



PUBLISH WHAT
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COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE PWYP GLOBAL COUNCIL

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A time for continuity and responsiveness

We, the members of the Publish What You Pay (PWYP) Global Council, met virtually on the 6th of May 2020 to discuss the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on our global advocacy agenda and on the movement. The meeting would have taken place in-person this week under normal circumstances.

Having spent 2019 overseeing the development of the PWYP Secretariat's three year [operational plan](#) and regional priorities for the implementation of [our Vision 2025 strategy](#), we were keen to begin this year with a clear focus on advocacy to achieve our goals of being informed, influential, heard and connected. Ambitious plans were underway to launch a global contract transparency campaign to ensure and build on the implementation of the [new requirement in the EITI Standard](#).

Yet the backdrop for our deliberations last week is one of widespread uncertainty about the medium and long-term impacts of the global health crisis. In countries where the virus has had devastating health implications, many have lost loved ones. Elsewhere, the pandemic has had significant economic implications, negatively affecting the livelihoods of many families around the world. The rapid expansion of COVID-19 is disrupting our lives in unimaginable ways.

Transparency, accountability and citizen participation are all at risk in this time of crisis, as governments, companies and civil society groups struggle to adapt and reallocate (often scarce) resources; and as communities become isolated in the absence of opportunities to convene and consult. There is ample evidence that governments around the world are using the pandemic as a pretext to curb fundamental liberties and harass civil society activists and independent journalists. Several PWYP members have reported being under increasing pressure and have faced serious threats in the past few weeks. This is making it harder for us to stand up for transparency. PWYP's strategic framework on civic space, which will be published and sent to all PWYP coalitions and members in the next few days, will be more pertinent than ever.

The spectre of mounting public debt and highly volatile commodity prices - with oil demand plummeting while gold is soaring - means that resource-rich countries that depend on revenues generated by extraction will face critical fiscal and economic challenges.

What this means is that, despite the challenges that we face, our agenda to put people at the centre of oil, gas and mineral governance is as important as ever.

Moreover, while there are clear risks and uncertainties on the horizon, now is a time of opportunity and innovation. This is a time to develop PWYP's role in pushing for economic diversification and a fair, just and equitable transition to a low-carbon economy. It is also a time to invest in our research to continue building a strong evidence base from which PWYP activists can: push for accountability in governments' use of revenues from oil, gas and minerals and ensure they are invested in providing basic social services and safeguarding the future; demand respect for women's rights and gender equality; and continue to hold



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companies and governments to account for the social and environmental impacts of extractive operations.

Due to the strict limits on travel, PWYP's Africa Steering Committee (ASC) has taken the difficult decision to postpone the [Africa Conference](#). However, this does not mean that we cannot convene our members in Africa - and around the world - in other ways, including via online platforms, to debate, share experiences and learn from each other. We need to find creative ways to make ourselves heard, and to protect those who are being persecuted for challenging powerful actors and corruption. It is a time for continuity - to stay the course of our Vision 2025 strategy; and for responsiveness - to be adaptable and creative and to seize unexpected opportunities. We will continue to defend and advance transparency gains - including by taking forward our global campaign on contract transparency.

While we cannot yet predict the inevitable social, physical, and economic shifts that will take place in the next few months, we anticipate that the crisis will have long term implications for PWYP's mission, vision and strategy, given the significant impact on members, communities, and the role and nature of the extractive industries themselves.

To inform our strategic response to the crisis, take unforeseen opportunities and address risks as they arise, we have collectively decided to meet on a more regular basis in the coming months. We welcome PWYP coalitions' and members' inputs and ideas as we navigate these uncharted waters together; and we commit to ensuring your voice is heard through consultation and convening in innovative ways.

We also want to acknowledge the invaluable support provided by the Secretariat to stay the course under these challenging circumstances.

We thank our PWYP sisters and brothers around the world for the opportunity to represent your diverse perspectives.

Standing in solidarity,

PWYP Global Council

Adnan Bahiya, Middle East and North Africa
Athayde Motta, Latin America (GC/Board Liaison)
Chadwick Llanos, Asia Pacific
Chenai Mukumba, Anglophone Africa (Chair)
Dupleix Kuenzob, Africa Steering Committee
Isabel Munilla, Global Reach
Joe Williams, Global Reach
Mariatou Amadou, Francophone Africa
Miles Litvinoff, Europe and North America
Olena Pavlenko, Eurasia