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OPEN GOVERNMENT AWARDS

IMPROVING 2015
THEME **PUBLIC SERVICES**

SEVEN WINNING INITIATIVES

Open
Government
Partnership



THEME

In 2015, OGP asked countries to showcase how open government initiatives resulted in concrete improvements in the delivery of public services, e.g. economic welfare programs, health care, education, water, roads, public safety etc. OGP selected this theme in recognition of the fact that public services are the most common interface between citizens and the government, and that governments should ensure transparency, accountability and responsiveness in their design and delivery. Good quality and effective public services respond to the needs of people, including vulnerable groups, and form the foundation of inclusive development. OGP also believes that this theme is a key component of achieving the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

PARTICIPATION

Each OGP participating country was eligible to submit one application to the 2015 Open Government Awards. This year, OGP received 30 applications. A government agency in each country was responsible for submitting the country's application. Governments are strongly encouraged to submit a joint application with one or more civil society partners. Given the theme of improving public services, OGP also recognized and encouraged the submission of initiatives that were led by subnational (vs. national) governments. National governments were required to consult with civil society organizations to select the most compelling initiative to be submitted as the country's entry for the 2015 Awards. Countries were allowed to submit initiatives either within or outside their OGP National Action Plans. This year, three of the seven winning initiatives were commitments from a country's OGP National Action Plan.

CATEGORIES OF RECOGNITION

Recognizing that good ideas come from everywhere, the Open Government Awards seek to showcase a diverse group of initiatives from around the world. Our judges understand that the boldness of each initiative should be assessed relative to the conditions in each country, and that each country will have unique experiences to share given the challenges they face. With this in mind, in 2015, OGP honored three overall WINNERS, four REGIONAL CHAMPIONS and one country in a SPECIAL RECOGNITION category. The special recognition category is for the initiative that made the most compelling case as to how the initiative benefitted vulnerable populations.

For more information, please visit: www.opengovawards.org

URUGUAY

“ATuServicio.uy”



Giving citizens unparalleled access to the performance indicators of health care providers

Every February, Uruguayans who are eligible and meet certain basic requirements are given the option to change their health care provider. Although health care providers scale up their marketing efforts during this time, the country's Ministry of Public Health is responsible for facilitating informed decisions based on providers' actual performance. Formerly, such health care provider performance data was published in an inaccessible closed format on the Ministry's website – the press and the public hardly viewed the dataset, which had only 500 registered downloads in 2013. Citizens instead chose health care providers based on their impressions of the respective company's marketing campaign, even though often the provider's key services were unavailable in their area or a free public option was available with better coverage.

A partnership between government, civil society and the media

ATuServicio.uy allows direct access to the key performance indicators of every health care service in Uruguay - including official and updated **data** on e.g. average wait times for treatment, user satisfaction, and fee structures by provider. The program's objective was to drastically increase access to the indicators of 100% of the health care providers in Uruguay and allow the roughly 1.5 million people eligible to switch healthcare providers in February 2014 to make better decisions. The civil society organization DATA Uruguay and the Ministry of Public Health in collaboration with the online news portal www.180.com.uy found new ways to present and promote the data through an online campaign.

Informed decision making for citizens on a key public service

These measures worked: the 500 sessions of accessing health

care provider data in 2013 grew to 34,092 sessions between February and April 2015 amounting to a 6,800% increase. Users spent an average of five minutes per session and visited an average of five pages of the website, clearly informing themselves thoroughly about the differences among providers.

The new widespread accessibility also revealed imprecisions in data supplied by the health care providers in terms of presentation of reports and data collection methods. Users noticed, and local newspapers conducted investigative journalism based on the data. The newfound accessibility and discrepancies it revealed sparked a broader debate about the quality of the data collected by the Ministry of Public Health, in which local politicians, press authorities and government participated. The service is now planning to add e-participation features, allowing citizens not only to consult and compare indicators, but also submit complaints which will be supervised by the Ministry of Public Health as well as through a transparent online follow-up. This feature will be presented publicly in February 2016.

