

COLOMBIA SELF – ASSESSMENT REPORT

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP



Gobierno Nacional
PROSPERIDAD PARA TODOS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Government of President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón has focused on applying the Good Governance philosophy in all its actions, as an instrument for improving public administration and fighting corruption. It is based on the application of the Good Governance principles: efficacy, efficiency, transparency and effective accountability frameworks, which are directly related to the challenges and principles of the Open Government Partnership.

Thus, in the 2010-2014 National Development Plan, “Prosperity for All”, Good Governance is one of the cross-cutting supports for democratic prosperity.

Accordingly, the country identified an opportunity in the Open Government Partnership to reinforce and promote its commitment within the framework of the Good Governance principles, since it strengthens initiatives undertaken by the country on transparency, social oversight, access to information and citizen participation matters over the last decade.

Likewise, joining the Partnership enables us to exchange and implement best practices, and provides an international perspective on the development of Colombia’s Action Plan.

The structuring of Colombia’s Action Plan, submitted to the Open Government Partnership, was carried out based on the initiatives the country has been engaged in over the past ten years, and an inter-institutional task force was created to develop it, under the coordination of the High Counsellor Office for Good Governance and Administrative Efficiency, with the participation of the Secretariat of Transparency of the Presidency of the Republic, the e-Government Program of the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications (MINTIC), and the National Planning Department (DNP), aimed at proposing the actions to be carried out within the open government framework.

This task force identified outreach opportunities for disseminating the Action Plan and engaging civil society in the construction of the document through an online forum and via #HoraTIC on Twitter, where a survey was conducted on topics such as public information of general interest for the citizens, the actions to be considered by Government entities in order to improve the quality of their services, and actions on which community commitments could be sought. Likewise, a hands-on workshop with civil society organizations was arranged to build the Action Plan proposed by the Government in order to consolidate the document and enrich the commitments.

The Action Plan submitted in Brasilia on April 2012, was a preliminary version. While said document contained observations and suggestions from the civil society, time constraints prevented the consolidation of specific proposals that would ensure that the Action Plan was the result of a joint country construction. Likewise, the expectation was to secure the engagement of different non-governmental organizations to support the stewardship of the commitments framed within this document.

Thus, during 2012, seven (7) working sessions were conducted with the public entities in charge of leading the commitments, civil society organizations and private sector representatives, aimed at analyzing and adjusting both the commitments originally submitted as well as the activities to be carried out for their implementation.

Additionally, a Follow-up Committee was created, comprising two members of the Colombian Government (High Counsellor's office for Good Governance and Administrative Efficiency and Secretariat of Transparency, within the Presidency), three civil society members (Transparencia por Colombia, Corporación Somos Más, Asociación de Fundaciones Empresariales), and one private sector member (Confederación Colombiana de Cámaras de Comercio - Confecámaras), in charge of defining the strategy for the preparation, development, follow-up and dissemination of the Colombian Government's Action Plan within the framework of the Open Government Partnership.

While these four organizations are our liaison with civil society and the private sector, it should be noted that they are formed by or represent over sixty organizations at the national and territorial levels.

This Committee has met three times during 2013 to analyze the commitments and the actions to be carried out for their fulfillment.

As a result of these working sessions and the meetings with the Follow-up Committee, the Action Plan originally submitted was readjusted. Among the adjustments made, several commitments were regrouped, the purposes set forth for other commitments were redrafted for clarity's sake, and some of the initially proposed commitments were agreed to undertaken as pilot, sector-based, regional and/or population-based commitments, as the basis for developing the initiatives that are now part of the Action Plan.

Likewise, as a result of the harmonization efforts via these participatory scenarios, the actions and scheduled dates for each one of the proposed commitments were defined, so as to enable an ongoing follow-up of their execution.

Following this line of thought, i) the commitments were regrouped into e-Government and Colombian State Site, Improve Citizen Services and Plain Language, Improve Government Performance and Accountability and the Unified Accountability Methodology, Public Utilities Regulation and Transparency in the Judicial System Information, and Citizen Participation; ii) the goals for the commitments on Consumer Protection, More Efficient Agencies, Access to Information, Royalties, Online Control and Economic Transparency Site were adjusted; iii) the possibility of conducting pilot trials on education and health topics will be evaluated; iv) finally, the commitment on the implementation of the Action Plan at the territorial level is implied in the development of each one of the other commitments.

Consequently, the Action Plan comprises seventeen (17) commitments, where fifteen (15) are in line with the established goals and timelines, and in two (2) of them (e-Government and More Efficient Entities), some goals are ahead of the established timelines.

The harmonized Action Plan and the annexes with actions and estimated dates, as well as the progress report, were posted during a two week period in the Crystal Urn (Urna de Cristal), <http://www.urnadecristal.gov.co/acuerdo-y-tematica/plan-de-accion-alianza-gobierno-abierto>, for citizen awareness and observations.

Likewise, and in order to continue building and developing the Action Plan's initiatives, questions were asked to the citizens regarding the Colombia State Site, pen data, accountability, plain language, citizen participation, transparency and access to information and economic transparency at the territorial level, and their replies will be used as inputs for the performance of the scheduled activities.

In an effort to engage the maximum possible participation, a news article was published about Colombia's participation in the Open Government Partnership; two news bulletins were sent to the citizens registered in the Crystal Urn, inviting them to participate; two mobile-based surveys were made, accompanied by text messaging aimed at boosting participation; synergies were created with the social networks of national level entities to increase the strategy's outreach and graphic pieces and links relative to the Open Government Partnership and the participation campaign were published in the Twitter and Facebook accounts of the Crystal Urn.

As a result of these efforts, there were 2,004 visits over these two weeks, 1,702 answers were received, and there were 6,500 printouts in social networks, amounting to 60,000 people reached via e-mail and text messaging (SMS).

Likewise, the Follow-up Committee was asked for its support in order to ensure increased publicity, coverage and participation, and their web pages also included a link redirecting visitors to the Crystal Urn.

These postings enabled the dissemination of Colombia's Action Plan and progress report throughout all of the country's regions.

Following is a summary of the progress report on the seventeen (17) commitments, pursuant to the activities scheduled for each one of them.

2. COMMITMENT PROGRESS

2.1. PUBLIC SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

The purpose of this component is to deliver State-provided services to the citizens in a more agile and effective way by using: information technologies, formalities reduction, service improvements for citizens, and more efficient entities. The following actions are contemplated:

2.1.1. e-GOVERNMENT

Within the continuous improvement framework of the access to information mechanisms on which Colombia has considerably moved forward, special emphasis has been given to enable, over the coming years, online transactions for the formalities and services managed and provided by State entities in order to provide timely attention and encourage citizen participation. Thanks to the extension of the connectivity network which will reach 1,078 municipalities and rural zones, the implementation of the e-Government strategy at the territorial level will be expanded, and the population will have timely and full access to State information and services throughout the entire country.

To this extent, the Colombian State's Site, www.gobiernoenlinea.gov.co, which integrates all information related to formalities and services, directories, news, among others, of the Colombian public institutions, will be redesigned so as to improve and strengthen citizen interaction and access to services through quick and timely answers.

For the Colombian State, e-Government has played a crucial role in improving public service efficiency, increasing transparency and enhancing citizen-public entity relationships. Thus, public policies on the matter have been designed since 2000, and as of 2010 the “e-Government” Strategy became a State Policy.

In view of the foregoing, and within the Open Government framework, the e-Government model was strengthened by a new decree and a new Handbook for the implementation of the e-Government Strategy by the public entities, which may be found at <http://www.programa.gobiernoenlinea.gov.co/decreto-manual.shtml>. The new Decree 2693 of 2012 sets forth 5 priority topics:

1. Data and Open Government.
2. Procedure and service provision via multiple channels, and the use of information and communication technologies in administrative formalities.
3. Interoperability, formalities chain and one-stop virtual windows.
4. Technology and the environment.
5. Collective construction.

The e-Government strategy within the Open Government Action Plan established the most relevant actions and goals aimed at strengthening the “Public Service Improvement” component, as follows:

- e-Government at the territorial level
- Assisting the implementation of the e-Government Strategy
- Monitoring and implementation of the e-Government Strategy
- Redesigning the Colombian State Site

- Forms available at the Colombian State Site

e-Government at the territorial level

Vive Digital (Live Digital) is the name given to the 2010 – 2014 Technology Plan led by the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications, aimed at having the country take a *“giant technological leap through widespread Internet access and the development of the national digital ecosystem.”*

The Vive Digital Plan, which won an award from the world’s GSM Association (GSMA) for the ‘2012 leadership Government’, envisions that Colombia, through widespread Internet usage, technology appropriation, creation of direct and indirect ICT jobs, will manage to reduce unemployment, reduce poverty and increase government transparency and competitiveness.

Fully aware of the importance of bringing the e-Government Strategy to the entire national territory, within the framework of the Vive Digital Plan, the Colombian Government is currently engaged in actions aimed at bringing Internet access to 100% of the country’s municipal government seats and 2,600 remote rural zones. Out of Colombia’s 1,102 municipalities, approximately 30% were already connected in 2010 and the remaining 70% will be connected by 2014 through the National Optical Fiber Network and other mobile access connections led by the Colombian Government. To date, the Colombian Government has connected 452 municipal government seats using optical fiber, out of the 753 proposed for 2014, as well as 1,144 rural zones through Internet community access centers in 14 departments of the country.

