

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Sierra Leone Progress Report 2016-2018

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Executive Summary: Sierra Leone

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) Progress Report 2016–18

Sierra Leone's second action plan covers a diverse range of issues including gender violence, waste management, climate change and elections. The next action plan could be made more relevant to civic participation and public accountability through inclusion of commitments on public service delivery and anti-corruption measures.

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. Sierra Leone began participating in OGP in 2013. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) carries out an annual review of the activities of each country that participates in OGP.

The Open Government Initiative (OGI) under the Office of the President is the leading entity in charge of OGP in Sierra Leone, with the OGP Secretariat as the liaison for action plan development and implementation.

A national steering committee, established in 2014, collectively coordinates the national action plan process and development. Originally comprised of 34 members with equal representation from government agencies and civil society organisations, the committee now includes two additional members from the Cabinet Secretariat and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

OGP Process

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

The OGI utilised a variety of approaches targeting all four regions of the country in order to engage civil society in the development of the action plan including in-person meetings, surveys, radio discussions and social media. It is unclear how and to what extent the OGP Secretariat incorporated the public feedback into the development of the commitments. The OGP Secretariat proposed the commitments and

At a Glance:

Member since: 2013
Number of commitments: 10

Level of Completion:

Completed: 0 of 10
Substantial: 2 of 10
Limited: 7 of 10
Not started: 1 of 10

Commitment Emphasis:

Access to information: 10 of 10
Civic participation: 2 of 10
Public accountability: 0 of 10
Tech & innovation for transparency & accountability: 2 of 10

Commitments that are

Clearly relevant to an OGP value: 10 of 10
Of transformative potential impact: 1 of 10
Substantially or completely implemented: 2 of 10
All three (🌟): 0 of 10

then requested details from the various government agencies involved. The steering committee then finalised the plan. For implementation of the commitments, OGI did not have a structured process to continue civil society involvement. In response to not having a clear role, CSOs formed their own committee to monitor the implementation of the commitments.

OGI intended to conduct monthly steering committee meetings, but they ended up occurring irregularly. There is a concern among some CSOs that the steering committee is not representative of all voices in civil society and that minutes are not published.

Sierra Leone published the OGP self-assessment report in October 2017, but did not release it for public comment.

Commitment Implementation

As part of OGP participation, countries make commitments in a two-year action plan. The Sierra Leone action plan contains 10 commitments. Table 1 summarizes each commitment's level of completion and potential impact. Table 2 provides a snapshot of progress for each commitment and recommends next steps. In some cases, similar commitments are grouped and reordered to make reading easier.

Note that the IRM updated the criteria for starred commitments in early 2015 in order to raise the standard for model OGP commitments. Under these criteria, commitments must be highly specific, relevant to OGP values, of transformative potential impact, and substantially completed or complete. Sierra Leone received no starred commitments.

Table 1: Assessment of Progress by Commitment

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME	POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
	NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE
1. Gender-Sexual Violence Against Women								
2. Foreign Aid Transparency								
3. Waste Management								
4. Fiscal Transparency and Open Budget								
5. Auditor General's Report								
6. Climate Change								
7. Elections								
8. Records and Archives Management								
9. Access to Justice								
10. Open Public Procurement Contracting								

Table 2: Summary of Progress by Commitment

NAME OF COMMITMENT	RESULTS
<p>1. Gender-Sexual Violence Against Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Limited 	<p>To address gender-based sexual violence issues the government of Sierra Leone committed to publish incidences of sexual violence more frequently, enhance forensic capacity and develop an online directory of offenders. The Family Support Unit (FSU) of the Sierra Leone Police has not increased the publication of sexual violence data and the expected work on the forensic lab has not begun. Initial work was carried out for the online directory, but it has been halted due to legal concerns related to infringement of sexual offender rights.</p>
<p>2. Foreign Aid Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial 	<p>This commitment aims to publish Ebola-related donor funds and host public meetings with various donor stakeholders. Donor agencies have been publishing funding information since 2013 in the Development Assistance Database (DAD), including Ebola-specific donor funds beginning in 2015. The Development Assistance Coordinating Office (DACO) did not conduct public donor meetings and there is no evidence of donors publishing amounts that go directly into the national budget. The IRM researcher recommends that the government share more detailed information on the progress and outcomes of donor-funded Ebola projects.</p>
<p>3. Waste Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Limited 	<p>This commitment aims to enhance the management of municipal waste in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown, a problem that has been exacerbated due to rapid urbanisation and the Ebola crisis. Under the Presidential Recovery Priorities to support Ebola efforts, Operation Clean Freetown began in May 2017 to address the waste problem. While there has been engagement with local communities and sanitary workers were trained, the main target of developing a new waste management policy was not achieved. The IRM researcher recommends that a future commitment is clearly coordinated with existing programmes.</p>
<p>4. Fiscal Transparency and Open Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Transformative • Completion: Limited 	<p>In line with the Public Financial Management Act of 2016, this commitment outlines activities including producing a citizens' budget, sharing how citizen feedback is incorporated into the budget and publishing information about tax exemptions. Publishing tax exemptions would be transformative given the fact that the government has never published this data before. The government published the 2016 Citizens' Budget, but there are no clear plans for completing the other activities. The IRM researcher recommends that the government consider carrying forward the tax exemption activity as an independent commitment.</p>
<p>5. Auditor General's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Not Started 	<p>This commitment aims to address the low implementation rate of Audit Service recommendations by publishing government entity action plans for implementation, progress made and the Parliamentary Audit Committee reports. There is no evidence that any progress has been made on this commitment. The IRM researcher recommends that the Audit Service develop action plan templates to support government entities with reporting their progress.</p>
<p>6. Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Limited 	<p>This commitment aims to improve public access to information on climate change through a policy tracking online tool and provision of datasets from an early warning system project. Climate information was disseminated to the public through radio, television and printed materials. However, the online tools have been delayed due to the Climate Change Secretariat considering providing trainings for various</p>

	government agencies, NGOs and the private sector. The government agencies need to continue to report climate data via existing media and produce a quarterly online newsletter with progress updates on the planned activities.
7. Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Minor • Completion: Substantial 	This commitment aims to promote transparency and accountability in the management of elections with the online publication of constituency and boundary information, as well as providing election results online in open data format. The National Elections Commission (NEC) has already been providing constituency and boundary data online prior to the start of the action plan. The NEC developed and is testing an android app featuring voter lists and election results. To ensure wider uptake, the NEC needs to engage civil society and popularise the app.
8. Records and Archives Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Limited 	This commitment supports the development of a records management system to support effective implementation of the Right to Access Information Act passed in 2013. It includes several activities related to passing a Records Management Act. It also outlines an assessment of the status of digital records in various government agencies, as well as consultations to coordinate the management of records. The draft of the bill had been completed prior to the start of this action plan. It has been published and is now tabled in parliament with the expectation that it will pass in 2018. The IRM researcher recommends to support the passage of the law and develop a plan for its implementation.
9. Access to Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 	The objective of the commitment is to increase transparency in the area of case management and enhance judicial processes by adding mediation panels and collecting more information from offenders. The only proposed activity that is relevant to OGP values is the quarterly publishing of court cases. Gathering fingerprint evidence from offenders was an established practice prior to the start of the action plan. There has been no evidence of progress with the mediation panels or publishing of court cases. The IRM researcher recommends that the commitment be carried forward into the next action plan with clearer language that focuses on publishing information on court cases.
10. Open Public Procurement Contracting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP Value Relevance: Clear • Potential Impact: Moderate • Completion: Limited 	The Sierra Leone Parliament passed a Public Procurement Act in 2016 to address the alleged corruption and fraud in public contracting. This commitment aims to fulfil the 2016 act by publishing government contracts from previous years beginning in 2015, as well as active contracts through 2018. The National Public Procurement Authority (NPPA) published information for government contracts awarded during 2016, but did not include all eight ministries highlighted in the commitment or information for 2015. The IRM researcher recommends the NPPA adopt the Open Contracting Data Standard that promotes the disclosure of public procurement data at all stages of the process.

Recommendations

While the commitments cover relevant policy areas in the country, they are oriented towards outcomes that mostly improve access to information and do not sufficiently engage with the public. The next action plan needs to address OGP principles of civic participation and public accountability through inclusion of commitments on public service delivery and anti-corruption measures.

Beginning in 2014, all OGP IRM reports include five key recommendations about the next OGP action planning cycle. Governments participating in OGP will be required to respond to these key recommendations in their annual self-assessments. These recommendations follow the SMART logic; they are Specific, Measurable, Answerable, Relevant, and Timebound. Given these findings, the IRM researcher presents the following key recommendations:

Table 3: Five Key Recommendations

1. Harness the contribution of civil society beyond membership of the Steering Committee
2. Improve inter-governmental coordination on OGP, regularly report on implementation of commitments
3. Consider commitments on transparency of extractive industry, with the focus on disclosure of contracts
4. Consider commitments on citizen engagement in budget tracking and monitoring of public service delivery
5. Include commitment on enforcement of anti-corruption measures

Charlie Hughes is an independent researcher for the IRM.

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 (IRM) assesses development and implementation of national action plans to foster dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.



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 VII on eligibility requirements at the end of this report or visit bit.ly/1929F11.

I. Introduction

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is an international multi-stakeholder 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.

Sierra Leone began its formal participation in October 2013 when the Chief of Staff in the Office of the President declared his country's intention to participate in the initiative¹.

In order to participate in OGP, governments must exhibit a demonstrated commitment to open government by meeting a set of (minimum) performance criteria. Objective, third-party indicators are used to determine the extent of country progress on each of the criteria: fiscal transparency, public officials' asset disclosure, citizen engagement, and access to information. See Section VII: Eligibility Requirements for more details.

All OGP-participating governments develop OGP action plans that elaborate concrete commitments with the aim of changing practice beyond the status quo over a two-year period. The commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

Sierra Leone developed its national action plan from April 2016 to June 2016. The official implementation period for the action plan was 1 July 2016 through 30 June 2018. This year one report covers the action plan development process and first year of implementation, from July 2016 to June 2017. Beginning in 2015, the IRM started publishing end-of-term reports on the final status of progress at the end of the action plan's two-year period. Any activities or progress occurring after the first year of implementation June 2017 will be assessed in the end-of-term report. The government published its self-assessment in October 2017. At the time of writing [October 2017], the report had not been made available for public comments.

In order to meet OGP requirements, the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) of OGP has partnered with Charlie Hughes, an independent researcher who carried out this evaluation of the development and implementation of Sierra Leone's second action plan. To gather the voices of multiple stakeholders, the IRM researcher interviewed government officials, independent experts and civil society leaders; and held one stakeholder forum in the capital city for civil society organisations. The IRM aims to inform ongoing dialogue around development and implementation of future commitments. Methods and sources are dealt with in Section VI of this report (Methodology and Sources).

¹[I.opengovpartnership.org/documents/sierra-leone-letter-of-intent-ogp](http://opengovpartnership.org/documents/sierra-leone-letter-of-intent-ogp)

II. Context

The development and implementation of the second OGP action plan has happened in the context of recovery from the Ebola crisis. The action plan covers a diverse range of topics relevant to the national context in Sierra Leone, including gender, climate change, budget transparency and public procurement. While commitments focus on improving access to information they are limited in activities that would create transformative change for citizen engagement and public accountability.

