

Jordan: Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) Progress Report 2014–2015



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Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development
Second Progress Report





Executive Summary: Jordan

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) Progress Report 2014–2015

The Jordanian action plan was primarily centred on improving public services and had a limited focus on OGP’s mandate to improve transparency and accountability in government. Moving forward, Jordan needs to ensure that it follows the OGP process of action plan development and implementation and that it only includes OGP relevant commitments that stretch government practice.

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.

Jordan began its formal participation in August 2011, when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a letter confirming the country’s intention to join the partnership, and the 2014–2015 action plan was its second one.

OGP PROCESS

Countries participating in OGP make commitments in a two-year action plan and should follow a process for consultation during the development of their OGP action plan and during implementation.

The government of Jordan did not engage the public or civil society in the development of the OGP action plan. There were no official statements, events, or publications announcing the preparation of the action plan. The only document made available to the public was the action plan itself after it was published on the OGP website.

The Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) was responsible for the development and implementation of Jordan’s second national action plan. Jordan’s action plan commitments were copied from an existing government reform strategy, namely, The Executive Plan for Strengthening the National Integrity System (NIS plan). The government did not consult stakeholders in the development of the OGP action plan.

It appears that the implementation of the OGP action plan has been an almost entirely internal government process. The government published the self-assessment report in August 2015.

At a glance

Member since: 2011
 Number of commitments: 14

Level of Completion:

Complete: (4) 29%
 Substantial: (8) 57%
 Limited: (2) 14%
 Not started: 0

Timing:

On schedule: (11) 79%

Commitment Emphasis:

Access to information: (2) 14%
 Civic participation: (1) 7%
 Public accountability: 0
 Tech. & innovation for transparency & accountability: (2) 14%

Number of Commitments That Were:

Clearly relevant to an OGP value: (3) 21%
 Of transformative potential impact: 0
 Substantially or completely implemented: (11) 79%
 All three (☐): 0

COMMITMENT IMPLEMENTATION

The following tables summarise the level of completion of each of Jordan's 14 commitments, their potential impact, whether they fall within Jordan's planned schedule, and the key recommendations for Jordan's commitments in future OGP action plans.

The IRM methodology includes starred commitments. These commitments are measurable, clearly relevant to OGP values as written, of transformative potential impact, and substantially or completely implemented. Jordan's action plan contains no starred commitments. Note that the IRM updated the star criteria in early 2015 in order to raise the bar for model OGP commitments.

In addition to the criteria listed above, the old criteria included commitments that have moderate potential impact. Under the old criteria, Jordan would have received two starred commitments (commitments 3 and 4). See (<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/node/5919>) for more information.

Table 1: Assessment of Progress by Commitment

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME	POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION				TIMING
	NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE	
Section 1: Enhancing the Role of Internal Control Units									
1. Internal control units structure									On schedule
1.1. Develop organisation structure									On schedule
1.2. Coordinate with Ministry of Finance to embed the internal control bylaw									On schedule
Section 2: Upgrade and Publish Service Delivery Standards									
2. Improve service delivery									On schedule
2.1. Unify an "information form"									On schedule
2.2. Prepare services guide									On schedule
2.3. Conduct training programs									On schedule
2.4. List department needs									On schedule
2.5. Prepare reports									On schedule
3. Develop service delivery standards and targets									On schedule
3.1. Implement Bylaw No.64									Behind schedule
3.2. Publish service manuals									On schedule
3.3. Publish service standards									On schedule
4. Publish service delivery standards									On schedule
5. Ensure full compliance with service delivery standards									Behind schedule
6. Service delivery process assessment									On schedule
6.1. Conduct field visits and prepare assessment reports									On schedule
6.2. Monitor and evaluate the development plan									Behind schedule

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME	POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION				TIMING
	NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE	
7. Upgrade services in remote areas									Behind schedule
7.1. List and sort the services									Behind schedule
7.2. Study the possibility of simplifying									Behind schedule
7.3. Cooperate and coordinate with the E-Government Program									Behind schedule
8. Develop a services-monitoring body									On schedule
8.1. Set technical specifications									On schedule
8.2. Conduct training workshops									On schedule
8.3. Launch the observatory									On schedule
8.4. Receive suggestions									On schedule
8.5. Monitor reports									On schedule
Section 3: Public Administration Development									
9. Public-sector restructuring									On schedule
9.1. Implement restructuring law									On schedule
9.2. New restructuring studies									On schedule
9.3. Develop organisational structures									On schedule
10. Update the Civil Service Bylaw									On schedule
11. Code of Ethics in civil service									On schedule
11.1. Human resources workshop									On schedule
11.2. Embed Code of Ethics in training courses									On schedule
11.3. Coordination with public administration institute to embed the code of Ethics in the trainings									On schedule
12. Institutional capacity building									On schedule
12.1. Issue operational manuals									On schedule
12.2. Five pilot projects									On schedule
12.3. Monitor reports									On schedule
Section 4: Enhance the Principles of Good Governance									
13. Apply the principles of good governance									On schedule
13.1. Governance practices manual									On schedule
13.2. Conduct training workshops									On schedule
13.3. Prepare monitoring reports									On schedule
Section 5: Civil Integrity and Oversight Institutions									
14. Media-sector restructuring									On schedule
14.1. Analyse media institutions' roles									On schedule
14.2. Specify restructured organisations									On schedule
14.3. Legislative amendments									On schedule

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME	POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION				TIMING
	NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE	
14.4. Implementation									On schedule

Table 2: Summary of Progress by Commitment

NAME OF COMMITMENT	SUMMARY OF RESULTS
Section 1: Enhancing the Role of Internal Control Units	
<p>1. Internal control units structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 	<p>This commitment seeks to standardise the work of the Internal Control Units (ICUs), which are responsible for financial and administrative oversight of government agencies. The ICU within each agency is charged with investigating the respective agency’s records and use of funds, protecting public funds and assets from misuse, ensuring compliance with existing laws and regulations, and conducting general financial and technical oversight. This commitment was completed. The Internal Control Bylaw was amended in December 2014, providing more detailed guidance on the role of ICUs. In April 2015 the Ministry of Finance published a guide on the restructuring of ICUs. Although the commitment currently does not have clear OGP relevance, there is an opportunity to include OGP values going forward, for instance by connecting the ICUs to other mechanisms for public accountability such as the Ombudsman Bureau. The government could keep the public regularly informed about the changes regarding the ICUs and other steps to reduce corruption internally.</p>
Section 2: Upgrade and Publish Service Delivery Standards	
<p>2. Improve service delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Substantial 	<p>This commitment deals with an ongoing effort by the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) to improve the provision of public service delivery, such as registering a business, taking out an agricultural loan, or filing an incident report with security officials. The commitment is substantially implemented. The MoPSD has developed a unified template to help in the creation of service manuals for citizens. It has also produced the manuals, conducted trainings for public employees, and issued technical reports and recommendations. While these are positive steps to improved service provision in the country, the commitment lacks a public-facing element, and its relevance to OGP values is unclear. The ministry could enhance the overall openness and transparency of the commitment by keeping the public informed of progress on implementation and seeking citizen feedback on the quality of services provided.</p>
<p>3. Develop service delivery standards and targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial 	<p>This commitment seeks to expand and improve public service delivery standards, and it is substantially implemented. The MoPSD had requested agencies to publish their service manuals and had submitted a report to the prime minister about the progress. Twenty-three out of 48 agencies have published the service manuals, which explain how citizens can access services. This commitment is important for the government to improve public service delivery standards in an effort to remain inclusive and accountable towards its citizens and limit the use of discretionary power. It is recommended that the ministry continue following up with all government agencies to ensure that the remaining manuals are published in an accessible and reusable format, both in paper and online.</p>
<p>4. Publish service delivery standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial 	<p>This commitment calls for the publication of service manuals that contain information concerning government services and how citizens can access these services. According to the original Arabic text of the commitment and documentation received from the Ministry of Public Sector Development, this commitment is a duplicate of commitment 3, which also addresses the publication of the same manuals. As discussed in commitment 3, government agencies publishing service manuals could support transparency by engaging in outreach to inform the public of these manuals and by publishing them in easy-to-find locations.</p>

NAME OF COMMITMENT	SUMMARY OF RESULTS
<p>5. Ensure full compliance with service delivery standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Substantial 	<p>The commitment calls for the Ministry of Public Sector Development to ensure that government agencies tighten monitoring and accountability procedures in the delivery of public services. Since January 2015 the ministry started issuing quarterly reports regarding citizen complaints on delivery of services. The MoPSD also appears to be in the process of writing a report on the progress of implementation of the Bylaw for the Development of Public Services. Although a positive step, this commitment will likely have a minor potential impact on improving service delivery, as the executive order does not include a penalty mechanism for the agencies or public employees that fail to follow the standards. To increase public accountability, stakeholders suggest that the government take steps to discipline employees breaking rules on compliance.</p>
<p>6. Service delivery process assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Substantial 	<p>This commitment was designed to introduce a mechanism to assess and monitor the quality of government services. It called for the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) to conduct unannounced visits to service-providing agencies in order to monitor the quality of service delivery. The MoPSD has conducted 65 visits to a number of public agencies, which did not cover all of Jordan's governorates, and produced reports about the quality of services provided. According to media reports, some agencies have responded to the recommendations of the ministry's report, although the numbers could not be independently verified. The potential impact of this initiative is minor as the results of the field visit reports are not publicly available. While publishing information in the media is a good start, it would be more beneficial for citizens if the results of site visits were published.</p>
<p>7. Upgrading services in remote areas initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 	<p>This commitment aims to ensure that the level of public service delivery in remote areas of the country is equal to the level of service provided in the capital. This commitment has demonstrated limited progress. The government prepared a draft Decentralisation Law that addresses the power delegation to strengthen service delivery in the governorates. Although there is still a need for targeted efforts to improve service delivery throughout the country, in the period under review the government had not taken any specific steps to improve the services in the provinces. Upgrading the current system will help to make service delivery more inclusive. However, this commitment does not contain a public-facing element and is therefore of unclear relevance to OGP values. It is recommended to establish public channels for citizen feedback and to improve electronic communication between provinces and the capital to enhance the overall quality of service provision. The MoPSD could also provide extra training for agency staff in rural areas.</p>
<p>8. Develop a services-monitoring body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 	<p>The commitment calls for the MoPSD to create a Monitoring Unit that would measure the quality of services provided by different government agencies. Overall, this commitment has achieved limited implementation. According to the MoPSD, it has developed technical specifications for setting up the interactive observatory, which is a tool to assess the services rendered between public-service providers and citizen recipients. The ministry still needs to create the observatory, conduct training workshops, and carry out the monitoring. While user feedback can play an important role in improving public services, the vagueness of this commitment limits the impact. It is recommended that going forward the government consult with civil society in initialising the observatory. The details could be further sharpened by including clear citizen-participation mechanisms.</p>

NAME OF COMMITMENT	SUMMARY OF RESULTS
Section 3: Public Administration Development	
<p>9. Public-sector restructuring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Substantial 	<p>This commitment seeks to implement a law calling for the restructuring of parts of the public sector. This commitment has been part of the pre-existing executive plan agreed upon by the Council of Ministers in 2013. In the period under review, the MoPSD oversaw a number of agency mergers, closings, and structural changes. The ministry reported conducting a review of 57 government institutions. This commitment is expected to clarify the role of government agencies, which can lead to making public administration more efficient. However, the OGP relevance needs to be clearly delineated. For example, the government could boost transparency and accountability by giving the public more information about these internal reforms.</p>
<p>10. Update the Civil Service Bylaw</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 	<p>This commitment seeks to modify the Civil Service Bylaw and related regulations in addition to building capacity for the Civil Service Commission. The MoPSD worked with the Civil Service Bureau to change a number of civil service regulations to bring it in compliance with the amended Civil Service Bylaw. These included regulations dealing with hiring, performance management for employees, employee roles, bonuses and salary increases, and human resources planning. The two agencies also worked together to prepare drafts of regulations including those forbidding certain types of bonuses and incentives. The ministry also conducted a number of trainings with the Civil Service Bureau. The commitment does not clearly explain how the public would benefit from the proposed actions concerning internal processes of public administration. Therefore, its potential impact is minor. If this commitment is to be included in future action plans, the government will need to make clear the commitment's relevance to OGP values. This can be realised by including civil society in the implementation of reforms to the public service.</p>
<p>11. Code of Ethics in Civil Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: None • Completion: Complete 	<p>This commitment seeks to conduct training and awareness raising on the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct in Public Service. This commitment was completed in 2014 before the implementation of the OGP action plan. The MoPSD prepared the Code of Ethics and included it in the trainings for new employees and management. This commitment was created in response to citizens' lack of trust in governmental agencies. However, given that the commitment does not include enforcement of the code and that it was completed before the release of the national action plan, it is considered to have no potential impact. Moving forward, stakeholders suggest having the code be accompanied with more robust monitoring procedures. This would ensure compliance, and it would provide proper incentives and disciplinary measures so that employees fulfil their responsibilities.</p>
<p>12. Institutional capacity building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Substantial 	<p>This commitment seeks to improve the human resources capacities of a number of government agencies in light of the reforms to the Civil Service Bylaw. The MoPSD and the Civil Service Bureau published and distributed two manuals designed to build the capacity of Human Resources Units across government agencies in Jordan. The MoPSD and the Civil Service Bureau conducted studies of the state of human resources departments in five government agencies and worked closely on training programs with eight different agencies. There is no clear timeline for updating the manuals. No monitoring reports have been published, and it is also unclear what exactly they should monitor. The efforts to improve institutional capacity are likely to have a positive but minor impact on public service delivery. Going forward, the government will have to include public-facing elements, such as civic participation, to ensure OGP relevance.</p>

NAME OF COMMITMENT	SUMMARY OF RESULTS
Section 4: Enhance the Principles of Good Governance	
<p>13. Applying the principles of good governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Substantial 	<p>This commitment seeks to develop a good governance manual, conduct training workshops, and prepare monitoring reports. The MoPSD has published a handbook for public-sector employees and conducted a training workshop in January 2015. According to the ministry, it has also prepared a methodology for evaluating governance performance in the water and the labour sector. However, no documentation has been provided. Due to this initiative being primarily concerned with an internal systems improvement, the potential impact has been evaluated as minor. Due to the lack of specificity, the intent of this commitment is unclear.</p>
Section 5: Civil Integrity and Oversight Institutions	
<p>14. Media-sector restructuring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: None • Completion: Complete 	<p>This commitment seeks to restructure the media sector. In 2014 before the release of the OGP action plan, the parliament passed a law converting the Audio Visual Communication Commission into the new Media Commission, which is directly under the supervision of the Prime Minister. The new Audio Visual Law, approved in April 2015, outlines details about the commission's mandate and work. According to the government, this commitment clarifies roles for regulation of the media sector. But media professionals are concerned that these institutional changes were designed to exert more control over the media by making the process of acquiring licences more cumbersome.</p> <p>It is too early to tell whether the impact of this initiative will have a positive or negative impact on the media sector. Reorganising the structure of media regulatory agencies does not in itself promote any of the OGP values. It is recommended that the government focuses on modifying the regulations that limit the freedom of speech in Jordan and make commitments related to promoting openness.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS

The OGP initiative offers a critical opportunity for advancing institutional progress in accountability, transparency, and government openness. So far, Jordan has failed to consult civil society and other stakeholders, which is a critical requirement for OGP countries.