Assisting and monitoring the implementation of the e-Government Strategy

Likewise, in order to ensure harnessing technology and meeting the goal of the Vive Digital Plan, the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications has accompanied the implementation of the e-Government Strategy in national and territorial level entities, prioritizing the following activities of the Strategy’s components:

- Transversal Elements: Activities to verify their different user groups, to identify their needs and permanently investigate changes in behavior trends.
- Online information: Activities for the entities to post general entity data, formalities, services and information of general public interest through their websites. Additionally, for the development of data opening activities.
- Online interaction: Activities to enable electronic outlets for filing petitions and enable interactive spaces.
- Online transactions: Activities enabling citizens to conduct online formalities and receive online services.
- Transformation: Activities aimed at using electronic media for internal processes and formalities and exchanging information among entities.
- e-Democracy: Activities for the entities to create an environment for citizen empowerment and engagement in the decision-making process.

During 2012 and 2013, 207 public entities at the national level and 1,102 municipalities have received ongoing accompaniment.

Monitoring the implementation of the e-Government Strategy

The monitoring of this strategy is being carried out pursuant to the progress percentages defined by Decree 2693 of 2012.

As of July 2013, the monitoring of the national level Executive Branch entities will be carried out using the Single Management Progress Report Form, which measures the implementation of public policies on administrative development, among them e-Government. The results will be reflected in the second semester.

A form is being designed for the territorial level entities, following the methodology used for the national level entities, as applicable.

Hence, the first progress reports will be available during the last quarter of 2013.

Redesigning the Colombian State Site

The Colombian Government has also focused part of its efforts on improving the mechanisms for granting access to information on formalities and services hosted by the Colombian State Site, seeking to ensure their online availability, simplicity and user-friendliness for the citizens.

With this goal in mind, the Colombian State Site was redesigned, modifying the contents of each of the site's categories, in an effort to adjust them to a clear and plain language.

Likewise, the Colombian State Site established the main categories pursuant to the citizens' moments in life, the contents of the topics of interest were expanded, and browsing and graphic presentation improvements were carried out.

On the other hand, the "100" citizen services hotline was activated nationally to provide citizen services and information on how to conduct formalities or access services offered by the State.

Seeking to disseminate the benefits of the Colombian State Site and the e-Government Strategy, informational sessions were held for over 65,000 people during 2012 and 2013.

Forms available at the Colombian State Site

Based on the principles of efficiency and simplicity, actions have been taken to improve the quality of life of the citizens when conducting formalities with the State. To this end, actions are under way to ensure that all forms required by national entities for their external formalities are posted on the Colombian State Site, are available for downloading for their completion in standard format computer equipment, and online transactions are enabled in a considerable number of them.

To date, 100% of the 356 forms of the national level entities have been posted, over 36% are available for downloading and completion on computer equipment, and 11% enable online transactions.

2.1.2. OPEN DATA

Commitment:

Colombia has an Open Data initiative, which promotes the posting and disclosure by all State entities of their non-sensitive data in a unified and open format manner. The use of these data should be open for everybody in order to develop added value application or services, conduct analyses or research, or exercise citizen oversight.

The National Government has defined the guidelines for data structuring and posting by the entities in their respective websites and in a uniform manner in the open data site www.datos.gov.co, whose purpose is to become the coordination mechanism for access to and use of the different data posted by the entities.

The protection of the right to access public information and use it to promote transparency, accountability and citizen oversight, and thus foster the nation's economic and social development, has been one of the priority topics for the Colombian Government. Taking this into account, Colombia's Open Government Action Plan includes strategic activities aimed at:

- Defining the regulatory framework for the implementation of open data in Colombia
- Defining policy and technical guidelines for the implementation of open data
- Accompanying and sensitizing national and territorial level entities in the posting of open data.
- Redesigning and improving the functionality of the www.datos.gov.co and www.aplicaciones.gov.co portals.
- Disseminating and sensitizing the topic on open data and encouraging third-party development of applications using open data.

Defining the regulatory framework for the implementation of open data in Colombia

Seeking to institutionalize and provide guidelines for data opening, the National Government included the Open Data general guidelines in the bill of the Statutory Law on Transparency and Access Rights to Public Information, whereby the implementation of open data is compulsory for every entity of all public power branches, for private parties who perform public functions, as well as for political parties and meaningful citizen movements, among others.

Likewise, within the framework of the e-Government Strategy, Decree 2693 of 2012, "Whereby the general instructions of the e-Government Strategy are set forth", includes detailed protocols for data opening and use as one of the priority topics for the furtherance of e-government in Colombia. In turn, said decree defines the guidelines for posting Government-generated data in an open and reusable manner, in order to encourage its use by third parties to create new added value services for the citizens.

Defining policy and technical guidelines for the implementation of open data

Seeking to clearly guide the data opening procedures to be followed by public entities in Colombia, the National Government established an Open Data Model for the State, and

is currently in the process of defining the prioritization strategy for data opening of the national level entities of the executive branch.

The Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications also prepared detailed guidelines for the implementation of the open data strategy, through the “*Guide for Data Opening in Colombia*”. The purpose of this document is to contribute towards the understanding, appropriation and execution of specific actions aimed at enabling the entities to better use public information and, in turn, to facilitate third-party collaboration in support of the development and delivery of services aimed at fulfilling the goals of each entity and of the State as a whole.

Accompanying and sensitizing national and territorial level entities in the posting of open data

One of the major challenges towards the achievement of data opening in a country is the appropriation of the open data culture. For that purpose, Colombia has not only accompanied national and territorial level entities to guide them through their data identification and opening process, but it has also arranged open data dissemination, awareness and promotion events with the development communities, promoting both data publication and usage.

To date, 207 national level entities and 257 territorial level entities have been accompanied, exceeding the preset goal of 404 entities, and achieving the effective publication of 176 datasets.

Redesigning and improving the functionality of the www.datos.gov.co and www.aplicaciones.gov.co portals

With the purpose of enabling the search and retrieval, in a unified manner and in an open format, of all data published by public entities in Colombia, and in order for these to be used by any individual to develop added value applications or services, to conduct analyses and research, to exercise oversight tasks or for any kind of commercial or non-commercial activity, the Colombian Government created the www.datos.gov.co and www.aplicaciones.gov.co portals, the latter for queries and downloads of the applications developed by State entities or third parties, using public data.

Acknowledging the importance of these tools, activities have been carried out since their launching aimed at improving the technological model design and the image and channels of such portals, in order to enhance user access to the information.

To that extent, portal browsing was improved in 2013 and the extended technological model of the platform is currently under development, including html5 for its operability in any mobile device. Currently, 146 datasets are posted in the Data Portal, and over 70 applications in the www.aplicaciones.gov.co portal, covering strategic sectors such as agriculture, health, defense, finance, education and mobility, among others.

Disseminating and sensitizing the topic on open data and encouraging third-party development of applications using open data

As previously stated, the Colombian Government is promoting the development of third-party applications using open data, such as, for example, applications for queries on

information about procedures, public real estate properties for sale, and government-funded research projects, among others. For this purpose, during the first semester of 2013, developer communities were summoned to support application developments. As a result of these cooperative working sessions, 4 mobile applications were developed; namely, procedure queries, State-owned real estate properties for sale, information queries for digitalized and historical resources of Colombia's National Library, and information on research projects funded by the Administrative Department on Science, Technology and Innovation (Departamento Administrativo de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación) – Colciencias.

Over the second semester of 2013, 11 applications will be developed under an agreement with Colciencias and outreach events will be held in three departments (Santander, Antioquia and Caldas).

2.1.3. PUBLIC SERVICES REGULATION

Commitment:

The country will continue promoting transparency in the regulation of public services, in order to ensure that the posted information is organized and disclosed to the citizens in a plain and clear language. Likewise, citizen participation will be encouraged during the regulatory process.

The National Government has been working on regulatory matters through different strategies aimed at encouraging citizen participation over the entire regulation issuance process and at enabling citizens to easily understand the posted information. The following strategies have been proposed for said purpose:

- Design the regulatory improvement policy
- Design a public consultation strategy on regulatory topics of the entities with regulatory powers
- Design strategies for the administration and rationalization of the regulatory stock
- Implement the Single Regulatory Information System (Sistema Único de Información Normativa) - SUIN

Regulatory Policy

The National Government is designing a regulatory improvement policy document with a view that integrates the quality of the regulatory process at the national level entities and an organized management of the legal system.

This document will provided the foundations for the National Government's regulatory planning, *ex ante* and *ex post* regulation design and review, implementation of public consultation mechanisms within the regulatory process, institutional capacity strengthening for regulatory management, updating the regulatory stock and eliminating unnecessary regulations, and the strengthening of the legal system

A diagnosis has been prepared in order to determine the problems to be addressed by the regulatory improvement policy, and for the establishment of solution strategies.

As of this disclosure and upon approval of the CONPES document on Regulatory Improvement Policy, steps will be taken towards regulating and providing training on public consultation during the regulatory process and promoting the use of plain language in order to ensure better citizen understanding of the statutory, regulatory and legal issues involving public services.

Furthermore, a strategy for managing the regulatory stock will be developed, working in conjunction with Executive Branch entities of the national level with regulatory powers, so as to prepare a regulatory inventory by sector, which may subsequently serve as the basis for a regulatory rationalization process and the elimination of unnecessary regulations.

The activities involving this commitment are scheduled for the last quarter of 2013 and for 2014.

Single Regulatory Information System

In order for the citizens to be assured regarding the validity of the regulations they are consulting, the Government is committed to continue with the implementation of the Single Regulatory Information System (Sistema Único de Información Normativa) - SUIN.

In said System, citizens will find the national level legal regulations issued since 1886. Likewise, the regulations will be accompanied by their respective analyses regarding their validity, for which purpose the High Courts' Judgments will also be taken into account.

As of 2014, citizens will be able to perform their respective queries on the validity of these regulations through the JURISCOL database, which will now be managed by the Central Bank (Banco de la República) and operated by the Ministry of Justice and Law, in order to expand its legal information and improve its technological query tools.

