

# TAP Network Webinar Series

## Call Notes

12 May 2020

Next meeting: TBD June 2020

Host: TAP Network

Chairing Call: Mr. Peter Van Sluijs, CSPPS

**SDG Accountability and SDG16+: Civil Society Reflections in a COVID-19 World**

### Executive Summary:

The TAP Network hosted a virtual webinar as a platform to launch the new Strategic Plan document and to provide a forum for the wider TAP community to reflect on the implications the COVID-19 pandemic on their work. The webinar also aimed to collect feedback and strategize an effective response for the network to support member and partner work towards advancing SDG16+ and SDG Accountability during the crisis and beyond.

### Agenda Items

#### **1. Launch of Strategic Plan and Outline of Workplan 2020**

The Secretariat provided participants with an overview of TAP's work for 2020 and beyond, as outlined in the Strategic Plan and Workplan. As a product of an extensive consultation process with TAP's membership, the [Strategic Plan](#) integrates the overwhelming feedback to deepen the network's current work and opportunities for engagement and ownership. The Secretariat outlined the three main strategic priorities: (1) empowering civil society, (2) SDG16+ Localization and capacity-building at the local and national levels, (3) Monitoring accountability for Agenda 2030. Within these workstreams are plans to update the Goal 16 Toolkit, launch the Campaign for a Decade of Accountability the SDGs, and publish a Post-VNR resource guide with the UNDP.

#### **2. Open Discussion & Reflections on the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The Chair opened up the discussion to questions of clarification on the documents shared and reflections on COVID-19 Pandemic. Many participants took the opportunity to share their experience and concerns of the current context and ways TAP could support member's work going forward.

Many participants expressed concern of the potential for the crisis to undermine and even backtrack the progress on SDG16+ and SDG Accountability. Some pointed to the concerning developments in their respective countries including the shrinking of civil society space to mobilize, states using emergency response to suppress opposition or consolidate power, exacerbation of domestic violence, and the economic fallout especially in the global south and among vulnerable groups.

Other reflections took a more optimistic tone in seeing the potential opportunity to frame the crisis in SDG language and in the context of the importance of accountability and resilient societies that underscores Agenda 2030. It was also discussed how civil society's response to the crisis can be taken as a learning opportunity in finding innovative ways to deal with difficulties and restrictions on mobilization. In order to do this, participants expressed the need for continued capacity-building resources (particularly in relation to fundraising support), greater opportunities to showcase work and local initiatives, and platforms for collaboration and ownership.

The idea of developing a COVID-19 task force, as well as piloting monthly blogs and newsletters to showcase work, had widespread support. Others welcomed the forthcoming Goal 16 Toolkit update and Post-VNR resource. The restart of the "Regional focal points" were discussed, but given current circumstances, it was agreed to postpone this effort to a more feasible date.

### **3. Next Steps & Upcoming Engagement Opportunities**

The webinar discussion made clear the need for engagement opportunities and resources for members during the crisis that maximize ownership and individual stories. Some agreed for the need for joint advocacy and messaging as a community in response to the crisis.

The following opportunities were listed and discussed in greater detail:

- TAP Survey - to be launched soon
- Monthly Blogs
  - To showcase partner work during the crisis

- Restart Monthly Webinar Series and Newsletters
  - to maintain communication & collaboration digitally
- “COVID-19 Task Force”
  - Focus on how to engage digitally in social distancing times
  - Focus on advocacy and joint messaging and unpacking all of the issues within TAP’s context
- SDG Accountability Survey
  - As a part of the Campaign for the Decade of Accountability for the SDGs
- Update of the Goal 16 Handbook
  - Members can submit case studies and useful feedback
- Possibly the establishment a Membership Engagement Portal on TAP website
  - Blog guidelines
  - TAP Survey

As a follow up to this webinar, the secretariat will provide a more detailed overview of upcoming engagement opportunities as deliverables come to fruition this summer.