

Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation: executive summary

Jeremy Smith, March 2016

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the review are to:

- Document and review the progression of the TAP Network, and the impact of their work;
- Document and analyze the contribution to advocacy around the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] at the global level;
- Undertake an analysis of the process and method of this project including successes, challenges and recommendations for the future of the project including but not limited to how the network was run, the partnership model with other agencies and the grant process.¹

The review focuses on the last year of the Network's operations, that is, the period since the establishment of a Secretariat in New York. Its timing indicates an intent to use the moment of the adoption of the Agenda 2030 and the transition to a new phase of work focused on implementation, monitoring and review to take stock of the contribution of the Network and assess the way in which it has operated.

Methodology

The evaluation draws on three main sources of data:

- an extensive review of documentation, including minutes of Network conference calls and Steering Committee meetings, newsletters, briefing notes and public position papers;
- an online survey, fully completed by 23 people and partially completed by 4 others;
- interviews with representatives of a total of 19 civil society organizations, UN agencies or states according to the following categories:

Secretariat staff	Steering Committee members	Other Network members	Representatives of CSOs not in the Network	Representatives of UN agencies	Representatives of governments
2	5	5	2	1	4

OUTCOMES

The Network has been engaged on issues of importance and interest to states. From a late start, the Coordinators moved quickly to assert themselves on the political map, maintain a high level of visibility and establish the Network as a serious player.

Respondents tend to view the content of Agenda 2030 through the lens of their appreciation of the process which led to its adoption: those who felt that the process had opened up and drawn in civil society tend to be more satisfied with the outcome. Likewise, impressions of Goal 16 reflect people's assessment of how seriously it was under threat during the latter stages of the negotiations. Ultimately of course, the Agenda is a means not an end and the question of how strong it is can only be resolved through a future assessment

¹ Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, Terms of Reference, p3.

of whether it focuses attention and changes practice on the ground. Its current value is as something to use in advocacy and not something to tie everything to.

That there may now be a transition in states' attitudes from rhetorical commitment to a high-level agreement to the dragging of feet in relation to implementation and accountability does not suggest anything wrong with the strategy employed in 2015. The Network worked closely with supportive states to preserve Goal 16 and help secure a role for civil society in follow-up and review. There was sufficient commonality of interest between the Network and some states to justify the constructive approach taken. The Network fought more of a defensive battle on indicators and follow-up and review, fighting to hold on to a respectable outcome. It found a niche on the issue of indicators in particular and appears to have got more from the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the SDGs than at least some members expected.

NETWORK ADDED VALUE

The key benefits that the Network has brought to members are depth and breadth of content expertise, high-quality political intelligence and the value of bringing together many groups of sometimes quite disparate types. It is an endorsement of the Network and of the Coordinators themselves that several international NGOs felt confident enough to effectively delegate responsibility for Goal 16 advocacy to it / them.

Members based in New York tend to value the information and intelligence function of the Network less than those outside because they can more or less keep up with the key processes themselves. These groups see the greatest value in the shared advocacy that the Network facilitates and the increased clout from all speaking with the same voice. Those without a presence in New York are more dependent on, and so accord higher value to, updates and intelligence.

COORDINATION AND GOVERNANCE

The urgency of joining the negotiation process obliged the Coordinators to 'hit the ground running' and focus on those systems and procedures most essential to the business of delivering advocacy. In this, they succeeded in striking the right balance between efficiency and participation, informality and structure.

Most respondents consider that the Network was able to agree on substantial points of common interest and that the tendency towards lowest common denominator policy lines was more or less avoided. There are some suggestions that papers overseen by the Coordinators tended to grow by addition rather than by synthesis, the inference being that the Coordinators felt unable to choose between different members' input, while those led by members may have been drafted more efficiently, but only by falling short of the ambition to draw on a wide range of members' input.

These and other isolated expressions of concern with the process of agreeing common positions do not suggest significant failings in how the Network has functioned. The overall impression is that the system in place to agree positions worked pretty well. It is inevitable that some members will be dissatisfied with specific aspects of the process with individual papers. Criticisms reflect not only the different aims that each

member has from the Network, but also their cultural understanding of how a Network should operate and the relative importance they accord to efficiency and ownership.

A compromise between providing information and generating ownership, the different tools used to coordinate the Network – conference calls and newsletters – do not please all members equally. Some find them too long and insufficiently strategic in scope. Others find them invaluable.

The role of the Steering Committee appears to have been fairly procedural in scope. It is less clear whether it has fulfilled the role of strategic advice to the Secretariat – on issues such as Finance for Development (FFD), for example – and whether it could do more to catalyse engagement in the Network among other members.

KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

Scope

The question of whether the Network's scope should be Goal 16 or governance effectively resolved itself during 2015 as the intensity of the negotiation phase dictated a focus on Goal 16 and obliged the Network to open itself up to commenting on all aspects of the Goal, including those only tangentially related to transparency, accountability and participation. Among respondents to this evaluation, there is a preference for the Network to focus on governance not Goal 16 – and hence not peace / violence and not only monitoring implementation of the Goal. The crux though is for the Network to find the right means to agree whether its purpose is shaped by a set of issues or by an international political process.

Positioning

The Network engaged constructively and at a fine level of technical detail in the negotiation phase, focusing on boosting champions more than undermining opponents. In this, the Network was reacting to demand from UN agencies and from states to have input from a technically expert civil society body. This was a legitimate role to have played during 2015, but the Network should prepare for the need to call out non-implementers or fudges in the monitoring and review process. What is at stake is not necessarily a dramatic change in positioning, but it is important that the Network is sure that its intended outcomes lead its positioning rather than have a default positioning shape its approach. An aspect to this may be to revisit the dynamic with the FFD or other more 'radical' groups. If these groups were unhelpful outliers during the negotiation phase, it is likely that their more critical voice will be needed during the implementation phase to expose states which are slow to get into gear.

Global – national balance

The Network was right to focus on New York in the period under review. Most national members had neither the knowledge or the interest to engage closely in the minutiae of the process, leaving the Secretariat to substitute for gaps in national-level engagement and accept a limit on the global-national synergies that could be stimulated. This does not appear to have significantly affected results won in 2015. It may, however, have caused a lag in terms of network development at the national level, a gap which needs to be filled if members can hold states to account. As the relative importance of the global and

national (and regional) levels shifts towards the latter, a more concerted effort to foster national-level advocacy becomes essential, as the Network and the Secretariat recognise.

Network structure

The Network has been Secretariat-led, with the balance struck between direct advocacy and enabling advocacy of members favouring the former. This reflects that the epicentre of the process was New York and that there is an unavoidable information asymmetry between those close to the centre and those further away. Judged in terms of getting the Network established and recognised in New York, this strategy worked, but it resulted in quite a sharp divergence between an inner core of members working closely with the Secretariat in drafting and promoting positions and a larger number which are more or less passive consumers of information or which may follow the Network's progress only very lightly.

As the focus of attention shifts from the global to the national level, there is an argument that there will continue to be, even beyond the phase of finalizing indicators and the follow-up and review process, sufficient demand for a small Secretariat following events in New York and feeding national-level members' analyses of implementation into the global review process. It may be though that the need to deepen and broaden engagement of members demands a more substantial change to the Network's model by which it evolves from an essentially 'mono-nodal' entity centred on a Secretariat geared towards a specific process in a specific place to a global network able to monitor and influence across multiple arena.

The impact on the role of the Secretariat and of members from such an evolution would be significant: the function of supporting national-level members in holding governments to account is quite different in scope from that played by the Secretariat to date while the need for intense engagement at the national level demands that members which were followers or observers now become leaders. The first part of this new leading role of members is to engage in the process of defining a new vision of the Network and of the New York function.

As the Network's purpose evolves, so its structure should too. One option being floated is that of a network of regional hubs or focal points. A less radical alternative would be to better exploit key multipliers within the Network – members with their own branches and networks – to act as a channel to national civil society organizations in different settings.

The crux is the process that the Network is able to employ to discuss and agree on these big questions of scope, positioning and structure. There seems to be desire among many members for this sort of discussion and, if the risk that the Network's future strategy is unduly shaped by those most involved to date can be avoided, they are good grounds for confidence that the Network can identify a renewed purpose and ways of working fit for the next stage of securing adherence to agreements on its core goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Network should design a process for agreeing a new strategy that draws on the widest possible input from members, including those which have been relatively passive to date but which are

crucial to the Network's next steps.

- As inputs to this strategy process, the Network should develop
 - a more comprehensive map of (the commitment of) the different networks within the Network and the paths to the national level that members with their own branches / affiliates represent;
 - a clear picture of the intended strategies of other civil society organisations and networks working on similar areas of concern.

- Key elements for consideration in the strategy process are
 - the implications of taking a decisive position on the question of the scope of the Network;
 - how to deepen engagement at the national level and ensure due synergy between the national and the global levels;
 - whether and how to develop 'another string to the Network's bow' – an ability to adopt more 'forceful' positions in response to slow or uncommitted implementation;
 - what form the Network needs to take in line with the shift in focus to the national-level.

- The balance struck between oversight, content / strategy and the catalytic and representational aspects of the Steering Committee should be reviewed in the light of decisions on overall strategy and structure. Likewise, refinements to Network coordination should follow from agreement on the future role of the Secretariat and members. In the interim period before a new strategy is agreed, ways to segment the Network's coordinating outputs (calls, newsletters etc.) for different groups of members should be explored, perhaps including by producing summary and specialist versions of updates and offering slots for more substantive discussion of key issues on network calls.

Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation: final report

Jeremy Smith, March 2016

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The review focuses on the last year of the Network's operations, that is, the period since the establishment of a Secretariat in New York. Its timing indicates an intent to use the moment of the adoption of the Agenda 2030 and the transition to a new phase of work focused on implementation, monitoring and review to take stock of the contribution of the Network and assess the way in which it has operated.³

Methodology

The evaluation draws on three main sources of data:

- an extensive review of documentation, including minutes of Network conference calls and Steering Committee meetings, newsletters, briefing notes and public position papers;
- an online survey, fully completed by 23 people and partially completed by 4 others, according to the following categories⁴:

Type of member ⁵	Steering Committee member		Individual member		Organizational member	
	6		5		20	
Region	Africa	Asia	N America	W Europe		
	4	6	10	7		
Organizational size (# staff)	1 – 5	5 – 14	15 – 40	40+.		
	5	5	4	13		

- interviews with representatives of a total of 19 civil society organizations, UN agencies or states

² *Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, Terms of Reference*, p3.

³ There had been an understanding that the evaluation was a pre-condition for a new round of grants. That two donors approved new grants prior to the completion of the evaluation decouples this link, although accountability to donors – and to members – remains an important driver.

⁴ Someone partially completing the survey may have answered only the first question or all but the last question. For this reason, the number of respondents to individual questions is not always the same.

⁵ Responses to this question are non-exclusive.

according to the following categories⁶:

Secretariat staff	Steering Committee members	Other Network members	Representatives of CSOs not in the Network	Representatives of UN agencies	Representatives of governments
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While the pool of interviewees includes civil society representatives from both within and outside the Network, it has not, understandably enough, drawn on the input of that fraction of the membership which have been relatively passive participants in, or observers of, Network activities. The motives of these members – and, critically, their willingness and capacity to play a more prominent role in the Network as the focus shifts to the national level – has not, therefore been substantially mined as part of this process, a gap which may need filling in later stages of Network strategy review and development.

The evaluation represents an independent assessment of the chain from activities to outputs to outcomes. Through interviews and the survey, the evaluation pursues the following broad lines of inquiry:

- the extent to which the Network's objectives were achieved and, in turn and insofar as it is possible to assess, how far positive results are attributable to the work of the Network;
- the Network's added value to members and to those whom it has been targeting;
- the quality and utility of Network outputs;
- the profile and strength of the Network;
- the ways in which the Network has been coordinated and overseen;
- prospects: whether and how the Network should adapt its strategy and ways of organising itself.

