

INDEPENDENT REPORTING MECHANISM (IRM):

CANADA PROGRESS REPORT 2014–2015



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Second Progress Report



INDEPENDENT REPORTING MECHANISM (IRM): CANADA PROGRESS REPORT 2014-2015



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INDEPENDENT REPORTING MECHANISM (IRM): CANADA PROGRESS REPORT 2014-2015

Overall, Canada's second action plan was stronger than its first plan and was developed through a much more thorough consultation process. The plan outlines some transformative commitments on open data, open science and mandatory reporting on extractives. Access to information reform and improved implementation should be a priority moving forward, to address one of the primary concerns of stakeholders.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary international initiative that aims to secure commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) carries out a biannual review of the activities of each OGP participating country.

Canada officially began participating in September 2011, when John Baird, Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, declared the government's intent to join.

This mid-term progress report covers the first year of implementation, from the release of the action plan in November 2014 through July 1, 2015. Responsibility for OGP is embedded in the federal government and is led by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). TBS leads the Open Government Steering Committee (OGSC) comprised of the departments and agencies tasked with implementing components of the action plan. The former TBS President, Tony Clement, also established an Advisory Panel on Open Government comprised of members of civil society, business and academia who were invited to provide advice and guidance on open government activities.

OGP PROCESS

Countries participating in the OGP follow a process for consultation during the development of their OGP action plan and during implementation.

Canada adopted a much more consultative approach to the development of its second national action plan in comparison to the consultations it ran in drafting the first national action plan. The process had three phases. Timelines and advance notice were only partially available throughout. Government carried out awareness-raising activities, in-person and online

AT A GLANCE

PARTICIPATING SINCE: 2011
NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS: 12
NUMBER OF MILESTONES: 45

LEVEL OF COMPLETION

COMPLETED: 0
SUBSTANTIAL: 8 (67 %)
LIMITED: 4 (33 %)
NOT STARTED: 0

TIMING

ON SCHEDULE: 9 (75 %)

COMMITMENT EMPHASIS

ACCESS TO INFORMATION: 12 (100 %)
CIVIC PARTICIPATION: 4 (33 %)
ACCOUNTABILITY: 3 (25 %)
TECH & INNOVATION FOR
TRANSPARENCY &
ACCOUNTABILITY: 8 (67 %)

NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS WITH

CLEAR RELEVANCE TO AN
OGP VALUE: 12 (100 %)
OF TRANSFORMATIVE
POTENTIAL IMPACT: 3 (25 %)
SUBSTANTIAL OR COMPLETE
IMPLEMENTATION: 8 (67 %)
ALL THREE (★) : 2 (17 %)

consultations. A summary of comments was provided, in addition to a dataset of all comments received.

While a regular forum for consultation during implementation remains to be established, the Advisory Panel on Open Government is the most concrete multi-stakeholder advisory mechanism that can be identified, but it is underutilized.

The self-assessment process was put on hold in Canada due to a federal election. Until the election call, there is evidence that the self-assessment had been on track to be published and opened for consultation on schedule. A draft was provided to the IRM researcher to aid writing of this report.

COMMITMENT IMPLEMENTATION

As part of OGP, countries are required to make commitments in a two-year action plan. The following tables summarize each action, its level of completion, its potential impact, whether it falls within Canada's planned schedule, and the key next steps for the action in future OGP action plans. The Canadian action plan was organized in the same way as its first action plan, focusing on four main areas: a foundational commitment, open data, open information, and open dialogue. In total there are twelve commitments, some with multiple deliverables, or milestones. The plan does not contain any clear deadlines for the completion of its various milestones. The inclusion of more specific timelines for deliverables would benefit future action plans, allowing Canadians to monitor progress and to engage with the OGP on a more regular basis.

Canada's action plan contained two starred commitments [2 and 7]. These commitments are measurable, clearly relevant to OGP values as written, of transformative potential impact, and substantially or completely implemented. Note that the IRM updated the star criteria in early 2015 in order to raise the bar for model OGP commitments. In addition to the criteria listed above, the old criteria included commitments that have moderate potential impact. Under the old criteria, Canada would have received four additional stars [commitments 3, 4, 5 and 8]. See <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/node/5919> for more information.

Table 1 | Assessment of Progress by Commitment

| COMMITMENT SHORT NAME | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | LEVEL OF COMPLETION | | | | TIMING |
|---|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|---------------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| | NONE | MINOR | MODERATE | TRANSFORMATIVE | NOT STARTED | LIMITED | SUBSTANTIAL | COMPLETE | |
| ★ COMMITMENT IS MEASURABLE, CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED. | | | | | | | | | |
| 1: Implement the Directive on Open Government | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 1.1. Issue Directive on Open Government | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.2. Publish open government implementation plans | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.3. Tools and guidance for departmental data inventories | | | | | | | | | |

| COMMITMENT SHORT NAME | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | LEVEL OF COMPLETION | | | | TIMING |
|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|---------------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| | NONE | MINOR | MODERATE | TRANSFORMATIVE | NOT STARTED | LIMITED | SUBSTANTIAL | COMPLETE | |
| <p>★ COMMITMENT IS MEASURABLE, CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p> | | | | | | | | | |
| ★2: Open Data | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 2.1. Common open data principles | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.2. Common open government license | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.3. Common open data standards | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.4. Federated open data search service | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.5. Expand national appathon event | | | | | | | | | |
| 3: Canadian Open Data Exchange | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 4: Open Data for Development | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 4.1. Open data initiatives in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.2. Host an international open data conference in 2015 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5: Open Data Core Commitment | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 5.1. Expand release of data | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.2. Public consultations on open data | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.3. Launch new open gov portal | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.4. Expand and deliver CODE | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.5. Consolidate geospatial data | | | | | | | | | |

| COMMITMENT SHORT NAME | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | LEVEL OF COMPLETION | | | | TIMING |
|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|---------------------|---------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| | NONE | MINOR | MODERATE | TRANSFORMATIVE | NOT STARTED | LIMITED | SUBSTANTIAL | COMPLETE | |
| <p>★ COMMITMENT IS MEASURABLE, CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p> | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.6. Broaden adoption of IATI standard | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 6: Open Science | | | | | | | | | Behind schedule |
| 6.1. Open Science Implementation Plan | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.2. One-stop publication search | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.3. Scientific Data Inventory | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.4. List of peer-reviewed articles | | | | | | | | | |
| ★7: Mandatory Reporting on Extractives | | | | | | | | | Tel que prévu |
| 7.1. New legislation on extractives | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 7.2. Stakeholder engagement | | | | | | | | | |
| 7.3. Required publication of payments by extractive entities | | | | | | | | | |
| 8: Open Contracting | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 8.1. Release data on contracts | | | | | | | | | |
| 8.2. Increase detail of disclosure | | | | | | | | | |
| 8.3. Guidance to departments | | | | | | | | | |
| 8.4. Open Contracting Data Standard | | | | | | | | | |

| COMMITMENT SHORT NAME | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | LEVEL OF COMPLETION | | | | TIMING |
|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|---------------------|---------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| | NONE | MINOR | MODERATE | TRANSFORMATIVE | NOT STARTED | LIMITED | SUBSTANTIAL | COMPLETE | |
| <p>★ COMMITMENT IS MEASURABLE, CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p> | | | | | | | | | |
| 9: Open Information on Budgets and Expenditures | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 9.1. New online service to view federal spending | | | | | | | | | |
| 9.2. Proactive disclosure portal | | | | | | | | | |
| 9.3. Budget 2015 data | | | | | | | | | |
| 10: Digital Literacy | | | | | | | | | Behind schedule |
| 10.1. Sponsor digital skills programs | | | | | | | | | |
| 10.2. Digital skills training/education | | | | | | | | | |
| 10.3. Fund digital skills programs | | | | | | | | | |
| 11: Open Information Core Commitment | | | | | | | | | On schedule |
| 11.1. Modernize ATIP services | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.2. Virtual library | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.3. GCDOCS | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.4. Document release | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.5. Science library | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.6. Regulatory information | | | | | | | | | |
| 11.7. Improve government websites | | | | | | | | | |

| COMMITMENT SHORT NAME | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | LEVEL OF COMPLETION | | | | TIMING |
|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|---------------------|---------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| | NONE | MINOR | MODERATE | TRANSFORMATIVE | NOT STARTED | LIMITED | SUBSTANTIAL | COMPLETE | |
| <p>★ COMMITMENT IS MEASURABLE, CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p> | | | | | | | | | |
| 12: Consulting Canadians | | | | | | | | | Behind schedule |
| 12.1. Improve Consulting with Canadians website | | | | | | | | | |
| 12.2. New consultation portal | | | | | | | | | |
| 12.3. Expand social media reach | | | | | | | | | |
| 12.4. Principles and standards for public consultation | | | | | | | | | |
| 12.5. Open government consultations | | | | | | | | | |

Table 2 | Summary of Progress by Commitment

| NAME OF COMMITMENT | SUMMARY |
|---|---|
| <p>★ COMMITMENT IS MEASURABLE, CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p> | |
| <p>1. Implement the Directive on Open Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial | <p>This commitment aims to implement a mandatory policy requiring federal government departments and agencies to maximize the release of government information and data of business value. Although the Directive was issued on 9 October 2014, substantial progress remains to be seen in its implementation. Further work is needed on the basic implementation of this commitment and it is recommended that the government: clarify the scope of the directive by better explaining the term 'business value'; develop and publicize standards for the preservation of information and data published according to the directive; and ensure the development of standards so that information and data published across departments are published in a manner that is organized, searchable, and comparable.</p> |
| <p>★2. Open Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Transformative • Completion: Substantial | <p>Open Data Canada is a starred commitment. It aims to remove existing jurisdictional barriers to realizing the full potential of open data. Significant progress in important milestones for this commitment have been accomplished. Given the complexity of pan-Canadian discussions, full implementation of this commitment could be potentially transformative. Moving forward, it is important to prioritize further actions on open data standards and raising awareness among citizens that may be interested in using data governed by the Open Government License.</p> |
| <p>3. Canadian Open Data Exchange</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial | <p>This commitment seeks to establish the Canadian Open Data Exchange (ODX). ODX was formally launched in Waterloo, Ontario in May 2015, and the Exchange has started outreach efforts in the form of conversations with the provinces. Although there are companies interested in the services of ODX, the impact of this commitment is narrow in scope. This initiative could have bigger impact if it was able to look beyond commercialization to embrace other sectors, such as the not-for-profit and cultural sectors.</p> |
| <p>4. Open Data for Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial | <p>This commitment aims to enhance accountability and to create new solutions for public services delivery as well as new economic opportunities with developing countries. So far, an open data for development (OD4D) network has been established in Latin America and the Caribbean, the government has supported five research projects related to open data, and an Open Data Conference was held in May 2015. In the future, it is important to enhance the geographic scope of this initiative by completing the planned engagement in Asia and Africa. In order to move forward, the IRM researcher suggests expanding the OD4D network and the focus of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to support all countries.</p> |
| <p>5. Open Data Core Commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial | <p>This commitment seeks to promote availability and reuse potential of federal open data. So far, the government has added over 500 new datasets since July 2014, a new open government portal was launched in November 2014, and the second Canadian Open Data Experience (CODE) hackathon took place in February 2015. There is limited progress in the consultation on open data prioritization. Moving forward, the IRM researcher recommends continued implementation of the Federal Geospatial Platform Portal since the geospatial community is one that has a long history with open data and it could be engaged in a much more active way.</p> |

| NAME OF COMMITMENT | SUMMARY |
|---|--|
| ★ COMMITMENT IS MEASURABLE, CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED. | |
| 6. Open Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Transformative • Completion: Limited | Open science aims to maximize access to federally funded scientific research. At the time of writing the report, this commitment was slightly behind schedule. If implemented properly, this commitment will allow for greater transparency into the federal government's scientific information and data holdings and can be seen as foundational to future open science commitments. Going forward, resources and time need to be invested in training and finding staff with requisite competencies to move open science forward. |
| ★7. Mandatory Reporting on Extractives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Transformative • Completion: Substantial | Mandatory reporting on extractives is a starred commitment and aims to introduce legislation on payments made to governments related to the commercial development of oil, gas, and minerals. The Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act came into force on 1 June 2015. There is substantial progress in the consultations with civil society on reporting standards. In the future, this initiative could have an even bigger impact if the government agreed to implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). |
| 8. Open Contracting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial | This commitment aims to coordinate single-window access to a broad range of open contracting information from across federal departments. A new "Search Government Contracts" feature was launched in November 2014, which allows users to search the procurement information of twenty federal institutions. There is still no scope or schedule for releasing more detailed information on government contracts over \$10,000. Significant progress was made with the Open Contracting Data Standards pilot and the training to government agencies regarding proactive disclosure systems. To move forward, the IRM researcher recommends the government expand the number of agencies under the Search Government Contracts service, publicize the scope and schedule of increased disclosure information, and evaluate the results of the Open Contracting Data Standard pilot. |
| 9. Open Information on Budgets and Expenditures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Substantial | This commitment looks to publish expanded information and data on federal spending. A searchable online database was launched in April 2015. Charts and tables from the 2015 federal budget are accessible on the open.canada.ca website. There is some overlap between this and the previous commitment related to open contracting, as the last one could potentially offer the same access to information as the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) InfoBase. This commitment could be improved by including all government proactive disclosure information, and by releasing federal budget data in open format. |
| 10. Digital Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited | This commitment supports development of tools, training resources, and other initiatives to help citizens acquire the essential skills needed to access digital information. Although this commitment is important to reduce the digital gap, division of powers in Canada limit the federal government's power over education in provinces. Furthermore, this commitment does not tackle the fact that many citizens and civil society organizations lack the technology needed to work with data. To improve digital literacy, other commitments should address the access to technology. |

| NAME OF COMMITMENT | SUMMARY |
|--|---|
| ✦ COMMITMENT IS MEASURABLE, CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED. | |
| 11. Open Information Core Commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Substantial | <p>The government of Canada aimed to expand its open information activities and facilitate easier access to published federal information. So far, ten additional federal institutions are using the Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) services, and information on completed Access to Information (ATI) requests is now available as open data. A records-management system is in the process of being rolled out and Library and Archives Canada has opened four million pages that were classified. In terms of tackling the problem of restricted documents, this commitment is a significant step forward. However, in terms of the bigger issue of opening information, the activities overall are not sufficient. Reform of the Access to Information Act, and better implementation are vital moving forward.</p> |
| 12. Consulting Canadians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Limited | <p>Consulting Canadians seeks to provide direction, resources and next generation tools to consult more broadly with citizens and civil society. Improvements have been made to the website and progress has been seen on social media outreach. Moving forward, focus should be set on overcoming the limited progress on the new consultation portal, the principles and standards for public consultation, and setting a clear goal for the Open Government Consultations.</p> |

RECOMMENDATIONS

Stakeholders and early research into the OGP, and research on public administration more generally, point to a number of factors that have the potential to strengthen and facilitate change. Taking this into consideration, there are a number of recommendations that can be made around the way that commitments are constructed, the manner in which engagement around the OGP occurs, the coordination of strategic documents, and resourcing. Based on the findings in the progress report, the IRM researcher made the following five specific, measurable, accountable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) recommendations for improving the OGP process in Canada.

TOP FIVE 'SMART' RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reform and improve implementation of the Access to Information Act.
2. Overhaul the Advisory Committee to become an active, permanent dialogue mechanism around the OGP and improve meaningful public dialogue, to move beyond informing and consulting to enhanced citizen collaboration and empowerment.
3. Support the collection and analysis of additional Canadian data while increasing the diversity and quality of datasets available.
4. Ensure that commitments made in future action plans are supported by proper resources to facilitate the work of the public servants responsible for implementing the plan. This would enhance the potential for successful implementation.
5. Develop and publicize a clear policy on the preservation of digital material.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To participate in OGP, governments must demonstrate commitment to open government by meeting minimum criteria on key dimensions of open government. Third-party indicators are used to determine country progress on each of the dimensions. For more information, see Section IX on eligibility requirements at the end of this report or visit: <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/how-it-works/eligibility-criteria>.



Mary Francoli is an Associate Professor in Communication Studies at Carleton University's School of Journalism and Communication. Her research concentrates on the impact of digital media on governance, the state, and society. Her publications have focused extensively on open government and e-government.



The Open Government Partnership (OGP) aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism assesses development and implementation of national action plans to foster dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.

I | NATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN OGP

HISTORY OF OGP PARTICIPATION

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder international initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. OGP provides an international forum for dialogue and sharing among governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector, all of which contribute to a common pursuit of open government.

Canada began its formal participation in September 2011, when the Minister of Foreign Affairs, John Baird, declared the government's intention to join the initiative.¹

In order to participate in OGP, governments must exhibit a demonstrated commitment to open government by meeting a set of (minimum) performance criteria on key dimensions of open government that are particularly consequential for increasing government responsiveness, strengthening citizen engagement, and fighting corruption. Objective, third party indicators are used to determine the extent of country progress on each of the dimensions. See Section IX: Eligibility Requirements for more details.

All OGP participating governments develop OGP country action plans that elaborate concrete commitments over an initial two-year period. Action plans should set out governments' OGP commitments, which move government practice beyond its current baseline. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete on-going reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

Canada developed its first national action plan from September 2011 to April 2012. The effective period of implementation for the action plan submitted in April was officially 1 July 2012 through 30 June 2014. The consultation process for the second national action

plan spanned from April to October 2014. The plan was officially launched in November 2014. This was slightly late according to the OGP schedule, which indicates an implementation time period from 1 July 2014 through 30 June 2016. This mid-term progress report covers the first year of implementation of this period, from the release of the action plan in November 2014 to the end of the first year of implementation, 1 July 2015. The government provided the IRM researcher with a draft self-assessment in July 2015. At the time of writing (October 2015), the self-assessment remained unpublished as the result of a federal election.

BASIC INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Canada has a federal system of government where power is divided between the federal and provincial governments according to the Constitution. Given that only national level governments are able to gain OGP membership at this time, responsibility for the OGP is embedded in the federal government and is led by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). The political system is, however, important to note as it limits the ability for the federal level of government to affect pan-Canadian change unilaterally, bringing the need for intergovernmental cooperation to the forefront.

According to the government's first self-assessment report, a dedicated Open Government Secretariat within TBS manages overall coordination, monitoring, and reporting of implementation activities.² TBS leads an Open Government Steering Committee (OGSC). The OGSC is comprised of a number of departments and agencies that are tasked with implementing a component of the existing action plan. The OGSC is "responsible for enterprise-wide governance of all federal Open Government initiatives, including the implementation of the commitments in Canada's Action on Open Government."³

TBS is the primary lead for the majority of commitments in the second national action plan; however, other federal departments and agencies also play a lead role.

The former TBS President, Tony Clement, established an advisory panel on open government upon joining the OGP. Currently, the panel is comprised of 13 members from civil society, business, and academia, including independent commentators. The role of the panel is to provide advice and guidance on open government activities, including:

- Finding ways to improve the delivery of open data and open information to citizens;
- Considering how to make the most of open government to maximize innovation and knowledge sharing; and
- Exploring how federal organizations can do an even better job of consulting Canadians.⁴

Currently, it is difficult to know the budget dedicated to OGP. The IRM researcher could only find one commitment with an explicit budget. In the February 2014 federal budget, the government announced \$3 million Canadian to be contributed to an Open Data Exchange (ODX),⁵ which later became one of the commitments in the second national action plan. The \$3 million is to be matched by funds from technology companies. Lack of resources was noted by almost all government interviewees as an issue with a negative impact on the timely implementation of commitments, and on their ambitiousness. For the most part, those inside government are only able to build commitments around work that they are already engaged in as there are no resources available to establish new initiatives. In many cases, implementation of the open government action plan is adding additional work with no additional resources at a time when cuts to the public service have already stretched existing personnel.