Furthermore, the vast majority of the commitments Jordan has set are irrelevant to OGP values. In order for the country to benefit from participating in the OGP framework, it is strongly recommended that it starts following OGP's guidelines.

Based on the challenges and findings identified in this report, this section presents the principal recommendations.

TOP FIVE 'SMART' RECOMMENDATIONS
1. To start an open OGP consultation process involving citizens, civil society, and any other relevant stakeholders. This process should contain clear opportunities for public input to help decide what is included in the third action plan, as well as to oversee the implementation of commitments. Outreach and awareness efforts should also be put in place to allow for active public participation.
2. Each of the commitments included in the third action plan should clearly address at least one OGP value instead of focusing on internal government procedures unrelated to open government. Otherwise, it is unclear what benefits Jordan can gain from being a member of OGP.
3. To improve the ability of civil society organisations to obtain funds and continue their activities, the government should remove the restrictions on pre-approval for foreign funding for civil society organisations within the Law of Organisations and Civil Society Organisations, especially those enforced in 2015.
4. Increasing citizens' access to information is key to improving government transparency in Jordan. To achieve this, the government needs to consider revising the Access to Information Law and the Law for Protection of State Secrets. In addition, it needs to consider improving the practical implementation of the laws to ensure that all citizens have quick and reliable access to information, both through electronic and non-electronic means. The Access to Information Law must be a priority for implementation over other legislation. The law should have implications or penalties to anyone who withholds information or gives wrong information.
5. To improve public accountability and transparency in the provision of public services, the IRM researchers recommend that the government improves the accessibility and quality of government websites. In order to achieve this it is recommended that civil society is involved in the development and design of public access criteria as part of the government's e-government reform strategy.

Eligibility Requirements: To participate in OGP, governments must demonstrate commitment to open government by meeting minimum criteria on key dimensions of open government. Third-party indicators are used to determine country progress on each of the dimensions. For more information, see Section IX on eligibility requirements at the end of this report or visit <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/how-it-works/eligibility-criteria>.

10 Dr. Amer Bani Amer and Mrs. Mai E'leimat of Al-Hayat Centre for Civil Society Development prepared this report. Al-Hayat Centre is a Jordanian, independent, nongovernmental, and nonprofit organisation. Established in 2006 by a group of Jordanian civil activists, it aims to enhance political life in Jordan within the frame of democratic principles, human rights, and rule of law and through raising public awareness on the values of civil society based on justice, equality, freedom, participation, and acceptance.

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

Open
Government
Partnership



I. National Participation in OGP

The Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) is the agency in charge of development and implementation of the second OGP action plan. The MoPSD was chosen due to its coordinating role of the National Integrity System Plan, a national-level reform similar to OGP.

History of OGP participation

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder international initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. OGP provides an international forum for dialogue and sharing among governments, civil society organisations, and the private sector, all of which contribute to a common pursuit of open government.

Jordan began its formal participation in August 2011, when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a letter confirming the country's intention to join.¹

In order to participate in OGP, governments must exhibit a demonstrated commitment to open government by meeting a set of (minimum) performance criteria on key dimensions of open government that are particularly consequential for increasing government responsiveness, strengthening citizen engagement, and fighting corruption. Objective third-party indicators are used to determine the extent of a country's progress on each of the dimensions. See "Section IX: Eligibility Requirements" for more details.

All OGP participating governments are required to develop OGP country action plans that detail concrete commitments over an initial two-year period. Governments should begin their OGP country action plans by sharing existing efforts related to their chosen grand challenge(s) (see Section IV), including specific open government strategies and ongoing programs. Action plans should then set out governments' OGP commitments, which move government practice beyond its current baseline with respect to the relevant grand challenge. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

Jordan developed its second national action plan from September 2013 to October 2014.² The official effective start date for the action plan submitted in October 2014 was January 2014 through 30 June 2016. The government published its self-assessment report in August 2015³. At the time of writing (October 2015), Jordan is preparing its third action plan. The government included representatives from civil society in the committee formed to prepare the action plan. There has been no public consultation so far, but the government promised the inclusion of civil society in the plan. This report reviews the progress made between 1 January 2014 and 30 June 2015.

Basic institutional context

MoPSD was solely responsible for the development and implementation of Jordan's second national action plan. This was a change from the previous national action plan, which was the responsibility of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. The MoPSD is responsible for overseeing administrative development in Jordan's government agencies, such as putting in place appropriate financial and administrative controls, developing the capacity of civil employees, improving public services, organising the structure of government agencies, overseeing strategic development programmes, and other issues related to the functioning of the government bureaucracy.⁴ The MoPSD claimed that it took over the role of coordinating OGP because of the similarity between the OGP effort and another larger national-level reform effort, "The National Integrity System Plan 2014-2016" (the NIS plan).⁵ The reason for the

takeover has to do with the lead role MoPSD plays in implementing the NIS plan. In addition, MoPSD is the central agency in control of public-sector development, making it a natural choice for this task.

The NIS plan was developed pursuant to a 2012 request from H.M. King Abdullah II to Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour to help advance a climate of reform in Jordan's government institutions, while fighting corruption and promoting integrity in the public sphere.⁶ In response to the request, the prime minister formed the Committee for Strengthening the National Integrity System in 2013. This committee included the president of the senate, the president of the Judicial Council, the minister of public sector development, and a number of "eminent figures" selected by the king. In September 2013, the committee announced its plans to create a National Integrity Charter and an Executive Plan for Strengthening the National Integrity System, two documents which would answer the king's requests for a more robust reform effort.⁷

The NIS plan contains 132 commitments giving responsibilities to different government agencies, parliament, the private sector, and civil society. To create the OGP action plan, MoPSD selected 14 of the commitments that had been outlined in the NIS plan and added some more specific milestones. While the MoPSD formulated the OGP action plan entirely on its own, the Committee for Strengthening the National Integrity System developed the content of the plan through a pre-existing process that included public consultation. Neither the NIS plan nor the OGP plans were accompanied with a dedicated budget or staff for implementation.

Methodological note

The IRM partners with experienced, independent national researchers to author and disseminate reports for each OGP participating government. In Jordan, the IRM partnered with researchers Dr. Amer Bani Amer and Mrs. Mai E'leimat of Al Hayat Center for Civil Society Development. Al-Hayat Center is a Jordanian civil society organisation that is independent, non-governmental and non-profit. Established in 2006, Al Hayat Center aims to enhance democracy and public participation in Jordan within the framework of democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law.

This report follows on an earlier review of OGP performance, "Jordan Progress Report 2013," which covered the development of the first action plan as well as implementation from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012.

To gather the voices of multiple stakeholders, the researchers organised three stakeholder forums in Amman, Irbid, and Karak, which were conducted according to a focus group model, as well as another forum with media representatives. The IRM researchers also reviewed two key documents prepared by the government: Jordan's second action plan⁸ and the self-assessment published by the government in August 2015.⁹ Numerous references are made to these documents throughout this report. Summaries of these forums and more detailed explanations are given in the Annex. OGP staff and a panel of experts reviewed the report.

¹ The Open Government Partnership, Jordan, "Overview," <http://bit.ly/1O8x0Bt>.

² The Open Government Partnership, Jordan, "Second National Action Plan," October 2014, <http://bit.ly/1pOY5v7>.

³ The Open Government Partnership, Jordan, "Progress Report," August 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1PrfFTi>.

⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "About the Ministry" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1K6T33m>.

⁵ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "The National Integrity System Charter and Executive Plan 2013" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1LsyLXq>.

⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, HM King Abdullah II Letters To Prime Ministers, 8 December 2012 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1PdNOH2>.

⁷ “The Committee for Strengthening the National Integrity System conducts its 12th meeting in Amman,” JRTV YouTube Channel, 24 September 2013 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1OvgriO>.

⁸ The Open Government Partnership, Jordan, “Second National Action Plan,” October 2014, <http://bit.ly/1pOY5v7>.

⁹ The Open Government Partnership, Jordan, “Progress Report,” August 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1PrfFTi>.

II. Action Plan Development

The Jordanian action plan was derived from an existing set of commitments contained in the National Integrity System (NIS) Plan. While the NIS was created with input from the public, the OGP action plan lacked a formal participation process.

Countries participating in OGP follow a set process for consultation during development of their OGP action plan. According to the OGP Articles of Governance, countries must:

- Make the details of their public consultation process and timeline available (online at minimum) prior to the consultation;
- Consult widely with the national community, including civil society and the private sector; seek out a diverse range of views; and make a summary of the public consultation and all individual written comment submissions available online;
- Undertake OGP awareness-raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation; and
- Consult the population with sufficient forewarning and through a variety of mechanisms—including online and through in-person meetings—to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage.

A fifth requirement during consultation is set out in the OGP Articles of Governance. This requirement is dealt with in “Section III: 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 is dealt with in the next section, but evidence for consultation both before and during implementation is included here and in Table 1 for ease of reference.

Table 1: Action Plan Consultation Process

Phase of Action Plan	OGP Process Requirement (Articles of Governance Section)	Did the government meet this requirement?
During Development	Were the timeline and process available prior to consultation?	No
	Was the timeline available online?	No
	Was the timeline available through other channels?	No
	Was there advance notice of the consultation?	No
	Was this notice adequate?	No
	Did the government carry out awareness-raising activities?	No
	Were consultations held online?	No
	Were in-person consultations held?	No
	Was a summary of comments provided?	No

	Were consultations open or invitation-only?	No
	Place the consultations on the IAP2 spectrum.	N/A
During Implementation	Was there a regular forum for consultation during implementation?	No
	Were consultations open or invitation-only?	N/A
	Place the consultations on the IAP2 spectrum.	N/A

Advance notice and awareness raising

Jordan's action plan originated from a pre-existing government reform initiative, namely, *The Executive Plan for Strengthening the National Integrity System* (NIS plan). The NIS plan included 132 commitments, 14 of which were included in the second OGP action plan. All of these 14 commitments were related to reform efforts made by the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) and have the same wording as the NIS plan's commitments. The commitments contained in the NIS plan were all published online and were open for public comment and feedback. Twenty-four discussion sessions were held to go over the NIS plan, and civil society organisations participated.

There were no official statements, events, or publications announcing the preparation of the OGP action plan or the OGP process. The IRM researchers only knew that the MoPSD was responsible for the OGP planning process through following up with the government. The government did not release information to the public regarding who was responsible for the OGP process or stating that the government was engaging with the OGP process or creating a second action plan. The only document made available to the public was the action plan itself after it was published on the OGP website.

The IRM researchers became aware of the plan's publication only after daily monitoring of the OGP website. The government had initially published a scanned PDF copy of the plan in Arabic and English in October 2014 (a copy is still available on the OGP website).¹ Later, the plan was changed to a Word document, with a detailed timeline that included some changes in the milestones and implementation timeline (some have been changed, some added, and some removed).²

Depth and breadth of consultation

The second national action plan was developed internally within MoPSD. There was no public consultation related to the development of this action plan. The government did not inform the public about this effort and did not invite the public to take part in any way. The commitments were taken from the NIS plan, which was created with a degree of public consultation. However, these consultations regarding the NIS plan predated the preparation of the OGP second action plan and did not involve any mention of OGP. Therefore, the NIS consultations do not apply to the OGP action plan.

Additional information

The IRM researchers contacted a number of civil society organisations working on issues relevant to the NIS plan and found that none had been invited to the consultations on preparation of the NIS plan. Participants in the stakeholder meetings, which were organised by the IRM researchers in preparing this report, also claimed that they were not engaged in these consultations.³ Because the consultations that the government held were closed, it is difficult to judge the quality of the participation in those consultations. However, from the media reports published about the consultations, it appears that the government presented stakeholders with an already prepared draft of the plan and asked for feedback about that draft.⁴ The stakeholders the government consulted with

included political parties, tribal leaders, current and former parliamentary members, municipality heads, provincial consultation councils, military veterans, CSOs, chambers of industry and commerce, professional associations, women, and young people.

Although the implementation of the action plan's commitments started in the first quarter of 2014, it took the government until October 2014 to publish its action plan. The government subsequently altered the plan, with changes noticeable with respect to commitment milestones and implementation timelines (some were changed, added, or removed).

¹ The Open Government Partnership, Jordan, "Second National Action Plan" (1st version uploaded, scanned PDF), <http://bit.ly/1NEKcxu>.

² The Open Government Partnership, Jordan, "Second National Action Plan" (2nd version uploaded, Word document), <http://bit.ly/1pOY5v7>.

³ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 October 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015.

⁴ "The NIS conducts its second consultation meeting in Ajloun," Jordan TV, 4 September 2013 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1L9FdBf>.

III. Action Plan Implementation

The IRM researchers could find no evidence of OGP stakeholders consultation during the implementation of the second national action plan.

As part of their participation in OGP, governments commit to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation—this can be an existing entity or a new one. This section summarizes that information.

Regular multi-stakeholder consultation

The IRM researchers were not able to uncover evidence of consultation regarding OGP implementation, including on any of Jordan’s media outlets. It appears that the implementation of the OGP action plan has been an entirely internal government process. Until now, the government has not made public statements informing citizens of the OGP second action plan’s implementation. The only mention of OGP concerning the second action plan is on a Jordanian government website, and it is a clause under a list of “general achievements” on the Ministry of Public Sector Development’s webpage: “Adopting the executive projects plan for the MoPSD contained in the [NIS Plan] as the second work plan for Jordan under the Open Government Partnership Initiative pursuant to a decision by the Council of Ministers.”¹

The website does not contain a copy of the action plan, a description of the OGP effort, or any further discussion of OGP. On the website of the Office of the Prime Minister, there is only a short executive summary of the “Open Government Partnership.”² To the IRM researchers’ knowledge, there has been no information about the second OGP action plan in any of Jordan’s media outlets.

