# Open Government Partnership

# What's in the New OGP National Action Plans?

An Overview of Commitments from 35 OGP Countries

# Introduction

The majority of countries participating in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) have submitted new National Action Plans since the London Summit in October 2013. For a voluntary initiative such as OGP, this is an important indication of support from governments and civil society around the world. Thirty-one of these are countries developing or implementing their second OGP action plan and three countries are implementing their first plan. Together these 35 new plans contain over 500 individual reform commitments.[1] This briefing paper provides an initial analysis of the noteworthy new commitments that are relevant to OGP values and that highlight major emerging trends. It also presents examples of solid civil society engagement in the public consultation process.

**The objectives of this briefing paper are:**
- To provide a summary of the policy commitments countries are undertaking.
- To identify some of the major emerging trends and examples of commitments that are relevant to OGP values.
- To highlight commitments that can inspire other countries to tackle new challenges.
- To encourage OGP's multilateral and civil society partners to play a role in the implementation of these new commitments.

This report is not intended to present a comprehensive picture of all commitments that countries are making. Further, it does not replace or supplant the Independent Reporting Mechanism process that will review all of these country commitments in due course.

We hope these examples will serve as an inspiration to all those using the OGP platform as we collectively work to make open government reforms that make a real difference to peoples' lives.

**OGP commitments have been grouped into seven clusters, according to the intended results of the reforms:**

**1. Public Participation** – Engaging Citizens in Policymaking.
**2. Government Integrity** – Fighting Corruption and Strengthening Democratic Institutions.
**3. Freedom of Information** – Guaranteeing Public Access to Government Information.
**4. Fiscal Transparency** – Helping Citizens Follow the Money.
**5. Public Service Delivery** – Making Services Work for the People.
**6. Extractive Resources Transparency** – Ensuring Extractive Revenues Are Used for Public Benefit.
**7. Open Data** – Digitizing and Opening Up Government Data for Access to Information and Transparency.

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1 - To give commitments adequate consideration for inclusion in this report, the Support Unit reviewed National Action Plans submitted before October 1, 2014.

# Overview of OGP

In the three years since the launch of OGP, participation has grown from eight to over 60 countries, with hundreds of civil society organizations (CSOs) participating in the OGP process at the country-level. OGP countries represent one third of the world's population and have made more than 2,000 open government reform commitments since joining. Commitments vary from country to country, as government and civil society reformers decide what is most relevant in their national contexts. This has led to a diversity of issues tackled and approaches taken, distinguishing OGP as a unique international platform for reform.

As a voluntary initiative, one of OGP's challenges is to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of the commitments included in action plans. It is too early to say definitively that the new action plans are stronger than the first round; however signs suggest improvements are taking place both in the ambition of the commitments and in the process to design them.