There was a federal election in October 2015 which, as is discussed in the Country Context section of this report, had some impact on the administration of the OGP within the country.^{6,7}

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The IRM partners with experienced, independent national researchers to author and disseminate reports

for each OGP participating government. In Canada, the IRM partnered with Mary Francoli, Associate Professor, School of Journalism and Communication, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Dr. Francoli reviewed the government's unpublished self-assessment report, gathered the views of civil society, and interviewed appropriate government officials and other stakeholders. OGP staff and a panel of experts reviewed the report.

This report covers the first year of implementation of Canada's second action plan, from November 2014 to 1 July 2015. Beginning in 2015, the IRM also publishes end-of-term reports to account for the final status of progress at the end of the action plan's two-year period. This report follows on an earlier review of OGP performance, "Canada Progress Report 2012-2013," which covered the development of the first action plan as well as implementation from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013.

Dr. Francoli consulted a variety of stakeholders across Canada. Open North⁸—a Montreal-based organization that creates websites to promote government transparency and citizen participation—along with PoweredBy Data,⁹ the non-profit arm of Ajah¹⁰—an organization that helps funders and fundraisers use data for improved decision-making—organized a consultation meeting in Montreal on 15 July 2015. Other stakeholders were interviewed either one-on-one, or in small group formats between 30 June 2015 and 30 September 2015. The majority of the interviews took place in person. In some instances, Skype was used when distance prohibited a face-to-face meeting, or at the request of interviewees. Stakeholders also provided the IRM researcher with information via email in cases. Stakeholders represented a variety of professions and sectors including journalists, academics, librarians, nongovernmental organizations, the federal government, and some from provincial governments.

Dr. Francoli also reviewed two key documents prepared by the government: a report on Canada's second action plan consultation¹¹ and a draft self-assessment report prepared in July 2015. At the time of writing, the self-assessment report was unpublished as a federal election call was made on 5 August 2015, which led to a suspension of new publications and consultations at the federal level. The government notified the OGP

Support Unit of the impact of the election. Numerous references are made to these documents throughout this report, along with references to the first IRM report, and to reports issued by both governmental and nongovernmental actors that relate to the broad areas comprising the Canadian action plan: open information, open data, and open dialogue.

A full list of interview participants can be found in Section VIII of this report and the Annex.

¹To see letter of intent view here: <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/canada>

²"Implementation of Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report," <http://open.canada.ca/en/implementation-canadas-action-plan-open-government-year-1-self-assessment-report>.

³"Implementation of Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report," <http://open.canada.ca/en/implementation-canadas-action-plan-open-government-year-1-self-assessment-report>.

⁴"Advisory Panel on Open Government," <http://open.canada.ca/en/advisory-panel-open-government>.

⁵"Budget 2014," <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2014/home-accueil-eng.html>.

⁶<http://psacunion.ca/cuts-federal-public-services>.

⁷<http://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/federal-government-on-track-to-cut-35000-public-service-jobs>.

⁸Link to organization's website <http://www.opennorth.ca/>

⁹Link to organization's website <http://poweredbydata.org/>

¹⁰Link to organization's website <http://ajah.ca/>

¹¹<http://open.canada.ca/en/consultations/what-we-heard-summary-report>.

II | PROCESS: ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Canada's second action plan consultation process saw much more progress from its first action plan.

Canada adopted a much more consultative approach to the development of its second national action plan in comparison to the consultations it ran in drafting the first national action plan. The consultation around the development of the second action plan took place over a six-month period from 24 April 2014 to 20 October 2014. The consultation included multiple phases and took place both online and in-person.

Countries participating in OGP follow a set process for consultation during development of their OGP action plan. According to the OGP Articles of Governance, countries must:

- Make the details of their public consultation process and timeline available (online at minimum) prior to the consultation;
- 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;
- Undertake OGP awareness-raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation; and
- 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.

A fifth requirement, during consultation, is set out in the OGP Articles of Governance. This requirement is dealt with in Section III: Consultation during implementation:

- Countries are to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP

implementation. This can be an existing entity or a new one.

This is dealt with in the next section, but evidence for consultation both before and during implementation is included here and in Table 1 for ease of reference.

Table 1 | Action Plan Consultation Process

| PHASE OF ACTION PLAN | OGP PROCESS REQUIREMENT (ARTICLES OF GOVERNANCE SECTION) | DID THE GOVERNMENT MEET THIS REQUIREMENT? |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| During Development | Were timelines and process available prior to consultation? | Partially ¹ |
| | Was the timeline available online? | Partially ² |
| | Was the timeline available through other channels? | Partially |
| | Was there advance notice of the consultation? | Partially |
| | How many days of advance notice were provided? | Unclear |
| | Was this notice adequate? | No |
| | Did the government carry out awareness-raising activities? | Yes ³ |
| | Were consultations held online? | Yes ⁴ |
| | Were in-person consultations held? | Yes |
| | Was a summary of comments provided? | Yes ⁵ |
| | Were consultations open or invitation-only? | Open |
| | Place the consultations on the IAP2 spectrum. ⁶ | Consult |
| During Implementation | Was there a regular forum for consultation during implementation? | No |
| | Were consultations open or invitation-only? | Invitation/limited participation |
| | Place the consultations on the IAP2 spectrum. | Consult |

ADVANCE NOTICE AND AWARENESS-RAISING

The consultation process leading up to the consultation on the draft second action plan had three phases: Consultation Plan (24 April – 8 August); Idea Dialogue (16 May – 8 August); and Activities Discussion (8 August – 15 September). The government did not make the above-mentioned dates clear on its consultation website, but readily provided them to the IRM researcher when asked.

The Consultation Plan phase gave people an opportunity to comment on the way that the government proposed to run the consultative process for the second action plan. They were asked to provide feedback on how to strengthen the consultation strategy. The Idea Dialogue phase was used to discuss old ideas and generate new ideas for commitments that could be included in the new action plan. This second phase allowed people to comment online, but it also included eight in-person workshops and panel discussions in different parts of

the country. The Activities Discussion phase proposed activities for the action plan, which were informed by the Idea Dialogue phase and were posted online for public consultation. Some CSOs indicated that the dates were unclear and that they were informed of timelines that differed from the website during in-person meetings.⁷ A press release was issued notifying people of the process leading up to consultation, but it did not include clear time frames.⁸ An overview of the pre-consultation process and feedback from some of the meetings was included on the government website.⁹

Some government and civil society stakeholders noted that while there was some advance notice of the in-person meetings, it was fairly short. It was widely stated that the opportunity to comment on the full draft plan was very limited.

While the pre-draft consultation took place both online and offline, the consultation around the actual draft action plan was online only. The deadline around the draft consultation was more concrete. The draft plan was

released for public consultation online on 9 October 2014 and it closed at noon on 20 October.¹⁰ Some CSOs noted that while the overall consultation was lengthy, the consultation on the actual draft plan was very short.

Awareness-raising activities were fairly minimal in the consultation on the first action plan.¹¹ Work remains to be done in this area, although improvements were made around the second action plan. The government continued to make use of news releases, the open government website, and Twitter to draw attention to its consultation. Using the #OGAP2, a wider range of public servants and nongovernmental stakeholders tweeted and re-tweeted information regarding the consultations.¹² One additional mechanism incorporated in the consultations on the second action plan was the use of an email list. According to information provided by TBS, the list had approximately 3,400 subscribers by July 2015. Most subscribe through the *Receive Open Government Emails Form on open.canada.ca*. Canadian Open Data Experience (CODE) participants agree to receive updates on open government during registration and the government offered attendees of other events it hosted the opportunity to sign-up for updates. Notices regarding consultation dates and activities were circulated fairly regularly to those who subscribed to the updates.

DEPTH AND BREADTH OF CONSULTATION

Many of the civil society stakeholders interviewed perceived the consultation process for the development of the second action plan to be more genuine than the consultation process for the first action plan.¹³ The in-person consultation meetings were a welcome addition to the consultation process, but some CSOs and the IRM researcher found that the structure and conduct of the meetings should be reexamined to ensure a discussion on a diversity of open government issues and to maximize stakeholder engagement. Some CSOs—notably the Centre for Law and Democracy—also indicated that the discussion was fairly controlled during the in-person consultations.¹⁴ Other stakeholders who attended in-person consultation meetings described them as very structured and overly focused on open data.

In some cases, consultation participants were invited to one of the in-person meetings. The IRM researcher, for example, was invited to attend the meeting in Ottawa, Ontario. However, participation was not purely invitation-only, and notice of the in-person meetings was circulated.

The government did not track participation at all phases of consultation. At the Idea Dialogue phase where the government did track in-person consultations, 42% of participants came from the public sector, 20% from the private sector, 17% from the non-profit sector, and 16% from academia. Five percent represented a hybrid across sectors. There was a diversity of views, but participation was predominately from the public sector. In total, 621 ideas, comments, and questions were collected online and in-person between 30 April 2014 and 31 July 2014. Three themes dominated the discussion: innovation and literacy, citizen engagement, and release early and improve often. Each theme appeared in approximately 23% of the 621 ideas, comments, and questions. Other themes, including open data and open and agile culture were less prominent at 8% and 9% respectively.

While stakeholders were consulted, the ultimate, final say on commitments to be included or excluded in the plan was made by the TBS.

It is difficult to assess how the stakeholder feedback from the consultations was used. Some stakeholders have called the participation limited.¹⁵ The civil society representative who spoke at the Canada country meeting during the OGP Meeting of the Americas in San Jose, Costa Rica in November 2014, indicated that CSOs were unsure of how their feedback was used. The online consultations were open to any interested participants. Because people could participate anonymously it made it somewhat difficult to track unique contributions or to know much about the background of some of the participants. The in-person consultations were held in different cities across the country. This appears to be an attempt to reach out to a diversity of views and geographies, but the expansive size of the country makes it difficult to do this and some communities were left out or underrepresented. Eastern Canada, for example, only had two in-person meetings. Northern Canada was also left out.

In addition to the open stakeholder consultations, the Advisory Panel on Open Government met on 3 June 2014 via teleconference to discuss potential commitments for the second action plan. The IRM Researcher was informed that this discussion lasted approximately one and a half hours and each member was only provided with 2–3 minutes to offer their ideas and thoughts. Minutes from that discussion can be found on the open government website.¹⁶ Generally, the panel expressed broad support for the draft plan although suggestions for improvement were also provided including, among other things, the inclusion of criteria for non-disclosure, the expansion of partners involved with the Open Data Institute, and amendment of access to information legislation.

¹ Find timeline and process available here: <http://goo.gl/HuKVsm>

² Find timeline available here: <http://goo.gl/AqPpBr>

³ Find examples of awareness raising activities here:

<http://open.canada.ca/en/stay-connected>, <http://goo.gl/PEDVhx>; <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=848169>; <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=842049>

⁴ Find online consultations here: <http://open.canada.ca/en/consultations/open-government-action-plan-20-consultation>

⁵ Find summary of contents here: <http://open.canada.ca/en/consultations/what-we-heard-summary-report>; <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/74aa0e1a-8e13-4ddb-a31e-129c253a09b3>

⁶ "IAP2 Spectrum of Political Participation," *International Association for Public Participation*, <http://bit.ly/1kMmLYC>.

⁷ "Submission to Canada's Open Government Consultations," Centre for Law and Democracy, http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Canada.OGP_Note_.pdf.

⁸ "News Release," Government of Canada, <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=842049>.

⁹ "Canada's Action Plan on Open Government 2.0," <http://bit.ly/1RuumH9>.

¹⁰ "Consultation on Canada's Action Plan on Open Government 2.0 Closing Soon," Government of Canada, http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Canada.OGP_Note_.pdf.

¹¹ http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_final_2012_Eng.pdf.

¹² For example, see <http://bit.ly/1k7sSUM>, or the links provided in Table 1.

¹³ Interview by IRM researcher, 6 July 2015.

¹⁴ "Submission to Canada's Open Government Consultations," Centre for Law and Democracy, http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Canada.OGP_Note_.pdf.

¹⁵ "Submission to Canada's Open Government Consultations," Centre for Law and Democracy, http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Canada.OGP_Note_.pdf.

¹⁶ <http://open.canada.ca/en/content/meeting-notes-advisory-panel-open-government-meeting-held-june-2014>

III | PROCESS: ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

As part of their participation in OGP, governments commit to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation. This can be an existing entity or a new one. This section summarizes that information.

The government did not harness the expertise of its multi-stakeholder forum (the Advisory Panel on Open Government) during the implementation of its action plan, but it did engage in some targeted consultations around the implementation of three commitments. The consultation process was disrupted in August of 2015 when the country went into a national election campaign. Canada's OGP point of contact submitted communication via email to the OGP Support Unit explaining this situation.¹

REGULAR MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The Advisory Panel on Open Government chaired by the President of the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) is the most concrete multi-stakeholder advisory mechanism that can be identified, but it is underutilized. The Advisory Panel was established when Canada first joined the OGP. It consists of experts from civil society, business, academia, including independent commentators from Canada and abroad.² Membership is by invitation-only and its mandate is to help the government prioritize the development and implementation of the national action plan.

While the Advisory Panel did meet briefly during the development of the second national action plan, it has not met since the release of the plan. Minutes of its meetings are posted online at open.canada.ca. The last set of minutes available are from June 2014, well before the release of the second action plan in November 2014.

While consultation during implementation has not taken place through a regular forum, the government of Canada has engaged in consultation around specific commitments in the national action plan. Since the release

of the second action plan, consultation has taken place around three commitments: the virtual library, open data, and open dialogue.

In a document provided to the IRM researcher, the government outlined two consultations related to the virtual library: 1) Government Information Day, BC (by teleconference) on 24 April 2015 where 20+ people participated in a teleconference and presentation;³ and 2) the Canadian Library Association Conference, Ottawa, 3 June 2015⁴ where 60+ people attended an in-person event as part of the conference, which consisted of a short presentation followed by questions and answers. Participants also completed individual comment forms.

Three consultations were referenced relating to the open data commitment: 1) the Open Data Summit, Ottawa, 25 May 2015, where 40-60 people participated in creating a mind map exploring the value of open datasets and, in an exercise, designed to examine the trade-offs between releasing early and improving data, versus getting it right the first time; 2) the International Open Data Conference, Ottawa, 29 May 2015, where 15 participants worked in groups to validate and extend the mind map and prioritization spectrum; and 3) the Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ottawa, 31 May 2015, where 12 participants worked in groups to validate and extend the mind map and prioritization spectrum.

Finally, one consultation took place around open dialogue at the Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ottawa, 4 June 2015,⁵ where 12 individuals (academics, federal public servants, and others) participated in a conversation designed to explore the most important attributes of the various phases of consulting with Canadians.

No consultation activities were held after June 2015. A federal election was called in August 2015 to take place on 19 October 2015.⁶ During this time, the federal public service did not engage in new consultation activities.

¹ Email to OGP Support Unit, 28 July 2015.

² <http://open.canada.ca/en/advisory-panel-open-government#toc3>.

³ <http://vall.vancouver.bc.ca/node/670>.

⁴ http://scilib.typepad.com/science_library_pad/2014/12/a-week-of-open-data-in-ottawa-may-2015.html.

⁵ <http://congress2015.ca/program/events/open-dialogue-open-government-principles-and-guidelines>.

⁶ <http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=med&document=aug0215&dir=pre&lang=e>.

IV | ANALYSIS OF ACTION PLAN CONTENTS

All OGP participating governments develop OGP country action plans that elaborate concrete commitments over an initial two-year period. Governments begin their OGP country action plans by sharing existing efforts related to open government, including specific strategies and on-going programs. Action plans then set out governments' OGP commitments, which stretch practice beyond its current baseline. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete on-going reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

Commitments should be appropriate to each country's unique circumstances and policy interests. OGP commitments should also be relevant to OGP values laid out in the OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration signed by all OGP participating countries. The IRM uses the following guidance to evaluate relevance to core open government values:

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Commitments around access to information:

- Pertain to government-held information, as opposed to only information on government activities. As an example, releasing government-held information on pollution would be clearly relevant, although the information is not about "government activity" per se;
- Are not restricted to data but pertain to all information. For example, releasing individual construction contracts and releasing data on a large set of construction contracts;
- May include information disclosures in open data and the systems that underpin the public disclosure of data;
- May cover both proactive and/or reactive releases of information;
- May cover both making data more available and/or improving the technological readability of information;

- May pertain to mechanisms to strengthen the right to information (such as ombudsman's offices or information tribunals);
- Must provide open access to information (it should not be privileged or internal only to government);
- Should promote transparency of government decision making and carrying out of basic functions;
- May seek to lower cost of obtaining information;
- Should strive to meet the 5 Star for Open Data design (<http://5stardata.info/>).

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Commitments around civic participation may pertain to formal public participation or to broader civic participation. They should generally seek to "consult," "involve," "collaborate," or "empower," as explained by the International Association for Public Participation's Public Participation Spectrum (<http://bit.ly/1kMmLYC>).

Commitments addressing public participation:

- Must open up decision making to all interested members of the public; such forums are usually "top-down" in that they are created by government (or actors empowered by government) to inform decision making throughout the policy cycle;
- Can include elements of access to information to ensure meaningful input of interested members of the public into decisions;
- Often include the right to have your voice heard, but do not necessarily include the right to be a formal part of a decision making process.

Alternately, commitments may address the broader operating environment that enables participation in civic space. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Reforms increasing freedoms of assembly, expression, petition, press, or association;

- Reforms on association including trade union laws or NGO laws;
- Reforms improving the transparency and process of formal democratic processes such as citizen proposals, elections, or petitions.

The following commitments are examples of commitments that would not be marked as clearly relevant to the broader term, civic participation:

- Commitments that assume participation will increase due to publication of information without specifying the mechanism for such participation (although this commitment would be marked as “access to information”);
- Commitments on decentralization that do not specify the mechanisms for enhanced public participation;
- Commitments that define participation as inter-agency cooperation without a mechanism for public participation.

Commitments that may be marked of “unclear relevance” also include those mechanisms where participation is limited to government-selected organizations.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Commitments improving accountability can include:

- Rules, regulations, and mechanisms 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.

Consistent with the core goal of “Open Government,” to be counted as “clearly relevant,” such commitments must include a public-facing element, meaning that they are not purely internal systems of accountability. While such commitments may be laudable and may meet an OGP grand challenge, they do not, as articulated, meet the test of “clear relevance” due to their lack of openness. Where such internal-facing mechanisms are a key part of government strategy, it is recommended that governments include a public facing element such as:

- Disclosure of non-sensitive metadata on institutional activities (following maximum disclosure principles);
- Citizen audits of performance;

- Citizen-initiated appeals processes in cases of non-performance or abuse.

Strong commitments around accountability ascribe rights, duties, or consequences for actions of officials or institutions. Formal accountability commitments include means of formally expressing grievances or reporting wrongdoing and achieving redress. Examples of strong commitments include:

- Improving or establishing appeals processes for denial of access to information;
- Improving access to justice by making justice mechanisms cheaper, faster, or easier to use;
- Improving public scrutiny of justice mechanisms;
- Creating public tracking systems for public complaints processes (such as case tracking software for police or anti-corruption hotlines).

A commitment that claims to improve accountability, but assumes that merely providing information or data without explaining what mechanism or intervention will translate that information into consequences or change, would not qualify as an accountability commitment. See <http://bit.ly/1oWPXdl> for further information.

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR OPENNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

OGP aims to enhance the use of technology and innovation to enable public involvement in government. Specifically, commitments that use technology and innovation should enhance openness and accountability by:

- Promoting new technologies that offer opportunities for information sharing, public participation, and collaboration;
- Making more information public in ways that enable people to both understand what their governments do and to influence decisions;
- Working to reduce costs of using these technologies.