2.1 Background

Sierra Leone experienced an extremely destructive civil war from 1991 until 2002 that negatively impacted both private and public sector infrastructures. Sierra Leone is the third poorest country in the world according to the UN Human Development Report, with a Human Development Index ranking of 179 out of 188.¹ It is also ranked as one of the most corrupt countries in the world, at 123 out of 176 nations, according to Transparency International.² With a score of 30 out of 100, it highlights the country's issues related to the functioning of public institutions, such as the police and judiciary.³

The Open Budget Survey 2015 ranked Sierra Leone 52 out of 100 possible points on budget transparency, an increase since 2012. However, legislative oversight and public engagement with the budgeting processes remain weak.⁴ According to Freedom House, Sierra Leone is partly free and scores particularly low in political rights and civil liberties.⁵ Incidents of police violence and a poor corruption prosecutorial record have negatively impacted government functioning and personal freedoms. Violence against women continues to be widespread and protections for women's rights are weak.⁶ Although Sierra Leone has experienced an upward trend in the past decade on several indicators, the 2017 Ibrahim Index for African Governance reports that the most recent five-year trends have highlighted deterioration in accountability, particularly in public sector transparency and corruption investigations.⁷

A few years ago, two disasters exacerbated these problems, which affected the country's recovery efforts and economic stability. At the end of 2013, international iron ore prices dropped, resulting in a significant impact on the GDP due to the country's heavy reliance on this export.^{8,9} This has led the country to rely more on international financial institutions to address the resulting budgetary and balance of payment gaps as well as improving the foreign exchange position.¹⁰ In 2014, Sierra Leone became one of the hardest hit countries during the Ebola outbreak, which killed thousands of people.¹¹ Not only did Ebola impact the economic stability of the country, the funds utilised in the fight against the Ebola epidemic were marred by a corruption scandal. An initial report on the management of the funds meant to fight Ebola suggested that at least \$14 million were misappropriated or unaccounted for in the first six months of the outbreak.¹² The government's Audit Service highlighted over-pricing, non-delivery of procured items, improper accounting, fictitious procurement, and non-adherence to accounting and procurement procedures as primary issues.^{13,14}

The Sierra Leone government joined the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in 2006 to bring more accountability to the largest economic sector.¹⁵ In 2013, the government published the Agenda for Prosperity (A4P) 2013-2018, outlining specific actions the government will take to support middle income status attainment, such as diversifying economic growth, promoting women's empowerment and public sector reform.¹⁶ That same year parliament also passed an Access to Information Act.¹⁷ In 2014, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development published a three-year public financial management strategy to support a stable economic infrastructure.¹⁸

In an effort to promote socioeconomic transformation following the Ebola crisis, the government initiated the President's Recovery priorities in July 2015, a multi-stakeholder initiative focused on improving healthcare, education, social protection and private trade.¹⁹ ²⁰ Later in 2016, the parliament passed a Public Procurement Act, enhancing the act passed in 2004 through additional regulations and decentralising the public procurement process.²¹ Furthermore, a new constitution is in the process of being endorsed through a citizen referendum, and the 2018 elections will be the country's fourth routine elections since the end of the conflict.²²

2.2 Scope of Action Plan in Relation to National Context

Compared to the previous action plan, the current plan has several commitments that address specific social issues such as gender violence, waste management and climate change. Issues covered by commitments also include public procurement, open budgeting activities and tracking court cases. While the action plan covers the areas relevant to the national context, the commitments often include activities or targets that had already been achieved prior to the action plan period, diminishing their overall potential impact for change.

The action plan includes publication of information about Ebola donor funds and increasing the rates for implementation of audit recommendations. While these areas are important given the allegations of misappropriation of Ebola funds, the action plan did not address project implementation of these funds when it comes to financing social sector services.

None of the three previous commitments related to the extractive industries were carried forward into this plan. According to the OGP Coordinator, the extractives industries issues were not raised by either civil society or government agencies; and therefore were not included in the action plan.²³ According to a member of the national steering committee, extractives issues from the previous action plan were not proposed because government was not seen as committed to deliver on them.²⁴ Only records management and tracking audit recommendations within government departments were adjusted and carried forward in the second action plan.

The majority of the commitments focus on access to information efforts and are limited in their activities related to citizen engagement. In the opinion of the researcher, the action plan could have incorporated other OGP values of civic participation to enhance delivery of public services. Given the continued corruption issues, the action plan could have included commitments specifically related to public accountability to provide more oversight to government actions.

¹ UN Human Development Report, http://www.hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf

² Sierra Leone, Corruption Perceptions Index, Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/country/SLE>

³ Corruption Perceptions Index, https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016#table

⁴ Open Budget Survey, 2015 Sierra Leone, <https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/OBS2015-CS-Sierra-Leone-English.pdf>

⁵ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2017, Sierra Leone, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/sierra-leone>

⁶ Sierra Leone 2017-2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/africa/sierra-leone/report-sierra-leone/>

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- ⁷ Ibrahim Index of African Governance, http://s.mo.ibrahim.foundation/u/2017/11/21165610/2017-IIAG-Report.pdf?_ga=2.119206665.1471390148.1513047443-696923240.1513047443#page=25
- ⁸ African Economic Outlook, Sierra Leone, <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/country-notes/sierra-leone>
- ⁹ The World Bank in Sierra Leone, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/sierraleone/overview>
- ¹⁰ The World Bank in Sierra Leone, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/sierraleone/overview>
- ¹¹ WHO Ebola data and statistics, <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view ebola-sitrep ebola-summary-latest?lang=en>
- ¹² BBC, 'Where are Sierra Leone's missing Ebola victims?', <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-38718196>
- ¹³ <http://www.auditservice.gov.sl/report/assl-auditor-general-report-ebola-phase-2.pdf>
- ¹⁴ <http://www.parliament.gov.sl/Portals/0/2014%20DOCUMENT/COMMITTEE/PAC/EBOLA%20REPORT%202015.pdf>
- ¹⁵ Sierra Leone Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, <http://www.sleiti.gov.sl/index.php/about-sleiti/background>
- ¹⁶ The Agenda for Prosperity, The Government of Sierra Leone, http://www.undp.org/content/dam/sierraleone/docs/projectdocuments/povreduction/undp_sle_The%20Agenda%20for%20Prosperity%20.pdf
- ¹⁷ The Rights to Access Information Act, <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/2013-02.pdf>
- ¹⁸ Sierra Leone PFM Reform Strategy, 2014-2017, https://psru.gov.sl/sites/default/files/Sierra%20Leone%20PFM%20Reform%20Strategy%202014-2017_0.pdf
- ¹⁹ The President's Recovery Priorities, <http://www.presidentsrecoverypriorities.gov.sl/overview>
- ²⁰ Government Budget and Statement of Financial Policies for the Financial Year 2016, <http://www.parliament.gov.sl/dnn5/Portals/0/2014%20DOCUMENT/BUDGET/2016%20BUDGET%20SPEECH%20AND%20BUDGET%20PROFILE.pdf>
- ²¹ The Public Procurement Act, <http://sierra-leone.org/Laws/2016-01.pdf>
- ²² Mohamed Gibril Sesay, Sierra Leone: Democracy and Political Participation. A Review by AfriMAP and the Open Society Initiative for West Africa, Open Society Foundations, January 2014.
- ²³ IRM researcher's interview of OGP Coordinator, 11 December 2017.
- ²⁴ IRM researcher's interview of the Programme Manager, Network Movement for Justice and Development, 16 October 2017.

III. Leadership and Multi-stakeholder Process

The OGI conducted wide-ranging consultations in the development of the action plan including in-person meetings, surveys, radio discussions and social media. The OGP Secretariat drafted the commitments with inputs from CSOs and various government agencies involved, and the multi-stakeholder Steering Committee finalised the plan. It is unclear how and to what extent public feedback was incorporated into the development of the commitments. There is a concern among some CSOs that the steering committee is not representative of all voices in civil society and that its minutes are not published.

3.1 Leadership

This subsection describes the OGP leadership and institutional context for OGP in Sierra Leone. Table 3.1 summarizes this structure while the narrative section (below) provides additional detail.

Table 3.1: OGP Leadership

I. Structure	Yes	No
Is there a clearly designated Point of Contact for OGP (individual)?	✓	
	Shared	Single
Is there a single lead agency on OGP efforts?		✓
Is the head of government leading the OGP initiative?		✓
2. Legal Mandate	Yes	No
Is the government's commitment to OGP established through an official, publicly released mandate?		✗
Is the government's commitment to OGP established through a legally binding mandate?		✗
3. Continuity and Instability	Yes	No
Was there a change in the organization(s) leading or involved with the OGP initiatives during the action plan implementation cycle?		✗
Was there a change in the executive leader during the duration of the OGP action plan cycle?		✗

The Coordinator for the Open Government Initiative (OGI), in the office of the President, leads Sierra Leone's OGP process. There are additional staff dedicated to OGI, including a Program Manager and Communications Officer. OGI is not an institution established by an act of Parliament, and therefore has few legal powers over other government agencies to enforce policy changes. The OGP Secretariat serves as the focal liaison between government agencies and civil society and reports to government and other stakeholders on the implementation of the national action plan. The mechanism established by the OGP Secretariat for this facilitation and coordination is a Steering Committee. For the financial year 2017, Government allocated 222,400,000 Leones for OGP Initiatives. The amount was

roughly USD30,000 at the time. (See Table 3.1 on the leadership and mandate of OGP in Sierra Leone.)

The leadership for OGP in Sierra Leone remained the same as during the first action plan, but there were changes made to the Steering Committee. When it was first established in 2014, the 34-member Steering Committee had equal representation of government agencies and civil society. Following the completion of the first action plan, the OGP Secretariat re-organised the Steering Committee and brought in a representative from each of the Cabinet Secretariat and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. According to the OGP Secretariat it was carried out in the hope that the two representatives would provide technical backstopping and strategic support to ensure timely implementation and effective monitoring of commitments across the implementing agencies”.¹

3.2 Intragovernmental Participation

This subsection describes which government institutions were involved at various stages in OGP. The next section will describe which nongovernmental organizations were involved in OGP.

Table 3.2 Participation in OGP by Government Institutions²

How did institutions participate?	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies	Legislative	Judiciary (including quasi-judicial agencies)	Other (including constitutional independent or autonomous bodies)	Subnational Governments
Consult: These institutions observed or were invited to observe the action plan but may not be responsible for commitments in the action plan.	24	1	0	0	0
Propose: These institutions proposed commitments for inclusion in the action plan.	24	0	1	2	0
Implement: These institutions are responsible for implementing commitments in the action plan whether or not they proposed the commitments.	24	0	1	2	1

In Sierra Leone, participation in OGP was limited mainly to agencies in the executive branch of government. The participating agencies were involved in the development and implementation of all the commitments. Table 3.2 above details which institutions were involved in OGP.

The OGP Secretariat involved government agencies in the meetings to guide the making of the second national action plan, as well as to support the development of the timelines for consultations. In a press release advertising the consultations the office of the President called on all ministries, departments and agencies to work together and effectively participate in the process. According to the coordinator of the OGP, other efforts to inform the public of consultations timelines included radio announcements.³ According to the OGP Secretariat, it intended for a diverse range of stakeholders to participate at all stages of the process.

From the interviews conducted with six government officials by the researcher, no agency reported being involved in selecting the commitment focus areas. Once the OGI identified the commitment topic areas, they presented the outline at a multi-stakeholder meeting. At that time, government agencies contributed the technical details and activities for each commitment. Commitments became finalised through the two multi-stakeholder meetings that were held. For instance, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed the details of the commitment on climate change directly to the steering committee, while multiple stakeholders influenced commitments related to elections, access to justice, and waste management. Civil society proposed the commitments on gender, fiscal transparency, and open data. Although the Parliament was consulted, it did not suggest any commitments. The police was the only quasi-judicial agency that contributed the technical details and activities for the commitment on gender. Nine of the 10 commitments are led by agencies in the executive branch of government, and one by a sub-national government.

3.3 Civil Society Engagement

Sierra Leone used a mixed of approaches to educate and get citizens' inputs into the second action plan. The first public education effort and initial call for citizens' inputs was made at a conference. The OGI hosted a booth at the Datafest organized by the government's Right to Access Information Commission on 20-21 April 2016. As witnessed by the researcher, email and telephone contacts of the OGP Secretariat, flyers and other informational materials were given out to members of the public at the booth for them to make inputs. On 20 May 2016, the Office of the President made an official announcement for the commencement of consultations on the second action plan. Following the announcement, float parades were held in the three headquarter cities of the country's four regions.⁴ Consultations in the form of town-hall meetings were also held in the regional headquarter cities of the northern and southern regions, and in a town outside the capital, in the western area. In the capital city of the eastern region, a float parade was not held due to civil disturbances there on the date planned.

CSOs participated in numerous Steering Committee meetings influencing the timelines for the consultations, offering ideas for awareness raising on the second action plan, providing inputs made by members of the public and proposing additional commitments. Many of the CSOs involved in the first action plan participated in developing the second plan. Continuing CSOs included organisations such as Network Movement for Justice and Development, Campaign for Good Governance, Center for Accountability and Rule of Law, Society for Knowledge Management, National Youth Coalition, Federation of Civil Society and Media, and Society for Democratic Initiatives. According to one civil society representative, the Steering Committee expanded to include new organisations, particularly those based in local communities so as to get "more actors involved in OGP discourses and dissemination".⁵

The OGP Secretariat aimed to have an inclusive consultation process on the second action plan by providing the timelines for the public consultations, indicating dates, time and places advertised in various newspapers, radio and television.⁶ The OGI ensured that civil society organisations from various parts of the country that were not part of the Steering Committee had an opportunity to attend other multi-stakeholder meetings. The OGI held consultation meetings in three regions and opened them to local community people, traditional leaders, women, and community-based groups. OGI also hosted discussion sessions at local radio stations so people were able to call and make contributions. During the consultations and awareness-raising activities, the visiting OGI team also conducted surveys in the area to get more people to make inputs into the second action plan, although it is unclear how the team specifically incorporated the responses. A review of the attendance lists for the stakeholder meetings shows that a diversity of city-based non-governmental organisations, community-based groups, women's associations, trades groups, disabled persons and others took part. However, an event cancellation in the eastern region meant that people there did not get the chance to have in-person consultations. According to the OGP Secretariat, a meeting was held with relevant institutions in the private sector to discuss inputs into the second action plan, but the sector did not propose any commitments.⁷

The OGP Secretariat accepted calls for direct submissions to feedback throughout the consultation period. Public could also make suggestions and contribute to the discussions via social media. The OGP Secretariat published a list consisting of 220 individual submissions.⁸ The suggestions included calls for comments on sexual and gender violence, waste management, education, electricity, civic education, access to information, and access to justice.⁹ Sexual and gender violence, waste management and access to justice were incorporated into the action plan.