OGP's overriding objective is to make sure that real change is happening on the ground in a majority of OGP countries and that this change is benefitting citizens. This will require an increased focus on supporting and improving implementation in existing OGP countries. To that end, this briefing paper focuses on some of the most inspiring new commitments that countries are making.
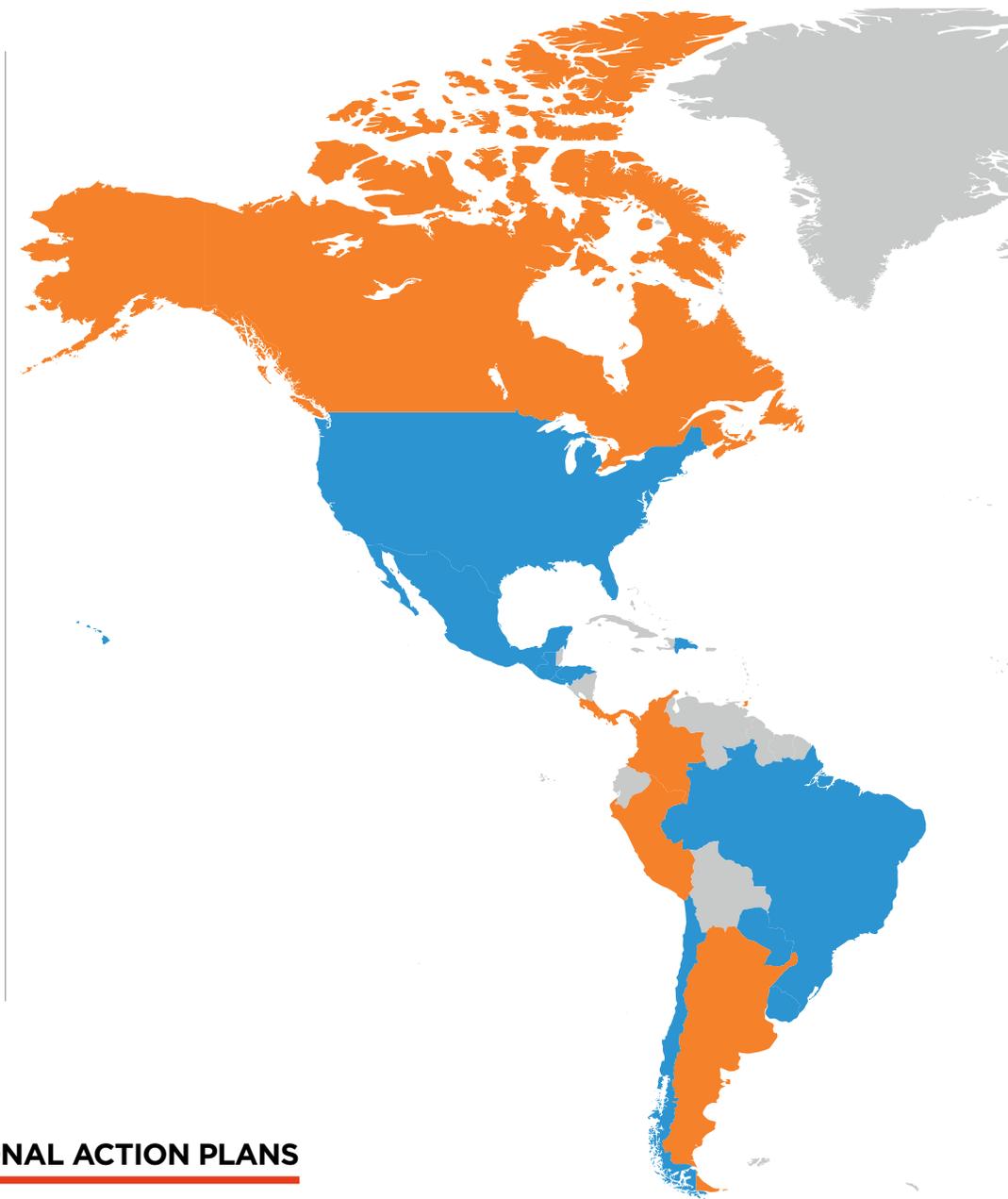
## COUNTRIES WITH NEW NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

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|---|---|---|---|
| Albania | Estonia | Mexico | South Korea |
| Armenia | Georgia | Moldova | Spain |
| Brazil | Greece | Mongolia | Sweden |
| Bulgaria | Guatemala | Norway | Tanzania |
| Chile | Honduras | Paraguay | Tunisia |
| Croatia | Indonesia | Philippines | United Kingdom |
| Denmark | Ireland | Romania | United States |
| Dominican Rep | Lithuania | Sierra Leone | Uruguay |
| El Salvador | Macedonia | South Africa | |
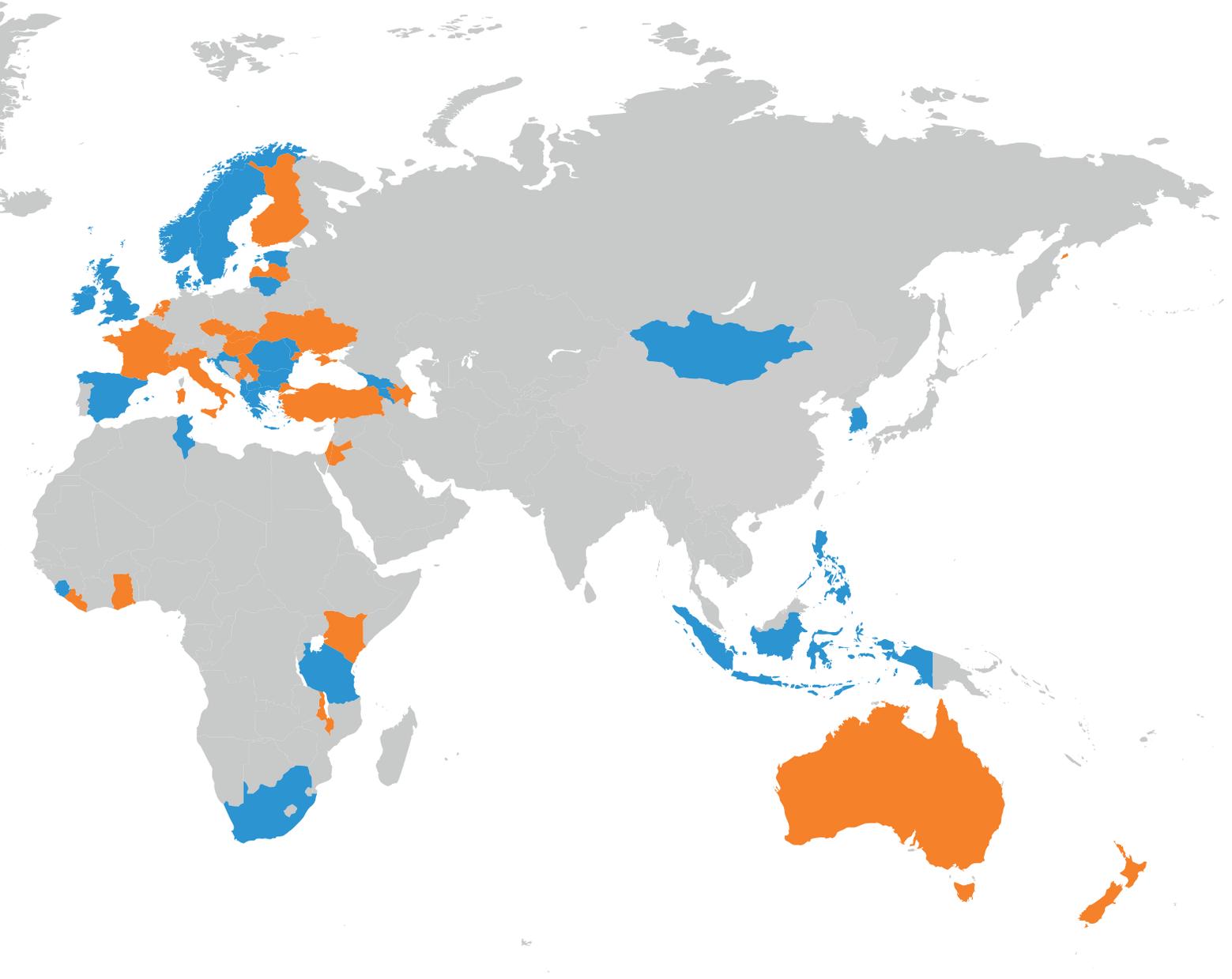
## COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN OGP

