



# Government Point of Contact Manual



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# Foreword

In the four years since the launch of the Open Government Partnership, reformers around the world have been using their OGP participation to make change happen. Over 2500 individual open government reforms have now been pledged via OGP, and many of them are already having a significant impact on the lives of citizens. We are beginning to see a change in the culture of government, which would not be possible without the civil servants within bureaucracies who are fighting every day for greater transparency, accountability and public participation.

The OGP Support Unit exists to support reformers in government and civil society, and when necessary to hold them to account for promises made. This new manual of guidance notes is designed to help officials with the main aspects of OGP participation: designing an ambitious National Action Plan; working with civil society; and securing outside support when needed. We welcome your feedback on this manual. More than anyone, it is the OGP points of contact who are on the frontline of making OGP work at the national level. As we collectively seek to raise our level of ambition and confront the biggest problems currently facing society, coordination across international borders will be essential. We want to encourage the sharing of best practice and learning between all countries, regardless of income, location or political affiliation.

Citizens are rightly demanding more from their governments than ever before. It is our job in OGP to help governments live up to that demand.

Joe Powell  
Acting Executive Director  
October 2015

# 1. Guidance for OGP Government Points of Contact

The point of contact for the Open Government Partnership (OGP) is the person responsible for coordinating a participating government's domestic and international OGP activities. This person is a working-level counterpart to a ministerial-level representative. The role is important and multi-dimensional: points of contact are at the forefront of transparency, accountability and participation efforts for an OGP country.

This document outlines the responsibilities and activities of an OGP point of contact. It should be read alongside the OGP [Calendar note](#), which provides details on the National Action Plan (NAP) timeline, and the NAP [guidance notes](#).

As a point of contact, you should:

## 1. Develop and implement an ambitious NAP in partnership with civil society organizations (CSOs)

The NAP creation process should involve:

- a. *Engaging with the Support Unit* to get details on the NAP development process, available resources and international best practices.
- b. *Using previous Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) reports* to identify and address areas for improvement.
- c. *Contacting and working with other government ministries* involved in relevant topics. These include transparency, accountability, finance, natural resources, justice, anti-corruption, public service reform and access to information.
- d. *Collaborating with the OGP Working Groups* for advice on building more ambitious commitments.

During the NAP implementation period, the point of contact should:

- e. *Engage with the Support Unit* to broker multilateral support for conducting consultation and monitoring.
- f. *Maintain communication with ministries* responsible for implementing specific commitments.
- g. *Work with CSOs* to ensure they are engaged throughout implementation.
- h. *Request support from OGP Working Groups* as needed for advice and technical expertise.

The point of contact must produce a self-assessment report, which involves:

- i. Using the [guidance note](#) and *engaging with the Support Unit* for advice on self-assessment report procedures.
- j. *Contacting ministries* responsible for implementation of specific commitments to get information on progress.
- k. *Consulting and involving CSOs*.

Halfway through implementation of the NAP, the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) will appoint an independent researcher to conduct an evaluation of the NAP and progress of implementation. The point of contact should:

- l. *Engage with the IRM team and local researcher* to understand the progress report's methodology and contents. The IRM Procedures Manual is available [here](#).
- m. *Provide information and contacts* to the IRM local researcher.
- n. *Provide comment and input* on draft versions of the report.
- o. *Participate in the country's IRM report launch event*, which will be organized by the researcher.

## 2. Work with other participating countries to exchange ideas and technical support

OGP provides a platform to connect government and civil society reformers across participating countries to learn from and inspire each other by exchanging ideas and technical support. Here are some more ideas to promote peer learning and exchange:

- Identify ministries and people responsible for implementing your commitments in your NAP.
- Share lessons learned from your experience in drafting, implementing, monitoring and evaluating national action plan commitments with other governments and CSOs. The Support Unit can broker exchanges between countries as needed. You should let them know when you are involved in peer learning and exchange activities.
- Participate in the activities of the five thematic working groups.
- Participate in OGP webinars to present and discuss your experience of working on open government programs.

## 3. Actively participate in regional and global OGP events

The Support Unit works with host countries and international CSOs to organize global and regional meetings and events. These are designed to keep OGP energized, to foster high level political support, and to provide an opportunity to learn from CSO and government counterparts. The Support Unit relies heavily on points of contact to organize these events. Points of contact should:

- Try to participate in all global OGP events and all relevant regional events.
- Inform senior government officials about OGP events and activities, and ask them to participate.
- Encourage ministerial attendance at regional events and global summits.
- Submit an entry to the annual Open Government Awards to showcase reforms and promote the country on the international stage.

## 4. Fulfill the following other duties

- Vote in Steering Committee elections. The Steering Committee is the decision making body of OGP and is composed of 22 members - 11 government and 11 civil society representatives. Governments vote annually to elect 3-4 government representatives. Governments interested in being on the Steering Committee should submit their letter of application when nominations open each year. The Support Unit organizes the election process.
- Update the Support Unit about national elections and ministerial and working level changes within governments. The Support Unit has developed a brief information package to guide new government points of contact and will officially write to new ministers when they take office.
- Ensure payment of annual financial contributions to OGP. The Support Unit will provide all the information necessary to make this process as simple as possible.
- Support occasional requests for information related to OGP research projects. OGP commissions researchers to visit OGP countries and investigate the short and long term impact of OGP initiatives. The researchers benefit greatly from the insights provided by the government agency coordinating and implementing these initiatives.

Beyond this guidance, each point of contact is assigned a counterpart in the Support Unit to assist throughout OGP participation. This person will respond to any additional questions.

## 2. OGP National Action Plan Guidance Note<sup>1</sup>

National Action Plans are at the core of a country's participation in OGP. They are the product of a co-creation process in which government and civil society define ambitious commitments to foster transparency, accountability and public participation. This guidance note reflects lessons learned from the experience in OGP countries so far on producing high quality action plans. In addition, the note includes templates that will ensure all the necessary information on commitments and the development process is included in the action plan.

### Main Action Plan Characteristics

Successful OGP action plans focus on ambitious national open government priorities; are relevant to the values of transparency, accountability and public participation; and contain specific, time-bound and measurable commitments.

**Ambitious:** OGP aims to promote ambitious open government reforms that stretch the government beyond its current state of practice, significantly improving the status quo by strengthening transparency, accountability and public participation in government. Countries may choose to initiate new open government initiatives in their action plans, or improve on existing, ongoing reforms. Countries are encouraged to show clear improvement from action plan to action plan.

**Relevant:** Countries should ensure that each commitment included in the action plan is clearly advancing one or more of the following open government principles:

- **Transparency:** This includes publication of all government-held information (as opposed to only information on government activities); proactive or reactive releases of information; mechanisms to strengthen the right to information; and open access to government information.
- **Accountability:** There are rules, regulations and mechanisms in place that call upon government actors to justify their actions, act upon criticisms or requirements made of them, and accept responsibility for failure to perform with respect to laws or commitments. Commitments on accountability should typically include an answerability element, i.e. that they are not purely internal systems of accountability but involve the public.
- **Participation:** Governments seek to mobilize citizens to engage in a dialogue on government policies or programs, provide input or feedback, and make contributions that lead to more responsive, innovative and effective governance.
- **Technology and Innovation:** Governments embrace the importance of providing citizens with open access to technology, the role of new technologies in driving innovation, and the importance of increasing the capacity of citizens to use technology. E-government initiatives are welcome, but in order to be relevant to OGP, action plans should explain how these initiatives advance government transparency, accountability and/or public participation.

<sup>1</sup> Article of Governance VI. OGP ACTION PLANS AND REPORTING. Action plans should be for a duration of two years, though individual commitments contained in these action plans may be for more or less than two years depending on the nature of the commitment. However, each action plan should include one-year and two-year benchmarks, so that governments, civil society organizations, and the Independent Reporting Mechanism (see below), have a common set of time-bound metrics to assess progress. As living documents, action plans may be updated as needed based on ongoing consultations with civil society. Any updates should be duly noted in the official version of the action plan on the OGP website.