The delay in developing the action plan until October 2014 and the differences in the commitments’ language added further challenges to the IRM researchers’ review efforts.

¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “General Achievements,” <http://bit.ly/1MpcpCL>.

² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Prime Ministry, “The Open Government Partnership—Executive Summary,” <http://bit.ly/1pV6u4K>.

IV. Analysis of Action Plan Contents

All OGP participating governments develop OGP country action plans that elaborate concrete commitments over an initial two-year period. Governments begin their OGP country action plans by sharing existing efforts related to open government, including specific strategies and ongoing programs. Action plans then set out governments' OGP commitments, which stretch practice beyond its current baseline. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

Commitments should be appropriate to each country's unique circumstances and policy interests. OGP commitments also should be relevant to OGP values laid out in the OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration signed by all OGP participating countries. The IRM uses the following guidance to evaluate relevance to core open government values.

Access to information

Commitments around access to information:

- Pertain to government-held information, as opposed to only information on government activities. As an example, releasing government-held information on pollution would be clearly relevant, although the information is not about "government activity" per se;
- Are not restricted to data but pertain to all information. For example, releasing individual construction contracts and releasing data on a large set of construction contracts;
- May include information disclosures in open data and the systems that underpin the public disclosure of data;
- May cover both proactive and/or reactive releases of information;
- May cover both making data more available and/or improving the technological readability of information;
- May pertain to mechanisms to strengthen the right to information (such as ombudsmen's offices or information tribunals);
- Must provide open access to information (it should not be privileged or internal only to government);
- Should promote transparency of government decision making and carrying out of basic functions;
- May seek to lower cost of obtaining information; and
- Should strive to meet the 5 Star for Open Data design (<http://5stardata.info/>).

Civic participation

Commitments around civic participation may pertain to formal public participation or to broader civic participation. They generally should seek to "consult," "involve," "collaborate," or "empower," as explained by the International Association for Public Participation's Public Participation Spectrum (<http://bit.ly/1kMmlYC>).

Commitments addressing public participation:

- Must open decision making to all interested members of the public; such forums are usually "top-down" in that they are created by government (or actors empowered by government) to inform decision making throughout the policy cycle;

- Can include elements of access to information to ensure meaningful input of interested members of the public into decisions; and
- Often include the right to have your voice heard, but do not necessarily include the right to be a formal part of a decision making process.

Alternately, commitments may address the broader operating environment that enables participation in civic space. Examples include but are not limited to the following:

- Reforms increasing freedoms of assembly, expression, petition, press, or association;
- Reforms on association including trade union laws or NGO laws; and
- Reforms improving the transparency and process of formal democratic processes such as citizen proposals, elections, or petitions.

The following commitments are examples of commitments that would **not** be marked as clearly relevant to the broader term “civic participation”:

- Commitments that assume participation will increase due to publication of information without specifying the mechanism for such participation (although this commitment would be marked as “access to information”);
- Commitments on decentralization that do not specify the mechanisms for enhanced public participation;
- Commitments that define participation as interagency cooperation without a mechanism for public participation; and
- Commitments that may be marked of “unclear relevance” also include those mechanisms where participation is limited to government-selected organizations.

Public accountability

Commitments improving accountability can include the following:

- Rules, regulations, and mechanisms 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.

Consistent with the core goal of “open government,” to be counted as “clearly relevant,” such commitments must include a public-facing element, meaning that they are not purely internal systems of accountability. While such commitments may be laudable and may meet an OGP grand challenge, they do not, as articulated, meet the test of “clear relevance” due to their lack of openness. Where such internal-facing mechanisms are a key part of government strategy, it is recommended that governments include a public facing element such as:

- Disclosure of non-sensitive metadata on institutional activities (following maximum disclosure principles);
- Citizen audits of performance;
- Citizen-initiated appeals processes in cases of non-performance or abuse.

Strong commitments around accountability ascribe rights, duties, or consequences for actions of officials or institutions. Formal accountability commitments include means of formally expressing grievances or reporting wrongdoing and achieving redress. Examples of strong commitments include:

- Improving or establishing appeals processes for denial of access to information;
- Improving access to justice by making justice mechanisms cheaper, faster, or easier to use;
- Improving public scrutiny of justice mechanisms;

- Creating public tracking systems for public complaints processes (such as case tracking software for police or anticorruption hotlines).

A commitment that claims to improve accountability, but assumes that merely providing information or data without explaining what mechanism or intervention will translate that information into consequences or change, would **not** qualify as an accountability commitment. See <http://bit.ly/1oWPXdl> for further information.

Technology and innovation for openness and accountability

OGP aims to enhance the use of technology and innovation to enable public involvement in government. Specifically, commitments that use technology and innovation should enhance openness and accountability by:

- Promoting new technologies that offer opportunities for information sharing, public participation, and collaboration.
- Making more information public in ways that enable people to both understand what their governments do and to influence decisions.
- Working to reduce costs of using these technologies.

Additionally, commitments that will be marked as technology and innovation:

- May commit to a process of engaging civil society and the business community to identify effective practices and innovative approaches for leveraging new technologies to empower people and promote transparency in government;
- May commit to supporting the ability of governments and citizens to use technology for openness and accountability;
- May support the use of technology by government employees and citizens alike.

Not all e-government reforms improve openness of government. When an e-government commitment is made, it needs to articulate how it enhances at least one of the following: access to information, public participation, or public accountability.

Key variables

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

All of the indicators and 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. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:

1. It must be specific enough that a judgment can be made about its potential impact. Starred commitments will have “medium” or “high” specificity.
2. 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.
3. The commitment would have a “moderate” or “transformative” potential impact, if completely implemented.
4. 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, Jordan's action plan contained no starred commitments.

Note that the IRM updated the star criteria in early 2015 to raise the bar for model OGP commitments. Under the old criteria, a commitment received a star if it was measurable, clearly relevant to OGP values as written, had moderate or transformative impact, and was substantially or completely implemented.

Based on these old criteria, Jordan's action plan would have received two starred commitments:

- Commitment 3: Develop service delivery standards and targets
- Commitment 4: Publish service delivery standards

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

General overview of the commitments

The second action plan contains 14 commitments that all deal with internal reforms within public agencies in Jordan. The commitments are grouped into five categories: (1) Enhancing internal oversight in government agencies; (2) Improving the delivery of government services; (3) Improving the quality of public administration; (4) Promoting good governance in public institutions; and (5) Improving the quality of institutions overseeing the media. The Ministry of Public Sector Development is responsible for implementing all of these commitments.

The commitments in the second action plan address follow up actions related to eight commitments from the first action plan (Commitments #1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 1.2, 1.3.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, and 2.2.2). The topics of the remaining 23 commitments in the first action plan are not addressed.

The commitments address three of the OGP Grand Challenges: (1) Improving Public Services, (2) Increasing Public Integrity, and (3) More Effectively Managing Public Resources. However, the commitments address these challenges through internal government reform that is not always relevant to OGP values as the commitments by and large lack public-facing elements.

The commitments in each category are closely related to one another. Different commitments often deal with the same topics, and in some cases, overlap. In one case, there are two commitments that are duplicates of one another (commitment 3.3. and commitment 4).

All of the commitments have associated timelines, although in some cases the timelines do not create clear time-bound goals. One commitment was listed for implementation in 2015, with an accompanying note saying it had already been implemented in 2014.

All of the commitments were copied from the Executive Plan for Strengthening the National Integrity System (NIS plan) that predated OGP and was already being implemented when the OGP action plan was released. The OGP action plan does add in a number of specific milestones for each commitment, but while the milestones *do* make the commitments more SMART, they *do not* add any new actions that weren't implied by the original plan. Furthermore, they do not clearly stretch government practice beyond what was called for in the NIS plan, and the majority of commitments do not include a public-facing element. A number of the commitments call for the government to implement laws that are already in force in Jordan. It is already the constitutional duty of every government agency to implement the laws in force in the country, so these kinds of commitments cannot be said to be changing the status quo.

There are two final features to note in the OGP action plan. First, the English and Arabic versions of the plan contain differences in wording (as explained in the editor’s notes at the beginning of each applicable commitment), which affect the meaning of the commitments, sometimes in critical ways. Second, as already noted, the action plan was revised during the course of the action plan cycle. The revised action plan contained a number of changes to milestones, with some having been added, some removed, and some revised. There is no notification in this document indicating that the plan had been updated during the implementation period, and there were no press releases or announcements to inform the public of this change.¹ Although the OGP Articles of Governance state that action plans “may be updated as needed based on ongoing consultations with civil society,” the government did not consult with civil society in this instance, nor did it inform the public of the changes.

¹ The Open Government Partnership, Jordan, “Second National Action Plan” (2nd version uploaded, Word document), <http://bit.ly/1pOY5v7>.

Section 1: Enhancing the Role of Internal Control Units

1. Internal Control Units Structure

Text of the commitment

Adopt a standardized organizational structure for internal control units that encompass financial and administrative controls and identifies the party to which each unit reports (the minister, president of commission, or chairperson).

Milestones:

1. Develop an organization structure.
2. Coordinating with the Ministry of Finance to embed the internal control bylaw (which substitute's the financial control bylaw) with the roles and responsibilities and specifying the audit control unit affiliation.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Second quarter 2014

Editor's Note: The timeframe for this commitment is unclear. The commitment text calls for it to be completed in Q2 of 2014, but the detailed timeline included in the plan calls for the second milestone to be completed in Q2 of 2015. Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
OVERALL		✓			Unclear					✓						✓
1.1 Develop organisation structure		✓			Unclear					✓						✓
1.2. Coordinating with Ministry of Finance to embed the Internal Control Bylaw		✓			Unclear					✓						✓

What happened?

This commitment aims to standardise the work of the Internal Control Units (ICUs), which are sections found in each Jordanian government agency and are responsible for financial and administrative oversight of those agencies. The commitment obligates the

Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) to work with the Ministry of Finance to clarify the structure of the ICUs in law and to specify the bureaucratic chains of authority over the ICUs.

The Financial Control Bylaw of 2011,¹ which Jordan's Council of Ministers issued in an attempt to enhance the oversight and use of public funds in Jordan, created the ICUs. The bylaw stipulated that an ICU should be created for all government bodies including ministries, agencies, authorities, commissions, and government-owned companies.² The ICUs within each agency were charged with investigating records and use of funds, protecting public funds and assets from misuse, ensuring compliance with existing laws and regulations, and conducting general financial and technical oversight.^{3,4}

The bylaw, however, did not clearly specify all details about how ICUs should fit into each agency's organisational structure or how they should operate. It did specify that the head of each ICU should report to the relevant minister or to the head of the Council of Commissioners (Council of Administrators) responsible for that body.⁵ It also specified that all ICUs should be overseen by the Central Council for Standards of Internal Control under the administration of the Ministry of Finance.⁶

Milestone 1.1: According to an August 2014 statement, MoPSD worked closely in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance to finalise the organisational structure of the internal control units.⁷ After this effort, a royal decree approved the amended Financial Control Bylaw to be enforced in 2015,⁸ renamed it the Internal Monitoring Bylaw,⁹ and added some more detail to the mission given to ICUs.¹⁰ The amended bylaw also added more clarity to the chain of command over ICUs, specifying that the ICU of any government agency should report directly to the ICU of the ministry overseeing that agency.¹¹ These changes did not add a great amount of detail, but they did add more clarification in keeping with the commitment's milestones.

MoPSD worked to ensure the application of these changes by reviewing the structures of a number of government agencies. MoPSD reported to the IRM researchers that it had completed 37 reviews during 2014, though this information could not be independently verified.¹²

Because the language of the commitment only obligates the government to develop new structures for ICUs—as opposed to actually taking steps to improve their performance—the IRM researchers consider the milestone to have been completed.

Milestone 1.2: This milestone called for coordination between the MoPSD and the Ministry of Finance to specify the audit control unit affiliation and was completed. Before amending the law, the MoPSD in May 2014 sent the Ministry of Finance a set of regulations concerning the organisational structure for ICUs.¹³ After amending the law, the MoPSD in April 2015 sent another set of documents to the Ministry of Finance, which included information on the organisational structure of the ICUs as stipulated by the amended Internal Control Bylaw.¹⁴ The Ministry of Finance published a guide to the restructuring process in a PDF document available to the public on its website, a positive step for the transparency of this initiative.¹⁵

Did it matter?

The Internal Monitoring Bylaw was an important step towards transparency and public accountability by strengthening the internal auditor. This bylaw also calls for a Central ICU to coordinate with ICUs in different governmental agencies. The absence of a clear, standardised organisational structure for the ICUs and the lack of information regarding administrative and technical monitoring in this bylaw have resulted, however, in giving this commitment a minor potential impact.

The IRM researchers have further concerns over the potential impact this commitment could achieve. Prior to this commitment's implementation, the Audit Bureau of Jordan was responsible for reporting on the use of finances in Jordanian institutions. From 2000 to 2006, it presented parliament with yearly reports of its findings. These reports were subsequently not discussed by parliament for years, and as a result they did little to protect public funds and assets from misuse.¹⁶ Additionally, neither political parties nor research centres nor the media have done much to follow up on the reports.¹⁷

As a result of this commitment not increasing access to information or improving civic participation in the accountability process, this commitment cannot be said to address any OGP values. Furthermore, the lack of OGP values makes it difficult to assess whether the commitment is fulfilling its intended function. In addition, stakeholders interviewed identified the ambition of this commitment as low, since simply restructuring the ICUs will not necessarily have an impact on their performance. Instead, if the government wants to improve anti-corruption efforts in Jordan, stakeholders suggested that the government undertake measures specifically designed to improve the performance of the respective units.¹⁸

Moving forward

Despite the fact that the commitment does not deal with government openness, in the future it is possible for the government to promote more transparency and accountability in ways related to this commitment. For example, the government could work to connect the ICUs to other mechanisms for public accountability such as the Ombudsman Bureau or other bodies responsible for assessing government accountability and performance.

In addition, the government could also take more steps to keep the public informed about the changes regarding the ICUs. The government could engage in active efforts through the media or grassroots channels to educate the public about the steps it is taking to reduce corruption internally, which would help keep the public informed.

¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Control Bylaw [Arabic] No. 3, 2011, Official Gazette 5081, 1 March 2011.

² Law No. 3, 2011, Article 4. This stipulation is repeated in the Development of Governmental Departments and Organisational Structures Law No. 80 of 2012, Article 7A.