According to the OGP Secretariat, they have incorporated the initial inputs made by ordinary citizens during the Datafest and throughout the course of the consultations into the action plan.¹⁰ Although the OGP Steering Committee discussed public feedback, it was ultimately left to the particular agency to edit the commitment language to incorporate the responses.¹¹ It is unclear how the agencies incorporated specific public feedback.

The OGP Secretariat introduced the topics being considered for the commitments at a presentation by the head of the civil society organisations, Budget Advocacy Network, at a multi-stakeholder meeting. The areas included climate change, open contracting, fiscal transparency, public records and archives, audit recommendations, foreign aid transparency, and extractive industries transparency.¹² The OGP Secretariat requested that civil society organisations and government agencies develop details of commitments they would want to have from the proposed areas. According to key CSO leaders interviewed, civil society suggested six commitments including those on public procurement, open budget, auditor general's report, waste management, elections, and foreign aid.¹³ According to one civil society leader, CSOs worked with government agencies to develop the details of the commitments to ensure practicality.¹⁴ The OGP Secretariat finalised the wording of the language of the commitments on public procurement, open budget, auditor general's report, waste management, elections, and foreign aid, which were later approved by the Steering Committee.

Countries participating in OGP follow a set of requirements for consultation during development, implementation, and review of their OGP action plan. Table 3.3 summarizes the performance of Sierra Leone during the 2016-2018 action plan.

Table 3.3: National OGP Process

Key Steps Followed: 7 of 7						
Before	1. Timeline Process & Availability			2. Advance Notice		
	Timeline and process available online prior to consultation	Yes	No	Advance notice of consultation	Yes	No
		✓			✓	
	3. Awareness Raising			4. Multiple Channels		
	Government carried out awareness-raising activities	Yes	No	4a. Online consultations:	Yes	No
		✓		4b. In-person consultations:	Yes	No
					✓	
5. Documentation & Feedback						
Summary of comments provided				Yes	No	
				✓		
During	6. Regular Multi-stakeholder Forum					
	6a. Did a forum exist?	Yes	No	6b. Did it meet regularly?	Yes	No
	✓			✓		
After	7. Government Self-Assessment Report					
	7a. Annual self-assessment report published?	Yes	No	7b. Report available in English and administrative language?	Yes	No
		✓			✓	
	7c. Two-week public comment period on report?	Yes	No	7d. Report responds to key IRM recommendations?	Yes	No
		✗			✗	

Table 3.4: Level of Public Influence

The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) “Spectrum of Participation” to apply to OGP.¹⁵ This spectrum shows the potential level of public influence on the contents of the action plan. In the spirit of OGP, most countries should aspire for “collaborative.”

Level of public input		During development of action plan	During implementation of action plan
Empower	The government handed decision-making power to members of the public.		
Collaborate	There was iterative dialogue AND the public helped set the agenda.		
Involve	The government gave feedback on how public inputs were considered.	✓	
Consult	The public could give inputs.		✓
Inform	The government provided the public with information on the action plan.		
No Consultation	No consultation		

3.4 Consultation During 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 summarises that information.

The Steering Committee that was set up during the first action plan cycle continued to be the forum for consultations on the implementation of the action plan. The committee was updated in several ways. First, the OGP Secretariat excluded government agencies not involved with current commitments despite previous involvement and then brought on board new agencies involved in current commitments. The Cabinet Secretariat and the Ministry of Internal Affairs joined the Steering Committee.¹⁶ Civil society organisations (CSOs) also participated in the Steering Committee, many continued from the previous action plan. These organisations included Campaign for Good Governance, Society for Knowledge Management, Network Movement for Justice and Development, and Budget Advocacy Network. During the development of the action plan, the Steering Committee expanded to include additional CSOs involved in current commitments. The Steering Committee also aimed to broaden the discussion by including several community-based groups.¹⁷ For the implementation of every commitment, CSOs are identified as “others involved”, however, no details have been given as to what the involvement would be. In the course of implementing the commitments, no roles were assigned to CSOs. A CSO committee was formed in an effort to monitor the implementation of the commitments. The Budget Advocacy Network took leadership of this and produced a report on the monitoring exercise.¹⁸

During the implementation of the action plan, the OGP Steering Committee scheduled monthly meetings. All civil society representatives on the committee interviewed, however, told the researcher that the meetings were irregular. When asked, the Secretariat acknowledged that Steering Committee meetings were irregular, mainly due to constraints of funds. However, according to the Secretariat, telephone and online platforms remained open for conversation on the implementation of the action plan.¹⁹ The OGP Secretariat restricted Steering Committee meetings for invitation only to all CSOs in the Steering Committee.

When meetings took place, stakeholders freely discussed the progress of commitments. The Steering Committee meetings were always open to the IRM researcher, but the researcher only attended one meeting in 2017. The OGP Secretariat does not publish notes or minutes of the Steering Committee meetings. Some civil society leaders told the researcher that

there are organisations in the Steering Committee that do not have the capacity and credibility to be critical of government. A civil society representative on the Steering Committee showed the researcher evidence of a representative of one such organisation posting partisan campaign messages on Whatsapp for the ruling party's candidate for president in the 2018 elections.

3.5 Self-Assessment

The OGP Articles of Governance require that participating countries publish a self-assessment report three months after the end of the first year of implementation. The self-assessment report must be made available for public comments for a two-week period. This section assesses compliance with these requirements and the quality of the report.

The government published a self-assessment report in October 2017. As at the end of October, the OGP Secretariat had not released the report to the public for comments. Civil society organisations at the Sierra Leone stakeholder forum said they had not seen the self-assessment report, and, therefore, have not been able to comment on it.

The self-assessment report covered all the commitments in the action plan. The report narrated consultation efforts carried out during the development of the action plan. The report did not include a review of consultation efforts during implementation of the action plan.¹ The report had problems with description of results, statements of completion level, and next steps. For example, the self-assessment report says that development assistance data was published on DACO's website but DACO does not have a website. Five of the commitments that were given substantial completion levels had no completed milestones. While the government's self-assessment report says completion of the commitment is "substantial" for the commitment on budget openness, nothing is indicated as a completed activity. Another problem with the report is that the statement of next steps is either ambiguous, insufficient or absent. Evidence including documents, participants' lists and pictures were not provided to the researcher to support the self-assessment.

3.6 Response to Previous IRM Recommendations

Table 3.5: Previous IRM Report Key Recommendations

	Recommendation	Addressed?	Integrated into Next Action Plan?
1	Work with independent bodies to introduce commitments that would strengthen integrity and independent oversight of corruption prone areas.	✓	✓
2	Get the implementing government institutions more involved with the OGP as insiders.	✓	✓
3	Include local government commitments in the next action plan.	✓	✓
4	A final review of the Extractives Industries Revenue Act, involving stakeholders	✗	✗
5	Complete implementation of the commitment on audit recommendations and access to information regulations.	✓	✓

¹ Ogi.gov.sl/report/OGP%20ASSMENT/%20REPORT%202017.pdf

The government addressed and included four out of the five recommendations in the action plan. This action plan has a commitment on access to justice, which includes an activity related to the publishing of cases to help citizens track progress. During this action plan, government agencies provided additional details to specific commitments and the OGP Steering Committee incorporated more government agencies throughout the process. Waste management in Freetown brings a local government commitment. The fifth recommendation of completing the audit and access to information regulation is partially addressed. The current action plan has a commitment that continues activities not completed in the audit recommendations. The government did not take additional measures regarding the Extractive Industries Revenue Act. Neither the OGP point of contact nor civil society leaders interviewed on the issues could say why these important commitments were not taken forward to the second action plan.

¹ Invitation letter from OGP Coordinator, dated 10 August 2016, for the Steering Committee certification ceremony and cocktail event.

² Ministries of Finance, Ministry of Health, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure, Foreign Affairs, Youths, Water Resources, Information and Communication, Social Welfare, Tourism, Education, Marine Resources, and Mines, Performance Management and Service Delivery, National Revenue Authority, Anti-Corruption Commission, National Archives, Road Maintenance Fund, Development Assistance Coordinating Office, National Registration Secretariat, and Environmental Protection Agency. Legislative: Parliament. Judiciary and quasi-Judiciary: Judiciary and the Police. Sub-national: Freetown City Council. Autonomous bodies: National Election Commission and Audit Service

³ IRM researcher's interview of OGP Coordinator, 11 December 2017.

⁴ They are the northern, southern, eastern and western regions.

⁵ IRM researcher's interview of John Momo (NMJD), 13 October 2017

⁶ A hard copy of Independent Observer newspaper of 27 May, 2016.

⁷ OGP Secretariat, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/sierra-leone-national-action-plan-2016-2018>

⁸ <http://www.ogi.gov.sl/report/INDIVIDUAL%20COMMENTS%20ON%20THE%20NATIONAL%20ACTION%20PLAN.pdf>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Sierra Leone's second national action plan, page 16.

¹¹ IRM researcher's interview of OGP Coordinator, 11 December 2017.

¹² Report of the consultative meeting on OGP action plan's 1 and 2, 8 June 2016, at ogi.gov.sl

¹³ The representatives of BAN, CGG, NMJD and Transparency International confirmed this in IRM researcher's interviews with them.

¹⁴ IRM researcher's interview of the Executive Director of Transparency International, 6 November 2017.

¹⁵ IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum,

http://c.yimcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf

¹⁶ Statements made by the OGP Coordinator and a representative of the Cabinet Secretariat at the Steering Committee meeting of 14 November 2016, attended by the researcher.

¹⁷ IRM researcher's interview of John Momo (NMJD), 13 October 2017

¹⁸ Information provided by BAN via email and given by participants at the civil society stakeholder forum of 20 October 2017; and "The Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan Implementation Status-Score Card (June 2016-July 2017).

¹⁹ Email reply of 23 October to researcher's questions.

IV. Commitments

All OGP-participating governments develop OGP action plans that include concrete commitments over a two-year period. Governments begin their OGP action plans by sharing existing efforts related to open government, including specific strategies and ongoing programs.

Commitments should be appropriate to each country's unique circumstances and challenges. 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.¹

What Makes a Good Commitment?

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

The indicators used by the IRM to evaluate commitments are as follows:

- **Specificity:** This variable assesses the level of specificity and measurability of each commitment. The options are:
 - **High:** Commitment language provides clear, verifiable activities and measurable deliverables for achievement of the commitment's objective.
 - **Medium:** Commitment language describes activity that is objectively verifiable and includes deliverables, but these deliverables are not clearly measurable or relevant to the achievement of the commitment's objective.
 - **Low:** Commitment language describes activity that can be construed as verifiable but requires some interpretation on the part of the reader to identify what the activity sets out to do and determine what the deliverables would be.
 - **None:** Commitment language contains no measurable activity, deliverables, or milestones.
- **Relevance:** This variable evaluates the commitment's relevance to OGP values. Based on a close reading of the commitment text as stated in the action plan, the guiding questions to determine the relevance are:
 - **Access to Information:** Will the government disclose more information or improve the quality of the information disclosed to the public?
 - **Civic Participation:** Will the government create or improve opportunities or capabilities for the public to inform or influence decisions?
 - **Public Accountability:** Will the government create or improve opportunities to hold officials answerable for their actions?
 - **Technology & Innovation for Transparency and Accountability:** Will technological innovation be used in conjunction with one of the other three OGP values to advance either transparency or accountability?²
- **Potential impact:** This variable assesses the *potential impact* of the commitment, if completed as written. The IRM researcher uses the text from the action plan to:
 - Identify the social, economic, political, or environmental problem;
 - Establish the status quo at the outset of the action plan; and
 - Assess the degree to which the commitment, if implemented, would impact performance and tackle the problem.
 - **Starred commitments** are considered exemplary OGP commitments. In order to receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:
- **Starred commitments** will have "medium" or "high" specificity. A commitment must lay out clearly defined activities and steps to make a judgment about its potential impact.