Going beyond a technological tool

The increased access to information has not only spurred public discussion, it has also led to intervention of authorities from the public hospital, the Ministry, and health care unions to ensure continued data availability. It has incentivized private health care services to update, correct and improve the quality of their information. The program established a new reference point for the information citizens need to choose their health care services.



INDONESIA

“Pencerah Nusantara (The Guiding Lights of the Archipelago)”

A partnership to address complex health challenges faced by an archipelago

Indonesia's geography as an archipelago, with 254 million inhabitants spread out over 17000+ islands, poses a challenge to equitable public service – particularly in the area of health care. Although primary health care services are intended to facilitate community health in terms of both preventive and promotive efforts and there are more than 9500 primary health centers in the country, less than half of them are adequately staffed and managed. This is the case particularly in rural areas, leading to structural problems including poverty, maternal mortality and malnutrition – in general, health services fail to reach citizens in peripheral areas where the government mechanism of local health centers falls short.

An inter-professional collaboration to solve a national problem

Pencerah Nusantara (PN) attempts to address this problem through an inter-professional collaboration initiated by the Office of President's Special Envoy on Millennium Development Goals, which includes partners from civil society, private sector, philanthropies and academic institutions. Each partner contributes expertise in different areas, with the goal of transforming primary health care services in Indonesia. PN is currently taking place in seven community-based health centers in marginalized, geographically isolated areas. Teams of health professionals are deployed to build local health providers' capacity, help run their operations more effectively, and become an information hub for the community. PN specifically targets women and youth. For example, its reproductive health education programs encourage women in the villages to discuss not only their health, but also relevant social and entrepreneurship issues, making them aware of their rights to development as citizens.



Community participation built in to the model

PN employs a range of tools for identifying and solving community health problems. The Community Health Survey gathers health-related data (e.g. state of sanitation and nutrition, knowledge about current services and their quality, etc.) at the sub-district level with the involvement of local inhabitants. This participatory approach builds ownership and community approval of the survey's results. Once the data is analyzed, another “Survey Mawas Diri (SMD)” (“Self-Awareness Survey”) assesses opinions of shared responsibility towards health status and service conditions. The continuation of SMD, “Musyawarah Masyarakat Desa” (“Village Meeting”) is held to determine priority issues, solution design strategy and feasible action plans that identify and mobilize available local resources. Each health center is obliged to hold a forum, known as the Badan Penyantun Puskesmas, that gathers community members to implement health interventions, function as a watchdog, and act as an ambassador of health and an extension of healthcare workers in disseminating health promotion messages to the public.

Progress leads to scale-up at the national level

PN's own assessments have shown significant improvement in health centers' management, health promotion activities, nutrition interventions, and delivery of basic medical treatments. Various community-based health units are now available in each village of the participating locations, with full support of local inhabitants. After three years of implementation, sufficient evidence on the improvement of public health service delivery in the seven designated areas has become the basis for Indonesia's Ministry of Health to scale up the program to the national level. Nusantara Sehat, literally “Healthy Archipelago,” was launched by the President, and is directly monitored by the Executive Office of the President.

UNITED KINGDOM



“Neighborhood Planning”

Handing democratic power to citizens to make planning policies and shape their communities

With the UK facing a housing shortage, the government has committed to significantly boost housing supply. But evidence shows local buy-in is necessary for the effort to be effective: the British Social Attitudes Survey 2013 found that 63 percent of citizens would be more supportive if local people were given greater control and say over what gets built. The then Minister for Planning (now Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government), Greg Clark said: “Planning has tended to exclude, rather than to include, people and communities... People have been put off from getting involved because planning policy itself has become so elaborate and forbidding – the preserve of specialists, rather than people in communities”.

Policy by the People

Neighborhood Planning is the tool that gives communities this control. Fundamentally it allows them to shape their area’s development and growth by setting local planning policies, and investing in community services of their choice using a levy raised from developers. This enables them to decide what type of development is needed and what infrastructure should be provided. The correlating Localism Act placed local planning authorities under a new legal duty to give advice and assistance to communities preparing neighborhood plans or development orders.