³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Control Bylaw [Arabic] No. 3, 2011, Official Gazette 5081, March 1, 2011, Article 8, A; Article 3.

⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Control Bylaw [Arabic] No. 3, 2011, Article 8B, <http://bit.ly/1pXQLRL>.

⁵ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Control Bylaw [Arabic] No. 3, 2011, Article 5, <http://bit.ly/1pXQLRL>.

⁶ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Control Bylaw [Arabic] No. 3, 2011, Article 6/G/6, <http://bit.ly/1pXQLRL>.

⁷ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Control Bylaw [Arabic] No. 3, 2011, Article 8A; Article 3, <http://bit.ly/1pXQLRL>.

⁸ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Control Bylaw [Arabic] No. 3, 2011, Article 8B, <http://bit.ly/1pXQLRL>.

⁹ "Al-Khawaldeh: Restructuring the public sector law soon eliminates and integrates institutions to achieve greater financial savings," *Addostor Newspaper*, 17 August 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1tbA7eG>.

¹⁰ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Amended Financial Control Bylaw [Arabic] No. 11, 2015, Official Gazette 5327, 16 February 2015.

¹¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Monitoring Bylaw [Arabic] No. 11, 2015.

¹² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Monitoring Bylaw [Arabic] No. 11, 2015, Article 3.

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- ¹³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Internal Monitoring Bylaw [Arabic] No. 11, 2015, Article 4.
- ¹⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayrouz Bani Hamdan, 24 June 2015.
- ¹⁵ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 1.
- ¹⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Executive Order 804/2/1 sent to the Ministry of Finance, received by researchers via email, 20 October 2015.
- ¹⁷ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Guide to Restructuring Government Agencies," March 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1GjldR8>.
- ¹⁸ "The Audit Bureau's Reports and the Required Attention," *Addostor Newspaper*, 29 June 2008 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1QY9vwk>.

Section 2: Upgrade and Publish Service Delivery Standards

2. Improve Service Delivery

Text of the commitment

Identify and list government services and their providers and work on improving service delivery through the following:

- Provide continuing specialized training to service delivery professionals.
- Enhance programs and e-linkage systems to support the one-stop-shop approach.
- Review, develop and simplify the required steps for accessing services.
- Improve the service delivery environment in terms of locations and facilities.

Milestones:

1. Unify governmental services “information form”.
2. Prepare a services guide for the governmental institution services (25 manuals per year).
3. Conducting training programs in the field of services development (restructuring, simplifying procedures, specifying the needs and measuring the customer satisfaction), (4 training programs per year).
4. Listing and sorting the needs of governmental departments to deliver their services and prepare suitable suggestions to provide these services, and implement electronic connections in cooperation with departments possessing information and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. (4 institutions per year).
5. Prepare technical reports for the reengineering processes for desired services (9 services per year).

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Fourth quarter 2015

Editor’s Note:

There are discrepancies between the English and Arabic versions of the action plan. For milestone 2.2, the Arabic version specifies 25 institutions (not manuals) per year, six each quarter. Milestone 2.3 of the English version adds “restructuring, simplifying procedures, specifying the needs and measuring the customer satisfaction” which are not found in the Arabic version. Finally, milestone 2.4 of the Arabic version lists four institutions per year at minimum. Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
Overall		✓			Unclear					✓					✓	

2.1. Unify an “information form”	✓				unclear	✓							✓
2.2. Prepare services guide	✓				Unclear	✓							✓
2.3. Conduct training programs		✓			Unclear		✓						✓
2.4. List department needs	✓				Unclear	✓							✓
2.5. Prepare reports	✓				Unclear	✓						✓	

What happened?

This commitment deals with an ongoing effort by the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) to improve the provision of public service delivery, such as registering a business, taking out an agricultural loan, or filing an incident report with security officials. Altogether, the MoPSD followed the guidelines in the milestones and substantially completed the commitment.

In 2012, the government of Jordan passed the Development of Public Services Bylaw.¹ This bylaw called for government agencies to spread a “cultural of excellence in service provision” (Article 3F), build awareness among staff on the mechanisms for service delivery (4F), create electronic manuals (4B), and prepare plans for the improvement of service delivery (3A). These issues are directly addressed in this commitment.

For all five milestones, the MoPSD provided documentation to the IRM researchers showing significant progress in 2014–2015. As a result of the commitment lacking a public-facing element and being primarily concerned with improving internal government processes and systems, the IRM researchers evaluated it as “unclear” to OGP values.

Milestone 2.1: This milestone, which was completed, aims to create a template for service manuals. According to MoPSD documentation, the ministry worked in 2014 to create a single template for service manuals for citizens. The template incorporated essential information about each service, including its type, where it is offered, conditions for receiving it, and more.² This is substantiated by the fact that all the manuals that have been published (see below) have followed one unified template.

Milestone 2.2: This milestone regarding the preparation of 25 service manuals was completed, according to MoPSD documents that claim it prepared service manuals for 48 government agencies covering 1,401 different services.³ (These numbers differ from the ministry’s website, which on an undated page accessed in September 2015 reported the preparation of 58 manuals covering 1,903 services.)⁴ Each of these manuals is a short document (typically 1-2 pages) that identifies the name of the service, the target groups for receiving each service, the places for service provision, conditions for citizens to receive services, required documentation, steps for providing services, partner agencies in delivery of the services, visual explanations of services (when needed), and appropriate timelines for completing services. The manuals also contain some information on steps to improve the quality of services.⁵ As of June 2015, government agencies had published hundreds of these manuals online. The commitment only calls

for implementation of part of the 2012 bylaw, and these actions were mandated by law to take place even without this commitment.

Milestone 2.3: This milestone calls for training for public employees to strengthen their ability to simplify and streamline public services. The milestone was completed. In a document provided to the IRM researchers,⁶ the MoPSD provided evidence that it had implemented a number of training modules to the bodies listed below. The milestone calls for four trainings per year. The record provided to the IRM researchers shows a total of six trainings in 2014 and three before June 2015, indicating the ministry achieved its target in 2014 and is on track to achieve it in 2015. The trainings were as followed:

- Two trainings on reengineering service processes on 25 March 2014 for 66 employees from 42 agencies.
- Training for the Higher Youth Council on improving service delivery on 9 April 2014.
- Two trainings on measuring service delivery on 22 June and 24 June 2014 for 55 employees from 52 government agencies.
- Training for employees of the Civil Defence Directorate on simplifying procedures for service delivery on 22 December 2014.
- Three trainings on reengineering services and establishing standards for 90 government agencies on 22, 24, and 26 March 2015.⁷

Milestone 2.4: This milestone aims to update the government's delivery of services by helping list and sort the needs of each governmental department. The milestone was completed. According to the website of the MoPSD, the ministry studied a number of service provision processes in depth and created technical suggestions for agencies to streamline and speed up their provision of those services.⁸ MoPSD shared these suggestions directly with the agencies but declined to share them with the IRM researchers or the public.⁹ These agencies included: Supreme Judge Department, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour, the National Aid Fund, the Ministry of Health, the Bureau of Lands and Properties, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Ministry of Tourism.¹⁰ The MoPSD therefore exceeded its target in preparing suggestions for electronic linkages according to the commitment. It is important to keep in mind that the commitment is only about *preparing suggestions* for electronic linkages; the actual implementation of such linkages is not part of the action plan process.

Milestone 2.5: The final milestone calls for the MoPSD to prepare technical reports to guide government agencies in reengineering their services and was substantially implemented. According to documentation from the MoPSD, the ministry prepared technical reports about services in the Ministry of Justice, the Transportation Authority, the National Aid Fund, the Ministry of Education, The Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Tourism.

The MoPSD provided the IRM researchers with the report of reengineering the procedures of services in the Transportation Authority as an example, the letter sending this report to the prime minister, and a press release regarding this subject. These documents are uploaded to the IRM document library at <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>.

Did it matter?

The commitment discusses the need to improve services offered by the government. Improving the quality of service delivery is an important reform priority for both government and citizens. The IRM researchers' consultations with civil society, citizens, and private sector actors confirmed this.¹¹ This commitment was created in response to

public demand. This demand stemmed from citizens being unable to access information regarding services, as well as a lack of electronic communication between service-providing agencies. According to some citizens interviewed, improvement of electronic communication is the main required improvement to public services.¹² The lack of electronic communication between service-providing agencies is perceived as a main cause of a decline of service standard provided to citizens. According to interviews with citizens, they expressed concerns regarding their repeated demands to improve the quality of service provided that are not taken into consideration.^{13,14} The IRM researchers rank the potential impact of this commitment overall to be minor. The distribution of service manuals, the implementation of trainings, and the issuance of new technical reports and recommendations are stepping stones to improved service provision in the country, and should be considered valuable to the reform effort.

The language of the commitment does not explicitly state that the manuals will be published. Therefore, the commitment was marked as having unclear relevance to OGP values. The other milestones are internal to government and do not contain a public element, rendering their relevance to OGP values unclear.

Some of the interviewed stakeholders complained that there is not enough information on service delivery online or at the locations of service delivery (through announcements/posters or manuals),¹⁵ and others stated that while they use these manuals they believe that some of them are not being properly updated.¹⁶

Moving forward

The IRM researchers recommend that the ministry enhance the overall openness and transparency of the commitment by keeping the public informed of progress on the commitment and seeking citizen feedback. In addition, citizens could be given more chances to participate in the process. For example, the government could conduct focus groups on the development of the manuals and then use that citizen input to design manuals more tailored to their needs.

The commitment also briefly mentions measuring “customer satisfaction.” This is an important area for further government efforts. The IRM researchers suggest that perhaps the government could explore more ways to bring citizens into the process of measuring service delivery. Making service delivery accountable to citizens is a good way to ensure that the processes will meet citizens’ needs in an efficient and consistent way.

¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Development of Public Services Bylaw [Arabic] No. 64, 2012. Official Gazette 5178, 9 September 2012.

² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayeze al Nahar, 21 October 2015.

³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 2.

⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Developing Government Services and Simplifying Their Steps” [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1PPFddW>.

⁵ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 2.

⁶ A similar more general document on MoPSD’s website that lists its achievements between 2012–Q3 of 2015 and can be found on <http://bit.ly/1RUBvk6>.

⁷ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 6-7.

⁸ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Developing Government Services and Simplifying their Steps” [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1PPFddW>.

⁹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayez Nahar, 21 October 2015.

¹⁰ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 7-8.

¹¹ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 October 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015; Karak, 1 October 2015.

¹² IRM researchers' phone interview with citizen Oula Sawai, Ajloun Province, 12 May 2015.

¹³ IRM researchers' phone interview with citizen AbdulRazaq Muhasib, Maan Province, 12 May 2015.

¹⁴ IRM researchers' phone interview with citizen Suleiman Al Khawaldeh, Mafraq Province, 12 May 2015.

¹⁵ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 October 2015.

¹⁶ Stakeholders meeting, Amman, 30 September 2015.

Commitment 3 and Commitment 4

3. Develop Service Delivery Standards and Targets

Text of the commitment

Develop service delivery standards and targets so as to limit the use of discretionary powers in providing services, meet customers' needs and expectations by listening to them, align with best practices, and take into consideration financial and legislative limitations.

- 1. Continue in providing requirement for services development bylaw No.64 year 2012 that reinforce governmental departments to develop and publish services delivery standards.*
- 2. Prepare and publish a governmental institutions service' manuals and make them accessible to the customers electronically and in the services delivery locations (25 manuals per year).*
- 3. Reinforce governmental institutions to publish services delivery standards and to commit to them by preparing services charters.*

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Fourth quarter 2015

Editor's note: *Milestone 3.2 of the English copy of the action plan contains more detail than the Arabic version in that it specifies 25 manuals per year should be prepared and published. Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.*

4. Publish service delivery standards

Obligate institutions and departments that provide services to publish service delivery standards and in manuals that include the procedures, responsibilities, timeframe, fees (if any), and needed documentation for each service. These manuals should be made available by publishing them on websites, customer service centers, etc.

Milestone:

List and sort the services provided by governmental institutions in a form of service card template that includes all information specified by the project. (25 manual per year)

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Fourth quarter 2015

Editor's note: *The English translation of the action plan submitted to OGP differs from the Arabic translation. In the Arabic version, the commitment specifies publishing services manuals for 25 agencies per year. In the English version, that number refers to the number of manuals to be published each year. Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.*

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
OVERALL			✓		✓			✓			✓				✓	
3.1. Implement Bylaw No.64		✓			✓				✓						✓	
3.2. Publish service manuals			✓		✓			✓							✓	
3.3. Publish service standards		✓			✓						✓				✓	
4. Publish service delivery standards			✓		✓			✓			✓				✓	

What happened?

This commitment aims to improve public service delivery standards through implementing a bylaw and publishing service delivery manuals and standards.

Milestones 3.1 and 3.2 of this commitment borrow directly from the language of the 2012 bylaw (Bylaw No. 64) for the development of public services and require its implementation. Milestone 3.3 addresses “services charters,” which are not addressed in the bylaw.

Milestone 3.1: This milestone aims to ensure enforcement of Bylaw No. 64 and was substantially implemented. The Minister of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) reported that throughout 2014 it issued requests in writing to government agencies to comply with Article 4 of the bylaw, compelling the agencies to publish the manuals on their own websites and on the central government e-portal.¹ While this is not in line with the language of the commitment, it is a transparent way to publish the services manuals that supports the overall rule of law in the country. To keep track of the government agencies’ adherence to the bylaw, the MoPSD claims that it submitted a report to the prime minister about the agencies’ progress and is in the process of writing another report for the year 2015.²

Milestone 3.2: This milestone was substantially implemented. In a document given to the researchers, the MoPSD reported that it created service manuals for 48 agencies and published manuals for 23 of these agencies online. The manuals for the remaining agencies, it claimed, were a work in progress. The researchers looked into each one of

these 23 agencies to determine if they had published the manuals and found that most of the agencies had indeed published them online.

All manuals follow a standard format: explaining the service, detailing how citizens can access the service, and providing information about how the service should be delivered. The publication of these manuals, therefore, can be considered a substantial fulfilment of Milestones 3.1 and 3.2 of this commitment though the process is still ongoing and the commitment is not set to end until the last quarter of 2015.

There were, however, many differences in how the agencies published the manuals. Some agencies published the manuals in easy to find places—one website even put the manuals on its front page—while others had their manuals on sub-pages that were difficult to find. Some websites explained the purpose of the manuals, while some simply posted them without accompanying information. One website published them as “drafts” despite there being no apparent reason for this.