NETWORK STRATEGY

Beneath a broad project goal to “*Ensure transparent and accountable mechanisms for, and citizen participation in, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs*”⁷, the Network has objectives relating to the outcome of the sustainable development policy process and to the manner in which this process was conducted. It works to a basic strategic assumption that “*open, inclusive, accountable and effective governance is both an outcome and an enabler of sustainable and equitable development*”.⁸

During 2015, the Network specifically sought to:

- *Help ensure member-states agreement on robust stand-alone goal on good governance, including transparency, accountability and citizen participation within the Post-2015 SDGs;*
- *Help ensure that robust and appropriate indicators for Goal 16 are developed and agreed upon by Member States;*

⁶ A total of twenty-one people were interviewed since the evaluator was able to benefit from the input of two members of staff as well as the Secretary-General of WFUNA. Eleven interviews were conducted in person during a visit to New York in early February. Short email feedback was provided by an additional state's representative and by a UN agency staff member.

⁷ *Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, Logframe.*

⁸ <http://tapnetwork2030.org/about/tap-mission/>. Hence the goal that “*civil society are recognized and mobilized as indispensable partners in the design, implementation of and accountability for sustainable development policies, at all levels*” is both an end in itself and a means to the end of the policy goal that “*open, inclusive, accountable, effective governance and peaceful societies are at the heart of the UN's 2030 sustainable development agenda*”; *Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, WFUNA Advert.*

- *Inclusion of robust review and monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the SDGs, with a focus on transparency, accountability and citizen participation.*⁹

To these ends, the Network has followed a strategy with three key dimensions: its advocacy has covered the whole of Goal 16, it has been focused in New York and it has involved a constructive positioning towards political targets.

Scope: governance or Goal 16

The Network started out with an ambition of securing a stand-alone goal on governance, but was obliged to 'follow the process': as it became apparent that Goal 16 was going to be broader in scope than governance, so the Network's scope expanded accordingly. This shift is not something that was ever openly debated – one member refers to a Goal 16 focus as “*something that the Network fell into*”¹⁰ under pressure from a number of organizations focused on peace and conflict – but during 2015, it effectively resolved itself as the intensity of the negotiation phase obliged the Network to focus on Goal 16 and to open itself up to commenting on all aspects of the Goal, including those only tangentially related to transparency, accountability and participation.

National and global advocacy

Like any network which has focused on an inter-governmental process, the TAP Network aspires to a situation in which advocacy at the epicentre of a process – in this case New York – is complemented by advocacy done at capital-level.¹¹ The barely positive score in the survey on this point suggests that the Network has not achieved an ideal level of synergy between national and global advocacy:

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to the Network's strategy? ¹²	Mean	Mode
The Network was able to organise capital-level advocacy to effectively complement work done in New York	3.12	3

Albeit with a small sample size, scores from organizations in the global south are higher than those from organizations from global north (3.89 versus 2.71),¹³ perhaps suggesting a greater dependence of national advocacy on an international process among those in the global south and a greater inclination of those from the global north to feel detached from international processes and / or to devolve responsibility to Secretariat lobbyists.

⁹ *Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, Terms of Reference*, p2.

¹⁰ Where not otherwise referenced, quotes are taken from interviews. Respondents are not named, but distinctions are drawn between state officials and representatives of civil society from within and outside the Network where this does not compromise anonymity. Quotes are used for illustrative purposes and are neither more or less 'true' than the text within which they are embedded.

¹¹ An aspiration reflected, for example, in the note that “*the Coordinators have sent out the TAP Network FfD position paper to all UN Missions in New York, and it would be helpful if TAP members could assist on advocacy within capitals*”; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-29-April-2015.pdf>, p3.

¹² Where 'Strongly agree' = 5, 'Agree' = 4, 'Neither agree nor disagree' = 3, 'Disagree' = 2, 'Strongly disagree' = 1. N = 26.

¹³ Where global north = North America + Western Europe and global south = Africa + Asia. Scores from organizations with fewer than 40 staff are higher than those with more than 40 staff, but less sharply so (3.46 versus 2.83).

The work of the TAP Network has been New York-focused, with capital-level advocacy not organised in a systematic way. Although efforts to broaden the Network's membership in part reflected gaps in coverage of key target governments, there was no strong push to assign members particular targets or ensure that certain governments were engaged at certain times. There is an argument that it was not appropriate to try to mobilize capital-level advocacy in the early part of the year as this could have risked asking too much of members distant from a process which had yet to reach the crunch point. A New York focus was also justifiable by the likelihood that for many countries, New York was where decisions were taken, given the level of detail of many of the points that were the subject of the Network's advocacy.

At the same time, the Network would ideally have done more to see its positions taken to different capitals. This is an issue of how the Network functions in the broader sense: the Coordinators themselves do not have the capacity to mobilize activity in all key capitals, but rely on members, especially those with their own networks, to act as conduit from the TAP Network to the national-level. As the representative of one international NGO puts it, *“it is what [we] are meant to be doing anyway. It is for these networks to gather information from the national-level and feed it into global processes... It is not for [the] TAP [Secretariat] to try to solve”*. The suggestion from this and other representatives of international NGOs is, however, that it has either proved difficult to engage their national members / branches or that few attempts have been made to do so. The effect is a degree of uncertainty as to what use was made of position papers at capital-level and whether they did in fact reach national-level decision-makers / decision-approvers.¹⁴

That it may not have been reasonable to expect national members to engage closely in the minutiae of the process legitimises the decision to boost the capacity applied to advocacy towards New York missions, in effect substituting for gaps in national-level engagement and accepting a limit on the national-global synergies that could be stimulated. As the relative importance of the global and national (and regional) levels shifts towards the latter, a more concerted effort to foster national-level advocacy becomes essential, as the Network and its Secretariat recognise.

Positioning: 'insider' technical experts

The Network has operated at a fine level of policy detail, engaging constructively with those involved in crafting and agreeing the SDGs and the apparatus of monitoring and review through outputs that include compendia of suggested language amendments and proposed indicators for each sub-goal. Friendly states and UN agencies have had a status akin to that of an ally.¹⁵

Survey data reflect the strategy that the Network was stronger in constructive New York advocacy and the cultivation of champions than in targeting opponents:

	Mean	Mode
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14 This comments applies to all position papers, but especially those targeted directly at states, including *An Open Letter to UN Delegations and National Statistical Offices: TAP Network Response to UN Technical Report on SDG Indicator Framework*, March 2015; and *Letter to Representatives of Member States to the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa: Ensuring Transparency and Open Data for better Financing for Development Outcomes*, June 2015.

15 The relative ease of securing interviews for this evaluation with UN and state officials is itself a sign of the positive relationship that they have with the TAP Network.

The Network was able to mobilize an important mix of states to support or champion its agenda	3.58	4
The Network was able to minimise the opposition of states hostile to its agenda	3.23	3

There are no examples offered by interviewees of positions that are considered to be too soft. Respondents note that position papers are bound to coalesce around a weaker line than they would take themselves, but see this as a normal consequence of joint working and not a sign that the Network was looking to appease states or other targets. And when the Secretariat sought a tough line to defend key elements of the Agenda 2030 at risk in the final rounds of negotiation, it is said to have been members who proved to be unwilling to take a more oppositional line.

This signal from members strengthens the claim that a constructive positioning was appropriate. At the same time, there is, at least in the abstract, a risk that those inside a process are reinforcing each other's perspective that a certain way of operating is most effective. In interrogating the positioning adopted by an organization or network, the starting point is that no positioning is inherently correct, but should rather be judged in terms of what is likely to work best for any given political process and hence the quality of political analysis behind the positioning adopted; the ability to think of positioning in strategic relationship to that adopted by others; and having the fluidity to toughen (or soften) a position according to a changing analysis of opportunity and threat.

The positioning adopted by the Network was partly a response to demand from UN agencies and from states to have input from a technically expert civil society entity. Precisely because the Network is not seen as radical and is assumed to have content expertise, it has secured access to key fora, as well as specific benefits such as having its papers translated and given the status of official input to the High-level Political Forum (HLPF).¹⁷ Being close to a process is not equivalent to having influence over it, of course. But it is a legitimate role to play if, as in this case, there seem to be reasonable grounds for thinking that policy wins can be won on points of detail. The need to avoid any sense of being co-opted is something that network leadership is sensitive to: the description of one leading member that the Network was “*used, but not abused [by] some member states who saw us as a bridge [to civil society]*” is certainly defensible as a positioning to have adopted.

Ideally though, there would have been other organizations or networks able to play the role of attacking opponents (as needs be) in informal synergy with the TAP Network's focus on fostering champions. There is at least a suggestion of a gap in civil society engagement of some 'difficult' states.

Positioning test case (1): Finance for Development

With the Finance for Development (FFD) strand of the process, an oppositional voice took a position somewhat at odds with that of the TAP Network. FFD and Post-2015 CSOs are said to have been “*working in*

¹⁶ Where 'Strongly agree' = 5, 'Agree' = 4, 'Neither agree nor disagree' = 3, 'Disagree' = 2, 'Strongly disagree' = 1. N = 26.

¹⁷ The position paper *People-Centred Post-2015 Review & Accountability with Transparency and Citizen Participation at its core* was produced in the six UN languages by the Department for Economic and Social Affairs.

different tracks”, with their eyes were on different constituencies.¹⁸ The FFD groups are said to have found the Post-2015 groups to have been “*tame*”, while the latter were “*late and slow to reach out to the FFD groups*”. It may have been that those who had followed FFD for a long time would be more critical of the Addis Ababa outcome than those for whom it was tangential part of the Post-2015 process. It may also have been a threat to FFD CSOs to have everything mixed together under Post-2015 process and to lose their own space, something that Post-2015 groups may not have initially grasped.¹⁹

At the time, the Network sought to hold “*a conversation between the two constituencies to analyze what are each other[’s] priorities and ensure co-habitation*”.²⁰ There is no suggestion, however, that anything much came of this, with one New York-based respondent noting that “*there was no time to sound each other out or find common ground, especially since the FFD groups were adamant that they wanted their own stream*”. That defining synergies with the FFD groups proved beyond the Network’s capacities represents something of a failure to find space for substantive strategic discussion within the Network, albeit one understandable in terms of other priorities and the difficulty of the task at hand.

Positioning test case (2): the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators

In the case of TAP’s interaction with the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), there were concerns from the start that “*the entry point is unclear for civil society*”²¹ and an acknowledged risk to presuming that indicator development could or should be a purely technical exercise.²² Meetings of the IAEG-SDGs in both June and October are reported to have been discouraging. The Network Coordinator has nonetheless taken the position that the Group “*still represents an opportunity for our advocacy work because their working methods remain undefined [and so] it gives us an opportunity to step in and contribute to the discussions*”.²³

It is arguable that the IAEG-SDGs is the primary vehicle for developing indicators and that a network with so much invested in the whole process cannot but engage with it. But some respondents contend that the value of engaging with the IAEG-SDGs is limited all the while it remains so chaotic. Several others admit to following the IAEG-SDG process only lightly and express their relief that the Network is, in effect, covering it for them. For the Network to follow this process is more defensible when the cost-benefit equation is

18 The division is between a tight set of New York-based Post-2015 groups and a disparate array of generally more radical FFD groups; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-5-August-2015.pdf>, p3.

19 Several factors may be at stake here: those who follow a process for a longer period know more about it and have more time to get disappointed, especially when their own input is ignored or denied while, conversely, if civil society are involved in a process, they may be more inclined to accept a compromise.

20 Arelys Bellorini, World Vision, quoted in <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-5-August-2015.pdf>, p3.

21 <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-3-March-2015.pdf>, p1.

22 See, for example the comment that “*some Member States believe they should have political oversight of the indicators but the forum for this oversight has not been decided*”; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-1-April-2015.pdf>, p2; and the report of “*push back from Member States in the 1st Meeting of the IAEG-SDGs that this process was very UN agency heavy*”; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-5-August-2015.pdf>, p6.

23 The June meeting was “*not well organized and there was not full agreement from Members on the way forward. [And] Because the first meeting was not well organized, a lot of delegations from UN Missions attended on behalf of their NSOs, which stalled the work of the group*”; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/TAP-Network-Indicators-Working-Group-ConfCall-9-June-2015.pdf>, p5.

weighed in relation to wider civil society. It is important too that there is a logic articulated to engaging with the IAEG-SDGs – exploiting its lack of organization to shape its direction – and that a position has been cultivated on the Praia Group on Governance Statistics as a means of having other channels to compensate for the weakness of the IAEG-SDGs.