SMART: Individual commitments should be:

- **Specific:** The commitment precisely describes the problem it is trying to solve, the activities it comprises and the expected outcomes.
- **Measurable:** It is possible to verify the fulfillment of the commitment. Where commitments have multiple sub-commitments, they are broken into clear, measurable milestones.
- **Answerable:** The commitment clearly specifies the main implementing agency, the coordinating or supporting agencies where relevant, and if necessary, other civil society, multilateral, or private sector partners who have a role in implementing the commitment.
- **Relevant:** For each commitment, the action plan should explain its relevance to one or more of the open government principles outlined above (transparency, accountability, public participation and technology & innovation).
- **Time-bound:** Commitment clearly states the date when it will be completed, as well as dates for milestones, benchmarks and any other deadline.

## Action Plan Template<sup>2</sup>

### <<Country name>> National Action Plan 201X-201X

#### 1. Introduction

*Briefly explain the local context by discussing why open government efforts are important for the country. This section should also outline the governance reform priorities for the country and identify the grand challenges that the country intends to address through its OGP National Action Plan along with a justification.*

#### 2. Open Government Efforts to Date

*Provide a brief narrative of key open government initiatives and accomplishments to date, particularly as they relate to the government's chosen grand challenges. This section should explain how the new action plan builds on previous OGP action plans and related efforts to strengthen open government reforms.*

#### 3. NAP Development Process

*OGP participants commit to "co-create" their country action plans through a multi-stakeholder consultation process, with the active engagement of citizens and civil society. In this section please describe the NAP development process, including the consultation.*

*Please consider that regarding the consultation process, the IRM evaluates the following activities:*

**1. Availability of timeline:** Countries are to make the details of their public consultation process and timeline available (online at minimum) prior to the consultation.

**2. Adequate notice:** Countries are to consult the population with sufficient forewarning. Many countries have chosen to share written drafts two weeks before the official start of consultation to allow stakeholders to organize themselves.

<sup>2</sup> This section includes the main components of an action plan. Each country can modify the format and add any sections they desire. However we strongly suggest to at least include the information in this template.



**3. Awareness raising:** Countries are to undertake OGP awareness raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation.

**4. Multiple channels:** Countries are to consult through a variety of mechanisms—including online and through in-person meetings—to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage.

**5. Breadth of consultation:** Countries are to consult widely with the national community, including civil society and the private sector, and to seek out a diverse range of views.

**6. Documentation and feedback:** Countries are to make a summary of the public consultation and all individual written comment submissions available online.

**7. Consultation during implementation:** Countries are to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation—this can be an existing entity or a new one.

- Commitments in your action plan should be clustered under themes. A theme is the broad open government issue area the commitment will address. Examples include Education, Health, Access to Justice, Corporate Social Responsibility, Open Data, etc. A theme can contain multiple commitments.
- Each commitment as written must be specific, clear, and succinct.
- The level of ambition and relevance to OGP values should be clearly demonstrated.
- Commitments should be broken into milestones—i.e. a list of specific and verifiable activities to be conducted in order to completely implement the commitment. Milestones should be measurable so they can be used to assess the progress of implementation.
- A strong, comprehensive action plan should address multiple themes with each theme containing multiple commitments, some of which have milestones.
- Experience has shown that action plans listing 5-15 high quality commitments spread over multiple themes are preferable to those with very large numbers of weaker commitments.

You must use the following template for each commitment in your action plan.

## Commitment Template

Theme

*Theme is the broad open government issue area the commitment will address (e.g. Examples include Education, Health, Access to Justice, Corporate Social Responsibility, Open Data, etc.) A theme contains one or more commitments.*

Number and Name of Commitment

Commitment Start and End Date (E.g. 30 June 2015 - 30 June 2017)

New or ongoing commitment

Lead implementing Ministry, Department, Agency

Person responsible from implementing agency



Title, Department		
Email		
Phone		
Other actors involved	Government Ministries, Department/ Agency	
	CSOs private sector, multilaterals, working groups	
Status quo or problem addressed by the commitment		
Main Objective		
Brief Description of Commitment		(140 character limit)
OGP challenge addressed by the commitment		
Relevance		<i>Briefly describe the way in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of access to information, public accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability. (A detailed description of these values is available in the <a href="#">OGP Values Guidance Note</a>.)</i>
Ambition		<i>Briefly describe the intended results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i>



<p>Milestone</p> <p><i>Activity with a verifiable deliverable and completion date.</i></p>	<p>Start Date:</p>	<p>End Date:</p>
<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>	

### Format and length

- Action plans should be clear, succinct, and action-oriented, and written in plain language with minimal use of jargon or technical terms.
- Governments are encouraged to work with multiple ministries and departments across the government to develop and implement their OGP commitments. For ease of communication, the contact information for the lead agency of each commitment should be included in the action plan.
- All actions plans must cover a two-year period. At minimum one-year and two-year milestones for each commitment are required so that governments, civil society organizations, and the Independent Reporting Mechanism, have a common set of time-bound metrics to assess progress.
- Commitments that will take longer than two years to implement are welcome as long as they are clearly marked in the country's next action plan.
- While action plans can be written in the country's official language, governments are required to submit an English translation to the OGP Support Unit.



# 3. OGP National Dialogue Guidance Note

OGP countries commit to developing their country Action Plans through a multi-stakeholder process, with the active engagement of citizens and civil society.

Involving civil society in the development of the national Action Plan is a critical step in improving the dialogue between citizens, civil society and government. This in turn is one of the primary aims of OGP. Governments are required to report on the quality of their dialogue with civil society in their OGP self-assessment report, and the Independent Reporting Mechanism also assesses performance in this area.

In summary, we encourage governments to follow the following steps to ensure effective consultation: *Plan* consultations early in the policy development process, and publish a plan for the consultation that *explains* why the government is consulting and how stakeholders' views will be taken into account. Strive to *involve* a diverse group of stakeholders, including hard-to-reach groups, and *organise* the consultations in ways that are accessible to the people whose views are sought. *Analyse* the input received from consultations, *assess* whether respondents were representative and *provide feedback* to participants to explain how decisions were made and what the next steps will be. Finally, *act on the findings* to improve policies and programmes, and then *evaluate* the consultation process to help improve future consultations. Throughout the consultation, *communicate clearly* and directly, with a focus on using plain language that will be easily understood by regular citizens.

The [OGP Articles of Governance \(Addendum C\)](#) outline seven 'Guidelines for Public Consultation on Country Commitments', as follows:

- 1. Availability of process and timeline:** Countries are to make the details of their public consultation process and timeline available (at least online) prior to the consultation.
- 2. Adequate notice:** Countries are to consult the population with sufficient forewarning to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage.
- 3. Awareness raising:** Countries are to undertake OGP awareness-raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation.
- 4. Multiple channels:** Countries are to consult through a variety of mechanisms—including online and through in-person meetings—to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage.
- 5. Breadth of consultation:** Countries are to consult widely with the national community, including civil society and the private sector, and to seek out a diverse range of views.
- 6. Documentation and feedback:** Countries are to produce a summary of the public consultation and all individual written comment submissions are to be made available online.
- 7. Consultation during implementation:** Countries are to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation—this can be an existing entity or a new one.

This document offers best practice recommendations on each of these seven guidelines, based on OGP experience. The last page of this document provides a set of helpful resources (OGP-specific and beyond).

This document offers best practice recommendations on each of these seven guidelines, based on OGP experience. The last page of this document provides a set of helpful resources (OGP-specific and beyond). Civil society organisations can use the guidance to formulate requests before the actual consultation takes place. Governments can use the guidance to design their consultation – ideally together with civil society. The Independent Reporting Mechanism uses the seven guidelines in the Articles of Governance to evaluate participating country adherence to OGP requirements.