- New national action plans
- Developing new national action plans

# Inspirational Public Consultation Process

In preparing their National Action Plans, countries are required to conduct a public consultation process to determine commitments jointly with civil society. Several countries took the extra step to engage broader stakeholders and undertake more robust consultations. As a result, new action plans might have commitments that are supported more broadly, are potentially more ambitious, and have a wider set of actors to rely on for successful implementation. This section highlights some examples of good consultation processes observed by members of civil society during the development of the National Action Plans. Examples include establishing permanent dialogue mechanisms with civil society, thematic workshops for targeted results, and related processes for collaboration.

**Georgia – Broad and Extensive Consultations**
Public consultations for Georgia's second National Action Plan were held in 15 cities of Georgia, where up to 700 people participated in 19 meetings. The consultations were organized and conducted by Open Government Georgia, the national OGP forum whose members include representatives of government agencies, and CSOs. Target groups for public consultations included representatives of local government, civil society, political parties, librarians, students, teachers, and professors from five universities. Local media contributed as well, ensuring coverage of the process and disseminating the information on citizen engagement. In addition to the public consultations, an online consultation module was created under the Open Government Georgia page at the website of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia (the OGP coordinator in Georgia). Several commitments in the National Action Plan have their origin in the public consultations, including ensuring transparent recruitment procedures in the civil service, adding new services to the Public Service Hall, developing community centers, creating a public officials' declarations monitoring system, and a portal for e-petitions.

**Ghana – Conducting On-the-Ground Outreach**
With the General Election approaching, the Ghanaian consultation process occurred in a two-month period starting in mid-October 2013 around the country. Members of a steering committee – composed of government and civil society representatives working on governance and transparency issues as well as by the Christian and Muslim Councils of Ghana – were encouraged to go into the field to spread the OGP message and gather input on the proposed commitments. Each consultation event attracted 40 to 60 participants from political parties, the public service, CSOs and the media, as well as traditional and religious leaders. In many instances, journalists were present in large numbers. While the steering committee was generally satisfied with the inputs received, they considered the number of participants insufficient. Limited financial resources and lack of time were cited as major concerns.

**Honduras – Raising Awareness and Broad Dissemination**
Honduras developed their second National Action Plan in the context of the presidential transition beginning January 2014. The March 2014 announcement of the creation of the Honduran Interagency Committee on the Open Government Partnership, a tripartite collective entity that drove and engineered the consultation process, marked the beginning of the formal process. During the following three months, the Interagency Committee worked on different aspects related to the construction of the National Action Plan: raising awareness, consultation, and dissemination. The Interagency Committee used several strategies including social media, the launch of an official national OGP website, the organization of events targeting different audiences (e.g. the media, public officials), and awareness-raising activities in public parks in several cities throughout the country. As a result, 1,072 stakeholders from CSOs, the private sector, local governments, public institutions, and citizens provided input in to the development of the final National Action Plan.