The suggestion with the indicators process is that most of the Network's recommendations were taken up by the IAEG-SDGs. There is no sense then that the point has been reached whereby the Network should call out a failing or failed process. But if this does come with the follow-up and review architecture or with the process of implementation, it is imagined that it would be “*hard to get TAP to do that*”.

To date, it has, for an international NGO respondent, been “*both a strength and weakness that TAP was quite constructive. It made it a good source of information, but with the costs of a lower level of ambition and the civil society element of being aspirational and alternative*”. The question of the balance between realism and ambition is one that needs to be permanently under review. The Network needs to find space for reflection and for a process of re-centring itself around a common understanding of positioning, the mutual dependence of national and global advocacy and the scope of its activities. What is at stake is not necessarily a dramatic change in positioning, but it is important that the Network is sure that its intended outcomes lead its positioning rather than have a default positioning shape its approach. An aspect to this may be to revisit the dynamic with the FFD or other more 'radical' groups. If these groups were unhelpful outliers during the negotiation phase, it is likely that their more critical voice will be needed during the implementation phase to call out states which are slow to get into gear. In turn, the Network should think afresh as to how its own policy positions can be strategically crafted in the light of those taken by others.

OUTPUTS AND ADDED VALUE

Survey data give a positive signal that the Network occupies a distinct space on the civil society landscape:

To what extent do you agree with the following statement relating to the Network's strategy? ²⁴	Mean	Mode
The Network had a clear niche distinct from that of other CSOs or CSO networks	3.92	4

The key benefits that the Network has brought to members are depth and breadth of content expertise, high-quality political intelligence and the value of having brought together many groups of sometimes quite disparate types. The representative of one international NGO talks of his organization having long-standing ties with another international NGO, but without being personally connected with that organization's governance expert. In this way, the Network has helped to improve the quality of the relationships between members, as well as enabling new contacts to be forged. Different member organizations' representatives talk of the value of exposure to the broader pool of expertise that the Network brings. Others highlight the provision of concise analyses of complex processes and insights relating to particular actors such as the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). As one leading member describes it, “*there were processes which we were not able to monitor ourselves. TAP saved us a lot of effort. They played a vital*

²⁴ Where 'Strongly agree' = 5, 'Agree' = 4, 'Neither agree nor disagree' = 3, 'Disagree' = 2, 'Strongly disagree' = 1. N = 26.

facilitative role [and] without dedicated Coordinators, it would have been much more difficult. Given the intensity of the process, it has made a significant difference. On our own, we could only have engaged with a smaller number of processes”.

For non-member allies too, the chief value of the Network was its expertise. For one such respondent, “*as they evolved, they became more technical, more specialist*”, a comment which suggests that over time the Network was able to clarify and deepen its niche.

Members are appreciative of the quality of direct advocacy delivered by the Coordinators and are very aware of the level of visibility which the Coordinators were able to achieve. The best indicator of the Coordinators' abilities is that several members effectively delegated advocacy on Goal 16 to the Network, putting their trust in the Coordinators and the wider Network to secure a decent result all the while they focused their own organization's core energies on other aspects of the Post-2015 Agenda.²⁵ This brings value to members in terms of efficiency as well as effectiveness. For one survey respondent, the existence of the Network “*enabl[ed] us as a collective to work smarter, not harder to get the same result. [It] would have been a lot of replicated effort had the TAP Network not been in existence*”.

Survey data offer a positive, if somewhat muted, impression of **outputs** with scores coalescing around an average response that outputs represent 'a useful resource'. See annex for a list of main outputs.

How useful have you found the following outputs to be?²⁶	Mean (1-3 scale)	Mean (1-5 scale)
Side events at key meetings	2.24	3.48
Indicators position paper	2.22	3.44
Redlines for Post-2015 Outcome Document	2.17	3.34
Analysis of Priority Indicators and Metadata for Goal 16	2.14	3.28
Compendium of suggested language amendments to Post-2015 drafts	2.13	3.26
Review and Accountability position paper	2.05	3.1
Compendium of suggested language amendments to FFD outcome document	2	3
Financing for Development position paper	1.95	2.9

Although side-events draw the highest score from the stand-alone question on utility, when a more generic list of outputs, including side-events and position papers, is compared with other Network products, including internal materials such as newsletters, side-events rank lowest. Although the narrow range of scores cautions against drawing sharp conclusions, the ranking question – by which respondents are forced to choose between outputs – is usually considered to represent the stronger signal. The inference from this pair of questions is that it is the analysis and intelligence generated by the Secretariat and the formulation of common advocacy positions which forms the Network's key value.

²⁵ For one international NGO, work on governance “*had not been elevated to the policy and advocacy sphere, so we did not have organisational policy lines [which made] working with TAP an intentional strategic decision*”.

²⁶ Where 'A critically important advocacy resource' = 3, 'useful resource' = 2, 'Limited utility' = 1. N = 24.

Most useful output

	Rank		Rank
Position papers	1	Compendia of suggested language amendments	4=
Internal briefing papers	2=	Network newsletters	4=
Intelligence sharing on Network conference calls	2=	Side events	6

When comparisons are drawn between different segments of the membership, the impression is that members based in New York tend to value the information and intelligence function of the Network less than those outside, because they can more or less keep up with the key processes themselves. These groups see the greatest value in the shared advocacy that the Network facilitates and the increased clout from all speaking with the same voice. Those without a presence in New York may be more dependent on updates and intelligence and so accord higher value to the flow of information from the Secretariat to the membership than that fed from members to inform advocacy by the Secretariat. This sense of dependence may be more acute in smaller, southern civil society organizations which may not otherwise have a connection into the global process and which may especially value being part of something bigger.²⁷

Interviewees tend to comment on outputs only in general terms. Of the various position papers produced by the Network, all are felt to have been useful, even if none are considered ground-breaking. Side-events are mostly believed to have had an impressive number and range of attendees, although one member argued that events run according to Chatham House Rules can be more fruitful.

There are some expressions of disappointment that the planned 'online platform for Goal 16 Indicator recommendations from TAP organizations' did not materialize. Survey respondents articulate different uses of such a platform, including as an online discussion forum and as the medium for delivering webinars and other learning tools. There is enough in these comments to warrant a response, even if there should be a degree of caution about moving too quickly to a technical solution to 'cultural' issues of participation and ownership. It is unlikely, for example, that an online forum would help the Network to *"to hash out our common interests and to determine our mutual goals"* as one survey respondent imagines, unless this happens as part of a wider process of strategic discussion.

OUTCOMES

Responses to the survey question relating to whether and how far the Network's objectives have been achieved indicate a decent level of confidence in the quality of Goal 16 itself, less so with the indicators and follow-up and review mechanism. This is no doubt partly a reflection of the stage that the process has reached, but also appears to signal some concern that there may be a ceiling on outcomes, a sense that it is easier to agree goals, less to have them taken seriously.

To what extent have the Network's objectives been achieved? ²⁸	Mean	Mode
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²⁷ There is a suggestion that the Network's work on FFD helped southern groups become more aware of how states can be held to account for revenues allocated to particular services and to take a common stand in pushing for greater transparency. How far this value was felt by other southern groups would need further testing, however.

²⁸ Where 'This outcome has now been substantially achieved' = 4, 'This outcome has not yet been achieved but I am confident that

Adoption of a robust, stand-alone goal on good governance, including transparency, accountability and citizen participation	3.37	4
Development and agreement of robust and appropriate indicators for Goal 16	2.63	2
Agreement of a robust review and monitoring mechanism	2.15	2

Respondents from large organizations (40+ staff) are more inclined than those from smaller organizations (<40 staff) to consider the goal on good governance to be robust – all thirteen respondents from larger organizations consider this objective to have been 'substantially achieved', but only 5 out of 14 from smaller organizations, with the latter giving a modal score of 'partial achievement'. One hypothesis would be that staff in larger organizations are more experienced in following inter-governmental processes and so take a more realistic view as to what constitutes a good result.²⁹

Goal 16 and the Agenda 2030

Respondents to the survey take a fairly positive view of the quality of the *process* of agreeing the Agenda 2030 and the ability of civil society to participate. Again, there is greater positivity from respondents from large organizations compared with those from respondents from smaller organizations.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the process of negotiating the post-2015 framework? ³⁰	Mean	Size: < 40 staff	Size: 40+ staff
Civil society was a key partner in the design of the SDGs	3.89	3.71	4.08
The negotiation process was open and inclusive	3.59	3.43	3.77

Various interviewees affirm, for example, that *“the process was open and inclusive relative to other UN processes”*.³¹ At different points in the process, governments such as Mexico expressed themselves to be *“very supportive of the participatory nature of the entirety of the Post-2015 process and pledged to be the first to speak up in negotiations if attempts were made to limit participation of civil society in next couple of months, or beyond”*.³² The willingness of the co-Chairs to have a transparent process is said to have been decisive, as was the commitment of the UN Secretary General.³³

Respondents tend to view the content of Agenda 2030 through the lens of their appreciation of the process which led to its adoption. A New York-based civil society representative argues that *“never before has there been this level of ambition, high-level political commitment and ownership from member states and civil*

it soon will be' = 3, 'This outcome has been - or will soon be - partially achieved' = 2, 'It is unlikely that any significant progress can be made in achieving this outcome' = 1. N = 27.

29 Size of organization and geographic base in the global north or south are rough correlates, although the tendency for groups in the global north to judge Goal 16 more favourably than those from the global south is less sharp than the variance between respondents from larger and smaller groups.

30 Where 'Strongly agree' = 5, 'Agree' = 4, 'Neither agree nor disagree' = 3, 'Disagree' = 2, 'Strongly disagree' = 1. N = 27, of which thirteen were from organizations with more than 40 staff and fourteen from organizations with less than 40 staff.

31 The Network publicly concluded that the overall process was *“truly transparent and participatory negotiation [and] inclusive of all stakeholders, including civil society”*; TAP Network Welcomes the *“2030 Agenda” Outcome Document*, <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Statement-on-2030-Agenda-Outcome.pdf>

32 <http://us10.campaign-archive1.com/?u=b5f41e57774f3a515a23fd276&id=cd8ff0496f>

33 In turn, the co-Chairs are said to have *“highlighted the crucial role civil society played in the post-2015 negotiations”*; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-5-August-2015.pdf>

society". And even a government representative for whom the Agenda 2030 is "*a compromise of many interests, a bare minimum agenda*" nonetheless asserts that "*it has wide ownership of member states and civil society*". The process of negotiating the Agenda served to increase ownership and commitment among both civil society organizations and states, with the hope now being that developing countries which may have felt that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were imposed on them will be more committed to the SDGs.

At the same time, there is acknowledgement that the Agenda is long and somewhat unfocused and a view that "*everyone is happy since it contains everything*".³⁴ The point anyway is to remain unsatisfied all the while the Agenda exists only on paper: the question of how strong the Agenda is can only be resolved through a future assessment of whether it focuses attention and changes practice on the ground. Its current value is as something to refer to in advocacy and not something to tie everything to.

With the text of **Goal 16** agreed prior to the period under review, the Network's contribution to its adoption is a defensive one of helping to forestall attempts to go back to the text of the Goals themselves under a premise that to do so would have been to weaken their language. Within the Network, it is claimed that "*at various points in the year, there were threats to reopen the Open Working Group process and if that had happened, Goal 16 was the most vulnerable*". State representatives agree that there were "*many instances when it could have been traded off*". Here again, impressions of the process affect impressions of the Goal itself. Those who consider the threats to the Goal to have been serious judge, in effect, that it is a success to have Goal 16 at all and view recognition that peace and governance are elements of sustainable development as a significant outcome, one that lays down an important symbolic marker. For this view, "*having Goal 16 is huge – people don't appreciate it as much as they should.*"

There is, however, also a view that dragging of feet in relation to the follow-up and review process casts a shadow on Goal 16 and the Agenda 2030 as a whole. One civil society representative counts himself "*quite disappointed*" that the Agenda 2030 "*contains some good language, but is vague. There are positive noises, but [We] wanted a lot more in terms of concrete commitments to engage CSOs in follow-up and review*". This view finds support in the analysis that it was the issue of how the targets were to be measured that was behind pressure to re-open negotiations on the Goals themselves. At a relatively early stage in the process, there was concern that the G77 group would react against 'technical proofing' of the SDG targets, potentially stirring up resistance to Goal 16 itself.³⁵ And in June, a blockage over the principle of 'reaching those furthest behind first' was couched in terms of "*Member States fear[ing] commitments that are far too aspirational to be achieved, and being held accountable [for them]*".³⁶ That the negotiation process was already exposing the risk of a gap between agreement of the Goal and commitment to implement puts an

34 The official line is that the Outcome Document is "*not perfect [but] it sets forth an ambitious vision for the 2030 Agenda, complemented by commitments for its implementation and set of principles for its follow up and review and accountability – all topped off by the Agenda's 17 goals and 169 targets, representing the global community's collective aspirations*". More specifically, there is "*bold and ambitious*" language on the importance of fostering peaceful, inclusive and just societies, good governance and effective rule of law, the Document is well-grounded in references to human rights and there is a commitment to transparency and participation and accountability; *TAP Network Welcomes the "2030 Agenda" Outcome Document*, <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Statement-on-2030-Agenda-Outcome.pdf>

35 <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-3-March-2015.pdf>, p2.