Additionally, commitments that will be marked as technology and innovation:

- May commit to a process of engaging civil society and the business community to identify effective

practices and innovative approaches for leveraging new technologies to empower people and promote transparency in government;

- May commit to supporting the ability of governments and citizens to use technology for openness and accountability;
- May support the use of technology by government employees and citizens alike.

Not all eGovernment reforms improve openness of government. When an eGovernment commitment is made, it needs to articulate how it enhances at least one of the following: access to information, public participation, or public accountability.

KEY VARIABLES

Recognizing that achieving open government commitments often involves a multiyear process, governments should attach time frames and benchmarks to their commitments that indicate what is to be accomplished each year, whenever possible. This report details each of the commitments that Canada included in its action plan and analyzes them for the first year of implementation.

While most indicators used to evaluate each commitment are self-explanatory, a number deserve further explanation.

1. Specificity: The IRM researcher first assesses the level of specificity and measurability with which each commitment or action was framed. The options are:
 - High (Commitment language provides clear, measurable, verifiable milestones for achievement of the goal);
 - Medium (Commitment language describes activity that is objectively verifiable, but does not contain clearly measurable milestones or deliverables);
 - Low (Commitment language describes activity that can be construed as measurable with some interpretation on the part of the reader);
 - None (Commitment language contains no verifiable deliverables or milestones).
2. Relevance: The IRM researcher evaluated each commitment for its relevance to OGP values and OGP grand challenges.

- OGP values: To identify OGP commitments with unclear relationships to OGP values, the IRM researcher made a judgment from a close reading of the commitment's text. This judgment reveals commitments that can better articulate a clear link to fundamental issues of openness.

3. Potential impact: The IRM researcher evaluated each commitment for how ambitious commitments were with respect to new or pre-existing activities that stretch government practice beyond an existing baseline.

- To contribute to a broad definition of ambition, the IRM researcher judged how potentially transformative each commitment might be in the policy area. This is based on the IRM researcher's findings and experience as a public policy expert. In order to assess potential impact, the IRM researcher identifies the policy problem, establishes a baseline performance level at the outset of the action plan and assesses the degree to which the commitment, if implemented, would impact performance and tackle the policy problem.

All of the indicators and method used in the IRM research can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual, available at (<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-irm>). Finally, one indicator is of particular interest to readers and useful for encouraging a race to the top between OGP-participating countries: the starred commitment. Starred commitments are considered to be exemplary OGP commitments. In order to receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:

1. It must be specific enough that a judgment can be made about its potential impact. Starred commitments will have medium or high specificity.
2. The commitment's language should make clear its relevance to opening government. Specifically, it must relate to at least one of the OGP values of access to information, civic participation, or public accountability.
3. The commitment would have a transformative potential impact if completely implemented.
4. Finally, the commitment must see significant progress during the action plan implementation peri-

od, receiving a ranking of substantial or complete implementation.

Based on these criteria, Canada's action plan contained two starred commitments, namely:

- Commitment 2: Open Data
- Commitment 7: Mandatory Reporting on Extractives

Note that the IRM updated the star criteria in early 2015 in order to raise the ambition for model OGP commitments. Under the old criteria, a commitment received a star if it was measurable, clearly relevant to OGP values as written, had moderate or transformative impact, and was substantially or completely implemented.

Based on these old criteria, Canada's action plan would have received an additional four starred commitments, namely:

- Commitment 3: Canadian Open Data Exchange
- Commitment 4: Open Data for Development
- Commitment 5: Open Data Core Commitment
- Commitment 8: Open Contracting

Finally, the graphs in this section present an excerpt of the wealth of data the IRM collects during its progress reporting process. For the full dataset for Canada and all OGP-participating countries, see the OGP Explorer.¹

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE COMMITMENTS

The second Canadian action plan assessed in this report was organized in the same way as its first action plan, focusing on four main areas: a foundational commitment, open data, open information, and open dialogue. In total there are 12 commitments, some with multiple deliverables, or milestones.

As was discussed in Section II, the consultation process for the development of the second action plan was lengthy. The plan itself was released in November 2014, slightly behind the OGP's schedule for Canada.

The plan does not contain any clear deadlines for the completion of its various milestones. While interviews with government officials unearthed internal working deadlines for planning purposes, these were not made

public. At times, the narrative assessing each commitment that follows in this section will reference the internal deadlines to indicate whether the commitment was on track, at the time of writing (October 2015), to be completed by the end of the second action plan. That said, a start date of November 2014—when the plan was published—is used as a start date, and the end of the action plan cycle—June 2016—is used as an end date in descriptive information preceding the analysis of each commitment. The inclusion of more specific timelines for deliverables would benefit future action plans. This sort of improved transparency would help Canadians to monitor progress and to engage with the OGP within Canada on a more regular basis.

¹The OGP Explorer provides the OGP community—civil society, academics, governments, and journalists—with easy access to the wealth of data that OGP has collected. It is available at <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/explorer/landing>.

1 | IMPLEMENT THE DIRECTIVE ON OPEN GOVERNMENT

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will issue mandatory policy requiring federal government departments and agencies to maximize the release of data and information of business value subject to applicable restrictions related to privacy, confidentiality, and security. Eligible data and information will be released in standardized, open formats, free of charge, and without restrictions on reuse.

The proactive release of data and information is the starting point for all other open government activity. It is the foundation on which all other aspects of Canada's Action Plan are based. Accordingly, the Government of Canada will firmly establish an "open by default" position in its mandatory policy framework by issuing a new Directive on Open Government.

The Directive on Open Government will provide clear and mandatory requirements to government departments aimed squarely at ensuring the availability of eligible government information and data of business value while respecting any restrictions related to privacy, security, and confidentiality. Business value takes on a broad definition in this context, including data and information that document the business of government, decision making in support of programs, services and ongoing operations, as well as departmental reporting. Furthermore, the directive will support broader accountability and transparency, and ensure that open government requirements are considered in the development and implementation of all federal programs and services. Departments and agencies will also be required to develop inventories of their data and information, plan for the release of eligible holdings, and lay out a schedule for their release.

Maximizing the release of data and information will enable Canadians to better engage with their government and hold it accountable, creating an environment that supports meaningful civic engagement and drives social and economic benefits through the innovative reuse of data and information.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- *Issue a new **Directive on Open Government** to require federal departments and agencies to maximize the release of eligible government data and information of business value subject to applicable restrictions related to privacy, confidentiality, and security.*
- *Require federal departments and agencies to **publish open government implementation plans** that describe planned activities to meet the requirements of the directive, including the following:*
 - *Establishing and maintaining inventories of data and information holdings;*
 - *Prioritizing the publication of data and information based on public demand;*
 - *Publishing data and information in accessible and open formats on federal open government websites under an open and unrestrictive licence; and*
 - *Reporting annually on progress made.*
- *Establish **tools and guidance** for the publication of **departmental data inventories**, subject to privacy, security, and confidentiality requirements.*

Responsible institution: Treasury Board Secretariat

Supporting institution(s): Treasury Board Secretariat

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|---|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 1. Overall | | | X | | X | | X | | | | X | | | X | | |
| 1.1. Issue Directive on Open Government | | | | X | X | | X | | | | X | | | | | X |
| 1.2. Publish open government implementation plans | | | | X | X | | X | | | | X | | | X | | |
| 1.3. Tools and guidance for departmental data inventories | | X | | | X | | | | | | X | | | X | | |

WHAT HAPPENED?

The first milestone of issuing a new Directive on Open Government is complete. The directive was released on 9 October 2014 and became effective the same day.¹ Fulfillment of the commitment was new in the sense that no previous directive existed; however, the commitment itself had been part of the first Canadian national action plan. It remained incomplete at the end of the temporal period covered by the first action plan.

The directive was issued the same day that the draft second action plan was released for public consultation. The Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) confirmed this with the IRM researcher and indicated that it felt that the public did not need to be consulted on this aspect of the action plan again because the commitment was in the first action plan and, as such, had already undergone consultation. The fact that this particular commitment was not open to consultation or change was not made clear during the consultation process.

The second milestone requiring federal departments and agencies to publish implementation plans was on schedule as of July 2015. According to a draft mid-term self-assessment report provided to the IRM researcher, templates for the implementation plans

and data inventories were on track to be finalized in July 2015. The implementation plans were scheduled to be published on open.canada.ca in November 2015.

The draft self-assessment document indicated that the third milestone—to establish tools and guidance for publishing departmental data inventories—was behind schedule. An inter-departmental working group, established in October 2014, is working to develop guidance for the development and publishing of data and information. According to TBS, this will likely take the form of a template for departments so that the information and data released looks standardized across the government.

DID IT MATTER?

As was discussed at length in the first IRM report, there has been widespread concern over the flow of information and data from the federal government.² There has also been concern over the diversity of datasets on the open.canada.ca (formally the data.gc.ca) portal.³ The goal of the directive is to “maximize the release of government information and data of business value to support transparency, accountability, citizen engagement, and socio-economic benefits through reuse, subject to applicable restrictions

associated with privacy, confidentiality, and security.” Ideally, if implemented well, the directive will facilitate the publication and diversity of information and data. The data inventories captured in the third milestone should also serve the purpose of providing Canadians with greater knowledge of the government’s data holdings.

At this point it is too early to judge the impact of the commitment as the commitment itself does not go beyond issuing the directive and implementation plans. We have yet to get a sense of the type of information and data that will be released and how it differs from information and data that are released under older, existing guidelines for proactive disclosure and information release. The format of the data also remains to be seen. However, if implemented well and widely, the commitment has the potential to improve the disclosure of information and data. There is reason to be encouraged that the directive will be taken seriously and will have high levels of cooperation and compliance across government as a result of the fact that it has been built into the Management Accountability Framework. The framework is an oversight tool used to assess and monitor management across federal government departments and agencies.⁴ As such, management within government will be assessed on the implementation of the directive. Theoretically, this should raise greater awareness of the directive within the government and should provide some motive for compliance.

Many of the civil society stakeholders interviewed questioned what sort of information and data would be released under the directive that is not currently available. In part, this stems from the wording of the directive: “This directive is to be applied to government information of business value required to support the delivery of programs and services by departments as of the effective date above in order to determine eligibility and facilitate planning for release.”⁵ Many stakeholders were unclear of what is covered by the term ‘business value.’ It is widely seen by non-governmental interviewees as a “vague term and one that leaves out social and cultural data, a barometer of the health of the population.”⁶ While the action plan defines business value as “including data and information that document the

business of government, decision making in support of programs, services and ongoing operations, as well as departmental reporting,” some stakeholders found this definition broad and were not entirely clear on the specifics of what would constitute the “business of government.” The government has also received concerns from CSOs regarding the term and informed the IRM researcher that CSOs have been provided with the explanation that “the term ‘business value’ takes on a broad definition in this context, including data and information that document the business of government, decision-making in support of programs, services and ongoing operations, as well as departmental reporting. It includes a wide variety of data, including data of ‘social value.’”⁷ The fact that government and the IRM researcher have both heard concerns regarding the term suggests that additional clarity should be provided moving forward to increase the transparency of the sort of information and data the Directive is meant to cover.

One public servant within the government noted that it is confusing to understand how the directive will be implemented alongside the existing government web renewal initiative outlined under the first national action plan, which has government departments and agencies cutting their web presence as they migrate from individual departmental and agency websites to a centralized web portal.⁸ Many civil society members mentioned discontinued websites and information to be problematic and noted that, while the directive might lead to an increase in the flow of information, care needs to be taken to ensure that the information and data is preserved and is accessible to the public.

If the directive results in the widespread, proactive, open by default flow of information and data that is well organized and easily searchable, the commitment has the potential to be more transformative. However, the seemingly narrow caveat that specifically references information of business value renders the potential impact more moderate.

MOVING FORWARD

Moving forward, it will be important to monitor and report on compliance to the directive. The directive itself does specify its review after, or before, a five-

year period. In addition, it is recommended that the government continue to work on the basic implementation of this commitment and:

- Provide clarity and further information and transparency regarding the reach of the Directive;
- Develop and publicize standards for the preservation of information and data published according to the directive; and
- Ensure the development of standards so that information and data published across departments are published in a manner that is organized, searchable, and comparable.

¹ "Directive on Open Government," <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?section=text&id=28108>.

² http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_final_2012_Eng.pdf.

³ http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_final_2012_Eng.pdf.

⁴ <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/maf-crg/ap-pe-eng.asp>.

⁵ "Directive on Open Government," <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?section=text&id=28108>.

⁶ Correspondence with the IRM Researcher January 2016 and IRM Interviews.

⁷ Correspondence with the IRM Researcher January 2016

⁸ Interview by IRM researcher, 6 July 2015.

★ 2 | OPEN DATA

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will work with provinces, territories, and municipalities to break down barriers to integrated, pan-Canadian open data services through the establishment of common principles, standards, and licensing across all levels of government.

As announced at the OGP Annual Summit in October 2013, the pan-Canadian, Open Data Canada strategy will remove existing jurisdictional barriers to realizing the full potential of open data in Canada. By harmonizing and integrating the diverse range of open data activities happening at all levels of government across Canada, we will facilitate a “no wrong door” approach to open government data, regardless of which government owns it.

This is a challenging prospect given that Canada is a decentralized federation in which government programs and services cut across multiple jurisdictions. Health, transportation, and agriculture are just a few examples of government activities that have municipal, provincial/territorial, and federal involvement.

Our consultations with citizens and civil society organizations have reinforced how important it is that users be able to combine data from multiple jurisdictions in spite of any challenges that stand in the way. Such challenges include data ownership, search and discovery barriers, licensing, cataloguing, and significant differences across jurisdictions with regard to capacity. As part of our commitment to open data in Canada, we will address these challenges head-on.

Work on these activities will be governed by a national Open Data Canada Steering Committee with representation from all levels of government. The end result will provide unprecedented access to comprehensive open data from across Canada to spur innovation, increase productivity, and ultimately improve the lives of Canadians.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- *Establish common open data principles for adoption by governments across Canada.*
- *Facilitate the adoption of a common or compatible open government licence by all Canadian governments to enable the release and reuse of open data and information.*
- *Establish or identify common open data standards (e.g., metadata, data formats) that align with existing international standards for adoption by governments across Canada.*
- *Develop a federated open data search service with provinces and municipalities to provide users with a “no wrong door” approach to accessing open data, so that data can be easily found and downloaded regardless of which government open data portal is used.*
- *Expand and deliver a national appathon event, the Canadian Open Data Experience (CODE), to promote access to, and reuse of, multi-jurisdictional data to develop new and innovative tools and services for Canadians.*

Responsible institution: Treasury Board Secretariat

Supporting institution(s): Provinces, Territories and Municipalities

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | IMPACT POTENTIAL | | | | AVANCEMENT | | | |
|---|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| ★ 2. Overall | | | X | | X | | | X | | | | X | | | | X |
| 2.1. Common Open Data Principles | | | | X | X | | | | | | | X | | | | X |
| 2.2. Common open government licence | | X | | | X | | | | | | | X | | | | X |
| 2.3. Common open data standards | | X | | | X | | | | | | | X | | X | | |
| 2.4. Federated open data search service | | | | X | X | | | X | | | | X | | X | | |
| 2.5. Expand national appathon event | | | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | | | | X |

Editorial Note: This is a starred commitment, because it is measurable, clearly relevant to OGP values as written, of transformative potential impact, and was substantially or completely implemented.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Government interviewees noted that a survey on open data principles was done with the provinces and territories. The survey collected information on best practices, challenges, and opportunities related to open data as a step toward fulfilling the first milestone of establishing common open data principles. According to the government, feedback from the provinces and territories was used to support the drafting of principles in the international open data charter that was announced in May 2015.¹

The second milestone—the open government licence—was started under the first action plan. Some provincial and municipal governments had already adopted the licence.² The goal under the current action plan is to expand participation. Efforts have been made to facilitate the adoption of common or compatible open government licences. For example, guidelines for implementing the Open Government

Licence have been published to facilitate its adoption.³ According to the federal government, all active open data provinces are using common or compatible licences.⁴ Future steps include providing support to jurisdictions considering the adoption of the licence.

According to government interviewees, a metadata mapping exercise was completed with five provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland) in June 2015. The results will be used to fulfill milestone number three under this commitment of drafting common core metadata elements that align with international standards.

Progress on the fourth milestone—the federated open data search service—has faced delays. This is an ambitious commitment and implementation is challenging as it entails cooperation with a wide range of partners. Government interviewees noted that intergovernmental discussions had been ongoing for a period of 8-10 months, but that limited

progress was made.⁵ In part, the lack of progress was attributed to strained resources. British Columbia has been identified as an initial partner with the federal government. The Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) has indicated that implementation of a federated search is delayed until fall of 2016.

The appathon event, CODE, first took place in 2014. The commitment for the second action plan was to expand and to hold another event. This was announced along with the launch of the second action plan on 7 November. CODE is a “48-hour appathon, inviting developers, graphic designers, students, and anyone interested at trying their hand at coding to use Government of Canada open data.”⁶ CODE 2015 was held from 20-22 February 2015. Over 1,300 participants from across Canada participated.⁷

DID IT MATTER?

This commitment has the potential to be highly transformative as it looks toward building a pan-Canadian foundation for open data. Given the complexity of pan-Canadian discussions—which involves a large number of actors from diverse regions—and the constitutional division of power, this commitment is ambitious. Given the incomplete nature of all milestones—with the exception of the appathon—it is difficult to assess the impact of the commitment at this time. Most progress to date is very preliminary and discussion-based and has not manifested itself in a way that is overtly visible to the general public.

The appathon event is perhaps less transformative than the other deliverables outlined in this commitment. It helps to generate attention to government datasets and what can be done with them, but it does not necessarily result in long-term change.

MOVING FORWARD

Moving forward, the government should continue work on the basic implementation of this commitment and should explore mechanisms for pan-Canadian approaches to improved open data. More specifically, it should:

- Continue discussions with provinces and territories regarding open data principles and standards, as well as the possibility of a federated search service; and,
- In developing a federated open search service, attention should be paid to the development of a space regarding licencing. Currently, not all governments have completely identical licences which some stakeholders have noted could complicate the use of a federated search. In developing a licencing space on the federated search service, the resources available to users who are considering using information and data governed by the Open Government Licence could be expanded. The guidelines published under the second national action plan represents a start, but more detailed guidance would help those interested in working with material governed by the Open Government Licence. The New Zealand Open Access and Licensing Framework is an example of the sorts of expanded resources that could be made available.⁸ This includes guides for different users as well as training videos.

¹<http://opendatacharter.net>.

²For some examples, see <http://www.ontario.ca/page/open-government-licence-ontario>; <http://www.data.gov.bc.ca/local/dbc/docs/license/OGL-vbc2.0.pdf>; <http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=4a37e03bb8d1e310VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>.

³http://open.canada.ca/en/open-government-licence-implementation-guidelines?_ga=1.228678811.661421053.1442310908.

⁴http://open.canada.ca/en/maps/open-data-canada?_ga=1.14756598.1705124065.1448712857#toc5.

⁵Interview with IRM researcher, 10 September 2015.

⁶http://open.canada.ca/en/canadian-open-data-experience-code?_ga=1.38113572.661421053.1442310908.

⁷http://open.canada.ca/en/blog/code-2015-its-wrap?_ga=1.25645242.661421053.1442310908.

⁸<https://www.ict.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/open-government/new-zealand-government-open-access-and-licensing-nzgoal-framework/>.

3 | CANADIAN OPEN DATA EXCHANGE

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will establish an open data institute to support collaboration with the private sector, civil society, academia, and other levels of government to promote the commercialization of open data.