To date, an analysis of the System's information quality has been conducted, involving over 4,000 regulatory records thereof. Likewise, an agreement has been made with Multilateral Banks for the long term development of the System, in order to position the SUIN as a query tool featuring top quality standards.

2.1.4. CONSUMER PROTECTION

Commitment:

Colombia will continue promoting the disclosure of consumer rights and promoting access to quality indicators for all service providers, via forums, portals and other mechanisms or tools ensuring regional coverage. Thus, citizens will be able to select the most convenient operator based on quality criteria. Entities having consumer right protection responsibilities will provide the National Consumer Protection Network, on a structured and timely basis, with information on the performance of the consumer rights protection they exercise, in order to reflect the behavior of the entities subject to their oversight (goods and services providers) regarding the users, so as to enable the latter to use said information whenever they need to select a provider of goods and/or services.

Seeking to promote and ensure the effectiveness and free exercise of consumer rights, Law 1480 was enacted in 2011 with the purpose of "regulating the rights and obligations arising among producers, providers and consumers."

Accordingly, and within the framework of the Open Government Action Plan, the following activities were prioritized:

- Implementation of the National Consumer Protection Network
- Training and advising 120 municipal mayors' offices in the fulfillment of the functions granted upon them pursuant to Law 1480 of 2011.
- Implementation of the Network's regional houses.
- Design and development of the National Consumer Protection Network's Site.

The National Consumer Protection Network was implemented on November 2012, as an instrument aimed at coordinating all the authorities with consumer protection functions in the country, at both the national as well as the regional levels.

The Network's implementation will achieve the dissemination and support compliance with consumer rights, the reception and referral of all administrative complaints to the competent authorities, and the provision of support services for municipal mayors' offices for the proper fulfillment of their consumer protection duties.

This will entail benefits such as ongoing accompaniment in the performance of their duties by the institutions part of the Network, training on rights and protection mechanisms, and full coverage on consumer protection throughout the country's regions.

Acknowledging the importance of the mayors' roles in their regions, 30 municipal mayor offices have been trained in the fulfillment of the functions granted upon them pursuant to Law 1480 of 2011.

In order to coordinate the interaction among Network members and the citizens and to orderly and timely provide the public with the results of the management of the consumer rights protection duties exercised by the entities part of the Network, the National Consumer Protection Network's Site is currently being designed and developed.

This Site will provide, among other things, the performance of the supervised bodies before the users, in order for the latter to be able to use the information available in electing the most suitable provider of goods and/or services based on their needs.

Likewise, the intent is to implement regional houses in order to facilitate consumer access to the services provided by different entities on consumer protection matters.

The greatest challenge of this commitment is the coordination among each and every one of the national and municipal entities that comprise the Network and getting them to become consumer rights' protection multipliers.

2.1.5. IMPROVED SERVICES FOR THE CITIZENS

Commitment:

Colombia has a public policy on citizen services, which is currently under review, aimed at implementing better citizen service standards and the use of virtual mechanisms based on new technologies. The nation-territory relationship will be improved through the establishment of service centers which will integrate the entire national offering in a single

location. The commissioning of these centers will be performed through pilot projects in municipalities where most national services converge.

Likewise, the National Government and civil society will work on the mandatory guidelines in order to ensure that the information posted by the entities meets the following standards: functionality, reliability, usefulness, relevance, credibility, accessibility, opportunity, coherence, applicability, non-redundancy, pertinence, availability, interpretability and comparability. Instructions and training support for public servants will be produced so as to ensure that the language used to provide the information is clear and easy to remember by the citizen (plain language strategy).

The general purpose of the Citizen Service Public Policy currently under review is to adopt the public management model to improve the effectiveness, collaboration and efficiency of the Executive Branch entities at the national level and their ability to address citizen requirements with the proper quality and timeliness.

This policy intends to strengthen the institutional, technical and operational capacities of the Public Administration entities in order to improve the entities' processes and procedures and positively impact the way in which their mission purposes and support processes are managed, while promoting citizen access to a range of procedures and services under the principles of complete and clear information, efficiency, transparency, consistency, quality, timeliness of service, accommodation to their needs, realities and expectations, and encompassing the implementation of innovative solutions and answers.

Pursuant to the foregoing, the following activities were proposed as part of the Action Plan:

- Design, implement and disseminate technical and public policy guidelines for citizen services
- Implement the Integrated Service Centers strategy as a tool to impact the access to and the quality of the services provided by the Public Administration
- Implement the plain language strategy for the citizens

Within this framework, National Citizen Services Fairs have been arranged, where the public administration entities are coordinated with the purpose of bringing the State closer to the territory and facilitating citizen access to the entities' services, formalities, programs and campaigns. Over 100,000 citizens have been served in 10 municipalities visited during 2012 and 2013 and access has been provided to nearly 300,000 formalities and citizen services throughout the country, through the participating entities.

On the other hand, and in order to improve the quality of the services provided to the citizens by National Government entities, a proposal on methodological guidelines was submitted for the definition of a policy on plain language for the citizen whose aim is to improve the way in which the public administration communicates with the citizens and which is expected to be adjusted pursuant to the results of focus groups and pilot programs.

Moreover, this commitment intends to implement the Integrated Service Center strategy which seeks to promote that the citizens who reside in the areas prioritized for that purpose may have access to the Public Administration's information, products and services offered at the national, departmental and municipal levels in a single geographic location, which has the potential to positively impact the quality and response times,

besides promoting the generation of economies of scale and reducing the costs borne by the citizen, mainly those related to travel and waiting times.

Currently, and under the leadership of the National Program for Citizen Services of the National Planning Department, the structuring of the business model and regulatory framework of the Integrated Services Centers is under way. Likewise, the municipalities of Chaparral, Tolima and San Andrés, San Andrés Island, have been visited to identify the existing offering of procedures with both entities and citizens, as well as the formalities and services most demanded by the citizens.

2.1.6. MORE EFFICIENT ENTITIES

Commitment:

In order to provide better public services, citizen services and accountability, the National Government will implement actions to modernize civil service through the improvement of labor conditions and encouraging public servants' commitment, ethics and transparency. Furthermore, the Anti-Formalities Strategy will be continued.

One of the Good Governance principles under which the Government of President Juan Manuel Santos has implemented its public policies is administrative efficiency. Based on this emphasis, the National Government has worked towards improving the procedures both within the public administration entities as well as those involving citizen interactions.

For this purpose, the following activities were proposed within the Open Government Action Plan:

- Advisory on formalities rationalization
- Follow-up on formalities improvements involving several entities
- Rationalization and simplification of the public entities' task in preparing and submitting plans and reports
- Follow-up and monitoring compliance with the Anti-Formalities Policy
- Delivery of technological tools
- Strengthening and debugging the Single Procedure Information System (Sistema Único de Información de Trámites) - SUIT
- Civil service modernization

Advisory on formalities rationalization

In January 2012, the National Government issued Decree-Law 019 of 2012, promoting a strategy to consolidate Good Governance by expanding the spaces for citizen participation and State – Society dialogue and strengthening the good faith principle, through the elimination of unnecessary formalities, procedures and regulations for citizens and businesspeople; and implementing ICTs to reduce times and costs and avoid unneeded travel.

Since the submission of the Open Government Action Plan, the National Government continued to implement the Anti Formalities Policy and for that purpose, under the accompaniment of the Administrative Department for Civil Service (Departamento Administrativo para la Función Pública), an inventory of the formalities of national level entities by sector was drawn up, and the most important formalities for the citizens were identified in order to implement rationalization strategies aimed at contributing to improve service provision. Formalities in the health, financial, retail, tax, foreign affairs and transportation sectors are noteworthy.

Likewise, the same exercise was conducted at the territorial level, where a baseline inventory of formalities was established both for Mayors' as well as for Governors' offices.

The inventory of procedures also enabled suggesting methods to improve the formalities deemed as important. As an example, it's worth mentioning improvements carried out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the apostille formalitie, which can now be fully completed via electronic media, resulting in celerity and cost reductions. Likewise, the ordinary passport is now received within 24 hours after being requested or within 3 hours in the case of emergency passports.

At the territorial level, after having identified the baseline inventory for Mayors' and Governors' offices, the behavior of those formalites was analyzed and 193 formalities which may be standardized were identified.

In compliance with the provisions set forth in article 15 of Decree 19 of 2012, whereby documents issued by other public entities should not be required, the public administration entities at both the national and territorial levels have been instructed not to request the following documents from the citizens for their formalities:

- Certificate of Incorporation and Legal Representation (Certificado de Existencia y Representación Legal): The entities, through an agreement with Confecámaras, may access this certificate's information via a web page, upon being assigned a user name and password.
- Certificate of Delivery and Unencumbered Real Estate Property (Certificado de Tradición y Libertad de Bienes Inmuebles): The Superintendency of Notaries and Registry Office (Superintendencia de Notariado y Registro) has provided the entities with the ability to query this certificate; the interested entities must previously enter into an agreement with this Superintendency.
- Certificate of Delivery and Unencumbered Vessels (Certificado de Tradición y Libertad de Naves): The General Maritime Directorate (Dirección General Marítima) - DIMAR has provided the entities with the ability to query this certificate directly via DIMAR's web page.
- Certificate of Delivery and Unencumbered Aircrafts (Certificado de Tradición y Libertad de Aeronaves): The Civil Aviation Authority (Aeronáutica Civil) has provided the entities with the ability to query this certificate; the interested entities must previously enter into an agreement with this entity.

The commitments proposed by the entities for the improvement of their formalities have also been followed-up. In this regard, 223 advisory services were provided, as well as 5 training sessions, 12 meetings, 56 written consultations and 51 telephone consultations.

The follow-up on compliance with the formalities rationalization policy has resulted in the implementation of ongoing follow-up mechanisms by the entities themselves, and their inclusion of actions to improve user formalities in their strategic planning.