36 <http://us10.campaign-archive1.com/?u=b5f41e57774f3a515a23fd276&id=cd8ff0496f>

onus on what the Network achieves in the design and, crucially, the application of indicators and systems of monitoring and review.

Indicators

The elaboration and agreement of SDG indicators has exposed unresolved tension between the technical and political aspects to the negotiation process. There is both a desire on the part of states, the UN Statistical Commission and civil society for indicators to be treated as a technical exercise to be delegated to experts and an awareness that political disagreements are maybe simply being deferred not addressed.

The creation of the IAEG-SDGs represents an attempt by the Statistical Commission to solve a political problem with a technical process or to pre-empt political problems by being lock-tight on the technical side. But this seems to be working neither on its own technical terms nor as a strategy to avoid politicisation. Despite the process having been a lot less transparent than that with the Goals themselves,³⁷ itself a sign of lack of clarity and unity of purpose, the Network has continued to engage with it, submitting expert input in each new round of consultations. Members were pessimistic about the likely outcomes. Indicators 16.7 and 16.10 were judged to be especially problematic: one interviewee's concern that *"the apparent ability of CSOs to get more on these indicators is limited"* is echoed in the comment to the survey that *"it is unclear whether there will be progress on [indicator 16.10]"* in particular.³⁸ With the global indicators framework still to be adopted by both the ECOSOC and the General Assembly after consideration by the Statistical Commission there may yet be a risk, highlighted by several respondents, that *"politically sensitive indicators might be dropped off the list"*.

In practice, the Network may have got more from the IAEG-SDGs process than at least some members expected. It found a niche on the issue of indicators – various respondents refer to the Network having *"seized the issue of indicators early"* and being *"ahead of the curve on this"* – and succeeded in making a poor outcome into a less poor one. On the issue of acceptance of third-party data in particular, the insider's view that *"most National Statistical Offices [NSOs] are open to third-party data, but it is not clear how the integration [of official and non-official data] is going to be made"* is suggestive of progress at the technical level.³⁹

There has been enough at stake to warrant the Secretariat and a few expert members engaging in the

37 Network members who have followed the IAEG-SDG process consider it to have been poorly organised, untransparent and rushed with very limited space for civil society to engage. And after the October 2015 IAEG-SDG meeting, the Network is on record as saying that *"There were insufficient opportunities for experts to contribute to the discussions and address the questions raised by IAEG Members on the metadata and methodologies for many Goal 16 indicators [and] We are further concerned by the lack of discussion around survey-based indicators and data during the Bangkok meeting, particularly for Goal 16"*; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Response-to-Second-Meeting-of-IAEG.pdf>

38 Another respondent heavily involved in the process *"underscored that there is still uncertainty as to how stakeholders' inputs from the IAEG-SDGs' open consultations will be utilized"* due to *"there still seem[ing] to be some dissent among member states on some of the proposals"*. By the point of the IAEG-SDGs having finalized its report prior to the Statistical Commission, the Network Coordinator judged that the Network did *"very well"* to have its proposals reflected, but noted a *"glaring omission in regards to our proposed indicator for 16.3"* (the rule of law); John Romano, email to TAP Network, 23 February 2016.

39 Here again, there is acknowledgement that *"there must be some political commitment from states [and] with some states, it may be necessary to work more on the political level"*, with it noted by more than one respondent that NSOs tend to be conservative and defensive. And for one civil society respondent, the effect is that there is *"very little official commitment to using non-official data at this stage. NSOs don't want resources for follow-up and review to go to CSOs"*.

detailed discussions at the IAEG-SDGs and the Praia Group. The process itself and the issues at stake are responsible for the limited scope of the results achieved or still achievable. Since SDG indicators are ultimately a small battle in the 'war' for improved transparency, accountability and participation, the Network should not make the best the enemy of the good during the stage of technical deliberations, but deal pragmatically with any reassertion of the political over the technical in the final stages of agreeing the indicators and focus on the crucial arena of national implementation.

Follow-up and review

Throughout the process of negotiating a follow-up and review mechanism, the Network has been concerned at resistance from members states to being held to account for their actions in delivering the SDGs. In May, there was *“strong hesitancy from the G77 in using accountability in the official language for the review mechanism”*,⁴⁰ in July, civil society was criticised for being insensitive to the already heavy reporting burden on developing states⁴¹ and by November it was anticipated that *“some governments will start calling for a 'less prescriptive' approach on engaging stakeholders in the national and global review process, respecting 'national circumstances and priorities'.”*⁴²

With it remaining to be seen whether a robust review and monitoring mechanism will be agreed, some respondents take a glass-is-half-full attitude that whatever process is finally adopted will be more substantive than that employed with the MDGs, including on the points of principle of the need for transparency and the participation of stakeholders including civil society.⁴³ The representative of one government supports this view by arguing that *“of course civil society will want more in terms of a role in implementation and review, but some member states wanted no role for civil society, so it is still a good result”*. For one New York-based respondent, if it is expected that the review mechanism will be *“too light for our taste, there is wording in the Agenda 2030 that we can use in terms of the role of civil society and the participation of citizens as a key element of accountability”*.

The institutional arrangements for operationalizing these commitments offer grounds for concern, however. The form of the HLPF agreed as a 'placeholder' before the Agenda 2030 was finalized has not ended up matching the function that the Agenda imagines for it. An eight day Forum is too short for considering progress against seventeen Goals, while the relationship between the HLPF and other entities – the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the various thematic Commissions – remains uncertain. All the while the need to retrofit the HLPF to the Agenda 2030 is outstanding, the effect is that *“it's clear that the HLPF has a key*

40 <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-28-May-2015.pdf>

41 <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-2-July-2015.pdf>

42 <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Report-from-MGOS-HLPF-Retreat-Nov-21-22-2015.pdf>

43 A principle affirmed in a recent report by the Secretary General which notes that *“Major groups of civil society and other stakeholders, including business, must participate in all parts of the follow-up and review architecture. The HLPF should champion innovative practices to engage non-state actors. People should know about its work and understand and relate to its conclusions”* [p5]. The Secretary General also *“encourage[s] countries that carry out Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF to invite civil society and the private sector to engage in their preparations including in national and subnational reviews”* [p15]; *Report of the Secretary-General on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level*, 19 January 2016, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/9599SG%20report%20on%20follow%20up%20and%20review%20-%20FINAL%20FOR%20POSTING.pdf>

role, but not clear what precise form that role will take".⁴⁴ A specific dimension to this is how the FFD Forum connects into the HLPF. If, ideally, the FFD Forum and the HLPF would run back to back and operate to the same modality, the desire of some states and some parts of civil society to preserve the integrity of the FFD process may militate against this, although there are said to be some signs that civil society groups focused on FFD are beginning to engage with the HLPF.

There will now be a period of trial-and-error as the HLPF takes shape, with a review after two years offering an opportunity to seek anew a better process if it proves to be ineffective. There are varying levels of confidence among Network members and other civil society commentators in how this will all pan out. Some argue that *"the set-up will be better than that of the MDGs and better than if civil society had not got involved"*. Other, more sceptical civil society advocates fear that the review process could end up as *"lame best practice showcasing"*. At this stage, there is little apparent option but to exploit the rhetorical commitment to civil society having a prominent role and establish an integrated strategy of engagement at the national, regional and global levels to expose uncommitted or ineffective implementation. Crucial to this is being able to organize national civil society organizations to take ownership of the Agenda 2030 and hold their governments to the agreed goals and targets.

Finance for Development

The Network formally tried to remain upbeat about the outcome of the Third Conference on FFD – the Addis Ababa Agenda for Action – arguing that the Agenda is *"fairly good in terms of achieving our goals and objectives"*⁴⁵ relating to transparency and open data and *"provides an entry point for greater change that must be seized"*.⁴⁶ But even those within the Network who have tried to play up the FFD process acknowledge that *"a lot more work needs to be done"*. Others are blunter that *"no one left Addis feeling that it was an important document that would fundamentally shape things"*.⁴⁷

The Addis Ababa Agenda itself reflects something of a schism between developed and developing states on the issue of whether FFD is a stand-alone mechanism or a subordinate part of the Agenda 2030 Means of Implementation. There is at least a suggestion that the Network mirrors the division between states on this issue and / or that its members were less comfortable formulating positions on it. It is said to have *"taken longer to strike the right balance in terms of the Network's response to the outcome"* of the Addis Ababa conference and there were *"some comments on the draft [Network statement] which indicated some disagreement on how good an outcome it was"*.

44 Different options include the HLPF looking at only a cluster of goals each year or acting as a 'review of review mechanisms', synthesising and drawing overarching conclusions from those of the FFD Forum, the Statistical Commission and other entities.

45 <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-5-August-2015.pdf>. In public comment, the TAP Network argued – *"provides recognition of the importance of the TAP agenda [but] does not provide concrete, action-oriented and measurable commitments, significant and new financial resources to achieve sustainable development; the means to deliver systemic reform, at all levels; an institutional framework for more effective, transparent, accountable and participatory development finance; [and] explicit and concrete commitments to implement open data and transparency initiatives"*; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Response-to-FfD3-Outcome-Document.pdf>

46 <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Response-to-FfD3-Outcome-Document.pdf>

47 An evaluation of the Beyond 2015 campaign refers to *"meager results regarding the relationship between Means of Implementation for the SDGs and the Financing for Development track"*; *Final Evaluation of the Beyond 2015 Campaign*, p9.

There is an argument that too much of the Network's energies were consumed with the question of what position to take on FFD and that *“TAP should have stuck with areas of agreement. There are strong CSOs working on FFD, so it would have been better to leave it as a separate stream”* – something to be aware of, but not engage too much with. In this, differences of opinion within the Network may reflect a range of levels of knowledge of the process as much as a range of positions towards it. The effect was that some TAP members took FFD seriously and followed it closely while most let it go. Even if there is no blame ascribed to the Secretariat, some now argue that in engaging less intensively with the FFD process than with others seemingly more directly related to the post-2015 framework, the Network, like large parts of concerned civil society, failed to integrate FFD properly into its advocacy plans. For this view, many organizations which did not realise the importance of FFD until late in the stage had the difficult task of trying to work out how to engage with what had effectively already been agreed in Addis Ababa.

The crux may be the quality of the discussion that the Network was able to have on the strategic question of whether and how to work on FFD. One insider admits now that *“maybe the Steering Committee should have confronted this question earlier.”* To date, the Network's advocacy on FFD may not have been as coherent and sustained as on other dimensions to the issues at stake in 2015, but it was able to formulate a public document and position itself towards the Addis Ababa process. It may now need to tighten its positions on FFD in relation to the institutional mechanics of the HLPF and the importance it collectively attributes to this issue within its broader agenda.

Analysis: credibility and contribution to outcomes

The survey suggests pretty good progress in terms of getting the Network acknowledged as a credible player, with a positive aggregate score, albeit one which again disguises something of a disparity between small and large organizations.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the process of negotiating the post-2015 framework?⁴⁸	Mean	Size: < 40 staff	Size: 40+ staff
The TAP Network has established itself as a leading player on issues relating to Goal 16	3.85	3.64	4.08

There is also a high degree of self-confidence in the claim that *“Our work on follow-up and review and accountability has made us a leading coalition of CSOs working on these issues, heading into the follow-up and review HLPF negotiations next year”⁴⁹* and the assertion to have become *“one of the leading coalitions working around the UN sustainable development processes – and the go-to group of CSOs working around Goal 16 issues”⁵⁰*.

