

Virtual meeting held on: 17th, 18th, and 19th  
November

## **Annual Workshop 2020**

Topic: Re-thinking and re-building: exploring opportunities to  
transform the civil society sector

Civil Society Organisations' (CSOs) internal and external contexts are evolving at an unprecedented speed as the crisis provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic has no end in sight. Over the past 7 months, CSOs have had to: swiftly adapt to a fast paced and very uncertain environment; operate with limited funding as the pandemic has attracted a significant portion of resources; deal with persistent closing or shrinking of civic space due to states of emergency; implement more and stronger safeguarding measures not only in communities but also for staff.

Whilst the situation can seem overwhelming, it has also proven that the sector can change dramatically the way it operates as we face chaos, uncertainty, and disruption. But,

- How can we use this opportunity to learn from the adaptation process to a crisis which might seem temporary but in reality might become something permanent?
- How can we strengthen this new way of working and rethink the way CSOs are operating and implement new approaches which are more inclusive and innovative?
- How can organisations use these extraordinary circumstances as an opportunity to challenge enduring assumptions and systemic problems that exist in the sector?

These are some of the questions that we wish to explore at this year's annual workshop as the Covid-19 pandemic pushes us to discuss systemic issues that our sector faces, such as power imbalances, toxic organisational culture, inclusivity, and ultimately, guaranteeing that the people we work for and with are the main drivers of our work.



## Objectives of the workshop

In the Accountable Now Annual Workshop 2020, we want to:

### Better understand current civil society challenges:

- Discuss, share and learn how and in which areas the pandemic has impacted organisations the most and how organisations have adapted.
- Establish a neutral and safe space where donors and grantees become equal actors in the development sphere discussing their challenges and barriers openly.
- Discuss how different kinds of private institutional donors and grantees are currently working together to overcome the current crisis.

### Re-imagine the civil society sector:

- Identify which short-term changes and adaptations could actually be implemented as a *standard way of working*, i.e. less travel.
- Rethink the way CSOs are operating and how systemic problems in the sector might be now tackled.
- Understand the role that accountability can play in solving some of these systemic challenges faced by CSOs.
- Learn how to strengthen the new ways of working that have positively impacted people

## Who is this workshop for?

This workshop is for all kinds of actors working with and for Civil Society Organisations. The individuals we want to bring together should broadly fit into one of these categories:

1. Decision-makers and “innovators” from private funds/foundations or institutional/governmental donor departments
2. People working in International Civil Society Organisations (Accountable Now members and beyond).
3. Staff of national-level CSOs.



If you are interested but unsure whether this workshop is for you, please get in touch via email ([hpavo@accountablenow.org](mailto:hpavo@accountablenow.org)) and we can assess your individual situation.

### **Our approach**

At Accountable Now we recognize that preparation is key to deliver a successful workshop. To enable fruitful discussions during a three-day workshop we will build our agenda on the basis of prep-work.

We will ask each participant to come up with an individual objective that defines the outcomes the participant wants to leave the workshop with. The Accountable Now team will prepare the workshop and its participants by understanding each participant's individual needs via **pre-workshop calls & surveys**. To achieve the individual objectives of each participant we invest time to understand the unique field every actor is working in, with all its opportunities and challenges.