A cultural change within the entities has been required for the implementation of this strategy, which has implied the development of technological mechanisms to enable information exchange.

This strategy has resulted in the rationalization of 31 formalities to date.

Follow-up on formalities improvements involving several entities: Formalities Chain

This activity refers to the follow-up of National Government priority projects in which several entities are involved in a given formalities.

The formalities chain that have been followed-up during 2012 and 2013 are: Progress and expansion plan of the Single National Transit Registry (Registro Único Nacional de Tránsito) – RUNT, INVIMA virtual Sanitary Registry (Registro Sanitario INVIMA virtual), Single Registry Window (Ventanilla Única de Registro) – VUR, chain on the Certificate of Non-existence of Drug Trafficking Reports (Certificado de Carencia de Informes por Tráfico de Estupefacientes), military ID card, Comprehensive Online Environmental Procedures Window (Ventanilla Integral de Trámites Ambientales en Línea) – VITAL, Single Foreign Trade Window (Ventanilla Única de Comercio Exterior) - VUCE, progress in the chain for business incorporation, project design and progress in the liquidation and voluntary business closure, housing subsidies, partial withdrawal of severance entitlements from the National Savings Fund (Fondo Nacional del Ahorro), Single Territorial Form (Formulario Único Territorial) – FUT, and Single Copyright Window (Ventanilla Única de Derechos de Autor).

Rationalization and simplification of the public entities' task in preparing and submitting plans and reports

Seeking to simplify and rationalize the entities' tasks in preparing and submitting plans and reports and to improve the daily jobs for public servants, the Government lead an inter-institutional task aimed at building a model that would collect all the information prepared and submitted by the entities to different Government players, related to activity planning, progress reports and performance outcomes.

This process managed to identify the requirements set forth by different public entities, in compliance with current regulations and policies on institutional performance. Findings showed that much of the information reported by the entities was duplicated and featured common elements which could be collected in a single instrument. Additionally, the existence of innumerable plans was detected, among them indicative plans, action plans, administrative development plans, administrative efficiency and zero paper plans, formalities rationalization plans, e-Government plans, anti-corruption and citizen service plans, institutional training plans, welfare and incentives plans, annual vacancy plans, and annual purchase plans.

Decree 2482 was issued in December 2012, whereby “general guidelines are established for the integration of planning and management” as a coordination and reporting instrument for planning, following five administrative development policies and through the monitoring and evaluation of progresses in institutional and sectoral management. This

model managed to simplify and reduce the number of requirements among public entities by 80%.

Likewise, the Single Performance Progress Report Form (Formulario Único de Reporte de Avances de la Gestión) was created as the single, online tool to enable management progress reporting, as an input for the monitoring, evaluation and oversight of institutional and sectoral performance.

Regarding the accompaniment tasks for the implementation of the Form in 24 sectors, among others, the following events have been held: launching event of the Single Performance Progress Report Form attended by 282 public servants from national level Executive Branch entities, covering the 24 administrative sectors; ten (10) Training Workshops on handling the Form, attended by 239 public servants from 131 national level entities of the Executive Branch; one training session on the Service Model for eighteen (18) agents of the Citizen Contact Center, responsible for the first level of attention provided to the entities, and the official launching of the model's portal: www.modelointegrado.gov.co.

Follow-up and monitoring compliance with the provisions of the Anti-Formalities Policy

Pursuant to the follow-up conducted on the compliance with the provisions of the Anti-Formalities Policy, to date, 183 formalities with national level entities have been rationalized.

At the territorial level, follow-up and monitoring compliance with the provisions of the Anti-Formalities Policy started by drawing up the stock and standardizing the formalities.

Delivery of technological tools

The Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications has delivered technological tools to 1,101 Mayors' offices, enabling the rationalization of formalities and services via automation. As of this report, the ICT Ministry has modeled 9 formalities and services in the transactional software delivered to territorial entities, which have been unified with the support of the Administrative Department for Civil Service (Departamento Administrativo para la Función Pública) and may be carried out online by the citizens, in whole or in part, depending on the number of steps already rationalized by the territorial entity for each formalities and/or services.

Strengthening and debugging the Single System of Information Procedure (Sistema Único de Información de Trámites) - SUIIT

The Single System of Information Procedure – SUIIT serves as a supporting instrument for the implementation of the Formalities Rationalization Policy, whose purpose is to be single and valid information source on the formalities offered to the citizens by all State through the Colombian State Site.

During 2012 and 2013, more than 3,300 territorial formalities were reviewed, and the responsible entities were requested to make adjustments, updates and corrections.

Additionally, all national level procedures were reviewed and advisory services were provided to the entities within the formalities rationalization action plan.

A new version of the SUIT is currently under development, which will facilitate the recording of the information by the entities and consequently will result in better availability thereof for the citizens via the Colombian State Site. The new version of the application will be deployed in phases, and to date the Nation's formalites are being migrated.

Civil service modernization

Civil service in Colombia has a vast regulatory framework, since the 1991 Constitution, which establishes the institutional framework and provides the guidelines and regulations for the administrative and civil service career at the national and territorial levels. It is guided by the principles of merit, competency, transparency, arm's length and equal employment opportunity for public and open selection process for all career positions.

The country has been working on the definition of a civil service policy aimed at guaranteeing its efficiency and dynamics while concurrently improving the delivery of State services to the citizens, since, in spite of the country's effort to regulate it, obstacles remain which have led to a slow civil service system which is unappealing for competitive and top management profiles.

Acknowledging these drawbacks and seeking to strengthen public service in Colombia, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD is in the process of analyzing the current situation of the civil service.

This advisory is the starting point for the definition of policy guidelines, which will include strategic elements such as the implementation of a reform of the civil service system; guidelines for the development of a comprehensive and long term policy; elements for the consolidation of the merits-based system; implementation of a civil service integrity and management-oriented culture; human talent capacity-building tools; and the implementation of best practices along with the consolidation of new management tools, among others.

Additionally, the strategic planning guide for human talent development is being explained and disseminated to the national and territorial entities, involving, among other concepts, the creation of added value in human resources, in order to become a source of competitive and sustainable advantages capable of leading change processes and developing adjustment abilities (organizational flexibility, adaptability, agility and innovation). The guide has been shared to date with 16 of the 32 Governors' offices and mayors' offices at municipal seats of government, and five sector heads.

Likewise, as of 2010, the Public Service Information and Management System (Sistema de Información y Gestión del Empleo Público) - SIGEP, is available as a technological tool supporting the entities in their civil service human resource planning, development and management processes.

Regarding the progress of the SIGEP process, the Human Resources Subsystem has trained 161 national level public entities in the module on assets and revenues curriculum vitae module and 108 entities in the engagement and termination module over 2012 and 2013; likewise, during 2013 training has been provided to 5 entities of the judicial and legislative branches, 4 oversight and electoral organization bodies, 12 territorial entities including Governors' offices and Department capitals, and 20 territorial entities including municipalities classified under categories 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The major challenge is to get the trained public entities to use the System by entering the information in a timely and proper manner and guaranteeing the process' continuity, so as to enable the provision of the information needed for the formulation of institutional organization and human resource policies.

2.2. INCREASING PUBLIC INTEGRITY

This component is aimed at attaining the greatest integrity and transparency in the acts of civil servants in order to facilitate access to public information process in an orderly and precise manner, using plain language, thus enabling and encouraging citizen participation.

2.2.1. ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Law on Transparency and Access to National Public Information (Ley de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública Nacional) which promotes the fundamental right to receive answers to the requests for access to public information and the States duty to actively makes this information visible with the need for it to be requested, based on the principle of proactive information disclosure, will come into force shortly. The Government will arrange for the designation of the responsible parties and its proper implementation. In turn, civil society will contribute in the dissemination of this Law and in following-up its application within the public institutions.

The Law on Transparency and Access to National Public Information was approved by Congress and is currently under constitutional review by the Constitutional Court. Upon conclusion of the review, it will be signed by the President. For this reason, most of the activities are scheduled to start in late 2013 and 2014.

Among the activities of the Action Plan, the following are envisioned:

- Disclosure of the experiences of Mexico and Chile to add best practices in the promotion of the access to information right
- Creation of a preliminary document on the action lines to promote and bring into effect the implementation of the Law at the national and territorial levels
- Implementation of the Access to Information Law at the territorial level by strengthening the capacities of territorial officers and increasing the awareness and appropriation of the Law
- Strengthening of citizen capacities to demand information and dissemination of the tools provided by the Access to Information Law

The purpose of this Law is to regulate access to public information rights, the procedures for exercising and guaranteeing this right, and the exceptions to information publicity.

In searching for tools for the effective implementation of the Law on Transparency and Access to Information, the experiences of Mexico and Chile were studied and will be made public in September, 2013, with the participation of experts from both countries.

Likewise, a preliminary document on the action lines to promote and effectively implement the Law at the national and territorial levels is being drafted, under three perspectives: the principle on active transparency, the strengthening of public officers' abilities, and the inter-institutional coordination and promotion of an organizational and archival culture aimed at the effective compliance with the Law.

Furthermore, regarding this commitment, the Secretariat of Transparency of the Presidency of the Republic, the Attorney General's Office, the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications, Transparencia por Colombia and the Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa, have arranged working sessions to draw up an inventory of the existence initiatives in order to identify the main challenges for the implementation of the Law.

Inter-institutional coordination among all entities involved in the Law will be a major challenge, as well as the creation of distinctive methodologies for its effective implementation in each one of the municipalities. The true success of the Law's implementation will depend on the civil society's ongoing accompaniment.

2.2.2. IMPROVED GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Colombia has a follow-up system for the Government's goals, easily accessible for the citizens. Thanks to this follow-up, timely decisions may be made in order to improve the execution of Government programs and projects. The goal is to increase citizen usage of this information and to accompany the implementation of follow-up mechanisms in the territorial entities.

