

INNOVATION TRENDS REPORT: **ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY**

.....
PART TWO IN OUR ONGOING SERIES ON MACRO TRENDS SHAPING GLOBAL SOCIETY



weber
shandwick
engaging, always.

social **IMPACT**

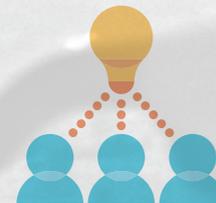
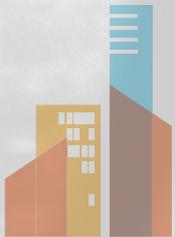
Welcome to the latest installation in our Innovation Trends Report series, brought to you by Weber Shandwick's Social Impact practice, a global team working at the intersection of corporate social responsibility (CSR), sustainability and social issues. We've created this resource to build awareness and fuel dialogue around the fast-growing Solution Economy — multidisciplinary and collaborative efforts by companies, foundations, nonprofits and governments to solve social problems.

We create communications strategies and engagement campaigns that focus attention, spark action and drive tangible outcomes for complex social problems such as poverty, climate change and inequality.

In this second report, we explore the topic of Always-On Transparency, rethinking the way that corporations, nonprofits, foundations and government entities engage in an ongoing dialogue about impact results — and the important lessons learned along the way.

INNOVATION TRENDS

This Always-On Transparency report is the second in a series of investigations into the key macro trends that are shaping the future of social impact work. Stay tuned for insights on additional topics transforming how people, organizations and systems connect to drive positive societal change.



NETWORKED SMART CITIES

How we source and scale innovations to ensure cities (and communities) provide a vibrant, equitable, sustainable, livable environment for inhabitants.

ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY

How forward-thinking organizations continually share failures, lessons and insider perspectives behind impact results.

PURPOSE-DRIVEN DATA

How we realize the potential for better data analysis and insights that inform solutions and advancements for society.

CONSCIOUS CROWDSOURCING

How organizations harness the expertise of those in the virtual network who are best equipped to solve a particular challenge.

INCLUSIVE GLOBAL ECONOMIES

How we can overcome the consequences of the global wealth imbalance to ensure access to health, education and opportunity for all.

AN INTEGRATED VIEW OF **SOCIAL IMPACT INNOVATION**

“We have intentionally designed our Innovation Trends Report series as an integrated approach to catalyzing smart and sustainable social impact. Over 2016, each report will build on the last to demonstrate how innovators and change agents can apply the latest creative thinking and tools to accelerate solutions to complex social issues.” — Paul Massey, Executive Vice President and Global Lead, Weber Shandwick Social Impact



NETWORKED SMART CITIES

The ECOSYSTEM in which social innovators are advancing new models for impact.

ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY

The RIGHT TO OPERATE — and currency for trust and credibility.

PURPOSE-DRIVEN DATA

The PROBLEM DEFINITION to articulate the right questions that drive solutions.

CONSCIOUS CROWDSOURCING

The MARKETPLACE for ideas, talent and resources aligned to the right problems.

INCLUSIVE GLOBAL ECONOMIES

Our COLLECTIVE VISION and ultimate goal for a more equitable future.

SPOTLIGHT ON
ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY

“The currency
of leadership
is transparency.”

HOWARD SCHULTZ, Chairman and CEO, Starbucks

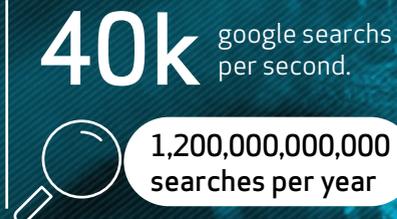
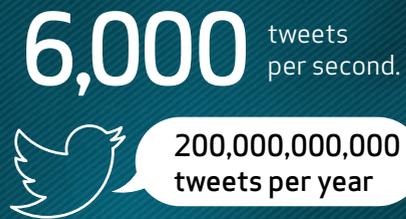
WHY ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY?

In a crowded, fast-paced world of information, organizations often struggle to break-through, connect and build meaningful relationships with key audiences. In the face of overwhelming amounts of content, people rely on sources that are open, credible and trusted to guide their decisions on where to focus their attention, time and engagement.

Today, stakeholders of all types demand more: more information, more often and with more relevance. They want to know how businesses impact society and where the products they consume come from. They want to know how governments steward public dollars. They want to know how social sector organizations allocate resources to solve pressing challenges.

“In this context, organizations must earn and sustain not only the attention, but also the trust of their audiences,” says Paul Massey, Executive Vice President and Global Lead of Weber Shandwick’s Social Impact practice. Consumers and advocates know when a brand or organization is whitewashing its commitment to social impact and are quick to vote with their share of voice and purchasing power in real time. By not leading with ongoing transparency, organizations risk losing not only their trust and credibility, but their right to operate.

IN A WORLD OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD...