Fundamentally, this self-confidence is warranted. The Network is engaged on issues of importance and interest to states. From a late start, the Coordinators moved quickly to assert themselves on the political stage, maintained a high level of visibility and established the Network as a serious player. States' and UN

48 Where 'Strongly agree' = 5, 'Agree' = 4, 'Neither agree nor disagree' = 3, 'Disagree' = 2, 'Strongly disagree' = 1. N = 27, of which thirteen were from organisations with more than 40 staff and fourteen from organizations with less than 40 staff.

49 <http://us10.campaign-archive2.com/?u=b5f41e57774f3a515a23fd276&id=0844708325>

50 *Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, Terms of Reference, p2.*

officials consider that the Coordinators are good networkers who 'know their way around' the UN and that the Network formulated credible positions and communicated them in the right way.⁵¹ In the Network's own analysis, it is claimed that *"A lot of the delegations that attend[ed] our event – the interactive dialogue on review and monitoring of the Post-2015 Agenda held in May – used some of the language that was put forward, particularly around transparency and participation"*.⁵²

Establishing a profile and providing the right sort of input converted into invitations to join events run by UN agencies or states – and also improved the 'quality' of attendance at the Network's own events. The Network Coordinator was one of three civil society representatives selected by the HLPF Working Group to participate in the ECOSOC President's Retreat on the HLPF in late November.⁵³ Recognition by the Praia Group also points to the Network having established itself as an authoritative entity, with the suggestion that the Group needed *"a single [civil society] focal point rather than several"* and that *"the Network's prime value is as a representative of many groups"*. The Network's own documentation also reports that the government of France *"welcomed the efforts of TAP to produce a common output on behalf of all endorsing organizations"*.⁵⁴ Other states' representatives have the impression of a large and diverse network and value the Network for representing global civil society and for exposing them to a broader set of perspectives than those they garner from civil society in their own region.

Different state officials refer to the Network as an ally or partner, which chimes with the strategy to engage constructively and to boost the positions of champions. To these governments, the TAP Network has been a consistent, reliable presence, sharing insights throughout the process, providing concrete suggestions which were for one diplomat, *"exactly what was asked for, what was needed to push for changes to the text."* In turn, state allies provided advice as to which other states / groups should be the focus of lobbying.

Whether this strategy was the right one is a matter of whether the Network got enough out of it in terms of the final agreements, measured against a realistic view of how much was achievable. There is a consensus that some text changes were won and some issues elevated to a higher level of attention, with the TAP's early engagement on indicators and its articulation of the importance of third-party data offered as two examples. It is also claimed by one international NGO's representative that *"anything positive on the role of civil society in follow-up and review reflects the good work of TAP – their bilateral advocacy with missions and other key stakeholders and widely distributed papers"*.⁵⁵ This evaluation has not conducted the sort of forensic process tracking that would be needed to confidently verify such claims, but the impressions of interviewees are circumstantial evidence that the Network's points on these issues had a positive reception.

The claim that *"we got what we wanted by being constructive"* raises the question whether access is being

51 One specific criticism of the way that the Coordinators conducted advocacy came from a Network member: *"referring to Goal 16 as being 'under threat' actually increased the threat. It would have been best not to even publicly consider the possibility that it was anything but agreed"*.

52 <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-28-May-2015.pdf>

53 <http://us10.campaign-archive1.com/?u=b5f41e57774f3a515a23fd276&id=239b545071>

54 <http://us10.campaign-archive1.com/?u=b5f41e57774f3a515a23fd276&id=cd8ff0496f>

55 More amorphously, the Network is felt to have been able to *"detox the discussions, help to visualise Goal 16, clarify non-negotiable elements and provide specific language"*.

equated with influence. There is at least a hypothetical risk that governments have sought out the type of civil society organization which they prefer to work with – a quiet 'insider' which can take the role of a single key interlocutor that allows them to 'tick the consultation box'. There may be something to this – certainly UNDESA is keen to engage with a designated interlocutor in the interests of efficiency and would prefer civil society to engage via the NGO Major Group rather than as an 'other stakeholder'.⁵⁶ But there does seem to be sufficient commonality of interest between the Network and some states to justify the approach taken, given too the nature of the SDG process: as one international NGO member puts it, “*to play an antagonising role as a coalition would have hurt the broader goal of opening up the UN space for civil society. The role of a 'critical friend' was appropriate*”. Further ahead though, the Network will need to scrutinize its positioning and consider whether and when it may need a tougher line to call out states not improving their practice.⁵⁷

NETWORK DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Prior to 2015, the Network had existed as an informal grouping through which organizations interested in issues of transparency, accountability and participation shared intelligence, exchanged ideas and formulated common positions.⁵⁸ This represented a solid foundation of organic demand that the Network could build upon. It also meant that, as the Network came to change its scope and structure in 2015, there was already a core group of organizations which had got through the initial stage of relationship development, sounding each other out and gauging areas of safe common ground and of likely tension.

Formalization of the Network and the addition of a central Secretariat was the next stage in the Network's development, one warranted by the intensity of opportunity that the conclusion of the SDG policy process in 2015 represented. In effect, a new type of network was needed at this “*critical point in the goal development process*”, one which hinged on “*A small, time-bound secretariat, bringing together the voices in this area to speak as one*”.⁵⁹

Network growth

The Network's own data shows an increase from 41 to 167 organizational members and from 79 to 243

⁵⁶ UNDESA is judged by one Network member to have had an “*odd dual role of interlocutor and facilitator*”. Civil society respondents are not sympathetic to UNDESA's view that input should be channelled through the Major Group. The suggestion is that the tide is anyway turning against a rigid Group-based approach to consultation. UNDESA itself is said to have changed a lot over the year in how it treated civil society organizations not on the Major Groups, while the UN Secretary General's recent report signalled that “*various reports reports by non-governmental actors and partnerships could be considered by the HLPF during a dedicated multi-stakeholder session. Opportunities could also be created on the margin of the HLPF for further reporting. This would be in addition to the position papers that major groups and other stakeholder constituencies submit to the HLPF annually*”; *Report of the Secretary-General on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level*, 19 January 2016, p24; <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/9599SG%20report%20on%20follow%20up%20and%20review%20-%20FINAL%20FOR%20POSTING.pdf>

⁵⁷ There is a legitimate point in the comment from one official that “*for many years civil society has fought for space and now got it. The onus is on civil society to contribute substantially*”. There is also a risk that civil society are somehow 'bought off' and withhold criticism because of having been involved in the negotiation of Agenda 2030. Either way, there is ultimately a limit to how far civil society groups can engage constructively in a process if to do so does not help their objectives and even if they have invested energy in securing the right to be heard in the first place.

⁵⁸ A mailing list set up in April 2014 had accumulated 65 subscribers by August of that year.

⁵⁹ *Project Proposal - Ensuring Transparent, Participatory and Accountable Governance in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda*, p8.

individual members during 2015.⁶⁰ In the absence of a thorough stakeholder mapping to identify gaps in the spread and profile of members, this growth was not the result of a conscious strategy of outreach. The Network grew as a consequence of being active: by putting itself about, organizations came to it, sought information and signed up. Nonetheless, Network insiders judge that the spread of members – north and south, large and small, those with different thematic / sectoral specialisms – is strong. As one puts it, “*there is a good mix of specialist and generalist organizations [and] each specific issue in Goal 16 is covered*”. Simple growth in numbers also positively impacts the Network's claim to legitimacy.

The role of the Secretariat

The Secretariat – a staff of two, hosted by the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) – is intended to provide “*A strong coordination mechanism for TAP members and a coherent framework for implementing governance-related initiatives in the post-2015 context*”.⁶¹ The two Coordinators represent the Network and speak for it in direct engagement of state and UN officials, “*operating at the global level of the 2030 Agenda discussions [and] engaging some of the foremost expert organizations on the issues around Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals*”.⁶² They also have the responsibility to “*Enhance the participation of all stakeholders within TAP in the discussions and processes regarding the review, monitoring and accountability for SDGs and on Indicators for the SDGs and Goal 16*”⁶³ through sharing intelligence and facilitating access to diplomats.

In these two roles of direct advocacy and facilitation of the advocacy of Network members – of doing and enabling – the Secretariat has tended to favour direct involvement in advocacy, even if this meant that, in the short term, functions relating to membership support were downgraded.⁶⁴ That the Secretariat has, as a consequence, run ahead of a segment of the Network in terms of understanding of, and engagement in, the SDG negotiation process reflects, in part, an asymmetry in information and understanding between those in New York and those outside: “*the opportunities for influence are dictated by the process and so you have to understand the process and for that you need to be present and well-connected*”. It is arguably not possible to gather the intelligence needed to inform the involvement of members from being a passive observer of a political process, but only from being a player, gauging other actors' positions from their reaction to being lobbied.

Judged in terms of getting the Network established and recognised in New York, this strategy worked. Allies report being unaware of the Network until the Secretariat was put in place: “*having a Secretariat made a huge change. In a very short time, it made TAP visible and got it connected*”. But the flip side to this is a degree of concern that “*TAP was equated with John [Romano] rather than [seen] as a Network*”. As an

60 <http://us10.campaign-archive2.com/?u=b5f41e57774f3a515a23fd276&id=0844708325>

61 *Project Proposal - Ensuring Transparent, Participatory and Accountable Governance in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda*, p5.

62 *Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, Terms of Reference*, p2.

63 *Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, Logframe*.

64 Specifically, output 4.3 relating to “*strengthen[ing] the work of stakeholders at the local, national, regional and global levels on TAP-related work*”, something intended to involve a platform for sharing best practices on local and national governance issues and capacity-building tools and resources for stakeholders at the regional and national level; *Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network Evaluation, Logframe*.

extension to this, there was some comment that too much energy was invested in generating the Network's own branding.

Respondents from outside civil society tend not to see beyond their direct interlocutor, with one judging that the Network is *"quite associated with John Romano who is very prominent and is the face of the Network"*. The representative of one state talked unprompted of the Network's association with, even dependence on, its Coordinator(s), asserting that a change in Secretariat staff *"would be the end of my connection with the Network"*.⁶⁵

The role of members

The Secretariat worked to an assumption that members would make one or two people responsible for their organization's involvement in the Network, with *"the senior coordinator work[ing] with each member to secure voluntary, yet formal commitments to the coalition's work, and will hold individual coalition members accountable to those commitments"*.⁶⁶ There was also consideration of a two-tier structure that distinguished between Partners and Members, the former representing that category with most stake in the Network and the latter at a level of looser, more conditional engagement.⁶⁷ In practice, this idea was dropped and there are no formal distinctions between members, nor was any substantial formal or informal mapping of commitments to the Network undertaken even if a survey was run at the outset to identify the issues that members wanted to work on. Instead the Network has evolved into a situation by which some contribute heavily to the development and promotion of position papers and are active participants in the sharing of intelligence and others are more or less passive consumers of information or may follow the Network's progress only very lightly. The contribution of the latter segment of the membership is to add to the count, the numbers that can be referred to in support of the Network's positions, sometimes as signatories to documents, but more often simply as a constituent of the total number of members used as a signal of the Network's breadth and, implicitly, its clout.

An inner circle?

The survey indicates moderate support for the notion that the Network has an 'inner circle' of members. At least in part a reflection of a divergence of opinion between those operating out of smaller organizations and those working for larger organizations, there is a range of views on this question, from the refuting of the idea of an inner circle to the belief from one New York-based member that *"of all the coalitions working on Post-2015 Agenda, TAP was the most dominated by an inner circle of northern groups"*. But there is general acceptance that by dint of proximity to the process and their own size and capacity, some organizations have found it easier to engage more intensively in Network discussions.⁶⁸

65 A comment tempered by acknowledgement that the Network would remain a point of reference and relations could be revived.

66 *Project Proposal - Ensuring Transparent, Participatory and Accountable Governance in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda*, p8.

67 The proposal was that *"The operational activities of the TAP Network will feature a two-tier structure in which members of the current informal TAP Network will have the choice to sign on as official Partner Organizations or remain unofficial and informal members of the TAP group"*. Partner Organizations would be able to input to joint advocacy products, elect a Steering Committee and have their names / logos deployed on TAP materials. Members would receive information and could join the process of crafting and promoting common positions, but without having voting rights; *TAP Network Structure Draft 2/27/15*, p3-4.

