



Sweden has made progress in improving access to information and public accountability primarily in aid and development. Yet the government could do more to expand the scope of future commitments by adopting a more holistic approach to open government. This could be achieved by including more government and civil society stakeholders in the development and implementation of commitments and by setting clear objectives.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary international initiative that aims to secure commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) carries out a review of the activities of each OGP participating country. This report summarises the results of the period 1 July 2014 through 30 June 2016 and includes some relevant developments up to August 2016.

The Department for Aid Management (UDSTYR) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is the leading office responsible for Sweden's OGP commitments. The mandate of UDSTYR is limited to foreign aid, and it does not have the power to enforce policy changes on other departments within government. Since open government touches all spheres of government and requires a more holistic approach, the OGP action plan would be better placed in the hands of a government entity with an overarching remit.

The government did not hold a regular multi-stakeholder forum for consultation with civil society organisations (CSOs) during the implementation period for this action plan. The MFA stated, however, that several consultations concerning OGP commitments took place in other forums.

All of the commitments are in line with OGP values. The IRM researcher found that only one of the commitments (increased access to Swedish aid information) had any noteworthy potential impact, albeit marginal. Commitments 3 and 4 (improved opportunities for dialogue and transparency in aid management and implementation) were also the only commitments to open government, although marginally. Three of the commitments have seen substantial progress, while two have a limited completion level.

At the time of writing, Sweden has not presented a new action plan for their third cycle.

Table 1: At a Glance		
	Mid-term	End-of-term
Number of commitments	5	
Number of milestones	25	
Level of completion		
Completed	0	0
Substantial	1	3
Limited	4	2
Not started	0	0
Number of commitments with:		
Clear relevance to OGP values	5	
Transformative potential impact	0	
Substantial or complete implementation	1	3
All three (☆)	0	0
Moving forward		
Number of commitments carried over to next action plan	Unknown	

Consultation with civil society during implementation

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

Sweden has not held any consultations during the implementation of the second national action plan. However, the MFA underlines that several consultations concerning action plan commitments have taken place in other, non-OGP-specific forums. For example, the Joint Commitments (covered in milestone 4.3) saw regular and wide attendance at meetings from both CSOs and the government, and both parties endorsed the end result. Similarly, consultations with civil society also took place regarding the government strategy for aid information and communication activities (see milestone 4.1.). However, the other commitments did not see similar consultation with stakeholders

Table 2: Action Plan Consultation Process		
Phase of action plan	OGP process requirement (Articles of Governance Section)	Did the government meet this requirement
During implementation	Regular forum for consultation during implementation?	No
	Consultations: Open or invitation only?	N/A
	Consultations on IAP2 spectrum	N/A

Progress in commitment implementation

All of the indicators and the method used in the IRM research can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual, available at (<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-irm>). One measure deserves further explanation due to its particular interest for readers and usefulness for encouraging a race to the top between OGP participating countries: the “starred commitment” (★). Starred commitments are considered exemplary OGP commitments. In order to receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:

- It must be specific enough that a judgment can be made about its potential impact. Starred commitments will have "medium" or "high" specificity.
- The commitment’s language should make clear its relevance to opening government. Specifically, it must relate to at least one of the OGP values of access to information, civic participation, or public accountability.
- The commitment would have a "transformative" potential impact if completely implemented.
- Finally, the commitment must see significant progress during the action plan implementation period, receiving a ranking of "substantial" or "complete" implementation.

Based on these criteria, at the midterm and at the end-of term-report, Sweden’s action plan contained no starred commitments.

If commitments fall short of substantial or full completion at the end of the action plan, commitments assessed as starred commitments in the midterm report can lose their starred status. This means that they have an overall limited completion at the end of term, per commitment language.

Finally, the graphs in this section present an excerpt of the wealth of data the IRM collects during its progress reporting process. For the full dataset for Sweden, see the OGP Explorer at www.opengovpartnership.org/explorer.

About “did it open government?”

Often, OGP commitments are vaguely worded or not clearly related to opening government, but they actually achieve significant political reforms. Other times, commitments with significant progress may appear relevant and ambitious but fail to open government. In an attempt to capture these subtleties and, more importantly, actual changes in government practice, the IRM introduced a new variable “did it open government?” in end-of-term reports. This variable attempts to move beyond measuring outputs and deliverables to looking at how the government practice has changed as a result of the commitment’s implementation. This can be contrasted to the IRM’s “starred commitments” which describe *potential* impact.

IRM researchers assess “did it open government?” with regard to each of the OGP values that this commitment is relevant to. It asks, did it stretch the government practice beyond business as usual? The scale for assessment is as follows:

- **Worsened:** Worsens government openness as a result of the measures taken by commitment.
- **Did not change:** Did not change status quo of government practice.
- **Marginal:** Some change, but minor in terms of its impact over level of openness.
- **Major:** A step forward for government openness in the relevant policy area, but remains limited in scope or scale.
- **Outstanding:** A reform that has transformed “business as usual” in the relevant policy area by opening government.

To assess this variable, researchers establish the status quo at the outset of the action plan. They then assess outcomes *as implemented* for changes in government openness.

Readers should keep in mind limitations. IRM end-of-term reports are prepared only a few months after the implementation cycle is completed. The variable focuses on outcomes that can be observed on government openness practices at the end of the two-year implementation period. The report and the variable do not intend to assess impact because of the complex methodological implications and the time frame of the report.

Table 4. Overview: Assessment of progress by commitment

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance (as written)				Potential impact				Completion		Midterm	Did it open government?					
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsens	Did not change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
1. Putting citizens at the centre (e-government) of government administration reforms				✓	✓		✓		✓						✓			✓			
2. A step further on the reuse of public administration documents			✓		✓		✓		✓				✓					✓			
3. Increased access to Swedish aid information				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓					✓		
4. Improved opportunities for dialogue and transparency in aid management and implementation			✓		✓	✓			✓				✓		✓				✓		
5. Increased aid transparency at the global level		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓			✓			

General overview of commitments

As part of OGP, countries are required to make commitments in a two-year action plan. End-of-term reports assess an additional metric: “did it open government?” The tables below summarise the completion level at the end of term and progress on this metric.

Sweden’s action plan included five commitments. Three of them focused on aid transparency. The aid transparency commitments aimed at increased access to Swedish aid information, improved opportunities for dialogue between government and civil society, and increased aid transparency at the global level. The other commitments aimed at enhancing e-government efficiency, supporting digitisation efforts, and release and reuse of public-sector information. Overall, the potential impact of the OGP action plan has been largely diminished because its scope was narrow and did not include commitments on some of the important issues in Sweden that would benefit from more openness and transparency.

In commitment 4 (improve opportunities for dialogue and transparency in aid management and transparency), the IRM researcher clustered milestones 4.3 and 4.4 into one since milestone 4.4 focused on organisation of an aid dialogue and was closely connected to milestone 4.3 concerning the Joint Commitments.

Commitment I. Putting Citizens at the Centre (e-Government) of Government Administration Reforms

Commitment Text:

This commitment aims at making everyday life easier, open up administration in order to support innovation and participation, and increase operational quality and effectiveness as stated in the e-Government strategy “Putting the citizen at the centre”. The strategy has three objectives:

1. Simplicity, in order to develop easy and user-friendly solutions;
2. Transparency and innovation, in order to take advantage of digital opportunities to increase transparency, strengthen democracy, and contribute to increased economic growth through open data;
3. Efficiency through digitisation.