**Mexico – Building Commitments through Thematic Working Groups**
In an effort to formulate a National Action Plan that addressed significant issues in Mexico, the federal public administration, civil society, and the Federal Access to Information Institute created nine Thematic Working Groups. Each of the groups comprised of a leading CSO, experts, and relevant government actors in each thematic sector. Each group prepared a diagnostic analysis, identified priority issues, and selected two commitments to be implemented by the federal government. As a result of this approach, the commitments were suitably targeted and gained the support of stakeholders. The development of the National Action Plan in Mexico was a model for other countries, including Trinidad and Tobago.

**Sierra Leone – Consulting Widely In and Outside the Country**
The Government of Sierra Leone embarked on a nationwide sensitization and consultation process that engaged citizens, public officials, CSOs, and other partners to put together a National Action Plan that was reflective of a transparent, accountable and responsive open government process. The consultation process also included Sierra Leoneans living in Guinea, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United States of America.

**United Kingdom – Developing A More Robust Action Plan in Partnership with Civil Society**

The government partnered with the OGP United Kingdom (UK) Civil Society Network to develop the UK's National Action Plan and commitments. The Network was formed in response to requests to do more to engage CSOs in the development of the action plan. With the Network, the UK improved its consultation process from that of the first National Action Plan. The UK built on the commitments in the draft plan and advanced a significant number of the requests by civil society. This process has been successful in strengthening cross-departmental coordination across a range of issues and in helping to pull together existing government plans. While members of the Network and the government did not agree on everything, the partnership delivered an important set of commitments that will bring significant benefits to citizens in the UK and beyond. Each commitment names CSOs that support it as a positive step towards open government and that have been or will be involved in its development and delivery.

# 7 Clusters of Commitments

In the thirty-four National Action Plans completed since the London Summit, there are over 500 open government reform commitments. This section highlights some of the most noteworthy examples that could be replicated and adapted by other OGP countries.

**Seven Clusters of Noteworthy Commitments:**

**1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
Engaging Citizens in Policymaking.

**2 GOVERNMENT INTEGRITY**
Fighting Corruption and Strengthening Democratic Institutions.

**3 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**
Guaranteeing Public Access to Government Information.

**4 FISCAL TRANSPARENCY**
Helping Citizens Follow the Money.

**5 PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY**
Making Services Work for the People.

**6 EXTRACTIVE RESOURCES TRANSPARENCY**
Ensuring Extractive Revenues Are Used for Public Benefit.

**7 OPEN DATA**
Digitizing and Opening Up Government Data for Access to Information and Transparency.

These clusters are not intended to be mutually exclusive; rather, they provide us with a way of grouping new commitments according to the results they are intended to deliver.

# 1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
## Engaging Citizens in Policymaking

OGP governments and civil society participants share the belief that governments perform better when they invite and facilitate public input and oversight. New forms of public participation are emerging as citizens seek opportunities to participate actively in shaping the policies that affect their lives. Similarly, governments are exploring new ways to inform and include citizens and CSOs in policymaking. OGP countries are fostering collaborative arrangements with civil society in preparation, enactment, implementation, and review of government development programs. These commitments highlight interesting mechanisms for public engagement that put into action the vision of active citizenship.

**Examples of Noteworthy Public Participation Commitments:**

**Macedonia – Establishing Advisory Body for Public Participation**
As outlined in the Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society (2012-2017), the Government of Macedonia designed a plan to enable greater inclusion and influence of citizens in policymaking. Moving a step forward, the Government of Macedonia is committed to establishing an advisory body composed of representatives of the Government, administrative bodies, and CSOs. The advisory body will seek to improve cooperation and dialogue as well as to encourage the development of civil society in the country.

**Moldova – Assuming Joint Responsibility of Completion of Commitments**
Moldova is taking steps to maintain the active engagement of civil society in its Open Government Agenda, including government and civil society assuming joint responsibility

for the delivery of specific commitments. The government will also be working on the development and promotion of new public consultation principles together with civil society. A methodological guidebook, in line with OECD principles for citizen engagement in policy making, will be developed, and capacity building, aimed at public servants from all Ministries, will be conducted. In addition, Moldova is encouraging participatory decision making by expanding public participation in the drafting of legal documents using the online platform www.particip.gov.md.

**Philippines – Engaging Citizens in Public Audits**
The Commission on Audit has committed to create a unit to institutionalize the engagement of CSOs in conducting participatory audits of government projects. The initiative brings together citizens and government to look into projects that have an impact on a large number of beneficiaries. Individual citizens are able to conduct audits and community surveys or to provide audit-related feedback. For 2014, the Commission will conduct four pilot audits of infrastructure projects jointly with partner CSOs.