The global movement of technology and social media is generating massive amounts of information. Capitalizing on data offers \$1.3 trillion in possible economic development in North America alone (McKinsey & Company: "Open data: Unlocking innovation and performance with liquid information"). This type of opportunity is leading public sector institutions in Canada at all levels to undertake open data initiatives. In response to the tremendous commercial opportunity represented by open data, the Government of Canada has announced an investment of \$3 million over three years to launch a new institute on open data: the Canadian Open Data Exchange (ODX).

While governments collect much of the world's data, they do not always share it in ways that support ease of discoverability, access, use, or understanding by the public. Today, citizens expect to be able to access information and services electronically when and how they choose to do so. The creation of an information economy has motivated government to release vast amounts of public data, but there remain real challenges to accessing that data in a way that can generate insights, ideas, and services to truly benefit society.

ODX will work with governments, the private sector, civil society, and academia to help realize the full potential of open data for the economic and social benefit of Canada. ODX will bring together all of the pieces that support a sustainable, market-driven, open -data ecosystem whose success is measured by commercialization outcomes, such as the creation of jobs, companies, and wealth.

The vision for ODX is that by creating a platform and toolsets to help commercial actors use available data, new products and companies may be launched to meet market needs, social challenges will be addressed to improve the quality of life for Canadians, and, above all, new jobs will be created.

ODX will develop industry standards for open data, build a national marketplace where commercialization of open data can flourish, and support a pan-Canadian open data innovation community that will help incubate the next generation of data-driven companies. Through ODX, Canadians will be able to see the measurable economic benefits of open data in the form of job creation, investment in data-driven companies, and the establishment of a national hub for the commercialization of open data.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- *Establish an open data institute in Canada (the Canadian Open Data Exchange, or ODX), as a national marketplace that includes an online community for those engaged in the commercialization of open data. ODX will undertake the following in collaboration with governments, civil society organizations, and private industry:*
 - *Developing new tools and applications that access and manipulate government data;*
 - *Establishing a framework for open data standards, including the articulation of industry standards for presenting, and providing access to open data for key sectors;*
 - *Consulting with industry champions on the development of demonstration projects for the commercialization of open data in priority sectors;*
 - *Launching a national outreach program, including events, workshops, hackathons, and student contest opportunities nationwide; and*
 - *Incubating new data-driven companies.*

Responsible institution: Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| | | | | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | | | X |

Editorial Note: Under the old criteria this commitment would have received a star because it is clearly relevant to OGP values as written, has moderate potential impact, and has been substantially or completely implemented. (Note that IRM updated the star criteria in early 2015.)

WHAT HAPPENED?

The funding for the Open Data Exchange (ODX) was announced in February 2014, prior to the development of the second action plan.¹ The ODX itself was formally launched in Waterloo, Ontario in May 2015 when FedDev Ontario—the lead institution for the commitment—announced that up to \$3 million Canadian would be given to Communitech Corporation to establish the exchange. According to government interviewees, the ODX deliverables should be completed by March 2018.

ODX is designed to be a place that companies are able to go when they are interested in understanding, designing, and deploying open data-oriented products and services.

The open data standards will come primarily from the demonstration projects, the first of which is scheduled for November 2015. According to government and private sector interviewees, the projects will be problem-based and will respond to market needs. Standards already exist in many industries. ODX will help to make people and companies aware of existing standards and will help to develop new ones where there are gaps, based on market demand. According to interviewees, ODX is not interested in creating

standards where they already exist.

Interviewees involved with ODX informed the IRM researcher that outreach has started in the form of conversations with the provinces. There is a plan to create “Open Data 150” that mirrors the Open Data 500 initiative.² It is a methodology and interactive graphic that links companies with open data by sector. Open Data 150 would illustrate how Canadian companies are involved in the open data space. Conversations have started with GovLab to see if there might be potential for a partnership to move this forward. Future outreach will likely involve participation in events, such as Canadian Open Data Experience (CODE) 2016, and support for activities sponsored by other stakeholders.³

ODX plans on drawing on infrastructure already created by the Communitech Hub and other innovation hubs to support the incubation of data-driven companies.

DID IT MATTER?

Many civil society stakeholders expressed skepticism regarding the ODX. Some were disappointed that the only commitment with a budget dealt specifically with economic innovation, instead of some of the

other issues facing open government and open data in Canada, including the growing existence of a data divide, discussed in the first IRM report. Some civil society interviewees pointed out that the emphasis on commercialization meant that other sectors would likely not benefit from the ODX. The not-for-profit and cultural sectors were both mentioned as being largely left out of this commitment, and the action plan in general. Others were skeptical that the commitment would generate significant national level change.

At the time of writing (October 2015), much of the work around the ODX had been foundational to get the marketplace up and running, making it difficult to determine its impact. While there is potential for the ODX to serve as a useful resource for some companies which are interested in using data for various products and services, the scope is too narrow to lead to transformative change, therefore this commitment is coded as having a moderate potential impact.

In addition, to continuing with the basic implementation of this commitment, it is recommended that future commitments look beyond commercialization to embrace other sectors—such as the not-for-profit and cultural sectors—in a much more direct manner.

MOVING FORWARD

Moving forward, the IRM researcher recommends continuing to work on the basic implementation of this commitment. According to government interviewees, this would mean the following activities would be completed during the second year of this action plan:

- Initiate two of the three demonstration projects (the first in November 2015, and the second in May 2016);
- Establish an Industry Advisory Board (February 2016);
- Complete review of national and international open data standards (June 2016);
- Develop and launch an outreach program (June 2016); and
- Develop a plan for incubating companies (June 2016).

¹"Budget 2014," <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2014/docs/plan/pdf/budget2014-eng.pdf>.

²<http://www.opendata500.com>.

³Interview with IRM researcher, 8 July 2015.

4 | OPEN DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will work together with developing countries to harness the potential of open data to enhance accountability, create new solutions for delivery of public services, and create new economic opportunities around the world.

Open data holds an enormous potential to enhance development efforts around the world. As co-chair for the OGP Open Data Working Group, Canada is committed to strengthening a truly global open data movement and exploring ways to use collaboration and technology to strengthen democracy and build prosperity. As noted in the OGP's Four-Year Strategy (2015-18), national action plans are meant to provide an organizing framework for international networking. The OGP is in many ways a global platform for connecting, empowering, and supporting open government reform across member countries.

In recent years, Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) has supported initiatives in developing countries to better use open data for development, establishing a global network of partners around the Open Data for Development (OD4D) initiative. The OD4D initiative aims to support the global and regional efforts of governments, civil society organizations, and entrepreneurs harnessing open data to achieve development outcomes, and enrich the international sharing of open data solutions and best practices.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- *Build the capacity of the open data initiatives in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia, and establish important partnerships with the open data movement in Canada:*
 - *Support developing countries to plan and execute national open data initiatives;*
 - *Develop international data standards and solution-driven networks that can help to bring about social and economic innovation; and*
 - *Measure and evaluate the relationship between open data initiatives and socioeconomic development, informing the quality and reach of future open data initiatives.*
- *Host an International Open Data Conference in 2015 to bring together experts from around the world to share knowledge and experience to strengthen international collaboration on open government issues.*

Responsible institution: International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|--|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 4. Overall | | | X | | X | | | | | | X | | | | X | |
| 4.1. Open data initiatives in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia | | X | | | X | | | | | | X | | | | X | |
| 4.2. Host an International Open Data Conference in 2015 | | | | X | X | | | | | X | | | | | | X |

Editorial Note: Under the old criteria this commitment would have received a star because it is clearly relevant to OGP values as written, has moderate potential impact, and has been substantially or completely implemented. (Note that IRM updated the star criteria in early 2015.)

WHAT HAPPENED?

Substantial progress was made in the area of this commitment. According to the government, Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC)—the lead institution for this commitment—runs a \$8 million Canadian program (\$1.125M from the Government of Canada)¹ to support open data in developing countries.² It primarily funds four activities: 1) research in developing countries on how to best use open data to find solutions to development challenges; 2) data literacy; 3) organization development, such as the creation of open data labs and hubs; and 4) the creation of innovation, such as applications.

An open data for development (OD4D) network has been established in Latin America and the Caribbean, whereby institutions working on open data have been linked through research projects that bring people together. Planning workshops have been held to support similar initiatives in Asia and Africa.³

In addition, there was support to governments in Tanzania and Burkina Faso and training of governments and civil society in these two regions.

In addition, the government has supported five research projects completed in collaboration with the OGP Working Group on Open Data.⁴

The third International Open Data Conference took place in Ottawa from 28-29 May 2015. The conference included over 58 parallel and plenary sessions with over 200 speakers and over 1,000 attendees, the majority of which (350+) came from government. Over 220 travel grants were extended by IDRC to support the participation of attendees from a range of countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia. In addition to the formal conference proceedings, over 15 related events were held over a nine-day period around the conference. A consultation around a draft International Open Data Charter was launched from the conference.⁵

DID IT MATTER?

According to interviewees, IDRC had an active and ambitious open data initiative in place long before the development of this second action plan.⁶ In this sense, much of the first milestone predates the action plan, and the commitment simply captures work that

has been ongoing within the federal government. This is not to say that the commitment does not matter as IDRC has shown itself to be a leader in OD4D, but it is a clear example of how some of the Canadian commitments are being constructed to capture existing activities while no additional resources are being put into funding or supporting additional, or new deliverables.

While the impact of this commitment may not be immediately felt in Canada, it does matter for those in the geographical areas covered by the commitment. IDRC funding has served to bring people together around open data and has led to knowledge creation around open data globally.

The open data conference is a useful initiative to generate discussion, for the government to engage with stakeholders, and to help build networks among those working in the open government and open data space.

MOVING FORWARD

Moving forward, if the Government of Canada should continue with this commitment in its next action plan, focus should be shifted to:

- Continue to expand its OD4D network, and add specificity to the goals of the network if it is included in future action plans; and
- Allow IDRC to expand its focus so that it is able to support all countries.

¹ https://web.archive.org/web/20151201081042/http://www.idrc.ca/EN/AboutUs/Donor_Partnerships/OD4D/Pages/default.aspx

² http://www.idrc.ca/EN/AboutUs/Donor_Partnerships/OD4D/Pages/default.aspx.

³ <http://od4d.net/>.

http://webfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/OD4Africa2015_WorkshopReport.pdf

<http://labs.webfoundation.org/part-1-a-deeper-look-at-the-regional-open-data-workshop/> / <http://labs.webfoundation.org/projects-2/open-data-asia-2020/>

⁴ <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/groups/opendata/>.

⁵ <http://opendatacon.org/report/>.

⁶ Interview with IRM researcher, 14 July 2015.

5 | OPEN DATA CORE COMMITMENT

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will continue to unlock the potential of open data through a series of innovative and forward-looking projects that drive government-wide progress on open data and prioritize easy access to high-value federal data.

Having launched its next-generation portal for federal open data, and released the Open Government Licence under Canada's first Action Plan, the Government of Canada is now focused on continuing to raise the bar on ensuring high-quality open data services for Canadians.

Through its open data initiatives to date, the Government of Canada is providing Canadians with access to timely, comprehensive, high-value data in open, reusable formats. More than 40 departments and agencies have already made available over 200,000 datasets on everything from weather and border wait times to product recalls and Canada's vast collection of maps and geospatial data. Moving forward, we will accelerate the release of high-value data, and continue to enhance and improve our open data platforms and services. By driving the proactive release of open data, we will increase government transparency, drive innovation, and maximize Canadians' potential reuse of federal data.

In 2014, the first Canadian Open Data Experience (CODE) was piloted to challenge innovators across the country to test their talent and liberate the data available on data.gc.ca. From 28 February 28 to 2 March 2, more than 900 participants raced against the clock to code an open data application in the largest hackathon in Canadian history. Over the next two years under Action Plan 2.0, the Government of Canada will work with partners, other levels of government, and the private sector to expand this flagship activity to further engage open data users across the country to promote the availability and reuse potential of federal open data.

In addition, we will continue our efforts to increase the transparency of Canada's international development assistance through open data, which contributes to greater aid effectiveness and increases the ability of citizens in partner countries to hold their governments to account on development progress.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- Continue to prioritize and **expand the release of open data** from federal departments and agencies under a single Open Government Licence.
- Complete **public consultations** with Canadians and civil society organizations in support of the prioritization of **open data** releases.
- **Launch** a new government-wide **open government portal** (open.canada.ca) with expanded open data services:
 - Interactive, thematic open data communities (e.g., health and safety) and enhanced consultation functionality and online forums;
 - Directory of open data services across Canada;
 - Expanded developers' tools to support reuse of federal data;
 - Enhanced data discovery; and
 - Standardized release procedures, formats, and metadata.

- **Expand and deliver** the Canadian Open Data Experience (**CODE**) as the premier national open data competition to drive creative and ambitious innovation in Canada:
 - Increase promotion of CODE activities and events;
 - Expand the use of regional hubs to increase participation in all areas of Canada; and
 - Create sub-themes to focus application development on everyday challenges facing Canadians.
- **Consolidate** the management of federal **geospatial data** across the Government of Canada to make this information more accessible and reusable via federal open government websites.
- **Broaden adoption of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard** in the Government of Canada, and encourage other Canadian actors to publish their own data, in particular, civil society organizations.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board Secretariat

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|--|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 5. Overall | | | X | | X | X | | X | | | X | | | | X | |
| 5.1. Expand release of data | | X | | | X | | | | | | X | | | X | | |
| 5.2. Public consultations on open data | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | |
| 5.3. Launch new open gov portal | | | | X | X | | | X | | | X | | | | | X |
| 5.4. Expand and deliver CODE | | | X | | | X | | X | | X | | | | | | X |
| 5.5 Consolidate geospatial data | | | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | | | X | |
| 5.6. Broaden adoption of IATI standard | | X | | | X | | | X | | | X | | | | X | |

Editorial Note: Under the old criteria this commitment would have received a star because it is clearly relevant to OGP values as written, has moderate potential impact, and has been substantially or completely implemented. (Note that IRM updated the star criteria in early 2015.)

WHAT HAPPENED?

With regard to the first milestone to “continue to prioritize and expand the release of open data from federal departments and agencies under a single Open Government Licence,” the IRM researcher was informed by the government that over 500 datasets have been added to the open government portal since July 2014.

Some progress has been made toward the second milestone in the consultations on open data prioritization. As was noted in Section III of this report, the government informed the IRM researcher that three consultations were held related to open data prioritization: 1) the Open Data Summit, Ottawa, 25 May 2015, where 40-60 people participated in creating a mind map exploring the value of open datasets and in an exercise designed to examine the trade-offs between releasing early and improving data, versus getting it right the first time; 2) the International Open Data Conference (IODC), Ottawa, 29 May 2015, where 15 participants worked in groups to validate and extend the mind map and prioritization spectrum; and 3) the Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ottawa, 31 May 2015, where 12 participants worked in groups to validate and extend the mind map and prioritization spectrum.

The third milestone to develop a new open government portal was completed. The new portal was announced and launched on the same day that the new action plan was announced on 7 November 2014.¹

The second CODE appathon was also announced at the launch of the new action plan.² This fourth milestone has been completed. As was noted earlier in this report, CODE was held in February 2015.

Work is ongoing with the fifth milestone regarding the consolidation of federal geospatial data. A project is currently underway to develop a consolidated Federal Geospatial Platform (FGP). The FGP is an initiative of the Federal Committee on Geomatics and Earth Observations. It involves 21 departments and agencies that produce or use geospatial data. The FGP “will be a collaborative online environment consisting of authoritative geospatial data, services, and applications, built on a shared infrastructure that will enable the government’s most relevant information

to be managed spatially, analyzed, and displayed in a visual context to enhance decision-making support of government priorities.”³ According to government interviewees, data release processes, a harmonized metadata standard, and a data inventory had been completed as of July 2015 for the release of a FGP portal that was scheduled for October 2015. At the time of writing (6 October 2015), the portal had not yet been launched.

The government has been broadening its adoption of the IATI standard as part of its sixth milestone. Under the first national action plan, only one government department—CIDA, now the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development (DFATD)—was publishing in accordance to the IATI standard.⁴ In April 2015, Finance Canada and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) started to publish according to the standard. The government published an updated IATI implementation schedule in July 2015.⁵ It is less clear how the government has been “encouraging” other actors to publish aid data. The IODC held in Ottawa in May 2015 included two IATI meetings⁶ which CSOs were invited to attend, but government and CSO interviewees noted that these meetings were not well attended.

DID IT MATTER?

Generally, civil society interviewees were positive about the quantity of datasets released, but some gaps were pointed out by a number of people across sectors. The lack of diverse datasets—cultural data in particular—was seen to be a gap in open data.⁷ As is discussed in the Country Context section of this report, the datasets are predominately from one government department. The lack of timely data available in easy-to-use formats was also thought to be problematic. Journalists, for example, often have trouble making use of datasets as a result of the unavailability of the most current data and still find it necessary to approach individual departments and agencies directly.⁸ Additionally, data users noted that much of the data is in formats that are not always easy to use.⁹

While there has been some clear movement on the open data prioritization consultations, participation in these exercises was limited and the lack of information

about existing government data collections impacted the results that could be garnered by the consultations. The IRM researcher participated in the consultation at the IODC and spoke to many participants who did not feel able to comment on how the government should prioritize its data release without first having a better idea of the sorts of data it held. The consultative exercises would potentially be more useful after federal departments and agencies released their data inventories as is mandated under the Open Government Directive Commitment.

The new government-wide open government portal, open.canada.ca, is a positive development. It constitutes the start of a shift back to discourse that is not wholly dominated by open data. This was a criticism in the first IRM report, as the government had moved away from an open government portal to an open data portal. The new open.canada.ca website is a small step toward correcting what has been, and to a large extent continues to be, an overemphasis on open data. Generally, civil society interviewees were very positive about the new portal. It is more comprehensive and has greater functionality than the old portal. The one criticism made by multiple civil society interviewees was that the search feature often yielded unwieldy results that were difficult to navigate and could be improved. The government acknowledged this problem with the IRM research and has indicated that it is working towards its improvement and has provided faceted navigation.

The CODE appathon grew in size from its first year and helps to engage users with government data. However, some civil society interviewees questioned the long-term sustained impact of appathons noting that, while positive, they have limited impact for transformation. As one interviewee put it, CODE is the main form of outreach and the government is “putting its eggs all in one basket.” There was also a widespread sense that CODE propagates what is seen as an overemphasis on open data for economic growth over other uses, such as open data for culture or for improved governance.

Given that the FGP portal had not been launched at the time of writing, it is difficult to assess the utility of the milestone. That said, geospatial data is widely recognized for its value, and civil society interviewees welcomed the addition of a geospatial specific

commitment to the second action plan.

IATI was a commitment under the first action plan and continuing to expand its adoption was universally seen as positive by stakeholders interviewed.

Overall this commitment, if fully implemented, is on track to have a moderate impact on openness in Canada. It creates a modest flow of new information and helps to organize information and data in a way that will have greater utility to many users. That said increased flow of information and data is still limited as a result of barriers set out by antiquated access to information legislation, and, in the case of the open government portal, by the search function.

MOVING FORWARD

Moving forward, continuing to release datasets on the open.canada.ca portal is useful, but should now flow naturally from the Open Government Directive and does not necessarily need to remain as a stand-alone deliverable in future action plans. Should it remain, it is recommended that there are clear goals regarding how many or what kind of data the government is looking to release. To date, this specificity has been lacking. Usability and diversity of datasets still needs to be improved.

The new open.canada.ca website is an improvement. Moving forward, the Government of Canada should continue to explore options for enhancing and optimizing the content and design. This includes improvements to the search functionality and ensuring that downloadable data is provided in formats that users can work with.