Transparency and openness are crucial to democratic accountability. Therefore transparency and access to information about government administration are vital. Supplying public sector information and digital services in standardised formats allows businesses and organisations to re-use it and to develop their own services. These services can supplement the range of services delivered by government agencies and meet diverse civic needs. The commitment will mainly be achieved through continuing the implementation of the e-Government strategy including strengthening the governance of the digitisation efforts of the government administration.

Main Activities:

- Develop a multi-annual reform-programme to be presented in Budget Bill for 2015, called the Digital move in order to achieve the objectives of the Putting the citizen at the centre strategy, as well as support other public digitisation efforts.
- Appoint an inquiry to investigate how an improved governance of public digital information can improve the efficiency, transparency and innovation in the public sector, as a part of the e-Government reform-programme.
- Promote the use of open data and agencies to release more data.
- Promote and coordinate electronic identification and signature for the public sector e-services.

Milestones:

- 1.1. A multi-annual implementation plan for the e-Government strategy is presented in the Budget Bill for 2015.
- 1.2. A national e-Government project portfolio is launched in 2014.
- 1.3. An inquiry is launched by the Government to explore how improved governance can increase efficiency, transparency and innovation in the public sector.
- 1.4. A web platform for collecting and promoting open government data is developed by VINNOVA on the Government’s mandate.
- 1.5. A flexible solution for electronic identification (e-ID) is developed, based on international standards and procured in a way that meets legislative requirements.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Energy and Communications¹

Supporting institution(s): Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (VINNOVA); The Swedish E-identification Board; The e-Government Delegation;² The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL).

Start date: 2011

End date: 2016

Commitment Overview	Specificity	OGP value relevance (as written)	Potential impact	Comple	Midterm	Did it open government?
				tion	End of term	

	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsens	Did not change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding	
I. Overall			✓		✓			✓			✓				✓			✓				
I.1. E-government plan in Budget Bill 2015			✓		Unclear						✓				✓							
I.2. Launch national e-government portfolio			✓		Unclear					✓						✓						
I.3. Launch inquiry on improved e-governance			✓		Unclear					✓		✓										
I.4. Develop open data platform			✓		✓			✓		✓						✓						
I.5. Develop e-ID solution			✓		Unclear					✓			✓									

Commitment Aim:

Sweden is currently among the leading e-government nations. However, according to the Network Readiness Index 2015, Sweden lags behind many countries on information and communication technology (ICT) policies and on the number of government online services (“government usage,” 20 out of 143), as well as on the quality of services (“Government Online Service Index,” 28 out of 143).³ A key challenge is to increase horizontal digital collaboration across government agencies in order to produce citizen-centric services and increase the level of participation in the production and design of such services. In response to this challenge, Sweden has committed to continuing the implementation of its e-government strategy—“putting the citizen at the centre”—and to improving governance of the digitisation efforts. More specifically, the commitment sets out to:

- ...Develop a reform programme called the “Digital Move” to achieve the objectives of the e-government strategy (1.1).
- ...Promote the release and use of open data (1.2 and 1.4).
- Appoint an inquiry to investigate how improved governance of digital public information can enhance efficiency, transparency, and innovation in the public sector (1.3).
- Promote and coordinate electronic identification and signature for e-services (1.5).

Status

Midterm: Substantial

Commitment I is aimed at continuing the implementation of the Swedish e-government strategy, launched in December 2012.⁴ The majority of milestones were achieved. The e-government reform programme was presented in the 2015 Budget Bill (milestone 1.1), and the efforts to promote the release and use of open data were completed. These efforts included the development of an e-

government portfolio website (1.2), which aims to improve the efficiency of public data use and to avoid duplication, and a web platform (1.4) for collecting and promoting open government data (Öppnadata.se⁵) that aims to standardise the way government authorities publish information about open data sources.⁶

The government inquiry to explore how improved governance can increase efficiency, transparency, and innovation in the public sector (milestone 1.3), and a flexible solution for electronic identification (e-ID) for public-sector e-services (milestone 1.5) had yet to be launched at the time of writing the midterm report. The envisaged e-ID solution would be used for online identification and for signing documents electronically, such as allowing citizens to declare income and notify change of address. Once developed, the new e-ID solution should increase efficiency and lay the groundwork for future e-ID regulations across the European Union (EU). For more information, please see the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report.

End of term: Substantial

Though the government has continued to make progress on implementing its “digital first” e-government strategy, the IRM researcher was unable to find any evidence of progress on the milestones that were incomplete at the midterm report (milestones 1.3 and 1.5).

The IRM researcher has not been able to ascertain the state of the inquiry on increased efficiency, transparency, and innovation in the public sector (milestone 1.3) despite inquiries made with the OGP point of contact in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the point of contact in the implementing agency.⁷

The delivery of an e-ID solution for e-services (milestone 1.5) has been delayed. The e-ID Board, the government agency responsible for the solution, has not yet convinced a number of key private stakeholders (mainly banks) to participate. Moreover, several public-sector agencies have raised issues regarding the security of the e-ID’s technological platform. The e-ID Board plans to complete a review of the solution by the end of 2016.⁸

Therefore, the IRM researcher found that this commitment remains substantially but not fully completed.

Did it open government?

Access to information: Did not change

Sweden is committed to increasing digital collaboration among government agencies in order to improve citizen-centric services. With this commitment, the government expected to promote a more open government that supports innovation and participation by working towards a shared and open digital infrastructure.⁹

Overall, this commitment was found to have moderate potential impact. The milestone activities were important prerequisites for the implementation of the innovative, multi-annual e-government programme. The programme, adopted by Parliament in December 2014, is focused on the development of digital services to facilitate contacts between public authorities and citizens or companies. As written, however, several of the milestones within this commitment were of unclear relevance to OGP values. For example, milestone 1.2 about the e-government portfolio and milestone 1.5 about a new e-ID system are mainly targeting government authorities and concern internal government reform. The only milestone with clear relevance, milestone 1.4, sought to develop an open data platform, though the vague language of the commitment text made it difficult to ascertain the potential impact of the milestone.

In sum, the OGP value relevance was unclear for four out of five milestones, both as written¹⁰ and as implemented. Since the “did it open government?” metric is assessed in terms of relevance to OGP values, the IRM researcher has coded this commitment using the activities outlined in milestone 1.4. However, given the significance of the e-government programme to the potential impact of this commitment, the IRM researcher has included an update on its implementation to note early results.

With regards to milestone 1.4, the open data portal was created already in 2012 and revamped in 2015 with the objective to standardise the way government authorities publish information about open data sources. Since its launch, the portal has registered an increased number of datasets and a variety of formats.¹¹ However, the number of data sources is still limited, and much development remains to be done.¹² The Global Open Data Index ranks Sweden as number 27 (down from rank 13 in 2014) with only 48 percent data openness overall and as low as 0–10 percent on datasets such as “Procurement Tenders,” “Government Spending,” and “Land Ownership.”¹³ Milestone 1.4 did not spur the government to disclose more information and improved the quality of the information only marginally during the action plan period.

The most innovative activity related to this commitment—the multi-annual e-government reform programme—is still at a very early stage of implementation. In February 2016, the government presented the first part of the new “digital first” programme¹⁴ as described in milestone 1.1. The programme is focused on the development of digital services to facilitate contacts between public authorities and citizens or companies. About 20 municipalities will pilot the new digital services, which will be launched in 2017.