**Uruguay – Bottom-up Approach to Urban Development**
As part of an Urban Development Program, Uruguay will develop an Arts Neighborhood program that seeks to rehabilitate degraded areas with historical value in a municipality in Montevideo. The program will be implemented through a bottom-up participatory approach. A collective group involving public, cultural, social, and business partners will develop the Master Plan for the neighborhood. The lessons learned will be collated as a case study and scaled-up to the national level.

**More New Public Participation Commitments:**

**Chile** is strengthening mechanisms for the implementation of the Law on Public Participation (Law 20,500) by delivering digital tools to improve citizen participation mechanisms, working to increase public understanding of the law, and centralizing all exchanges through a single portal.

**Denmark** is holding an Open Government Camp for civil society, private companies, and public agencies to collaborate on finding innovative solutions to public service challenges.

**Estonia** is improving opportunities for public participation in the legislative process, in particular in the early stages of drafting legislation.

**Lithuania** is committed to drafting a legal regulation on public consultations to promote local communities' active involvement in decision making.

**Paraguay** is implementing social dialogue and citizen participation through consultation and monitoring of public policies through the establishment of the Board of Culture, Board of Water and Sanitation, and Board of Nutrition.

# 2 GOVERNMENT INTEGRITY
## Fighting Corruption and Strengthening Democratic Institutions

Integrity is at the core of effective governance. OGP countries are fighting corruption by trying to ensure public resources are used for public goods and service delivery, and not lost to embezzlement, bribery or tax evasion. Policies are being enacted on whistleblower protection, ombudsman's offices, and auditing. Many aim to improve procurement transparency and personnel processes. Some countries are also extending their commitments into financial systems, parliamentary proceedings, and campaign financing. These measures help provide the public with the levers to hold their government accountable.

**Examples of Noteworthy Government Integrity Commitments:**

**Armenia – Ensuring Transparency of Asset and Income Declarations of Officials**
In the Republic of Armenia, income and asset disclosures are becoming an important tool for the government to fight corruption. Financial declarations on property and income of high-ranking officials are subject to publicity, as outlined by Government Decision No. 1835-N of 2011. However, the decision does not provide a fully transparent list of all operations in the property of officials and their associates, due to a high price threshold. The Ethics Commission commits to reducing these restrictions and expanding the list of data available to the public, hence increasing transparency to deter against unethical behavior.

**Chile – Implementation and Monitoring of the Lobby Law**
After over a decade of campaigning by civil society and with near-unanimous support from both houses of parliament, Chile passed legislation on lobbying disclosure. Although the law will require additional adjustments, it provides a solid foundation to create a lobbying register. Along with a summary of each meeting with a lobbyist, a public employee must submit information to the public register administered by the independent Information Commissioner.

**Croatia – Improving Transparency of Campaign Financing**
Although information on political parties' donors is available, some of the biggest political parties report less income than what they spend on election campaigns. To address this, the Government of Croatia is committed to enhance the transparency of campaign spending through more effective regulation. In addition, the government pledged to improve collection and publication of data on financing political activities.

**Tunisia – Strengthening Legal Framework to Combat Corruption**
In its first action plan, Tunisia is taking steps to strengthen integrity in the public sector and promote democracy through more transparent government. Three laws will be drafted to bolster the legal framework to combat corruption. First, Tunisia will draft a law to establish mechanisms to report corruption cases, and set up special measures to protect whistleblowers that witness corruption cases within the public sector. Second, the government will prepare a regulation obligating asset declaration by senior government officials. Lastly, a law will be drafted that aims to prevent illicit enrichment of public officials, their spouses or children.

**More New Government Integrity Commitments:**

**Georgia** is publishing financial declarations and other related information on political parties in machine-readable format.

**Macedonia** is adopting amendments to the Law on Prevention of Corruption to introduce integrity systems in the public and private sectors, and to provide protection to whistleblowers.

**South Korea** is strengthening public service ethics and averting conflicts of interest by developing guidelines for post-public sector employment and posting online the result of inspections on post-public employment conducted by the Ethics Committee.

# 3 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
## Guaranteeing Public Access to Government-held Information

As of 2014, over 100 countries have enacted national Freedom of Information Acts (FOIA,) and more governments around the world are committing – through their OGP National Action Plans – to disclosing records and information that citizens have a right to access. OGP countries are beginning to make more categories of government-held information open. They are also streamlining the process for information requests and enforcing sanctions on government agencies that do not comply. Many countries have pledged to improve FOIA and bring the regulation in line with modern standards to strengthen democracy and accountability.

**Examples of Noteworthy Freedom of Information Commitments:**

**Brazil – Carrying Out "Brazil Transparent" Program**
Brazil is launching the "Brazil Transparent" Program to support the implementation of the Access to Information Law. It will combine efforts to increase public transparency and the adoption of measures for open government in states and municipalities. Seminars, workshops, and training courses on technical and guiding topics related to these themes will be carried out along with awareness campaigns on the Access to Information Law. In addition, capacity building on development of Transparency Portals and the Citizen Information System (e-SIC) at the subnational level will be delivered.