In addition, IRM researchers found services manuals published by several government agencies that were not included in the report by the MoPSD, including 48 manuals published by the Media Commission.³

Milestone 3.3: This milestone deals with “services charters.” On 1 June 2015, the prime minister disseminated the charter, a one-page document explaining the duties of the service provider and the service receiver,⁴ among governmental institutions for publication on government websites.⁵ The charter was prepared by MoPSD, and the IRM researchers found a copy of the charter on MoPSD website. However, looking at other government websites, such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Environment, the IRM researchers couldn’t find this charter, so it is assumed that the process of publishing the charter is still ongoing. Thus, the level of completion can only be deemed “limited.”

Commitment 4 calls for the publication of service manuals that describe information about government services and how citizens can access them. According to the original Arabic text of the commitment and documentation received from the Ministry of Public Sector Development, this commitment is a duplicate of commitment 3, milestone 3.3. as it addresses the publication of the same manuals.

Did it matter?

Commitment 3 was created in the absence of clear standards for the provision of government services, resulting in employees using their own discretion when making decisions. In fact, the Arabic text of the National Integrity System lists “reducing the discretionary powers in service providing” as a key objective. According to citizens who participated in the in-person and phone interviews held by the IRM research team, “discretionary powers” significantly affect the quality of services provided.

This commitment helps the government improve public service delivery standards, which would, in turn, make the government more inclusive and accountable towards its citizens and would limit the use of discretionary power.

Additionally, the commitment explains MoPSD’s role in responding to stakeholders’ and citizens’ needs, measuring the service delivery with outlined standards, and training staff to ensure that the government follows the procedures laid out in the law. Given the issues experienced by the Jordanian people to obtain services (such as a lack of information), publishing manuals online as promised in milestone 3.3. and commitment 4 will most likely have a significant impact on the ability of citizens to access services and can be considered a helpful reform. Publishing service manuals will simplify administrative procedures and will provide necessary information for the recipients of services, both of which will enhance service standards.

Moreover, publishing the service standards will potentially raise public accountability because citizens will have a benchmark of what the quality of services should be. Some stakeholders complained that there is not enough information on service delivery online or at the locations of service delivery (through announcements, posters, or manuals).⁶ Others stated that while they use these manuals, some of them are and are not being properly updated.⁷

Prior to the publication of these manuals, citizens did not know the location, the necessary amount of time, or the cost of each desired service. Service delivery standards will help solve these issues by providing all the information regarding these services to the public. Therefore, this commitment is ambitious since publishing the service standards will save time, effort, and cost for the public, giving it a moderate potential impact.

Moving forward

In the coming months, the IRM researchers suggest that the ministry continue following up with all government agencies to ensure that the remaining manuals are published in paper and online. In order to promote the open use of information, the ministry should encourage agencies to publish these plans in open formats such as HTML or .doc formats rather than PDF files. In addition, the ministry should encourage agencies to publish these manuals in clearly labelled, easy-to-find locations on their websites, and government publicity efforts could raise citizen awareness about the existence of these manuals.

¹ "Public Sector Development provides guides for service delivery in government departments," Petra News Agency, 9 August 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1MCtGNc>.

² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 9-10.

³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Media Commission, "Services Manual" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1GHReiV>.

⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Service Charter" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1GHQNi0>.

⁵ "Prime Minister disseminate the general framework of services charters," Petra News Agency, 1 June 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1k62jji>.

⁶ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 October 2015.

⁷ Stakeholders meeting, Amman, 30 September 2015.

5. Ensuring Full Compliance with Service Delivery Standards

Text of the commitment

Intensify monitoring of and accountability procedures to ensure full compliance with service delivery standards.

Milestone:

Conduct a periodic assessment for institutions to assure they provide requirements of the services development bylaw No 64 for the year 2012.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Continuous

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
		✓			Unclear					✓						✓

What happened?

The commitment calls for the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) to ensure that government agencies are complying with the 2012 Development of Public Services Bylaw.¹ Essentially this amounts to a tightening of monitoring and accountability procedures in the delivery of public services.

However, improving government accountability needs specific measures that go beyond periodic assessments of institutions in their delivery of public services. The IRM researchers could not find proof that the government accountability has in practice been tightened through this commitment. Thus, the researchers consider the overall completion of this commitment to be limited.

The commitment lists the implementation period as “continuous,” meaning it is ongoing and can never be truly considered completed.

During 2014–2015, MoPSD worked with the Prime Minister to help ensure that government agencies implemented the requirements of the 2012 Development of Public Services Bylaw. For more information on these requirements, see commitment 3.

As previously mentioned, the MoPSD claims that in 2014 it submitted an internal report to the prime minister about the progress of agencies’ implementation of the bylaw, and it is in the process of writing another report for the year 2015.² In response, on 12 November 2014, the Prime Minister released Executive Order 83/11/1/39451, calling for all government agencies to address the concerns raised in the MoPSD’s report on the 2012 bylaw.³

In March 2015, the MoPSD sent another report to the prime minister regarding citizen complaints about government systems. These concerns were raised through the Central Complaints Management Unit, an office of the MoPSD that accepts citizen complaints about government agencies and follows up with those agencies.⁴ This report covered

unresolved citizen complaints that had been received in previous years, asking the prime minister for help to address them.⁵ Although this report was not published in full, information about it was publicised by the media after a press conference by the Minister of Public Sector Development, which shows a limited but positive step for the transparency of the reform initiative.⁶ This information included the number of complaints in each municipality, the percentage of solved complaints, complaints under process, and complaints waiting to be dealt with.⁷

Furthermore, the MoPSD started issuing quarterly reports regarding the citizen complaints raised through the Central Complaints Management Unit. Two quarterly reports have been issued in the period of evaluation, on 20 January 2015 and 21 April 2015, which covered the fourth quarter of 2014 and the first quarter of 2015 respectively. The MoPSD sent these reports to the Prime Ministry in order to compel government agencies to follow up on its recommendations.⁸ The government did not publish the reports publically, but they were discussed in the media.⁹

As of now, the MoPSD appears to be conducting periodic reviews of government agencies' service delivery operations and their compliance with the 2012 bylaw. The MoPSD has sent these reports to the prime minister and the relevant agencies to develop the service delivery standards and to fix any shortcomings. So far, the MoPSD has done 65 unannounced visits to different institutions. According to the timeframe contained in the action plan, MoPSD will continue to do so on a continuous basis.

Did it matter?

This commitment could limit the use of the discretionary powers by civil servants who do not fully comply with service delivery standards. But because the executive order does not include penalty mechanisms for the agencies or servants that fail to follow these orders, the IRM researchers consider this commitment to have a minor potential impact.

The citizen complaints covered in the MoPSD report focus on the services provided by the municipalities, the water sector, Jordan Standards and Metrology Organisation, the Social Security Institution, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education.¹⁰

According to stakeholders, the way the commitment is phrased does not allow public scrutiny of what steps the government takes in the assessment of existing service delivery standards. In addition, citizens do not have access to the results of the review process for services or the steps taken to address any shortcomings identified. For these reasons, the commitment has been deemed to have unclear relevance to OGP values.

Moving forward

The researchers' consultations with citizens in the Al-Wahadat Camp, a permanent refugee camp in a major neighbourhood of Amman, revealed a consensus that there was a need for more transparency and public accountability regarding the efforts of ensuring full compliance with service delivery standards. To promote the transparency of this national action plan, citizens suggested the government could publish these reports in a timely manner and seek citizen feedback about them.

To increase public accountability, stakeholders suggested that the government could develop a disciplinary system for employees who do not comply with the service delivery standard. Enabling the public to play a bigger role in the feedback process and being more open about measures to improve the quality of services could help as well. It could also help to increase citizens' trust in the government's ability to provide public services.¹¹

In addition, in the next action plan, the government can include commitments that

stretch beyond implementation of adopted laws. Implementing existing laws and regulations should be part of the normal work of the government, without having to be specified in an action plan.

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- ¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Development of Public Services Bylaw [Arabic] No. 64, 2012, Official Gazette 5178, 9 September 2012.
 - ² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 9-10.
 - ³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 13.
 - ⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "The Central Complaints Management Unit" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1Rdm6rQ>.
 - ⁵ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Document 1/1/469 submitted to the Prime Ministry 17 March 2015, received by the researchers via email, 20 October 2015.
 - ⁶ "The MoPSD Releases a Report on Outstanding Complaints About Government Services," Petra News Agency, 22 March 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1No6aUo>.
 - ⁷ "Governmental Report: 63% of Citizens Complaints Are Service Demands," *Addustour Newspaper*, 3 November 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/20Uu3FO>.
 - ⁸ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Document 1/1/497 submitted to the Prime Ministry 21 April 2015, received by the researchers via email, 20 Oct 2015.
 - ⁹ "308 Complaints about Government Services in the First Quarter," Petra News Agency, 26 April 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1M98muT>.
 - ¹⁰ "Governmental Report: 63% of Citizens Complaints Are Service Demands," *Addustour Newspaper*, 3 November 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/20Uu3FO>.
 - ¹¹ Stakeholders meeting, Amman, 30 September 2015.

6. Service Delivery Process Assessment

Text of the commitment

Conducting unannounced periodic assessment for the service delivery process and identify areas and opportunities for potential improvements, and implementing them in cooperation with the concerned government institutions.

Milestones:

1. Conduct field visits and prepare assessment reports and report them to the cabinet and relevant parties (9 visits per quarter)
2. Continues Monitoring and evaluation of the development plan throughout the implementation.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Continuous

Editor's note: The English copy of the action plan submitted to OGP differs from the Arabic copy. In the Arabic version, milestone 6.1 specifies that visits will be unannounced. Milestone 6.2 is more specific in the Arabic version and says "follow up on the development plan and address gaps that are found based on the requests of the agencies." Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
OVERALL			✓		Unclear					✓					✓	
6.1. Conduct field visits and prepare assessment reports			✓		Unclear					✓						✓
6.2. Monitor and evaluate the development plan	✓				Unclear					✓			✓			

What happened?

This commitment calls for the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) to conduct unannounced visits to service-providing agencies in order to monitor levels of service delivery. MoPSD has been engaging in these visits since 2012,¹ pursuant to Order No. 270/A from the ministry issued 14 November 2012.²

Milestone 6.1: This milestone was completed. According to information provided by the MoPSD to the IRM researchers, a working team from the MoPSD visited a number of agencies without prior announcement. During each visit, a member of the team would request a specific service at the office and would observe the service delivery, noting its quality. After these visits, the team wrote reports to the Prime Ministry detailing the levels of service delivery observed in the visits and any gaps in quality.³ According to documentation provided by the MoPSD, these visits occurred on about a weekly basis.⁴ Documentation provided by the MoPSD showed 65 visits to government agencies by June 2015.⁵ It appears, therefore, that the MoPSD may have achieved more than the target of nine visits per quarter, although the ministry did not provide an exact breakdown of when visits occurred.

The MoPSD visited a diverse set of government agencies. However, all the agencies listed are located in the eight governorates of Jordan's northern and central regions. The four governorates of Jordan's southern region did not receive any visits. This is a serious gap in the MoPSD's monitoring.

The MoPSD claimed that it sent reports on these visits to the Prime Ministry and also published them in daily newspapers.⁶ In fact, a number of popular newspapers did publish stories about the ministry's visits, including *Al-Ghad*⁷ and *Al-Rai*,⁸ as well as other news outlets such as Amman XChange.⁹ In several cases, the ministry shared these articles on its website, a positive step for the transparency of the initiative.¹⁰ These articles included information about the visits, and some included summaries of the MoPSD's reports. However, the researchers did not find that any reports had been reproduced in full in the media, nor did they uncover the complete reports posted anywhere for the public to read.

Milestone 6.2: This milestone calls for following up on the recommendations of the assessment reports. The Prime Ministry responded to the assessment reports by corresponding with the relevant ministries and ordering them to comply with the recommendations made in the MoPSD's reports.¹¹ In August 2015, *Ad Dastour* newspaper reported that 30% of the agencies identified in the MoPSD report had responded to the MoPSD's recommendations, which the newspaper claimed was a large increase over the previous year. However, this article identified only 28 visits by the ministry, which conflicts with the 65 reported by the ministry itself. In addition, the article did not reveal the extent to which the agencies had "responded" and whether or not they had implemented the MoPSD's suggestions.¹² Thus, the IRM researchers were unable to ascertain the level of completion of this milestone, resulting in a level of completion of "not started."

Did it matter?

This commitment was designed to introduce a mechanism to assess and monitor the quality of governmental services. The level of service standards is unequal in the different provinces and governmental agencies and requires periodic assessments to identify areas for improvements. This inequality was a crucial concern for stakeholders who met with the IRM research team. A participant from Karak mentioned that the capital city of Amman has better resources than remote areas.¹³ Another participant from Ajloun agreed with that statement and observed that the farther you get from Amman the worse the service standards get.¹⁴ A participant from Al-Tafilah supported this opinion and claimed that government in provinces other than Amman has little knowledge of correct service standards, especially Al-Tafilah and parts of Al-Zarqa.¹⁵ A participant from Mafraq agreed with these claims and said that the quality and array of services provided in Amman are rarely provided in other provinces.¹⁶

This commitment's impact has only a minor potential impact. Although the government put out a press release following each MoPSD visit, the results of the field visits are not available to the public but are instead sent to the Prime Ministry. The MoPSD has provided a report of an unannounced visit to the clinics of Al-Mafraq Hospital in Al-Mafraq municipality. It also provided a press release about the visit, the letter the prime minister wrote to the minister of health, compelling the ministry to act upon the visit report, and the letter the minister of health wrote to his ministry. It is also unclear whether the assessment reports cause changes within the government, changes that could make services more useful to the public.

The commitment does not address any of the OGP values and does not appear to be relevant to the OGP effort because it lacks public-facing element. While monitoring service delivery is an important part of the reform process, it does little to open government to citizens. The commitment itself does not require the government to inform citizens of the effort. With that in mind, it is a positive step that the ministry voluntarily published the results of its visits in the media, strengthening the overall transparency of the effort.

Moving forward

According to the IRM researchers, keeping the public informed of the assessments would be a good way to enhance the overall transparency of the reform process. While publishing information in the media is a good start, it would be more beneficial for the citizens if the results of site visits were publicly available and reports from the visits, including the methodology used to determine findings, were published. As with the previous commitment, the IRM researchers' consultations with stakeholders pointed out that it is essential for the government to share more information about this effort with the public and to seek feedback from citizens in a public way. Citizens also suggested that the government publicise the steps it is taking to hold errant public servants accountable for not fulfilling their work duties, including publicising high-level outcomes of the disciplinary process.¹⁷

¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayeze Nahar, 21 October 2015.

