent



**Caroline Harper**  
Vice Chair - Independent



**Colm Ó Cuanacháin**  
Amnesty International



**Elie Gasagara**  
World Vision Int.



**Janet Naumi Mawiyoo**  
Independent



**José M. Faura**  
Educo



**Perry Maddox**  
Restless Development



**Rosa Inés Ospina**  
Independent

We are especially thankful to our Board of Trustees. Their guidance, advice and commitment to Accountable Now has helped support the Secretariat with the work they do with Members.

Buidling a new strategy for the coming years, taking the Global Standard project to the next level and exploring new avenues for Accountable Now by beginning the process of registering as a charity in Germany: this has all been possible thanks to the time and dedication of the Board.

We would like to extend a special thank you and farewell to Janet Mawiyoo, Caroline Harper, and Perry Maddox who will be leaving the Accountable Now Board in 2019. Thank you for helping us take Accountable Now to the position it is in today.

[FIND THE MEETING MINUTES  
FROM OUR BOARD MEETINGS](#)

# MEMBERS

A special thank you must be extended to our members who are at the core of the work we do at Accountable Now. In 2018 we welcomed two new members: ChildFund Australia and ChildFund New Zealand.



Looking to develop your organisation's accountability practices? Why not contact us to find out the benefits of becoming a member of Accountable Now!

[JOIN ACCOUNTABLE NOW](#)



## INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL



Charlie Martial Ngounou



Danilo Songco



Elodie Le Grand



Jeremy Sandbrook



John Clark



Louise James



Mihir Bhatt



Simon Lawry-White

The Independent Review Panel plays an integral role in Accountable Now by independently and critically assessing our Members' compliance with our 12 Accountability Commitments. Their efforts have been central to the reworking and updating of our reporting questions and framework as well as the reviewing of Member's accountability reports.

## SECRETARIAT



**Bethany Keeley**  
Communications Officer



**Erika Baranda**  
Project Coordinator  
Global Standard



**Elisa Lopez**  
Programme Officer  
Global Standard



**Ezgi Akarsu**  
Programme Manager



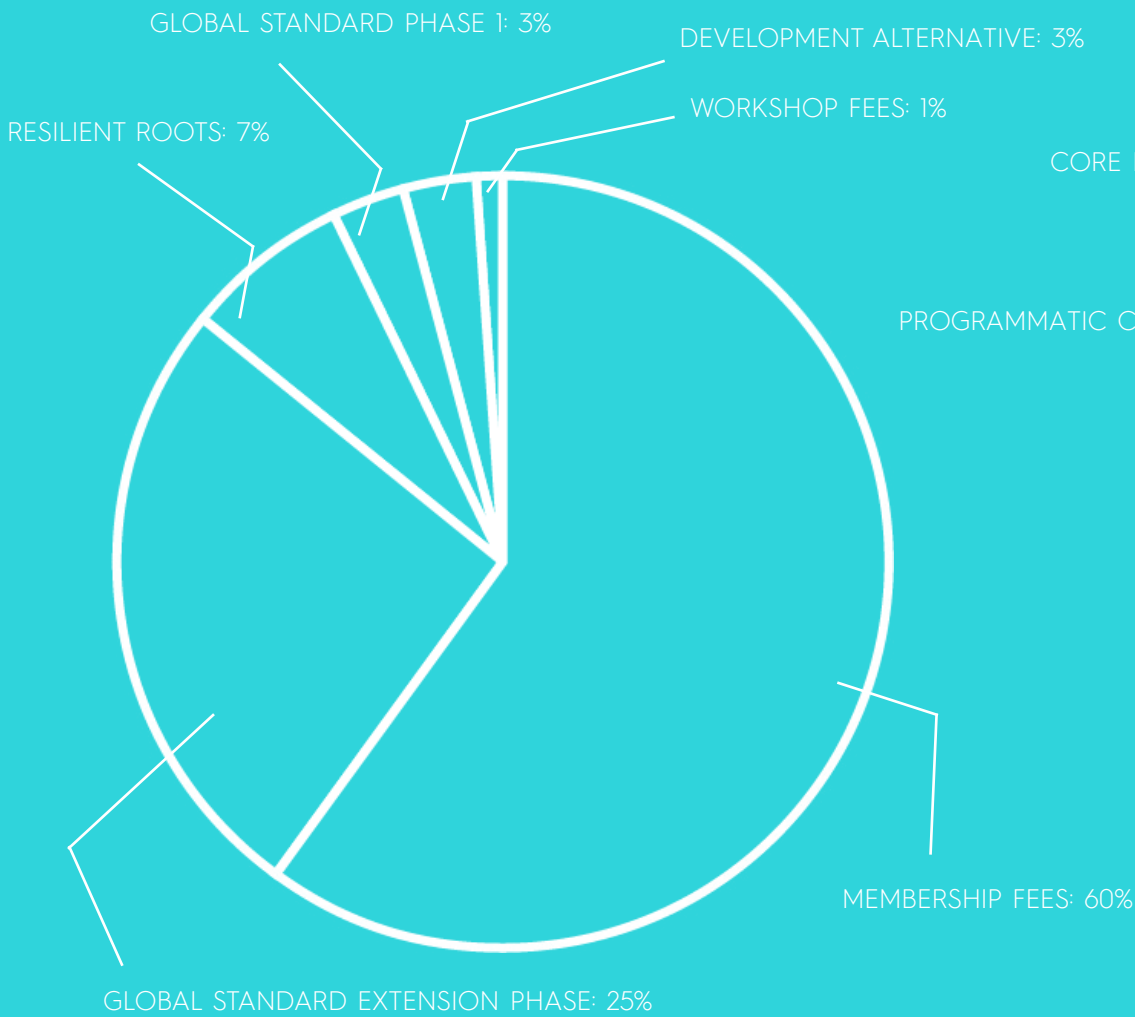
**Isabelle Büchner**  
Programme Officer