While CODE is useful in bringing people together and encouraging people to engage with government data, consideration should be given to adapting the appathon in a way that leads to more sustained engagement. One suggestion made by civil society interviewees is to support, or fund, local events that showcase federal data use as a way of increasing visibility across the country. Other suggestions included holding open data activities around major events and celebrations, such as Canada 150.¹⁰

Moving forward, it is recommended that the government continue implementation of the FGP

portal. The geospatial community is one that has a long history with open data and could be engaged in a much more active way as the government looks toward future action plans.

Significant progress has been made within the government when it comes to adoption of the IATI standard. Data should continue to be published according to the standard. In moving forward, the government should consider how it might support civil society organizations (CSOs) to publish their own data. In December 2013, an IATI representative spoke at a workshop for the government to explain what other countries are doing in respect to IATI and to discuss ideas for developing a tool to help CSOs report financial information.

Additionally, the Government should consider the development of a Grants and Contributions Data Standard as part of its future commitment to open data. A government wide grants and contribution data standard would benefit many of the existing commitment areas including open contracting, open budgeting and expenditures, as well as IATI. Such a standard would help to make a wide range of government expenditures compatible across purpose (contracts vs contributions) and departments. It would aid in the disaggregating and structuring the data in a way that makes it machine-readable and standardized across the whole government.

¹ http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=901789&_ga=1.204951575.661421053.1442310908.

² <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=907729>.

³ <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/earth-sciences/geomatics/canadas-spatial-data-infrastructure/geospatial-communities/federal>.

⁴ http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_final_2012_Eng.pdf.

⁵ "IATI Implementation Schedule," <http://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/aidtransparency-transparenceaide/schedule-plan.aspx?lang=eng>.

⁶ <http://opendatacon.org/program/detail/>.

⁷ Interview with IRM researcher, 15 July 2015.

⁸ Interview with IRM researcher, 26 May 2015.

⁹ Interview with IRM researcher, 15 July 2015.

¹⁰ <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1342792785740>.

6 | OPEN SCIENCE

Commitment Text:

The Government of Canada will maximize access to federally funded scientific research to encourage greater collaboration and engagement with the scientific community, the private sector, and the public.

The Government of Canada makes significant investments in scientific research. As a result, Canada has become a world leader in a number of important scientific research areas, and continues to support leading-edge research by some of the world's best scientific minds. Increasing public access to government-funded scientific research data and information has the potential to further drive innovation and discovery across the broader scientific community.

On 12 June 12, 2013, the Honourable Gary Goodyear, Minister of State for Science and Technology, signed the G8 Science Ministers Statement on behalf of the Government of Canada to promote policies that increase access to the results of publicly funded research to spur scientific discovery, enable better international collaboration and coordination of research, enhance the engagement of society and help support economic prosperity. Accordingly, the Government of Canada will establish a government-wide approach to open science to increase access to federally funded scientific publications and data.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- *Develop and publish a government-wide **Open Science Implementation Plan** with specific activities and milestones, including the following:*
 - *Public consultations on the implementation of open science;*
 - *Launch of open access to publications and data resulting from federally funded scientific activities;*
 - *Development and adoption of policies, guidelines and tools to support effective stewardship of scientific data; and*
 - *Promotion of the adoption of open science standards in Canada.*
- *Establish an online service to enable a **one-stop search for publications** and data resulting from federal scientific activities.*
- *Develop **inventories** of federal **scientific data** and initiate the public release of data.*
- *Publish and maintain a **consolidated online list of peer-reviewed articles** by Government of Canada scientists dating back to 2012.*

Responsible institution: Environment Canada, Industry Canada

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 6. Overall | | | X | | X | X | | X | | | | X | | X | | |
| 6.1. Open Science Implementation Plan | | | X | | X | X | | | | | | X | | | X | |
| 6.2. One-stop publication search | | | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | | X | | |
| 6.3. Scientific data inventory | | | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | | X | | |
| 6.4. List of peer-reviewed articles | | | X | | X | | | X | | X | | | | X | | |

WHAT HAPPENED?

At the time of writing the report, this commitment was slightly behind schedule, although a Tri-Council Open Access Policy was announced in February 2015 which requires all peer-reviewed journal publications funded by one of the three federal granting agencies (the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) to be freely available online within twelve months.¹ The implementation plan had been brought to a meeting of deputy ministers for approval in the summer of 2015. According to government interviewees, additional questions were raised at this meeting and the plan was sent back for further review and work. It was ultimately approved at a 24 September 2015 meeting of deputy ministers.

This commitment is somewhat unique from the other commitments in the second national action plan in that all deliverables flow from the first milestone of developing and publishing a government-wide open science implementation plan. Some progress has been seen on the fourth deliverable as Environment Canada has released two years' worth of citations.²

Others, including Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada as well as the National Research Council of Canada are also making lists of publications available for longer periods of time; however, progress toward the three deliverables that flow from the implementation plan is limited.

Interviews with government officials indicated that the public consultations on the implementation of open science will likely take place in January 2016. The timing of the consultations was impacted by the federal election call in 2015. The consultation will inform citizens about the implementation plan and will solicit feedback on future commitments related to open science.

DID IT MATTER?

The milestones are all new. They have the potential to be transformative for open science if implemented well. However, it is too soon to measure the impact of the deliverables under this commitment. Open science has been a particularly problematic and controversial area in Canada. There has been widespread documentation and evidence of scientists being "muzzled," by a strict communication policy.³ Under

the previous government administration which lost power in the October 2015 election, scientists were not allowed to talk to the media without prior approval of the Public Relations or Communication teams. Media had been denied access to scientists and media coverage of some specific topics (e.g., climate change) have decreased markedly in Canada. A 2014 report published by *Evidence for Democracy*, noted that “over 85% of departments assessed (12/14) received a grade of C or lower” in open communication between media and scientists.⁴ Similar findings have been published by other stakeholders including the *Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada*, which noted that 90% of federal scientists cannot speak freely.⁵ When the interviews for this report were conducted, it was prior to the federal election and this was the reality facing science in Canada. At that time, stakeholders almost universally noted that this commitment does not deal with this particular problem. As such, most civil society interviewees were hesitant to speak too highly of the commitment. However, it was widely thought to be a step in the right direction.

Following the October 2015 election, the new prime minister, Justin Trudeau, appointed two ministers with mandates focused on science: Kirsty Duncan is the Minister of Science and Navdeep Bains is the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development.⁶ In addition, the longstanding concern of freedom of speech for scientists has been addressed by the new government which has told scientists that they are now able to speak freely about their work to the media and the public.⁷

The open science commitment can be seen as foundational to future open science commitments. If implemented properly, the commitment will allow for greater transparency into the federal government’s scientific information and data holdings. That said, there are multiple issues complicating the implementation of open science. The move

toward open publishing is relatively new within many government departments and agencies. As such, it is difficult for managers to find staff with the requisite competencies to move open science forward. Training requires time and resources that many government interviewees across multiple departments indicated they are lacking.

Technological infrastructure also poses challenges. Currently, there are no enterprise, or government-wide, archives. There is no place to put the complete copies of scientific research papers. Without further investing in IT infrastructure, open science will be limited to listing citations.

While progress toward the fulfillment of this commitment has seen delays and is currently limited, government interviewees have noted that it has helped to bring 13 science-based departments and agencies together to work toward a common goal.

MOVING FORWARD

Lack of resources is a problem across government and was noted in particular by those involved in science-based work from multiple departments. Moving forward, the IRM researcher recommends the government take action to:

- Invest in enterprise-wide archives to support the provision of scientific information and data;
- Move to provide the full text of scientific articles linked to the citations established under the current action plan where possible; and
- Provide federal scientists with the final right of review of their research to ensure that their science is not inadvertently misrepresented after it goes through the process of approvals and editing.

¹ <http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=F6765465-1>

² <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/8a42e6f6-7ae5-4863-bac5-93b6f40f6b63>.

³ <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12316>.

⁴ https://evidencefordemocracy.ca/sites/default/files/reports/Can%20Scientists%20Speak_.pdf.

⁵ <http://www.pipsc.ca/portal/page/portal/website/issues/science/bigchill>.

⁶ <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/why-canadian-science-now-has-two-ministers>.

⁷ <http://www.ifscience.com/editors-blog/canadian-federal-scientists-can-now-speak-freely-media>.

★ 7 | MANDATORY REPORTING ON EXTRACTIVES

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will introduce legislation on mandatory reporting standards for the extractive sector that require the reporting of certain payments made to governments related to the commercial development of oil, gas, and minerals.

As a country with abundant natural resource wealth, Canada understands the necessity of openness and accountability in resource development both at home and abroad. Responsible development attracts investment, helps enhance the reputation of Canada's extractive firms, and strengthens international partnerships.

In 2013, G8 leaders noted that in many developing countries there is huge potential for economic growth based on abundant natural resource reserves. The Government of Canada is meeting its international commitment to establish mandatory reporting standards by 2015 for the extractive sector and doing its part to contribute to raising global standards of transparency. Raising global standards of transparency will improve accountability in the sector and reduce corruption and other illicit activities.

The Government of Canada will establish reporting standards for the extractive sector, requiring extractive entities to report on certain payments made to governments in Canada. Extractive entities are often required to make such payments to cover licence fees, rental and entry fees, royalties, and other costs. Mandatory reporting standards will increase Canadians' awareness about how extractive companies' revenues are spent, which supports transparency and social responsibility and helps to combat corruption.

By creating an open reporting environment, with clear and understandable information made available to the public, greater transparency and accountability in resource development can be achieved everywhere Canadian extractive firms operate.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- Introduce **new legislation** that will require extractive entities to implement mandatory reporting standards and report annually on payments to all levels of government, domestically and internationally.
- Ensure **stakeholder engagement** on the establishment and implementation of these mandatory reporting standards.
- Require **extractive entities to publish data** on the payments they make to governments in Canada and around the world.

Responsible institution: Natural Resources Canada

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|--|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| ★7. Overall | | | | X | X | X | | | | | | X | | | X | |
| 7.1. New legislation on extractives | | | | X | X | | | | | | | X | | | | X |
| 7.2. Stakeholder engagement | | X | | | | X | | | | | X | | | | X | |
| 7.3. Required publication of payments by extractive entities | | | | X | X | | | | | | | X | | | X | |

Editorial Note: This is a starred commitment, because it is measurable, clearly relevant to OGP values as written, of transformative potential impact, and was substantially or completely implemented.

WHAT HAPPENED?

The first milestone under this commitment is complete. The *Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act*¹ was assented to on 16 December 2014 and came into force on 1 June 2015. Under the act, extractive entities are “required to report annually on payments made to governments relating to the commercial development of oil, natural gas, or minerals, at home and abroad.”²

According to government interviewees, the consultation activities referenced under the second milestone have begun and will continue in 2016. Some consultation activities were held with provinces and territories, aboriginal groups, the private sector, and civil society around the drafting of the new legislation in 2014 and its implementation in 2015.³

The act itself fulfilled the third milestone as it set out a requirement for extractive entities to publish data annually within 150 days after their fiscal year end with the exception of aboriginal governments which have a two-year deferral. The Government of Canada has prepared a set of draft implementation tools that were released for consultation between 12 August 2015 and 22 September 2015.⁴

DID IT MATTER?

The new legislation is widely thought to be a positive step forward when it comes to improving transparency within the extractive sector. Some organizations working within Canada have been actively pushing for greater transparency in this sector for some time. Publish What You Pay Canada, for example, encouraged civil society members to draft commitments to be considered for the Second Open Government National Action Plan.⁵

The milestone under this commitment to require extractive entities to publish data is important, but is somewhat redundant as it is a requirement elaborated in the act itself and, as such, is really part of the first milestone. That said, the implementation tools that have been developed and released for public consultation were not part of the national action plan and constitute a potentially valuable addition.

However, attention needs to be paid to the format of the reporting. According to the technical guidance provided to extractive entities, reports are to be provided in either XLS or PDF format.⁶ This could prove problematic as inconsistent formatting could make it

difficult for users to engage in comparative analysis and to harvest information and data.

All stakeholders interviewed saw the overall commitment as a positive development and potentially transformative. However, some expressed a desire for the Government of Canada to go further and to be more ambitious.

MOVING FORWARD

The most common recommendation made by civil society interviewees for furthering extractive sector transparency was for Canada to implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).⁷ While the Government of Canada has supported EITI, it does not implement the standard. Implementing the standard would, among other things, foster citizen engagement as well as simplify and improve the ability for stakeholders to locate information regarding the extractive industries. Under EITI, there is “a centralized repository where records can quickly be downloaded and compared.”⁸ Under the current situation captured by the existing commitment, Canada’s “‘compliance’ will involve each company maintaining its own records ‘somewhere’ and will require anyone interested in actually figuring out what is going on to track down each one individually.”⁹ As such, when moving this commitment forward to the next action plan, it is recommended that the Government of Canada implement the EITI standard.

Additionally, it is recommended that the standards and guidance around the mandatory reporting outlined in milestone three are clarified to ensure the information and data is usable. Data should be in at least one machine readable format, and reports should be easily searchable.

¹<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/E-22.7/FullText.html>.

²<http://open.canada.ca/en/consultations/key-elements-extractive-sector-transparency-measures-act>.

³<http://open.canada.ca/en/content/comments-received-response-consultation-mandatory-reporting-standards-extractive-sector>.

⁴<http://open.canada.ca/en/content/comments-received-response-consultation-mandatory-reporting-standards-extractive-sector>.

⁵http://www.pwyp.ca/images/PWYP-Canada_OGP_Action_Plan_Commitment_on_Extractives_Transparency.pdf.

⁶http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/sites/www.nrcan.gc.ca/files/mining-materials/PDF/ESTMA-Technical_e.pdf

⁷<https://eiti.org>.

⁸<http://on.thestar.com/1gY5aDL>.

⁹<http://on.thestar.com/1gY5aDL>.

8 | OPEN CONTRACTING

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will coordinate single-window access to a broad range of open contracting information from across federal departments.

The federal government spends millions of dollars every year on procurement activities, and Canadians need to understand how this money is spent and what is being received in return. Access to this information is essential to ensuring accountability for the stewardship of public money. In addition, parties involved in public contracts must understand that open, proactive disclosure of contracting data is a condition of doing business with the Government of Canada.

The Government of Canada has demonstrated global leadership in this area through its robust disclosure regime for contracting data. Since 2004, federal departments and agencies have been required to proactively disclose information on contracts awarded over \$10,000 on their websites. Furthermore, the Government of Canada's buyandsell.gc.ca website for procurement data has been influential in the design of the Open Contracting Partnership's (OCP's) draft international Open Contracting Data Standard. Canada supports the steps taken by the OCP to strengthen the openness and transparency of procurement processes in the international community through the establishment of Open Contracting Global Principles.

By improving upon the disclosure of contracting data, the Government of Canada will strengthen the openness and transparency of its procurement processes and increase Canadians' knowledge of how their tax dollars are being spent.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- **Release data on all contracts** over \$10,000 via a centralized, machine-readable database available to the public.
- **Increase the level of detail disclosed** on government contracts over \$10,000.
- Provide **guidance to federal departments** and agencies to increase consistency in open contracting.
- **Pilot the Open Contracting Data Standard**, v. 0.3.3 on the BuyandSell.gc.ca website for federal contracts awarded by Public Works and Government Services Canada.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board Secretariat, Public Works and Government Services Canada

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 8. Overall | | | X | | X | | X | | | | X | | | | X | |
| 8.1. Release data on contracts | | | | X | X | | X | | | X | | | | | X | |
| 8.2. Increase detail of disclosure | | X | | | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | | |
| 8.3. Guidance to departments | | X | | | X | | | | | X | | | | | X | |
| 8.4. Open Contracting Data Standard | | | | X | X | | | | | | X | | | | X | |

Editorial Note: Under the old criteria this commitment would have received a star because it is clearly relevant to OGP values as written, has moderate potential impact, and has been substantially or completely implemented. (Note that IRM updated the star criteria in early 2015.)

WHAT HAPPENED?

A new “Search Government Contracts” feature was built into and launched with the new open.canada.ca portal in November 2014.¹ The service allows users to search the procurement information of 20 federal institutions. Training has been provided to departments and agencies on the use of the proactive disclosure system.

According to government interviewees, planning has started toward the fulfillment of the second milestone under this commitment to define the scope and the schedule for releasing more detailed information on government contracts over \$10,000. The mandatory publication of contracts over \$10,000 was announced in 2004.² Rules governing contracting are contained with the Treasury Board Secretariat’s Contracting Policy.³ However, at the time of writing (October 2015), the scope and schedule had yet to be released or finalized.

Significant progress has been made toward the fourth milestone in the commitment. The Open Contracting Data Standard has been applied on a pilot basis to one government department—Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC).⁴ The pilot includes contracts dating back to 2012. Data files from PWGSC are provided on the buyandsell.gc.ca website for each year between 2012 and 2016. The files include information regarding standing offer and supply arrangement, tender, award, and contract history information for procurement.⁵ Data provided through the standard is governed by the Open Government Licence.

DID IT MATTER?

The government has a proactive disclosure policy for contracts over \$10,000 that predates the second national action plan.⁶ None of those interviewed for the purposes of this report took issue with the \$10,000 limit; some were, however, unclear what sort of new

information flow is encouraged by this commitment, particularly since the increased level of detail disclosed on contracts had yet to be clarified at the time of writing. However, the commitment does begin to repackage and present contracting information in a manner that is more accessible to the public.

It is too early to fully assess the impact of the Open Contracting Data Standard given that it is still in its pilot phase and given the limited scope of that pilot to one department. It does provide users with the ability to download and work with contracting information via the Open Government Licence which has the potential to be useful to some. The .JSON schema is the recommended (“canonical”) format set by the international Open Contracting Data Standard, however, the .JSON format is not easy for all users to manipulate and work with. As such, usability of the data may be limited. The Government points out that additional technology is needed to use and visualize the data provided by the pilot: “Pilot data means that businesses, using commercially available business intelligence products that enable data visualization, can analyze markets, and predict trends and requirements.”⁷ CSOs and others who might not have the resources to access “commercially available business intelligence products” may not be able to benefit from the pilot.

MOVING FORWARD

Moving forward, based on the findings of the IRM researcher, additional work needs to be done on the basic implementation of this commitment. This includes expanding the number of departments and agencies captured under the Search Government Contracts service, publicizing the scope and schedule for the increased levels of disclosure, as well as completing and analyzing the impact of the Open Contracting Data Standard. In its analysis of the standard, government should pay particular attention to usability and question whether diverse stakeholders

are able to use the data provided through the standard.

Additionally, the IRM researcher recommends that the Search Government Contracts service be reviewed with an eye toward increasing its functionality and openness. Currently, users can get a list of government contracts over \$10,000 by searching organization name, vendor name, or year; however, the search results are not provided in an open format that is easy to use.

¹<http://open.canada.ca/en/search/pd/>.

²<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pd-dp/dc/index-eng.asp>.

³<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=14494>.

⁴<https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/open-contracting-data-standard-pilot>.

⁵<https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/open-contracting-data-standard-pilot>.

⁶<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pd-dp/dc/index-eng.asp>.

⁷<https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/open-contracting-data-standard-pilot/visualization-and-use-of-ocds-pilot-data>.

9 | OPEN INFORMATION ON BUDGETS AND EXPENDITURES

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will publish expanded information and data on federal spending to help Canadians understand, and hold government accountable for, the use of public monies.

One of the most important things Canadians want from their government is information on how their tax dollars are being spent. The budget and expenditures process can often be unclear to citizens, and it is the government's responsibility to make every effort to ensure that taxpayers understand how their money is being spent.

Canada has demonstrated clear leadership in providing Canadians with access to information on government expenditures. Since 2003, federal departments and agencies have proactively disclosed information about government operations on their websites (e.g., travel, contracts, hospitality expenditures) to allow Canadians and Parliament to better hold the government and public sector officials to account. Proactively disclosed information is currently fragmented, since it is published on more than a hundred individual departmental websites. Under our new action plan, Canadians will be provided with single-window access for searching and comparing this information across government.