TRUST IS OUR GUIDING FILTER...



AND TRANSPARENCY IS OUR RIGHT TO OPERATE



Sources:
Internet Live Stats
San Diego Supercomputer Center at UC San Diego
Bazaarvoice and the Center for Generational Kinetics
BRANDfog: Global Social CEO Survey

Weber Shandwick: The Company Behind the Brand
Hope Consulting: Money For Good II
2013 Open Data Barometer
Pew Research Center

MEETING THE **TRANSPARENCY CHALLENGE**

The era of instant communication creates a unique opportunity for organizations to move away from static reports to a practice of consistent reporting and engagement with key audiences.

At a Weber Shandwick hosted event, noted leaders framed the Always-On Transparency opportunity. Here are some key learnings:

1

It's not just about information availability — it's about accessibility, relevance and usability.

2

It's not just about statistics and financial metrics — it's about impact.

3

It's about understanding human behavior to give data meaning and leverage.

4

It's about embracing a culture that values failing forward and constant learning.

5

It's about going beyond "being authentic" to being open in all things that affect stakeholders and environments.



Weber Shandwick brought together Marc Gunther, founder of Nonprofit Chronicles; Jeremy Hill, Director of Corporate Communications at the World Bank; Joanne Krell, former Vice President of Communications at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; and Allyson Burns, Senior Vice President of Communications and Marketing at the Case Foundation, to discuss how they are navigating the roadmap to Always-On Transparency.

WEBER SHANDWICK'S ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY ROAD MAP

This five-step roadmap provides a starting point for organizations across sectors to align their practices with best-in-class transparency efforts. Ideally, this roadmap would be reinforced by a leadership model that is decision-based and articulates a clarity of purpose for the organization within an increasingly connected and open ecosystem.



ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY **ACTION PLAN**

	Employees	Consumers	Shareholders & Boards	Partners	Influencers	Media
Research & Reporting	Include employees in the development of reporting and research processes and outputs, soliciting regular feedback from diverse internal stakeholders and inviting engagement.	Translate impact statistics and results into compelling stories and visuals with relevance to the consumer/donor decision journey.	Link research and reporting to the organization's bottom line, demonstrating how impact and results drive performance — reinforce longer-term view for progress.	Invite partners to provide input on research, reporting and impact tracking processes as a means to deepen relationships and surface new areas for collaboration.	Use clear language and impactful visuals to start a conversation.	Translate compelling information into material that aligns with reporters' interests, promotes relationship building and offers an invitation to start or deepen a conversation.
Thought Leadership	Empower employees to contribute to thought leadership with their own perspectives and impact examples.	Position thought leadership as the authentic voice of the organization, leveraging diverse spokespeople.	Leverage board member and shareholder expertise and perspectives to inform thought leadership and help co-create op-eds and think pieces.	Connect with partners and kindred organizations to collaborate on original research and thought leadership that reinforces your joint missions and shares lessons and models that work.	Find points of connection to engage influencers through social media and convenings to inform, co-create and share thought leadership.	Form strategic media partnerships to co-create and distribute thought leadership to key audiences in a targeted, strategic way.
Storytelling & Campaigns	Feature employees in storytelling, raising up the work that they carry out and empower them to champion your organization's impact on their social channels.	Feature authentic stories and storytellers on the channels consumers use to engage with your organization — and invite feedback and user generated content in response.	Equip board members and shareholders to become authentic and passionate spokespeople for the organization.	Showcase partner testimonials and stories as authentic third party validation and examples of your impact — and cross promote content on each other's channels.	Target influencers with meaningful and relevant stories through social channels and invite them to participate in an ongoing dialogue about impact and social change.	Leverage multimedia and visual storytelling to get attention with media and illustrate your impact in ways that will connect with their audiences.
Events & Convenings	Bring employees together in a collaborative way — either in person or virtually — to celebrate impact and participate in feedback discussions.	Incorporate consumer perspectives in the design and execution of hosted events; anticipate consumer priorities when delivering presentations at external events.	Reflect the board's and shareholders' perspectives about social impact priorities in events the organization convenes or in presentations delivered at third-party events.	Include partners in event design and/or as part of a presentation or panel on social impact.	Convene influencer groups to help inform social impact strategy, provide feedback on current initiatives or help champion a cause or approach.	Grant priority media unique access to hosted events and leverage third-party events to deepen relationships with media in attendance.

ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY
IN ACTION

“Truth never damages
a cause that is just.”

MAHATMA GANDHI

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY **EXISTS ACROSS KEY SECTORS:**

CORPORATE

Lead & engage audiences
to create shared value

“Our clients recognize that in an increasingly transparent environment, a corporation must explain the company behind the product, its values, and how it positively contributes to society.”