This is no easy ask of communities – making planning policy that stands up is complex and time consuming but since the regulations came into force in April 2012, over 1500 communities across England have formally started neighborhood planning – 64 percent of local planning authorities in England now contain designated neighborhood plan areas. Around 270 communities have published full draft neighborhood plans and over 70 neighborhood planning

referenda have been held. All of the referenda so far have been successful: over 198,430 people have cast a vote, average turnout is 35 percent, and the average ‘yes’ vote is 88 percent. Once neighborhood plans have been passed at referendum and brought into force, they form part of the statutory development plan. Communities with a neighborhood plan in place receive 25 percent of the funds raised from developers to spend on their priorities.

Stories from the community

Neighbourhood planning has rightly been called a “quiet revolution”, stimulating stronger neighborhood identity and building local social capital. The community of St James in Exeter set up a new community benefit society using a community share issue to take over and run important assets and green spaces. Residents of a small Oxfordshire village called Woodcote had opposed any new housing development for years, yet the neighborhood plan process resulted in the overwhelming passage of a referendum (for which there was a 60 percent turnout) backing the building of scores more affordable new homes.

Sustaining and scaling up

Around 11 percent of the population of England lives in one of the 1500 neighborhood plan areas. A new 3-year £22.5 million support contract was recently launched, which will provide grant funding and direct support to hundreds of new neighborhood planning groups. The groups will receive greater support – an additional £6000 grant on top of the £8000 that every group can apply for - plus additional expert advice. A mobilisation strategy has also been developed which will raise awareness of this right and ensure that take-up is even higher.

MEXICO



“Stakeholder Participation in Day Care Center Safety”

Transforming public childcare facilities with civic engagement

In 2009, a fire in a public daycare unit located in Hermosillo - in Mexico's northwestern state of Sonora - caused the death of 49 children and left 106 injured. This was one of the region's most tragic calamities and sparked fierce public demands for justice. However, the required dramatic transformation of day care facility inspection mechanisms to improve safety conditions and prevent this incident from repeating itself demanded reviewing nearly 1,400 units in which over 200,000 children are taken care of daily. The need for a collaborative scheme and beneficiary engagement became apparent, as government alone proved unable to address the challenge.

The simple combination of technology and parent participation

The sizeable task of improving the **public child care service** provided by the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) required two things: (1) involving technology in a more effective way to monitor indicators and provide a faster response in cases where regulations were not being adhered to, and (2) involving service users as inspectors to ensure safety regulations were met. To design this last component, Transparencia Mexicana (TM) created a set of algorithms that each month randomly selects ten percent of the day care units in the country to be inspected. Using the beneficiaries database, a random sample of up to 20 parents is selected to conduct the revisions and ensure that these daycares meet safety regulations and standards. Using an inspection guide designed by TM, they review 87 measures that allow them to identify if safety conditions are in accordance with the established regulations. The results are then shared in real time with IMSS and TM through a report that is available at a public website and also made public at the facilities where the visit took place.

Steady improvement and institutionalization

From October 2010 through April 2015, 100% of the surrogate day-care units (where a private entity provides the service on behalf of IMSS) were reviewed at least twice while around 50% of the public scheme day-care units were reviewed. In total, over 30,000 parents have participated, donating 68,246 hours of their time. During the first cycle of visits, only 41 percent of the inspected facilities fulfilled all of the safety measures. Recent data shows a clear improvement: 60 percent of the day care units fulfil all safety measures, 39 percent fulfil between 90 and 99 percent of the requirements and only one percent fulfil less than 89 percent of requirements. Day care units that fulfil less than 80 percent of the safety measures are automatically selected for a visit in the following month. Through a **public website** results can be consulted by other interested parties, which are also available in **open data**.