On the other hand, the country will prepared a unified accountability methodology for all entities of the National Government and the territorial governments, which will additionally strengthen citizen participation.

Colombia has a robust information system for evaluating and monitoring the goals set by the National Government, as well as for evaluating the performance and results of public policy implementation.

This National Public Performance and Results Evaluation System (Sistema Nacional de Evaluación de Gestión y Resultados de la Gestión Pública) – Sinergia, comprising three components –follow-up, evaluation and territory-, has enabled the Government to determine its priorities and identify the greatest challenges and make decisions.

Sinergia is not just available to the Government but to the general public as well, and it has been internationally recognized as a tool featuring the highest quality standards. Its applicability enables a comprehensive Government follow-up based on the design of a series of indicators covering all the goals stated in the National Development Plan.

Likewise, for the proper operation of any democracy, having an optimum accountability framework is essential for the rulers to inform the citizens about the results of the public policies which have been implemented. For this reason, the National Government has defined it as a fundamental principle of Good Governance for the construction and development of its policies, as well as to improve the public sector's transparency, strengthen the creation of information and controls on the performance and management of public entities, and encourage social oversight.

For the Open Government Action Plan, actions aimed at strengthening the use of the Sinergia Site were stated, as well as the need to accompany territorial entities in the implementation of follow-up mechanisms and actions aimed at promoting accountability:

- Strengthen the use of the SINERGIA Site
- Support the implementation of accountability mechanisms in territorial entities

- Promote accountability and citizen participation
- Provide advisory services to public entities on the accountability strategy

Strengthen the use of the SINERGIA Site

Leveraging this tool requires strengthening the use of the Sinergia site (sinergia.dnp.gov.co), starting by adjusting the contents of its components to the information needs of the different kinds of users. That is, the goal is to facilitate the browsing and understanding of the information available to the citizens and thus generate increased participation based on effective accountability. These activities are scheduled for the last quarter of 2013 and throughout 2014.

Parallel to the strengthening of Sinergia, the National Government is aware of the fact that an effective follow-up requires ongoing education and training of leaders who will turn into promoters of the best practices on this matter.

Thus, scenarios have been implemented to promote a results-based management culture, such as the Public Policy Monitoring and Evaluation Network (Red de Monitoreo y Evaluación de Política Pública), which acts primarily at the territorial level. In these scenarios, training in follow-up and evaluation events have been held during 2012, which have helped to showcase local experiences specifically on matters related to the follow-up of municipal development plans, where some municipalities have turned to those municipalities which have shared their experiences looking for help and cooperation for setting up similar systems in their territories.

Furthermore, other training opportunities have been provided, such as diploma studies on public policy follow-up and evaluation at the territorial level, and university courses over four consecutive years. These training mechanisms have been highly demanded among national and territorial level public entities and in educational institutions. In addition to foster increased awareness of the follow-up, evaluation and accountability mechanisms, Sinergia has helped to promote the training of officers to lead these topics within their respective entities.

On the other hand, 3 Sinergia courses have been carried out (Externado, UPTC, and UTP universities), and 5 more are expected to start this semester, 3 of which are already scheduled. The purpose of the Sinergia courses is to provide knowledge on follow-up and evaluation to higher education institutions.

Seeking to train citizens on follow-up and evaluation topics, three presentations have been broadcast over the Institutional TV Channel. The first program was about following up the National Development Plan, the second one about formulation and evaluation, and the third one on accountability.

Support the implementation of accountability mechanisms in territorial entities

Hard work has been carried out at the territorial level in the implementation of accountability mechanisms as a management tool for performance follow-up. Currently, 88 territorial entities are being accompanied in the design, implementation and use of follow-up mechanisms for their development plans.

One of the steps forward on this matter has been the publication of local development plans in order to improve not just the policy decision-making but also to understand the dynamics of the country's regional development and thus identify the territories which require greater boosts on a given sector.

Promote accountability and citizen participation

The National Government, as of the approval of Conpes document 3654 of 2010, structured an accountability policy at the national and territorial levels.

In accordance with the provisions of this policy document, a Single Accountability Handbook (Manual Único de Rendición de Cuentas) is being drafted to set clear and common rules for the self-development of accountability strategies within the public entities.

This handbook, shared with some civil society organizations to receive their feedback, establishes the single methodological guidelines for national and territorial entities and public servants to carry out specific actions aimed at becoming citizen participation, social oversight, transparency, and anti corruption instruments. The document is expected to be ready during the third quarter of 2013 and publicized at the national level in 70 municipalities and 20 social organizations.

Within the framework of the Citizen Service Fairs, the topic on accountability in the municipalities of Cúcuta, Apartadó, Pasto, San Andrés and Quibdó was publicly disseminated during 2012 as a mechanism aimed at promoting citizen participation on accountability matters.

Likewise, technical assistance on the accountability strategy was provided to territorial entity officers from eight (8) regions of the country, Nariño, Atlántico, Magdalena Medio, Santander, Boyacá, Meta, Valle de Aburrá and Cundinamarca.

Additionally, and in order to promote an accountability and transparency culture among public officers and the civil society, four pilot projects have been carried out in Soacha, Cartagena, Cúcuta and Montes de María.

Provide advisory services to public entities on the accountability strategy

With the technical assistance of the Administrative Department for Civil Service (Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública), a diagnosis was made of the information, dialogue and accountability incentives in 136 selected entities.

Based on the aforementioned diagnosis and the advisory services provided, to date, 80 of those 136 entities have drawn up accountability strategies.

Nevertheless, the challenge of this strategy is to ensure its sustainability and get an increasing number of territorial entities involved in the development of their own follow-up mechanisms in order to improve public management and facilitate an informed social oversight.

2.2.3. TRANSPARENCY AND ANTI CORRUPTION POLICY

The Secretariat of Transparency of the Presidency of the Republic is leading the development of the policy against corruption, which will focus on the effective application of the regulations, preventive actions, active citizen cooperation, and on the promotion of the legality culture. Likewise, it will determine the methodology and guidelines for the annual preparation of anti corruption and citizen service strategy by the national, departmental and municipal entities. This strategy will consider the corruption risk map of

each entity, specific measures to mitigate those risks, anti formalities strategies, and mechanisms aimed at improving citizen services.

The launching of the Anti-corruption Statute on July 12, 2011, a Comprehensive State Policy for Fighting Corruption was set in motion, which comprises specific policies for the Judicial Branch, oversight bodies and the Executive Branch, as well as for territorial entities.

Accordingly, the following activities were prioritized within the Action Plan:

- Drafting of a diagnostics document on anti-corruption policy
- Drafting and implementing the document entitled Fight Against Corruption of the National Council on Economic and Social Policy (Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social) - Conpes
- Implementation and follow-up of an Anti-corruption Plan methodology
- Preparing a legality culture strategy and promoting it through a national campaign

A diagnostics document was drafted for the design of the Anti-corruption Policy, which provided the conceptual framework for its subsequent design.

Based on this diagnosis and several international experiences, the Conpes document on the Fight against Corruption is currently being drafted and agreed, whose purpose is to create a transparency and risk mitigation policy for the State as a whole. The components included by the Conpes are: efficiency of social oversight on corruption and accountability; strengthening the quality of and the access to public information; improving public management tools; adopting integrity approaches for the State and the society; and reducing impunity on corrupt behavior.

On the other hand, within the framework of the National Development Plan and the Anti-corruption Statute, a methodology of the Anti-corruption Plan was prepared for all central level public entities to draw up their action maps with activities aimed at mitigating risks and citizen service strategies. The entities have already implemented the methodology and are currently following it up in order to evaluate its effectiveness.

The fight against corruption strategy is also aimed at increasing citizen awareness about their participation in the fight against corruption; thus, a legality culture strategy is under way, which will be promoted through a national campaign (mass media), focused on self-regulation codes, education and citizen competencies.

2.2.4. OBSERVATORY FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

The Colombian State will implement the observatory for the fight against corruption in coordination with the Attorney General's Office (Procuraduría General de la Nación). This instance will enable the analysis of State information on prevention and penalization matters, the improvement of the administration's performance and the analysis of complaints in order to adopt the necessary actions.

Within the Open Government Partnership Action Plan, the National Government defined 5 priority activities for the implementation of the Observatory, aimed at ensuring that it will become a useful reference for the identification of corruption phenomena and voicing warnings for the formulation of anti-corruption strategies in the country. Said activities are:

- Implementation and launching of the Anti-corruption Observatory
- Visualization of the National Moralization Commission's performance
- Creation of six new transparency and anti-corruption indicators
- Creation of a platform for monitoring the indicators of the Comprehensive Anti-corruption Policy

In view of the foregoing, in January, 2012, the Colombian State, along with the Attorney General's Office, started the implementation of the design project for the Anti-corruption Observatory as a tool for detecting risks and corrupt actions in public management (<http://www.anticorrupcion.gov.co/>). It was publicly launched in February, 2013.

This instance enables the analysis of State information on prevention and penalization matters, improves the administration's performance and the analysis of complaints, in order to provide national and territorial entities, civil society organizations, private sector, academia, international community and the citizens in general with greater and better elements for the decision-making process regarding the fight against corruption and the promotion of integrity.

Administrative tasks have been undertaken throughout 2013, aimed towards improving the contents of the Observatory's web platform, offer a friendlier appearance and create new indicators to enable the fulfillment of its goals.