68 As suggested by the comment that *"there is not an inner circle if that suggests that it is closed... it is just the nature of*

Please indicate how far you agree with the following statements relating to Network coordination and governance ⁶⁹	Mean	40 + staff (n = 13)	< 40 staff (n = 12)
An 'inner circle' of members has driven the Network's agenda	3.52	3.08	4

There are two dimensions to this: firstly, a degree of discomfort arising from the idea that a small clique consciously or unconsciously leads the Network. On this point, both the Coordinators and the Steering Committee point to ways in which they have tried to minimize the controlling influence of any inner circle – through how papers are drafted and conference calls organised and by Steering Committee members “*not being overawed by the large international NGOs*”.

The second aspect to this is the implicit under-utilization of the expertise and energy of those outside the inner circle.⁷⁰ It is acknowledged that most members are probably quite passive and cannot give much time to the Network. This is true of national-level members distant from New York, but also of international NGO representatives for whom the SDGs are only one part of their 'advocacy portfolio'. But the effect may be to have caused a lag in terms of network development at the national-level, a gap which needs to be filled if members can operate at this level to hold states to account;

Analysis

If on paper, the Network has a good mix and quantity of members, the challenge is to maximise the Network's collective potential. To this point, it seems right to have focused on action, given the timing of the Secretariat's establishment and the limited slack available to it to foster and prepare the membership for greater involvement in advocacy around the Agenda 2030 negotiations. There is no question of the Coordinators disregarding the Network – they were aware of, and sought to minimize, the information imbalance between those in New York and those outside by providing updates and analysis to, and soliciting input from, members. But there has been a trade-off by which the Secretariat has played a leading role at a cost to broad membership engagement and ownership.⁷¹ One New York-based member contends that “*before the Secretariat was established, the Network was looser, but perhaps also had greater ownership since members had to take on more responsibility themselves*”. And at one point, a Steering Committee member queried the low participation of members on conference calls⁷² and sought a discussion on the strategic direction of the Network.⁷³

networks”, it is possible that those who say there is no inner circle are actually responding to a different question of whether the existence of an inner circle has had a significant negative impact on the Network's strategy.

69 Where 'Strongly agree' = 5, 'Agree' = 4, 'Neither agree nor disagree' = 3, 'Disagree' = 2, 'Strongly disagree' = 1. N = 25, of which thirteen were from organizations with more than 40 staff and twelve from organizations with less than 40 staff.

70 A December 2015 effort to map expertise within the Network is acknowledged to have been “*a very long overdue attempt for us to map out and gather data / information on each of your individual organizations' work and expertise around Goal 16 issues*”; <http://us10.campaign-archive2.com/?u=b5f41e57774f3a515a23fd276&id=3f1170c4b5>

71 The Beyond 2015 coalition invested a lot more time in consulting and fostering the commitment and ownership of its members – but also had a lot more time to be able to do so.

72 There appears to have been a downward trend in participation on the calls: from eighteen, including the two Network Coordinators, on 3 March, to fourteen on 1 and 29 April, eleven on 28 May, ten on 2 July, fifteen on 5 August, nine on 9 October and ten on 10 December.

73 This suggestion drew the response at the time that that “*the Network has had good participation from members but it is the case of how to best streamline mechanism of engagement with members*”; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-28-May-2015.pdf>

Various members now articulate a desire that “TAP could maybe do more to engage those more distant from New York in order to generate suggestions and improve strategy”. This also comes through in comments that the Network needs to do more to allow members to participate in – and represent the Network at – international meetings. That ownership of the Network's agenda has stayed with those 'inside the bubble' may not have been a problem during 2015. But, just as there needs to be a drive to get the SDGs onto the agenda of broader civil society, as well as states and branches of the UN, so too may the Network need to evolve from a Secretariat with a core of engaged members into a more vibrant entity with heightened activity in different national and regional, as well as global, arena. From allowing members to opt in while pressing on with direct advocacy, the Secretariat's focus should now be on proactively cultivating their engagement in monitoring and advocating around national-level implementation and review.

NETWORK COORDINATION AND GOVERNANCE

Coordination

Survey data relating to coordination paint a picture of a Network that is well-run. Respondents from large organizations tend to be more positive about coordination than those from smaller organizations. There is at least a hint that respondents from smaller organizations feel a little marginalised from Network processes. On consultation of members at the outset and on involvement in position paper development, their scores are only moderately positive and sharply lower than those of respondents from larger organizations. As noted, they are also more inclined to judge the Network to be driven by an 'inner circle'.

Please indicate how far you agree with the following statements relating to Network coordination and governance⁷⁴	Mean	40 + staff	< 40 staff
There is an efficient process for signing up to position papers	4.12	4.38	3.83
The Network practices what it preaches in terms of transparency, accountability and participation	3.92	4.23	3.58
There has been sufficient opportunity to be involved in the process of developing common policy positions	3.92	4.42	3.42
There was sufficient consultation of Network members in the selection of issues to focus on during 2015	3.88	4.38	3.33
Decision-making within the Network strikes the right balance between efficiency and ownership	3.8	4.08	3.5
Network strategies are based on a good understanding of the expertise	3.68	3.85	3.5

⁷⁴ Where 'Strongly agree' = 5, 'Agree' = 4, 'Neither agree nor disagree' = 3, 'Disagree' = 2, 'Strongly disagree' = 1. N = 25, of which thirteen were from organizations with more than 40 staff and twelve from organizations with less than 40 staff.

The Secretariat's approach to coordination has been to try to maintain informality while adding more in the way of structure. The urgency of joining the negotiation process obliged the Coordinators to 'hit the ground running' and focus on those systems and procedures most essential to the business of delivering advocacy.⁷⁵

A process for **developing and agreeing joint positions** emphasizes the need for “*a light touch approach to drafting TAP common positions [and] stress[ing] that the content of these position papers must come from a wide range of TAP Network members, as it is an opportunity to reflect as much expertise on these topics as possible*”.⁷⁶ There is no substantial dissension from the view that “*the feedback loops and timelines in developing a paper are fine*”. Steering Committee members concur that “*collectively, we have a common understanding of the right process and were able to solve things amicably... It never got ugly, we were able to strike the right balance*” between different opinions.

The process of securing signatories to position papers has been intensive, especially when a fast turnaround was demanded. Members have sympathy with the task falling to the Coordinators, noting that large international NGOs can tend to move only slowly in signalling their ability to support a position. One respondent concludes that “*given the effort involved, [TAP Network position] papers get an impressive set of signatories*”. The Coordinators themselves judge that only in the case of the response to the FFD conference outcome was the number of signatories low, something felt to reflect both the limited time allowed for agreeing to the statement and the relatively low priority accorded to FFD by some members.

Most members are pleased with the Network's ability to “*agree on quite substantial things*” and praise the Coordinators for “*creating something coherent out of disparate comments*”. There are some comments that some papers were too long and slightly unfocused, but not to an extent considered unusual for a network.

There is an interesting contrast of views on the extent to which members felt that their input was taken into account. One sees a positive in a comparison with other networks less likely to take on board what a coalition member proposes, noting that “*with TAP, you can be confident what you propose gets in*”. Another argues that “*papers grew by addition not synthesis, especially when the Secretariat led the process*”, the inference being that the Coordinators felt unable to choose between different members' input. The same respondent feels that in cases when members led the development of a paper, as with that on the Review and Accountability process, the result was a shorter, tighter document. Another respondent notes, however,

⁷⁵ The project proposal – *Ensuring Transparent, Participatory and Accountable Governance in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda*, p5 – did include criteria for transparent and accountable ways of working as a coalition and a Code of Conduct was prepared for the use of the TAP Network mailing list (to remind participants not to reply to all, to keep to Network issues, respect confidentiality etc.).

⁷⁶ The process for developing a position paper was agreed as (i) organizing a drafting committee for each TAP position paper; (ii) drafting committee puts together first draft of position paper; (iii) circulating draft position paper to wider TAP Network for comments and inputs; (iv) finalizing draft position paper for endorsement from TAP Network members; (v) sending out for advocacy and outreach; <http://tapnetwork2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/TAP-Network-Conference-Call-Minutes-3-March-2015.pdf>.

that the Review and Accountability position paper was the product of *“a good collaboration among a small group, but pressure of time meant that the wider Network was not consulted”*.

These comments point to the delicate balance that the Secretariat – and the Network as a whole – needs to strike. Papers that grow by the accumulation of different inputs can tend towards a lower common denominator, even if the Secretariat tries gallantly to get agreement to a strong, concise position.⁷⁷ Papers developed by a small group to an almost final draft stage fall short of the ambition to draw on the input of *“a wide range of members”*. And in a context of a growing Network and incomplete knowledge of the expertise existing within it, a little more assurance that papers *“reflect as much expertise on these topics as possible”* may be needed.

There are isolated comments that the Priority Indicators and Metadata for Goal 16 document was *“challenging since there is a diversity of opinion on these issues”*, in part the result of a range of levels of technical expertise. In the case of another paper, input provided after the deadline for comments had passed is felt to have been dealt with inappropriately, both in the sense that the deadline should have been adhered to and because *“it was left to the two organizations which had different views to come up with a compromise, but without it being definitively resolved”*.

It is important to stress that these examples do not suggest significant or systematic failings in how the Network functions. The overall impression is that the system that to agree positions has worked pretty well. It is inevitable that some members are dissatisfied with specific aspects of the process with individual papers. Criticisms reflect not only the different aims that each member has from the Network, but also their cultural understanding of how a Network should operate and the relative importance they accord to efficiency and ownership.

To some extent, this issue may resolve itself as the external policy context changes: there may now be longer lead-in times prior to fewer moments or events around which the Network needs to form a common position. There may also be value in reiterating some basic principles about the process of developing common positions, along the following lines:

- members should have the opportunity to contribute to developing any Network position and the responsibility to contribute to positions on areas in which they have particular expertise;
- not every member needs to contribute to each policy process to the same extent;
- the timing and scale of a consultation exercise should be reasonable for the given capacity of the Coordinators (and any others involved in facilitating a consultation process) and for members' own approval processes;
- insofar as is possible, consultation processes and the windows for members' input should be

⁷⁷ Arguably, the growth of the Network enhances this trend. The Coordinators report having to deal with an increasing number of suggestions that do not show full understanding of context; in response, they have tried to get members to signal agreement (or not) to others' comments to allow areas of consensus to emerge relatively efficiently.

- planned in advance. When this is not possible, mutual expectations of contributing should be less;
- members' input should not automatically be incorporated into a Network position, but the reasons why their input is not included should be communicated to them.

For a number of respondents, **conference calls** held on a more or less monthly basis with a purpose to share intelligence and mobilise common activities went into too much detail and updated them on things which they knew already. For other members, these updates may be the key benefit of the calls, so the crux may be to structure them better, hold a tighter line on the time given to general information-sharing and encourage people to prepare better in advance. There may also be a cultural dimension to impressions of the conference calls: some, perhaps mostly northern members may prefer more information to be shared by email, while those from other backgrounds may see a value in talking through even what was already known to them.

The issue of the utility of the calls relates to that of the utility of the Network's more or less weekly email **newsletters**.⁷⁸ Here again there is a range of views, with some seeing the newsletters as a “*very effective communication tool*” and others judging them to be too long and detailed. It may be that in looking across these two communication mechanisms – the calls and the newsletter – the Coordinators can find a way to better segment its 'internal outputs' for different parts of the Network. This could be a matter of producing summary and specialist versions of updates and offering the option to join either a short or an in-depth discussion of an issue. There is a practical aspect to this too: to have two slots for calls – one for members in the western hemisphere, a second for those in the eastern hemisphere – to increase capacity to participate.⁷⁹

A second aspect to the assessment of the different internal communications tools, especially the Network calls, is the apparent lack of space for substantive strategic discussion. One long-standing member recalls one occasion – before the period under review – when Goal 16 was under threat from a particular state and there was a debate whether to meet this state halfway or to stick to a hard line, but “*otherwise we do not really go into these strategic questions*”. There has been little space given to commenting on the Network's work-plan which is perceived to be “*sent as a finished product*”, something felt to jar with other ways of working based on consultation and inclusion. That only the Steering Committee reviews the work-plan in any detail may be a consequence of its 'unfriendly' logframe format, but that may point to the need to produce an alternative summary which is easier to digest.

