



## **The Open Government Partnership**

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a global effort to make governments better. Citizens want more transparent, effective and accountable government -- with institutions that empower people and are responsive to their aspirations. But this work is never easy.

It takes political leadership. It takes technical knowledge. It takes sustained effort and investment. It takes collaboration between government and civil society.

The Open Government Partnership is a new multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. In the spirit of multi-stakeholder collaboration, OGP is overseen by a steering committee of governments and civil society organizations.

To become a member of OGP, participating countries must embrace an Open Government Declaration; deliver a concrete action plan, developed with public consultation and feedback; and commit to independent reporting on their progress going forward.

The Open Government Partnership will formally launch in September 2011, when the governments on the steering committee will embrace the Open Government Declaration and announce their country action plans. We invite you to stand with us in September and signal your intent to join OGP and deliver your own commitments when we meet again in Brazil in March 2012.



## Roadmap to Participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP)





## I. OGP Minimum Eligibility Criteria

In order to participate in OGP, governments must exhibit a demonstrated commitment to open government in four key areas, as measured by objective indicators and validated by independent experts. These four areas and indicators are:

### 1. Fiscal Transparency

The timely publication of essential budget documents forms the basic building blocks of budget accountability and an open budget system.

*Measurement:* Two points awarded for publication of each of two essential documents (Executive's Budget Proposal and Audit Report) for open budgets, using the 2010 Open Budget Index, conducted by the International Budget Partnership, which covers 94 countries.

### 2. Access to Information

An access to information law that guarantees the public's right to information and access to government data is essential to the spirit and practice of open government.

*Measurement:* 4 points awarded to countries with access to information laws in place, 3 points if a country has a constitutional provision guaranteeing access to information, and 1 point if a country has a draft access to information law under consideration, taken from a 2010 survey by Right2Info.org (a collaboration of the Open Society Institute Justice Initiative and AccessInfo Europe) that covers 197 countries.

### 3. Disclosures Related to Elected or Senior Public Officials

Rules that require public disclosure of income and assets for elected and senior public officials are essential to anti-corruption and open, accountable government.

*Measurement:* 4 points awarded to countries with a law requiring disclosures for politicians and senior public officials to the public, 3 points awarded to countries with either a law requiring disclosures for politicians OR senior public officials to the public, and 2 points awarded for a law requiring non-public disclosures for elected or senior officials, based on a 2009 World Bank-commissioned survey on



disclosure by elected officials entitled "Disclosure by Politicians," by Simeon Djankov, Rafael La Porta, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, and Andrei Shleifer, which covers 175 countries, a 2009 World Bank study on income and asset disclosure by senior officials entitled "Income and asset disclosure in World Bank client countries," by Richard Messick, World Bank Senior Public Sector Specialist, which covers 149 countries and OECD Governance at a Glance 2009, covering 28 countries.

#### **4. Citizen Engagement**

Open Government requires openness to citizen participation and engagement in policymaking and governance, including basic protections for civil liberties.

*Measurement:* Using the 2010 EIU Democracy Index's Civil Liberties sub-indicator where 10 is the highest and 0 is the lowest score, 4 points for countries scoring above 7.5, 3 points for countries scoring above 5, 2 points for countries scoring above 2.5, and 0 points otherwise. The 2010 Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index covers 167 countries.

Countries can earn a total of 16 points for their performance against these minimum standards of open government. As the Open Budget Index covers only 94 countries, some countries are only measured on three criteria (and can earn up to 12 points). In order to participate in OGP, countries must score at least 75% of the total possible points available to them (e.g. 12 out of 16, or 9 out of 12).

An independent group of experts will oversee the minimum criteria for participation to ensure that all OGP participating countries remain in good standing and that the performance measures are up to date. This independent expert group will be charged with informing the Steering Committee if a country is suspected of falling below the minimum eligibility criteria at any point.

## **II. OGP Common Expectations**

All OGP participating governments must agree to meet five common expectations:

1. Endorse a high-level Declaration of Principles on Open Government;
2. Make concrete commitments as part of a country action plan that stretches the country beyond current practice;
3. Develop country action plans through a multi-stakeholder process, with the active engagement of citizens and civil society;



4. Commit to a self-assessment and independent reporting on the country's progress;
5. Contribute to the advancement of open government in other countries through sharing of best practices, expertise, technical assistance, technologies and resources, as appropriate.

### **III. OGP Steering Committee**

The OGP is overseen by a multi-stakeholder International Steering Committee, comprised of governments (Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States) and leading civil society representatives [Africa Center for Open Governance (Kenya), Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos (Brazil), Instituto Mexicano para la Competitividad (Mexico), International Budget Project (Intl), MKSS (India), National Security Archives (US), Revenue Watch Institute (Intl), Transparency and Accountability Initiative (Intl), Twaweza (Tanzania)].

In 2011, The United States and Brazil co-chair the OGP International Steering Committee. The U.S. will host the first annual OGP meeting. Brazil will host in 2012.

### **IV. Public Consultation on OGP Commitment Development**

OGP participants commit to developing their country action plans through a multi-stakeholder process, with the active engagement of citizens and civil society. Taking account of relevant national laws and policies, OGP participants agree to develop their country commitments according to the following principles:

1. Countries will make the details of their public consultation process and timeline available (online at minimum) prior to the consultation
2. Countries will consult widely with the national community, including civil society and the private sector; seek out a diverse range of views and; make a summary of the public consultation and all individual written comment submissions available online
3. Countries will undertake OGP awareness raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation
4. Countries will consult the population with sufficient forewarning and through a variety of mechanisms—including online and through in-person meetings—to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage
5. Countries will identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation—this can be an existing entity or a new one



Countries will report on their consultation efforts as part of the self-assessment, and the independent reporting mechanism will also examine the application of these principles in practice.