During 2014, the goal is to create six new transparency and anti-corruption indicators aimed at increasing the amount and enhancing the quality of the portal's information so as enable the citizens and users of the page to study the phenomenon:

1. Indicator built upon the information received at the Unified Complaint Window (Ventanilla Unificada de Denuncias) or the information received by the Secretariat.
2. Sectoral transparency and best practices indicator.
3. Transparency indicators, provided by the Single Performance Progress Report Form (Formulario Único de Reporte de Avances de la Gestión) of the Integrated Planning and Performance Model (Modelo Integrado de Planeación y Gestión).
4. Access to public information indicators, provided by the Single Performance Progress Report Form (Formulario Único de Reporte de Avances de la Gestión) of the Integrated Planning and Performance Model (Modelo Integrado de Planeación y Gestión).
5. Performance indicator for the Regional Moralization Commissions.

The Observatory administrator is currently in the process of being hired, so as to include the aforementioned requirements along with a monitoring platform for the monitoring of the Comprehensive Anti-corruption Public Policy.

With this tool, the Colombia State will have a knowledge management system capable of producing information, dialogue and education on corruption.

2.2.5. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The country will work on consolidating national policies on citizen participation mechanisms aimed at creating actions directed towards strengthening the capacities of the officers, public authorities and citizens and towards the implementation of effective participation spaces. Likewise, the National Government and civil society will identify

follow-up indicators to enable the evaluation of citizen participation in Government actions, so as to build strategies and capacities to increase its effectiveness and activity.

Colombia has vast regulations on citizen participation, defined since the 1991 Political Constitution, which have driven different participation mechanisms in both the public and private sectors.

However, and in spite of the actions carried out on this topic, the country is building a model directed towards guaranteeing civil and democratic action and the formation of social networks and organizations focused on social wellbeing and civic culture.

The activities included in the Action Plan for this commitment are the following:

- Reformulation of the citizen participation policy
- Promotion of citizen oversight mechanisms
- Strengthening social oversight mechanisms
- Implementation of an information system for citizen participation

Reformulation of the Citizen Participation Policy

The Conpes document on Citizen Participation seeks to consolidate a National Policy on participation mechanisms, instances and channels.

The purpose sought in the drafting of this document is to engage the highest possible number of players in its design and determine the appropriate mechanisms for involving citizens in its implementation and follow-up.

During this period, the baseline document was reviewed for its formulation with delegates from the 32 institutional support networks of the citizen oversight boards at the department level (these include nearly 140 territorial officers from Governors' and Mayors' offices, Ombudsman offices, Attorney General's offices and Comptroller offices) in three "Training of Social Oversight Multipliers" events and 5 regional working groups with citizens within the framework of the Agreements for Prosperity (Acuerdos para la Prosperidad).

The Conpes document is expected to be ready in the last quarter of 2014.

Likewise, for the consolidation of the Citizen Participation Policy, documents are being drafted on guidelines for strengthening the National Planning Systems, tools for strengthening associative arrangements and fostering democratic culture by promoting respect, tolerance and participation. These documents are expected to be ready during the second quarter of 2014.

Promotion of citizen oversight mechanisms

The National Government is working on the promotion of mechanisms aimed at encouraging social oversight building upon the implementation of a social conflict observatory at the national level, training multipliers for the social oversight department networks, and strengthening leaders.

- Social Conflict and Social Organization Coexistence Observatory (Observatorio del Conflicto Social y la Convivencia en las Organizaciones Sociales)

The design and implementation process of the Social Conflict and Social Organization Coexistence Observatory was started in January, 2013, in order to support social organizations on internal conflict resolution processes and thus consolidate a tool that will enable the creation of information about the different kinds of conflicts affecting the coexistence within and among social organizations, and their coexistence with the State, so as contribute towards the strengthening of a culture of tolerance and reconciliation in Colombia.

Currently, a preliminary document on the characterization of conflict in social organizations is available, and the implementation of the training project on conflict resolution mechanisms and alternative means has been started, targeted to leaders of the country's 32 departments.

- Multiplier training

Three multiplier training meetings were held for over 270 trainees from 32 departments. A meeting was held in Santa Marta in October for 95 public servants from 9 departments; two regional meetings were held in November, in Bogotá for 85 attendants from 14 departments, and in Cali for 91 attendants from 9 departments.

Likewise, 49 municipal training events were held for citizens in 10 prioritized departments, which featured the participation of more than 2,400 citizens, oversight board members and social organization leaders.

- Leader strengthening

The creation of the School on Leadership and Citizen Participation (Escuela de Liderazgo y Participación Ciudadana) was started in January 2013, aimed at strengthening leaders on citizen participation, management and inclusion, targeted towards regional community leaders, oversight board members and social organizations. It features a differentiated and population-based approach, pursuant to the political guidelines of the Ministry of the Interior (purposes, methodology, epistemological principles and educational model). The School started its first training process in July 2013, with the first Diploma course entitled "Building actions for democracy" in the country's 32 departments and in Bogotá D.C.

Strengthening social oversight mechanisms

- Crystal Urn (Urna de Cristal)

Since the onset of the current National Government, one of the challenges has been to govern through the Crystal Urn, where the citizens may have direct dialogues with the Government and enjoy more transparent and participatory policies. The idea is to "embed transparency practices in all State spheres through effective accountability mechanisms" (National Development Plan, 2010).

The Crystal Urn is a multichannel tool designed to publicize the Government's management actions, involve the citizens in the proposed policies and initiatives and engage them in social oversight, via Internet, TV and telephone surveys.

A more robust technological platform was implemented to strengthen its technological development and encourage participation, to enable a better content management, an

enhanced segmentation of the public that signs up in the Urn, and a more accurate, simple and effective response management system.

This last version of the website has been complemented with the possibility of creating micro-sites for specific campaigns, offering the option for each State entity to upload and manage its own databases, and featuring more participation tools, such as surveys and forums.

Likewise, and to take advantage of social networks, a Google + profile was enabled in order to harness the possibilities for creating discussion groups.

Thanks to the new platform of the Crystal Urn, now it is possible to engage in massive mail campaigns, segmented by interest groups, a high impact exercise that enables the provision of accurate information to the users.

Within the framework aimed at strengthening this tool and taking the needs and expectations of the Colombian people into account, three kinds of campaigns were created to promote participation and provide a better understanding of the government projects:

- Queries: the citizen asks, the government answers;
- Educational campaigns: the government clarifies doubts and educates the citizens;
- Participation exercises: citizens influence public policies.

As a result of this strategy, during 2012 and 2013, 22 exercises and citizen participation campaigns were implemented on topics such as education, priority interest housing, women protection projects, social and victim protection and reparation projects, and anti-corruption policy, among others (<http://www.urnadecristal.gov.co/ejercicios-gobierno>).

Besides the foregoing and in order to continue promoting citizen participation and governmental transparency under the principles of social inclusion and innovation, the Crystal Urn has developed the following mobile applications:

- Mobile Urn (Urna Móvil) (USSD): This is an information query and interaction service for all kinds of mobile devices, where the citizens can access information and participate in the different contents of the Crystal Urn by dialing *159# from any cell phone in Colombia.
- Transforming Colombia (Transformando a Colombia) application: This is a web-based Government Accountability and Transparency application, created to publicly disclose the progresses achieved by the government of President Juan Manuel Santos and receive citizen comments, doubts and concerns on the government's performance. www.transformandoacolombia.gov.co
- Agreements for Prosperity (Acuerdos para la Prosperidad)

Another important citizen participation mechanism promoted by the current Government are the so called Agreements for Prosperity, whose main purpose is to achieve social cohesion based upon invigorating different sectors throughout the country's regions.

During these dialogue exercises the follow-up of each one of the commitments acquired by the Government is shared with the general public, thus providing a social diagnosis and accountability tool on the performance by regions and sectors.

Over the April 2012 – June 2013 period, 42 Agreements for Prosperity have been held.

Likewise, ongoing dialogues have been established with the communities through citizen participation bodies aimed at identifying the communities' needs and expectations within the framework of pre-identified social areas and at addressing these problems through national and territorial offerings, producing supplemental proposals to those of the policies championed by the different bodies and the nation. This strategy, designed, created and implemented this year, has held 10 citizen participation dialogues during 2013.

The consolidation of these exercises is of vital importance since they are a tool for leveraging regional development, from several sources, featuring the joint participation of the National Government, local governments, and communities.

Implementation of an information system for citizen participation

The National Government, represented by the Ministry of the Interior, is developing the Information System for Citizen Participation (Sistema de Información para la Participación Ciudadana) – SIDEPAR, which will enable the proper follow-up of all aspects related to citizen participation.

Colombia continues working on the acknowledgment of the right to participate as well as on encouraging joint collaboration with the citizens in building the public domain, recognizing it as a fundamental element in the national life.

2.3. IMPROVED PUBLIC INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

This component seeks to promote a more efficient use of public resources by the State, in order to increase the fiscal capacity for social investment for the benefit of the citizens.

2.3.1. EFFICIENT PROCUREMENT

In order to provide greater transparency and efficiency in public procurement, and in light of the recent creation of the Colombia's Public Procurement Agency (Agencia Colombia Compra Eficiente), the Government will engage on public policies, mechanisms and instruments for the organization and coordination of public procurement processes, for the establishment of reference prices and the subscription of framework price agreements, among others.

A proper public purchase and procurement system enables the State to offer the goods, works and services it should provide to ensure greater equity, prosperity and quality of life. Therefore, the National Government recognizes that public procurement is a strategic issue for the State's operation, and with the creation of Colombia's Public Procurement Agency it sets into motion a public procurement policy aimed at achieving optimum results in terms of value for money, promoting competition, risk management, accountability, publicity and transparency.

Colombia's Public Procurement Agency acts on several subject areas, among which the following are highlighted:

- Positioning public procurement as a strategic issue for State's operation.
- Setting training programs in motion for the participants in public procurement.
- Implementing Framework Price Agreements and a strategy for the development of the e-procurement system.
- Modernizing the legal structure of the Colombian public purchasing and procurement system and of the oversight systems.
- Providing technical assistance to territorial governments.
- Fostering and improving citizen participation in the system.