To ensure that Canadians have the information they need on government finances and expenditures, we will provide enhanced online tools that give a clear picture of the financial expenditures of federal organizations. These tools will provide innovative visualizations of data, interactive infographics, and public reports released as interactive documents. Using these tools, Canadians will be able to track government spending by departments and agencies over time, and more effectively compare and contrast expenditures across departments.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- *Launch a **new interactive online service** that enables Canadians to review and visualize **federal spending** broken down by department, and to compare expenditures across departments. Consultations with Canadians will be completed to test and ensure the effectiveness of this new online service.*
- *Provide **single-window**, searchable access to information that is **proactively disclosed** by departments and agencies (e.g., travel and hospitality, contracts, grants and contributions).*
 - *Standardize procedures for publishing mandatory proactive disclosure information by federal departments and agencies.*
- *Make all **data** from charts and tables in **Budget 2015** available in machine-readable formats to facilitate analysis by citizens and parliamentarians.*

Responsible institution: Treasury Board Secretariat

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|--|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 9. Overall | | | | X | X | | X | X | | X | | | | | X | |
| 9.1. New online service to view federal spending | | | | X | X | | X | X | | | X | | | | X | |
| 9.2. Proactive disclosure portal | | | | X | X | | X | X | | X | | | | X | | |
| 9.3. Budget 2015 data | | | | X | X | | X | X | | X | | | | | | X |

WHAT HAPPENED?

Progress has been made toward the first milestone under this commitment. A new online tool—the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) Infobase—for visualizing federal spending was launched in April 2015. It is “a searchable online database providing financial and human resources information on government operations.”¹

The first phase of the proactive disclosure portal, the second milestone under the commitment, was launched in November 2014 in the form of the Search Government Contracts service detailed under Commitment 8: Open Contracting.

The third milestone is complete. Charts and tables from the 2015 federal budget are accessible on the open.canada.ca website.² Data tables can be downloaded in both official languages in either CSV or Excel formats. Additionally, the federal budget document is available in French and English in PDF format.³

DID IT MATTER?

The TBS Infobase outlined in the first milestone does not provide new information, but it does package existing information in a way that makes it

more accessible to users. It allows users to analyze data by subject area, to see all data for a particular organization, and to explore Government of Canada management data. It provides information regarding the whole-of-government framework which helps users to contextualize spending by providing information about spending areas and the structure of the government. While much of the data provided on the TBS Infobase is available for download via open data, it is not in an open format on the TBS Infobase page itself. Providing the open format on the TBS Infobase site instead of prompting users to leave the site in search of the downloadable formats would enhance the usability of the new service.

There is an overlap between the second milestone of this commitment and the previous commitment related to open contracting. According to government interviewees, the development of the Search Government Contracts service, outlined in commitment number 8, provides a platform that can be built on to allow for searchable access to other categories of information detailed in the federal proactive information disclosure policy,⁴ including travel and hospitality spending as well as grants and contributions.

Currently, the functionality of the new single-window

proactive disclosure portal detailed in milestone number two is limited, but has the potential to improve transparency should it be expanded across government and all proactive disclosure spending. While proactive disclosure information is currently provided for each department and agency, it is dispersed across numerous websites. Bringing it to a centralized portal and making the information available in open formats would render it easier for users to find and work with the information.

Civil society interviewees were positive about information and data related to budgets and expenditures. While the third milestone related to the release of the 2015 budget data was generally well received, it was also noted that it appeared relatively narrow in the sense that it did not specify or commit to making future budget data available in machine-readable formats. It simply indicates that this will happen for budget 2015.

MOVING FORWARD

Based on the findings of the IRM researcher, additional work needs to be done on the basic implementation of this commitment. According to government interviewees, usability testing of the TBS Infobase will be conducted with Canadians in the fall of 2015, and the single-window proactive disclosure portal will be expanded to include all proactive disclosure information for 15 departments during the same time period. In addition to completing the existing milestones, it is recommended that:

- The single-window proactive disclosure portal be expanded to include whole-of-government proactive disclosure information; and
- Future federal budgeting data and information is released in an open format.

¹ <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>.

² <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/8826e456-6bb2-4183-8072-f6747ae9db71>.

³ <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2015/docs/plan/budget2015-eng.pdf>.

⁴ <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pd-dp/index-eng.asp>.

10 | DIGITAL LITERACY

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will support the development of tools, training resources, and other initiatives to help Canadians acquire the essential skills needed to access, understand, and use digital information and new technologies.

Increasingly, Canadians are required to use technology to access, use, and create digital information in their work and other daily activities. Similarly, digital literacy skills are needed to take full advantage of the benefits of open data, information, and dialogue. The potential reach and impact of Canada's open government activities can be significantly augmented by efforts to ensure citizens understand how to make use of the technologies that enable open government.

In order to target these activities more effectively, initiatives will be undertaken to better understand the relationship between digital skills and labour market and social outcomes. To this end, the Government of Canada will develop tools, training resources, and other initiatives to support digital skills development by Canadians.

The Government of Canada will work with partners in the private sector, civil society, and academia to ensure that federal digital skills initiatives are aligned with nongovernmental efforts being undertaken in this domain.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- **Sponsor** projects to increase understanding of the relationship between **digital skills** and relevant labour market and social outcomes, including building a profile of Canadians' digital skills competencies by region and by demographic group.
- Develop online tools, **training** materials, and other resources to enable individual Canadians to assess and improve their **digital skills**.
- **Fund** private sector and civil society initiatives aimed at improving the digital skills of Canadians (e.g., **digital skills** in rural small business, essential skills for Northern youth, business technology management accreditation).

Responsible institution: Employment and Social Development Canada

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|--|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 10. Overall | | X | | | X | | | X | | X | | | | X | | |
| 10.1. Sponsor digital skills programs | | X | | | X | | | | | X | | | | X | | |
| 10.2. Digital skills training/ education | | X | | | X | | | X | | X | | | | X | | |
| 10.3. Fund digital skills programs | | X | | | X | | | | | X | | | | X | | |

WHAT HAPPENED?

The digital literacy commitment is complicated in some ways by the division of powers in Canada.¹ Provincial governments have power over education. As such, the federal government is somewhat limited in the sorts of activities or milestones it can commit to unilaterally. As a result, the overall commitment relates more to supporting research and the implementation of programs run by other parties. Much of this commitment is being carried out with data from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD's) Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).² The lead agency—Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)—is working on seven reports based on a range of themes identified in PIAAC. At the time of writing, none of the reports had been released. A profile of Canada's digital skills competencies is included in PIAAC. There are results by province/territory and for various demographic groups: age, labour force status, level of education, Indigenous, immigrant, Anglophone/Francophone, and gender.³

The second milestone promises the development of online tools, training material, and resources to help Canadian's improve their digital skills. According to

government interviewees, this is also being carried out within the context of PIAAC. ESDC has supported the development of Education and Skills Online, which is an online assessment tool based on the PIAAC survey. This tool is led by the OECD with member countries participating to develop country-specific assessments. Initially it was expected to be available in fall 2015,⁴ however in January of 2016, during the editing of this report, the IRM researcher was informed that it will likely be available in Spring 2016.

Funding for private sector and civil society initiatives aimed at improving the digital skills of Canadians was limited. Government interviewees mentioned two grants and contributions projects that are funded by the government to develop and test models and tools that can assess and improve digital skills. The first project is at the Université de Québec à Montréal. The project runs from April 2013 to December 2015 and was funded in the amount of \$332,000. The project is to develop and test online training materials to help individuals assess and enhance their digital skills. A website was launched along with mobile applications for a brain training game, which has 30 levels with different levels of task difficulty (90 levels in total). The pilot test targeted 250 participants. The next steps are to analyze results and prepare final reports. The second project is being carried out by the Community

Business Development Corporation (Restigouche) between February 2012 and January 2016. Funding for this project is \$2 million Canadian. The project is to develop online training materials and tools to support small and medium enterprises in rural regions across Canada in identifying organizational needs and enhancing the essential digital skills of their employees. Training activities are now being pilot tested, following which the results will be analyzed and will inform the final stages of tool and material refinement. Finally, the organization will finalize its strategies for longer-term support, sustainability, and dissemination of the products, and prepare final reports.

DID IT MATTER?

Some of the work identified in this commitment predates the Canadian national action plan. PIAAC data was collected between 2011 and 2012 with the results being released in 2013. The work being done to fulfill the first milestone is simply about engaging in additional analysis of data that is quickly becoming dated.

While the commitment itself might help to understand digital literacy in more depth, it does not go a long way toward providing Canadians with digital skills or the technology that they require to hone these skills. Moreover, it does not address the issue of data literacy that was flagged in the first IRM report. While PIAAC provides a lot of information, it is related to literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in a technology-rich environment and is not focused on understanding challenges or issues related to the use of data; namely, that many citizens and civil society organizations lack the technology needed to work with data and lack the expertise needed to harness the capacity of data and the open datasets that the federal government makes public.⁵

The commitment does not capture or include the issue of access to digital technology. This was also raised in

the first IRM report as many civil society interviewees noted that the federal government cut its community access program (CAP) in 2012, effectively removing access to the Internet for some who may not have it in their homes.⁶ Therefore, the milestones and overall commitment are considered to be of minor potential impact.

MOVING FORWARD

Understanding digital literacy is a laudable goal and helps to provide a foundation for future action and policy in this area. However, more needs to be done to move from research to the development and implementation of solutions to the problems related to digital literacy and access to technology, or lack thereof. It is recommended that future action plans:

- Clearly define the term “digital literacy;”
- Include commitments that relate to the data divide and that help Canadians to work with the open datasets that are being released by the Government of Canada; and
- Include commitments that address the issue of access to technology.

¹ http://www.parl.gc.ca/about/parliament/education/ourcountryourparliament/html_booklet/division-powers-e.html.

² <http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/>.

³ <http://www.piaac.ca>.

⁴ Government correspondence with IRM researcher, 18 August 2015.

⁵ http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_final_2012_Eng.pdf.

⁶ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/ottawa-cuts-cap-public-web-access-funding-1.1152248>.

11 | OPEN INFORMATION CORE COMMITMENT

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will expand the proactive release of information on government activities, programs, policies, and services, making information easier to find, access, and use.

Digital technologies have made it far easier for governments to create, repurpose, and disseminate information than ever before. Robust information management and next-generation search and discovery services will significantly improve the sharing of government information in support of government transparency and accountability. At the same time, public access to government research and analysis will open the door to the unlimited reuse of this information in new and innovative ways.

Throughout public consultations, Canadians have expressed a desire to see the Government of Canada expand its open information activities and facilitate easier access to published federal information. The Government of Canada will continue to take bold steps to make government information more widely available. This involves a range of activities, including ensuring more effective records management across all federal departments and agencies as the foundation of transparency and accountability; developing new public-facing open government resources such as a new online virtual library to preserve and improve access to historical and archival records; and providing better and more efficient access to information services to Canadians.

Providing open information will help to build a more engaged and informed citizenry, promote informed policy making, and enable better management of public resources.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- **Modernize** the administration of Access to Information and Privacy (**ATIP**) services across the federal government, including the following:
 - Expansion of online ATI request-and-pay services to additional federal departments and agencies across government;
 - Access to a searchable database of all completed ATI requests, and the ability to request the released documents;
 - Publication of statistical information on extensions and consultations related to access requests;
 - Development of standardized, whole-of-government services and solutions to expedite ATIP requests and enable Canadians to track the status of their ATIP requests; and
 - Establishment of an expanded whole-of-government training strategy to help government officials understand and manage their responsibilities under ATIP legislation.
- Develop and launch a **virtual library** on the new government-wide open government portal (open.canada.ca). This new service will provide access to federal publications through an online, searchable repository of published federal documents of all kinds.
 - Complete public consultations with citizens and civil society to support development of the virtual library service;
 - Establish a government-wide system and web architecture for the release of government information assets; and
 - Standardize release procedures, formats, and metadata.
- Improve the management and accessibility of government records, and facilitate faster responses to requests for information through the roll-out of **GCDOCS**, a government-wide records management solution for the

federal government.

- Increase Canadians' access to federal records by **removing access restrictions on archived federal documents** held by Library and Archives Canada.
- Develop and pilot a single online discovery and access platform for federal **science library** services and collections.
- Provide consolidated, searchable access to **regulatory information** from federal departments and agencies involved in regulatory activities.
- **Improve** access to all online Government of Canada information through the new whole-of-government **open.canada.ca website**:
 - Intuitive user-centric design based on government-wide web standards;
 - Whole-of-government search functionality; and
 - Faster access to frequently used services and information.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board Secretariat, Library and Archives Canada, National Research Council Canada

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 11. Overall | | | X | | X | | | X | | X | | | | | X | |
| 11.1. Modernize ATIP services | | | X | | X | | | | | X | | | | | X | |
| 11.2. Virtual library | | | | X | X | | | | | X | | | | X | | |
| 11.3. GCDOCS | | X | | | X | | | X | X | | | | | X | | |
| 11.4. Document release | | X | | | X | | | | | | X | | | | X | |
| 11.5 Science library | | | X | | X | | | | | X | | | | X | | |
| 11.6 Regulatory information | | | X | | X | | | | | X | | | | X | | |
| 11.7. Improve government websites | | X | | | X | | | X | | X | | | | | X | |

WHAT HAPPENED?

The first milestone regarding the modernization of Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) services and the online request-and-pay service was initiated under the first Canadian action plan. During the first year of the second action plan, it was expanded to ten additional federal institutions bringing the total number of institutions using the service to 31. Completed Access to Information (ATI) requests are searchable online. While this information is not necessarily new, it is now available as open data.

The Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) has created six new ATIP training modules, including such things as privacy and cabinet confidence, and is working with the Canada School of Public Service on a new training program that will incorporate the modules.

The second milestone, the virtual library, was a

commitment in the first Canadian action plan.

According to government documents provided to the IRM researcher, the “Open Information” section of the open.canada.ca site that was launched in November 2014 serves as a virtual library of federal publications. As of July 2015, the site provided access to over 170,000 digital information resources under the Open Government Licence and a common metadata profile¹ had been developed.

GCDOCS, the third milestone, was also in the first action plan. Government interviewees informed the IRM researcher that a readiness assessment survey has been completed and GCDOCS is in the process of being rolled out to departments and agencies based on the survey findings. The IRM researcher had recommended excluding GCDOCS from the second action plan as it is an internal information management

system, but government kept it in the second plan noting that better information management practices have the potential to improve the flow of information to citizens.

Removing restrictions from Library and Archives Canada (LAC) holdings, outlined in the fourth milestone, was also in the first action plan. This process started under the first plan. According to government officials, the LAC has reviewed six million pages for declassification since July 2014 and has opened four million as a result. LAC federal holdings will continue to be reviewed. The IRM researcher asked whether there was a declassification policy or guidelines that were publically available, and was told that there were not and that a set of criteria were under review and could potentially be released by the end of the fiscal year.

In July 2015, government informed the IRM researcher that consultations with departments were underway on draft instructions concerning increasing the availability of federal documentary heritage. Ultimately, government plans to issue a new LAC Directive on Making Government of Canada Documentary Heritage Available by June of 2016.

Some progress has been made toward the fifth milestone—the development of a federal science library pilot—but it has yet to be launched. As of July 2015, an implementation plan had been developed and a memorandum of understanding had been established between the National Research Council, Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Environment Canada.

Government interviewees told the IRM researcher that planning discussions were underway to support consolidated, searchable access to federal regulatory information on the canada.ca site, outlined in the sixth milestone under this commitment. However, as of July 2015, progress toward this particular milestone was behind schedule.

Activity around the seventh milestone in this commitment, related to improving government websites, was primarily concerned with the canada.ca website initiated under the first national action plan. The canada.ca website was updated in December

2014 in an effort to improve access to government information. Usability testing was completed with 3,400 Canadians, and a contract was awarded for “hosted, whole-of-government Web Management Services solution.”

DID IT MATTER?

This commitment was largely identified as the most disappointing of all of the commitments in the action plan by virtually all civil society interviewees and by many government interviewees as well. Most of the milestones are hold overs from the first action plan. The ATIP modernization plan only focuses on technical improvements and does not deal with the fundamental problems facing the access regime in Canada that were spelled out in detail in the first IRM report; namely, the antiquated nature of Canadian access to information legislation.² Problems around access to information include: the timely fulfillment of requests, overly broad exceptions in the grounds to refuse access, limitations in the scope of public bodies not covered by the Access to Information Act, and high fees.

While no stakeholder saw any individual milestone as inherently negative, it was believed that the commitment neglected to make what is seen as a key change to the improvement of open information—updating the Access to Information Act. As such, this commitment has been coded as only having a minor potential impact. As was in the case of the first IRM report, many civil society interviewees identified the Access to Information Act as “broken.” As one interviewee noted, “nothing you build on something with a broken foundation will hold.” Amending the legislation would have led to a much more transformative impact on openness and transparency.

Civil society stakeholders and the IRM researcher struggled to identify the presence of a virtual library, outlined in the second milestone. There is confusion over this milestone. Government interviewees noted that the Open Information Portal on open.canada.ca is serving as a virtual library, but the link between this and the virtual library milestone is not clear to users.

Civil society stakeholders widely complimented the work being done by the LAC in removing access

restrictions on archived federal documents. The block review strategy used by the LAC to review large quantities of holdings was seen as effective by a range of stakeholders interviewed. In terms of tackling the problem of restricted documents this milestone is an important step forward. As such, this milestone was coded as having a moderate potential impact in the chart above. However, the access to information limitations noted above prevent the opening of some information, rendering an overall coding of 'minor potential impact' for the commitment as a whole.

It is too early to assess the utility of some of the other milestones given their limited completion. The federal science library portal, for example, is not scheduled to launch until December 2015 according to documentation provided to the IRM researcher. It is unclear how a science library portal differs from the virtual library. The references to a range of libraries renders it unclear to many users as to what they might anticipate should this commitment be fulfilled, or where to find the libraries online.

As was the case with the interviews conducted for the first IRM report,³ many civil society interviewees expressed concern with the canada.ca website and the move toward a centralized government portal. This move has meant a great deal of information loss with no clear digital preservation strategy, nor a mechanism for users to request information that has been removed.

MOVING FORWARD

There are a number of recommendations that could be made when it comes to moving forward with open information. The most important at this time, as noted by interviewed civil society organizations and the previous IRM report, is to reform the Access to Information Act and to improve its implementation to deal with the problems identified in the first IRM report, and restated above. The legislation is the

foundation to all commitments made related to open government. Significant progress cannot be made when it comes to improving the flow of information without amending the legislation.

The Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada should be drawn upon as a significant resource in updating the Access to Information Act. Successive Information Commissioners have offered recommendations for its amendment. The current Information Commissioner, Suzanne Legault, tabled an in-depth report to Parliament⁴ in March 2015 that proposed in-depth reform of the Access to Information Act. The report contained 85 recommendations related to: extending coverage to all branches of government; improving procedures for making access requests; setting tighter timelines; maximizing disclosure; strengthening oversight; disclosing more information proactively; adding consequences for non-compliance; and ensuring periodic review of the act.⁵ The Information Commissioner's Office engaged in a lengthy citizen engagement process in the preparation of the report.⁶ This office is a valuable resource in the development and implementation of commitments aimed at improving open government in the country.

Other recommendations for moving forward include:

- Clarify commitments around the virtual library and making it more readily identifiable to users;
- Publicize a policy on document declassification;
- Develop and publicize a clear policy for digital preservation; and
- Clarify a process for users to request digital information that has been archived.

¹ <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/e418841e-d9dc-4caf-9a19-09b3269a3e1e>.

² <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/canada/irm>.

³ <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/canada/irm>.

