

Actions for a More Inclusive Open Government Partnership

“We value public participation of all people, equally and without discrimination, in decision making and policy formulation. Public engagement, including the full participation of women, increases the effectiveness of governments, which benefit from people’s knowledge, ideas and ability to provide oversight.”
- The Open Government Declaration

Opening up government is an underexplored method for accelerating gender equality and closing critical gaps in information, access, and participation. After all, women use public services, access loans for businesses, pay taxes, walk on city roads – shouldn’t they have an equal say in how governments provide those services? When women and girls are absent from open government, so is the information, knowledge, and skills that limit the potential of ambitious reforms impacting daily lives.

Open Government Partnership (OGP) has made great strides in the past years, but women’s participation and gender perspectives in OGP remains uneven around the world. As of the end of 2018, only [54 OGP commitments include women or gender](#) – representing less than [2% of the 3,000 commitments](#) made by national and local governments. Where we do have gender commitments, they often suffer from below-average completion rates and can lack ambition. In 2019, we call on the partnership to be intentional, strategic, and ambitious in how it brings women and girls into the co-creation process and implementation of commitments.

Gender and inclusion play a pivotal role in our co-chairs’ vision for the OGP Global Summit in Canada, which we intend to be an action-forcing moment for open government partners to seriously consider how they support inclusion throughout their open government reform efforts. This is part of an OGP-wide effort to broaden the base of participation and expand open government efforts across government ministries, including meaningfully engaging women and gender equality advocates.

In advance of the Summit, we ask your government or organization to commit to taking a concrete action to advance women’s participation and gender-sensitive commitments. This action could take one of many forms, including:

- Proactively invite and positively encourage women’s organizations, networks, and leaders to participate in your multi-stakeholder forum;
- Work with gender advocates to conduct an analysis of your action plan to identify where women, men, girls, boys and other groups have different levels of access or potential benefit, and then use that analysis to mainstream gender considerations into specific OGP commitments; and
- Consider a new commitment that uses open government to address a specific gap in women and girl’s services or policy needs.

The following document suggests recommended actions to make co-creation more inclusive, mainstream gender into action plans, or introduce gender-specific commitments. While the actions listed are not exhaustive, we hope they will serve as inspiration.



The OGP Support Unit and partners are available to support these efforts and look forward to engaging with your government or organization as you consider your gender action.

Make Co-Creation More Inclusive

Ensure that co-creation and consultation processes are more inclusive by including civil society groups working on gender equality and inviting key gender and inclusion ministries to OGP discussions.

- **Open Gov Week** - This year, the Open Government community will focus on increasing the number and diversity of partners taking part in events and conversations. All OGP members are asked to consider how to bring new voices into their OGP forum, for example, by inviting at least one new ministry and organization to join them in their Open Gov Week plans or to proactively engage communities who have not traditionally been involved in your forum, such as gender organizations, rural communities or indigenous groups. As part of your outreach, consider a focus on women and gender groups.
- Expand governmental consultations to other ministries. For example, engage counterparts in **gender and women's ministries** to participate in OGP co-creation and implementation conversations. Governmental gender advisors in other ministries may also be valuable resources on key policy issues.
- Invite **gender organizations and women's networks** to participate in multi-stakeholder forums and consult with them on specific commitments that may affect and support their communities' priorities. Remember that one woman does not represent all women, so consider including a diverse group of women and gender advocates across age, race, ethnicity, education, region, and experience. Other actions to make forums and consultations more inclusive may include taking into account hidden costs like childcare, as well as the time, day and location of the forum so that is accessible for all.

Mainstream Gender into Commitments

Gender analysis of Action Plans

Commit to conducting a gender analysis of your entire action plan to help identify where and how policies, practices, or actions may differently impact men, women, boys, girls and other gender groups. This can be done for action plans that are currently being drafted as well as those that are being implemented to assess what gaps exist and identify steps to make the action plans more gender-responsive. Gender analyses can be conducted in partnership with local, national, or international organizations; women's ministries or governmental gender advisors; or independent consultants.

For example:

- Prior to finalizing their action plan, the Government of **Canada** conducted a [GBA+ review](#) of all draft commitments to ensure the full plan took into consideration the needs of women and other equity-seeking groups¹. Interested in conducting your own GBA+ analysis? OGP and the Government of Canada will host a webinar in March and for a forthcoming tool to support your analysis.