**1. Availability of process and timeline:** Countries are to make the details of their public consultation process and timeline available (at least online) prior to the consultation.

*Governments should aim to provide the following details of the consultation process:*

- Clear information on the government's OGP point of contact;
- Clearly stated purpose of the consultation process;
- Where the country falls in the OGP cycle (i.e. is this the first or second national Action Plan);<sup>1</sup>
- Information on the scope of the consultation and the methods to be used, as well as what can be expected after the consultation has formally closed;<sup>2</sup>
- Timeline of meetings, including objectives, expected outcomes and logistical information (e.g. location, format for input, contact details);
- List of directly invited participants (from government, civil society and other stakeholders);
- Information on who can participate additionally and how;
- Specific pre-defined topics to be discussed (if applicable) during consultation in the event that a thematic approach is planned (e.g. open data, extractive industries, open budgets);
- Roles and responsibilities in the process of government, civil society and other participants;
- Materials to be prepared/discussed by participants before the consultation process begins.

**2. Adequate notice:** Countries are to consult the population with sufficient forewarning to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage

*To effectively publicise the consultation process it is important that multiple channels are used; start doing this at least four weeks before consultation begins. This could include the following actions:*

- Post a document on the responsible agency's website that explains the consultation process and how the government will address responses;<sup>3</sup>
- Clearly state a deadline for responses, any alternative ways of contributing, and the language (s) in which responses are preferred;<sup>3</sup>
- State the date when and the place where the summary of responses will be published;<sup>3</sup>
- Explicitly state who to contact if respondents have comments or complaints about the consultation process;<sup>3</sup>
- Make reference to all relevant background information.<sup>3</sup> A good starting point is to openly discuss with civil society the preliminary work done on open government and to share government expectations and ideas for OGP commitments;

**3. Awareness raising:** Countries are to undertake OGP awareness-raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation.

*Beyond the basic 'getting the word out', countries should consider the following recommendations:*

- Take steps to raise awareness of OGP and the consultation exercise among a diverse group of stakeholders and individuals who are likely to be interested, including audiences beyond the capital city;<sup>2</sup>
- Present information in a way that is likely to be accessible and useful to the stakeholders with substantial interest in the matter; relevant documentation should be posted online to enhance accessibility and opportunities for reuse;<sup>1</sup>
- Organise preliminary workshops to raise awareness of open government/the OGP basics and encourage a common starting point for consultation discussions;
- Create a national OGP website (as a government or in partnership with civil society) that explains the OGP basics, provides information on the national process, and carries key national OGP documents (e.g. Action Plan, monitoring reports). Make sure it is easy to find, easy to understand and available in the national language(s). For example, [Indonesia](#), [Ireland](#), [Mexico](#) and the [United Kingdom](#) have web pages dedicated to the local OGP process built by civil society, the government or both.
- Organise outreach activities to publicise the government's participation in OGP. This might include working with media partners to disseminate interviews or Q&A sessions with public officials; the active use of social media; organising webinars or other forms of online discussion; and/or press conferences to publicise the country's commitments and responsibilities within OGP.

**4. Multiple channels:** Countries are to consult through a variety of mechanisms—including online and through in-person meetings—to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage.

- There are many different online tools countries can use to solicit public input. It is important to make sure the online platform is easy to use, easy to find, and clear about how the government will receive and respond to input. In-depth consultation can be combined with surveys and/or online voting.
- In parallel to - or building on - the online mechanism it is advisable to have in-person meetings to discuss proposals and prioritise them (e.g. thematic working groups). For example, in Ghana the National Steering Committee organised three in-person consultation meetings in rural regions.
- Countries should make sure that some of these activities reach a diverse group of stakeholders, including those outside the capital city.
- Allow sufficient time for responses - international best practice recommends that when consultation takes place over a holiday, the response time should be extended.

**5. Breadth of consultation:** Countries are to consult widely with the national community, including civil society and the private sector, and to seek out a diverse range of views.

Some suggestions:

- OGP does not have a specific definition of civil society. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for some common definitions. It will depend on the national context how civil society is defined and who key stakeholders are.
- Ask local experts for suggestions about appropriate organisations to consult.<sup>2</sup> This is likely to include traditional transparency and accountability organisations, but also more issue-driven organisations, for example in the health sector or those working on environmental issues.

- Identify and map organisations with the appropriate expertise and maintain an up-to-date database;<sup>3</sup> Key stakeholders may include research organisations, associations, foundations, interest-based advocacy groups or community organisations, academics, businesses and business associations, faith-based organisations, trade associations, oversight institutions, information commissioners and ombudsmen, social movements, media, etc.;
- Consultations should also include individuals representing a variety of government agencies or departments;
- Where appropriate, contact the donor community and international cooperation offices in your country to discuss how they might be able to support the national OGP process. OGP has formal partnerships with the World Bank, OECD, IDB and UNDP, and they can be contacted for assistance either directly via the national offices or via the OGP Support Unit.

**6. Documentation and feedback:** Countries are to produce a summary of the public consultation and all individual written comment submissions are to be made available online.

*Constructive, timely feedback to stakeholders improves the transparency and accountability of the overall Action Plan development process and helps make the connections between stakeholder input and the final result.<sup>2</sup> The following are some suggestions on documenting input and providing feedback:*

- Keep track of all suggestions made; If possible include all of these on the responsible agency's website or the national OGP site and/or as an annex to the national Action Plan. As a minimum, publish a summary of the comments received via these channels;
- Ideally, publish all written submissions (grouping submissions by topic), and explain why they were or were not included in the Action Plan;
- Try to be prompt with the feedback to stakeholders after the consultation closes;
- Publish a summary of the next steps of the OGP national process;
- Invite respondents to comment on the consultation process and suggest ways of further improving it;<sup>3</sup>
- Include this in an (evaluation) report on the consultation. That report could also contain details of and statistical information on the participants (i.e. number of respondents, their type, geographical distribution).

**7. Consultation during implementation:** Countries are to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation—this can be an existing entity or a new one.

*Experience shows that having a platform for permanent dialogue is an important factor in building a true partnership based on trust and understanding, exchanging expertise and monitoring the process. There is a wide diversity of such platforms. Some of the principles include:*

- Try to include a variety of government, civil society and other stakeholders and balance the numbers across interest groups;
- Agree early on roles, responsibilities, frequency of meetings;
- It helps the national process if there is sufficient capacity/resources to run/coordinate the permanent dialogue;
- The civil society representatives should be self-selected by civil society and not be selected or appointed by government

*Two good examples*

- In Mexico the Tripartite Technical Secretariat includes the Presidency, the Access to Information Institute and an elected representative of each of the eight participating civil society organisations. The Secretariat discusses and makes decisions on all OGP-related matters.
- In Peru, by Presidential Decree, the Multi-sectoral Commission comprises three representatives of civil society organisations (elected by participating CSOs) and one from the private sector; as well as five government entities (Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Electronic Government Office, the Public Administration Office and the Department of Justice). Additionally, the Comptroller General and the national Ombudsman participate as observers. The Commission meets regularly to follow-up on national implementation efforts.

**Good OGP-related resources**

- The OGP [basics](#) of consultation and Action Plan development.
- The OGP [basics from a purely civil society perspective](#) with suggestions for advocacy and useful documents.
- Overview article [Improving the OGP experience](#): lessons from 15 countries and access to the individual [country case studies](#) offer ideas and inspiration.
- The UK consultation for the second Action Plan: [A brief on the lessons learned](#).
- The [Open Government Guide](#) highlights practical, measurable, specific and actionable steps that governments can and are taking across a range of cross-cutting and focused areas.
- The [Open Government Standards](#) project defines the OGP core concepts of Transparency, Participation and Accountability.