There is a suggestion that all Network calls should focus on a point of strategy with a two-pager circulated in advance with key questions and options. There is support for this idea in the comment that “*now that we're*

⁷⁸ The newsletters are intended to “*provide regular updates, resources and key intel around different processes from the week; provide updates on joint TAP work that is being done by the Network, and tak[e] a look ahead at key meetings, events or entry points in the next week or two ahead*”; <http://us10.campaign-archive2.com/?u=b5f41e57774f3a515a23fd276&id=88095a48f8>

⁷⁹ In this regard, it is noted by one international NGO member that using technology better in involving members is a question of policy coherence: this is “*something that TAP asks of states so needs to deliver itself*”.

moving to the national level, we could have a couple of the calls to discuss what strategies members are using and share advice on how to utilise the toolkit". It may be that not every call has to function in this way, but this would seem to fill in a gap, one that could have the spin-off of increasing membership engagement from giving the discussion on calls more bite.

It should be reiterated that these points should not distract from what is a generally positive conclusion regarding coordination. Several respondents compare the Network favourably to others which they are or have been involved with in terms of efficiency of process and clarity of purpose. But if one of the reasons why the Network has functioned well is that it had tangible goals linked to a clear process, the evolution of the process, the consequent impact on the role of the Secretariat and that of members will demand important changes to how the Network is run.

Network governance

The Network's Steering Committee consists of the representatives of five organizations, at least two from the global south.⁸⁰ The Steering Committee has a responsibility to provide strategic guidance, represent the Network, help build consensus on key issues, review budgets, select individuals to attend international meetings and adjudicate issues of disagreement either by taking a decision or by choosing to ballot the full membership.⁸¹

In practice, the Steering Committee's role appears to have been mostly procedural in scope, limited to budget oversight and choosing people to represent the Network at meetings (itself an issue of some political sensitivity). It is less clear whether the Steering Committee has fulfilled the role of strategic advice to the Secretariat. The Committee comments on annual plans and donor proposals, but seems less effective in helping the Network resolve actual or potential areas of policy uncertainty on issues such as FFD, for example. Perhaps reflecting this gap, there is a degree of defensiveness about the role that the Committee has played to date, but also recognition among some Steering Committee members that *"the current Steering Committee is not positioned to lead this sort of [strategic] discussion"*. There is a corresponding risk that the Coordinators set a metric in how such a discussion is prepared as and when it does take place. The Committee is aware though that that it could be more visible and that *"we can do more as a Steering Committee to foster transparency by updating members on a more regular basis about our decisions"*.

At the same time as its strategic potential appears underused, the Steering Committee is said to be overstretched. Its members judge that their role is, on paper, quite open-ended and has the potential to consume an important portion of their time. There has been discussion of the boundary between the Coordinators and the Committee including the question of when communications to the Network should come from Coordinators and when from the Committee.

These concerns suggest that the remit of the Steering Committee needs to be reviewed and a clearer balance struck between oversight, content / strategy and the catalytic and representational aspects. Part of

⁸⁰ The five Steering Committee members were notionally elected from a list of five nominees. Whether more members put themselves forward to stand for the Committee in future years will be a test of engagement and ownership.

⁸¹ TAP Network Steering Committee Terms of Reference, p1.

this is to reflect on the governance implications of the shift in the locus of the SDG process to the national (and regional) level. How the governance of the Network may need to change is a subordinate question to that of overall strategy. At the same time, governance instruments should be designed to enable the fulfilment of a strategy, including to foster ownership in a network and allow it to maximise the collective resources upon which it can draw.

A specific dimension to the issue of governance is the appropriateness of the multiple role of WFUNA as Steering Committee member, channel for funding and host and line manager of the two Coordinators. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed to delineate TAP from WFUNA and make it explicit that “*TAP staff are allowed to develop and promote materials, statements, positions and collateral with and at the behest of the members solely as TAP to avoid actual or perceived co-option by any organization*”.⁸²

While the line management function of the Secretary-General of WFUNA has remained operational in scope and having him on hand is reported to have helped in resolving day-to-day concerns, there is an opinion that “*there is a tendency to not quite being able to tell the independence of the Network from WFUNA*”. Nothing untoward is suggested by this, more a situation of WFUNA having an unconscious influence on the direction that the Secretariat takes. It is important to stress that others are adamant that there is no question of influence on the Secretariat by WFUNA. It is likely that a perception of influence would exist whatever the reality, but it is a perception that needs managing.⁸³

Both the Coordinators and WFUNA have struggled in coping with non-aligned timelines and reporting obligations of the Network's donors. That the logframe and narrative have to be written up into three versions, one for each donor, seems unavoidable at least for the latest round of funding.⁸⁴ Given too that reporting against an output-based logframe(s)⁸⁵ is quite limiting, there may be value in a review of the Network's approach to monitoring and evaluation by which reports to donors are derived from an overall analysis of delivery, outputs and outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

Clarity of scope

There are mixed signals as to whether the Network is – or is presumed by others to be – focusing on Goal 16 or governance.⁸⁶ If the former, then it is arguable that the profile of Network members is not broad enough,

82 *Project Proposal - Ensuring Transparent, Participatory and Accountable Governance in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda*, p7

83 And managing on an ongoing basis since it has recently been agreed that the entity formally responsible for incoming grants would retain a seat on the Committee, as WFUNA currently does, though there is no assumption that WFUNA would always be the organization that acts as the conduit for Network funds.

84 There may be some scope for increasing efficiency in future rounds if donors prove receptive to the idea being put to them by WFUNA of better synchronisation among themselves.

85 Although the logframe does refer to analysing the post-2015 accountability framework and review mechanism in relation to the Project Goal to ensure transparent and accountable mechanisms for, and citizen participation in, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs, the indicators for the project's outcomes are limited to the delivery of outputs such as position papers and events or to secondary results such as the growth in number of diversity of network members. This lacks qualitative depth and misses the stage of interrogating the link between outputs and outcomes.

86 The question of whether the Network should focus on Goal 16 or upon governance more broadly has two, somewhat conflicting dimensions. On the one hand, it narrows the Network's mandate to tie it to a specific process: the negotiation of Goal 16 and now (monitoring of) implementation. On the other hand, it expands the thematic scope of the Network to deal with the whole

with several respondents citing a relative lack of members with a peace or conflict remit.⁸⁷ Nor, according to one survey respondent, has the Network established the same reputation on peace and justice as it has on transparency, accountability and participation.⁸⁸ But if it is the latter, then it seems confusing to have made the scope of the Toolkit the whole of Goal 16.

A majority of interviewees believes that the Network should focus on governance and not adopt a Goal 16 monitoring brief. For this view, the Network suffers from trying to mirror Goal 16, “*a melting pot of principles*”, with peace and security distracting it from a more coherent emphasis on governance.⁸⁹ The implication is that the Network should focus on the governance aspects to the wider set of overlapping international processes – the SDGs, FFD, the COP21 agreement *et al.* – and to promoting transparency, accountability and participation as values guiding sustainable development in the broadest sense.⁹⁰ Greater coherence around a governance agenda becomes more pressing as the locus of these processes moves to the national level: on the ground, “*the space is not labelled 'Goal 16'*”. To the point that pushing the Network to address governance across all development agenda – the governance aspects of how to improve a health system, for example – poses a risk of the Network being spread too thin, an international NGO respondent argues that “*it can focus on where the risks of a lack of transparency, accountability and participation are greatest or where wins are possible*”.

It is for the Network itself to decide its scope. The point here is for the Network to create space for debate on this point and hence confirm whether its purpose is shaped by a set of issues or by an international political process. Its policy and advocacy priorities would follow from that.⁹¹

From a global to a national-level focus

The focus in 2015 on the global process made a Secretariat-led Network focused on New York a logical

gamut of issues falling under Goal 16, that is, peace and security as well as transparency, accountability and participation.

87 It is reported that the Quakers, for example, did not join the Network because they judged that its focus on governance took it beyond their own priorities of peace and conflict. There are different views on this point, however, with others claiming that the Network has “*collected a wide range of groups across Goal 16 [and] has the status of go-to coalition on Goal 16*”.

88 In the comment left to the survey, it is argued that “*The TAP Network has definitely established itself as a leading player on issues related to transparency, accountability and participation but less so when it comes to the peace and just[ice]-related aspects of Goal 16*”.

89 As one comment left to the survey puts it “*The focus on Goal 16 is a challenge – it may benefit the network to think about how it lives up to its name (T-A-P) rather than using Goal 16 as a framer – there are too many issues within Goal 16 that are only tangentially related to TAP*”. A corollary to such a conclusion is that it would mean that “*something like the World Humanitarian Summit is not a TAP space*”.

90 That the scope of the Finance for Development (FFD) process is broader than the SDGs also encourages the Network to look beyond the borders of the SDGs themselves: “*TAP in FfD and post-2015 is not only related to the tracking resources for SDGs it is about ensuring these principles across all fiscal processes and public financial management systems...We do not think that this recommendations should be narrowly focused on the SDGs. The primary focus should be to ensure full transparency of revenue, allocations pending, contracting and results as a general principle*”; TAP FFD 2.docx

91 If the Network does choose to focus explicitly on Goal 16, then it would need a position on the lead agency concept, which some members oppose for recreating siloes of implementing bodies, and on the specific question of whether UNDP should take the role of lead agency for Goal 16. Assuming that UNDP were selected, a focus on Goal 16 would seem to oblige the Secretariat to intensify its contacts with this agency, follow UNDP Board meetings etc.

strategic move. Still into 2016, there is ample justification for sustained effort in New York to influence the finalization of indicators and the construction of an efficient, serious follow-up and review mechanism. The Network worked hard in 2015 to raise the status of civil society in the negotiation process and needs to follow that through into the early stages of implementation and review. Other NGOs and networks have reportedly disengaged from the question of the design of the HLPF, making it even more valuable that the TAP Network continues to press on this.

Nonetheless, the broad trend, of course, is from the global to the national level.⁹² In the first instance, the Network needs to affect how states adapt their policies and develop their own mechanisms and institutions of review and ensure that states' approach to the SDGs is in line with the ambition and intent agreed in New York. Further ahead, broader civil society at the national level should be made aware of the potential and utility of the SDGs and empowered to hold their governments to account in meeting them.

The position that the Network finds itself in may be an uncomfortable one; as one New York-based ally puts it, it is *"hard for TAP to know where to go. During the negotiating process, it had clear hooks and it was easy to know what its role was"*. That the transition from negotiation to implementation has been drawn out by the last stages of agreeing structures is useful in the sense that there is time now to plan a process for reviewing the Network's basic strategic purpose and, pending the outcomes of that discussion, for taking decisions on structure and ways of working.

The Advocacy Toolkit: exemplar of the challenges facing the Network?

The Advocacy Toolkit is already being designed with the need to enable national-level advocacy and bridge the gap from New York to the capital-level in mind. But the Toolkit arguably illustrates more than resolves the challenge that the Network faces. Envisioned to *"Provide a brief overview of the issues contained within Goal 16 and around the issues of transparency, accountability and participation; Provide a comprehensive toolkit providing civil society with the tools, knowledge, and case studies to contextualize and undertake advocacy at the national and local levels to advance Goal 16 implementation and for translating principles and issues into action; Explore case studies and best practices by CSOs working on these issues at various levels,"*⁹³ there are at least three areas of concern with the Toolkit. Firstly, the scope of the Toolkit appears to have been made Goal 16 without / prior to adequate strategic discussion of whether the Network focuses on Goal 16 or governance. Since the Toolkit is presumably intended to have a decent shelf-life, this may prove unhelpful to the discussion that the Network needs to have on the issue of scope as it may appear that a decision has already been taken.

Secondly, there are concerns that the Toolkit may be unsuitable for national-level advocacy because of insufficient involvement in its design of members operating at this level.⁹⁴ When looking at the three

92 Multiple comments left to the survey on the issue of how the Network's strategy should change evidence this trend, with suggestions including: *Advocacy projects at country level; Map out country-level initiatives and hubs of expertise; monitoring - CS platform for monitoring SDG 16; Not so New York centric; Select a number of countries where to be more embedded at local country level; mobilization projects at country level; Provide guidance on engagement (when clear) in monitoring mechanisms on Goal 16 issues in country; networking, lobbying and coalition development projects at country level.*

93 *TAP Network Goal 16 Advocacy Toolkit Consultancy ToR*, p1.