⁴ <http://www.oic-ci.gc.ca/eng/rapport-de-modernisation-modernization-report.aspx>.

⁵ http://www.oic-ci.gc.ca/eng/rapport-de-modernisation-modernization-report_2.aspx.

⁶ http://www.oic-ci.gc.ca/eng/modernization-atia_2012.aspx.

12 | CONSULTING CANADIANS

Commitment text:

The Government of Canada will provide direction and next-generation tools and resources to enable federal departments and agencies to consult more broadly with citizens and civil society in support of the development and delivery of government policies and programs.

Modern technology has enabled governments to connect faster and more easily with citizens. Given Canada's geographic diversity, federal departments and agencies often face a challenge in conducting wide-ranging consultations with Canadians from diverse areas of the country and backgrounds. Evolving technological solutions can help government departments and agencies better consult with citizens and civil society organizations on a wide range of policy, program, and regulatory issues. The result will be a more informed society on government programs and direction, and improved policy development for the government.

To meet this challenge, the Government of Canada will develop new and innovative approaches and solutions to enable Canadians to more easily take part in federal consultations of interest to them. The government will also develop a set of principles and procedures to guide consultation processes in order to increase the consistency and effectiveness of public consultations across government. As a result, Canadians will be more aware of the opportunities to engage with their government, will have consistent, advance notice of government consultations, and will have access to easy-to-use solutions for providing their ideas on federal programs and services.

Deliverables to be completed in 2014-16:

- **Improve** the existing **Consulting with Canadians website** to facilitate easier access to information on federal consultation activities for citizens.
- Develop and launch a **new** government-wide **consultation portal** to promote opportunities for public participation, host online consultations, and share findings from completed consultations.
- **Expand** the use of **social media** across government to enable departments and programs to connect to Canadians in innovative ways and enhance engagement in support of citizen-centric services.
- Develop a set of **principles and standards for public consultations** in discussion with citizens and civil society (e.g., advance notice and promotion of consultations, best practices for in-person and online engagement, effective use of social media, reporting on results), including setting out minimum benchmarks for consultations.
- Conduct targeted **consultations on open government** themes with key groups in Canada (e.g., youth, aboriginal populations).

Responsible institution: Treasury Board Secretariat, Privy Council Office

Supporting institution(s): None

Start date: November 2014

End date: 30 June 2016

| COMMITMENT OVERVIEW | SPECIFICITY | | | | OGP VALUE RELEVANCE | | | | POTENTIAL IMPACT | | | | COMPLETION | | | |
|--|-------------|-----|--------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|-------|----------|----------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | None | Low | Medium | High | Access to information | Civic participation | Public accountability | Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability | None | Minor | Moderate | Transformative | Not started | Limited | Substantial | Complete |
| 12. Overall | | | X | | X | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | |
| 12.1. Improve Consulting with Canadians website | | X | | | X | X | | | | X | | | | | | X |
| 12.2. New consultation portal | | | X | | | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | |
| 12.3. Expand social media reach | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | | | X | |
| 12.4. Principles and standards for public consultation | | | X | | | X | | | | | X | | | X | | |
| 12.5. Open government consultations | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | |

WHAT HAPPENED?

The Consulting Canadians website dates back to the late 1990s. The first milestone was to improve this existing website. Changes were made to the site and it was integrated with the canada.ca site and re-launched in December 2014.¹ It is the understanding of the IRM researcher that the modified Consulting Canadians website is a stop-gap, short-term solution to improve the consultative mechanism while the government works on the second milestone of launching a new government-wide consultation portal.

The new site for consultations was part of the first action plan that was not completed. A bid for solicitations was posted on 21 March 2014,² and the government has established a standing offer for stakeholder/citizen and engagement services.³ According to government interviewees, the new consultation portal will be launched by June 2016 and will include a unified consultation calendar, enhanced search functionality, notification and subscription service, and reports and outcomes.

In April 2014, the Government of Canada partnered with Hootsuite.⁴ Hootsuite is contracted to provide social media account management services. According to information provided to the IRM researcher by the Government of Canada, there were 47 federal institutions using the service as of July 2015. This number is expected to rise to 64 or 65 by the end of the fiscal year. Additionally, there are 2,529 social networks (1,752 belong to the Environment Canada Alert System) engaged by 648 users, making an average number of 3,480 posts per week. An Interdepartmental Task Force on Social Media is working to develop guidance on social media use for departments.

Government has indicated that it is on schedule with its fourth milestone to develop principles, standards, and best practices for public consultations. Some policies on federal consultations do exist,⁵ but they do not appear to be coordinated. According to government interviewees, a review of existing principles and best practices is underway. This includes

an environmental scan of internal and external guidance documents. The review will be used to draft principles and best practices. Government has noted that the draft will be released for public consultation early in 2016 before it is finalized.

Government is behind schedule with its final milestone of engaging in targeted consultations. Government interviewees noted that some targeted consultations were done with what they referred to as “key” groups around specific commitments in the second national action plan. However, there was a gap in the consultations; no consultations took place between November 2014 and April 2015. This final milestone does not have a clear goal. It is unclear which groups would be considered “key groups” or why they would be considered that way. It is also unclear what the ultimate goal of these consultations on unspecified “open government themes” would be.

DID IT MATTER?

Social media use does occur in the government already. The federal government outlined guidelines for the use of social media in the public service in 2011.⁶ The former President of the Treasury Board, Tony Clement, did announce that public servants would be encouraged to use social media more at the launch of the second action plan in 2014.⁷ It is not clear what form this encouragement will take. Social media has been employed in a manner that is largely broadcast only and that lacks interactivity. Some have perceived the guidelines as a mechanism for message control.⁸ Some news accounts have shown some evidence of procedures that complicate the use of social media.⁹

The milestone of developing principles and standards for best practice when it comes to consultations has the potential to help government departments and agencies better understand consultations and how they should be conducted. The milestone will have the most potential impact if standards are set that departments and agencies must follow. If the milestone simply results in a best practice narrative, the impact may not be as substantial.

Efforts were made to engage in some consultation around the implementation of three commitments;

however, in some cases, the term “consultation” is being used liberally by the government. The mind map exercise at the Open Data Conference in Ottawa is an example. Participants were asked to help the government prioritize which data holdings should be released. Participants were not provided with information related to data holdings prior to the exercise and participation was ad hoc. It was not clear how the feedback would be used. This sort of consultative exercise, while perhaps well-intentioned, does not follow best practices and could not rank above “consult” on the IAP2 spectrum of engagement. Additionally, two interviewees who participated in the mind map exercise informed the IRM researcher that they found the exercise to be controlled having their contributions regarding “increasing the scope and relevance of social data for public consumption removed from the map more than once before giving up.”¹⁰ Again, this calls the rigor and openness of the consultative exercise into question.

Many civil society interviewees felt that the government could be much more creative in the way it engages with Canadians. Engagement exercises could go beyond consultation whereby citizens are asked to either comment in an open forum or via email on a draft document or idea. One suggestion heard by the IRM researcher was for the government to create fellowships related to different aspects of open government so that they have an opportunity to work within government for a period—to work with the creators and curators of government data and information.

While this is not a large scale engagement project that touches Canadians widely, one interviewee noted that it would be a unique opportunity to engage with a few. It would also help to create awareness about the federal open government initiatives and the OGP, and could potentially foster greater understanding between citizens and government as “open government is not just about opening data, but opening government. Bring people in.”

MOVING FORWARD

It is too early to gauge the impact of the new government-wide consultation portal given that it is

still under development. However, multiple civil society interviewees warned that technology simply mediates engagement; it does not create it. Moving forward, the government will need to assess the technology it ultimately employs to determine how it both helps and hinders engagement. Attention needs to be paid to ensure that social media does not replace in person consultation methods. It will also need to consider a communication plan for raising awareness and encouraging participation in consultations. Keeping proper records of engagement activities and how feedback was used and then making it public will also be vital to increasing transparency and trust between the government and citizens.

Moving forward to expand the use of social media, government interviewees noted additional users across departments would be using social media, and that the Canada School of Public Service would serve as a partner to provide learning opportunities on enhanced use of social media. Additionally, government noted that privacy guidelines and protocols for official social media accounts would be established.

¹ <http://www1.canada.ca/consultingcanadians/>.

² <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/tender-notice/PW-CY-019-64893>.

³ <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/goods-and-services-identification-number/gsin/T001H>.

⁴ <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/award-notice/PW-EEM-006-26757-001>.

⁵ <https://www.ec.gc.ca/consultation/default.asp?lang=En&n=A7FB732A-1>.

⁶ <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=27517§ion=text>.

⁷ http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=901789&_ga=1.127343433.533486403.1448614763.

⁸ <http://eaves.ca/2011/11/23/the-canadian-government-new-web-2-0-guidelines-the-good-the-bad-the-ugly/>.

⁹ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/government-tweets-sanitized-through-super-rigid-process-1.2520731>.

¹⁰ Correspondence with the IRM Researcher January 2016

V | PROCESS: SELF-ASSESSMENT

The self-assessment process was put on hold in Canada due to a federal election. Government informed the IRM researcher that all consultation activities are stopped once an election has been called, citing the Guidelines on the Conduct of Ministers, Ministers of State, Exempt Staff, and Public Servants During an Election.¹

Table 1: Self-assessment checklist

| | |
|--|---|
| Was the annual progress report published? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Was it done according to schedule? | NA |
| Is the report available in the administrative language(s)? | NA |
| Is the report available in English? | NA |
| Did the government provide a two-week public comment period on draft self-assessment reports? | NA |
| Were any public comments received? | NA |
| Is the report deposited in the OGP portal? | NA |
| Did the self-assessment report include review of consultation efforts during action plan development? | NA |
| Did the self-assessment report include review of consultation efforts during action plan implementation? | NA |
| Did the self-assessment report include a description of the public comment period during the development of the self-assessment? | NA |
| Did the report cover all of the commitments? | NA |
| Did it assess completion of each commitment according to the timeline and milestones in the action plan? | NA |
| Did the report respond to the IRM key recommendations (2015+ only)? | NA |

SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Until the election call, there is evidence that the self-assessment had been on track to be published and opened for consultation on schedule. On 23 July 2015, an email was sent to the open government listserv stating: “We’re now about halfway through implementing Canada’s 2014-16 Action Plan. It’s almost time to release our draft Mid-term Self-Assessment Report on progress so far. Over the weeks that follow the release, you have the opportunity to make suggestions or comments online as we enter the home stretch of the 2014-16 Action Plan.” This was followed by another email on 5 August 2015, stating: “The Mid-Term Self-Assessment on Open Government Action Plan 2014-16 will take place later this year. We thank you as always for your support, and we look forward to being able to hear your views at that time.” This second email announcing the delay of the self-assessment came three days after the federal election was called. The election is scheduled for 19 October 2015.

A draft of the mid-term self-assessment report was provided to the IRM researcher in July 2015 to aid in the development of this IRM report.

FOLLOW-UP ON PREVIOUS IRM RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve Citizen Engagement

As was mentioned earlier in this report, some concerns were raised with the consultation process around the drafting of the second action plan, particularly with the weak use of the Advisory Panel and the short timeframe to comment on the actual draft action plan. However, civil society members were virtually unanimous in pointing out that the consultations were an improvement compared to those held in conjunction with the first action plan. Overall, the consultations were more comprehensive and seemed “more genuine.” That said, there is room for improvement in the diversity of engagement activities and in engagement during the implementation of the plan and with citizens more generally.

Improve Information Flow

As was the case in the first IRM report, improvements

to the flow of information are somewhat limited under the second action plan. The online request-and-pay system for access to information helps to improve its administration, but it does not tackle the main issues facing the access to information regime. Portals, such as the searchable access to proactive information disclosure service, facilitate the retrieval of information that was already publically available, but does not go a long way toward improving the flow of new information. Without amending the Access to Information Act to, among other things, stretch its reach, and without improving the implementation of the Act, the flow of information is bound to remain limited.

Ensure Usability of Information and Data

While some commitments in the second action plan included the adoption of common principals and standards for data, users note that there is still work to do in this regard. The metadata standards were received with skepticism and did not provide users with a high level of information. Some data is still not presented in formats that are easy for users to manipulate. Moreover, the commitment related to digital literacy was narrow and did not explicitly deal with the data divide, or helping to ensure that Canadians can make use of government data.

Expand Integrity Commitments

In the first IRM report, the researcher recommended expanding commitments related to integrity. More specifically, it was recommended that “clear, ambitious and measurable commitments oriented toward improving integrity and addressing some of the problems inherent in the existing access to information system would go a long way. This includes having both the House of Commons and the Senate being subject to the access to information legislation.” While the specifics of this recommendation were not taken up in the second action plan, some efforts were made in the area of integrity commitments. The commitments on open contracting, the mandatory reporting on extractives, and the commitments on budget and expenditure information are examples.

Whole-of-Government Support is Required

This recommendation remained neglected. While open government received some support by Tony Clement, the former President of the Treasury Board—

the agency responsible for the OGP—it did not receive whole-of-government support. With the exception of the Open Data Exchange (ODX), no resources were provided to departments or agencies to fulfill open government commitments. Former Prime Minister Stephen Harper did not discuss the OGP or Canada’s open government commitments. The Clerk of the Privy Council—Canada’s most senior, non-political official—has a strategic document called “Blueprint 20/20” which outlines a vision for improving services to Canadians and incorporates elements of open government. However, there is a disconnect between the document and the action plan; the two documents do not reference one another and it is unclear how or if they work together for the advancement of any specific challenge related to open government. The new Liberal Government has established a Cabinet Committee on Open and Transparent Government that has a mandate “concerning the reform of democratic institutions and processes, and improving government transparency and openness.” This might be taken as a potential signal that greater whole-of-government support will be seen in the future, but this will need to be assessed.

¹“Guidelines on the Conduct of Ministers, Ministers of State, Exempt Staff, and Public Servants during an Election,” <http://www.pco.gc.ca/index.asp?lang=eng&page=convention&doc=convention-eng.htm>.

²<http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1342792785740>.

³<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/cabinet-committees-are-where-the-federal-governments-real-power-lies>.

VI | COUNTRY CONTEXT

In August 2015, a federal election was called. This election call impacted the administration of the OGP in Canada. During federal campaign periods, the public service slows, and in some cases stops, new publications and consultations. The timing of the campaign aligned directly with the government's schedule for publishing and consulting on its self-assessment report for the OGP. As such, the report was not published on schedule. However, a draft report was provided to the IRM researcher in July 2015 to aid in the preparation of this report, and the OGP Support Unit was notified that the self-assessment process had been delayed pending the election outcome.

The federal election took place on 19 October 2015. At that time, the longstanding Conservative Government gave way to a new Liberal Government led by Justin Trudeau. It should be noted that this report was drafted prior to the federal election. There has been some significant changes on the open government front in the short time that Prime Minister Trudeau has been in office. Most notably, the mandatory long form census has been reinstated¹ and communication restrictions on scientists have been lifted.² Edits have been undertaken to this report to capture these changes and to ensure its relevance in the post-election period. However, more time needs to pass to be able to effectively assess the implementation and the implications of the changes.

Civil society had been actively calling for the changes made by the new government for some time. While civil society has mobilized around various issues, such as the communication of science,³ it has not yet organized around Canada's participation in the OGP or around the broader concept of open governance. The lack of a coordinating actor or structure around open governance was noted in the first IRM report.⁴ While the IRM researcher noted that awareness about the OGP has increased marginally, the lack of a coordinating body or actor remains.

The Government of Canada has made significant progress with many of the commitments made in its

second national action plan. It has also gone beyond its commitments in some ways. For example, it has been engaged in a number of activities related to open government that were not included in the action plan. It has taken a leadership role in the OGP's Open Data Working Group and has worked to draft an International Open Data Charter as part of its work with the group. It has also launched a Regulatory Transparency and Openness Framework for Health,⁵ and it has partnered with the Munk School of Global Affairs in an effort to create a digital space for open dialogue.

That said, while the actions taken are largely seen in either a positive, or at worst neutral, light by civil society stakeholders, they are still not addressing what stakeholders see as the primary barriers, or challenges, to openness in the country. The most commonly mentioned challenges identified by stakeholders and the IRM researcher include:

A broken access to information system: This was raised repeatedly in the first IRM report and has been raised by many others, including successive Information Commissioners as well as nongovernmental organizations: the Centre for Law and Democracy, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, PEN Canada, the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, and Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada.⁶ The first and second national action plans only commit to modernizing the administration of the access to information regime. They do not deal with the fundamental problems facing the system that require substantial legislative change and improvements to the implementation of the Act. While the legislation may have been seen as progressive at its inception, it has not changed significantly since it came into force over 30 years ago and is not sufficient in the digital age, which has seen an explosion in the volume of information and data generated. The exceptions made in the legislation and its limited coverage of public institutions mean that a great deal of information and data does not need to be publically disclosed. This, coupled with the lack of binding timelines, has in many

instances crippled the system. The limits placed on the power and the mandate of the federal Information Commissioner's Office also impacts the ability of that office to serve as a champion to Canadians who need help to retrieve information or data and to negotiate the government system.⁷

While the new Liberal government included changes to the access regime in its election platform in 2015, so far it committed to reviewing the Access to Information Act with input from the Information Commissioner and other stakeholders.⁸ The new review will be one of many and follows closely on the tail of a review conducted by the Information Commissioner which included a public consultation and which made many recommendations for reform. Many stakeholders interviewed for this report did note that existing reviews could be drawn upon to draft new legislation which would then be subject to the regular scrutiny and review that is part of the legislative process.

Lack of free speech for public servants: At the time of researching and writing this report, prior to the federal election that took place in October 2015, the inability for scientists in the public service to freely communicate was a major concern in the country. A number of reports and media coverage had pointed to the inability for many public servants to speak publically. Much of the attention has been given to the muzzling of scientists in particular.⁹ As was noted above, the newly elected Liberal Government has revoked communication restrictions and has committed to allowing scientists to speak freely about their work with both the general public and the media.¹⁰ Given the recent nature of the change, it is too early to assess its implementation or impact, but it was positively received across sectors.

It should be noted that a smaller number of civil society interviewees also pointed to the need for better protection for whistleblowers as an additional mechanism to improve freedoms for public servants. This is an area not dealt with in either the first or the second action plan. While Canada does have the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act,¹¹ the legislation could be strengthened and improved.¹²

A data deficit: In spite of the fact that the number of datasets available via the open data portal has continued to grow and now sits at 244,649,¹³ there

continue to be gaps in the data available. Of the datasets available, 235,913 or 96% were from one department—Natural Resources Canada. This indicates a clear lack of diversity in available data. In addition to the lack of diverse data available, there has been widespread concern over the cancellation of some government studies, most notably the mandatory long form census, the impact on the future of evidence-based policy development, and national identity.¹⁴ In 2014, the Auditor General of Canada confirmed that a shorter, voluntary National Household Survey which replaced the long form census produced inferior data and cost taxpayers more.^{15,16} Evidence has been mounting as to the severity of the lack of reliable data on diverse sectors and issues, including labour, housing, and equality, just to name a few.¹⁷ It has also meant that Canadians are not able to know as much about some of the smaller and more remote parts of the country. In some cases, there is no information beyond population size.¹⁸ As was noted above in the Country Context, the long form census has recently been reinstated. This move was widely welcomed and will work to restore what had been a mounting data deficit. That said, there is still work to be done to improve the quality and quantity of data in Canada. While the long form census has generated the most discussion, it was not the only study to have been cut and not all have been reinstated. The cancellation of longitudinal studies¹⁹ has been compounded by the effects of the federal web renewal strategy whereby individual departmental and agency websites are being folded into one centralized site. In doing this, departments and agencies are being told to reduce their digital content, leading to the public's loss of a great deal of information, particularly older research and data that had been less frequently accessed than other pages. Other stakeholders, most notably from universities and libraries, have tried to engage in preservation.²⁰

STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIES

In some ways it was difficult for stakeholders to speak to which elements of the current action plan they felt were most important or which should be carried forward, as many of the commitments had not yet been completed. Moreover, the government had

not published its self-assessment, making it difficult for many stakeholders to clearly see what progress had been made in the implementation of the plan. That said, there was optimism around the Open Government Directive, but some worry about its scope. Stakeholders largely felt that if implemented well and widely, the directive had the potential to create significant change and transparency. All of those interviewed wanted to see what would happen to this commitment in implementation. They also held some degree of skepticism or worry as it was recognized that the directive is ambitious and will be difficult to implement.