¹ *Equity-seeking groups refers to social groups whose members have historically been denied equal access to government services. Canada's Employment Equity Act defines equity-seeking groups as women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.*



Include a gender perspective within a specific commitment

Public procurement. Budgeting and fiscal transparency. Natural resources governance. Justice. Access to information. Many core OGP themes can be enhanced by considering how they affect men, women, boys, and girls differently and then building specific outreach and support efforts around those communities. OGP partners have started to look at how these policy issues and practices can better include women and gender throughout, and there is considerable room to partner with national and international organizations to determine which of your action plans commitments may particularly benefit from a gender perspective.

For example:

- Public service delivery commitments, including health and education-focused policies, can be improved by considering gender impacts. In **Nigeria**, civil society organizations are using OGP to monitor whether both young boys and girls are receiving school feeding programs. For other examples of bringing a gender perspective to service delivery, consider those from outside of OGP such as the government of **Sweden** who assessed its education policy to understand gender imbalance in teacher recruitment and retention.
- As part of a participatory budgeting commitment, **Côte d'Ivoire** committed through OGP to engage women's groups as a target community for participatory budgeting to help set priorities and fund public services that better respond to their needs. This is one of many ways to incorporate a gender perspective in budgeting processes, from conducting gender-responsive budget analyses to address inequality in specific budgets to using gender costing exercises to ensure equity and appropriate resourcing during budget creation.
- OGP has a number of extractive and natural resources commitments, but none of those currently include a specific effort to engage women and girls in the creation or implementation of the commitment. To build on other national interventions, consider those such as the government of **Mongolia** who created a gender equality strategy for the mining sector beginning with review of laws and policies, or **Malawi** who committed in their [EITI](#) workplan to submit reports with gender-disaggregated data.

Gender-disaggregated data

Governments and organizations can identify opportunities to collect gender-specific data from OGP commitments, and analyze that data to inform and improve policies and practices.

- Through its OGP commitment, **Bojonegoro, Indonesia** committed to training women in communities to monitor gender-disaggregated data on services. To address the absence of basic social, economic, and demographic data available to support local public services and development programs, Bojonegoro developed the Dasa Wisma open data application, building on a women-led community movement to collect previously under-collected village-level demographic and service data.

Design Commitments that Advance Gender-Focused Priorities

The Open Government Partnership offers an action platform to advance national and local gender equality and women's empowerment objectives, whether those are focused on reducing gender-based violence, increasing access to reproductive health services, or improving the political voice and agency of women and girls. OGP also provides an opportunity to showcase global leadership by creating concrete national



commitments around global agreements such as the Convention to End Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as international pledges like those in the [Charlevoix G7 Summit Communique](#) on women and girls education and economic participation, the [W20 policy recommendations](#), or the joint [civil society G20 Statement](#) on gender and corruption. In partnership with government actors responsible for women and gender-centered policies, consider co-creating a commitment that uses transparency to address systemic gender issues and policy gaps.

- **Germany** used its action plan to conduct regular monitoring on the status of women and men in leadership positions in private sector bodies and the public service. This will serve as a framework for implementing the national Act on Equal Participation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions in the Private and the Public Sector.
- **Buenos Aires** has championed the inclusion of women and other gender minorities' needs through its action plans. In one commitment, the city of Buenos Aires created an online platform called #DÓNDE that details locations and services of local clinics and health centers to help close the gap in access to reproductive health services. Importantly, the platform also provides feedback opportunities for citizens to report back on the quality of the services received at those centers.
- In **Sri Lanka**, the government used the OGP process as the implementing body for targets under CEDAW, including a targeted effort to increase women's political participation through enacting a 25% mandatory quota for women in public office within local governments.
- **Brazil** developed a unified information system for data on violence against women based on the 2006 Maria da Penha Law on Domestic and Family Violence. This led to the launch of the "Woman, to Live without Violence" program, which used the Dial 180 system to route complaints about domestic violence to the public-security authorities and inform the public prosecutor's office in each state.

If your government or organization would like to speak further about a gender action you can take, please contact Allison Merchant, OGP's Senior Gender Advisor, at gender@opengovpartnership.org or your OGP Support Unit regional representative. This document is also available on the [OGP website](#) for your convenience.