**Good consultation resources**

- [Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe. Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process. \(2013\).](#)
- [OECD. Guidelines for Online Public Consultation.](#)
- [OECD. Background Document on Public Consultation.](#)
- [UK Government Consultation Principles.](#)
- [UNDP. Multi-Stakeholder Decision-Making. \(2012\).](#)
- [European Union. Directorate General for Health and Consumers. Code of Good Practice for Consultation of Stakeholders.](#)
- [The World Bank. Consultation with Civil Society Organizations; General Guidelines for World Bank Staff. \(2000\).](#)
- [Scottish Executive: Consultation Good Practice Guidance. \(2004\).](#)

## Sources

- <sup>1</sup> [UK Government Consultation Principles.](#)
- <sup>2</sup> [European Union. Directorate General for Health and Consumers. Code of Good Practice for Consultation of Stakeholders.](#)
- <sup>3</sup> [OECD. Guidelines for Online Public Consultation.](#)

# 4. OGP Self-Assessment Report Guidance Note

Self-Assessment Reports are a key element of the Open Government Partnership accountability mechanism. This document reflects lessons learned from the first three years of OGP and provides specific guidance on producing high quality and comprehensive Self-Assessment Reports. During the two-year National Action Plan (NAP) cycle, governments will produce yearly Self-Assessment Reports.

In order to minimize the administrative burden, the two Self-Assessment Reports will have similar content to one another, differing primarily in the time period covered. The Midterm Self-Assessment should focus on the development of the NAP, consultation process, relevance and ambitiousness of the commitments, and progress to date. The End of Term Self-Assessment should focus on the final results of the reforms completed in the NAP, consultation during implementation, and lessons learned.

The development of the Self-Assessment Reports must include a two-week public consultation period.

## Self-Assessment Report Template

This section includes the main required components of a Self-Assessment Report. Each country can modify the format and add sections if they wish, but all of the information in the template should be included.

While Self-Assessment Reports can be written in the country's official language, governments are required to submit an English translation to the OGP Support Unit.

<<Country Name>>

Midterm (or End of Term) Self-Assessment Report  
National Action Plan 201X-201X

## 1. Introduction and Background

*Briefly explain:*

- *How the country's OGP commitments are relevant to the four core open government principles of OGP (transparency, civic participation, public accountability, and technology and innovation for openness and accountability).*
- *How did the country's OGP commitments attempt to address at least one of the five OGP grand challenges (improving public services, increasing public integrity, more effectively managing public resources, creating safer communities, and increasing corporate accountability)*

## 2. National Action Plan Process

*The Midterm Self-Assessment Report should focus on subsection A, while the End of Term should focus on subsection B.*

**A. Consultation during NAP development:** *The OGP Articles of Governance and supporting documents lay out the following requirements for consultation during NAP development:*

- **Availability of timeline:** Countries are to make the details of their public consultation process and timeline available (online at minimum) prior to the consultation;
- **Adequate notice:** Countries are to consult the population with sufficient forewarning;
- **Awareness raising:** Countries are to undertake OGP awareness raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation;
- **Multiple channels:** Countries are to consult through a variety of mechanisms—including online and through in-person meetings—to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage;
- **Breadth of consultation:** Countries are to consult widely with the national community, including civil society and the private sector, and to seek out a diverse range of views; and
- **Documentation and feedback:** Countries are to make a summary of the public consultation and all individual written comment submissions available online.

*Provide a brief narrative of government's approach to the NAP development and implementation process as related to the above requirements and add any additional information on this subject, including:*

- *What process challenges, if any, the government faced in developing the action plan in terms of*
  - o *Fostering citizen participation;*
  - o *Organizing inter-agency and/or Central/Local consultation mechanisms; and*
  - o *Developing the plan in a timely manner.*

**B. Consultation during implementation:** *The OGP Articles of Governance state that, "Countries are to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation—this can be an existing entity or a new one."*

*Provide a brief narrative of government's approach to participation during implementation, including:*

- o *Which forum was identified and whether it was new or pre-existing;*
- o *The frequency and regularity of meetings of the forum; and*
- o *Which organizations and individuals participated regularly.*

**C. Briefly describe the consultation or comment period for the Self-Assessment Report. Include the two-week-minimum comment period and the way in which the comments were included into the report.**

### 3. IRM Recommendations

*Briefly explain how the IRM report results were used to improve the process of NAP drafting and implementation.*

### 4. Implementation of National Action Plan commitments

*Provide a complete description of the commitment implementation process, conditions, problems, etc. globally considered. This may include a summary table of the progress and results on all the commitments. Any information on modifications or updates on the commitments should be included here. Additionally, for each commitment write a brief explanation of the commitment and the main results achieved.*



Use the following template for each commitment in your action plan.

Commitment Template	
<p>Theme</p> <p><i>Theme is the broad open government issue area the commitment will address (e.g. Examples include Education, Health, Access to Justice, Corporate Social Responsibility, Open Data, etc.) A theme contains one or more commitments.</i></p>	
<p>Number and Name of Commitment</p>	
<p>Commitment Start and End Date (E.g. 30 June 2015 - 30 June 2017)</p>	<p>New or ongoing commitment</p>
<p>Lead implementing agency</p>	
<p>Persons responsible from implementing agency</p>	
<p>Title, Department</p>	
<p>Email</p>	
<p>Phone</p>	
<p>Other actors involved</p>	<p>Government Ministries, Department/ Agency</p>
	<p>CSOs private sector, multilaterals, working groups</p>
<p>Status quo or problem/issue to be addressed</p>	
<p>Main Objective</p>	
<p>Brief Description of Commitment</p>	<p>(140 character limit)</p>





Relevance	<i>Briefly describe the intended results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i>			
Ambition	<i>Briefly describe the intended results of the commitment and how it will either make government more open or improve government through more openness.</i>			
Completion level	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
Description of the results	<i>Include specific activities within the reporting period (first or second year of the action plan) and, wherever possible, please indicate whether there has been evidence of members of the public using the commitment or whether the commitment has had an effect.</i>			
End date				
Next steps				
Additional information				
<i>Description on what remains to be achieved and any risks or challenges to implementing the commitment.</i>				



## 5. Progress on Eligibility Criteria (optional)

*Governments that have voluntarily taken steps to improve their performance on the OGP eligibility criteria as part of their NAP should identify those actions and outcomes.*

## 6. Peer Exchange and Learning (if applicable)

*Briefly describe involvement in peer exchange and learning activities. For example, please describe the nature and outcome of activities where you provided assistance to other countries or if you received assistance during action plan development and implementation.*

## 7. Conclusion, Other initiatives and Next Steps

**A. Lessons learned:** *What were overall lessons learned and challenges encountered with respect to the action plan development and implementation?*

**B. Other initiatives (optional):** *Report on any other initiatives or reforms undertaken by your country to advance the Open Government Partnership values that were not included in the National Action Plan.*

**C. Next steps:** *What are next steps with regard to OGP generally?*

**D. Conclusion:** *Report on the positive impact of the activities and related outcomes with respect to each commitment; this could include a broader assessment that may detail actions taken outside the action plan itself, such as political/electoral developments, cultural changes, and plans for the future unrelated to last year's commitment.*

## 5. OGP Consultation During Implementation Guidance Note

Countries participating in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) are asked to co-create their OGP national action plans with civil society. In implementing their action plans, countries are also expected to consult with stakeholders on the implementation of the commitments included in their action plan. Consultation during implementation will help ensure that commitments achieve their intended outcome. We are starting to see examples from around the world of how consultation forums help transform the relationship between governments and citizens. They provide the space for transparency and dialogue that can lead to better targeted and more widely accepted policy.

This document briefly describes what governments can do to consult during implementation, including how to design a forum to keep the dialogue going between key actors throughout the implementation period. There are many ways to achieve such a forum. Here we highlight some of the basic design elements that meet the OGP expectation, along with some examples of how this could look. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) will report on the way that countries organize public consultation in both the design and the implementation of OGP action plans. This Guidance Note sheds light on the design elements that the IRM will assess.