PAUL JENSEN,
North American corporate chair,
Weber Shandwick

SOCIAL

Live & foster a culture of shared
accountability & impact

“Foundations would do well to become radically more transparent and accountable, not merely for their own sake, but to set an example for the nonprofits they fund. After all, if foundations, with their influence, deep pockets and professional staff, don’t demand more transparency and accountability from nonprofits, who will? They are key to unlocking the immense potential of the nonprofit sector.”

MARC GUNTHER,
Founder, Nonprofit Chronicles blog

PUBLIC

Empower an informed
& active populace

“Transparency lies at the very foundation of good governance,” as quoted upon the adoption of the new Rules on Transparency, which called for a “transparency revolution” to empower citizens to have greater scrutiny over Government actions and expenditures.

MICHAEL SCHÖLL,
Chairman of the 46th Session of the United
Nations Commission on International Trade Law

CORPORATE SECTOR

“ [...] if you want to be successful in tomorrow's world, you have to reach a higher level of trust, which requires more transparency.”

PAUL POLMAN, CEO, UNILEVER



For businesses, reporting on social and environmental impact has become an imperative. Stakeholders of all types demand information beyond governance practices and financial accountability. And companies are recognizing the inherent value in engaging with those stakeholders on sustainability and social responsibility — from elevating reputation, to anticipating resource scarcity and talent needs, to moving beyond risk mitigation to drive innovation. The Governance & Accountability Institute finds that as of 2015, 75% of S&P 500 companies are producing an annual sustainability or corporate responsibility report, up from just under 20% in 2011. Now, leading companies are going beyond static reporting cycles to steadily communicate what impact they are having on the world.

BRINGING TRANSPARENCY TO LIFE FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Unilever* has set a new standard for how companies can integrate shared value and sustainable practices into the heart and soul of the organization. Through the [Sustainable Living Plan](#), Unilever not only tracks its own progress toward ambitious 2020 global goals but also empowers consumers to live “well and within the natural limits of the planet.”

As **Jonathan Atwood**, Unilever’s Vice President of Sustainable Living and Corporate Communications, North America, explains: “Unilever advances our Sustainable Living Plan in open dialogue with key audiences about successes, challenges and lessons learned and cultivates ongoing conversation across our diverse communications channels.”



Unilever



Prominent appearances and thought leadership by executives, such as CEO Paul Polman, share journeys with media and reinforce integration of sustainability into all business operations



Unilever #brightFuture brings the Sustainable Living Plan to life for consumers, connecting Unilever with its family of brands



Progress reports, infographics and convenings keep stakeholders up-to-date on goal progress and learnings

Q&A: THE FUTURE OF CSR & SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING



Michael Meehan, Chief Executive of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

He has led several companies as CEO around the world, focused on the intersection of technology, sustainability and innovation.



Catie de Montille, Vice President, Weber Shandwick

She leads Weber Shandwick's sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) reporting efforts, helping clients engage stakeholders in ongoing conversations about transparency and impact.

Catie de Montille:
What role does GRI* play in facilitating greater transparency?

Michael Meehan: GRI helps businesses, governments and other organizations understand and communicate their risks, opportunities and impacts on critical sustainability issues such as climate change, human rights and corruption. GRI enables better decision making by business and governments through the use of GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards, the world's most trusted and widely-used sustainability reporting standards. GRI Standards are used by thousands of organizations in more than 90 countries. Reporting is the first step in enabling greater transparency and trust in companies and governments around the world.

GRI's Strategic Plan: Empowering Sustainable Decisions

- 1 Enabling Smart Policy
- 2 More Reporters & Better Reporting
- 3 Moving Beyond Reports
- 4 Innovation & Collaboration



Catie de Montille:
What is the value of transparency through reporting?

Michael Meehan: Transparency through reporting enables better strategic business and policy decisions on critical sustainability issues using information that matters. The reporting process helps organizations understand this non-financial information and communicate it — not only to stakeholders outside the organization, but also internally so better decisions can be made. Sustainability reporting is also crucial to build and maintain trust between organizations and their stakeholders. The data from the reporting process helps organizations identify, manage and communicate their risks, opportunities and impacts around key sustainability issues. This provides a powerful catalyst for continuous change and improvement.

Q&A: *continued*

Catie de Montille: **What challenges do companies face in pursuing greater transparency?**

Michael Meehan: Despite the rapid expansion of companies adopting sustainability reporting, a number of organizations are still working to understand the exact form their reporting should take — what issues they should be reporting on, and how to then communicate about those impacts, given the wide range of stakeholders that a company must consider. There are various ratings organizations and reporting frameworks available, leading to a sense of “reporting fatigue” by many companies, which can be a challenge. But the reality is that GRI Standards are the only globally accepted sustainability standards. There are many complementary standards and frameworks available that focus on specific areas, issues, and audiences. GRI — as the “data engine” behind many of these standards — is complementary to the vast majority of these specific initiatives. By using GRI Standards, organizations can better understand the full breadth of their non-financial risks and opportunities and identify their material issues*. They can then choose to dive deeper into these specific issues by using these linked standards or frameworks.

