

**OGP UK National Action Plan 2013-15
Commitment progress update**

Commitment title		
Open contracting		
Lead department(s)	Cabinet Office	
Civil society organisation(s) involved in implementation to date	CAFOD, Campaign for Freedom of Information, Compact Voice, Global Witness, Integrity Action, ONE, Open Knowledge Foundation, The Institute for Government	
Report date	30 June 2015	
Overall commitment status	In progress	
Overall progress against commitment		
Mixed progress has been made against this commitment, primarily due to resource issues.		
Progress against milestones/activities		
1.	Endorse, implement and champion internationally the Open Contracting Principles at the end of October 2013 and continue to assist in the development of a set of open contracting data standards	On track
<p>The UK officially endorsed the Principles at the Open Government Partnership summit on 31 October 2013.</p> <p>The OGP provides a forum to work with other countries on this agenda and to explore opportunities to collaborate and share experiences on open contracting. We will also continue to share knowledge through participation in group discussions, e.g. conferences, events and webinars organised by the Open Contracting Partnership. We welcomed and contributed to the Open Data Institute's open data training course for procurement officers.</p> <p>Over the course of this year, the objective of the Open Contracting Data Standard team in GDS will be to continue working with data publishers, including those in the UK, and data users to build a flexible, modular and adaptable standard that is able to meet their needs.</p>		
2.	Subject to technical capability, enhance the scope, breadth and usability of published contractual data on the Contracts Finder system to include:	Behind Schedule

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● providing greater transparency of contracts awarded overseas, beginning October 2013 ● delivering a new procurement pipeline in November 2013 ● investigating the feasibility of providing greater transparency of design competitions run by the Technology Strategy Board ● engaging with prime contractors to encourage them to provide improved visibility of supply chain opportunities, and explore a means of standardising the publication of sub-contractor details through Contracts Finder to make this data more accessible ● investigating the use of open corporate identifiers to allow the data to be more easily compared and linked to other data held about contracting authorities and suppliers ● working with a user group to look at ways of improving site usability to make it easier to publish data and to find opportunities and other data of interest 	
<p>DFID and FCO committed to publish overseas contracts and tenders on Contracts Finder, beginning in October 2013. In Q4 of 2013/14 DFID published 88 contracts, of which 21 were published by overseas offices. In Q1 of 2014/15 DFID published 56 contracts, of which 11 were published by overseas offices. Q2 2014/15 data is currently being compiled. In 2014 the FCO published over 400 contracts and tenders from multiple countries fully clearing its previous backlog.</p> <p>In 2015 the FCO proposed a pilot scheme to publish supplier datasets from its overseas network to reflect the difficulties that became apparent when attempting to publish all £10k+ contracts in full from all posts. This work has been overtaken by the new procurement regulations which came into force in February 2015, concerning the use of Contracts Finder and the associated re-design of its functionality. In particular, the automatic feed linking Contracts Finder to the FCO Bravo system is not yet live, and there is a document size limit on uploaded attachments (max 5mb).</p> <p>Procurement pipelines were last publicly updated in December 2014, with £191 billion of potential business opportunities. They are an integral part of the redeveloped Contracts Finder, launched in February 2015, with a separate tab to highlight future opportunities. A new feature permits buyers to add opportunities for any future period or year. There is ongoing work to ensure this material reflects the needs of small and medium as well as larger businesses. Work on corporate identifiers is still being undertaken by the Transparency Team, who are reviewing the scope for a non-proprietary approach taking account of cost and resource.</p> <p>Functionality of the redeveloped Contracts Finder site continues to be improved, based on feedback from site users, user lab testing, various working groups and panels (including the Pipelines Working Group and SME Panel). Options for including sub-</p>	

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contractor details in Contracts Finder are being explored. A Contracts Finder user/stakeholder working group is being considered to continue guiding the site's development in the long term.		
3.	Look to introduce standard transparency clauses into central government contracts in consultation with civil society organisations and the business community	On track
An updated draft transparency clause has been circulated for consultation across government and to civil society organisations with a view to implementing it for government contracts by October 2015. Initial implementation will focus on the Model Services Contract as an example to show how the clause would look in the most complex contracts. We will also need to address how the clause might be scaled down for simpler forms of contract.		
4.	Build on the findings from a pilot programme by launching the new Solutions Exchange website during Winter 2013 for small and medium-sized enterprises to pitch innovative solutions to government outside of the formal procurement process, and for government to conduct informal pre-market engagement by providing greater transparency of the challenges and themes to which solutions are needed	Completed
Work on Solutions Exchange has been discontinued. Contracts Finder 2 will include space for PPD/Innovation.		
5.	Take steps to ensure transparency about outsourced services is provided in response to freedom of information requests, by encouraging the use and enforcement of contractual provisions to maintain the levels of transparency provided by the Freedom of Information Act 2000: revised guidance will be issued in 2014.	Behind schedule
Working with CBI and industry, and following extensive consultation across government and civil society organisations, a set of general transparency principles were developed which set for the first time a presumption in favour of disclosure of information that might normally have been withheld or redacted due to reasons of commercial confidentiality. The principles go further than FOI by asking departments to discuss with suppliers early in the procurement process the types of additional information that might be disclosed on contract award and during the life of a contract (although disclosure should follow FOI on national security or genuine commercial sensitivity grounds) and publishing this information. The Crown Commercial Service are preparing a procurement policy note during the summer 2015 to implement the principles with data to be published initially on GOV.UK.		
6.	Publish contracts using the local language where contracts are drawn up with overseas suppliers; we will consider what further steps can be taken to provide greater transparency of contracts to affected communities	Closed

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	where additional language barriers occur.	
The FCO contracts are normally written and agreed in English. It is not practical to routinely translate contracts into a local language without incurring disproportionate costs.		

More information about this commitment and previous progress updates are available on the [OGP website](#).