² "Report of the MoPSD Records Notes About the Directorate of Lands in Irbid," *Addostor Newspaper*, 2 December 2013 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1ZELz3g>.

³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayeze Nahar, 21 October 2015.

⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayeze Nahar, 21 October 2015.

⁵ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 15. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayeze Nahar, 21 October 2015.

⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 15.

⁷ "Government Report Criticizes the Lack of Aids for Persons with Special Needs in the Health Insurance Directorate," *Al-Ghad Newspaper*, 18 August 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1k6aPiz>.

⁸ "The Ministry of Public Sector Makes Unannounced Visits to Measure Government Performance and Services," *Al-Rai Newspaper*, 17 August 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1PutyjN>.

⁹ "Secret Shoppers': The Most Effective Way to Get a Picture of the Reality in Government Agencies, for Better or For Worse," Amman XChange, 22 November 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1LJBZZs>.

¹⁰ "Documents at the Social Security Office in Amman Damaged by Water," *Addostor Newspaper*, 14 October 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1Mk7Wke>; "Report criticizes the wait time at the Central Amman Social Security Office," *Al-Ghad Newspaper*, 8 October 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1O9k7XH>.

¹¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 14.

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- ¹² “30% of Government Agencies Responding to the Report by the Ministry of Public Sector Development,” *Addostor Newspaper*, 2 August 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1ZELz3g>.
- ¹³ IRM researchers’ personal interview with citizen Abbas Nawaiseh, Karak Province, 15 March 2015.
- ¹⁴ IRM researchers’ phone interview with citizen Oula Sawai, Ajloun Province, 12 May 2015.
- ¹⁵ IRM researchers’ phone interview with citizen Hani al-Rafoua, Tafila Province, 12 May 2015.
- ¹⁶ IRM researchers’ phone interview with citizen Suleiman al-Khawaldeh, Mafraq Province, 12 May 2015.
- ¹⁷ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 August 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015; Karak, 1 October 2015.

7. Upgrading Services in Remote Areas

Text of the commitment

Upgrading the government services provided in governorates and remote areas to reach the level at which they are served in the capital.

Milestones:

1. List and sort the services provided by governmental institutions and their directorates in the governorates.
2. Study the possibility of simplifying procedures for the services delivery process in the governorates by the delegation of authority, and electronically connecting the divisions in the center with their directorates in the governorates.
3. Cooperate and coordinate with the E-Government Program to study the possibility and applicability of the connection.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Continuous

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
OVERALL		✓			Unclear					✓				✓		
7.1. List and sort the services		✓			Unclear					✓				✓		
7.2. Study the possibility of simplifying			✓		Unclear						✓			✓		
7.3. Cooperate and coordinate with the E-Government Programme		✓			Unclear					✓				✓		

What happened?

This commitment aims to ensure the level of public service delivery in remote areas of the country is equal to the level of service provided in the capital.

Milestone 7.1: In documentation provided to the IRM researchers, the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) claimed that the commitment was substantially completed. The IRM researchers, however, found the completion level to be limited. The IRM researchers found limited proof of government action to improve services in the

provinces. These included: developing standards of service delivery, disseminating evidence of services, and periodic evaluation visits and reports.

In its report on implementation of the commitment, the ministry referenced the creation of the draft Decentralisation Law, which at the time of writing (December 2015) had been passed in the Jordanian Parliament. According to the ministry, decentralisation reform is meant to strengthen service delivery in the governorates by delegating authority.¹ It is true that the decentralisation reform will be an important step for better service delivery. However, within the context of decentralisation reforms, there is still a need for targeted, specific efforts to improve the quality of services.

Milestones 7.2 and 7.3: These two milestones share similar goals and steps. The MoPSD undertook significant steps to electronically connect service providers in the governorates. These steps included:

1. Connecting the systems of the Supreme Judge Department with the Civil Affairs Bureau, the Bureau of Lands and Properties, and The Department of Driver and Passenger Licensing to facilitate the sharing of documents and information;²
2. Working with the Ministry of Labour to prepare a technical report with recommendations for electronically connecting the Ministry of Labour with a number of other government agencies;³
3. Working with the Transportation Management Commission to prepare a technical report with recommendations for electronically connecting the commission with a number of other government agencies;⁴ and
4. Preparing a technical report with suggestions for connecting the Ministry of Culture and its field directorates and between the ministry and specific partners responsible for providing services.⁵

On a related note, it is worth mentioning that Jordan approved the Decentralisation Law on 16 December 2015, that tackles the power delegation and empower the directors to take decisions that simplify the services procedures in the remote areas.

Did it matter?

The commitment addresses an important aspect of reform in Jordan. It expands the reach of government services in the governorates and remote areas of the country, making these services accessible to people in all regions. Upgrading the current system to improve the services in areas outside the capital will create a more efficient and inclusive system. Nevertheless, the commitment lacks relevance to OGP values.

Citizens interviewed noted that while some key government services are provided in decentralised locations close to their homes some services are only available from institutions located in major cities or the capital. ⁶ This requires transportation to Amman to access the desired service.

This demand to increase the level of service delivery came about due to repeat complaints by citizens about service standards in these areas, and the citizens who participated in interviews with the IRM research team expressed their concerns regarding the quality of governmental service standards in their provinces.

Moving forward

This commitment has significant room for improvement in regards to OGP values. In Jordan, there is a need for service providers to be more responsive to the people they serve and to ensure transparency and accountability for services they provide.

The IRM researchers recommend establishing a real-time interactive portal that could be used for gathering public feedback and engaging with citizens. This could be realised

through deepening government outreach and publicity concerning the efforts already underway.

Furthermore, it is recommended that the government improve electronic communications between governorates and the capital in order to enhance the overall quality of service provision in Jordan. It is also recommended that MoPSD considers undertaking extra training and capacity-building efforts for government agencies in rural areas as an additional step towards improving governmental service delivery.⁷

¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 21.

² "The MoPSD Recommends Electronic Connection Between the Supreme Judge Department and a Number of Government Agencies," Petra News Agency, 11 August 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1VKRBiy>.

³ "Moves to Electronically Connect the Ministry of Labor with other Government Agencies," *Al-Ghad Newspaper*, 27 October 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1KW22oq>.

⁴ "Electronically Connecting the Transportation Management Commission with Other Agencies," *Volt News*, 8 September 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1Q3AfKN>.

⁵ "The MoPSD works to distribute employees among the Ministry of Culture," *Amman Net*, 10 August 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1iAnE3a>.

⁶ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 August 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015; Karak, 1 October 2015.

⁷ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 August 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015; Karak, 1 October 2015.

8. Develop a Services-Monitoring Body

Text of the commitment

Developing a monitoring body for assess government services and measuring customer satisfaction.

Milestones:

1. Setting up the observatory's technical specifications.
2. Training workshops.
3. Launching the observatory.
4. Receiving suggestions and comments from the customers.
5. Monitoring reports.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Fourth quarter 2016

Editor's note: For three of the milestones, the English translation of the action plan submitted to OGP differs from the Arabic translation. In the Arabic version, milestone 8.2 specifies "provide training for the observatory officials in charge on how to administer and supervise it." Milestone 8.4 specifies that the opinions and suggestions received will be for evaluating services and will be followed up on. Lastly, milestone 8.5 specifies preparation of evaluation reports about the observatory and following up on them. Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
OVERALL		✓				✓				✓				✓		
8.1. Setting technical specifications		✓			Unclear					✓						✓
8.2 Training workshops		✓			Unclear					✓			✓			
8.3. Launching the observatory		✓			Unclear					✓			✓			
8.4. Receiving suggestions	✓					✓				✓			✓			
8.5. Monitoring reports	✓				Unclear					✓			✓			

What happened?

The commitment calls for the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) to take steps to create a Monitoring Unit to measure the level of services provided by different government agencies. This is in line with the Developing Government Services Bylaw of 2012, which tasks the ministry with studying levels of service delivery, making suggestions, and providing support to different agencies.¹ Due to the low level of specificity of the commitments language, the OGP value relevance is “unclear.”

To fulfil the commitment, MoPSD needs to create the interactive observatory to assess the services rendered between the service providers and the citizen recipients. This interactive observatory, which is the monitoring unit mentioned in the commitment, has several tools that create a space for citizens to evaluate governmental services, submit suggestions to improve it, and share their experiences. The observatory has governmental services evaluation surveys, development suggestions forms, public opinion forms, and experiences sharing forms. Depending on these forms and surveys, the MoPSD creates reports that it shares on the observatory.

According to documentation provided by the ministry to the IRM researchers, the ministry carried out a number of steps to begin preparing the Monitoring Unit. These included:

- Preparing the general framework for the observatory;
- Developing forms and templates for the unit’s observation, evaluation, and reporting; and
- Preparing a draft of technical details for the unit and its work.²

The ministry reported that groundwork for setting up the observatory was complete. However, the launching of the observatory is still ongoing, and the ministry will be cooperating with the European Union to complete it. This cooperation will take place as part of the EU’s “Support to Public Finance and Public Administration Reforms” project, which is currently in its early stages.³

The IRM researchers were unable to independently verify these steps, resulting in a level of completion of “not started.”

Did it matter?

This commitment attempts to develop the observatory to assess the performance of government services. Currently, there is no clear mechanism to measure citizens’ satisfaction regarding available governmental services. The commitment represents an important component of Jordan’s reform process, but as written, its relevance to the principles of open government is unclear, with the exception of milestone 8.4, which encourages civic participation. Citizen feedback is an integral component in encouraging effective public participation.

In addition, citizen feedback can play an important role by helping service providers to improve their efficiency and effectiveness, being a source of innovative ideas for the improvement of services, helping policy makers to identify issues with policy and delivery, and uncovering instances of corruption. However, the vagueness and the lack of detail on how each milestone would be implemented limited the potential impact to minor.

The IRM researchers’ consultation with groups of citizens in Amman and Irbid showed that there was significant citizen interest in an observatory, as they expected that this would provide an effective vehicle for citizen feedback.

Moving forward

By working towards completion of the remaining four milestones of this commitment, the ministry can enhance the quality of service delivery in Jordan. To enhance the transparency of the effort, the ministry should consider engaging in greater outreach and publicity to inform the public of these efforts.

Citizens participating in discussions held by the IRM researchers made the following suggestions regarding implementation of this commitment:

- The ministry should hold a public consultation about the observatory itself in order to get people's ideas about how the observatory could best interact with the public and serve their needs. The government should consult civil society organisations in setting up such an observatory because of CSOs' experience working with local citizens and taking feedback from them.⁴
- The observatory should be set up with an online and offline interface (i.e. offices) in order to ensure that citizens who are not Internet users would still be able to access it, while also providing connectivity for those who wished to use the Internet. The ministry should consider giving the public some role in the service monitoring effort. Linking the Monitoring Unit to social accountability initiatives, such as citizen scorecards, could help make the evaluation process more representative of citizens' needs and concerns and ultimately more effective.
- Any mechanism for collecting feedback should do so in a way that makes it easy for citizens to voice their concerns. The procedures for submitting feedback and complaints should be simple, user-friendly, and not time intensive. In addition, the feedback process should not just be a one-way communication process from citizens to the government. The government must also publicise the feedback it receives, and demonstrate to the public that it is taking steps to address the issues.⁵

Section 3: Public Administration Development

9. Public-Sector Restructuring.

Text of the commitment

Public sector restructuring:

- Review the components of government (independent agencies, government departments, ministries, etc.)
- Amend relevant legislation.
- Carry out restructuring processes in the public sector.
- Develop the organizational structures of government agencies, and revise their administrative organization bylaws to prevent any conflict with the Civil Service Bylaw.

Milestones:

1. Implementing the “restructuring of institutions and government departments” law that as approved by the parliament in April 2014, which contains (dissolving/merging/change of affiliation) for number of governmental institutions. The implementation includes:
 - Legislations amendments proposals.
 - Human resources reallocating plans.
 - Organization structures for the affected institutions.
2. Conduct new restructuring studies:
 - Study the possibility and feasibility of restructuring the institutions and companies included in the governments units’ budget law. And Sectoral restructuring (2 sectors in 2014).
 - Submit the recommendations to the cabinet for endorsement.
 - Legislations amendments proposals.
 - Implantation
3. Develop organizational structures for the government ministries/ institutions/ departments (16 institutions per year)

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Fourth quarter 2016

Editor’s note: For milestone 2, the English translation of the action plan submitted to OGP differs from the Arabic translation. Milestone 2.1 specifies the number of sectors to be restructured. For milestone 2.2, the Arabic version specifies that the recommendation submitted to the cabinet from the study will be the subject of a cabinet decision regarding the institutions that will be restructured. Milestone 2.3, which is about legislative amendments, specifies “revising or amending the necessary legislation and approving it by the government in order to pass it onto the House of Representatives.” Milestone 2.4 says, “begin an implementation period after the legislation is passed by the Senate according to Article 1.” Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

	Specificity	OGP value relevance	Potential impact	Completion
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Commitment Overview	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete	
	OVERALL			✓		Unclear						✓				✓	
9.1. Implement restructuring law			✓		Unclear						✓						✓
9.2. Conduct new restructuring studies			✓		Unclear					✓					✓		
9.3. Develop organisational structures		✓			Unclear					✓							✓

What happened?

This commitment obligates Jordan to implement a law calling for the restructuring of parts of the public sector. The commitment refers to the public-sector restructuring process that was put into place by the Restructuring Institutions and Government Departments Law No. 17 of 2014.⁶ This law, which was first prepared as a draft in 2013,⁷ contains directives to merge, cancel, and rearrange a number of government agencies. This commitment is part of an executive plan agreed on by the Council of Ministers in 2013.⁸ As a government agency, the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) implements the laws of the country, so this commitment would have been implemented whether or not it was included in the OGP action plan.