Catie de Montille: **How have reporting and transparency evolved since GRI began its work in the late 1990s?**

Michael Meehan: In the late 1990s, sustainability reporting was a niche practice. At that time, our primary aim was to encourage more organizations to report on their impacts. Now, thousands of companies around the world use GRI (74% of the world’s largest 250 corporations alone — source KPMG 2015 report) to report on their sustainability performance. Our new strategic plan includes four pillars that drive the conversation forward, towards a business climate in which sustainability is integrated into all organizational decision-making.

***Material Issues:** Material, or relevant issues are ones that represent the organization’s significant economic, environmental and social impacts; or substantively influence the assessments and decisions of stakeholders.

Catie de Montille: **Where is reporting headed next?**

Michael Meehan: Although corporate reporting and performance measurement have increased dramatically over the past decade, key sustainability issues such as climate change, population growth, wealth inequality, environmental degradation and human rights abuses — have not been properly addressed. These global issues will have an increasing impact on companies and communities around the world. Addressing these global challenges will require companies and policymakers to place greater emphasis on transparency by enhancing the quality and consistency of reporting, and clearly demonstrating the link between sustainability challenges and business performance.

Advances in data and digital technologies will enable companies, governments and stakeholders to access massive volumes of business data with incredible ease. This will push companies to break down operational silos and integrate management systems in ways that allow the business to tackle critical sustainability issues while maintaining growth. This will also empower stakeholders, such as investors, employees and civil society, who will have robust and real-time data on a company’s sustainability performance.

GRI is catalyzing this new era of transparency, a future where organizations move beyond reports to draw sustainability into the heart of strategic decision-making, in order to create a more sustainable future for all.

SOCIAL SECTOR

“ If the philanthropic sector is transparent about mistakes and lessons along the way, and adapts as the situation calls for, hopefully we’ll all end up a little wiser and a little closer to solutions that can more effectively address the daunting challenges of our day. ”

JEAN CASE, CEO, THE CASE FOUNDATION



Leading nonprofits and foundations operate by a clear theory of change, which requires that they not only disclose legal status and financial accountability, but also evaluate their effectiveness against rigorous social and environmental metrics. They must always be learning about what works and what doesn't in a way that continues to drive positive social change against the complex issues of our time. True effectiveness therefore requires transparency. On the other side of the equation, funders, be they foundations or individual donors, rely (or should rely) on transparency to align their financial resources with the impact they seek to achieve. If the social sector hopes to advance the “effective altruism” movement and harness the resources of impact-minded institutions and generous crowds, it must elevate transparency and effectiveness in engagement strategies.

WELCOMING FAILURE IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR: 3 LESSONS ON FAILING FORWARD



Allyson Burns,
SVP Communications,
Case Foundation

In 2012, we at the Case Foundation* issued a challenge to the social sector to “[Be Fearless](#)” in our efforts to create and fund solutions for

significant social challenges. The call to action was clear: take risks, be bold and embrace failure. Inherent in accepting that challenge was a commitment to transparency and a willingness to share the messy process of making change. But given what is at stake — the health of our planet, the strength of our society, the quality of human life itself — a little humility, vulnerability and openness seems like a fair exchange. Here are a few lessons on failing forward we have learned through our work to empower transformational change. You can also read more on our [Be Fearless Hub](#) and in the “[What We’ve Learned](#)” section of our website.

THE CASE FOUNDATION

1 Solve the right problem.

Having a solution is not the same as solving a problem. Pay close attention to what is evident — and more importantly what is not so obvious — and use insight to shape decisions. To make change in people’s lives, we have to understand what the true need is and how we can inspire people to act to solve it.

2 Be a true collaborator.

Change is an ongoing process fueled by learning. We must be willing to admit that we don’t have all the answers — or even know all the right questions to ask — and then invite others who have information, perspectives and ideas to complement our own into the process. As in life, progress is about the shared journey, not the destination.

3 Act. Assess. Adapt.

Creating change requires being able to lead through uncertainty, remaining humble enough to recognize learning opportunities and nimble enough to respond to feedback and change course responsibly. In the end, an entrepreneurial approach allows us to address social challenges faster, smarter and with better impact.

HOW FOUNDATIONS CAN CHAMPION TRANSPARENCY TO DRIVE **INNOVATION & IMPACT**



Bradford K. Smith is the President of [Foundation Center](#), the leading source of information about philanthropy worldwide. Foundation Center maintains the most comprehensive database on American and, increasingly, global grantmakers — a robust, accessible knowledge bank for the sector — and conducts research, education and training programs designed to advance knowledge of philanthropy at every level.