- 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.
- The commitment would have a "transformative" potential impact if completely implemented.³
- The government must make significant progress on this commitment during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of "substantial" or "complete" implementation.

Based on these criteria, Sierra Leone's action plan contained no starred commitments.

Finally, the tables in this section present an excerpt of the wealth of data the IRM collects during its progress reporting process. For the full dataset for Sierra Leone and all OGP-participating countries, see the OGP Explorer.⁴

General Overview of the Commitments

The commitments in the action plan cover a diverse range of areas. Compared to the previous cycle, the second action plan covers new areas such as gender-based violence, climate change, waste management, elections and access to justice.

All 10 commitments are relevant to OGP values but only two out of 10 are clearly relevant to civic participation, while the rest focus on expanding access to information in the relevant policy areas.

I. Gender-Sexual Violence Against Women

Commitment Text:

The SLP will publish data on sexual violence against women and girls, establish a forensic lab with trained and qualified personnel, develop a directory for all sexual violence convicts, and provide free health services for women affected by sexual violence in collaboration with the Ministry of Health.

Milestones: Publish data on sexual violence issue on a half yearly basis; Develop the framework for the establishment of a forensic lab on gender base violence; Set up a forensic lab to fast track sexual violence cases; Development of online directory of all sexual violence convicts and published on a half yearly basis.

Responsible institution: Family Support Unit

Supporting institution(s): Police, Judiciary, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Campaign for Good Governance, Rainbow Center, AdvoAid, United for Humanity, Network Movement for Youth and Children Welfare

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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
Overall			✓		✓						✓		Yes		✓		

Context and Objectives

Gender-based violence remains endemic in Sierra Leone, contributing to women's economic, social and political disempowerment. Impunity for offenders is perpetuated through economic issues and a general unwillingness to report crimes.⁵ The Family Support Unit (FSU) of the Sierra Leone Police is the government institution responsible for dealing with issues related to sexual and gender-based violence. FSU is faced with several challenges including limited funding, insufficient staff and lack of institutional infrastructure for forensic tests.⁶ According to one report major challenges faced in the country are the weaknesses in the investigative and forensic capacities of law enforcement agencies to speedily and successfully investigate and prosecute sexual offences.⁷ In addition to the forensic and law enforcement issues, there is no gender-based violence data available to the public apart from an annual report publishing the number of incidences. This commitment aims to carry out activities that support the prosecution of offenders.

The online directory of sexual convict data will mark the first set of public data available on individuals who have committed gender-based violence, therefore this commitment is relevant to the OGP value of access to information. The commitment has a moderate potential impact given that it could support capturing and prosecuting sexual offences. It

could also serve as a deterrent and minimise the occurrence of sexual offences. However, data alone would not necessarily provide a transformational change.

Completion

This commitment is limited in completion. FSU published an annual report on sexual violence incidences for 2016, but has not increased publication to a half-annual basis in 2017. Despite internal efforts at summarising data quarterly, the citizens' report has not been published more than once a year. The Director of Gender Affairs in the Sierra Leone Police did not specify a particular barrier, except that they would be willing to publish more frequently if resources permitted.⁸ The forensic capacity assessment listed as one of the milestones in the commitments had already been published, in January 2016, prior to the start of the current action plan.⁹

Work on setting up the forensic lab has not begun. According to the head of the department responsible for gender issues, there were no funds to establish the forensic lab.¹⁰ There has been limited progress in developing the online directory of sexual offenders. The head of the department in the Police responsible for the commitment confirmed that the Information Communication Technology staff working on sexual violence in the department received some initial training. However, there is an internal concern about legal implications and possible infringements of sexual offender rights before publishing this information.¹¹

Next Steps

The IRM researcher recommends to carry this commitment over into the next action plan in a modified form. The development of the forensic lab is not relevant to OGP values and while this is an important milestone, it can continue outside of the OGP framework. As outlined in the commitment, the responsible department in the Police should release sexual offences information to the public at more regular intervals rather than through the yearly Police report. The Police and civil society organisations need to consider how privacy infringement could be addressed to continue developing the online offender directory.

¹ Open Government Partnership: Articles of Governance, June 2012 (Updated March 2014 and April 2015), https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/attachments/OGP_Articles-Gov_Apr-21-2015.pdf

² IRM Procedures Manual, http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/IRM-Procedures-Manual-v3_July-2016.docx

³ The International Experts Panel changed this criterion in 2015. For more information, <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/node/5919>

⁴ OGP Explorer and IRM data, bit.ly/1KE2WII

⁵ Country Report on Human Rights Practices, Sierra Leone, U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper>

⁶ Assessing the Family Support Unit 2016 Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law, <http://www.carl-sl.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/FSU%20REPORT%20PDF.pdf>

⁷ Sierra Leone Police Forensic Capability Assessment, January 2016, and given to researcher by head of Gender and Hospitality in the Sierra Leone Police. The report is not available online.

⁸ IRM researcher's interview of Director of Gender Affairs and Hospitality, 15 October 2017.

⁹ Assessing the Family Support Unit 2016 Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law, <http://www.carl-sl.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/FSU%20REPORT%20PDF.pdf>

¹⁰ IRM researcher's interview of Director of Gender Affairs and Hospitality, 15 October 2017.

¹¹ IRM researcher's interview of Director of Gender Affairs and Hospitality, 15 October 2017.

2. Foreign Aid Transparency

Commitment Text:

Donor, NGO, INGO and CSOs will publish funds meant for the post Ebola recovery online and in an open data format. Also, annual district meeting will be held for donors, INGO, NGOs and CSOs to disclose funds meant for that particular district and detailed activity level budget shared.

Milestones: DACO to publish details donor fund meant for the post Ebola recovery online according to the standard established by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and the on the open data portal including activity level budget. INGOs and NGOs to publish details of donor funds meant for the post Ebola recovery online according to the standard established by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and the on the open data portal including activity level budget. Donor, INGOs and NGOs hold annual District public meetings to disclose fund meant for that particular district and for what purpose and detail activity-level budget shared. Donor publish all funds that go directly into the national budget according to the IATI Standard.

Responsible institution: Development Assistance Coordinating Office (DACO), Anti Corruption Commission

Supporting institution(s): Society for Democratic Initiatives, Budget Advocacy Network, Sierra Leone Association of Non-governmental Organisations, Federation.

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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
2. Overall				✓	✓						✓		Yes			✓	

Context and Objectives

Sierra Leone receives millions of US dollars in international aid each year.¹ To promote transparency of donor funds, the government joined the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) in 2012 committing to following the publishing standards. Further donor transparency efforts were taken in 2013, when the government began hosting the Development Assistance Database (DAD).² DAD is an online database that provides an overview of all donor projects including amount, donor and project information.³ Despite these efforts, in 2015 Transparency International published concerns over corruption related to the influx of Ebola-related funding.⁴ A detailed report in 2017 from Oxfam highlighted civil society organisations' desires for more access to information in an easy-to-understand way.⁵ According to a representative of a civil society organisation involved with government budget and public finance issues, there is still a lack of transparency that hampers development planning and allocations of resources; and limits citizens' ability to exert accountability.⁶

In an effort to address the transparency issues with donor funding for Ebola, this commitment aims to publish Ebola-related donor funds and host public meetings with various donors. Since some of these activities had started and two of the foreseen milestones were completed prior to the action plan, the commitment would have a moderate impact on making sure that foreign aid specific to Ebola is used more effectively and efficiently.

Completion

Two activities under this commitment were completed prior to the start of the action plan. According to officials of the department, DACO asked donor agencies and international non-governmental agencies to proactively upload their development assistance data on the Development Assistance Data (DAD) website.⁷ However, donor project information has been published on DAD since the website launch in 2013. Despite having sections to detail key performance indicators, many project profiles are blank with no updated information outside of the funding source, dates and amounts.

When reviewing the Ebola-specific project funds in DAD, project histories show profile creation dates ranging from as early as January 2015 to as recent as July 2017. This is evidence that actions for these commitments began prior to the start of the action plan.

DACO officials did not conduct public donor meetings and were unaware of any efforts, stating that this commitment was not their responsibility.⁸ According to the OGP coordinator, the Budget Bureau of the Ministry of Finance provided information at meetings in the various districts of the country to disclose use of development assistance funds. According to the OGP coordinator, these public meetings have been held quarterly.⁹ There is no publicly available evidence to indicate that donors had published their contributions to the government budget as intended in the last milestone.

Early Results (if any)

The researcher could not ascertain any early results that could be attributed to the implementation of the commitment. Although a number of international development agencies publish information on their websites and DACO hosts the DAD website, none of the civil society participants at a stakeholder meeting could tell where one could get information on foreign aid.¹⁰ None of the civil society participants at a stakeholder meeting held by the researcher had ever used the DAD website despite its existence since 2013.¹¹

Next Steps

The IRM researcher recommends to carry this commitment forward in the next action plan and make efforts to identify ways that the Development Assistance Data (DAD) website could become more accessible to civil society and increase the likelihood of use.

- Consider changes to the DAD website to make it more user-friendly.
- Given the accountability issues with programme implementation, future Ebola-related commitments should include activities that track progress on projects to ensure deliverables are being met and funds are used for their original intents.
- The responsibility should be on government to get aid information from donors and international non-governmental organisations and put it out to the public online and in print, in formats that are easier to understand.

¹ UNDP, Aid Coordination and Poverty Reduction, http://www.sl.undp.org/content/sierraleone/en/home/operations/projects/poverty_reduction/aid-coordination-and-poverty-reduction.html

² Development Assistance Database (DAD), <http://dad.synisys.com/dadsierraleone/#>

³ DAD contract signed for Sierra Leone, <https://www.synisys.com/dad-contract-signed-for-sierra-leone/>

⁴ Transparency International, Ebola: Corruption and Aid, https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/ebola_corruption_and_aid

⁵ Oxfam, Transparency is more than dollars and cents, <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/transparency-is-more-than-dollars-and-cents-an-examination-of-informational-nee-620330>

⁶ Contribution of the representative of Citizens Budget Watch at the stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2017.

⁷ IRM researcher's interview of a group of DACO officials, 3 November 2017.

⁸ IRM researcher's interview of a group of DACO officials, 3 November 2017.

⁹ IRM researcher's interview of OGP Coordinator, 11 December 2017.

¹⁰ Contribution of the representative of Citizens Budget Watch at the stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2017.

¹¹ Ibid.

3. Waste Management

Commitment Text:

The governance around waste management in the city is uncoordinated with lack of information on the roles of the various stakeholders. The resultant effect is continued filth posing a serious challenge for diseases such as malaria and cholera and the circumstances even worrying in the aftermath of Ebola. This situation has been persistent even when a private company MASADA has been contracted and operating for two years to clear the waste in the city and transform it to fertilizer and gas. Government of Sierra Leone is paying huge sums of money without citizens receiving the required services. As Sierra Leone moves to the Ebola recovery phase of its development planning process it becomes necessary that **a clear policy** around waste management is formulated in the city; detailing specific roles of key institutions, companies and players in order to ensure clear lines of accountability on the delivery of services.

The commitment will ensure the development of **an implementation strategy** which will serve as a roll out plan with clear deliverables and timelines that will be made available to the public through education so that both citizens and Agencies will be clear on their duties and responsibilities.

Milestones: Review of existing Waste Management Contract and report on the effectiveness of the present Waste Management Process in the Freetown City Council. Engage local communities/general public to determine a most effective way for Waste Collection through community meetings and media outreach programs involving Civil Society, Ward Development Committee and Tribal Authorities, Freetown residents and responsible agencies. Development of a Comprehensive Waste Management Policy and implementation strategy with Waste Management Authorities, Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Local Councils and private Company outlining clear roles and responsibilities. It should also include responsibility for Waste Management Company to transform waste. Popularize the new policy and implementation strategy at local communities and the national level. Ministry of Health to train and Deploy 50 Sanitary officers in the City. Create Citizens Education Programmes on “Keep the City Clean” theme; Conduct annual assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of the new policy and implementation strategy for waste management.

Responsible institution: Freetown City Council

Supporting institution(s): Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Health, Road Maintenance Fund, Masada Waste Management Company, National Youth Coalition, Campaign for Good Governance, Network Movement for Youth and Children Welfare.