The government has already mandated several agencies to promote digital services in cooperation with industry, relevant authorities, and municipalities. For example, the Swedish National Land Survey, a government agency that provides information on Swedish geography and property, was commissioned by the government to speed up the digitisation process in housing construction with the goal of providing more housing in a faster, easier, cheaper, and more sustainable way.¹⁵ The expected result is that citizens will be able to access information about construction works in their neighbourhood early in the planning process. Moreover, the Environmental Protection Agency was given the task of promoting smarter environmental information, such as monitoring both the state of the environment and the progress on environmental issues in all sectors of society.¹⁶ Citizens should, as a result of this programme, gain better access to environmental information on their mobile devices and become more aware about dangerous substances in their environment or in products.

However, these new digital services will not be launched before 2017, so it is too early to say whether it will change government practice to provide better services and information to citizens.

Additionally, the delayed e-ID solution (milestone 1.5) represents a challenge in terms of equality of access. In practice, only people holding a bank account can get an e-ID, which means that it is difficult for newly arrived migrants to access many of the public e-services. This issue is emphasised by an expert that was involved in the initial development plans for the e-ID, who stresses that the state should offer a solution accessible for all people and make sure that the e-ID is not delivered only by private actors (banks).¹⁷ Presently, it is unclear whether the forthcoming e-ID solution will contribute to a more open government, especially in terms of equality of access to services.

Carried forward?

At the time of writing the end-of-term report (September 2016), Sweden has not yet released its next action plan; hence, it is too early to say whether the commitment has been carried forward.

The IRM researcher recommends that future commitments in the area of e-government include more public-facing elements to better address the need for improved access to public information and citizen participation. In particular, a plan for engaging with civil society could be built into future commitments on e-government reform.

A key priority for the future should be to open up public data. In a recent opinion piece, representatives of both government authorities and companies jointly demanded that the government starts investing heavily in open data.¹⁸ To achieve the government’s goal of becoming the world leader in using the opportunities arising with digitalisation,¹⁹ Sweden needs to develop a coherent national policy on open data and invest in the necessary financial and personnel resources.²⁰ Above all, there is a need for a systematic approach to opening data across government agencies, with clear guidelines on data specifications and solutions, and a model for the funding of joint solutions. This would make the publishing of open data more cost effective and raise the quality of

the data. To support the process of opening up data, the government should invest in personnel, knowledge, and technology.²¹

1 Now named the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation.

2 The e-Government Delegation concluded its mission on 15 June 2015.

3 World Economic Forum, The Global Information Technology Report (2015). Network Readiness Index, <http://reports.weforum.org/global-information-technology-report-2015/economies/#economy=SWE>.

4 Link to e-government strategy in Swedish: Med medborgaren i centrum, Regeringens strategi för en digitalt samverkande statsförvaltning Diarienummer: N2012.37, <http://www.regeringen.se/informationsmaterial/2012/12/n2012.37/>.

5 <http://oppnadata.se/>.

6 VINNOVA, "Slutrapport av regeringsuppdrag om den tekniska plattformen oppnadata.se - en portal för innovation," Öppnadata.se, 25 June 2015.

7 The IRM researcher contacted both the OGP point of contact at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by telephone on 9 September 2016 and by email on 17 September 2016 and on 2 October 2016; and the contact person from the implementing agency (the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation) by email on 8 September 2016.

8 Bank ID, "Översynen av Svensk e-legitimation har siktet inställt på framtiden." Interview with the e-Identification Board Director, Eva Ekenberg, (Bank ID Nyhetsbrev, 2 June 2016), www.elegnamnden.se/.../Nyhetsbrev+BankID+Nr2+juni+2016.pdf.

9 The statement about expected impact is based on what is written in Sweden's "Mid-term Self-Assessment Report: Open Government Partnership, National Action Plan 2013–2015," p. 4.

10 See the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report for more information.

11 <http://oppnadata.se/about>.

12 <http://oppnadata.se/about>.

13 Global Open Data Index 2015, <http://index.okfn.org/place/sweden/>.

14 There was a slight title change from "the digital move" to "digital first" since the OGP action plan was launched.

15 Regeringskansliet, "Digitalisering ska förenkla bostadsplaneringen," Government Offices, 18 February 2016, <http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2016/02/digitalisering-ska-forenkla-bostadsplaneringen/>.

16 Naturvårdsverket, Digitalt först—smartare miljöinformation, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, 1 July 2016, <http://www.naturvardsverket.se/Miljoarbete-i-samhället/Miljoarbete-i-Sverige/Regeringsuppdrag/Digitalt-forst--smartare-miljoinformation/>.

17 "Statens e-legitimation tillbaka på ruta ett – fiaskoprojektet tas om från början," Computer Sweden, 10 May 2016, <http://computersweden.idg.se/2.2683/1.657863/svensk-e-legitimation-fiasko>.

18 "Vi kräver att regeringen storsatsar på öppna data," Computer Sweden, 6 September 2016.

19 This government goal means that public agencies, municipalities, and county councils should be the best in the world in the use of digitalisation possibilities for creating an easier life for individuals and businesses, a more climate-friendly society, more jobs, and more housing. Source: Aftonbladet. Så ska vårt land bli bäst i världen på it. Opinion piece by Mehmet Kaplan, the minister for housing and urban development, Mikael Damberg, minister for enterprise, Åsa Romson, minister of the environment, and Sven-Erik Bucht, minister for rural affairs Regeringskansliet (Aftonbladet, 8 February 2016), <http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2015/12/mehmet-kaplan-tar-emot-digitaliseringskommissionens-betankande> <http://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/article22214980.ab>.

20 Johannes Semere, "Öppen offentlig data - Hinder och utmaningar som offentlig sektor upplever i samband öppen datapublicering" (Bachelor thesis, University of Lund, 2016), <https://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/search/publication/8881728>.

21 VINNOVA's final report on the Öppnadata.se portal published in June 2015 (VINNOVA, "Slutrapport av regeringsuppdrag").

Commitment 2. A Step Further on the Reuse of Public Administration Documents

Commitment Text:

The commitment on a step further on the re-use of public administration documents aims to enhance economic growth, greater openness and better service for citizens. Various estimates point to considerable value for society when the re-use of public administration documents is increased. When information from the public sector is being re-used, compiled, processed and made available, the ability of citizens to gain insight and make demands on government activities increases. A more open government can increase its legitimacy among citizens and their willingness to participate in the development of the service level, efficiency and quality of public services. The commitment will mainly be achieved through changes in Swedish legislation, actions to promote and monitor the re-use of public administration documents, and an evaluation of the re-use of public data.

Main activities:

-Prepare for changes in the Act on the re-use of public administration documents (2010:566) in order to implement the Directive 2013/37/EU (Public Sector Information Directive).

-Support initiatives related to the project 'Application profile for data portals in Europe' (DCAT-AP), where Sweden participates.

-Continue to facilitate actions in order to promote agencies' re-use of public administration documents at different levels.

- Improve comprehensive follow-up and monitoring, including continuing to systematically give missions to agencies to report on their work on re-using public administration documents

Milestones:

2.1. Full implementation of the Public Sector Information Directive (PSI)

2.2. Systematic reports of agencies work on reusing public information

2.3. Participation in the European Commission's work on DCAT-AP

2.4. Continued actions to facilitate agencies' work on re-using public administration documents

2.5. An evaluation of the re-use of public administration documents by the Swedish Agency for Public Management

Responsible institution: Ministry of Finance

Supporting institution(s): The National Archives; The Swedish National Financial Management Authority; Swedish Competition Authority; Swedish Government Agency for Innovations Systems; The Swedish Agency for Public Management

Start date: 2011

End date: 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance (as written)				Potential impact				Completion		Midterm		Did it open government?					
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsens	Did not change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding	
2. Overall			✓		✓			✓		✓				✓				✓				
			✓		✓				✓				✓									

written justification from authorities if their requests on the reuse of data are refused or come with conditions.⁵ For more information, please see the 2013–2014 midterm IRM report.