Good works were once chiefly the concern of nonprofits and the foundations that fund them. As social responsibility, sustainability and shared value practices are becoming more widely accepted and adopted across sectors, the role of philanthropy is shifting. Foundations, as both the stewards of large endowments and advocates for distinct theories of change, are increasingly relied upon for leadership to drive new funding and program models to solve immense challenges such as global poverty. In order to achieve the promise of strategic philanthropy, foundations have a responsibility to champion transparency, innovation and collaboration. Here are three critical actions foundations can take to foster openness and partnership in service of greater collective action and impact.

1 Innovate together.

In the social sector, there is no inherent return for being first to market with a bold idea or being the only provider of a new innovation. In fact, the opposite is true: the more social innovations permeate, the better the public good outcomes are for people everywhere. The promise of “open source” for social progress is immense. Foundations, in their role as funders and experts, can set the tone for collaboration among their grantees, with their peers and across their partners in the private and public sectors.

2 Listen more.

Proving a theory of change is long and hard work. From defining the problem to be solved to architecting the right programs and interventions to measuring outcomes and impacts, the process is complex and nuanced. The more foundations can elevate

the insights of grantees and partners and incorporate their perspectives into program design, measurement and evaluation, the more sophisticated all parties can become in aligning the right resources to the right problem in real time — and comfortable and adept at learning and adapting from failure.

3 Share early and often.

There is a tendency for organizations to wait to share results until there is a clear milestone to acknowledge, such as when a program is completed or a metric is achieved. However, there is much to be gained from revealing the messy process of change, not just the outcomes. Embracing the practice of sharing incremental updates, course corrections and insights about what isn't working can lead to deeper collaboration and inspire better and faster innovation. It requires some vulnerability, but ultimately helps us all achieve more impact.

PUBLIC SECTOR

“Just dumping data is not the answer, it ticks a box but it doesn't do the job.”

MEG HILLIER, LABOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, UNITED KINGDOM



Transparency has long been an integral component of good government operations, and the lack of it has historically been a key factor for large-scale social movements and revolutions intended to open up governance practices. In order to maintain a democratic system, citizens have the right to know where tax dollars are spent and what laws and regulations they are subject to. Now, government entities around the globe are beginning to implement public policies that prioritize transparency and hold all sectors accountable for their societal impacts.

THE NEW PUBLIC POLICY FRONTIER: **MANDATED TRANSPARENCY**

In the past decade, companies have disclosed environmental and social information due to internal or public pressure, not because of government regulation.

This dynamic is rapidly shifting, as countries like China, South Africa and India are already implementing policies to mandate greater transparency in nonfinancial corporate reporting. In the EU, Parliament recently passed a law requiring major businesses to report on social, environmental and human rights impact, which will become mandatory in the 2017-2018 financial year.

“I am pleased that the Council has adopted (the non-financial reporting) Directive, which will drive the long-term performance of the EU’s largest companies by significantly improving their transparency and, concretely, the disclosure of material non-financial information. Companies, investors and society at large will benefit from this increased transparency.”

MICHEL BARNIER

Vice President of the European Commission in charge of Internal Market and Services

How do organizations shift to respond to legislation?

- + View social responsibility as a process: identify, gather, evaluate, manage, validate, report
- + Integrate marketing, legal, compliance and auditing across the organization
- + Streamline reporting standards with formatting guidelines and consistent practices
- + Expand scope of disclosure to include supply chains and third parties
- + Disclose philanthropic giving in accordance with government mandates

HOW GOVERNMENTS CAN TAKE ON CORRUPTION — **AND WIN**

Valerie Pinto is CEO of Weber Shandwick India. She has over 18 years of experience as a strategic counselor to Fortune 500 companies and C-suite executives on shaping their reputation and leading with transparency.



The government of India is focused on efforts to improve transparency and accountability under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who defines these values as “the two cornerstones of any pro-people government.” This country in particular, which defeated nearly two centuries of colonial rule through a populist civil disobedience movement for independence, provides some compelling insights on how the evolution of open governance can keep pace with the demand from citizens for rights, resources and opportunity.

India’s experience with the practical application of transparency, accountability and participatory empowerment provides examples for other countries that embrace democratic rule of law and seek to transform from historically agrarian economies and enfranchise millions of citizens who have never had a voice in government before, but who are vocal participants in the evolution to a stable global market economy.

Modern-day, independent India owes many of its more recent systemic reforms to grassroots efforts, especially championed by younger citizens and the media, to ensure basic entitlements and means of participation by all Indians in the process of government. Two efforts have been particularly fruitful: e-government and right to information (see following page).

India’s more recent focus on transparency, anti-corruption measures and pro-business public policy has had a positive impact on economic development and perception too. In the World Economic Forum’s 2015-2016 ranking of the most competitive global economies, India jumped 16 spots to be ranked 55th, following five consecutive years of decline. Elsewhere the World Justice Project ranked India 37 out of 102 countries on the Open Government Index 2015 — another strong indicator that the reforms are trending in the right direction.