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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
3. Overall			✓		✓	✓					✓		Yes		✓		

Context and Objectives

Management of municipal waste in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown has been a problem for decades, but has been exacerbated in the past few years due to rapid urbanisation, high unemployment and the Ebola crisis.¹ Masada Waste Management Company holds the current contract with Freetown City Council as the primary waste management company, however, Freetown City Council (FCC) has expressed concern over bad performance.² Further challenges stem from the lack of coordination of waste management services. There is an unclear relationship between the city council, private sector contractors, and the central government. By law, the municipal government is responsible for keeping the city clean. Even though the municipal government uses both private contractors as well as their own workers to do the same job, private businesses also collect household garbage for a fee. In an effort to coordinate services, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation developed a National Policy Roadmap on Integrated Waste Management in 2015 outlining clear roles and responsibilities.³ The Presidential Recovery Priorities have brought additional attention to this area in an effort to enhance delivery of social services under a post-Ebola recovery programme initiated in 2015.⁴

This commitment aims to enhance the existing efforts through activities that help to solidify and establish structures to address waste management issues involving a range of stakeholders. The milestone to engage communities on the best ways to manage waste is relevant to civic participation as a result of the public involvement activities. The milestone to popularise a new waste management policy is relevant to access to information, given that the existing waste management policy has never been published as a public document. If implemented in its entirety, this commitment could be a major step forward on changing the government practice on waste management.

Completion

Under the Presidential Recovery Priorities to support Ebola efforts, Operation Clean Freetown began in May 2017 to address the waste problem in the city.⁵ It incorporates several activities outlined in this commitment such as engaging civil society with waste collection, conducting stakeholder engagement with local communities, and training sanitary workers. There has been no explicit information provided by the government that links this initiative with this commitment. Civil society stakeholders including leadership at Masada Waste Management were unaware of any additional efforts made outside of Operation Clean Freetown.⁶ Activities completed under this programme such as the stakeholder meetings, deployment of sanitary workers and popularisation of waste management through citizen education can be considered completed as they relate to this commitment.⁷ The OGP Coordinator, the head of the Masada Waste Management company and civil society participants at the stakeholder meeting held on 20 October 2017, agreed that the activities under Operation Clean Freetown were implemented in a satisfactory manner.

The head of the Masada Waste Management Company shared that an assessment of their current contract has not been done despite the company's interest in getting feedback on their performance.⁸ An official of the FCC told a meeting of the Steering Committee that the Masada Waste Management Company had defaulted on some of the terms of their contract, and therefore a decision had been taken to terminate the company's contract.

The researcher was unable to get evidence, neither from FCC nor from the OGP Secretariat, as to whether what the official said came from the findings of an assessment. In an interview with the researcher, the head of the company said no formal assessment of her company's performance had been done. The researcher did not come across a new waste management policy as part of the implementation of the commitment.

Early Results (if any)

Stakeholders interviewed say the city is cleaner than it was a year ago. However, they say it can be attributed to the special ad hoc arrangement made under the government's post-Ebola recovery programme. According to the head of the waste management company, the deployment of sanitary officers, the public education and mobilisation activities, and the use of youth groups to collect waste for fees are early results specifically from Operation Clean Freetown.⁹ One CSO leader told the researcher that while the city is cleaner, the President's Recovery Priorities, the establishment of youth groups, and the unresolved problem of Masada's contract, have brought more confusion over the management of waste in general.¹⁰

Next Steps

Given that Operation Freetown was not explicitly connected to this commitment, a future commitment needs to have clear coordination with existing programmes and identify ways to enhance it rather than commit to similar actions.

The commitment could be further enhanced with additional actions related to civic participation to engage civil society in the governmental strategic planning for this issue and articulate authority and ownership to ensure public accountability.

¹ Waste Management Situational Analysis, <http://www.washlearningsl.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Waste-Management-in-Freetown-Final-report-2013.pdf>

² Minutes of the Steering Committee meeting, 9 February 2017.

³ National Policy Roadmap on Integrated Waste Management, washlearningsl.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/RWA-SL-Roadmap-Policy-Final-20150316.pdf

⁴ The President's Recovery Priorities, http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/767c32_5cefb0c2b184caeb0d97809957709f5.pdf

⁵ Operation Clean Freetown, <http://www.presidentsrecoverypriorities.gov.sl/operation-clean-freetown>

⁶ Views from participants at the civil society stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2017; and IRM researcher's interview of the Executive Director (Masada Waste Management Company), November 2017.

⁷ The President's Recovery Priorities ran from April 2016 to June 2017, www.presidentsrecoverypriorities.gov.sl

⁸ IRM researcher's interview of the Executive Director (Masada Waste Management Company), November 2017.

⁹ Awoko, Operation Clean Freetown, <http://awoko.org/2017/05/17/sierra-leone-news-operation-clean-freetown-50-youths-to-starts-work/>

¹⁰ IRM researcher's interview of the Executive Director of Transparency International, 6 November 2017.

4. Fiscal Transparency and Open Budget

Commitment Text:

This commitment is geared towards the government publishing the pre-budget and mid review budget and also publish all tax exemptions in an open data format. In addition, it will provide feedback mechanism to citizens on their inputs into the budget.

Milestones: Publish, in a timely manner, the budget reports each budget year: the MTEF and a mid-year review as these two reports are still not yet published by the Government of Sierra Leone. (Pre- budget for 2017 and 2018 and mid-year review budget for 2016, 2017 and 2018); In line with the Public Financial Management Act 2016, publish all tax exemptions, on a half yearly basis starting 2016 in government website; Publish Budget data (a pre-budget statement; the executive's budget proposal; the enacted budget; a citizens budget; in-year reports on revenues collected, expenditures made and debt incurred; a mid-year review; year-end report; and audit reports) online, in machine-readable formats; Provide and publish the detailed feedback on how public perceptions have been captured and taken into account on the budget discussion process during the formation stage.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

Supporting institution(s): National Revenue Authority, Anti-Corruption Commission, International Budget Partnership, Transparency International, Citizen Budget Watch, Budget Advocacy Network

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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			✓		✓							✓	Yes		✓		

Context and Objectives

In 2014, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development published a three-year public financial management strategy to support a stable economic infrastructure.¹ It outlined specific efforts such as enhancing the regulatory framework, improving accounting and promoting public transparency for all budgets. Civil society stakeholders say that the lack of regular information on budget implementation makes it difficult for citizens to demand accountability for cost-over-runs, under-funding, or expenditure not budgeted for.² A particular area of concern for the public has been transparency around tax exemptions. The significant number of tax exemptions given by the government to attract foreign investment has led to some international criticism, claiming that this negatively impacts funding for government services.³ Two key international reports between 2011 and 2014 highlighted the massive revenue loss that resulted from the system of discretionary tax waivers that have been granted without Parliament's formal approval.⁴ In 2015, the Open Budget Survey reported that specific areas of improvement around the budget include publishing a pre-

budget statement and mid-year review report, which are currently limited to internal use only. Currently there is an end-of-year budget report that is made available to the public, but is not accessible online.⁵

This commitment promotes further budget transparency by identifying activities in line with the Public Financial Management Act of 2016, which outlined specific institutional responsibility to provide fiscal transparency.⁶ This commitment goes beyond the existing year end and audit reports to expand access to information further through pre-budget and mid-term reports. It also includes the publishing of government tax exemptions as well as sharing public feedback. The activity related to tax exemptions would be transformative given the fact that the government has never published this data before and it would provide transparency on an issue that has been controversial. When implemented fully, the overall commitment would have a transformative impact as it would disclose important budget information, ideally leading to better allocation of public monies.

Completion

There has been limited progress made on this commitment. The pre-budget statement has not been published online. The researcher's investigations show that government practice regarding disclosure of the pre-budget statement, and mid-year budget review has not changed with the exception of the citizens' budget. In the course of the period under review, the government did produce and distribute the 2016 Citizens' Budget.⁷ According to the OGP Coordinator, the Ministry still plans to publish the pre-budget statement and mid-year budget review online.⁸

There has been no information published about tax exemptions.⁹ Civil society experts working on budget issues note that they have never seen any report from government showing tax waivers granted by government.¹⁰ There has also not been any movement on publishing information on how citizens' feedback is incorporated into the national budget. As confirmed by civil society organisations involved with budget issues, it has been a yearly practice by the Ministry of Finance to hold public sessions to consult with the public as part of the budget formulation process.¹¹ Civil society organisations participated in the 2017-2019 medium term expenditure framework budgeting process, but the Ministry of Finance did not publish any information on how they incorporated citizens' feedback. Stakeholders interviewed, including the OGP coordinator, could not confirm whether there were still plans to publish citizen feedback.

Next Steps

Given the importance of this commitment, the IRM researcher recommends to carry it over to the next action plan, if foreseen activities are not implemented by the end of the current action plan cycle.

Given the large issues relating to tax exemptions, the government may consider pursuing this as a separate and independent commitment.

¹Sierra Leone PFM Reform Strategy 2014-2017

https://psru.gov.sl/sites/default/files/Sierra%20Leone%20PFM%20Reform%20Strategy%202014-2017_0.pdf

² Contributions by the representatives of Citizens Budget Watch and Campaign for Good Governance at the stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2017; and IRM researcher's interview of the Executive Director of Open Budget Initiative, 28 November 2017.

³ Losing Out, <http://curtisresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/Losing-Out.-Final-report.-April-2014.pdf>

⁴ "Sierra Leone's Massive Revenue Loss from tax incentives", curtisresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/LosingOut-Final-report-April-2014; and "Not Sharing the Loot,

https://resourcegovernance.org/sites/default/files/Not_Sharing_the_Loot.pdf

⁵ Open Budget Survey 2015, <https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/OBS2015-CS-Sierra-Leone-English.pdf>

⁶ The Public Financial Management Act,

<http://www.parliament.gov.sl/dnn5/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=CcK9MzbLTOY%3D&tabid=79&mid=650>, page 25.

⁷ http://opendatasl.gov.sl/sites/default/files/2016_Citizens_Budget.pdf

⁸ IRM researcher's interview of the OGP Coordinator, 11 December 2017.

⁹ Budget Speech, point 76 (iii) at mofed.gov.sl/media/attachments/2017/11/09/2018-budget-speech.pdf

¹⁰ IRM researcher's interview of the Executive Director of Open Budget Initiative, 28 November 2017; and participants' comments at the stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2017.

¹¹ Participants' comments at the stakeholder meeting of 20 October, and IRM researcher's interview of the Executive Director of Open Budget Initiative, 28 November 2017.

5. Auditor General's Report

Commitment Text:

This commitment seeks to improve compliance with procurement related recommendations from the Audit Service and the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee report published online.

Milestones: 3 MDAs (MOHS, MHWI and MOFED) implement 50% of procurement related recommendation of the Auditor General's reports 2014 and 2015 and the Audit Service publish the status of the recommendation in their audit report; MDAs to develop action plans to show how they are going to implement the recommendation and these plans are to be published. Each plan should be submitted together with the progress report on the implementation of the recommendation of the 2014 Auditor General's report; 50% of the special procurement audit reports conducted by the Audit Service Sierra Leone for 2015 implemented by MEST and MAFFS; Publish the reports of the 2014 and 2015 Parliamentary Audit Committees online.

Responsible institution: Audit Service

Supporting institution(s): Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED), Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MOHS), Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEST), Ministry of Housing, Works, and Infrastructure (MHWI), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Performance Management and Service Delivery (PMSD), Transparency International, Budget Advocacy Network, Education for All, National Youth Coalition, Network Movement for Justice and Development.

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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			✓		✓						✓		No	✓			

Context and Objectives

The Audit Service of Sierra Leone is the office responsible for auditing accounts of all public institutions with oversight by the Auditor General.¹ An annual report from the previous year is required by law to be submitted to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in Parliament within 12 months of the end of the current fiscal year. Each report includes an overview of accounting and financial management along with specific recommendations. Implementation rate of recommendations by the Audit Service to improve the management of public finances has been low. According to a 2015 analysis looking at eight significant government entities, including the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, there was a combined recommendation implementation rate of only 28.8 percent.²

The first national action plan for 2014-2016 included a commitment to take action to address this issue by publishing a white paper highlighting specific ways to implement the recommendations, a policy paper to expedite audit report publishing and proposed a 50 percent implementation goal for all ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). At the end

of the implementation of the first action plan, no white paper was published nor did the government achieve the 50 percent recommendations implementation target. The policy paper was never made public to verify the extent to which it fulfilled the activity.³

This commitment from the current action plan expands on the previous efforts by focusing on specific activities to enhance the recommendation implementation rate. All MDAs are expected to develop an action plan that outlines specific ways each will implement the recommendations on procurement. Instead of providing an overarching goal for all entities, there is a 50 percent implementation rate for specific ministries (MOHS, MHWI, MOFED, MEST and MAFFS). There is also an activity to publish information from the PACs. When fully implemented, the commitment will have a moderate impact on opening up information to the public on government institutions' compliance with audit recommendations.

Completion

There has been no progress on the implementation of this commitment. An official of the Audit Department could not provide detailed information about the implementation rates of MDAs or specifically the MEST and MAFFS and explained the 2016 audit report would have the details, but was still in the process of being completed.⁴ As of the time of writing this report, no MDA submitted to the audit service details their plans on how audit recommendations would be implemented, as confirmed by an official of the institution.⁵ The Audit Department did not provide any template to guide MDAs for developing action plans or any special support.⁶ Previous audit reports are not available online.