**Croatia – Enacting Amendments to Improve the Implementation of FOIA**
As amended in June 2010, Croatia's FOIA formally recognizes the citizens' right to information. However, challenges with implementation have made it difficult for citizens to exercise this right. The Government of Croatia therefore has committed to improving the legislative framework for access to information, as well as to improving the implementation of FOIA. The changes envisaged in Croatia's National Action Plan would help ensure that data is high quality and accessible for reuse, and that monitoring of implementation is strengthened.

**Sierra Leone – Passing an Archives Act to Support FOIA**
Since the end of the civil war in 2002, each successive administration in Sierra Leone promised to respect the right to information and enact FOIA. However, those promises did not materialize, with officials expressing an array of reservations ranging from claims of administrative unpreparedness to fears over the bill's potential implications for national security. In October 2013, with the intent of establishing a more open government, President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone signed into law the Right to Access Information Bill. The passing of this law made Sierra Leone eligible to participate in OGP. To support its implementation, the country has committed to passing a robust and proactive Archives and Records Management Act by March 2015. This Act will help to buttress FOIA as an essential tool to tackle corruption and ensure transparency.

**More New Freedom of Information Commitments:**

**Honduras** is ensuring that the right to access public information is in line with international best-practice standards. Their access to information system will include an electronic system for citizens to submit freedom of information requests and published archives.

**Ireland** is reforming FOIA to modernize the legislation based on international best practices, to extend the law to all public agencies, and to remove up-front application fees.

**Uruguay** is developing an e-access system that will allow centralized management and online monitoring of requests for access to public information filed by the public to any government agency.

# 4 FISCAL TRANSPARENCY
## Helping Citizens Follow the Money

Countries are making commitments to promote greater transparency in varying aspects of tax, public spending, management of public resources, and aid. These OGP commitments allow citizens to monitor better the source and use of public resources. Increasing fiscal transparency helps reduce opportunities for fraud, corruption, and waste, and gives people power to follow the money.

**Examples of Noteworthy Fiscal Transparency Commitments:**

**United Kingdom – Creating Central Registry of Company Beneficial Ownership**
A lack of knowledge about who ultimately controls, owns, and profits from companies and legal arrangements facilitates misuse of profits for illicit purposes including tax evasion, money laundering, corruption and bribery. The UK is committed to implementing international standards on transparency of ownership and control to curb the misuse of companies and legal arrangements. In particular, the UK has committed to place a requirement on companies to obtain and hold adequate, accurate, and current information on their beneficial ownership. Beneficial ownership is defined as the natural person(s) who ultimately owns or controls a legal person or arrangement. Company beneficial ownership information will be held in a central registry maintained by Companies House.

**Brazil – Public Participation in Budget Planning**
To expand citizen participation in the development of the federal budget and the monitoring of government spending, the Government of Brazil is committed to developing a methodology for citizen participation in monitoring the Pluriannual Plan and drafting the Federal Public Budget. The Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management, along with partners in civil society, will create a mechanism to monitor multiyear programs in a participatory fashion.

**Greece – Open Data on Offshore Companies**
Many experts cite tax evasion in Greece as one of the contributors to the economic crisis that has hit the country in recent years. The Ministry of Finance has committed to provide a list of all foreign offshore companies in an open and accessible format. The published information will be updated on a monthly basis and will contain the Taxpayer Identification Number, contact details in Greece, details about the operations, company name, distinctive title, and other relevant information registered for the holding company.

**Tanzania – Publishing Eight Key Budget Reports Annually**
To increase public participation in the budget process, Tanzania is committed to making eight key budget reports, including audit committee reports and tax exemptions, publicly available on an annual basis by December 2014. The budget reports include a pre-budget statement; the executive's budget proposal; the enacted budget; a citizens budget; in-year reports on revenue collected, expenditures made, and debt incurred; a mid-year review; a year-end report; and audit reports. Further, the government will publish basic budget information at District Councils and at all education and health facilities.

**More New Fiscal Transparency Commitments:**
**Bulgaria** is publishing official information on consolidated government debt and guarantees on the Ministry of Finance website.
**El Salvador** is ensuring that private companies managing public funds openly share their data in line with the Law on Access to Public Information.
**Guatemala** is implementing Open Budgeting in all web portals for the general population to learn about and have access to budgetary information published by the Ministry of Public Finance.
**Honduras** is improving the quality of planning and budgetary control on the implementation of the "Annual Plans on Procurement and Contracting" and is opening up citizen participation in the monitoring of public procurement processes.
**Mexico** is building a public, open, and interactive geo-referencing platform that allows citizens to track public resource allocation as well as the results of federal spending and public works.
**Paraguay** is building capacity among citizens to monitor public sector budget management by explaining the general budget proposal in plain and accessible language and creating citizen access to budget information on indigenous beneficiaries and investments made.
**Romania** is conducting a pilot project to apply the principles of open contracting to publicly-funded contracts with values exceeding RON 250,000 (over USD 72,000), with the exception of contracts containing confidential information.
**Spain** is combatting grant-related fraud by increasing transparency and monitoring of disbursement of state aid through the approval of the new General Grants Act.
**Sweden** is strengthening channels for dialogue and feedback to improve participation and transparency in aid management and implementation.