End of term: Limited

Based on the government self-assessment report and media monitoring conducted by the IRM researcher, limited progress has been made on this commitment. The evaluation of the reuse of public administration documents by the Swedish Agency for Public Management planned in milestone 2.5 has produced its first report in September 2015. This report described the current situation with the reuse of PSI (as assessed during summer 2015) and how the authorities perceive and work with this issue. The report was based on a survey of 310 state and municipal authorities that showed that about half of them believe that they have substantial or specific information that may be of interest for reuse. At the same time, the survey revealed that the authorities have not come very far in making this information available. Only a few authorities have developed concrete plans to facilitate the reuse of information, and about 20 percent of the authorities are not aware of the actual significance of the current law on the reuse of PSI.⁶ The report concludes that many public authorities are not making enough progress to reach the final aim of the PSI Directive, which is to make as much information available for reuse as possible.⁷

Milestone 2.2, “reporting on agencies’ reuse of public information,” and Milestone 2.4, “facilitating agencies’ work on the reuse of documents,” were vaguely formulated, and the IRM researcher could not find any publicly available evidence of further attempts by the government to make progress on these two milestones. The IRM researcher sent a draft of the commitment analysis to the government contact point for this commitment—Karina Aldén, deputy director at the Ministry of Finance—for comments on 8 September 2016 and got a reply saying that she did not have any views on the draft on 25 October 2016. Therefore, completion of this commitment is assessed as limited.

Did it open government?

Access to information: Did not change

This commitment is aimed at promoting the reuse of public-sector information. To date, there is no indication of increased government openness resulting from the achievements under this commitment. The IRM researcher consulted an expert on open data and its reuse who confirmed these findings.⁸

The purpose of facilitating the reuse of public-sector information (PSI) converges with the open data agenda, which implies that the public sector should publish data in an open, machine-readable format without restriction for commercial reuse. However, opening up PSI has proved to be complex. A government inquiry on PSI in Sweden,⁹ as well as academic studies,¹⁰ judge that the law is not a sufficient incentive for authorities to implement the EU’s PSI Directive and to take full advantage of the benefits of extensive reuse of information. Above all, the public authorities need to develop significant technical skills and get adequate financial and organisational resources in order to manage, organise, and present the data.¹¹ Moreover, many authorities, especially on the local level, are not aware of the legal requirements on PSI and do not realise the importance of adopting a more proactive approach in making the data more accessible, as opposed to passively waiting for requests of information to come in.¹²

Carried forward?

Sweden has not yet released its next action plan; hence, it is too early to say whether the commitment has been carried forward.

In order to speed up the reuse of PSI, the IRM researcher recommends that future commitments in the area aim at:¹³

- Complementing the PSI law with a roadmap setting out what data should be opened up and by when;
- Developing a model for funding joint solutions across government authorities in order to diminish the costs of data;

- Developing a ranking system, which would allow stakeholders to assess authorities' progress and identify the leading public authorities in the field of open data to feature as best practice cases; and
- Informing and training public authorities, especially on the local level. A starting point would be to make sure that all authorities are aware of the guidelines on reuse of PSI¹⁴ developed by the Swedish e-Delegation and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL). These guidelines contain basic information on the legal framework and on how authorities should work on the reuse of information.

For this commitment to be “complete,” the government should also clarify the meaning of milestone 2.2, “reporting on agencies’ reuse of public information,” and milestone 2.4, “facilitating agencies’ work on reuse of documents.” These milestones were vaguely formulated, making it impossible to assess their level of accomplishment

1 E. Eklund and O. Jansson, A new PSI Directive for more and cheaper re-use of information (Delphi, September 2013), <http://www.delphi.se/>.

2 The statement about expected impact is based on what is written in Sweden’s “Mid-term Self-Assessment Report: Open Government Partnership, National Action Plan 2013–2015.”

3 Ibid.

4 Since 2013 content held by museums, libraries, and archives falls within the scope of application of the PSI Directive as well. <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/european-legislation-reuse-public-sector-information>.

5 “Reuse of information from the public administration,” Report 2014/15: FiU14. (“Vidareutnyttjande av information från den offentliga förvaltningen,” Betänkande 2014/15:FiU14), <http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Utskottens-dokument/Betankanden/Arenden/201415/FiU14/>.

6 Agency for Public Management, “Authorities work with the reuse of information. The current picture,” September 2015. (“Myndigheternas arbete med vidareutnyttjande av information. En nulägesbild.” Dnr 2014/80-5). The final report is due on 19 January 2018.

7 The EU’s PSI Directive states that all content that can be accessed under national access to documents laws should in principle be reusable. <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/european-legislation-reuse-public-sector-information>.

8 The open data expert referenced requested anonymity but confirmed the IRM researcher’s findings for commitments 1 and 2 and had no additional comments on the draft report.

9 Ministry of Finance, “One step further—the new rules and measures to promote the re-use of documents,” ID: SOU 2014: 10 February 2014. (“Ett steg vidare – nya regler och åtgärder för att främja vidareutnyttjande av handlingar,” ID-nummer: SOU 2014:10. Finansdepartementet). <http://www.regeringen.se/rattsdokument/statens-offentliga-utredningar/2014/02/sou-201410/>

10 Johannes Semere, Bachelor thesis.

11 Ibid.

12 “The authorities are careless about open data—they are not aware of the law,” Computer Sweden, 5 October 2015. (“Myndigheterna slarvar med öppna data - har inte koll på lagen,” Computer Sweden, 5 oktober 2015). <http://computersweden.idg.se/2.2683/1.638761/myndigheter-oppna-data>.

13 These recommendations are mainly based on interviews carried out in the framework of the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report and on the report of the Agency for Public Management: “Authorities work with the reuse of information. The current picture” (September 2015).

14 E-Delegation, “Reuse of public information, a guide for authorities,” undated. (“Vidareutnyttjande av offentlig information En vägledning för myndigheter”. E-delegationen) <http://skl.se/download/18.430f8b0b145ac911ed643836/1399451140249/Juridisk-v%C3%A4gledning-e-delegationen.pdf>.

Commitment 3. Increased Access to Swedish Aid Information

Commitment Text:

The commitment on increased access to Swedish aid information aims to increase the transparency of aid spending and performance. Transparent information is a prerequisite for open debate and public participation and facilitates accountability to citizens and organisations in partner countries and to Swedish taxpayers. More accessible information also provides a better basis for decisions and visibility of aid results, and limits the scope for corruption and misuse of resources. The commitment will be achieved mainly through further development of the Openaid.se platform and improved IATI reporting.

Main activities:

- Follow up the implementation of the transparency guarantee in Swedish aid in order to ensure that relevant routines are in place.
- Update Sweden's Common Standard implementation schedule in order to further extend and broaden Sweden's IATI reporting.
- Further develop the Openaid.se platform in order to extend and improve data quality, accessibility and usability.