The head of a civil society organisation involved with public finance advocacy noted that no information has been shared with civil society and everyone has been told to wait until the publishing of the report.⁷

Next Steps

The IRM Researcher recommends the following actions:

- The Audit Service can support MDA efforts by providing general action plan outlines that serve as guidance towards their development.
- The Auditor General's 2016 audit report on the implementation of audit recommendations needs to be published online.
- MDAs' plans for implementing audit recommendations, once they are developed, need to be publicly disclosed.
- Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee needs to put its 2014 and 2015 reports online.

¹ Mandate and Framework, <http://www.auditservice.gov.sl/organisation-1st.html>

² Transmittal Letter, <http://www.auditservice.gov.sl/report/assl-auditor-general-annual-report-2015.pdf>

³ Sierra Leone, End of Term Report, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Sierra-Leone_EOTR_2014-2016_for-public-comment.pdf

⁴ IRM researcher's interview of the Information, Education and Communication Officer (Audit Service Sierra Leone), 3 October 2017.

⁵ IRM researcher's interview of the Information, Education and Communication Officer (Audit Service Sierra Leone), 3 October 2017.

⁶ IRM researcher's interview of the Information, Education and Communication Officer (Audit Service Sierra Leone), 3 October 2017.

⁷ IRM researcher's interview of Executive Director, Open Tax Initiative, 28 November 2017.

6. Climate Change

Commitment Text:

This commitment is geared towards empowering the citizen with climate change information in an open data format and also track the policy implementation on gas targets, renewable energy, and forest restoration, clean mobility, green buildings, and other policy goals and targets.

Milestones:

Creating a user-friendly public tool to track policy implementation with critical milestones in specific sectors. Country and national actors could commit to track policies through a central database that showcases progress on commitments, including toward specific greenhouse gas targets, renewable energy, and forest restoration, clean mobility, green buildings, and other policy goals and targets.

Making use of MRV (Monitoring, Reporting and Verification) systems.

- *Public consultation with MDAs, CSOs and local councils on how to develop monitoring tools (4 consultations)*
- *System Investigation and design to identify measurable indicators and show the information flow.*
- *Desk Review of relevant data from the various sectors.*
- *Generate report from the monitoring, reporting and verification system on half yearly basis.*
- *Undertake yearly climate change greenhouse gas inventory*

Providing adequate and relevant climate information to the public at the policy and project levels (reactively and proactively) with a focus on usability, accessibility and publicity

- *Awareness raising activities on climate change impact through the media and stakeholders (radio monthly and TV quarterly)*
- *Development of quarterly newsletter and brochures on specific climate-related and thematic-related*
- *Simplify the format of relevant climate change documents such as the climate change policy and the national climate change strategy and action plan disseminated to the public*
- *Providing web based information on climate data working closely with the Department of Meteorology, Ministry of Transportation and Aviation (half yearly)*

Making use of the early warning project supported by GEF and implemented by UNDP to release information or datasets in open data formats and web-based to meet the requirements of the Doha Plan of Action that would help educate, empower and engage all stakeholders.

- *Collaboration with the relevant MDAs, CBOs, CSOs and other NGOs to develop the relevant tools required to raise awareness and promote environmental education*
- *Desk review of the information provided and system analysis*
- *Development of web based platform and making the platform public*
- *Call for proposal for GEF small grant projects to raise awareness by CSOs for climate change*

Responsible institution: Environmental Protection Agency

Supporting institution(s): Meteorological Department, Ministry of Transport and Aviation, Water Resources, Mines, Marine, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Tourism, and Energy.

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity	OGP Value Relevance	Potential Impact	On Time?	Completion
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	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				✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		Yes		✓		

Context and Objectives

Sierra Leone is particularly sensitive to climate changes and ranks in the top 10 in most vulnerable countries.¹ To address this vulnerability, the Environmental Protection Agency of Sierra Leone established the National Secretariat for Climate Change (NSCC) in 2012, which enables government to access public funding related to climate change issues, as well as guides the formulation of climate policies and programmes.² That same year, the United Nations (UN) hosted a climate change conference in Doha, which focused on the implementation of agreements reached at previous conferences, and opening the way for greater ambitions and actions at all levels on climate change.³ As a result, Sierra Leone began participation in the regional UN Development Programme (UNDP) Early Warning Systems project in 2013, aimed at improving climate monitoring and warning through specific interventions, such as enhancing environmental monitoring infrastructure and strengthening capacity of the Sierra Leone Meteorological Department.⁴ The National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan published in 2015 articulates further efforts Sierra Leone is taking to address climate change.⁵

Despite these efforts, there is little citizen involvement due in part to the fact that governmental actions related to climate change have not been publicly communicated.⁶ In addition, civil society leaders say climate change information can be technical and challenging for the public to understand.⁷ This commitment aims to improve public access to information related to climate change by providing user-friendly data and information on climate change and related matters. It seeks to publish climate change information in open data format, allowing to track the implementation of policy on various climate change issues such as forest restoration, and renewable energy. The commitment is relevant to OGP's value of access to information because government-held information on climate change challenges and impact in Sierra Leone will be given to the public. The commitment is also relevant to OGP's value of civic participation because citizens will use the public consultations to contribute to climate change mitigation discussions. If fully implemented, the commitment can have a moderate impact as it would allow citizens to have access to government-held information on climate change challenges and impact and contribute to discussions on climate change.

Completion

Overall, the commitment has had limited progress, with only one milestone being substantially completed.

Preliminary actions have been taken to support the development of the user-friendly database on climate change. The public consultations have not yet been held because, according to the head of the Climate Change Secretariat, they want to first provide context for the public monitoring tools. The Secretariat conducted trainings for various government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and private sector institutions involved with climate change activities. One training in March 2017 was on climate change monitoring, reporting and verification and another was on indicators for measuring progress on climate

change policy.⁸ The Secretariat plans to build on these efforts in 2018 and begin receiving information from collaborating institutions.⁹ The progress on other activities related to this milestone such as system identification, desk review or the greenhouse inventory is unclear.

Substantial efforts have been made related to providing climate change information to the public. Brochures have been developed and circulated to organisations around the country. One of the public education brochures describes the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the key findings of the Fifth Assessment Report on Climate Change, including observed changes, causes, and climate change mitigation options and recommendations. The EPA has, since 2016, been producing monthly television programmes on climate change. The agency also held a one-day forum in July 2017, which aimed to popularise the current climate change policy developed by the NSCC.¹⁰ The EPA originally produced a quarterly printed newsletter, but discontinued it and did not provide a justification to the researcher. A non-governmental organisation working on human settlement and environmental issues acknowledged the public education work that EPA did.¹¹ The NGO considered the work to be relevant in mobilising the population to action on climate change.

It is unclear whether any progress has been made to meet the requirements of the Doha Plan of Action. The Climate Change Secretariat was unaware of how this commitment leverages the UNDP early warning system project. There is no evidence of a web-based platform specifically related to the early warning systems projects. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) small grants programme began in Sierra Leone in 2013, but there is no evidence that it has offered any grants that specifically relate to CSOs raising awareness to the public.¹²

Early Results (if any)

Citizens have been given information on climate change through various media for the first time. Civil society participants at a stakeholder meeting say that much of what they know comes from the public education work of the Environmental Protection Agency.¹³ The head of a non-governmental organisation working on human settlement and environmental issues acknowledged that the public education work on climate change by a government agency was helping to close gaps in people's knowledge about climate change.¹⁴

Next Steps

The IRM Researcher recommends:

- The climate change policy that has been simplified should be circulated as public information.
- The newsletter should be produced quarterly including online and report the results of government agencies' climate change monitoring and reporting in order to verify proposed activities.
- Articulate how the activities of the third milestone relate to the Doha Plan of Action and continue efforts related to developing a web-based platform to share early warning systems information with the public.
- While the different responsible agencies continue the climate monitoring, reporting and verification activities, the outcomes and meteorological data should continue to be reported to the public through existing media.

¹ Climate Change and Environmental Risk Atlas 2015, <https://maplecroft.com/portfolio/new-analysis/2014/10/29/climate-change-and-lack-food-security-multiply-risks-conflict-and-civil-unrest-32-countries-maplecroft/>

² Environmental Protection Agency, Sierra Leone, <https://epa.gov.sl/>

³ Summary of the Doha Climate Change Conference, enb.iisd.org/vol12/enb12567e.html

⁴ [Climate Information and Early Warning Systems,
http://www.sl.undp.org/content/sierraleone/en/home/operations/projects/environment_and_energy/strengthening-climate-information-and-early-warning-systems-for-.html](http://www.sl.undp.org/content/sierraleone/en/home/operations/projects/environment_and_energy/strengthening-climate-information-and-early-warning-systems-for-.html)

⁵ Standard Times Press, <http://standardtimespress.org/?p=6131>

⁶ IRM researcher's interview of the Director, Center of Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation, 17 October 2017; and consensus opinion at the civil society stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2017.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ IRM researcher's interview of Head of Climate Change Secretariat, 19 October 2017.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Sierra Leone News, <http://awoko.org/2017/08/01/sierra-leone-news-climate-change-issues-part-of-the-policy/>

¹¹ IRM researcher's interview of the Director, Center of Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation, 17 October 2017.

¹² Global Environment Facility, <http://www.thegef.org/news/gef-sgp-launched-sierra-leone>

¹³ Stakeholder meeting of civil society organisations on the OGP organized by the researcher on 20 October, 2017.

¹⁴ IRM researcher's interview of the Director, Center of Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty, 17 October 2017.

7. Elections

Commitment Text:

This commitment will promote transparency and accountability in the management of elections by making available constituency and boundary information in electronic format online. It will also improve the transmission of election results through technology and making them available online in open data format.

Milestones: Promote transparency and accountability in the management of elections by making available:

- Constituency and boundary information in electronic format online
- Improving the transmission of election results through technology and making them available online in open data format

Responsible institution: National Elections Commission

Supporting institution(s): National Elections Watch, Campaign for Good Governance, Youth Coalition, Women's Forum.

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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			✓		✓			✓		✓			Yes			✓	

Context and Objectives

Sierra Leone is divided into constituencies for national elections. The boundaries of constituencies are revised every five to seven years.¹ The National Elections Commission (NEC) is responsible for monitoring and regulation of all election-related efforts, including registering voters, demarcating constituency boundaries and managing elections. The NEC is also required to openly publish information on certain elections processes, such as election dates, list of candidates and voters as well as election results.² Information on constituency boundaries is not among the elections information that the constitution or the electoral laws specify that NEC publish, however, the NEC published this data for the 2007 and 2012 elections.³ Prior to this information, people would not know where to go to vote or campaign.⁴ According to civil society activists, this information should be more accessible as confusion still occurs.⁵ Using telephone communication and SMS messages as a platform for disseminating information on locations of polling stations could help to address these confusions.⁶

The objective of the commitment is to publish information on constituency boundaries online and ensure the transmission of elections results online. The commitment is relevant to OGP's access to information and technological innovation values as it aims to facilitate citizens access to elections-related information. However, it will have a minor impact given

that prior to this commitment, the NEC had already made efforts to provide election information online in digital format, including information on constituency boundaries and election results. Representatives of the civil society elections monitoring network say that the milestone to publish information on constituency boundaries is not a new activity resulting from this commitment.⁷

Completion

The NEC published information on constituency boundaries for the 2018 general elections on its website following completion of the boundary delineation exercise at the end of 2016.⁸ However, according to the representatives of the civil society elections monitoring network, NEC had published demarcated constituency boundaries for previous elections. Therefore, publication of information on 2018 general elections is not a new addition to the range of information that NEC provides citizens.⁹

However, as a way of improving the transmission of election results through technology, the NEC has developed a test version of an android app that can be downloaded on any android device. It features voter lists, elections updates, and election results.¹⁰ In addition to the app, NEC has used printed materials, radio announcements, newspaper inserts and a website to give out elections information to the public; and intends to continue to do so, including publication of the 2018 election results.¹¹

Early Results (if any)

The constituency boundaries delineated for the 2018 general elections are on the NEC's website; citizens can look up to see which constituency they fall in. At the time of writing this report, the website is the only place people could go to find out in which constituency they would be voting. According to civil society leaders interviewed, the website information is not relevant to voters in places without internet access and, therefore, request that hard copies of the information be made available to the public. According to a NEC official, the android application for sharing elections information has not been publicised because it is still being tested.¹² Participants at the civil society stakeholder meeting were not aware of the application's existence. However, senior officials of the civil society elections observation network interviewed by the researcher were aware of the test version and lauded the application.¹³

Next Steps

The IRM researcher recommends that NEC finds ways to provide information on constituency boundaries demarcation in offline formats as well so that people without internet access know where to vote.¹⁴

The NEC needs to engage civil society and collaborate on how to popularise the elections app and gather feedback on how to improve it.