### **Design Elements to Consider in Establishing a Multistakeholder Forum**

In setting up a multistakeholder forum to discuss implementation of commitments, countries consider varying types of structures, activities, and levels of transparency that are well suited to their needs. The table below outlines the design elements in setting up a forum for regular consultation. It describes different arrangements and activities grouped by basic minimum requirements and by good practice.

The “Basic Minimum Requirements” column outlines what is required in a consultation forum for participation in OGP, as stated in the Articles of Governance. The IRM will assess these requirements. Meeting the basic requirements may help ease and strengthen implementation of commitments and deepen legitimacy.

The “Good Practice” column describes the emerging practices among OGP countries that advance public consultation as a true partnership based on trust, understanding, an exchange of expertise, and monitoring of the process. The IRM will document these practices in reports as well.

The design elements outlined in Good Practice are consistent with setting up a permanent dialogue forum. Experience shows that establishing a permanent dialogue forum provides a mechanism for effective engagement during the implementation of a country’s OGP action plan. A permanent dialogue forum means there is a formal structure for regular, two-way communication between government and civil society.

Governments are expected to set up a forum that meets the basic minimum requirements, and are encouraged to strive for an approach in line with good practice to help strengthen the OGP process and outcome in their country.



DESIGN ELEMENT DESCRIPTION	BASIC MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	GOOD PRACTICE
<b>1. STRUCTURE OF FORUM</b>		
<p><b>1.1 Clear Lead(s)</b> There is a government entity leading coordination of implementation of OGP commitments. The entity leading the coordination forum may be the overall lead on OGP or the lead for a group of commitments or issue areas.</p>	<p>Clear lead agency for consultation identified; point of contact publicly available.</p>	<p><b>Consultation forum:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is co-designed by government and civil society;</li> <li>• Has a formal structure;</li> <li>• Has clearly defined roles and responsibilities (including documentation of forum's activities, accountability mechanisms, etc.);</li> <li>• Has clear rules on who participates as well as selection and rotation (if applicable) of members;</li> <li>• Ideally is co-managed or co-governed by government and civil society; and</li> <li>• Meets regularly (at least once every two months).</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.2 Participants</b> - The breadth of the call to participate in the multistakeholder dialogue forum. Depending on the context, participants may include a wide group of stakeholders or a smaller group that adequately represent the relevant players.</p>	<p>Minimum: Inform or invite interested government and nongovernment parties from the past and potential collaborators.</p>	
<p><b>1.3 Meeting Regularity</b> - The frequency and format of the multistakeholder forum meetings. Depending on the action plan, it may cover all, one, or several commitments in a single consultation process.</p>		
<b>2. FORUM ACTIVITIES</b>		
<p><b>2.1 Preparing for Action Plan Development</b> - The role of the consultation forum in the development of the national action plan.</p>	<p>The forum hosts co-creation of national action plans through a multistakeholder process, with the active engagement of citizens and civil society.</p>	<p>The consultation forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designs and executes an inclusive consultation process; and</li> <li>• Leads on reviewing input from consultation and jointly defines priorities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.2 Commitment Tracking</b> - Transparency Measures - The manner in which the consultation forum discloses information on progress of OGP commitments to the public.</p>	<p>The forum publicizes progress on OGP website and relevant government website. There is a two-week notice and comment period for the public.</p>	<p>Forum manages/supervises an online dashboard which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly explains each commitment;</li> <li>• Communicates timetable and milestones;</li> <li>• Clearly shows progress of commitments; and</li> <li>• Is updated regularly.</li> </ul>



DESIGN ELEMENT DESCRIPTION	BASIC MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	GOOD PRACTICE
<b>2. FORUM ACTIVITIES (CONT)</b>		
<p><b>2.3 Commitment Tracking - Frequency of Updates</b> - The rate at which the forum provides publicly available documentation on the progress of implementing OGP commitments.</p>	<p>Progress of commitments is published in the yearly self-assessment reports.</p>	<p>The forum provides supervision on periodic or ongoing tracking, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision of the collection of documentation regarding action plan commitments; and</li> <li>• Development of strategies to foster compliance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.4 Awareness-Raising and External Communication</b> - The activities carried out to foster participation in OGP and to communicate activities related to OGP in the country.</p>	<p>The forum posts online notice of meetings and request for public comments in advance.</p>	<p>The consultation forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducts awareness activities that foster informed participation (both government and civil society) in the national OGP process;</li> <li>• Uses multiple, appropriate channels, clearly communicating expectations for level of public involvement; and</li> <li>• Has a clear communications mandate (i.e. on how to engage the media, etc.).</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.5 Upholding Accountability</b> - The format and timing in which the multistakeholder body informs the public about its activities and outcomes.</p>	<p>The forum keeps all attendees/ mailing lists informed of outcomes and status of implementing OGP commitments.</p>	<p>The forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has clear guidelines on transparency and accountability;</li> <li>• Documents activities and decision making processes;</li> <li>• Discloses/publishes information about activities online (e.g. meeting minutes); and</li> <li>• Has clear mechanisms to receive feedback/input from society.</li> </ul>

### Examples of Consultation Forums

- **Colombia** - The country's Follow-Up Committee is composed of two representatives from the government, three from civil society, and one from the private sector. Together, the representatives embody more than 60 organizations at the national and regional levels. In the participatory sessions, the Committee revised Colombia's Action Plan for more clarity and improved timelines of commitments to better enable execution. The self-assessment provides official information on participating institutions and their role.

- **Georgia** – Commitment 10 of the country’s second national action plan moves forward the activities of Georgia’s Open Government Forum (Forum). Established in Georgia’s first action plan, the Forum is comprised of responsible agencies, NGOs, international organizations, and private sector. The national forum sessions are held regularly, on a monthly basis to support implementation of the action plan, monitor progress of commitments, and raise awareness on Open Government Georgia’s process.
- **Mexico** – The Technical Secretariat is composed of a member of civil society and representatives from two government agencies. They jointly govern and manage all aspects of OGP domestically. (More information is available in the government’s self-assessment.)
- **Sierra Leone** – The country established a Steering Committee composed of 17 government officials and 17 individuals from civil society. Members of the Steering Committee are part of thematic clusters, which are coordinated by one representative from civil society and one from government. Thematic cluster meetings are scheduled to implement decisions, and to receive feedback. The consultation process also was held in 13 districts and incorporated the Sierra Leonean diaspora.
- **United States** – Government and civil society created implementation and monitoring teams organized based on specific commitments to complement more central meetings between key government actors and civil society. The entity leading the coordination forum is selected based on commitments, and the participants in the each forum consist of those relevant and active to that particular issue area.

As these examples show, countries may consider establishing a single forum or a hub-and-spoke model for their consultation mechanism. The single forum model, such as the one in Georgia, convenes government and civil society relevant to the action plan in one formally established, central committee for coordination. The hub-and-spoke model of engagement consists of a network of smaller forums – for instance, broken down by sector, thematic areas, or commitments – and may be coordinated by a larger central committee, as in the case of the United States.

## Conclusion

In practice, the structures of consultation forums range from ad hoc and informal to regular meetings established by a presidential decree or regulation. The intensity of the dialogue or partnership differs in each country. It ranges from regular government updates on the status of commitments to intense cooperation with stakeholders in co-managing OGP national action plan development, implementation, and monitoring.

The choice of the consultation form will depend largely on the country’s OGP commitments, national context, which stakeholders need to be consulted, and the available resources. We hope that as countries craft and learn from a consultation forum that works well for their situation, we begin to see more good practices turning into common practice for maintaining dialogue during implementation.

## 6. OGP Working Groups

OGP Working groups provide an opportunity for open government reformers working on similar issues to share experiences, lessons, and best practice in specific open government policy areas. The goal of the working groups is to connect government and civil society participants so they can inspire and learn from each other to improve the quality of OGP national action plans. They are a resource for peer learning and technical assistance in support of developing and implementing more ambitious commitments. The working groups can help you tap into the expertise you need to develop more meaningful and innovative open government initiatives.