Milestones:

1. Full implementation of the Swedish aid transparency guarantee
2. Full implementation of the Common Standard on Swedish development cooperation.
3. Substantial improvements made in the Openaid.se platform.
4. Anti-corruption reports are published in an IATI format at Openaid.se.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

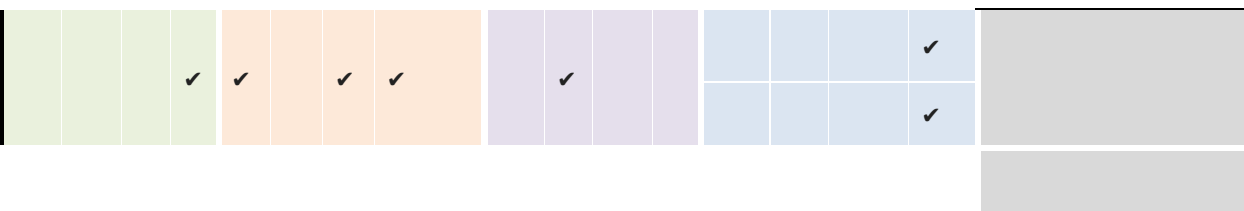
Supporting institution(s): Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Start date: 2010

End date: 2016

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance (as written)				Potential impact				Completion		Midterm		Did it open government?				
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsens	Did not change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
3. Overall				✓	✓		✓	✓			✓				✓			✓			
3.1. Implement aid transparency guarantee				✓	✓		✓				✓				✓						
3.2. Implement the Common Standard on development cooperation				✓	✓		✓			✓					✓						
3.3. Improve the Openaid.se platform			✓		✓		✓	✓			✓				✓						

3.4. Publish anti-corruption reports in IATI format



Commitment Aim:

Sweden is already a top performer in aid transparency at the global level. However, both the quantity and quality of aid data can still be improved. The overarching objective of this commitment is to improve transparency in the field of development aid by implementing the Swedish aid transparency guarantee (milestone 3.1). The transparency guarantee is a policy document introduced into Swedish development assistance in January 2010. The guarantee means that all public documents and public information will be made available online. The information must explain when, to whom, and why money has been made available and what results have been achieved.¹ In particular, the commitment sets out to:²

- Implement the Swedish aid transparency guarantee (3.1);
- Implement the Common Standard on Swedish development cooperation (3.2);
- Substantially improve the Openaid.se platform (3.3); and
- Publish anti-corruption reports in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) format on Openaid.se (3.4).

Status

Midterm: Substantial

Despite good progress, the aid transparency guarantee was not fully implemented. The implementation of the transparency guarantee is carried out mainly through the improvement of the Openaid.se platform (milestone 3.3), as well as by broadening Sweden's IATI reporting (3.2 and 3.4). However, about one-third of aid expenditures (mainly refugee costs) are traceable only on a generic level. This means that one cannot monitor expenditures through all stages of the process (i.e., decision, implementation, and monitoring).

In order to implement the aid transparency guarantee, the IRM researcher recommended in the midterm assessment report that the level of detail of Swedish aid financing information should increase. This additional information should include further specifying information on aid flows, in particular the refugee costs in Sweden and "unspecified" aid, and more and better-detailed data on forward spending. For more information, please see the 2013–2014 midterm IRM report.

End of term: Substantial

Based on the government self-assessment report, interviews with government officials, and media monitoring conducted by the IRM researcher, there was progress on the implementation of the unfinished milestones. Sweden has taken significant steps towards full implementation of the Common Standard (3.2) and is on the highest ranks of the IATI dashboard (sixth of all publishers).³ According to the Publish What You Fund (PWYF) 2016 EU Aid Transparency Index, Sweden has now met the Busan commitment on aid transparency⁴ and publishes 34 of 36 items assessed in the index in the IATI Standard (related to milestones 3.2 and 3.3).⁵ PWYF ranks Sweden among the top 10 performers in aid transparency in 2016 and commends it for its efforts in dramatically improving the timeliness and the comprehensiveness of aid information since 2011.⁶

However, despite good progress on this commitment, the aid transparency guarantee, which means that all public documents and public information related to Swedish development assistance will be made available online,⁷ was not fully implemented.

Did it open government?

Access to information: Marginal

Public accountability: Did not change

The commitment aimed at improving transparency in the field of development aid by implementing the Swedish aid transparency guarantee. Sweden provides comprehensive and timely aid information and is considered a world leader in aid transparency.⁸

However, the quality of the aid information disclosed to the public improved only marginally during the OGP action plan period. A large share of the aid expenditure (approximately 37 percent, which consists of refugee costs) is still traceable only on a generic level, which means that it cannot be followed through the whole chain of information (i.e., decision, implementation, and monitoring).⁹ This leads the IRM researcher to conclude that this commitment improved access to information to a limited extent.

With regards to public accountability, the publication of anti-corruption reports on the Openaid.se portal in IATI format (milestone 3.4) is a positive development. There is evidence that at least one major newspaper in Sweden has used this service for reporting purposes.¹⁰ The publication of outcomes from corruption investigations is critical for closing the reporting feedback loop. The value added by making reports available as open data is that it may allow for the discovery of interesting patterns by journalists or civil society organisations. However, the reports were already publicly available, and there has been little evidence of their widespread use. Additionally, the IRM researcher was unable to find evidence of change in government *practice* as a result of implementing this commitment.

Carried forward?

Sweden has not yet released its next action plan; hence, it is too early to say whether the commitment has been carried forward. Based on the previous IRM assessment and interviews with government stakeholders, the IRM researcher recommends the following steps to complete this commitment and to advance aid transparency in Sweden:

- Further specify information on aid flows, in particular the refugee costs in Sweden;
- Improve reporting procedures and continue to move towards the publishing of data in IATI format, not only by the government but also by CSOs. This is a joint commitment that could be made between the Swedish government and civil society;
- Improve procedures and awareness of data quality in the project contribution management process among the government staff;¹¹ and
- Provide more and better detailed data on forward spending, as stressed by both government and civil society interviewees. This would allow comparison with what other donors are planning in a specific country.

Moreover, according to the findings of the 2016 EU Aid Transparency Index, Sweden should:¹²

- Aim for full implementation of the IATI Standard by including tenders and the budget identifier.
- Improve the quality and coverage of some of the items published at the activity level, starting with planned dates, sub-national locations, and contracts.
- Continue to play a leading role in the IATI community and maximise the benefits of its transparency efforts by developing a strategy to promote internal and external use of its data with all relevant stakeholders in particular at the country level.

1 MFA, "A transparency guarantee in Swedish development assistance," 11 June 2010, <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/12656/a/147849>.

2 The statement about expected impact is based on what is written in Sweden's "Mid-term Self-Assessment Report: Open Government Partnership, National Action Plan 2013–2015."

3 The IATI dashboard was accessed on 13 October 16, <http://dashboard.iatistandard.org/transparencyindicator.html>.

4 The Busan commitments were agreed upon in 2011 at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, South Korea. They offer a framework for continued dialogue and efforts to enhance the effectiveness of development cooperation. These are the key principles: (i) ownership of development priorities by developing countries, (ii) a focus on results—having a sustainable impact should be the driving force behind investments and efforts in development policy making, (iii) partnerships for development—development depends on the participation of all actors, and recognises the diversity and complementarity of their functions, and (iv) transparency and shared responsibility.

5 Publish What You Fund (PWYF) 2016 EU Aid Transparency Index, page on Sweden: <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/donor/sweden/>.

6 The 2016 Aid Transparency Index uses 39 indicators grouped into weighted categories to assess how transparent donor organisations are about their aid activities. These categories cover overall commitment to aid transparency and publication of information at both the organisational and activity level, Publish What You Fund (PWYF) 2016 EU Aid Transparency Index, http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ATI-2016_Report_Proof_DIGITAL.pdf.

7 The information must explain when, to whom, and why money has been made available and what results have been achieved. Government Offices, A transparency guarantee in Swedish development assistance, <http://www.regeringen.se/informationsmaterial/2010/06/ud10.052/>.

8 Publish What You Fund (PWYF) 2016 EU Aid Transparency Index, page on Sweden: <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/donor/sweden/>.