Important progress has been made during the past year and results are reported on several fronts. Decree 1510 dated July 17, 2012 – available at <http://www.colombiacompra.gov.co/es/decreto-1510-de-2013->, starts the modernization of the public purchasing and procurement legal system, with simplified, easily understandable regulations, which provides the flexibility and enables new tools for more effective, efficient and lower cost purchases. This decree is the result of discussions with multiple participants in the public procurement system, including civil society, via face to face and virtual meetings.

Furthermore, the process of subscribing Framework Price Agreements was started for fuel purchases for Bogotá and for the Mandatory Traffic Accident Insurance (Seguro Obligatorio de Accidentes de Tránsito) – SOAT at the national level, as well as the implementation of the electronic catalogue which will allow entities to make purchases through framework price agreements and from large retail outlets, and the procurement process of the *e-Procurement* technological platform. These processes are available for consultation at <http://www.colombiacompra.gov.co/es/procesos-de-contratacion>.

In line with the strategic vision on public procurement, other tools have been created to ensure “proper spending” by the entities. The country adopted the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code® (UNSPSC®) by means of Decree 1510 of 2013 to facilitate communications among the participants in public procurement and enable a quicker analysis of the information, as well as the standard Annual Purchase Plan (Plan Anual de Adquisiciones). The guides for the drafting and publication of the Annual Purchase Plan is available at <http://colombiacompra.gov.co/es/plan-anual-de-adquisiciones> and the guide for the use of codes, as well as a tool to facilitate classification, is available at <http://www.colombiacompra.gov.co/es/Clasificacion>.

In May, 2013, Colombia's Public Procurement Agency led the academic agenda of the III State Fair (Expoestatal III) which featured 1,200 attendants –including public officers, civil society members and suppliers- representing more than 500 national and territorial level entities. Working sessions focused on presenting the strategic vision on public procurement and on training the attendants in the use of the Annual Purchase Plan, the Products and Services Code, the Framework Price Agreements, and on the bill of the decree aimed at regulating the Colombian public purchase and procurement system (SCPC) which became Decree 1510 of 2013. The minutes are available at <http://www.colombiacompra.gov.co/es/memorias-expoestatal-2013>.

Lastly, Colombia's Public Procurement Agency took part in the development of the Open Contracting guide. This guide is intended to provide orientation to the Participants in Public

Purchasers who want to implement the principles of the Open Contracting Partnership in their procurement processes. The book is available at: <http://bit.ly/OpenContractingGuide>.

The main challenges for the implementation of the commitment on efficient purchases will be the adoption of the tools by the participants in public purchasing and the effective value generation of these tools in the Colombia's Public Procurement Agency System (Sistema Nacional de Compras y Contratación Pública Colombiano).

2.3.2. ECONOMIC TRANSPARENCY SITE

Colombia has the economic transparency site (www.ptc.gov.co), where the citizens have the information on budget execution and payments at their disposal. The purpose is to strengthen this mechanism, particularly through better education on the use of this information for all citizens. Likewise, it seeks to promote fiscal follow-up mechanisms at the territorial level.

The Economic Transparency Site is an online tool for the Colombian people to follow, step by step, the budget and payment execution of the Ministries, Administrative Departments, the Congress of the Republic, the Judicial Branch, Government Institutions, Autonomous Corporations and Oversight and Electoral Bodies.

The activities for this commitment include:

- Strengthening the Economic Transparency Site
- Implementing increased education for the use by the citizens of the information available at the Economic Transparency Site
- Publication of territorial financial information

In order to strengthen the Economic Transparency Site and foster citizen fiscal oversight of public resources, easily understandable queries for the everyday citizen were incorporated to provide information on how the country's financial resources are used, offering information on issues such as the way in which the resources are spent, cash management, where are they invested, and the progress in project execution.

Tests are currently under way to improve the Site's image and the query language in order to make them easier to understand for the citizen. This new image will be posted during the second semester of 2013.

Seeking to ensure the effectiveness of this tool and thus meet its intended purpose, citizen awareness works are concurrently under in order to encourage its use. A media strategy (online videos and TV ads) will be used to explain the way in which information may be obtained through the Site. A working plan with the State TV channel Señal Colombia is being prepared for the production of the TV ad for September 2013.

At the territorial level, the purpose is to implement an information system that will allow the Planning Secretaries of each Department to follow-up the fiscal performance of their jurisdictions' municipalities. A pilot test was performed with the Administrative Department on Planning of the Governor's Office of Antioquia on the fiscal performance follow-up of its municipalities, which resulted in some adjustments to the system, to enable its use by all the departments.

Likewise, and in order to improve the accountability of the territorial entities and enable citizen queries about the financial situation of their territorial entities, the Single Territorial Form (Formulario Único Territorial) – FUT Portal will be implemented and will start operating in November, 2013. This initiative includes an awareness component aimed at encouraging citizen participation.

Undoubtedly, these portals will foster the democratization of the information, will encourage the transparency culture in the State and will reduce corruption risks.

2.3.3. ONLINE CONTROL

The e-Government Program (nowadays the e-Government Directorate of the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications), along with the oversight bodies (Attorney General's Office, Comptroller General's Office and the General Auditing Office) and the Prosecutor General's Office, are currently unifying the system for citizen reporting and follow-up of corruption complaints.

Based on the inter-institutional coordination between the Executive Branch, the oversight bodies and the Prosecutor General's Office, the importance of developing tools to fight corruption was brought to the forefront.

Within this framework, a pilot complaint test is being developed via the Single Window (Ventanilla Única), a technological solution that will allow citizens to record in a web portal, anonymously or fully identifying themselves, any complaint against public administration officers and private parties who manage public funds or provide public services, thus providing a single contact point to file, follow-up and learn the answers to the complaints filed before different entities (Comptroller General's Office [Contraloría General de la República] – CGR, Attorney General's Office [Procuraduría General de la Nación] – PGN, General Auditing Office [Auditoría General de la República] – AGR, and Prosecutor General's Office [Fiscalía General de la Nación] – FGN), making the process more efficient for the citizen by integrating the different information systems of the participating entities.

The implementation of the Single Complaint Window (Ventanilla Única de Denuncias), besides promoting ethics on public matters and the legality culture, is engaging the citizens as fundamental players in the fight against corruption.

Progress in this commitment involved the development of the first pilot (Beta version) of the Single Complaint Window, which will be publicized via citizen awareness campaigns.

2.3.4. ROYALTIES

To ensure transparency in the management and investment of the resources of the General Royalty System (Sistema General de Regalías – SGR), several tools have been provided for following up the execution of these funds; the follow-up results are posted and disclosed on the SGR site, available at www.sgr.gov.co, which has been implemented as a proprietary domain where the citizens may exercise an effective oversight on the administration of the resources and the investments in the departments, cities and municipalities.

Seeking to achieve the proposed goal within this commitment and pursuant to the provisions set forth in the current royalty regulations, the Royalty Monitoring, Follow-up,

Control and Evaluation System (Sistema de Monitoreo, Seguimiento, Control y Evaluación de Regalías) – SMSCE is under implementation, as well as the Integrated Information Platform (Plataforma Integrada de Información) of the SGR.

Thus, the following activities were included in the Open Government Action Plan:

- Regulation of the Royalty Monitoring, Follow-up, Control and Evaluation System of the General Royalty System – SGR.
- Issuance of guidelines to raise awareness, disclose, report information and execute the resources of the General Royalty System.
- Quarterly collection, consolidation and analysis of the information produced by the System's players and selection of sample projects for follow-up.
- Design and implementation of the Integrated Information Platform.
- Performance of evaluations on the impact, results, management and operation of the investments.
- Publication of the information obtained from the processes of the Royalty Monitoring, Follow-up, Control and Evaluation System – SMSCE (how resources are managed and executed) in the website sgr.dnp.gov.co.
- Participation of social actors.
- Diagnosis and consolidation of the information from social actors (citizen oversight board members, auditors, citizen organizations) through the web page of the General Royalty System.
- Citizen training on the use of the platform and other follow-up means via citizen audits, among others.

The National Government issued Decree 414 of 2012 regulating the SMSCE. Acting pursuant to the legal and regulatory provision, the National Planning Department – DNP, in its capacity as administrator of the SGR's SMSCE, and within the framework of its implementation, has undertaken actions such as the issuance of guidelines to raise awareness, disclose and report the information demanded by the SMSCE, as well as guidelines for the proper execution of SGR resources, particularly targeted to the beneficiary entities and those in charge of executing said resources. Additional information on the regulations and guidelines issued on the matter is available at <https://www.sgr.gov.co/Normativa.aspx>.

In conducting the activities of the SMSCE, the information produced and reported by the System's players is collected, consolidated and analyzed on a quarterly basis; for these purposes, applications were designed and developed for reporting bank account project execution information.

Based on the analysis of the information reported by the players of the SGR, the monitoring component selects investment projects by using an indicator and alert system, activating the System's Follow-up component for the verification of the physical onsite and financial execution thereof, in terms of efficacy, efficiency and quality in the management of the goods or services.

Likewise, the System uses the selected investment projects to perform evaluations on the investments' impact, management, results and operation. For this purpose, the hiring process was started for the following evaluations:

- Design of the SGR System's Evaluation Processes, whose purpose is to "evaluate the processes of the SGR emphasizing on the project cycles, so as to identify the progress, achievements and aspects requiring improvement in the design, management and implementation of the System and its capacity for fulfilling the goals."
- Design of the Baseline Evaluation of the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Fund, whose purpose is to "draw up and consolidate baseline indicators on science, technology and innovation for the subsequent impact evaluation of the investments funded pursuant to the purposes of the STI Fund of the SGR."
- Design of the Baseline Evaluation of the Regional Development and Compensation Fund, whose purpose is to "draw up the baseline of the Regional Development and Compensation Funds for the future identification and evaluation of the impacts generated by the funded investments, in terms of regional development and convergence, competitiveness, poverty reduction and good governance."