After the results obtained in the first year, the mechanism was made part of the internal regulation of IMSS, institutionalizing the effort and ensuring it became a regular practice. There are plans to improve information visualization, develop a mobile application to consult and compare the information that is generated by the visits, and develop analytical models that can help predict problems in day care units, as well as to promote improvements in safety regulations. This project has yielded a civic participation mechanism that is simple and inexpensive. It engages thousands of parents in the country to monitor the conditions of an essential public service, providing incentives for reform and sustainability of performance indicators in each facility, as well as essential information for decision makers and beneficiaries.

CROATIA

“E-Citizens”



Involving citizens to be designers, users and evaluators of public services

In early 2013, Croatians who wanted to take advantage of multiple government services online had to register separately for each service, resulting in dozens of logins and passwords. Many electronic services asked for an authentication mechanism too strong or too weak for the purpose of the service, and personal data was entered often without quality control. **E-Citizens** is part of the Croatian Government's reform of public administration aimed at becoming more open and accessible to citizens by improving access to information on public services and performance of public service providers. The program uses three unique building blocks: a **Central State Portal** which contains all the information about public services for citizens in one place; a National Identification and Authentication System (NIAS) where identification and authentication to public electronic services is performed only once; and a **Personal Mailbox** where citizens receive personal information from public entities in a secure way.

A multi-service network reforming the style of governance

Individuals with internet access are able to engage in government-to-citizen or citizen-to-government communication. “E-Consultations” are the projects’ most innovative aspect, providing citizens with an opportunity to directly comment on legal and policy documents. Citizens can easily track the response of government bodies on all submitted comments and suggestions, since they publish clear reasons for rejecting proposals. “E-Registry” allows citizens to get official personal documents online and print them at home rather than wait in queues at administrative offices. In the public health sector, “E-Prescription” allows every citizen to pick up a prescription at any pharmacy



in Croatia, but also access all prescriptions used in the past 6 months either via mobile device or PC. On the education front, “E-School Diary” connects teachers, parents and students to focus on improving the quality of school education. It is through the diary that parents have access to their children’s grades, teachers’ notes and other important information on children’s school activities. One year since its launch in June 2014, the Central State Portal was being used by more than half a million people. More than 150,000 users accessed public electronic services around 2.5 million times using NIAS. In addition, 90,000 users activated their Personal Mailbox. Public institutions sent the Personal Mailbox users over 2.2 million messages. Based on these numbers, the e-Citizens system decreased the number of visits to public institutions by 4.7 million in a year.

Legal obligation for public institutions to use E-Citizens

In order to oblige all public institutions to use e-Citizens system, a law on the State Information Infrastructure entered into force in July 2014, making it compulsory for all public sector bodies to use the system when developing new electronic services. New applications are being introduced to further increase electronic service use, including incorporating online banking credentials: almost 1 million people have online banking accounts in Croatia, so this could rapidly increase the number of e-Citizens users. The program enjoys a strong political commitment to develop open and citizen-oriented public services, with solid policy coordination undertaken jointly by the Croatian Prime Minister’s Office and Ministry of Public Administration. With 600 new users every day, the potential for sustainability of the initiative is evident.

ARMENIA



“Smart Municipality”

Connecting the needs of the citizenry to the institutional development of local government

The development of local governance and municipal management allowed Armenia to join the mainstream of European democratic institutions. However, the new system of local government (LG) - operating in 49 urban and 866 rural communities - has lacked capacities, resources and skills. LG have struggled to provide efficient management or deliver high-quality need-based public services, and to ensure that their activities are sufficiently transparent, participatory, and accountable. Though the LG were structurally decentralized, conceptually they still carried the inertia of the old centralized communist system: citizens lacked tools to access local services and could not oversee the work of the municipal authorities or influence their decisions.

A human-centered approach to ICT to improve public administration

The “**Smart Municipality**” platform has triggered a reform process that has helped connect the citizenry to the institutional development of LG bodies. Two actions were central in this process: a Municipal Management Information System (MMIS) to enhance LG officers’ capacities was introduced in over 550 communities in all 10 regions of Armenia, (involving approximately 92 percent of the population), and “Citizen Offices” established in 11 urban communities. These measures create opportunities for ordinary citizens to participate in the community management process, providing access for marginalized groups.