HOW GOVERNMENTS CAN TAKE ON CORRUPTION—AND WIN: *continued*

e-Government

India understands the power of e-governance for transparency and more efficient service delivery. Today, most public departments, including the Police and Judiciary, have implemented e-governance systems. Remarkably, several state governments have introduced e-governance standards that are more stringent than national government requirements.

India's biggest challenge in this space however, is the fact that it has the lowest penetration of Internet connection of the world's leading economies. Improving digital infrastructure, therefore, has become the single most important step in ensuring an effective e-government system is realized.

Because of it, the Modi government has now embarked on a landmark infrastructure and transparency program called "Digital India". The initiative is the cornerstone of the effort to ensure government services are made available to citizens electronically, files and information are synchronized across agencies faster, and Internet connectivity is increased throughout the country.

Moreover, "Digital India" is designed to touch every aspect of people's lives. From applying for national scholarships to booking a doctor's appointment, the program will bring a majority of services directly to citizens through their fixed and mobile devices. Local governments — the key to most of rural India's welfare — are expected to see the most benefit, as they will be connected to central hubs for faster access to information.

Further, the initiative aims to eliminate corrupt practices in areas like education, public healthcare and other essential services by streamlining practices through technology.

Right to Information

India's landmark Right to Information (RTI) law, enacted in 2005, allows citizens to request information from the majority of government departments. That department is then required to reply expeditiously or within thirty days to any request for information.

The RTI has had a notable impact, shifting the nature of the relationship between governments and its public. Today, Indians consider the RTI Act as their "Right to be Heard," with the law mandating fines and penalties for government officials who withhold information.

Of course, there are some who believe that RTI might have more far-reaching implications — particularly in the area of corruption. Whilst individual complaints are being addressed the absence of a formal mechanism to flag and address broader systemic issues is a cause for concern.

Nevertheless, the RTI has shifted the balance of power away from politicians and bureaucrats, where it has historically been concentrated, giving those across the demographic spectrum that makes up India the means to put a check on individuals in a position of authority and to ensure that services and supports reach them as intended.

HOW THE **UN GLOBAL GOALS** WILL TRANSFORM PUBLIC SECTOR TRANSPARENCY

Hanna Hellquist directs Public Affairs at Weber Shandwick's Prime unit in Stockholm, Sweden. She specializes in governance, transparency and global development issues.



In September 2015, the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs) were officially adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in New York City. The SDGs, or “Global Goals”, are a new, universal set of goals, targets and indicators that UN member states will be expected to use to frame their agendas and political policies over the next 15 years to address challenges such as poverty, gender equality, clean water, clean energy and climate change.

Transparency, international development and democracy are inextricably linked.

Corruption and inefficiency often stand in the way of international development, and democracy and governance efforts. But without transparency, accountability is almost impossible and without accountability, democracy becomes a hollow label. While development efforts often focus on the material well-being of people and societies, all evidence shows that development will be seriously impeded if efforts do not advance the freedoms that are protected in even the most elementary of democracies. Citizens must be able to hold decision-makers accountable for the use of public money, to ensure investments meet their needs, aren't lost to fraud or corruption, and drive progress in crucial areas. In order for this to happen, citizens must have access to information about where public money comes from, where it goes and what it delivers. Governments of today need to take the first step in all matters related to transparency, as they set a standard for other actors.

GLOBAL GOALS: *continued*

There is tremendous value in having universal standards for reporting progress towards the new Global Goals.

Universal standards make benchmarking and comparisons across time, actors and other key indicators possible. Further, monitoring and evaluation by trusted third parties puts pressure on governments and other actors to actually achieve results. As the history of international development efforts has taught us, coherent reporting standards are what make the difference between real accountability and lip service to grand development agendas. To achieve those standards will take profound political will, financial support to collect, analyze and report data, and ongoing efforts to demonstrate the win-win value proposition for all actors in making investments in political and financial capital.

We need to take a long view for progress towards the Global Goals — but not lose sight of important incremental milestones.

The road to a sustainable future is paved with good intentions, but requires a commitment to transparency to turn intentions into impact. It will take time to learn how multiple sectors, actors and interventions are making a collective impact on the Global Goals. And it will take sophisticated evaluation and analytics to understand what contributes most to progress: political will, resource allocations, cross-sector collaborations, behavior change campaigns, or any number of other factors.

There are clear and important communications implications for collective action for the Global Goals.

All sectors and actors would benefit from abandoning the aid jargon that has for so long characterized global development efforts. Established aid terminology — empowerment, mainstreaming and awareness raising; capacity building and stakeholder engagement; catalytic, holistic and rights-based approaches — while often based on genuine and ambitious intentions, often overshadow the actual challenges of everyday life for people living in poverty and oppression. For this basic reason, cooperation between the development and private sectors doesn't happen. Business can't understand what development people are saying due to jargon that doesn't factor in their priorities. If we seek to achieve collective impact for the common global good and the final eradication of poverty, we must find simpler language and messages that are accessible to all — across borders, generations, sectors and life situations.

ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY TIMELINE

1967

U.S. Congress passes the Freedom of Information Act, giving citizens the right to access information from the federal government. Currently, over 95 countries have implemented Freedom of Information legislation.

1972

Watergate scandal fractures trust between the presidency and the American public, ushering in an era of government mistrust.

1977

Increased communication about human rights abuses across the globe caused President Jimmy Carter to base his foreign policy on curbing abuse.

1986

Michel Gorbachev calls for glasnost, or more transparency about the Soviet Union's government. This would ultimately lead to the disintegration of the USSR.

1990s

Information about multiple multinational corporations employing unjust labor practices spurs mass protests.

1993

Transparency International, a supranational organization, begins tracking corruption and promoting transparency for governments worldwide.

1995

Commercialization of the Internet ushers in an era of on-demand data and information.

Google begins as a research project for two Stanford PhD students and soon changes the way we index, search and integrate information.

1999

Repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act removes the wall between commercial banks and securities firms.

U.S. President Clinton's impeachment hearing.

1971

The Pentagon Papers case involving the Nixon administration and the *New York Times* strengthened the media's rights to obtain information from government and print classified materials.

1976-78

U.S. Congress passes Government in Sunshine, Presidential Records and Ethics in Government Acts, systemizing scrutiny in the public sphere.

1980s

Tobacco executives attempt to keep secret that cigarettes cause lung cancer.

1989

With the collapse of the Berlin Wall came numerous details about conditions in East Germany during the Cold War.

1992

The signing of the Maastricht Treaty officially forms the European Union, which would usher in an era of unprecedented cooperation between states.