94 Behind this, there are concerns that the process to outline and develop the Toolkit has been atypically closed. More lengthy

elements of the Toolkit – a summary of the issues and processes relating to Goal 16; the tools and knowledge that directly enable advocacy; and case studies and best practice examples – the general view among respondents is that the Toolkit will be useful in terms of the first element, cannot meaningfully achieve the second – on the basis that “as soon as you get to TAP issues in-country, it is national-level members who know how these issues are playing out in their country” and that there is not a single formula for advocacy at this level – and ought to focus more on the third. As it stands, some members feel that “the Toolkit does not offer confidence that it will work for national-level groups... I may tell my members not to use it”.

Finally, there is the risk that the Secretariat coordinates the production of an output which it lacks the capacity to see utilised properly, even acknowledging the intention to make funding available in 2016 for webinars and workshops to incentivise members to engage in ongoing advocacy and monitoring. For one international NGO representative, “there is work to do to identify clusters of members in countries who are keen or others which represent the best investment of central energies to ensure take up of the Toolkit”.

In reflecting upon the future purpose and structure of the Network, civil society respondents tend to more or less agree with the prognosis that “TAP needs to re-purpose itself if it wants to remain relevant and useful in a context that is less UN-focused and more about the national-level”. This begs the question of how the Network evolves from an essentially 'mono-nodal' entity centred on a Secretariat geared towards a specific process in a specific place to a global network able to monitor and influence actions across multiple countries. Some appear to lack the appetite for the significant transformation that this would require or argue against a Network created for a specific purpose morphing into something else: a respondent from one international NGO who is “sceptical about the TAP Network's ability to do a global implementation role” considers that it is “generally better to close networks [once their original purpose has been met] and reform them when there is a new, clear need”.

Implications: the membership

If, to date, members have trusted the Secretariat and let it advocate for them, the need for greater engagement at the national-level demands more of them. In the next phase, members need to “put more in to get more out... Members were followers, but need to become leaders”. The first part of this is to engage in the process of defining a new vision of the Network and of the New York function.

A push to involve members more and the shift to the national-level may involve an initial 'flushing out' process as some members detach themselves from the Network and others form themselves into a new core group. That profile evolves to match the Network's changing function is perfectly natural and desirable. Where the loss of members may be greatest is among international NGOs for which governance may not be a high priority or one that does not outlast the conclusion of the SDG negotiating process.⁹⁵ The Network

than a position paper, there may have been a degree of nervousness about inviting comments across the whole of a draft. The burden of review appears, in turn, to have fallen disproportionately on the Steering Committee.

95 The representative of one international NGO argues that while the negotiation of the SDGs had a centripetal effect on civil society, pulling groups together around common positions regarding the draft texts, the implementation phase may conversely have a centrifugal effect as organizations pull back to their own thematic and / or geographic areas of focus.

would want to ensure a necessary minimum of the content expertise and clout at the international level which these sort of members may bring, but their loss should be offset by the increasing interest of national-level members. The signal from this evaluation as to whether this will turn out to be the case is weak, given that few such members have been consulted. But there is favourable supporting evidence from the case of Beyond 2015's evolution into Together 2030: southern members are reported to have been keenest to join the new network and international NGOs less so, either because their own decision-making procedures are slow or because their focus on governance has tailed off.⁹⁶

Implications: Network structure

Taking the swing away from New York to the national and regional levels to a structural conclusion may suggest a model of five to ten regional hubs with *“well-networked people able to play facilitative, convening, information-sharing role”*. This raises an obvious financial challenge and draws scepticism on the grounds that *“it was easy to form a network or campaign around a New York process [but] it is hard now to form a regional model after the fact and still have legitimacy”*.

The less radical response to the shift from the global to the national level works on the basis of connecting up to existing initiatives and encouraging key multipliers within the Network – members with their own branches and networks – to act as a channel to national civil society organizations in different settings. This would involve building a clearer picture of the Network's 'internal architecture' and the different actual and potential multipliers that exist in order to ensure that the right people from member organizations are connected into the Network and that the links between the national and global levels are maintained.

Implications: the Secretariat

There is general acceptance that however the Network evolves, there is an ongoing, but smaller need for members to be fed updates and intelligence from New York. There is also a function of collating material from members, producing syntheses and thematic analyses and injecting them into global review processes.⁹⁷ There may also be a role in New York to defend civil society's status in these review processes.

In line with the less radical view of how the Network should evolve, one proposal is to leave the Secretariat's role at that: a low-key presence in New York supporting the involvement of members in annual review processes and servicing small and non-New York based members with information and intelligence.

The option of transitioning to a polynodal network would more profoundly impact the role of the Secretariat. It suggests, in addition to the roles of intelligence-gathering and influencing global review processes, a need to *“get close to grassroots organizations to build a picture of how the SDGs are being implemented”* and to support national-level members in their role of holding their governments to account. This last function is substantial and quite different in scope from that played by the Secretariat to date.

⁹⁶ The broader point again is that international NGOs separate policy and programmes and, by extension, negotiation and implementation, but national NGOs do not.

⁹⁷ The representative of one government talks of *“needing to work with civil society organizations who have a view of the national level and who can relay to the international level the experience from the ground”*. And for another, *“they are going to be very important in the next stage [since] it is hard for us to identify who among civil society has experience in measuring useful data. And to collate what is actually been measured”*.

What role the Secretariat plays – and what form the Network as a whole takes – are not questions to address in isolation. The TAP Network's strategy should be formulated in terms of the wider civil society landscape, something that is itself in a state of flux as different players withdraw or reinvent themselves. As part of this, the Network may need to think through its relationship to a new Global Civil Society Platform on Sustainable Development in particular.⁹⁸

Navigating a way forward

These issues of scope and structure warrant a serious process of reflection and strategizing. For one Network insider, *“TAP has grown organically and dealt with issues as they arise. It now needs to take a more strategic view of what it wants to achieve, what its scope and structure should be”*. Various respondents talk of the need for three or five year strategies (beyond the immediate tasks of advocacy around the follow-up and review process) and deciding the form of the Secretariat on that basis.

It is important to note that there appears to be demand for such a process among interviewees and in the calls in responses to the survey to *“Discuss more issues on the long-term horizon”* and to *“Decide on Key Goals on what we want to accomplish”*. The Network would ideally see this sort of discussion in a positive light as a collective effort to define an exciting new stage in its development. That may not be easy though, given the range of views existing on some of the core questions at stake. Beyond 2015's strategic review is reported to have been quite fraught, so the TAP Network can look to learn from how this process was run.

There are some concerns that the Network *“does not currently have the modality to have the sort of discussion it needs to have”* and a risk that those most engaged in the Network to date may have a disproportionate say on its future even if it is some of the members who have been relatively passive so far who are crucial to, and hence need to shape, the Network's next steps. A lot also depends on how the questions are asked and what parameters are set: whether members are asked what role the Network should have on governance or on monitoring Goal 16 implementation, for example. But these are questions which can and should be solved. If there is a issue of legitimacy in the conversion of the current Network into a more genuinely global entity, the involvement of national-level groups in an open strategic process would help to engender the level of ownership essential to sustaining this kind of new Network structure.

None of this is to deny the financial and practical obstacles to running this sort of strategy process. In the idea currently under consideration to hold a stakeholder meeting at the time of the HLPF in July, there is an awareness of the risk that participation is skewed towards those international NGOs which will anyway be attending the HLPF. Funds to bring representatives of national-level groups from the south may be limited

⁹⁸ The Platform has a broad mandate that overlaps with that of the Network in terms of accountability and participation, as reflected in its aim to *“make the voices of people heard and to hold leaders to account on the commitments they have made, including key commitments on financing and universal implementation... We also want to go further to inspire, enable and mobilize people to deepen their participation at the local, national, regional and global levels, and to work together across constituencies and borders in a movement for a just, peaceful and sustainable world”*; www.loomio.org/d/deUmcQvB/about-the-group-english. Several Network members are sceptical of the need for what would, in effect, be a 'network of networks', although one recognises that there may be value in having space to *“share ideas and strategies as long as there is no pressure to agree or formally divide [spheres of operation]”*.

and there would be an issue of how to choose among groups which have not been particularly engaged to date. Opportunities to engage smaller groups of members in strategic discussion around the fringes of other international meetings can also be explored.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Network should design a process for agreeing a new strategy that draws on the widest possible input from members, including those which have been relatively passive to date but which are crucial to the Network's next steps.

- As inputs to this strategy process, the Network should develop
 - a more comprehensive map of (the commitment of) the different networks within the Network and the paths to the national level that members with their own branches / affiliates represent;
 - a clear picture of the intended strategies of other civil society organisations and networks working on similar areas of concern.

- Key elements for consideration in the strategy process are
 - the implications of taking a decisive position on the question of the scope of the Network;
 - how to deepen engagement at the national level and ensure due synergy between the national and the global levels;
 - whether and how to develop 'another string to the Network's bow' – an ability to adopt more 'forceful' positions in response to slow or uncommitted implementation;
 - what form the Network needs to take in line with the shift in focus to the national-level.

- The balance struck between oversight, content / strategy and the catalytic and representational aspects of the Steering Committee should be reviewed in the light of decisions on overall strategy and structure. Likewise, refinements to Network coordination should follow from agreement on the future role of the Secretariat and members. In the interim period before a new strategy is agreed, ways to segment the Network's coordinating outputs (calls, newsletters etc.) for different groups of members should be explored, perhaps including by producing summary and specialist versions of updates and offering slots for more substantive discussion of key issues on network calls.

ANNEX: MAIN OUTPUTS

Position papers and statements	Theme	Date
TAP Network Response to Second Meeting of IAEG-SDGs	Indicators	October
TAP Network Synthesized Inputs for Second Meeting of IAEG-SDGs Consultation	Indicators	October
TAP Network Welcomes the “2030 Agenda” Outcome Document	Post-2015 framework	September
TAP Network Redlines for the Post-2015 Outcome Document	Post-2015 framework	September
TAP Network Response to the “Revised Final Draft” of the Post-2015 Outcome Document	Post-2015 framework	August (?)
TAP Network Response to the Post-2015 “Final Draft”	Post-2015 framework	July
TAP Network Response to the Financing for Development “Addis Ababa Action Agenda”	FFD	July
Making Goal 16 and the SDGs Transformative: An Indicator Framework Fit for Purpose	Indicators	June
TAP Network Response to the Post-2015 “Zero Draft” and Compendium of Suggested Edits to the Zero Draft of Post-2015 Agenda Outcome Document from TAP Network organizations	Post-2015 framework	June
TAP Network Statement to IGN Interactive Dialogue	Post-2015 framework	24 June
People-Centred Post-2015 Review & Accountability with Transparency and Citizen Participation at its core	Follow-up and Review	May (?)
Catalyzing inclusive and transformative Financing for Development	FFD	April (?)
An Open Letter to National Statistical Offices, UN Agencies and CSOs: TAP Network Response to UN Technical Report on SDG Indicator Framework	Indicators	25 March
Side-events	Theme	Date
Post-2015 Lunch Summit during UN Summit for Sustainable Development	Post-2015 framework	24 September
<i>The Role of Third-Party Data in Follow-Up and Review for the Post-2015 Agenda</i>	Follow-up and Review	23 July
Two events at the Third FFD Conference	FFD	July
<i>Transparency, Accountability and Participation: Building a Post-2015 Review Architecture that is Fit for Purpose</i>	Follow-up and Review	01 July
Side event at Post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations	Post-2015 framework	22 May
<i>Participatory Governance: Laying the Foundation for a Transformative and Accountable Post-2015 Agenda</i>	Post-2015 framework	21 May
Interactive dialogue on multi-level review and monitoring of the Post-2015 Agenda	Post-2015 framework	15 May
High-level Consultation: Review and Monitoring of the Post-2015 Agenda	Post-2015 framework	06 May
Panel discussion during the Third Session of the Post-2015 Negotiations	Post-2015 framework, Indicators	25 March