The web-based platform provides municipal services online, including tax and fee calculation, budget monitoring and problem reporting. The system also grants access to information on municipal events, available services and employment opportunities. Users can submit comments

and participate in discussions on community-related issues, program planning and implementation. They can also submit applications for public tenders and receive responses. Over 3000 public servants have been trained to operate the Smart Municipality system. The Citizen Offices deliver between 16 and 27 individual services, depending on the size of the community.

Generating and sustaining efficiency in the delivery of public services

Results show many indicators of success, particularly reduced turnaround time for important services: getting a construction permit, for instance, used to take 10-15 days and can now be done within 3-7 days. Paperwork and time spent for processing local taxes, duties, and fees have been cut, and services related to provision of various certificates as well as administration of municipal property have noticeably improved – delay and lines have disappeared. Community development plans have become transparent, from the design stage through actual management of the municipal projects to evaluation of the outputs and outcomes. Key to the program’s success is the breadth of its parent consortium, which involves public and private institutions. The implementing team involves a partnership between the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations of Armenia and the non-profit Information Systems Development and Training Center, with ongoing support from the Prime Minister’s Office and Development Agencies. The program has reached a point where municipalities allocate funding in their annual budgets to ensure system maintenance, update the technical equipment, enlarge user networks and to regularly train staff. The project has led to a strategic devolution of power from the central to local level and ultimately to the end-user, strengthening participation and feedback capacity of the citizenry.

TUNISIA



“Tunisia on-line e-Procurement System (TUNEPS)”

Increasing transparency in a challenging political context

Corruption is an obstacle to economic and human development. It generates social inequality and led to the revolution of 2011 in Tunisia. Public procurement is a key economic activity of governments and plays a critical role in generating revenues and providing essential public goods, works and services. But it is also the government activity most vulnerable to wastefulness, mismanagement, inefficiency, and corruption. TUNEPS was designed within the framework of the electronic government program in order to try to solve corruption and inefficiency in public procurement.

A portal with suppliers and average citizens in mind

TUNEPS was established to streamline procedures, minimize human intervention and save money by decreasing public procurement transaction costs. It is primarily targeted towards suppliers and public purchasers. The system provides equal opportunities for suppliers through single-window access that allows them to obtain important documents without having to visit several public administrations. It also allows them to ask questions about subscription and submission procedures online. This facilitates access for small and medium enterprises in distant towns who want to participate in public procurement. Since May 2014, the TUNEPS pilot program involved tenders of 17 public purchasers. Through TUNEPS, 119 tenders have been published and 44 contracts have been signed. Participants are instructed on how to use the program, with 29 training sessions having been conducted to date for 1190 users.

But TUNEPS is not just a portal for suppliers and purchasers. Before the system was introduced, the

only parties having access to the public procurement assessment results were the bidders on the respective tender. Today, TUNEPS provides real-time information to citizens, civil society and the media on how public funds are being used. The system explains new public infrastructure projects and lists the number of tenders issued by every public purchaser and tender results. Additionally, a call center is available to receive complaints and clarification requests of the system's users. Call center operators provide assistance to users but also compile their feedback to help improve the platform.

Scaling up progress

Establishing TUNEPS was not easy. The reform measures faced resistance to change, and the multiplicity of parties involved in the implementation complicated this further. The political and social challenges faced by government also meant that TUNEPS was not a priority. However, the project is attempting to scale up efforts to popularize the use of TUNEPS. Besides building more capacity to manage increasing user numbers, TUNEPS engineers are creating new solutions such as setting up links with banks to facilitate e-payment and coordinating with other government administrations to achieve the goal of zero paper use. A newly developed communication plan, to be implemented with media and civil society, aims to inform purchasers and suppliers about the importance of using the platform – it will also train them to use it and urge them to contribute to the assessment and the improvement of TUNEPS. The communication plan also aims to popularize the system throughout the country and encourage civil society to make proposals to improve government action.

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OPEN GOVERNMENT AWARDS Panel of Judges



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