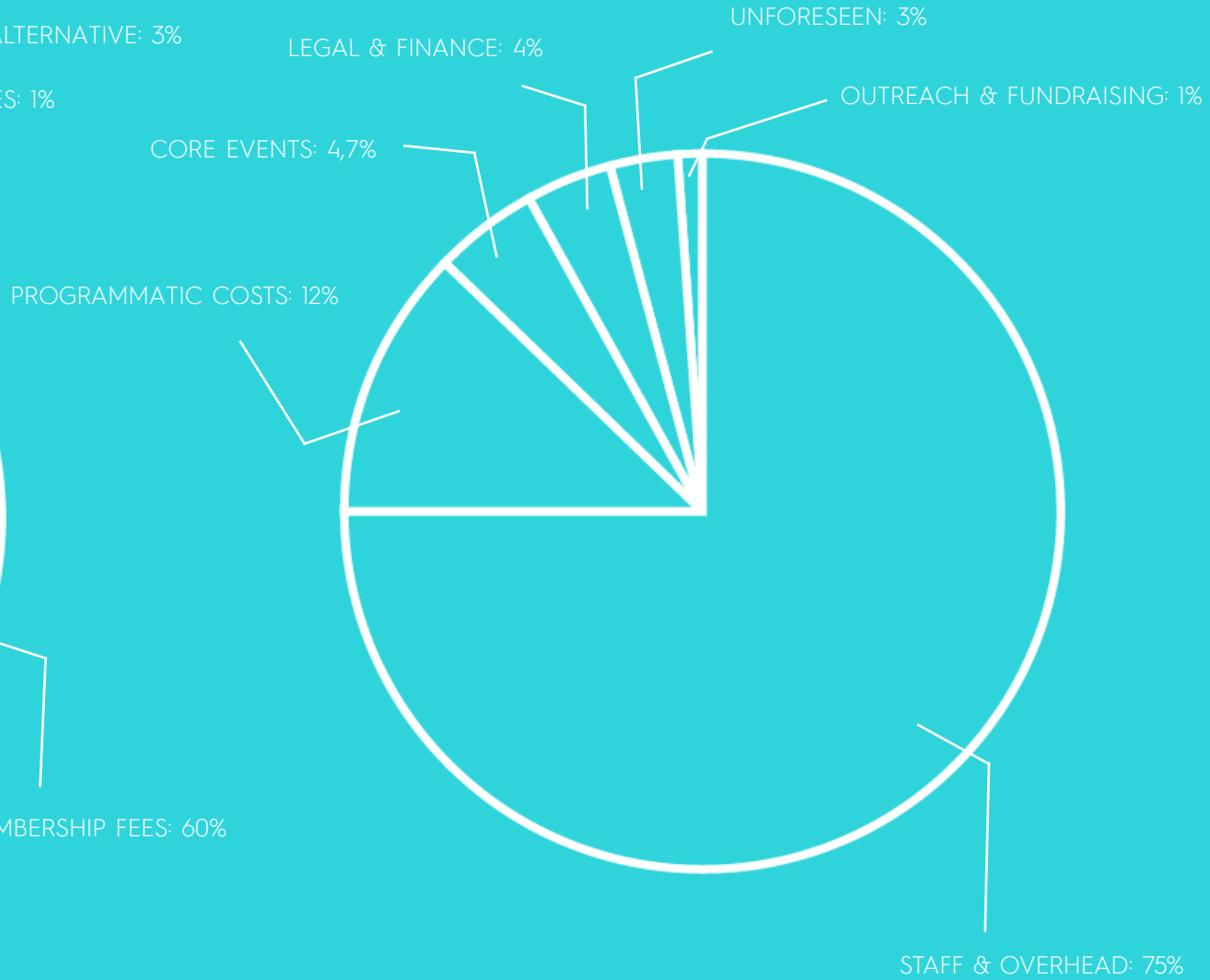
**Rocío Moreno Lopez**  
Executive Director

# FINANCES\*

**INCOME: €425,130**



**EXPENDITURE: €417,476**



**FOR MORE DETAILS ON OUR FINANCES,  
READ OUR AUDIT REPORT**

\*THESE NUMBERS DO NOT REFLECT COSTS THAT RUN INTO 2019 THAT LEFT ACCOUNTABLE NOW WITH A DEFICIT IN 2018 **17**

## COPYRIGHT 2019

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Company Number: 6527022  
Charity Number: 1173827

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