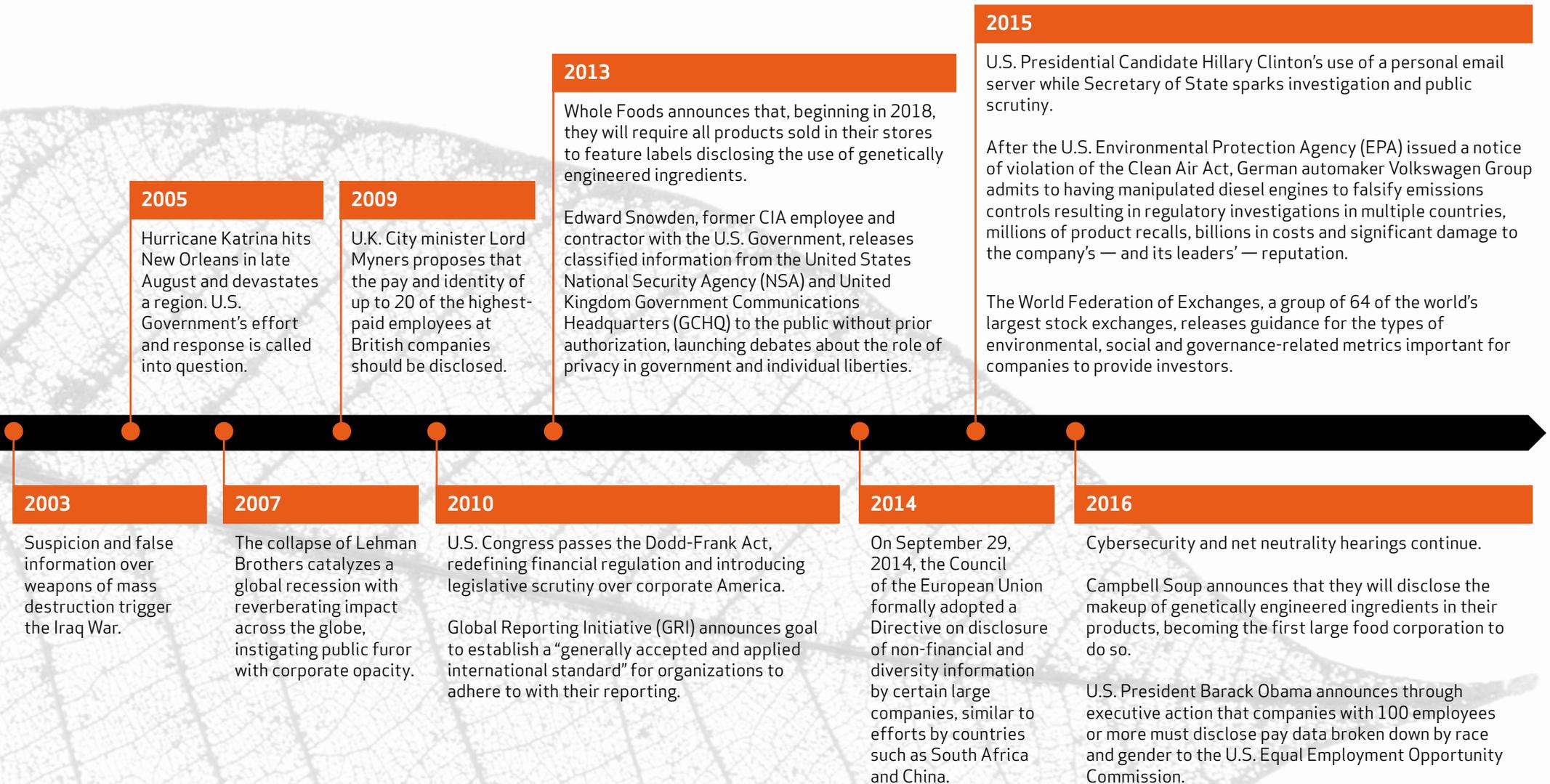
1994

Foundation Center creates its first website, ushering in a new era of foundation communications.

1996

U.S. Congress passes the HIPAA Act to increase transparency and accountability in medicine. HIPAA protects the confidentiality of both the patient and the doctor.

ALWAYS-ON TRANSPARENCY TIMELINE



LEARN MORE

[**Weber Shandwick's The CEO Reputation Premium: Gaining Advantage in the Engagement Era**](#) report demonstrates how vital CEO and senior leader engagement is to corporate reputation in an increasingly connected and transparent world.

[**Weber Shandwick's The Company Behind the Brand: in Reputation we Trust**](#) report focuses on how corporate reputation is shifting in our increasingly transparent communications landscape. It goes into how strong identification of corporate brand can help to unify voice and inspire trust.

[**Weber Shandwick Social Impact's Meeting the Transparency Challenge**](#) event featured philanthropy leaders in conversation with Marc Gunther on the topic of how foundations are integrating transparency into their work to solve some of the world's most pressing problems.

[**Weber Shandwick's Third Annual Corporate Citizenship Report and GRI G4 Index**](#) tells the story of how Weber Shandwick views its role in creating shared value, both through our work with client partners and our own sustainability and culture.

[**Kimberly-Clark's* Sustainability 2022**](#) report tells the story of how environmental responsibility is at the core of its culture. Interactive videos and content help multiple audiences connect to the stories Kimberly-Clark has to tell, while also maintaining a focus on delivering relevant data and metrics.

[**Sealed Air's* Sustainability Report, A Better Way for Life**](#), creates a new narrative for the company, infusing sustainability leadership into its core identity and demonstrating how environmental and social considerations are a critical business driver. By thinking about its business as not just the products it sells, but rather as a set of solutions it provides to help customers ensure the quality and sustainability of their own businesses, Sealed Air extends its own sustainability footprint and amplifies the positive impact it makes on global issues.

[**Glasspockets.org**](#), a service of Foundation Center, encourages improved philanthropic transparency in an online world, providing a range of opportunities for foundations to learn and engage. The site offers a transparency self-assessment tool, an interactive knowledge base of transparency examples, and data visualizations and blog posts that feature trends and best practices.

[**The Nonprofit Chronicles**](#) is a new blog by Marc Gunther, the former editor at large of [**Guardian Sustainable Business**](#). It focuses on journalism about nonprofit organizations and their impact, with particular emphasis on effectiveness, accountability and transparency within the social sector.

[**Transparency International**](#) is an independent watchdog organization committed to transparency as a mechanism to expose government corruption.

The United Nations-supported [**Principles for Responsible Investment**](#) (PRI) Initiative is an international network of investors working together to put six Principles for Responsible Investment related to environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) issues into practice. The Principles, signed by almost 1,500 institutional investors globally, promote greater collaboration, disclosures and reporting on progress, among other practices.

CONTACT US TO EXPLORE SOCIAL IMPACT OPPORTUNITIES

PAUL MASSEY

Global Lead - Washington, D.C.
Executive Vice President
pmassey@webershandwick.com
+202 585 2799

VICTORIA BAXTER

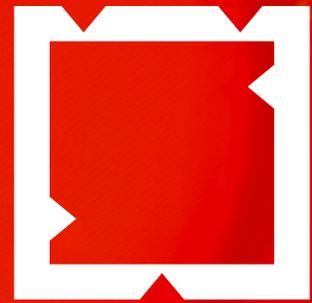
NA Lead - Washington, D.C.
Senior Vice President & Management Supervisor
vbaxter@webershandwick.com
+202 585 2128

BRIAN TJUGUM

EMEA Lead - London
Global Director, Health Impact
btjugum@webershandwick.com
+44 20 7067 0610

IAN RUMSBY

APAC Lead - Sydney
Chair, Australia & Chief Strategy Officer
ian.rumsby@webershandwick.com
+61 2 9994 4475



weber
shandwick

engaging, always.