# 5 PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY
## Making Services Work for the People

In recent years, many governments have restructured their public services to be more responsive to citizen preferences. Technology and digital information have extended the reach of, and access to, public services. This increased access has contributed to greater citizen awareness of their rights, obligations, and options.

**Examples of Noteworthy Public Service Delivery Commitments:**

**Dominican Republic – Monitoring and Tracking of Aid for Catastrophic Diseases**
Catastrophic diseases that require prolonged hospitalization impose financial hardships due to the high costs of hospitals, doctors, and medicines. To address this issue, the Government of Dominican Republic is creating a mobile application and website to enable beneficiaries of aid programs for catastrophic diseases to know in real time the inventory of medications for their illnesses. Information on the amount of medication the Ministry of Public Health has in stock will be published, and the public will be able to make requests for medicine and track their request.

**Indonesia – Increasing Transparency in Religious Affairs Services**
Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population, many of whom embark on the annual Hajj, a pilgrimage. The Ministry of Religious Affairs long has been suspected of graft-ridden management of Hajj funds deposited by over three million pilgrims queuing for their chance to perform a sacred duty. For some, the queue may last ten to twenty years. To enhance effectiveness of the quality of services by the Ministry, the Government of Indonesia is committed to publishing Hajj services on the website, detailing the costs, the total number of Hajj departures from each regency or city, the list of travel plans, and the queuing status.

**South Africa – Continuing the Establishment of Service Delivery Improvement Forums**
In their first National Action Plan, South Africa began entering into partnerships with CSOs to establish Service Delivery Improvement Forums (SDIFs) in all nine provinces and to provide timely report cards to citizens on service delivery. The Government of South Africa is recommitting to the establishment of SDIFs and to conduct more work to bring civil society in this initiative, an important element for the successful delivery of public services in the country.

**More New Public Service Delivery Commitments:**

**Georgia** is transforming public libraries into venues for access to and training on electronic services. Public libraries also will be venues to provide public information to citizens, broadening the delivery of services and narrowing the digital divide.

**Honduras** is developing an application for the public to monitor delivery and distribution of medical supplies in five major hospitals.

**Mongolia** will increase access at the local level to "Public Service Online Machines" that help deliver public services to individuals in remote areas. The government will also expand its data collection to track citizen's feedback on government performance.

# 6 EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY
## Ensuring Extractive Revenues Benefit the Public

More accountability in the management of extractives like oil, gas, metals, and minerals can be achieved through increased reporting by extractive companies of their payments to governments and by government reporting of revenues generated. This is in line with the Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and recent advances in mandatory disclosure laws. OGP countries are increasingly making commitments to ensure that governments and extractives industry companies are transparent and accountable to citizens, and that revenues from natural resources are being used to benefit all citizens.

**Examples of Noteworthy Extractive Industries Transparency Commitments:**

**Guatemala – Ensuring Revenues Promote Social Wellbeing**
To guarantee that governments invest revenues from oil and mining industries in ways that promote social wellbeing of local communities, the Government of Guatemala will publish reports and publications on the amount of regional distribution of royalties from extractive industries. In addition to publishing revenue flows, reports will also disclose local projects for which revenues are earmarked.

**Indonesia – Opening Data on Business Operations in Extractive Industries**
As a major player in oil, gas and mining, Indonesia faces many challenges that come with managing the wealth of natural resources. To achieve EITI Compliant Country status, Indonesia is opening information on production volume, spatial information in the extractive industries, renegotiation of the work contracts, implementation of social responsibility programs, and upstream procurement in oil, gas, and mining. This commitment helps to ensure transparency in the management of one-third of the national budget, which originates from extractive industry revenues.

**Philippines – Initiating Fiscal Transparency in the Extractive Industry**
The extraction of resources, particularly through mining, has sparked disputes in local communities in the Philippines. The Government of the Philippines has committed through OGP to enact policies that will institutionalize fiscal transparency in the extractive industries in 2014. Oil, gas, and mining companies will be required to disclose tax payments and credits (to the Bureau of Internal Revenue); duties (to the Bureau of Customs); royalties, fees, and charges (to different government agencies such as the Mines and Geosciences Bureau); and, how much they pay (to the local governments). The government also commits to publish a report disclosing the revenues of extractive industries and government revenues from these industries by May 2015.