9 For more information, please see the 2013–2014 midterm IRM report.

10 Elias Andersson, "Sida kräver tillbaka miljonbelopp," Expressen, 6 January 2015, <http://www.expressen.se/nyheter/sida-kraver-tillbaka-miljonbelopp/>.

11 Elias Rådelius, "White paper, Part 4: Keys to success and the road ahead," 28 May 2015, <http://www.openaid.se/blog/part-4-keys-to-success-and-the-road-ahead/>.

12 Publish What You Fund (PWYF) 2016 EU Aid Transparency Index, page on Sweden: <http://ati.publishwhatyoufund.org/donor/sweden/>.

Commitment 4. Improved Opportunities for Dialogue and Transparency in Aid Management and Implementation

Commitment Text:

The commitment on improved opportunities for dialogue and transparency in aid management and implementation aims to increase mutual knowledge and participation. Greater knowledge and involvement of more actors create better possibilities for accountability and promote innovative thinking. Increased transparency also facilitates active involvement and public participation and may limit the scope for corruption and misuse of resources. The commitment will mainly be achieved through strengthening channels for dialogue and feedback on aid management and implementation with different parts of society.

Main activities:

- Develop and implement an updated government strategy for aid information and communication activities.
- Negotiate and implement a compact between the Government and Swedish civil society organisations that enhances dialogue and outlines these organisations' role in Swedish aid.
- Support initiatives related to ICT that create opportunities for increased participation from a broader spectrum of the population.
- Further develop procedures for management of reports by the public, organisations and employees of misuse, suspected corruption and other complaints with an impact on Swedish aid funds.

Milestones:

- 4.1. A government-established strategy for aid information and communication activities, including regular follow-up on results.
- 4.2. A government communication on Swedish Policy for Global Development (PGU), which also highlights potential conflicts of interest within one of the policy's global challenges.
- 4.3. A negotiated CSO compact, including regular follow-up on implementation.
- 4.4. Arrangement of an aid dialogue event.
- 4.5. Creation of opportunities for increased participation as a result of supported initiatives.
- 4.6. Established procedures for suspected corruption and complaints handling for Swedish aid-funded activities, including active dialogue with multilateral development organisations

Editorial note: For ease of reading, the author combined milestones 4.3 and 4.4 for analysis (now 4.3 and 4.4 Negotiated CSO compact & aid dialogue).

Responsible institution(s): Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

Supporting institution(s): Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Start date: 2014

End date: 2017

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance (as written)				Potential impact				Completion		Midterm		Did it open government?				
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsens	Did not change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding

4. Overall			✓		✓	✓				✓						✓		
4.1. Strategy for aid information and communication			✓		✓					✓						✓		
4.2. Communication on PGU			✓		✓					✓								
4.3. & 4.4. CSO compact & aid dialogue event				✓		✓							✓					
4.5. Increase participation by ICT initiatives	✓				Unclear				✓				✓					
4.6. Establish procedures for corruption and complaints handling	✓				Unclear								✓					

Commitment Aim:

The commitment aims to improve opportunities and strengthen channels for dialogue and transparency in aid management. The underlying rationale of the government is that greater knowledge and citizen/stakeholder involvement create better possibilities for accountability and promote innovative thinking. Increased transparency also facilitates public participation and may limit the scope for corruption and misuse of resources. This commitment addresses the lack of involvement of CSOs in the development of aid policy, emphasized by various civil society stakeholders in recent years.¹

The commitment set out to achieve the following:

- A strategy for aid information and communication, including regular follow-up on results (milestone 4.1);
- A communication on Swedish Policy for Global Development (PGU) (milestone 4.2);
- A negotiated CSO compact, including the organisation of an aid dialogue event and regular follow-up on implementation (milestones 4.3 and 4.4); and
- Procedures for suspected corruption and complaints handling for Swedish aid-funded activities, including dialogue with multilateral development organisations (milestone 4.6).

Status

Midterm: Limited

Most of the milestones under this commitment had either not started or had a limited completion rate at the time when the IRM midterm report was written. The only milestones that had achieved substantial completion were the ones related to the CSO compact (milestones 4.3 and 4.4).

Both the development of a strategy for aid information and communication (milestone 4.1) and the government communication about the Swedish Policy for Global Development (PGU) (milestone 4.2) had a limited completion rate. The strategy was under development by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) when the IRM report was written,² and the communication was due in spring 2016.³

The “compact,” renamed “Joint Commitments between Swedish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” (milestone 4.3) was concluded. The compact aims to enhance dialogue between the government and the CSOs and defines the role of CSOs in Swedish development aid. The government decided to launch the compact to improve relations with CSOs and to emphasise the important role they play in the development field. The related aid dialogue event (milestone 4.4), was scheduled to take place in autumn 2015.

Milestone 4.5, the “creation of opportunities for increased participation as a result of supported initiatives,” and milestone 4.6, “establish procedures for corruption and complaints handling,” were not formulated clearly, and despite attempts to get clarification from government points of contact, the IRM researcher did not manage to clarify what they aimed to achieve or what progress was made. The government self-assessment mentions that it has developed courses on anti-corruption, but it is unclear if these were public or internally focused. For more information, please see the 2013–2014 midterm IRM report.

End of term: Substantial

This commitment now has a substantial completion level with four of six completed milestones. The strategy for aid information and communication (milestone 4.1) was published on 2 June 2016.⁴ It covers the period 2016–2022 and has a budget of about SEK 100 million (approximately USD 12 million) per year.⁵ The strategy aims at raising awareness about the importance of aid, strengthening citizen engagement in support of a fair and sustainable global development, and funding an independent assessment of aid.⁶ Through the strategy, Swedish organisations will also receive support targeted at strengthening civil society organisations (CSOs) in partner countries that work on poverty alleviation, democracy, and human rights. A novelty with respect to the previous strategy is lower co-financing requirements from CSOs. According to the minister for international development cooperation, Isabella Lövin, this will allow more organisations, including smaller ones, to participate in the implementation of the strategy.⁷

The communication by the government to Parliament on the Policy for Global Development (PGU) (milestone 4.2) was released on 31 May 2016.⁸ The PGU stipulates that all government policies should contribute to an equal and sustainable global development.⁹ The communication aims at relaunching the PGU by improving awareness about it among the government offices and its agencies and by raising their ambition to implement it. The government has now set concrete targets and clarified responsibilities for the implementation of the PGU. An interministerial working group with heads of unit from all ministries has been set up. All ministries have for the first time developed internal action plans for the implementation of the PGU. These plans are connected to the UN’s new Sustainable Development Goals.¹⁰ During the elaboration of the ministerial action plans, the civil society network CONCORD Sweden organised informal meetings between civil society and eight government departments.¹¹

The aid dialogue event (milestone 4.4) took the shape of a Civil Society Week held on 12–16 October 2015 in Stockholm.¹² The Civil Society Week included open seminars on civic space and civil society support, as well as workshops dedicated to the recently agreed Joint Commitments between Swedish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (milestone 4.3). The theme was the “shrinking space,” and the participants discussed how to counteract the negative trend of increasingly limited freedom of action for civil society worldwide. The event had around 200 participants, the majority from Sida and from CSOs and a small share from public authorities, academia, and the private sector.¹³ The event also involved high-level representatives, such as Maina Kiai, United Nations’ special rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, and the Swedish minister for international development cooperation, Isabella Lövin.¹⁴

Regarding the two incomplete milestones (4.5 and 4.6), the IRM researcher could not find evidence of any further attempts by the government to make progress.¹⁵

Did it open government?