Milestone 9.1: This milestone was completed. It committed the government to begin implementing a law in the first quarter of 2014 that was not passed until the second quarter of 2014. The MoPSD provided evidence to the IRM researchers that it had implemented some provisions of the law. This included overseeing a number of agency mergers, closings, and changes in affiliation and designation in 2014–2015. This law was already in force, and it was the ministry’s responsibility to implement it, regardless of this action plan.⁹

Milestone 9.2: This milestone obligates the ministry to conduct studies and submit recommendations to the prime minister proposing a restructuring of institutions and companies included in the budget. The MoPSD reported that they conducted a review for 57 ministry and governmental institutions. In April 2014, the minister of the MoPSD announced in a press conference that the study was in process and that a preliminary analysis was being conducted for these institutions.¹⁰

In documents provided to the IRM researchers, the ministry reported that it submitted recommendations for restructuring the public budget to the prime minister on 2 September 2014.¹¹ The ministry declined to make the report public, citing concerns that providing information about ongoing internal reforms would negatively affect the reforms.¹² However, according to the MoPSD, the Council of Ministers decided on 28 September 2015 to follow the report’s recommendations to move two separate funds

(the Education Tax and the Fund for the Treatment of Kidney Diseases) from the account of the governmental units to the account of specialised ministries. The Jordanian budget is divided into two accounts, the governmental units and the specialized ministries, and the removal of these two funds acted as a restructure to the government financially and administratively. This move indicates a restructuring of some government agencies, which could be interpreted as partial fulfilment of the second milestone.¹³

Milestone 9.3: According to MoPSD, this milestone was fully implemented. It aims to develop organisational structures for ministries, institutions, and departments (16 institutions per year). The MoPSD reported on progress on this milestone in its self-assessment report, explaining that it had “reviewed as stated above and adopted” organisational structures for 57 government agencies.¹⁴ The MoPSD submitted proof of the completion of this milestone to the IRM researchers, as well as the names of the 57 governmental institutions that have been included in the organisational restructuring so far.

The MoPSD has submitted the organisational restructuring of the Jordan Standards and Metrology Organisation to the IRM researchers as an example of the restructuring process. The MoPSD has also submitted the letter from the president of the Legislation and Opinion Bureau to the minister of public-sector development. In this letter the president asks to complete the required procedures to approve the Administrative Structuring Bylaw of the Jordan Standards and Metrology Organisation. The MoPSD also included the minister’s reply with the amendments the ministry likes to see in this bylaw. The MoPSD has also submitted the letter of the minister of social development to the minister of public-sector development in which she suggests the organisational structure for the social development directorates. These documents are examples of the procedures that take place in the organisational restructuring process and are available in the document library.¹⁵

Did it matter?

Restructuring the public sector in Jordan was necessary due to the duplication of roles and responsibilities among governmental agencies. This duplication of roles has resulted in a waste of public resources and a duplication of personnel in these agencies. This in turn led to corruption and weakened accountability. An example of the public resources waste is represented in the Greater Amman Municipality. In 2013, there was a leak of official documents that proves administrative inefficiencies and waste in the municipality, with 67 executive directors and 12 office administrators.¹⁶ This commitment is expected to clarify the role of government agencies, which can lead to incremental positive impacts in making public administration more efficient.

However, it is unclear how the restructuring will affect the budget of each of these agencies. The commitment does not specify if the budgets will be combined or if each agency will still oversee their own budget. This could result in a continued waste of public funds. Therefore, the IRM research team considers the impact potential of this commitment to be moderate.

With regards to the OGP values, the commitment only addresses restructuring government agencies, which does not address any of the OGP values. Stakeholders interviewed did not comment very much on this commitment, since there is no public facing-element. They indicated that they are only familiar with the information that the government gives the media to publish.

Moving forward

If this commitment is to be carried over in future action plans, the IRM researchers recommend that the government make clearer the commitment's relevance to OGP values. For example, during the action plan's implementation, the government could boost transparency and accountability by giving the public more information about these internal reforms and consulting with the citizens about such reforms.

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- ¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Development of Public Services Bylaw [Arabic] 2012, Official Gazette 5178, 9 September 2012, Article 3.
 - ² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 21-22.
 - ³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Document 5/2/42/8910 submitted to the Prime Ministry 21 September 2015, received by the researchers via email, 29 Oct 2015.
 - ⁴ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 August 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015; Karak, 1 October 2015.
 - ⁵ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 August 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015; Karak, 1 October 2015.
 - ⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Restructuring Institutions and Government Departments Law [Arabic] No. 17, 2014, Official Gazette 5283, 30 April 2014.
 - ⁷ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Legislation and Opinion Bureau, "Restructuring of ministries, institutions and government departments draft law" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1jQXCtf>.
 - ⁸ "The Council of Ministers Approves Executive Plan for Developing the Performance of Government Agencies," Petra News Agency, 5 December 2013 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1NI5f5p>.
 - ⁹ Law No. 17 of 2014, Article 11.
 - ¹⁰ "MoPSD presents the work of the government performance program," *Al-Ghad Newspaper*, 22 April 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1klvQ94>.
 - ¹¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Document 1/1/1442, submitted to the Prime Ministry 2 September 2014, received by the researchers via email, 27 Oct 2015.
 - ¹² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayez al Nahar, 27 October 2015.
 - ¹³ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Government Institution Restructuring Aspect" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1klwK5l>.
 - ¹⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 26-29.
 - ¹⁵ "9.3—Public sector restructuring" folder, <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>.
 - ¹⁶ "Huge Administrative Deficiency in Amman Municipality," *Al-Maqar Newspaper*, 31 July 2013 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1ROGudW>.

10. Update the Civil Service Bylaw

Text of the commitment

- Revise the Civil Service Bylaw to reflect latest developments and changes in civil service.
- Embed in the Civil Service Bylaw provisions concerning civil servants and civil service derived from the National Integrity System so as to limit the use of discretionary powers by civil servants and put emphasis on clear and declared procedures.
- Build the capacity of the Civil Service Bureau.

Milestone:

Modifying and adopting the instructions issued according to the civil service bylaw, and conducting specialized awareness workshops for human resources to introduce the most prominent amendments on the bylaw and instructions.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Third quarter 2014

Editor's note: The milestone in the Arabic version is different from the English milestone and reads as follows: "Continue adopting the necessary regulations that should be issued according to the Civil Service Bylaw." Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
		✓			Unclear					✓						✓

What happened?

The commitment refers to modifying the Civil Service Bylaw and related regulations, in addition to capacity building for the Civil Service Commission. This commitment was fully implemented. In 2013, the Council of Ministers agreed on an executive plan to improve government performance that included a commitment to revising civil service bylaws, regulations, and procedures.¹ This work with the civil service was also included in the Ministry of Public Sector Development's (MoPSD) strategic plan, *Developing Public Sector Performance Programs, 2014–2016*.²

Jordan's current Civil Service Bylaw was passed in 2014,³ replacing the former Civil Service Bylaw of 2007.⁴ The new bylaw was put into place to deal with a number of new government agencies and to strengthen administrative and financial practices. The new bylaw cancels the practice of permanent government appointments, puts in place systems for evaluating employee performance, promotes equal opportunities for

leadership positions, and seeks to prevent employees from using discretionary authority.⁵

According to MoPSD documents, the MoPSD and the Civil Service Bureau worked together to amend the Civil Service Bylaw of 2007 on 16 October 2014.⁶ The amendments to the law change how the ministry deals with human resources, competencies for managers, and the use of discretionary authority among employees.⁷

During 2014–2015, the MoPSD reported that it worked with the Civil Service Bureau to change a number of civil service regulations to comply with the amended Civil Service Bylaw. These included regulations dealing with the hiring and choosing of employees, performance management for employees, employee roles, rewards for outstanding employee performance, bonuses and salary increases, leaves and vacations, annual raises, educational requirements, and human resources planning.⁸ The two agencies also worked together to prepare drafts of regulations including those forbidding certain types of bonuses and incentives.⁹

The MoPSD and the Civil Service Bureau also reviewed a number of regulations, including ones dealing with raises, bonuses, housing funds, and savings accounts, and determined there was no need to change them.¹⁰

Finally, the MoPSD and the Civil Service Bureau created and finalised standardised guides for hiring new employees, recording bonuses and payments, and other issues.¹¹ The ministry publicised these guides on its website, a positive step for the transparency of the reform initiative.¹²

The MoPSD conducted a number of training workshops with the Civil Service Bureau to help agencies get to know the new civil service system; some of these trainings were publicised in the media.¹³ The IRM researchers were unable to independently verify how many of these trainings took place.

Did it matter?

The vague wording of this commitment made it difficult to assess its potential impact. This commitment aims to limit the use of discretionary powers by civil servants by putting in place clear procedures in the hiring process. The commitment also claims it will build the capacity of the Civil Service Bureau. However, it is unclear what impact building capacity of the Civil Service Bureau will have in improving public service delivery.

While the reform of the civil service bureau is important to ensure that Jordan's government runs more effectively (which would have many benefits for Jordanian citizens), the commitment does not address any OGP values. It does not involve the general public in any way, and it does not increase government transparency or openness. As a result, The IRM researchers' discussions with stakeholders did not reveal much knowledge or interest in this commitment.

Moving forward

If this commitment is to be included in future action plans, the government will need to make clear the commitment's relevance to OGP values. The government should consider engaging in more outreach efforts to inform citizens of the changes being made to the civil service, which would have the dual purpose of making the initiative more transparent and increasing citizens' trust in this important national institution.

In addition, the government should seek public assessment and feedback on the current bylaw and use those recommendations to improve the proposed amendment.

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- ¹ “The Council of Ministers Approves Executive Plan for Developing the Performance of Government Agencies,” Petra News Agency, 5 December 2013 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1Nl5f5p>.
 - ² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Management and human resources development policies” [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1RTquwK>.
 - ³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Civil Service Bureau, “Civil Service Regulation of 2014” [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1XgDn7d>.
 - ⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Civil Service Bylaw [Arabic] No. 30, 2007, Official Gazette 4818, 1 April 2007.
 - ⁵ “New Civil Service Bylaw eliminates permanent appointments and replaces contracts,” Petra News Agency, 31 December 2013 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1OPrAJX>.
 - ⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 30.
 - ⁷ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Bylaw No. 96 Amending the 2013 Civil Service Bylaw [Arabic], No. 96, 2014, Gazette 5308, 24 September 2014.
 - ⁸ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 30-34.
 - ⁹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 34.
 - ¹⁰ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 34.
 - ¹¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 34.
 - ¹² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Guides” [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1Wp1T99>.
 - ¹³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 34; “The Ministry of Public Sector Development and the Civil Service Bureau Launch New Organization Guide for Human Resources Units,” *Addostor Newspaper*, 2 October 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1Wp1IL9>.

11. Code of Ethics in Civil Service

Text of the commitment

Activate the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct in Civil Service by conducting a series of training programs and awareness sessions.

Milestones:

1. Awareness workshops for human resources managers
2. Awareness workshops for heads of human resources departments
3. Coordinating with public administration institute to embed the code of conduct inclusions in the training courses for middle and top management, in addition to new employees.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Third quarter 2014

Editor's note: *The Arabic version of the action plan specifies the following milestones: 11.1 Conducting awareness workshops about the Employee Code of Ethics for human resources managers in government agencies; 11.2 Conduct awareness workshops for a number of heads of departments in government agencies in cooperation with the Institute of Public Administration; 11.3 Coordinating with the Institute for Public Administration to include the topics of the Employee Code of Ethics as one of the topics for training programs for new employees, middle management, and leaders. Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.*

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
OVERALL		✓			Unclear				✓							✓
11.1. Human resources workshop		✓			Unclear				✓							✓
11.2. Embed Code of Ethics in training courses.			✓		Unclear				✓							✓

11.3. Coordinate with public administration to embed the code in training courses			✓		Unclear	✓								✓
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What happened?

This commitment aims to conduct training and awareness raising on the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct in Public Service (hereafter: Code of Ethics). It is considered a pre-existing initiative and was completed before the release of the action plan. The Code of Ethics was amended by the Council of Ministers on 2 March 2014, incorporating changes that had been suggested by the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD). These changes to the Code of Ethics deal with various issues such as prohibiting employees from using their work time for personal purposes, respecting co-workers, preventing discrimination on any basis, safeguarding public funds and resources, and handling conflicts of interest.¹ In October 2014, the Council of Ministers printed and distributed 2,000 copies of the revised Code of Ethics to government agencies.² As a result of the commitment not including a public-facing element, the OGP value relevance is unclear.

Milestone 11.1: This milestone refers to training workshops for human resources managers that the ministry conducted in 2014. According to documentation provided by the MoPSD, leadership capacity-building and employee orientation programmes have been launched in 2014. As part of this programme, MoPSD conducted a workshop for nearly 110 directors of human resources from different ministries and government agencies. The workshop featured a presentation of the revised Code of Ethics and discussions about how HR unit directors could work to make their employees aware of the code. According to the ministry, the training also focused on ways that HR units could work with new employees to make them aware of the Code of Ethics and its contents.³ This is considered a fulfilment of the first and second milestones of this commitment. MoPSD provided the IRM research team with evidence that MoPSD prepared the Code of Ethics and included it in the trainings for new employees and management. Several newspaper websites reported on the workshops.⁴ According to MoPSD documentation provided to the IRM researchers, the ministry sent letters containing the code to all government agencies on 13 October 2014, and the ministry sent a letter containing the Code of Ethics to the prime minister on 16 October 2014. The MoPSD asked all governmental institutions to publish the code on their websites, according to a letter dated 11 June 2014. Hence, the IRM researchers consider this milestone to be completed.⁵

Milestone 11.2: This milestone refers to awareness workshops on the Code of Ethics. The ministry held these workshops for HR managers in government institutions. This milestone was completed before the action plan was officially submitted to OGP. The MoPSD has submitted letters inviting the HR managers to attend the workshop held on 23 April 2014, and those letters represent a fulfilment of this milestone.⁶

Milestone 11.3: This milestone aims to include the Code of Ethics in the training for new employees and management. The MoPSD has taken the steps necessary to implement the commitment by incorporating the Code of Ethics into the training programmes of the Institute of Public Administration, which trains all new staff hired by the government. The research team obtained the MoPSD's training plans for new staff

and observed that it addressed a number of training programs targeted at different groups around the country. The MoPSD has submitted the employee orientation schedule that includes the Code of Ethics.⁷ This represents a fulfilment of the third milestone.⁸ Since all the milestones of this commitment were completed within the framework of this commitment, the IRM researchers consider this commitment to be “completed.” However, this commitment was completed prior to the release of Jordan's national action plan in October 2014. Therefore, the IRM researchers consider this commitment to have no potential impact.

Did it matter?

This commitment was created in response to the lack of citizens' trust in government agencies.^{9,10} It seeks to build the organisational capacity of HR units in the public sector by training the managers of those departments in modern practices and methods. Additionally, this commitment will provide employees in those units with skills and knowledge linked to the concepts of national integrity.