¹ The Public Elections Act, 2012, Sierra-leone.org/Laws/2012-04.pdf

² sierra-leone.org/Laws/constitution1991.pdf

³ <http://necsl2018.org/electoral-boundaries/>

⁴ IRM researcher's interview of the head and deputy head of the National Elections Watch, 6 November 2017.

⁵ Consensus opinion at the civil society stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2017.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ IRM researcher's interview of the head and deputy head of the National Elections Watch, 6 November 2017.

⁸ <http://necsl2018.org/electoral-boundaries/>

⁹ National Electoral Commission, www.necsl.org

¹⁰ Sierra Leone Elections, <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.necsl.necapp&hl=en>

¹¹ IRM researcher's interview of Chief of Research, Monitoring and Evaluation, 19 October 2017

¹² IRM researcher's interview of Chief of Research, Monitoring and Evaluation, 19 October 2017.

¹³ IRM researcher's interview of the head and deputy head of the National Elections Watch, 6 November 2017.

¹⁴ Ibid.

8. Records and Archives management

Commitment Text:

This commitment is geared towards ensuring that Sierra Leone has a law on Archives and Records management, which will support the implementation of the Right to Access Information.

Milestones: Drafting of the Record Management Act; Publishing of the Bill online in government website; Tabling of the Record Management Bill in Parliament; Parliament debate and pass the Record Management bill into law; Begin the process of harmonizing laws, policies and procedures across the functional areas, ensuring that the coordinating body has an ongoing role in supporting harmonization; Carry out an assessment of digital records in the government agencies, including Statistics Sierra Leone, National Electoral Commission and the National Registration Secretariat, to determine what exists and to develop structures for coordinating, capturing, preserving and sharing these records; Carry out consultations on the harmonization and assessment with civil society organizations and local communities within existing structures for local governance.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Information and Communication, Public Sector Reform Unit

Supporting institution(s): Society for Knowledge Management, Society for Democratic Initiatives, Federation.

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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			✓		✓						✓		Yes		✓		

Context and Objectives

In 2014, the Public Sector Reform Unit in the Office of the President published an assessment report outlining specific issues related to records management in Sierra Leone.¹ In response to the recommendations, the first OGP national action plan included a commitment to draft and pass a record management bill.² Managing records is an essential step to ensure effective implementation of the Right to Access to Information Act passed in 2013.³ A management system allows the necessary storage of information to have the ability to publicly disclose it.

At the end of the implementation of the first action plan, government had a draft public records and archives management bill and was awaiting submission to cabinet.⁴

The current commitment in the second action plan carries forward several activities including publishing the bill online and passing the bill into law. This commitment does not include previous efforts related to establishing an e-governance infrastructure, but rather

focuses on coordinating policies, assessing digital records of government agencies and consulting with civil society in these efforts. The commitment is relevant to the OGP value of access to information. When fully implemented the commitment will have a moderate impact on properly storing government information and making it easier to retrieve for public disclosure.

Completion

The commitment has been implemented to a limited extent. The draft of the bill had been completed at the end of the first action plan. The bill has been published in the government gazette according to the required two publications outlined by the Constitution of Sierra Leone.⁵ Parliament then tabled the bill for the review period. Parliament is expected to debate and pass the bill in 2018.⁶

The harmonising process, digital records assessment and civil society consultation are dependent on the passage of the bill. The public records archiving processes and procedures across government agencies cannot be harmonised until the record management act is passed.⁷ According to the private consultant who helped draft the commitment, the passage of the act is necessary to give legal powers for the digital records assessment.⁸ Public institutions are more likely to cooperate on the assessment once the law is in place.

The head of a civil society organisation and a private consultant that had long involvement with advocacy for a new archives law in Sierra Leone expressed satisfaction with the progression of the bill.^{9,10}

Next Steps

Given that the activities of this commitment support enhanced access to information for the public, the researcher recommends timely passage of the archives law in the Parliament. The remaining activities in this commitment should be carried over to the next action plan.

¹ Capacity and Needs Assessment of Records Management in the Sierra Leone Public Service, http://psru.gov.sl/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/reports/Capacity%20and%20Needs%20Assessment%20of%20Records%20Management%20in%20SL_Final%20Report.pdf

² National Action Plan,

https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/SIERRA%20LEONE_FINAL%20NATIONAL%20ACTION%20PLAN_6_15_2014_Final.pdf

³ Right to Access Information Act, <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/2013-02.pdf>

⁴ Sierra Leone, End of Term Report, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Sierra-Leone_EOTR_2014-2016.pdf

⁵ Section 108 (2a) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991, [sierra-leone.org/Laws/constitution1991.pdf](http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/constitution1991.pdf)

⁶ IRM researcher's interview of Mr. Muniru Kawa, archivist and records management consultant, 29 November 2017; and of OGP Coordinator, 11 December 2017.

⁷ IRM researcher's interview of Mr. Muniru Kawa, archivist and records management consultant, 29 November 2017.

⁸ IRM researcher's interview of Executive Director of Society for Knowledge Management, 20 October 2017; and of Mr. Muniru Kawa, archivist and records management consultant, 29 November 2017.

⁹ IRM researcher's interview of Executive Director of Society for Knowledge Management, 20 October 2017.

¹⁰ IRM researcher's interview of Mr. Muniru Kawa, archivist and records management consultant, 29 November 2017.

9. Access to Justice

Commitment Text:

Local structures will be established to address justice issues and government will publish on a quarterly basis updates on all cases starting July 2016.

Milestones:

- Activate child mediation panels with stakeholders in all the Nineteen (19) local councils
- Have pictures and finger print evidence for offenders
- Quarterly publication of all cases that go through the justice system
- Setting mediation panels in all police stations

Responsible institution: Sierra Leone Police

Supporting institution(s): Office of the Master and Registrar, Campaign for Good Governance, Center for Accountability and Rule of Law, Society for Democratic Initiative

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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		✓			✓					✓			Yes		✓		

Context and Objectives

Sierra Leone has made several strides in strengthening the justice system by establishing a National Human Rights Commission and a Law Reform Commission to review existing laws and guide future legislation.¹ The effectiveness of the judiciary, however, continues to be hampered by many factors including corruption, lack of resources, unprofessionalism of the police, and over-crowding in prisons.² In addition, citizens have limited access to judiciary matters. Another area where the justice system continues to be fraught with challenges is juvenile services. According to one report these challenges include lack of cells across all police stations for juvenile suspects, lack of psychological support for children in contact with the law, and lack of transportation for child offenders.³

The objective of the commitment is to increase transparency in case management and establish structures at the local level to improve access to justice. The idea of the commitment including child mediation panels came from the Police. One particular activity focuses on developing judicial infrastructure for child cases, while the others focus on general cases. If fully implemented, the commitment would contribute to improving access to justice, as the mediation panels would reduce the length of time it takes to finish prosecution. Only the milestone on “quarterly publication of all cases that go through the justice system” has relevance to the OGP value of access to information. If fully implemented, the commitment will have limited impact first, because other law enforcement

bodies handle child justice issues already. Second, because it is unclear what specific information will be published about cases, it is difficult to establish greater than minor impact. A Steering Committee member from a civil society organisation working on court issues told the researcher that the milestone did not adequately convey the case management information that was to be provided as envisaged by civil society.⁴ According to him, civil society had wanted basic information such as dates for court sittings, and announcements of petitions and adjournments.

Completion

From the researcher's investigations, implementation of the two commitment milestones has not started, with one activity completed prior to the start of the action plan. The Registrar of the Legal Aid Board expressed doubt regarding the child mediation panels because the Family Support Unit in the Police and the Legal Aid Board are handling the child justice issues already.⁵ Key informants interviewed by the researcher were not aware of child mediation panels in local councils.⁶

According to the head of gender and hospitality in the Sierra Leone Police, fingerprints and pictures of sexual offenders are taken during the course of an investigation, however, this is not a new practice as it began prior to the start of this action plan.⁷ She also expressed that the expectations for publishing court cases were unclear.⁸ The OGP coordinator explained that there has been some exploration for utilising telephone technology to track cases, but nothing has been confirmed.⁹ These efforts are dependent on funding, which has not been guaranteed.

The researcher saw no evidence of mediation panels set up in police stations. Key informants told the researcher that the Police sometimes helps people settle disputes informally, without litigation. According to the Registrar of the Legal Aid Board they offer alternative dispute resolution services that could incorporate police in some capacity.

Next Steps

This commitment should be taken forward into the next action plan, with a clearer language that focuses on providing information on case management to the public. An official of the Center for Accountability and Rule of Law, a CSO involved with the commitment, told the researcher that the commitment's language missed the real intentions of civil society and did not address issues related to bribery for accessing information such as court dates or assigned magistrate to a case.¹⁰ The intention should be to enable citizens to easily follow the progress of cases in court without any hassle.¹¹ The police should also consult with civil society organisations to better understand judiciary priorities that are important to the public to ensure future commitments are relevant and address existing needs.

¹ Justice Sector and the Rule of Law, <http://issat.dcaf.ch/download/48039/758786/Sierra%20Leone%20Justice.pdf>

² Freedom House, Sierra Leone, freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2016/sierra-leone

³ Sierra Leone Legal Aid Board,

internationallegallaidgroup.org/images/miscdocs/LEGAL_AID_BOARD_COUNTRY_REPORT_2016_Final.pdf

⁴ IRM researcher's interview of Programme Officer, Center for Accountability and Rule of Law, 6 November 2017.

⁵ IRM researcher's interview of the Registrar, Legal Aid Board, 20 October 2017.

⁶ These included IRM researcher's interview with the head of gender and hospitality in the Sierra Leone Police, interview with the Registrar of the Legal Aid Board, and participants at the civil society stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2017.

⁷ IRM researcher's interview of the Director, Gender Affairs and Hospitality, 15 October 2017.

⁸ IRM researcher's interview of the Director, Gender Affairs and Hospitality, 15 October 2017; and of Programme Officer, Center for Accountability and Rule of Law, 6 November 2017.

⁹ IRM researcher's interview of OGP Coordinator, 11 December 2017.

¹⁰ IRM researcher's interview of Programme Officer, Center for Accountability and Rule of Law, 6 November 2017.

¹¹ Ibid.

10. Open Public Procurement Contracting

Commitment Text:

The government will improve citizen and business access to open, timely, and credible information about public procurement and promote their engagement in monitoring public procurement processes.

Milestones:

- Publish on yearly basis all contracts entered into by Government above the threshold for the preceding year: 2015, 2016
- 8 Ministries (MOFED, MAFFS, MOHS, MEST, MMR, MWHI, MOE, MTA) will proactively publish on NPPA websites contracts entered into with private contractors above the threshold on regular basis (Contract entered between January to December of each year from 2016 to 2018).
- A forum comprised of public officials, civil society leaders and National Public Procurement Authority to promote open contracting will be established

Responsible institution: National Public Procurement Authority

Supporting institution(s): Transparency International, Open Contract Partnership, Society for Democratic Initiatives, Budget Advocacy Network, Network Movement for Justice and Development, and Education for All.

Start date: July 2016

End date: June 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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			✓		✓						✓		Yes		✓		

Context and Objectives

The procurement of public goods and services by government institutions is a key source of corruption in Sierra Leone. A recent report published in 2016 by the Office of the Auditor General highlighted that public procurement, in the opinion of citizens is the major source of fraud and corruption.¹ Public procurement is the largest non-payroll government expenditure in the country and thus warrants particular attention. In February 2016 the parliament passed a new Public Procurement Act to enhance a similar act passed in 2004, which established the National Public Procurement Authority. Among other things, the act made it a requirement to establish a public forum with a variety of stakeholders on open contracting, as well as for government contracts to be published.²

The commitment aims to fulfill the 2016 Public Procurement Act by publishing government contracts from previous years beginning in 2015, as well as active contracts through to 2018. It also incorporates a public forum involving a variety of stakeholders centered on

contracting but does not provide specifics about what the scope of work or intended results of the forum would be. The commitment is relevant to access to information as a result of the activities intended to publish goods and services contracts entered into by public institutions. Before the commitment was made, government contracts had never been published for the public to see. When fully implemented, the impact of the commitment will be moderate because it only publishes procurement information and not the processes by which public contracts are negotiated and awarded, which stakeholders say requires greater transparency.³

Completion

According to an official of the agency, government contracts within the threshold set in the Procurement Act were uploaded on the NPPA's website during the course of 2016 and 2017.⁴ Upon verification the "contracts awarded" section of the website only provides information for contracts awarded during 2016 and not 2015 as outlined in the commitment text.⁵ The information lists the contracting institution, the contractor, the value of the contract, date of award, and estimated date of completion.⁶ Upon further review, not all ministries listed in the commitment text have published contracts in the database. The forum to bring together public officials, civil society, and the NPPA to promote open contracting was not established, but an official confirmed to the researcher that plans to do so in 2018 were under way at the time of writing this report.⁷

Next Steps

To fully implement this important commitment, the IRM researcher recommends the following actions:

- The NPPA needs to publish the report of the annual assessment of procurement activities online for easier public access.
- The NPPA should establish processes that automate the publishing of awarded government contracts. The suggested format for publication is Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS)⁸, that promotes the disclosure of data and documents at all stages of the contracting process and not just after the contract has been awarded. It entails publication of contracting documents in a common data model and allows deeper analysis of contracting data by a wide range of users.
- The government needs to communicate the terms of reference of the intended forum outlined by the 2016 Public Procurement Act for public officials, civil society, and the NPPA to promote open contracting. The forum should include representatives of all government agencies, local councils, civil society organisations working on public financial management, and trade and commercial associations; and should meet annually to debate the state of public procurement in the country and recommend improvements.