Access to information: Marginal

Public accountability: Marginal

The commitment's overarching goal was to improve opportunities for dialogue and transparency in aid management. This goal was reached. However, considering that most of the outputs (milestones 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3) are relatively recent, it is too early to say whether this had any major effect on government openness in Sweden.

The new strategy for aid information and communication (milestone 4.1) has a substantial yearly budget (USD 12 million) and is expected to enable more Swedish CSOs to participate in the implementation of the strategy, as well as to improve the opportunities of the CSOs in partner countries to inform decisions on Swedish aid.¹⁶ The strategy will also fund independent evaluations, which should improve access to information about aid.

The released communication (milestone 4.2) has raised the priority of the Policy for Global Development (PGU). It includes concrete targets and assigns the responsibility for the implementation of the PGU to senior officials in each ministry. This has received praise from civil society¹⁷ and is in line with the recommendations of the midterm IRM report. The communication is expected to create opportunities to hold officials answerable for their actions.

The Joint Commitments between Swedish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (milestone 4.3) was an important step forward in terms of opening up government practice and is expected to have a positive impact on the cooperation between government and civil society. The importance of the commitments lies in the process through which CSOs and government regained mutual trust and managed to produce an output satisfactory to both parties. The dialogue process was open and interactive, and the MFA showed serious commitment through the presence of high-level officials in some of the meetings. Receiving positive feedback from civil society,¹⁸ the Civil Society Week (milestone 4.4) was probably the largest event of this kind and was organised by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).¹⁹ It remains to be seen whether there will be continued dialogue on the management of development aid, but the development of the Joint Commitments and the success of the Civil Society Week demonstrate a positive, but incremental, step forward in terms of opening government practice to more civic participation.

Carried forward?

In line with the recommendations put forward by the consulted CSOs,²⁰ the IRM researcher recommends that the MFA makes the process for monitoring PGU implementation²¹ more transparent and participatory, more specifically that the MFA:

- Provides access to the departmental action plans so civil society can consult, monitor, and influence their implementation;²²
- Includes civil society representatives in the monitoring of the action plans; and
- Clarifies if the MFA will have the mandate to follow up on these plans.²³

Moreover, based on a report by the Swedish Agency for Public Management,²⁴ the IRM researcher recommends the government:

- Mandates a specific entity with the responsibility for managing and monitoring the overall application of the PGU; and
- Allocates adequate funds and human resources for the implementation of the PGU.²⁵

The consulted CSOs²⁶ recommend that the government assigns a clear status to the Joint Commitments between Swedish CSOs and the MFA (milestone 4.3), allocate appropriate resources for its implementation, and integrate it into its working procedures and processes. It is also very important that adequate resources are provided for an evaluation on the progress of the Joint Commitments.

Finally, the government should clarify milestone 4.5, the “creation of opportunities for increased participation as a result of supported initiatives,” and milestone 4.6, “establish procedures for corruption and complaints handling,” or drop them from future commitments. For more information, please see the 2013–2014 midterm IRM report.

1 UNICEF Sweden, “Lack of dialogue.” See also, Civil Rights Defenders, “Opinion on the government’s foreign aid policy platform,” letter 2013/14, 11 February 2014.

2 In May 2015, the government assigned the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to develop the basis for a new strategy for information and communication in international development cooperation, hereafter referred to as the “strategy,” by 1 October 2015. The Government Offices, “Assignment to develop a basis for information and communication activities in international development cooperation,” May 2015. (“Uppdrag att ta fram underlag för informations- och kommunikationsverksamheten inom internationell utvecklingssamarbete”), <http://www.regeringen.se/land--och-regionstrategier/2015/05/uf201532103udustyr>.

3 Public oversight over PGU implementation occurs through an official, public communication to Parliament every two years.

4 Government Offices, “Government approves strategies for strengthening civil society and debate on development cooperation,” 2 June 2016. (“Regeringen fattar beslut om strategier för ett stärkt civilsamhälle och debatt om utvecklingssamarbetet”), <http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2016/06/regeringen-fattar-beslut-om-strategier-for-ett-starkt-civilsamhalle-och-debatt-om-utvecklingssamarbetet/>.

5 Ibid.

6 The Government Offices, “Assignment to develop a basis for information.”

7 “Now, our aid can be scrutinised better again,” Aftonbladet, 2 June 2016. (“Nu kan vårt bistånd granskas bättre igen”), <http://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/article22926855.ab>.

8 “The Policy for Global Development (PGU) in the implementation of Agenda 2030,” Communication 2015/16: 182. (The Swedish government, submitted on 31 May 2016). (“Politiken för global utveckling i genomförandet av Agenda 2030”. Skrivelse 2015/16:182), https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/skrivelse/politiken-for-global-utveckling-i-genomforandet_H303182/html.

9 Ministry for Foreign Affairs, “Shared Responsibility: Sweden’s Policy for Global Development,” 2002/03:122, <http://www.government.se/legal-documents/2003/05/200203122/>.

10 “The Policy for Global Development (PGU) in the implementation of Agenda 2030.” Communication 2015/16: 182. (The Swedish government, submitted on 31 May 2016). (“Politiken för global utveckling i genomförandet av Agenda 2030”. Skrivelse 2015/16:182), https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/skrivelse/politiken-for-global-utveckling-i-genomforandet_H303182/html.

11 Email from the OGP point of contact at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 13 October 2016.

12 Link to the programme of the Civil Society Week: http://www.sida.se/contentassets/2fedce9ca687478b871a3f29f4ef63b1/stockholm_civil_society_week_program.pdf.

13 “Stockholm Civil Society Week,” Mission Council, 25 October 2015, <http://www.missioncouncil.se/2015/10/25/stockholm-civil-society-week/>.

14 Ibid.

15 Regarding milestone 4.6, the government’s self-assessment states that “anti-corruption is also an integrated part of the Swedish strategies for multilateral organisations. This includes yearly work plans for delivery and follow-up.” The OGP contact points further clarified this by stating that internal work plans are drawn up in order to implement the strategies for multilateral organisations. Some of these work plans include measures to reduce corruption. The work plans are followed up regularly in consultation with multilateral organisations. If Sweden suspects instances of corruption, these are dealt with in another way than through work plans. (Source: Email from the OGP point of contact at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 13 October 2016.) According to the IRM researcher, these clarifications of milestone 4.6 do not point to any concrete output or progress on delivering results within commitment 4.

16 “Now, our aid can be scrutinised better again,” Aftonbladet, 2 June 2016. (“Nu kan vårt bistånd granskas bättre igen”), <http://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/article22926855.ab>.

17 “Sharp criticism of the government’s policy for global development,” DN, 2 May 2016. (“Skarp kritik mot regeringens politik för global utveckling”), <http://www.dn.se/ekonomi/global-utveckling/skarp-kritik-mot-regeringens-politik-for-global-utveckling/>.

18 “Stockholm Civil Society Week,” Mission Council, 25 October 2015, <http://www.missioncouncil.se/2015/10/25/stockholm-civil-society-week/>.

19 “The civil society operates under increasing threat,” Omvärlden, 16 October 2015. (“Civilsamhället arbetar under ökat hot”),

<http://www.omvarlden.se/Branschnytt/2015/civilsamhallet-arbetar-under-okat-hot/>.

20 See the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report for more information.

21 According to an email from the OGP contact point at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 13 October 2016, the follow-up of action plans is the responsibility of each department. The MFA coordinates the work and serves as support in the process.

22 According to an email from the OGP contact point at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 13 October 2016, the action plans are internal working documents. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be publishing a summary document of the action plans on [regeringen.se](http://www.regeringen.se).

