



29 July 2016

Dear colleagues,

In late April you wrote to the OGP Steering Committee outlining some concerns about OGP, including concrete suggestions to address these concerns and strengthen the partnership in the future. As the Governance and Leadership subcommittee of OGP, we are replying on behalf of the Steering Committee.

We appreciate the leadership and ownership you have all shown - and continue to show – towards OGP by sharing your collective concerns and proposals.

The letter is extremely timely. As we approach OGP's fifth anniversary, and fourth Global Summit in December, the Steering Committee agreed at its last meeting, in Cape Town in May, to undertake a strategic refresh which will set a vision for the next five years of OGP. This refresh will examine how well OGP has worked in the first five years and will include a review of the basic rules of the game. The Cape Town discussions recognized the need to improve the quality of the national co-creation processes, further strengthen the design and uptake of the IRM and improve our own transparency and accountability as a Steering Committee. We recognize that as a partnership that promotes the principles of participation, transparency and accountability we need to practice what we preach.

We value the analysis and suggestions you have made, and wish to assure you that work is already underway on some of the specific proposals outlined in the letter. For example, OGP's Criteria and Standards subcommittee is developing revised co-creation guidelines that aim to improve both the quality and ambition of the government/civil society partnership that is at the heart of OGP. These will be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting in September and then be released for public comment.

The civil society Steering Committee members - responding to explicit civil society demand - have experimented with a more transparent and inclusive selection of the newest batch of Steering Committee members. This included full transparency on selection criteria and scoring, as well as public webinars with shortlisted candidates. They have also agreed to act on some of your suggestions by asking the Support Unit to include small biographies, contact information and the details of their 'seconds' on the OGP website as soon as possible. Furthermore they will start sharing notes from their monthly calls over the civil society mailing list.

We would welcome further input from the community into the strategic refresh process that will be organised by the Support Unit, overseen by us, the Governance and Leadership subcommittee. We intend for this process to be highly inclusive and consultative, particularly



drawing on the knowledge and experience of national government officials and civil society organizations who are implementing open government reforms day-to-day.

The refresh should also surface a set of strategic choices for OGP to consider as it enters its sixth year, including decisions related to the institutions of OGP such as the Steering Committee and Support Unit. Throughout the process we will inform and engage the broader community as much as possible. More details on the strategic refresh process and timeline can be found in the annex to this letter.

The Steering Committee has discussed the need for more regular engagement with the broader OGP civil society community as a way to share decisions and perspectives from the inside, and to be informed and inspired from the outside. Your letter and the 'strategic refresh' process present an immediate opportunity to do this. The civil society members - both current and incoming - will facilitate a set of group conversations with the community to co-create civil society OGP priorities for the coming years. The Support Unit will facilitate this process and will make sure it mirrors as much as possible OGP's principles and guidelines on engagement and co-creation, including: using multiple off and online channels, proactively sharing details on the planned conversations and making sure conclusions are documented and fed back to the civil society community. These conversations will also be reported back to the full Steering Committee. On July 22 the first conversation took place at the OGP Asia Pacific Regional Dialogue in Manilla. Details on other opportunities will be shared with the civil society community by mid August.

As the Governance and Leadership subcommittee of OGP we feel that a thorough process of reflection and strategizing, involving many of the most active OGP participants from both government and civil society, and leading to both a refreshed strategy and a political agenda that addresses some of the key concerns in your letter, is the best response possible to the concerns you raise. We are committed to strengthening OGP over the next five years, to ensure we deepen our impact and use OGP to deliver transformative change for citizens around the world.

With the deepest respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alejandro Gonzalez Arreola", is positioned above the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alejandro Gonzalez Arreola
Executive Director
GESOC, Gestión Social y Cooperación A.C.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Ayanda Dlodlo".

Ayanda Dlodlo
Deputy Minister of Public Service and Administration,
Government of South Africa

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Jean-Vincent Placé".

Jean-Vincent Placé
Secretary of State for State Reform and Simplification
Government of France

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Manish Bapna".

Manish Bapna
Executive Vice President and Managing Director
World Resources Institute, OGP Support Civil Society Co-Chair

Copied to:

OGP Steering Committee
OGP Civil Society Listserv
Sanjay Pradhan, CEO, OGP