Each working group is led by government and civil society co-anchors that are experts in their field. Working groups are open to interested government and civil society reformers, professional networks, and others who are interested in the broader open government agenda. Currently there are five working groups covering critical open government policy areas:

1. **Open Data Working Group** - led by World Wide Web Foundation and the Government of Canada
2. **Access to Information Working Group** - led by Carter Center and Mexico's Federal Institute for Access to Public Information and Data Protection
3. **Fiscal Openness Working Group** - led by the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency, the Federal Secretary of Budget & Planning of the Government of Brazil, and the International Budget Partnership.
4. **Openness in Natural Resources Working Group** - led by Natural Resources Governance Institute and World Resources International)
5. **Legislative Openness Working Group** - led by the National Democratic Institute and the Congress of Chile

### How Working Groups Can Help

Working groups can assist OGP countries depending where they are in the national action plan cycle. They can help countries develop more ambitious commitments by facilitating peer learning and providing feedback on draft action plans. They can also serve as a resource for targeted peer exchange and direct technical assistance to improve the quality of implementation of action plans. The following are different ways in which the Working Group can be of assistance:

Action Plan	How Working Groups Can Help
Action plan development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share experiences and best practices on aspects of action plan development (e.g. consultations with civil society, development of commitment milestones).</li> <li>• Review and provide feedback on content of draft action plans.</li> </ul>

Action Plan	How Working Groups Can Help
Action plan development (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help broaden the organisations involved in consultations by recommending thematic experts in specific issue areas.</li> <li>• Identify ambitious model commitments for OGP countries to include in their action plans.</li> <li>• Connect governments to learning resources such as country case studies, best practices, research papers, etc.</li> </ul>
Action plan implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share experiences and best practices on aspects of action plan implementation (e.g. implementing ATI legislation, setting up open data portals, coordinating with civil society, etc).</li> <li>• Conduct targeted bilateral or regional peer exchanges among countries (e.g. study tours, video conference calls).</li> <li>• Connect the working group's experts to governments that request technical assistance on implementation.</li> </ul>
Action Plan Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist governments and civil society with performance monitoring methodologies for self assessment and shadow reports.</li> <li>• Help governments incorporate feedback from the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) to strengthen subsequent national action plans.</li> <li>• Participate in domestic IRM report launches.</li> <li>• Supplement IRM findings with additional analysis and recommendations for government and civil society actors.</li> </ul>

## Contact Us

Contact the OGP Support Unit or working group co-anchors if you would like to participate in working group activities or receive support in developing and implementing your action plan. For more information please email Abhinav Bahl, OGP Support Unit, Washington DC at [abhinav.bahl@opengovpartnership.org](mailto:abhinav.bahl@opengovpartnership.org).

# OGP Fiscal Openness Working Group

The **Fiscal Openness Working Group** enables peer-to-peer learning to advance transparency and public participation in fiscal policies around the world. The working group aims to strengthen learning on good practices, challenges, and solutions in public finance management and supports the development and implementation of better fiscal openness commitments in national action plans

The FOWG is co-anchored by the **Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency**, the Federal Secretary of Budget & Planning of the Government of Brazil, and the International Budget Partnership. GIFT is a multi-stakeholder action network that works to advance and institutionalize significant and continuous improvements in the state of fiscal transparency, participation, and accountability worldwide by strengthening global norms, incentives, peer-learning, and technical assistance. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the International Budget Partnership, the International Federation of Accountants, and the Governments of the Philippines and Brazil are part of GIFT. More information at <http://fiscaltransparency.net>.

## How We Can Help

The FOWG can:

1. Provide a platform for peer-to-peer exchange and learning on fiscal openness.
2. Offer efficient and coordinated access to international good practices, tools, norms, assessments, and technical expertise on fiscal openness.
3. Support participating countries to implement better fiscal openness commitments and pursue ambitious goals.
4. Motivate governments to become champions of fiscal openness.

## Recent Achievements

**Technical Assistance:** FOWG has responded to requests for technical assistance in the formulation and implementation of national action plan commitments in Paraguay, Liberia, Ghana, the Philippines and New Zealand.

**Peer learning opportunities:** FOWG has organized several sessions at OGP regional meetings in Ireland, Costa Rica, Indonesia, and Tanzania; peer learning workshops in Brasilia and Manila; and meetings on public participation in fiscal policies in Mexico, South Africa, Tunisia, and Washington DC. Ministry of Finance representatives from more than 25 OGP countries have attended these meetings to exchange ideas and experiences on fiscal transparency portals, budget analysis, citizens budgets, public participation, and timely publication of budget documents.

**Tools and resources:** The working group has produced analytical and policy background papers on fiscal openness commitments across the partnership. GIFT is developing a global tool with visualization and analysis capabilities for publishing micro-level budget and fiscal outturn information in open data formats to help non-experts use the data. The governments of Paraguay, Brazil and Tunisia have actively engaged on this project.

## Contact Us

Visit our [webpage](#) for more information on the Fiscal Openness Working Group. If you are interested in participating in the working group or requesting assistance please contact Juan Pablo Guerrero, Network Director, Global Initiative on Fiscal Transparency at [guerrero@fiscaltransparency.net](mailto:guerrero@fiscaltransparency.net).

# OGP Openness in Natural Resources Working Group

The **Openness in Natural Resources Working Group** (ONRWG) fosters the creation and implementation of concrete and impactful natural resource-related commitments. The ONRWG provides a space for peer learning and exchange of experience between and across government and civil society. Our ultimate ambition is to advance our collective understanding of how openness in natural resources can improve citizen's lives.

The ONRWG brings together governments and civil society organizations who have a demonstrated track record advancing natural resource governance and are deepening their commitment through the Open Government Partnership. The ten participating countries include: Colombia, Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia, Mexico, Mongolia, Philippines, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States of America. The Working Group also provides technical support on a request basis to OGP participating countries.

The ONRWG is co-chaired by the Government of Indonesia, the **Natural Resource Governance Institute** (NRGI) and the **World Resources Institute** (WRI), and is supported by international initiatives such as the **Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative** (EITI), and organizations such as the **World Bank** and **UNDP**.

## How we can help

The Working Group recognizes that while significant progress has been made in the disclosure of information related to the natural resource sector, there remain persistent areas of opacity. The Working Group seeks to promote disclosure of contracts, beneficial ownership and environmental policy, management and compliance data. OGP participating countries have already made progress on many of these fronts. To illustrate, the UK announced a publicly accessible central registry of company beneficial ownership information in 2013, and Mongolia has committed to develop a central information database of land tenure, minerals and oil license owners, open to the public. The Working Group will seek to capitalize on that momentum and broaden the number of countries and commitments promoting disclosure in these key areas.

Disclosure of information will only be made meaningful if countries adhere to open data standards that promote accessibility and usability by a range of stakeholders. The Working Group members have experience and expertise to share in how to use spatial data, maps and portals effectively to ensure disclosure advances transparency. There are more than thirty commitments focused on the creation of natural resource information portals: for example, Indonesia has created the OneMap portal for forest management. The Working Group will leverage this and other experiences to draw lessons on good practice in the release and organization of information.

The Working Group also provides support to better understand and identify key natural resource issues, formulate commitments that offer concrete solutions, share experience in implementation and seek partnerships with contacts across the globe for expertise and advice. By supporting regional meetings, such as the Africa and LAC (Latin America and the Caribbean) meetings on open data and extractives, and the publication of OpenGov Guide, the Working Group is able to capitalize on the collective knowledge of its members.

## Contact Us

Visit our [webpage](#) for more information on the Openness in Natural Resources Working Group or click [here](#) to become a member of the Working Group. If you are interested in participating in the working group please contact Suneeta Kaimal, Chief Operating Officer, Natural Resources Governance Institute at [skaimal@resourcegovernance.org](mailto:skaimal@resourcegovernance.org) or Carole Excell, Project Director, The Access Initiative, World Resources Institute at [CExcell@wri.org](mailto:CExcell@wri.org).