In regards to social oversight in the SGR and the participation of social actors, a characterization survey was conducted through the site, whereby social actors and organizations interested in performing social oversight of the SGR's resources were identified. In total, 66 individual actors and 20 social organizations participated in the survey.

Moreover, 18 Visible Audit forums have been held for 13 SGR projects, with the participation of more than 960 attendants, where the website queries were disseminated, reaching communities in the departments of Atlántico, Bolívar, Boyacá, Casanare, La Guajira, Meta and Sucre.

In furtherance of the foregoing, a dedicated channel was incorporated into the SGR's domain for accessing the applications and SMSCE reports and information postings, available at <https://www.sgr.gov.co/SMSCE/MonitoreoSGR.aspx>

On the other hand, an Integrated Information Platform is under design and implementation for the SGR. This platform will feature all the information related to royalty resources, starting with their exploitation, collection, remittance, transfer, approval, execution and follow-up by the Bodies and actors of the SGR. This development is undertaken in two phases.

In phase I, the information available in the information systems of DNP's SGR, the Ministry of Mines and Energy and the Finance Ministry will be displayed. The development of this phase is currently at 90% and it will be launched to the public during the last week of August, 2013.

In phase II, all information systems and databases of the relevant entities of the central and territorial level will be integrated with the information coming from the citizens. This phase will be supported and funded with a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank –IADB-, which has been approved by the Congress of the Republic.

EITI - Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

The country is conducting all the procedures to submit its candidacy before the Secretariat of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative – EITI, whose purpose is the publication of the traceability of the extractive sector (oil, gas and minerals) and the promotion of transparency and accountability.

Best international practices have enabled Colombia to build a more efficient, effective and transparent government which fosters accountability before its citizens. Additionally, and under the umbrella of the 2010-2014 National Development Plan, the National Government has identified the extractive sector as one of the main locomotives for economic development. Within this framework, Colombia states its intention to adhere to the EITI initiative in order ensure transparency in the extractive industry.

The following proposed activities are included in this initiative:

- Conducting a study with the World Bank whose purpose is to analyze the costs and benefits for the country of adhering to the EITI initiative.
- Defining the sources to fund the preparation of the candidacy.
- Announcing Colombia's interest at the International EITI Convention in Sidney.
- Preparing and undertaking the necessary steps for the submission of the candidacy.
- Submitting the candidacy documentation to the EITI Secretariat in Oslo.

With the cooperation of the World Bank, a study was conducted in 2012 for the analysis of the costs and benefits of the country's adherence to the EITI initiative, and the results state Colombia's progress and commitment in the mining sector, in addition to the desire of attaining increased degrees of transparency and accountability.

Pursuant to the foregoing and to the country's commitment to Open Government Partnership, in May 2013, in Sidney, Colombia officially announced its interest on implementing the EITI and consequently started all the candidacy preparation activities under the leadership of the Ministry of Mines and Energy, which will be published in a virtual site currently under construction.

As previously stated, the World Bank is a strategic ally for the development of the EITI in Colombia; in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank, they will fund the project's initial stage. Subsequently, when the work schedule for 2013 is defined, other specialized funding sources will be identified with civil society and the private sector so as to avoid fund dispersion.

The main engine for driving this strategy will be the definition of the Action Plan and the formation of the Tripartite Committee (Government, civil society and private sector) in charge of providing the guidelines for the design and implementation of this strategy.

Additionally, civil society contacts were started with four organizations that are driving the EITI in Colombia since 2009 (Foro Nacional por Colombia, Transparencia por Colombia, Universidad Externado de Colombia and Fundación Avina), which committed to move forward in the formation of a group to drive the selection process of civil society delegates pursuant to EITI requirements and to define the initial activity proposal with the civil society in 2013.

The major challenge for the implementation of this commitment is to coordinate all the actors with a sufficiently representative Tripartite Committee that will enable reaching consensus on decision-making. Likewise, it's critical for the process to ensure the proper disclosure and a sound documentary archive certifying compliance with all the requirements set forth by the EITI.

The implementation of the EITI is yet another step for the construction of Good Governance since, to the extent that more tools are at the country's disposal for building transparency and trust, improvements will be seen in the quality of its public policies and the country's credibility among foreign investors, and it will foster a better quality of life for its citizens.

2.3.5. FOLLOW-UP PLAN FOR UTILITIES PROJECTS

One of the highest corruption indexes worldwide is found in the investments on public utility infrastructure, particularly in basic sanitation. In order to promote transparency, the National Government is implementing efficiency and accountability criteria within water and sewage companies, and a follow-up system for investment execution at the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory.

The following activities were set forth to achieve this purpose:

- Implementation of a project follow-up module within the Information Management System of the Vice Ministry of Water and Basic Sanitation (Sistema de Gestión de Información del Viceministerio de Agua y Saneamiento Básico) SIGEVAS
- Development and implementation of the Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation Investment System (Sistema de Inversiones en Agua Potable y Saneamiento Básico) – SINAS
- Development of an investment project follow-up module within the application for rate verification of the Superintendence of Public Utilities (Superintendencia de Servicios Públicos)

One of the major corruption hotspots, not just in Colombia but worldwide, is the drinking water and basic sanitation sector. In order to promote transparency and undertake preventive measures, the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory has developed the SIGEVAS Information System where detailed information is stored regarding the evaluation process of basic sanitation projects submitted by the regions. The implementation of a project follow-up module is currently in the procurement process.

Furthermore, within the operational structure of the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory, the Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation Investment System – SINAS was created, whose purpose is to support the structuring of the annual sectoral investment budget for drinking water and basic sanitation projects and monitor its execution (Article 57, Law 1537 of 2012). The conceptual design of the SINAS is currently in the procurement process.

On the other hand, the Superintendence of Public Utilities will develop a module in 2014 within the rate verification application to confirm the application of the charges made on account of the rate for service improvement investments and the execution of the projects submitted by the service provider.

These initiatives are a major step towards creating mechanisms to minimize corruption risks and ensure the sector's transparency and efficiency.

2.3.6. GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships will be promoted among the National Government, the private sector and civil society to determine the self-regulation guidelines and good governance codes in critical sectors such as infrastructure and domestic public utilities.

The fight against corruption and the strengthening of transparency should be the responsibility of all the players; hence, the role of both the private sector and the citizens is essential for building democracy.

Accordingly, actions were proposed aimed at establishing:

- Good governance codes
- Strategic partnerships
- Transparency in the private sector

The purpose is to design, raise awareness and jointly adopt good governance codes among the National Government, the private sector and the citizens to promote transparency as a guiding principle for project implementation.

Thus, through pilot projects particularly among national entities of the transportation sector, civil society and the private sector, a General Good Governance Code will be implemented as a best practices tool for contract development and execution over the last quarter of 2013. Likewise, through strategic partnerships, transparency components will be included in the Technical Rules for Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation (Reglamento Técnico de Agua Potable y Saneamiento Básico) – RAS.

Moreover, an Anti-corruption Statute regulation is being prepared, including a chapter on business ethics and legal entity responsibility, whose purposes, among others, are to promote actions for the observance of high ethical conduct standards and fighting against corruption among the different stakeholders. Likewise, controls and warnings will be developed on integrity methods with the country's largest exporters, by disseminating the Anti-bribery Convention of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD, for which purpose several trade union sectors have been held to define a methodology.

Hence, the purpose is to incorporate ethical values within the management frameworks, since, in spite of the fact that governmental and private sector organizations have different political and cultural contexts in their administrations, they generally face the same ethical challenges which demand a general framework to ensure a response consistent with the highest standards of ethical conduct.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The Open Government Partnership has been a fundamental driver in Colombia for the construction of dialogue spaces among the National Government, civil society and the private sector in order to promote actions aimed at fostering transparency, citizen participation, accountability and the use of information technologies.

The leadership of the National Government, from the Presidency of the Republic, has encouraged inter-institutional coordination for the construction of the Action Plan, its activities and follow-up, as well as for its joint development with other sectors of society.

Therefore, arrangements were made for each one of the commitments to be led by a Government entity with the operational and budgetary capabilities needed to fulfill the commitment.

Nevertheless, in order to achieve a proper development and fulfillment of these commitments, the active participation of civil society and the private sector through these harmonization spaces is required, since joining efforts will be the only way to successfully fulfill the initiatives set forth in the Action Plan.

Much progress has been made to date in the construction of dialogue spaces between the Government and other social actors, as well as in advancing most of the initiatives; however, we face several challenges to continue moving forward in executing the acquired commitments.

For this purpose, we need to strengthen citizen capabilities, since the Government's implementation of Open Government principles necessarily requires sufficient participation and feedback from an informed, trained and jointly responsible citizenship.

Civil society and private sector support have been fundamental for the Plan's development and to watch over the fulfillment of the proposed activities. To this extent, the National Government expects the concretion of specific proposals brought forth by these actors in support of commitments the country has assumed.

Yet another major challenge is the implementation of the Action Plan in the territory, since, in spite of the fact that the Government is working on strengthening territorial capacities, further actions are still required to underpin local administrative capabilities. For this purpose, the implementation of territorial pilots is being considered for some of the commitments part of the Action Plan, to encourage and promote the transparency, openness and access to information culture, as well as the use of information and communication technologies at the territorial level.

While the implementation of the Action Plan in Colombia has favored a cultural change, where both government and citizens have had to change their dynamics for jointly building public policies, this change is still an ever present challenge among all sectors.

Based on all of the foregoing, Colombia reiterates its commitment to openness and to being a party to the Open Government Partnership. The country has a great opportunity for setting good governance, transparency and accountability standards, and therefore its desire is to implement the best practices.