## V. OGP Country Action Plan

Governments will develop OGP country action plans that elaborate concrete commitments. Governments should begin their OGP country action plans by sharing existing efforts related to their chosen grand challenge(s), including specific open government strategies and ongoing programs. Action Plans should then set out governments' OGP commitments, which stretch government practice beyond its current baseline with respect to the relevant grand challenge. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete on-going reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area. OGP recognizes that all countries will be starting from different baselines. Countries are charged with selecting the grand challenges and related concrete commitments that most relate to their unique country contexts. No action plan or specific commitments will be forced on any country.

## VI. Grand Challenges

OGP commitments will be structured around a set of five “grand challenges” that governments face. In year one, **countries will choose at least one** of these grand challenges and develop concrete commitments around open government to address it. Countries are welcome and encouraged to tackle more than one challenge in year one.

The five OGP grand challenges are:

1. **Improving Public Services**—measures that address the full spectrum of citizen services including health, education, criminal justice, water, electricity, telecommunications and any other relevant service areas, by fostering public service improvement or private sector innovation
2. **Increasing Public Integrity**—measures that address corruption and public ethics, access to information, campaign finance reform, and media and civil society freedom
3. **More Effectively Managing Public Resources**—measures that address budgets, procurement, natural resources and foreign assistance



4. **Creating Safer Communities**—measures that address public safety, the security sector, disaster and crisis response, and environmental threats
5. **Increasing Corporate Accountability**—measures that address corporate responsibility on issues such as the environment, anti-corruption, consumer protection, and community engagement

## VII. Concrete Commitments

While the nature of concrete commitments under any grand challenge area should be flexible and allow for each country's unique circumstances, all OGP commitments should reflect four core open government principles.

**Transparency:** information on government activities and decisions is open, comprehensive, timely, freely available to the public and meets basic open data standards (e.g. raw data, machine readability)

**Citizen Participation:** governments seek to mobilize citizens to engage in public debate, provide input, and make contributions that lead to more responsive, innovative and effective governance.

**Accountability:** there are rules, regulations and mechanisms in place that call upon government actors to justify their actions, act upon criticisms or requirements made of them, and accept responsibility for failure to perform with respect to laws or commitments.

**Technology and Innovation:** governments embrace the importance of providing citizens with open access to technology, the role of new technologies in driving innovation, and the importance of increasing the capacity of citizens to use technology.

Countries may focus their commitments at the national, local and/or sub-national level—wherever they believe their open government efforts will have the greatest impact.

Recognizing that achieving open government commitments often involves a multi-year process, governments should attach timeframes and benchmarks to their commitments that indicate what will be accomplished in year one and beyond, wherever possible.

## VIII. Peer Consultation



It is important to ensure that countries' OGP commitments achieve a sufficient and comparable level of ambition that builds upon existing efforts and stretches governments beyond their current baseline. To encourage the sharing of best practice and innovation and maintain high standards, all OGP countries will participate in working level sessions with other participating countries and the OGP Steering Committee during the commitment development phase.

Through these presentations and discussions, governments with initially less ambitious proposals will be able to identify gaps and address them early on. These peer consultation sessions will also enable participants to identify the need for additional feedback from relevant technical experts on specific commitment areas, which the OGP networking mechanism can help facilitate.

#### **IX. OGP Declaration of Principles**

All OGP governments will endorse a voluntary and non-binding declaration that expresses shared beliefs about the role of openness and citizen engagement in fostering accountability, promoting innovation and growth and improving performance. Governments are able to endorse the declaration once they have developed a country action plan elaborating new concrete commitments around open government, and deposited it on the OGP portal.

#### **X. Self-Assessment Report**

All governments will publish a progress report approximately three months after the end of the 12-month OGP implementation cycle. This report should assess government performance in living up to its OGP commitments, according to the substance and timelines elaborated in its country action plan. This report should be made publicly available in the local language (s) and in English and deposited on the OGP portal.

#### **XI. Independent Reporting Mechanism**

As a complement to the self-assessment, an independent assessment report will be written by well-respected local governance experts from each OGP participating country. These experts will fill out a common OGP independent report questionnaire, based on a combination of interviews with local OGP stakeholders as well as desk-based analysis. This report will be shared with a small international expert committee (appointed by the OGP Steering Committee) for peer review to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied. The draft report will then be



shared with the relevant OGP government for comment. After receiving comments on the draft report from the government, the local expert will then finalize the independent report for publication on the OGP portal. OGP governments will also have the chance to issue a formal public response to the independent report on the OGP portal once it is published. The independent report will be made publicly available in the local language (s) and in English, and will be published approximately 3 months after the end of the 12-month OGP implementation cycle.

## **XII. OGP Networking Mechanism**

The OGP networking mechanism helps participating governments identify and connect with the networks, expertise, resources and technology they need to develop and implement their OGP commitments. In particular, many new efforts to engage and empower citizens involve the creative use of new technologies (e.g. internet, mobile phone) or new platforms (e.g. SMS, moderated online chats, etc.). The networking mechanism has engaged a stable of private sector and non-profit entities that are ready and willing to share their ideas, technologies and platforms with OGP governments to help engage citizens and improve government efficiency and responsiveness. This mechanism is available to all OGP participating countries, and contact information will be provided to participants once they signal their intent to join to the OGP Steering Committee.

## **XIII. OGP Portal**

The OGP portal is the initiative's online presence. It is the primary repository for all OGP country action plans as well as the declaration of principles. It provides basic information about OGP's mission, governance and approach, and helps cultivate an interactive community of open government practitioners that are eager to share and document their experience and best practice.

Updated July 8, 2011