23 These views were expressed during the consultation with civil society members held by the IRM researcher in Stockholm in August 2015. See Section VIII: Methodology and Sources for more details.

24 The Swedish Agency for Public Management’s summary of the publication “Sweden’s Policy for Global Development: the Government’s joint responsibility?” (2014:1), <http://www.statskontoret.se/In-English/publications/2014---summaries-of-publications/swedens-policy-for-global-development.-the-governments-joint-responsibility-20141/>.

25 According to an email from the OGP contact point at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 13 October 2016, a specific job position was funded at the relaunch of the PGU (duration: May 2015 to June 2016). The person on this position has contributed to the development of PGU communication (presented in May 2016) and to the development of PGU action plans. However, the IRM researcher notes that this does not represent sufficient funding and personnel to implement PGU across all government departments.

26 See the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report for more information.

Commitment 5. Increased Aid Transparency at the Global Level

Commitment Text:

The commitment on increased aid transparency at global level aims to accelerate international efforts on publishing aid information in accordance with the Busan commitment on a Common Standard. Increased publication of timely, forward-looking and comprehensive aid data in a standardised way creates better conditions for accountability and governance in partner countries, leading to sustainable and locally owned development results. It also facilitates division of labour and the use of all the available financial resources for poverty eradication. The commitment will mainly be achieved through activities, including those listed here, in order to promote other development actors' efforts to meet international transparency commitments.

Main activities:

- Promote IATI International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) reporting among other development actors and the use of IATI data at country level, through dialogue and development of methodology and capacity
- Promote transparency and anti-corruption work in the EU and multilateral development organisations, including IATI reporting.
- Support initiatives related to ICT that facilitate aid transparency.
- Promote transparency including budget transparency in partner countries as a part of Swedish development cooperation.

Milestones:

- 5.1. Increased number of countries and organisations that publish aid data to IATI.
- 5.2. Contributions to IATI related work on methodology and capacity development.
- 5.3. Actions taken at EU level to increase aid transparency, and increased number of multilateral development organisations with Swedish development assistance funds that publish aid data to IATI.
- 5.4. Examples of improvements in aid transparency, as a result of supported initiatives.
- 5.5. Examples of transparency improvements in partner countries.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

Supporting institution(s): Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Start date: 2010.....

End date: 2016

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance (as written)				Potential impact				Completion		Midterm		Did it open government?					
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsens	Did not change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding	
5. Overall		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓				✓					✓				
5.1. Promote IATI reporting			✓		✓	✓	✓			✓					✓							

5.2. Promote transparency and anti-corruption work in the EU & multilateral organisations	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓									
5.3. Support ICT in aid transparency	✓				Unclear				✓									
5.4. & 5.5. Promote transparency in partner countries	✓					✓			✓									

Commitment Aim:

This commitment aims to accelerate international efforts on publishing aid information in accordance with the Busan commitment on a Common Standard, in particular by promoting IATI reporting standards among development actors. Sweden is already a leader in aid transparency, and as an innovator, it plays an important role in promoting good practices among countries and multilateral donors. Increasing the number of donors that publish aid information according to a common standard would enable a global overview of aid flows and better coordination of aid.

More specifically, the commitment sets out to:

- Increase the number of countries and multilateral development organisations with Swedish development assistance that publish aid data to IATI (5.1 and 5.3); and
- Contribute to IATI-related work on methodology and capacity development (5.2).

Status

Midterm: Limited

This commitment listed a number of vaguely formulated target areas, and due to their lack of specificity, it was difficult to measure impact.

In line with the commitments made in milestones 5.1 and 5.2, Sweden has shared its experience and contributed to IATI,¹ which is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiative that seeks to improve aid transparency. Sweden is also contributing to the IATI Secretariat with in-kind personnel support² and had shared the experiences of working with the IATI standard from a donor perspective by publishing a white paper in spring 2015. Moreover, Sida made available Openaid.se as an open source platform for other IATI publishers to use in whole or in part and has provided support to several organisations in trying out the software during the evaluation period. Sweden has also contributed to the refinement of IATI’s Transparency Indicator methodology by supporting the Creditor Reporting System (CRS)³/IATI pilot jointly with the UK and the Netherlands.⁴

Milestone 5.3, which aims to promote IATI in the EU and multilateral organisations, was not started. Sweden has an ongoing dialogue with multilateral development organisations with Swedish development assistance funds about the importance of publishing aid data to IATI. However, the MFA could not report on any particular action taken in the framework during the evaluation period.⁵ Milestones 5.4 and 5.5 on promoting aid transparency were formulated vaguely without any measurable outputs, making it difficult to ascertain the level of completion. For more information, please see the 2013–2014 midterm IRM report.

End of term: Limited

The overall completion rate of the commitment remains limited. The only milestone that has been substantially completed is the one focusing on promotion of IATI reporting among other donors (5.1). The IRM researcher could not find evidence of any further attempts by the government to make progress on the other milestones.⁶

The government self-assessment report states that 22 multilateral development organisations funded by Sweden have published data to IATI during the OGP action plan period. However, it is unclear how the correlation between Sweden's initiatives on IATI and the 22 organisations publishing in IATI was made. Given that a variety of factors influence donor decisions to publish data in IATI (e.g., political will, technical capacity, and financial resources), it is difficult to find evidence for such a correlation, unless a specific study is carried out on the subject.

Did it open government?

Access to information: Did not change

Public accountability: Did not change

This commitment aims to accelerate international efforts on publishing aid information by promoting IATI reporting standards among development actors. Sweden, as an acknowledged innovator in aid transparency, plays an important role in promoting good practices among other countries and multilateral donors. However, to improve the contribution of Sweden in promoting the accountability of aid at a global level, this commitment could be clarified. Overall, the IRM researcher concludes that government openness did not change with this commitment.

Carried forward?

Sweden has not yet released its next action plan; hence, it is too early to say whether the commitment has been carried forward.

The IRM researcher recommends that MFA sets out clear and measurable milestones for achieving the stated objective of the commitment. The first step towards achieving transformative potential impact is to clarify the relationship between the activities carried out by the Swedish government and intended changes in recipient behaviour (i.e., bilateral and multilateral organisations). Moreover, civil society stakeholders recommend that the MFA involves CSOs when deciding about priorities on transparency and anti-corruption work in the EU and in multilateral development organisations.⁷

1 <http://www.aidtransparency.net>.

2 Sweden is contributing to the IATI Secretariat in-kind with senior management oversight, a senior policy advisor, a communications specialist, a policy advisor, and a programme officer.

3 Creditor Reporting System (CRS).

4 IATI, "Annual Workplan: September 2014–August 2015," <http://www.aidtransparency.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Paper-3B-IATI-Workplan-Y2-FY14-15.pdf>.

5 Per Trulsson (MFA), interviewed by Alina Östling, 25 September 2015.

6 The IRM researcher contacted the OGP point of contact at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by telephone on 9 September 2016 and by email on 17 September 2016 and on 2 October 2016.

7 These views were expressed during the consultation with civil society members held by the IRM researcher in Stockholm in August 2015.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

Commitments are clustered based on the original OGP action plan. This report is based on interviews with government officials, civil society organisations, and subject matter experts; a desk review of governmental programmes, draft laws, and regulations; review of the government self-assessment report; and analysis of the commitments, as well as on monitoring the implementation of the second action plan.

Alina Ostling is an independent researcher with a strong professional background in democratic governance, public participation, old and new (digital) media, and development. She is currently working at the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF) at the European University Institute with the development and testing of indicators for the Media Pluralism Monitor.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism assesses development and implementation of national action plans to foster dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.