Civil society interviewees were also positive about the open science commitment. While most wished that it went further to incorporate, among other things, the muzzling of scientists, they did want to see this commitment move forward. The post-election unmuzzling of scientists addresses many of the concerns raised by interviewees. The new Liberal Government has also established a cabinet position, a new Minister of Science. Together, these actions have signaled a change in the way that science is governed and communicated.

Generally, stakeholders did not have a negative reaction to any of the commitments and wanted to see them completed. However, there was a sense that the action plan failed to meet stakeholder priorities, which included, among other things that are captured in the commitment analysis above, access to information, greater freedom for public servants to communicate with the public, and the data deficit. While steps have been taken to start addressing the latter two issues in the form of the revived census and the freedom of scientists to communicate, access to information has yet to see the changes it so greatly needs.

SCOPE OF ACTION PLAN IN RELATION TO NATIONAL CONTEXT

The first and second Canadian action plans helped to start to build a foundation for improved open governance. Work has been done to facilitate peoples' ability to find government information and to build internal government capacity to support future transparency measures, but there is still a lot that

remains to be undertaken, particularly when it comes to improved information flow, usability of information and data, and engagement. Access to information is a particularly important area that requires more attention and cannot be overlooked in the third action plan. The IRM researcher found that some civil society actors who were keen and motivated to engage with the government around the OGP during the first action plan had started to disengage with the second action plan because they did not see the more ambitious transparency challenges being tackled. This is problematic in a country that already has limited civil society engagement. If the more ambitious challenges continue to elude future action plans, there is a risk that the OGP will become an irrelevant endeavor in the eyes of Canadians.

In order to construct the sort of more ambitious plan that better responds to the national transparency challenges, public servants need to be better supported. All of those interviewed appeared to be working diligently to make whatever progress they could and expressed a desire for further change, however, most were stretched thin. Without the proper resources and without the political will to affect change they can only do so much.

¹ <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/11/05/liberals-restore-mandatory-long-form-census.html>.

² <http://bit.ly/1MJUDKg>; <http://mwne.ws/1NYoVxP>.

³ <https://evidencefordemocracy.ca>.

⁴ <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/canada/irm>.

⁵ <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/home-accueil/rto-tor/index-eng.php>.

⁶ http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Canada.UPR_Oct12.final_.pdf.

⁷ http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Canada.OGP_Note_.pdf.

⁸ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/access-to-information-reforms-review-1.3342584>

⁹ https://evidencefordemocracy.ca/sites/default/files/reports/Can%20Scientists%20Speak_.pdf.

¹⁰ <http://www.marketwired.com/press-release/statement-from-minister-innovation-science-economic-development-on-communicating-science-2071303.htm>.

¹¹ <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-31.9/page-1.html>.

¹² <https://web.archive.org/web/20140327070450/>; http://fairwhistleblower.ca/psdpa/psdpa_critique.html; <http://canadians4accountability.org/accountability-and-whistleblowing/>; <http://bit.ly/1MmmkbF>.

¹³ As of 12 October 2015

¹⁴ <http://www.citylab.com/politics/2015/02/the-tragedy-of-canadas-census/385846/>.

¹⁵ http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/05/10/long-form-census-canada_n_5300330.html.

¹⁶ http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/parl_oag_201405_08_e.pdf.

¹⁷ <http://bit.ly/RGnuKF>; <http://bit.ly/1zFwSM>.

¹⁸ <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/vanishing-canada-why-were-all-losers-in-ottawas-war-on-data/>.

¹⁹ http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/statscan-takes-criticism-for-cutting-funding-to-lifepaths-database/article25487398/?cmpid=rss1&click=sf_globe.

²⁰ <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/vanishing-canada-why-were-all-losers-in-ottawas-war-on-data/>.

VII | GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

This section recommends general next steps for OGP in general, rather than for specific commitments. Recommendations regarding specific commitments can be found in the text of the Commitment Analysis section above.

CROSSCUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Stakeholders and early research into the OGP, and research on public administration more generally, point to a number of factors that have the potential to strengthen and facilitate change. Taking this into consideration, there are a number of recommendations that can be made around the way that commitments are constructed, the manner in which engagement around the OGP occurs, the coordination of strategic documents, and resourcing.

Commitment construction: In the first two action plans, the commitments have been organized around the concepts of open information, open data, and open dialogue. While this serves as a useful way to conceptualize the complicated and expansive concept of open government, it has led to the construction of commitments that are thematically based instead of policy or problem-based. Many civil society stakeholders noted that this obscures the potential impact and ambition on the commitments. As such, it is recommended that future action plans:

- Clearly identify a set of problems or challenges that exist in the national context and connect the commitments to the problems;
- Add specificity to the commitments. Much of the language in the first two action plans was vague. For example, “establish or identify.” Such vague language makes it difficult for Canadians, and the IRM researcher, to establish the full intention of the commitment and to measure government’s success in living up to the commitments. Greater specificity

also includes clarifying and setting timelines for individual milestones within the two-year action plan. Timelines are readily provided to the IRM researcher during the Independent Assessment, but are not incorporated into the plan or made public;

- Better coordinate or combine milestones to avoid duplication; and
- Include commitments that are grounded in policy or human resources frameworks, such as the Management Accountability Framework, to enhance the chances for government-wide compliance and effectiveness.

Engagement: While some specific recommendations were made around engagement in the above assessment of the open dialogue commitment, it is also important to note that there is room for improved engagement around the OGP generally. Recent research has shown that countries that have established some sort of permanent dialogue mechanism are likely to have higher and more ongoing engagement in the OGP.¹ In Canada, the closest body to a permanent dialogue mechanism is the Advisory Panel on Open Government outlined at this start of this report.² The panel, comprising experts in diverse fields stemming from a range of sectors, has the potential to provide the government with insight and help related to open government, but it is vastly underutilized. At the time of writing (October 2015), the Advisory Panel had not met for over a year (last meeting was June 2014). Some stakeholders were unsure of whether the panel still existed and pointed to problems related to the circulation of information to panel members. As such, it is recommended that:

- The Government of Canada establish a permanent dialogue mechanism that will better connect diverse sectors with the government on matters related to open government and the OGP in an ongoing way, and make better use of the experts convened

as part of the Advisory Panel. In doing this, government should:

- o Clarify the criteria for member selection;
- o Clarify membership tenure;
- o Establish a line of regular communication with members;
- o Meet regularly with members in a format where they are given time to provide feedback (this has been lacking with the existing structure);
- o Hold at least one in-person meeting per year; and
- o Maintain transparency of meeting records.

Given the lack of a strongly coordinated civil society, as was noted in the Country Context above, the development of a more effective permanent dialogue mechanism that brings together diverse sectors is particularly important.

Coordinate strategies related to open government and embed open government as a priority:

There was confusion among some government interviewees as to what the open government national action plan entailed, how some of the commitments differed from one another, and when internal deadlines and reporting would take place. Complicating this further is the fact that there are various aspects of open government included across a number of the federal government's major strategic documents: the Economic Action Plan,³ the Open Government National Action Plan,⁴ Blueprint 2020,⁵ and Digital Canada 150 2.0.⁶ As such, it is recommended that the government:

- Engage in further awareness-raising, both within and outside of the government, about the OGP and the specifics of Canada's commitments;
- Better coordinate its various strategic documents into a more coherent and comprehensive vision of open government;
- Consider the establishment of a dedicated open government champion to facilitate coordination, implementation, monitoring, and awareness-raising around open government. Currently responsibility lies with the President of the Treasury Board Secretariat, however, the mandate of that position

is expansive and open government is only one responsibility among many; and

- Establish a government working group comprised of representatives from departments and agencies leading a specific commitment in the action plan. This will help to create greater awareness regarding OGP timelines and could serve as a forum for working out challenges to implementation.

Resources: A large number of government interviewees noted that their ability to either develop ambitious commitments or to meet existing commitment deadlines in a timely fashion was at risk because of a lack of resources. Resources, in this case, can take many forms including lack of qualified personnel, lack of funding, lack of adequate technology, or lack of appropriate information and data. The IRM researcher carried out a number of interviews within the government and found that most public servants were positive, if not eager, to advance an open government agenda. All were forthcoming with information and documentation and appeared to want to change. However, as was mentioned earlier in this report, open government has become an additional file with numerous responsibilities that have not included additional resources. Cuts to the public service in recent years have meant that resources are already strained in many cases. In this case, it is recommended that the Government of Canada:

- Provide additional resources to those institutions involved in implementing action plan commitments, and increase the potential for institutions that are aiming to develop commitments to access resources to fulfill them. In making this recommendation, it is certainly recognized that the government does not have infinite resources and has many important priorities along with open government. Determining how to add or move different types of resources will be a challenge and is one that should be undertaken in consultation with departments and agencies responsible for various action plan commitments. Currently, the Open Data Exchange (ODX) is the only commitment that received clearly identifiable funding within the federal budget. Linking the budget to commitments will allow institutions the resources they need to develop and implement commitments, and it will

also foster transparency by allowing Canadians to make a clearer connection between public finances and the work being done in relation to open government.

TOP FIVE 'SMART' RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reform and improve implementation of the Access to Information Act.
2. Overhaul the Advisory Committee to become an active, permanent dialogue mechanism around the OGP and improve meaningful public dialogue, to move beyond informing and consulting to enhanced citizen collaboration and empowerment.
3. Support the collection and analysis of additional Canadian data while increasing the diversity and quality of datasets available.
4. Ensure that commitments made in future action plans are supported by proper resources to facilitate the work of the public servants responsible for implementing the plan. This would enhance the potential for successful implementation.
5. Develop and publicize a clear policy on the preservation of digital material.

¹<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/blog/mary-francoli-alina-ostling-and-fabro-steibel/2015/09/01/improving-government-civil-society>.

²<http://open.canada.ca/en/advisory-panel-open-government>.

³<http://actionplan.gc.ca/en>.

⁴<http://open.canada.ca/en/content/canadas-action-plan-open-government-2014-16>.

⁵http://www.clerk.gc.ca/local_grfx/bp2020/bp2020-eng.pdf.

⁶<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/028.nsf/eng/home>.

VIII | METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

As a complement to the government self-assessment, an independent IRM assessment report is written by well-respected governance researchers, preferably from each OGP participating country.

These experts use a common OGP independent report questionnaire and guidelines, based on a combination of interviews with local OGP stakeholders as well as desk-based analysis. This report is shared with a small International Expert Panel (appointed by the OGP Steering Committee) for peer review to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied.

Analysis of progress on OGP action plans is a combination of interviews, desk research, and feedback from nongovernmental stakeholder meetings. The IRM report builds on the findings of the government's own self-assessment report and any other assessments of progress put out by civil society, the private sector, or international organizations.

Each local researcher carries out stakeholder meetings to ensure an accurate portrayal of events. Given budgetary and calendar constraints, the IRM cannot consult all interested or affected parties. Consequently, the IRM strives for methodological transparency, and therefore where possible, makes public the process of stakeholder engagement in research (detailed later in this section.) In those national contexts where anonymity of informants—governmental or nongovernmental—is required, the IRM reserves the ability to protect the anonymity of informants. Additionally, because of the necessary limitations of the method, the IRM strongly encourages commentary on public drafts of each national document.

INTERVIEWS

Each national researcher will carry out at least one public information-gathering event. Care should be taken in inviting stakeholders outside of the “usual

suspects” list of invitees already participating in existing processes. Supplementary means may be needed to gather the inputs of stakeholders in a more meaningful way (e.g. online surveys, written responses, follow-up interviews). Additionally, researchers perform specific interviews with responsible agencies when the commitments require more information than provided in the self-assessment or accessible online.

During a period of approximately three months from July to October 2015, the IRM researcher spoke to as many stakeholders as possible. Feedback was provided to the IRM researcher through a number of group and one-on-one interviews. Most interviews took place either in-person or via conference call. In a few instances, feedback was provided via email. Open North—a Montreal-based organization that creates websites to promote government transparency and citizen participation—along with PoweredBy Data, the non-profit arm of Ajah—an organization that helps funders and fundraisers use data for improved decision-making—organized a consultation meeting in Montreal on 15 July 2015.

Interviews were held with persons who had been widely identified as key stakeholders in the Canadian open government dialogue. Many participants identified during the first IRM report were contacted for this second review. Other participants were identified through the IRM's participation at open government events, including the action plan consultation held in Ottawa. The Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) provided the IRM researcher with a list of points of contact for each of the commitments in the action plan. Additionally, a snowball method was used, where many interviewees suggested lists of additional contacts who were then contacted by the IRM national researcher. Efforts were made to include respondents from different parts of Canada. The time frame for the IRM evaluation made it difficult to interview all of the stakeholders identified, and many

of those who were contacted declined to participate in the evaluation. In some cases, this was because of scheduling. In other cases, this was because there was a strong feeling that the administration at the time was not dedicated to open government.

Saturation was reached through the interviews and meetings conducted by the IRM researcher as many of the same issues, problems, and concerns were identified and repeated by stakeholders. The issues and opinions of civil society organizations (CSOs) highlighted in this report are those of the majority and do not constitute the opinion of any one person or group.

There is no large, coordinating CSO outside of government that brought diverse actors together on this issue. There are some organizations, such as the Centre for Law and Democracy, Democracy Watch, BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, Engineers without Borders, Evidence for Democracy, Open North, and Publish What You Pay that have done work on open government. In general, such organizations tend to be stretched for resources to engage civil society compared with large organizations, such as the Sunlight Foundation in the United States.

A full list of those who participated in interviews with the IRM national researcher can be found below.

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

- Teresa Scassa, University of Ottawa
- Toby Mendel, Centre for Law and Democracy
- Ernie Boyko, Carleton University
- Wendy Watkins, Carleton University
- Pat Moore, Carleton University
- Yohanna Loucheur, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development
- Patrick Tobin, Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario
- Linda Cousineau, Federal Economic Development Agency of Southern Ontario
- Kevin Tuer, Communitech and Canadian Open Data Exchange (ODX)
- Suzanne Legault, Information Commissioner of Canada
- Susan Haigh, Canadian Association of Research Libraries
- Katherine McColgan, Canadian Association of Research Libraries
- Rhonda Fernandes, Employment and Social Development Canada
- Alana Westwood, Research Coordinator, Evidence for Democracy
- Mark Levene, Treasury Board Secretariat
- Stephen Walker, Treasury Board Secretariat
- Laurent Elder, International Development Research Centre
- Fernando Perini, International Development Research Centre
- Vincent Gogolek, BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association
- Ruth Naylor, Treasury Board Secretariat
- Elspeth Gullen, Treasury Board Secretariat
- Michael Lenczner, Ajah
- Jean-Noe Landry, Open North
- Heri Rakotomalala, Montreal Tech Watch
- Yves Otis, Percolab
- Kathleen O'Connell, National Research Council Canada
- Karen Morgenroth, National Research Council Canada
- Katie Gibbs, Evidence for Democracy
- Marija Curran, Evidence for Democracy
- Prashant Shukle, Natural Resources Canada
- David Wrate, Government of British Columbia
- Chantal Marin-Comeau, Library and Archives Canada
- Eric Gagne, Environment Canada
- Richard Ackerman, Environment Canada
- Jim Suderman, InterPARES Trust
- Kelly Rovegno, InterPARES Trust

- Grant Hurley, InterPARES Trust
- David Eaves, Open Data and Open Government Expert

ABOUT THE INDEPENDENT REPORTING MECHANISM

The IRM is a key means by which government, civil society, and the private sector can track government development and implementation of OGP action plans on a bi-annual basis. The design of research and quality control of such reports is carried out by the International Experts' Panel, comprised of experts in transparency, participation, accountability, and social science research methods.

The current membership of the International Experts' Panel is—

- Anuradha Joshi
- Debbie Budlender
- Ernesto Velasco-Sánchez
- Gerardo Munck
- Hazel Feigenblatt
- Hille Hinsberg
- Jonathan Fox
- Liliane Corrêa de Oliveira Klaus
- Rosemary McGee
- Yamini Aiyar

A small staff based in Washington, DC shepherds reports through the IRM process in close coordination with the researcher. Questions and comments about this report can be directed to the staff at irm@opengovpartnership.org.

¹Full research guidance can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual, available at: <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-irm>.

IX | ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ANNEX

In September 2012, OGP decided to begin strongly encouraging participating governments to adopt ambitious commitments in relation to their performance in the OGP eligibility criteria.

The OGP Support Unit collates eligibility criteria on an annual basis. These scores are presented below.¹ When appropriate, the IRM reports will discuss the context surrounding progress or regress on specific criteria in the Country Context section.

| Criteria | 2011 | Current | Change | Explanation |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| Budget transparency ² | ND | ND | ND | 4 = Executive's Budget Proposal and Audit Report published 2 = One of two published 0 = Neither published |
| Access to information ³ | 4 | 4 | No change | 4 = Access to information (ATI) Law 3 = Constitutional ATI provision 1 = Draft ATI law 0 = No ATI law |
| Asset Declaration ⁴ | 4 | 4 | No change | 4 = Asset disclosure law, data public 2 = Asset disclosure law, no public data 0 = No law |
| Citizen Engagement (Raw score) | 4 (10.00) ⁵ | 4 (10.00) ⁶ | No change | <i>EIU Citizen Engagement Index</i> raw score: 1 > 0 2 > 2.5 3 > 5 4 > 7.5 |
| Total/Possible (Percent) | 12/12 (100%) | 12/12 (100%) | No change | 75% of possible points to be eligible |

¹ For more information, see <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/how-it-works/eligibility-criteria>.

² For more information, see Table 1 in <http://internationalbudget.org/what-we-do/open-budget-survey/>. For up-to-date assessments, see <http://www.obstracker.org/>.

³ The two databases used are "Constitutional Provisions," <http://www.right2info.org/constitutional-protections>; and "Laws and draft laws," <http://www.right2info.org/access-to-information-laws>.

⁴ Simeon Djankov, Rafael La Porta, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, and Andrei Shleifer, "Disclosure by Politicians," (Tuck School of Business Working Paper 2009-60, 2009), <http://bit.ly/19nDEFK>. "Types of Information Decision Makers Are Required to Formally Disclose, and Level Of Transparency," in *Government at a Glance 2009* (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2009), <http://bit.ly/13vGtq5>. Ricard Messick, "Income and Asset Disclosure by World Bank Client Countries" (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2009), <http://bit.ly/1clokyf>. For more recent information, see <http://publicofficialsfinancialdisclosure.worldbank.org>. In 2014, the OGP Steering Committee approved a change in the asset disclosure measurement. The existence of a law and de facto public access to the disclosed information replaced the old measures of disclosure by politicians and disclosure of high-level officials. For additional information, see the guidance note on 2014 OGP Eligibility Requirements at <http://bit.ly/1EjLJ4Y>.

⁵ "Democracy Index 2010: Democracy in Retreat," Economist Intelligence Unit (London: Economist, 2010), <http://bit.ly/eLC1rE>.

⁶ "Democracy Index 2014: Democracy and its Discontents," Economist Intelligence Unit (London: Economist, 2014), <http://bit.ly/18kEzCt>.



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