**Sierra Leone – Publishing Mining and Agricultural Lease Agreements**
Sierra Leone is endowed with vast amounts of diamonds, gold, bauxite, rutile, and iron ore. From 2009 to 2012, Sierra Leone reported exporting US $1.2 billion in natural resources, comprising 70% of the country's exports. Following delays in gaining EITI validation, the Government of Sierra Leone pledged through OGP to publish 70% of all mining and agricultural lease agreements and revised contracts. This commitment helps enact an accountability mechanism to ensure that extractive industries operate for the genuine benefit of the communities.

**More New Extractive Industries Transparency Commitments:**

**Armenia** committed to join EITI to increase transparency in the mining industry and to improve the investment environment.

**Mongolia** is ensuring transparency in all agreements on investment, stability, and production sharing of public-owned resources such as water, minerals, oil, and land.

**Norway** is promoting the development of a "transparency guarantee" in the management of oil and gas revenues for natural-resource-rich countries to secure access to extractive company accounting information necessary to levy the right amount of tax.

# 7 OPEN DATA
## Digitizing and Opening Up Government-held Data for Access to Information and Transparency

Open data, defined as machine-readable information, particularly government-held data, that is made available for use and reuse by citizens, is a central part of many OGP action plans. Governments can do more to craft open data policies that present more meaningful information and protect privacy, confidentiality, and security interests, while driving innovation, monitoring, and participation. As new commitments in OGP show, countries are shifting from digitizing data to providing richer, global datasets of more timely, reusable, and functional information. Also, governments are using open data to help reform their public services so they fit citizens' needs better.

**Examples of Noteworthy Open Data Commitments:**

**Ireland – Signing Up for the G8 Open Data Charter**
In their first National Action Plan, Ireland is committing to establishing international best practice standards for publishing and licensing open data. Ireland will set up an Open Data platform publishing high quality data and facilitating feedback from citizens. The platform will, for example, enable citizens to request additional datasets, provide information about applications for which the data is being utilized, and provide practical knowledge about usability and the quality of data sets. In setting up the platform, Ireland aims to be compliant with the G8 Open Data Charter, which they plan to sign within the next two years.

**Mexico – Opening Registration of Detainees**
In an effort to uphold personal dignity and justice for detainees, the Government of Mexico will open access to information on detainees. Mexico is putting in place a standardized search and location registration system of detainees. It will be available via the web, telephone, or in person. The government is ensuring that, in a timely manner, citizens have access to statistical data, as well as the circumstances and causes of arrests in the country. This commitment provides citizens with the tools to understand and to maneuver processes in the criminal justice system more effectively. Further, it is in line with the presumption of innocence established in the constitutional reform of the Mexican criminal justice system.

**United States – Launching an Improved Data.gov**
Journalists can use government data to uncover variations in hospital billings. Citizens can use government data to learn more about the social services provided by charities in their communities. Entrepreneurs can use government data to build new software tools to help farmers plan and manage their crops. Building upon the successful implementation of open data commitments in the first National Action Plan, the US will launch an improved Data.gov that will allow the public to find, understand, and use data collected or created by the Federal Government more easily. The US government also commits to expand the amount of natural disaster-related open government data with the aim of increasing awareness of the effects of natural disasters and improving disaster relief and recovery efforts. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through its OpenFEMA initiative, will release new disaster-related data in a machine-readable format. FEMA also will host workshops to build tools that support first responders, survivors, and impacted communities.

**More New Open Data Commitments:**

**Albania** will develop a National Electronic Registry for seekers and beneficiaries of economic assistance, and for the administration of welfare benefits.

**Armenia** is broadcasting State Procurement Appeals Board decision making sessions online via www.gnumner.am.

**Greece** is creating a platform for tracking changes on draft legislation including changes such as submission by the parliamentary committee level and voting at the plenary level.

**South Korea** is operationalizing a public-private consultative body to improve and promote the effective use and reuse of open data by businesses.

# Looking Forward

Countries are renewing their commitments to enhance government integrity, enact and modernize freedom of information legislation, increase fiscal transparency, improve public service delivery, and strengthen natural resources transparency. These commitments are being carried out through open data, use of new technology tools, and public participation measures that expand transparency and accountability.

The real test ahead of us is implementation of these commitments. Countries must galvanize political support, work with civil society, and mobilize resources to ensure these political commitments result in concrete action. Peer exchanges between countries, and support from OGP partners on implementation, will produce a higher rate of completion for many of these commitments. The Independent Reporting Mechanism process will review all of these country commitments in due course.

The commitments summarized in this report show that the momentum behind open government reform in many OGP countries is still strong. If implemented, these reforms will make governments more open, accountable, and transparent for citizens around the world.

Open
Government
Partnership