# OGP Open Data Working Group

The **Open Data Working Group (ODWG)** supports the design and implementation of ambitious action plan commitments related to the release of high quality, open government data, helping OGP countries around the world to advance their open data agendas. The ODWG has focused its efforts to date on four work streams: Principles (led by Government of Canada and OECD), Standards (led by Open North and Government of the United States), Measurement of Impact (led by the World Wide Web Foundation and Government of the United States), and Capacity Building (led by AVINA and Government of Mexico). The ODWG is co-anchored by the Government of Canada and the World Wide Web Foundation. The working group is governed by a Steering Committee (SC), which is made up of representatives of governments, civil society, and multilateral institutions. Under the leadership of its co-anchors, the steering committee plans and manages work plans, working group meetings, and other related activities.

## How We Can Help

The ODWG offers a number of services to support government and civil society in participating countries:

1. **National Action Plan Development and Review:** Assist in formulating ambitious open data commitments as well as review draft national action plans to provide feedback and suggest how open data commitments could be strengthened.
2. **Expert Network:** Provide access to a network of open data experts and advocates, allowing OGP members to circulate information or request expert input for commitment implementation and other specific initiatives.
3. **Event Planning Support:** Plan events related to open data, suggesting potential speakers and providing information on key topics.
4. **Bilateral Discussions:** Engage in bilateral discussions with country or civil society representatives to support increased capacity for open data.

The ODWG is always looking for new ways to support OGP participants, both government and civil society. If there is a way the working group can help you, please get in touch with the co-anchors and we will do all we can to provide our support and guidance.

## Recent Achievements

Throughout 2015, each work stream has focused on developing key products or initiatives to support open data implementation worldwide. Recent achievements of the ODWG work streams include:

- **Principles:** The development and launch of the **International Open Data Charter**, an initiative which seeks to codify common foundational open data principles.
- **Standards:** Creating and publishing an inventory of open data standards by type.
- **Measurement of Impact:** Consulting with subject matter experts on common criteria, metrics, and methodologies to measure the impact of open data activities.
- **Capacity Building:** Providing on-demand consultation and peer review services to support the development of Action Plan Open Data commitments in multiple OGP member countries.
- **Open Data for Development Research Fund:** Providing almost \$100,000 in funding for **research projects** dedicated to open data for sustainable development.
- **International Open Data Conference:** Contributing to shaping the agenda of the **International Open Data Conference (IODC) 2015** in Ottawa, Canada.
- **Open Data Leaders' Summit:** Working with the ODI to support a Leaders' Summit on the margins of IODC 2015, bringing together open data leaders from countries around the world.

## Contact Us

Visit our **webpage** for more information. If you are interested in participating in the working group please contact Jose M. Alonso, Program Manager, Open Data, World Wide Web Foundation at [jose.alonso@webfoundation.org](mailto:jose.alonso@webfoundation.org) or Stephen Walker, Treasury Board Secretariat, Government of Canada at [stephen.walker@tbs-sct.gc.ca](mailto:stephen.walker@tbs-sct.gc.ca).

# OGP Legislative Openness Working Group

Greater openness of the legislative process enables citizens to engage more effectively in the policymaking process by providing access to information about the laws under consideration, as well as opportunities to influence legislative deliberation. While some countries have made OGP action plan commitments to improve public consultation in legislative or regulatory action, legislative engagement has been underemphasized in the action plans of many OGP participating countries. The Legislative Openness Working Group aims to expand the number and quality of relevant commitments in national action plans. The Working Group is co-chaired by the Congress of Chile, led by Senator Hernán Larraín, and the National Democratic Institute, led by Scott Hubli.

## How we can help

1. Deepen parliamentary engagement in OGP and build awareness of open government issues within the parliamentary community.
2. Support governments, legislatures and civil society in developing legislative openness commitments.
3. Provide a forum for peer-to-peer sharing of best practices, experiences, and innovative technologies.
4. Develop high-quality tools, resources, and research products to be shared within the broader OGP community.
5. Strengthen the capacity of and provide opportunities for legislatures and civil society to collaborate towards greater openness.
6. Identify technical assistance and partnership opportunities on legislative openness.
7. Support OGP national action plans especially where commitments require passing legislation.

## Recent achievements

*Global Legislative Openness Week (GLOW):* GLOW, which took place September 7-15, was the second annual week dedicated to legislative openness. In addition to meetings, advocacy campaigns, and other activities organized by LOWG members in over 10 countries, the week included a global meeting of the Working Group hosted by the Parliament of Georgia. The meeting brought together more than 100 open parliament champions from 32 countries to discuss strategies for advancing legislative openness through the OGP process.

*Comparative Research and Data Explorer:* Over the last year, the Working Group has collected detailed information on openness practices in more than 40 countries. In the coming months, the Working Group will launch a data explorer to make it easy for users to search, sort, and analyze the collected data, which can be used to inform OGP commitments and reform efforts.

*Developing Standards on Legislative Ethics:* Members of the Working Group, in conjunction with the broader parliamentary openness community, has drafted Common Ethical Principles for MPs, a set of normative standards on legislative ethics. Following a public comment period, the document is currently being finalized and will be published in advance of the OGP Summit.

## Contact Us

Visit our [webpage](#) for more information on the Legislative Openness Working Group. If you are interested in participating in the working group or requesting assistance please contact Dan Swislow, Senior Partnerships Officer, National Democratic Institute at [dswislow@ndi.org](mailto:dswislow@ndi.org).

# OGP Access to Information Working Group

The [Access to Information Working Group \(ATIWG\)](#) is a resource to help governments and civil society design and implement ambitious commitments to advance the right of access to information and lead to greater transparency and openness. The ATIWG is co-anchored by the Carter Center and the Federal Institute for Access to Information and Data Protection, Government of Mexico. The working group includes almost 200 participants from government and civil society across all regions that support the group's activities.

## The ATIWG has four goals:

- 1) Assist participating governments in designing and implementing ambitious commitments regarding Access To Information and disclosure of relevant information.
- 2) Support the participation of key stakeholders, access to information oversight agencies, networks, and civil society in the OGP access to information dialogue.
- 3) Encourage best practices and coordinate efforts to promote access to public information with OGP participating countries.
- 4) Promote the right of access to information as a catalyst for generating useful public knowledge and contributing to building more open institutions and accountability.

## How We Can Help

1. Support in developing more ambitious access to information commitments and reviewing new draft commitments
2. Provide concrete opportunities for peer exchange and mentorship
3. Provide advice and assistance to countries related to the implementation of their access to information commitments
4. Demonstrate how access to information theoretically and substantively strengthens other OGP principles and objectives
5. Encourage member participation in upcoming OGP activities and organize ATIWG panels or speakers for key events
6. Develop new research and analysis related to ATI OGP commitments and disseminate additional relevant information among its members, such as IRM reports, research, and articles related to access to information and OGP, etc.

The ATIWG is open to interested government representatives, civil society organizations, networks, advocates of the right to access information, and others whose work relates to access to information and the broader transparency and accountability agenda. The working group is always looking for new ways to support both government and civil society from OGP participating countries.

## Recent Achievements

Since 2014 the ATIWG has supported access to information commitments across the Partnership. Highlights include:

- Analysis of access to information-related commitments in OGP action plans
- Recommendations on developing and implementing access to information commitments to interested countries, such as Sierra Leone, Tunisia, Georgia, and Liberia
- Exchange visit of government and civil society leaders from Georgia to Mexico on access to information implementation
- Supporting research demonstrating access to information linkages to OGP commitment
- Webinars on lessons learned and best practices
- ATIWG panels and workshops at regional meetings in Georgia, Costa Rica, Ireland, and the OGP Summit in London.