¹ Audit Service Sierra Leone, <http://www.auditservice.gov.sl/report/assl-general-report-procurement-2016.pdf>

² See sections 14 and 26 of the Public Procurement Act.

³ Consensus views of participants at the stakeholder meeting of 20 October 2016.

⁴ According to the Public Procurement Act, 2016, goods and services contracts above 300,000 Leones; and works contracts above 600,000 are to be published. IRM researcher's interview of head of procurement capacity building, 4 October 2017.

⁵ Contract awards, <http://www.publicprocurement.gov.sl/index.php/contract-awards>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Open Contracting Data Standard, <http://standard.open-contracting.org/latest/en/>

V. General Recommendations

While the commitments cover relevant policy areas in the country, they are oriented towards outcomes that mostly improve access to information and do not sufficiently engage with the public. The next action plan needs to address OGP principles of civic participation and public accountability through inclusion of commitments on public service delivery and anti-corruption measures.

This section aims to inform development of the next action plan and guide completion of the current action plan. It is divided into two sections: 1) those civil society and government priorities identified while elaborating this report and 2) the recommendations of the IRM.

5.1 Stakeholder Priorities

The priorities of civil society stakeholders regarding the action plan are the completion of the commitments on foreign aid, open contracting and climate change. The commitments on foreign aid and open contracting are given priority, according to stakeholders, to continue to support the fight against corruption in the country. In the wake of the mudslide in September 2017 that killed more than 1,000 people, participants at the stakeholder forum say citizens now need to be more involved in transparency and accountability on environmental issues; hence the need to complete the commitment on climate change.

For the next action plan civil society participants, including non-governmental organisations and community-based groups at a stakeholder meeting organised by the researcher, say they would like to see commitments on local government finance, implementation of the Records and Archives Act when passed into law, and annual disclosure of assets owned by public officials. They also expressed concerns that the allocation of development grants to local government was being subjected to political considerations, hence the need for greater transparency. According to these stakeholders, including the implementation of the Records and Archives Act in the next action plan would help the overall environment for the public right to access information.

5.2 IRM Recommendations

1. Harness the contribution of civil society beyond membership of the Steering Committee

In working with civil society organisations, government should focus on those that have the resources to make meaningful contributions. Such resources include capacity and known presence in communities. The government needs to harness contributions of civic groups outside of the Steering Committee that can push OGP issues in their projects and programmes and query government in the implementation of commitments.

2. Improve inter-governmental coordination on OGP, regularly report on implementation of commitments

Given that several commitments had activities completed prior to the start of the action plan, the government needs to consider better coordination efforts to ensure that there is no overlap of activities carried out by different agencies. Each commitment should have clearly intended outcomes and should not include activities that have already been completed prior to the action plan.

The OGP Secretariat should devise a system for government agencies to periodically report on the implementation of commitments, whether or not they attend Steering Committee meetings. Government should work to publicly report in a systematic and periodic way on

the implementation of commitments, including specific milestones achieved, challenges faced and next steps.

3. Consider including commitment on transparency of extractive industries, with the focus on disclosure of contracts

Transparency in the extractives remains a significant issue in Sierra Leone. Future commitment in this area can help with fiscal transparency, by including some of the commitments from the first action plan that were not carried forward in the second plan. Although the country is EITI-compliant, there is still a need to pass the EITI bill as it can mandate full disclosure of information around mining contracts. Commitments can also address the need for disclosure of all investments and contracts in the extractive industries, including the investors and value of deals undertaken.

4. Consider commitments on citizen engagement in budget tracking and monitoring of public service delivery

According to the latest Open Budget Survey, Sierra Leone has few opportunities for the public to engage in the budget process and there is weak legislative oversight during the budget cycle. The next action plan could include commitments that entail greater budget transparency through formal structures for civilian monitoring, tracking and oversight, of the budget as well as government revenue collection, allocation and spending. One area where this can be tested is access to health - a commitment can be made around tracking how much money is disbursed from the centre to local communities and disclose how these funds are used in the communities.

5. Include commitments on enforcement of anti-corruption measures

Sierra Leone has legislation on disclosure of assets owned by public officials, but the declarations are not made public. The government and the Anti-Corruption Commission need to consider enforcing and publishing declarations of wealth by state and public officials.

Judiciary needs to consider providing information around court cases, both by the Judiciary and the ACC. The ACC can publish online details of cases received, numbers that are investigated, and their outcomes, such as which cases result in convictions, out of court settlements, fines etc. The judiciary should publish the outcome of cases that have to do with key issues of contestation in Sierra Leone; these include land as well as cases involving citizens against state officials.

Table 5.1: Five Key Recommendations

1	Harness the contribution of civil society beyond membership of the Steering Committee
2	Improve inter-governmental coordination on OGP, regularly report on implementation of commitments
3	Consider commitments on transparency of the extractives industry, with the focus on disclosure of contracts
4	Consider commitments on citizen engagement in budget tracking and monitoring of public service delivery
5	Include commitment on enforcement of anti-corruption measures

VI. Methodology and Sources

The IRM progress report is written by researchers based in each OGP-participating country. All IRM reports undergo a process of quality control 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 IRM 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.) Some contexts require anonymity of interviewees and the IRM reviews the right to remove personal identifying information of these participants. Due to the necessary limitations of the method, the IRM strongly encourages commentary on public drafts of each report.

Each report undergoes a four-step review and quality-control process:

1. Staff review: IRM staff reviews the report for grammar, readability, content, and adherence to IRM methodology.
2. International Experts Panel (IEP) review: IEP reviews the content of the report for rigorous evidence to support findings, evaluates the extent to which the action plan applies OGP values, and provides technical recommendations for improving the implementation of commitments and realization of OGP values through the action plan as a whole. (See below for IEP membership.)
3. Prepublication review: Government and select civil society organizations are invited to provide comments on content of the draft IRM report.
4. Public comment period: The public is invited to provide comments on the content of the draft IRM report.

This review process, including the procedure for incorporating comments received, is outlined in greater detail in Section III of the Procedures Manual.¹

Interviews and Focus Groups

Each IRM researcher is required to hold at least one public information-gathering event. Researchers should make a genuine effort to invite 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 is provided in the self-assessment or is accessible online.

As sources of information, the IRM researcher interviewed key informants, held one civil society stakeholder meeting and reviewed literature. Key informants interviewed included civil society and government agencies representatives on the OGP Steering Committee, other officials from government agencies directly and indirectly involved with commitments and CSOs who are not in the Steering Committee. All interviews took place after the government released the Self-Assessment report in October 2017.

The stakeholder meeting held in the capital city on 20 October 2017 brought together participants from organisations that were involved with the OGP and others that were not;

to discuss how the action plan has been implemented, and give views on the initial findings of the researcher and the government self-assessment report. The meeting discussed the extent of consultation on the development of the action, the nature and extent of consultation during implementation, and the initial findings from the researcher and government's self-assessment report. Discussions were held on the country context to guide the recommendations made. It was the consensus or dominant opinions from participants in the stakeholder meeting and key informant interviews that the IRM researcher presents as stakeholder views.

Literature reviewed included documents held by government agencies directly related to a commitment, and online documents generated by government institutions, and international and local organisations.

This table shows the institutions the stakeholders represented in interviews and at the stakeholder meeting.

No.	NAME	INSTITUTION	DATE
1	Abu Bakarr Kamara	Coordinator, Budget Advocacy Network	Email response of 5 November 2017 to researcher
2	Abdul Salim	Head-Climite Change Secretariat, Environmental Protection	19 October 2017
3	Abdulai K. Jalloh	Institute for Governance Reform	20 October 2017
4	Amie Dumbuya	Managing Director, Masada Waste Management Company	6 November 2017
5	Elizabeth Turay (Ms)	Head of Gender and Hospitality, Sierra Leone Police	15 October 2017
6	Frederick Conteh	Good Shepard Development Minstry	20 October 2017
7	Gibrilla Murray-Jusu	Chief of Research, Monitoring and Evaluation, National Electoral Commission	19 October 2017
8	Hamida Karim	Programme Manager, Open Government Partnership	Email response of 23 October 2017 to researcher
9	Marcella Samba-Sesay (Ms)	Chairman, National Elections Watch	6 November 2015
10	Jalikatu Cotay (Ms)	Director, Center of Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation	17 October 2017
11	James Lahai	National Elections Watch	6 November 2017
12	John Momo	Network Movement for Justice and Development	16 October 2017
13	Joseph Dumbuya	Registrar, Legal Aid Board	20 October 2017
14	Khadija Sesay (Ms)	Coordinator, OGP Secretariat	11 December 2017
15	Kawusu Kebbay	Director, Development Assistance Coordinating Office	4 October 2017
16	Lavina Banduah (Ms)	Executive Director, Transparency International-Sierra Leone Chapter	6 November 2015
17	Martin Sandy	Information, Education and Communication Officer, Audit Services	3 October 2017
18	Mohamed J. Musa	Head of Procurement Capacity Building, National Public Procurement Authority	4 October 2017
19	Muniru Kawa	Private Consultant, Records and	29 November 2017

		Archives Management Improvement	
20	Paul Luseni	Programme Officer, Center for Accountability and Rule of Law	6 November 2017
21	Princess Massaquoi (Ms)	Programme Officer, Campaign for Good Governance	20 October 2017
22	Sahr S. Ansumana	Citizens Budget Watch	20 October 2017
23	Tanu Jalloh	Executive Director, Open Budget Initiative	28 November 2017
24	Tiana Alpha (Ms)	Women in the Media-Sierra Leone	20 October 2017
25	Umaru Bangura	Executive Director, Society for Knowledge Management	20 October 2017
26	Umu Kabia (Ms)	Peace Africa Alliance, Consulting, Education and Training Center	20 October 2017

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 an 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

- César Cruz-Rubio
- Mary Francoli
- Brendan Halloran
- Jeff Lovitt
- Fredline M'Cormack-Hale
- Showers Mawowa
- Juanita Oalaya
- Quentin Reed
- Rick Snell
- Jean-Patrick Villeneuve

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

I IRM Procedures Manual, V.3 : <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>

VII. Eligibility Requirements Annex

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.

In September 2012, OGP officially encouraged governments to adopt ambitious commitments that relate to eligibility.

Table 7.1: Eligibility Annex for Sierra Leone

Criteria	2010	Current	Change	Explanation
Budget Transparency ²	ND	4	Increase	4 = Executive's Budget Proposal and Audit Report published 2 = One of two published 0 = Neither published
Access to Information ³	1	4	Increase	4 = Access to information (ATI) Law 3 = Constitutional ATI provision 1 = Draft ATI law 0 = No ATI law
Asset Declaration ⁴	0	2	Increase	4 = Asset disclosure law, data public 2 = Asset disclosure law, no public data 0 = No law
Citizen Engagement (Raw score)	3 (5.29) ⁵	3 (5.29) ⁶	No change	<i>EIU Citizen Engagement Index</i> raw score: 1 > 0 2 > 2.5 3 > 5 4 > 7.5
Total / Possible (Percent)	4/12 (33%)	13/16 (81%)	Increase	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 at <http://www.right2info.org/constitutional-protections> and Laws and draft laws at <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>; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "Types of Information Decision Makers Are Required to Formally Disclose, and Level Of Transparency," in *Government at a Glance 2009*, (OECD, 2009), <http://bit.ly/13vGtqS>; 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," The Economist Intelligence Unit (London: Economist, 2010), <http://bit.ly/eLC1rE>.

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