## Contact Us

Visit our [webpage](#) for more information on the Access to Information Working Group. If you are interested in participating in the working group please contact Laura Neuman, Director, Global Access to Information Program, The Carter Center at [laura.neuman@cartercenter.org](mailto:laura.neuman@cartercenter.org) or Joel Salas, Commissioner, Federal Institute for Access to Information and Data Protection, Government of Mexico at [joel.salas@ifai.org.mx](mailto:joel.salas@ifai.org.mx).

# 7. OGP Calendar Guidance Note

*This section outlines the long-term calendar for all Open Government Partnership (OGP) participating countries. The Support Unit, based on rules issued by the OGP Steering Committee, is providing governments and civil society with this information so they can plan accordingly and avoid future delays. This calendar includes three key features:*

- i A two-year action plan cycle with continuous implementation
- ii Grouping countries into odd and even years
- iii Rules regarding delays

## **i Two-year action plan cycle with continuous implementation.**

OGP participating countries work in a two-year National Action Plan (NAP) calendar cycle, in which there are no gaps between the end of the last action plan and the beginning of the new one. This means every country will be implementing a NAP at all times, although individual commitments still vary in length.

In order to achieve this, countries will draft their new NAPs during the last six months of implementation of the previous NAP. The OGP Support Unit, including the Civil Society Engagement Team, and Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) will work closely with countries during this important time to provide support and guidance. Please see Section 3 for rules regarding delays.

This shift to a two-year cycle also affects the timing of the government self-assessment report and “IRM Progress Reports”. From now on, governments will need to complete two self-assessment reports for each action plan: one after the first year of implementation, and one upon completion of the two-year cycle. The first year self-assessment should focus on the NAP drafting process, while the second year should focus on the final results of the reforms completed in the NAP. Please refer to the OGP [“Self-Assessment Report Guidance Note”](#) for more information.

The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) will also produce two reports during the two-year action plan cycle. The IRM will deliver the first progress report by the January of the second year of implementation (18 months into the two-year cycle). This progress report includes an analysis of the action plan, the action plan drafting process and progress in implementing commitments as of the mid-point of the two-year cycle. A key objective of this report is to recommend areas for improvement before countries publish their next action plan. The second “End of Term IRM Report” will focus on the final results achieved in the second year of NAP implementation.

## Description of Activities

For each action plan cycle, there are six different activities that happen in parallel or in a series of sequential steps. The due dates for each activity vary according to whether a country is in the Even or Odd Year grouping.

ACTIVITY	LEAD ACTOR	DURATION	DESCRIPTION
<b>Draft NAP</b>	<b>Government (Co-created with Civil Society)</b>	<b>6 months</b>	Co-creation of the NAP with civil society. New NAPs are developed during the last six months of implementation of an ongoing NAP.
<b>Implement NAP</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>24 months</b>	Implementation of the NAP over a two year period. Throughout the implementation period, governments are expected to conduct periodic consultations with civil society to share progress and updates.
<b>Develop and Publish Midterm Self-Assessment</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>3 months</b>	Development of the midterm self-assessment report that focuses on the consultation process, relevance and ambitiousness of the commitments, and progress to date. This includes a two-week consultation period as stipulated in OGP Guidelines.
<b>Develop and Publish IRM Progress Report</b>	<b>IRM</b>	<b>5 months</b>	The IRM prepares its main evaluation on the NAP, which focuses on the consultation process, relevance and ambitiousness of the commitments, and advances to date. This report will be available in time for the development of the next NAP.
<b>Develop and Publish NAP Final Self-Assessment</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>3 months</b>	Government presents the final self-assessment of their completed action plan, which focuses on final results and lessons learned. This document is produced after a two-week public consultation period and in parallel with the start of implementation of a new NAP.
<b>Develop and Publish IRM NAP End of Term Report</b>	<b>IRM</b>	<b>2 months</b>	The IRM prepares an “end of term report,” which will focus on the commitments that have advanced since the publication of the main progress report.

## ii Grouping countries into odd and even years.

All OGP participating countries will join an even or odd year grouping. Even year countries deliver new NAPs in even years and odd year countries deliver new NAPs in odd years. This replaces the previous “cohort” system. The complete list of Odd and Even Year countries is available on page 6 of this document.

### Even years

The following chart describes how the calendar will work for even year countries:

Activity	2015												2016												2017											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
<b>IMPLEMENT NAP 2</b> July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2016	[Blue bar]																																			
<b>DEVELOP NAP 2 MIDTERM SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT</b> Due date September 30, 2015													[Light blue bar]																							
<b>PUBLISH IRM NAP 2 PROGRESS REPORT</b> Due date January 2016													[Orange bar]																							
<b>DRAFT NAP 3</b> Due date June 30, 2016													[Dark blue bar]																							
<b>IMPLEMENT NAP 3</b> July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2018													[Blue bar]												[Blue bar]											
<b>DEVELOP NAP 2 END OF TERM SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT</b> Due date September 30, 2016													[Light blue bar]																							
<b>PUBLISH IRM NAP 2 END OF TERM REPORT</b> Due date September 30, 2016													[Orange bar]																							
<b>DEVELOP NAP 3 MIDTERM SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT</b> Due date September 30, 2017																									[Light blue bar]											



### iii Rules regarding delays:

1. Countries should deliver their NAP and Self-Assessment Reports on time. This calendar provides advance notice on all due dates in order to avoid future delays. In order to take full advantage of economies of scale, and to ensure transparency in operations so all OGP countries are treated fairly, the IRM will not modify or rearrange any of their product deadlines to accommodate delays from countries. NAPs and Self-Assessment Reports will be considered delivered when they are uploaded to the OGP website.
2. If a country submits their NAP or Self-Assessment Report late, the delay will be noted in the IRM report.
3. If a country delivers its new NAP more than four months late, the IRM will document this and, working with the Support Unit, will refer the case to the Criteria and Standards Subcommittee of the OGP Steering Committee. The country will receive a letter from the Support Unit noting this occurrence. The same rules apply to the late submission of the self-assessment reports.
4. If a country delivers its new NAP late but within six months of the deadline, the calendar end date for the NAP will not change, but, as a result, the amount of time for implementation of the commitments will be reduced. All NAPs should cover a period of implementation of a minimum of 18 months, although individual commitments may be of any length.
5. If a country is more than six months late it will be moved to the following year's group and be considered to be starting a new action plan cycle (e.g. from the odd year grouping to the even year grouping). The country will receive a letter from the Support Unit noting this occurrence and will be asked to respond with details on what challenges they are facing. The letter will be copied to the Criteria and Standards subcommittee, so that members can consider additional actions or support as necessary, as well as the need to consider if the country has acted contrary to OGP process for two consecutive cycles, in accordance with the OGP Articles of Governance.
6. New countries joining OGP should agree the timetable for their first NAP with the Support Unit within two months of sending their letter of intent.
7. In order to keep to the calendar and ensure the highest quality reporting, all governments should regularly engage with the IRM researcher in their country.

## Grouping is based on when countries deliver new NAPs:

### Even year countries

Albania  
Armenia  
Australia  
Azerbaijan  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Brazil  
Bulgaria  
Canada  
Cape Verde  
Chile  
Cote d'Ivoire  
Croatia  
Czech Republic  
Denmark  
Dominican Republic  
El Salvador  
Estonia  
Georgia  
Greece  
Guatemala  
Honduras  
Indonesia  
Ireland  
Italy  
Jordan  
Kenya  
Lithuania  
Macedonia  
Malawi  
Mexico  
Moldova  
Mongolia  
Montenegro  
Netherlands  
New Zealand  
Nigeria  
Norway  
Papua New Guinea  
Paraguay  
Romania  
Serbia  
Sierra Leone

South Africa  
South Korea  
Spain  
Sri Lanka  
Sweden  
Tanzania  
Trinidad and Tobago  
Tunisia  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom  
Uruguay

### Odd year countries

Argentina  
Colombia  
Costa Rica  
Finland  
France  
Ghana  
Hungary  
Israel  
Latvia  
Liberia  
Malta  
Panama  
Peru  
Philippines  
Slovak Republic  
United States

Grouping as of January 2016.