Citizens in stakeholder consultations expressed widespread agreement that there is a need to improve the ethical conduct of employees of government agencies, as they notice that practices like lack of transparency, corruption, and the use of discretionary powers are widespread in the public sector and result in increasing the time and effort needed to obtain government services. However, citizens suggested that simply promoting the Code of Ethics was not enough. Instead, these citizens argued that there should be clear consequences and punishments for employees found breaching the code or the law. Because the commitment does not go far enough in regulating the implementation of the Code of Ethics, this commitment should have a minor potential impact. However, as previously stated, since this commitment was completed before the release of the action plan in October 2014, the IRM researchers have to give it a potential impact of “none.”

Improving the ethics in the civil service is an important step for ensuring government integrity. However, this commitment does not include any element of access to information, civic participation, public accountability, or using technology and innovation in public transparency.

Moving forward

This commitment should only be included in the next action plan if the MoPSD can clearly articulate its relevance to OGP values. One way to accomplish this, as suggested by stakeholders in the IRM researchers' consultations, would be to accompany the new Code of Ethics with more robust monitoring procedures to ensure compliance with the code and to apply proper incentives and disciplinary measures, guaranteeing that employees fulfil their responsibilities. It should also include a public-facing element to involve citizens in the process.¹¹ For example, the government could make compliance information available on the MoPSD website.

¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “The Council of Ministers Approves Amendments to the Code of Conduct and Ethics for Public Employees,” 2 March 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1jy9C3u>.

² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 35.

³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, “Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015,” received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 35-36.

⁴ “A workshop on the code of conduct and ethics of career public office,” Petra News Agency, 6 December 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1Q4wG6F>.

⁵ “11.1—Code of Conduct,” <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>.

⁶ "11.1—Code of Conduct," <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>.

⁷ "11.1—Code of Conduct," <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>.

⁸ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayrouz Bani Hamdan, 24 June 2015.

⁹ "A Crisis of Confidence between the People and the Government," *Al-Shahid Online*, 25 November 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1OKzDbI>.

¹⁰ "Al Momani: The Government Realized the Importance of Building Trust with Citizens," *Al-Rai*, 3 December 2015 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1UJaSgg>.

¹¹ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 August 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015; Karak, 1 October 2015.

12. Institutional Capacity Building

Text of the commitment

Build the institutional capacity of human resources units in the public sector, with special focus to the following aspects:

- Develop and adopt an operational manual containing all policies and procedures that govern the work of HR management units and guarantees transparency and fairness in the implementation of these procedures.
- Train HR units' personnel in modern HR management and development techniques and practices.
- Provide HR units' personnel with skills and knowledge related to the national integrity system.

Milestones:

1. Issue of HRM assessment and operational manuals
2. Implementing the project in five pilot institutions.
3. Monitoring reports and updating the manuals

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Fourth quarter 2016

Editor's note: For three of the commitment milestones, the English translation of the action plan submitted to OGP differs from the Arabic translation. The milestones are as follows: 12.1 Prepare a Manual for Evaluating Human Resources Units and a Manual on Procedures for Human Resources Units, and have these manuals approved by the Civil Service Council and the Council of Ministers, 12.2 Implementing the project in five pilot agencies in coordination with the Civil Service Bureau, 12.3 Reviewing and following up on reports evaluating the state of human resources departments in the agencies dealing with their needs, development, areas for improvement, and revise [those departments'] regulations and policies according to the results of the following efforts:

- The Civil Service Bureau: Ensure that HR departments in government agencies are using the evaluation methodology
- The Institute for Public Administration: Responsible for conducting trainings for managers on using the evaluation manual and methodologies (with a focus on HR departments).
- Updating the manuals (Manual for Evaluating Human Resources Units and a Manual on Procedures for Human Resources Units) when needed.

Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete

OVERALL			✓		Unclear		✓					✓	
12.1. Issue operational manuals			✓		Unclear	✓							✓
12.2. Five pilot projects		✓			Unclear		✓						✓
12.3. Monitor reports		✓			Unclear		✓		✓				

What happened?

The commitment deals with piloting a program to improve the HR capacities of a certain number of government agencies in light of the reforms to the Civil Service Bylaw as described in commitment 10. As with commitments 10 and 11, this commitment addresses themes found in an executive plan adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2013 to improve government performance.¹

Milestone 12.1: According to documentation from the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD,) the MoPSD and the Civil Service Bureau published and distributed two manuals in fulfilment of this commitment²: the *Organisational Manual for Human Resources Units*³ and a *Manual for Evaluating Human Resources Units*.⁴ The two guides are designed to build the capacity of human resources units across government agencies in Jordan.⁵ These manuals were published in .doc format on the website of the Civil Service Bureau, a positive step for the transparency of the initiative. The MoPSD also stated that it printed 500 copies of these manuals and distributed them to government agencies.⁶ And the manuals were launched during an awareness-raising workshop organised for the purpose of introducing the manual to HR managers in different governmental agencies.⁷

The government provided evidence to assess completion of this milestone, including a letter, dated 16 October 2014, sent to the prime minister's office informing him of the completion of these manuals; letters, dated 13 October 2014, sent to all government agencies to publish these manuals; and copies of the assessment and the operational manuals.⁸ Moreover, assessments were performed for the HR departments of the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, and the Department of Antiquities. Hence, the IRM researchers consider this milestone to be completed. However, the government completed the milestone before the release of the national action plan, resulting in a potential impact coding of "none."

Milestone 12.2: This milestone calls for the MoPSD to conduct pilot studies and trainings in five government agencies, and milestone 12.3 calls for monitoring reports. In fulfilment of these two milestone, the MoPSD and Civil Service Bureau conducted studies of the current state of human resources departments in five government agencies: the Ministry of Public Sector Development, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Department of Antiquities, and the Ministry of Environment. These reports were sent to each agency in order for them to make appropriate changes, as stated by MoPSD in a letter sent to the IRM researchers dated 9 September 2015.⁹ The government also provided the IRM researchers with a sample assessment report for the Ministry of Environment and the executive plan to build the institutional capacity of the ministry. The MoPSD also included a letter containing the assessment and the plan to the minister of environment, dated 13 January 2015.¹⁰

The MoPSD also worked closely on training programs with eight different agencies, including the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Water, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Communications and IT, the Ministry of Work, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Awqaf Islamic Affairs and Holy Places. For each of these agencies, the MoPSD conducted four field visits, during which it offered technical support for using the two manuals mentioned above. The ministry then held two awareness-building workshops for these eight agencies on 18 March 2015 and 10 June 2015, building up their human resources management capacity. Due to this evidence, the IRM researchers consider this milestone to be complete.¹¹

Milestone 12.3: This milestone is difficult to evaluate because it is not specific and refers to actions taken on an ongoing basis. There is no clear timeline for updating the manuals nor are there clear guidelines about when this should be done. With regards to the monitoring reports, it is also unclear when these should be published or what exactly they should monitor. Follow up with MoPSD on this milestone did not give the researchers sufficient clarity to make a judgment about this milestone's progress. Hence, the IRM researchers consider this milestone to be "not started" based on the available evidence.

Did it matter?

Improving the individual performance of government employees and therefore increasing the quality of public administration should benefit citizens by enhancing the quality of public services received. Hence, the commitment was rated as having a minor potential impact.

This commitment could be most effective once commitment 9 has been fully implemented. Commitment 9 deals with restructuring the public sector. Once the government clarifies the roles and responsibilities of civil servants, it should be easier to keep them accountable for their actions.

While these reforms may be important for the national reform effort, they are not relevant to the OGP values of access to information, civic participation, and public accountability.

Moving forward

As this commitment does not directly address OGP values, the government should not include this commitment in the next action plan.

¹ "The Council of Ministers Approves Executive Plan for Developing the Performance of Government Agencies", Petra News Agency, 5 December 2013 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1NI5f5p>.

² The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015", received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 36.

³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Civil Service Bureau, "Organizational Manual for Human Resources Units" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1Lmc8CW>.

⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Civil Service Bureau, "Manual for Evaluating Human Resources Units" [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/10Qedtd>.

⁵ "Organizational and Evaluation Manuals Published for Human Resources Units", Amman XChange, 2 October 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1M4zNVs>.

⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015", received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 36.

⁷ "Organizational and Evaluation Manuals Published for Human Resources Units", Amman XChange, 2 October 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1M4zNVs>.

⁸ " 12.1 - HRM Assessment and Operational Manuals", <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>.

⁹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 36-37.

¹⁰ "12.2—HRM Assessment and Operational Manuals," <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>.

¹¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 37.

Section 4: Enhancing the Principles of Good Governance

13. Applying the Principles of Good Governance

Text of the commitment

Applying the principles of good governance in the public and the private sectors and civil society organizations. Formulate and adopt good governance policies and programs and include them in relevant legislation to bridge gaps in this area. Promote societal and institutional awareness using all means of communication with society and institutions to ensure adoption of good governance policies.

Milestones:

1. Develop a governance practices manual
2. Conduct awareness and training workshops.
3. Prepare monitoring reports

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2014

End date: Fourth quarter 2016

Editor's note: Some of the milestones in the Arabic version of the action plan contain significantly more detail than their English counterpart. The milestones in the Arabic version are: 13.1 Prepare a governance guide for the public sector and 13.3 Yearly report about the implementation of governance in government agencies. Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
OVERALL		✓			Unclear					✓					✓	
13.1. Governance practices manual		✓			Unclear				✓							✓
13.2. Conduct training workshops		✓			Unclear					✓						✓
13.3. Prepare monitoring reports		✓			Unclear					✓			✓			

What happened?

This commitment seeks to develop a good governance manual, conduct training workshops, and prepare monitoring reports. This commitment is vaguely worded due to

its reliance on the broad term “good governance” without a clear explanation of what is meant or how the milestones will improve governance in Jordan. The intent of this commitment is unclear, and while it might be to open government, there is no evidence to suggest so.

In 2014–2015, the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) took several steps to implement some of the commitment milestones.

Milestone 13.1: This milestone was fully implemented. In August 2014, the ministry published the *Manual for Governance in the Public Sector*, a handbook for public-sector employees. According to the ministry, the manual stresses the importance of integrity, transparency, ethical values, and partnership for capacity building and leadership. The manual itself was not released to the public.¹ However, several officials in different ministries confirmed that most had received and viewed this guide.²

Milestone 13.2: This commitment aims to provide training to civil servants on the existence and use of the governance manual. The MoPSD provided evidence that awareness workshops were held³ by submitting two invitation letters—dated 3 November 2014 and 5 January 2015—to attend the awareness workshop.⁴ Local newspapers have also addressed the awareness workshops.⁵

Milestone 13.3: This milestone aims to prepare monitoring reports on the implementation of “good governance.” According to documentation given to the IRM researchers, the MoPSD has prepared a methodology for evaluating the governance performance in different sectors and has begun evaluations of two sectors: the Water Sector (including the Ministry of Water, the Water Authority, and the Jordan Valley Authority) and the Labour Sector.⁶ MoPSD did not provide the IRM researchers with a copy of the methodology. As a result, the level of completion was assessed as “not started.”

Did it matter?

The language of the commitment is vague, making its potential impact difficult to assess. First and foremost, the government has yet to present a definition of “good governance.” While the principles of good governance are linked to improving the operations and performance of the government, which should lead to increased citizen engagement and public accountability, it is unclear how publishing a manual will accomplish that goal. At the same time, the first milestone in this commitment was completed in August 2014, prior to the release of the national action plan, which gives this milestone a potential impact of “none.” Therefore, the IRM researchers gave the overall commitment a potential impact rating of “minor.”

In the researchers’ consultations with stakeholders, citizens claimed that they did not find this commitment’s purpose to be clear. Most of the citizens did not see a connection between the vague term of “good governance” and any practical actions that would impact their lives.⁷ Therefore, it would have been helpful for the government to work to raise awareness about the meaning of “good governance” while also identifying specific reform actions that fall under this general topic.

The milestones listed towards accomplishment of the commitment are internally focused and do not contain any element of access to information, civic participation, or any concrete aspect of public accountability. Therefore, the commitment’s relevance to OGP values was deemed “unclear.”

Moving forward

The term “good governance” can be a useful focal point to bring together government and citizens in a common effort. Since many definitions of “good governance” include

the ideas of openness, transparency, and citizen participation, efforts to promote good governance can promote OGP values if they are purposefully directed as such.

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- ¹ "Distribution of Good Practices Guide in the Public Sector to Government Agencies," Petra News Agency, 11 August 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1GgKNTP>.
 - ² Researchers' consultation with government officials in the Social Security Administration, the Greater Amman Municipality, and the Ministry of Municipalities, 4–5 April 2015.
 - ³ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 38.
 - ⁴ Jordan IRM report 2014-2015 document library. Commitment 13. Invitation letter to attend the awareness workshop. <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>
 - ⁵ "Workshop to raise awareness Bdlili governance and the development of institutional performance," Petra News Agency, 10 September 2014 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1TUjDDX>.
 - ⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, email communication with Fayez Nahar, 21 October 2015; The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 38.
 - ⁷ Stakeholders meeting, Irbid, 1 August 2015; Amman, 30 September 2015; Karak, 1 October 2015.

Section 5: Civil Integrity and Oversight Institutions

14. Media-Sector Restructuring

Text of the commitment

Restructuring the media sector to upgrade its performance.

Milestones:

1. List, sort, and analyze the current roles of the institutions working in the sector and specify the roles and responsibilities to be carried out by the governmental body and to distribute it among those institutions
2. Specify the institutions that will be exposed to (merging, dissolving, change affiliation, and developing new organization structure and human resources reallocation plan)
3. Legislations amendments proposals approved by the government
4. Follow up the implementation

Responsible institution: Ministry of Public Sector Development

Supporting institution: Not specified

Start date: First quarter 2015

End date: Fourth quarter 2015

Editor's note: For three of the commitment milestones, the English translation of the action plan submitted to OGP differs from the Arabic translation. The Arabic milestones are as follows: 14.1 List and analyse the current roles of the institutions working in the sector and specify the agencies that will be exposed to restructuring (merging, dissolving, changing affiliation, changing designation...) (Completed); 14.2 Developing an organisational structure for the sector and organisational structures for its agencies and a human resources allocation plan (Completed); 14.3 Amended legislation approved by the government (Completed); and 14.4 Follow up on the steps taken to implement the Law for Restructuring Government Agencies after its approval. Please check <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP value relevance				Potential impact				Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to information	Civic participation	Public accountability	Tech. and innov. for transparency and accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
OVERALL		✓			Unclear				✓							✓
14.1. Analyse media-sector institutions' roles		✓			Unclear				✓							✓
14.2. Specify restructured organisations		✓			Unclear				✓							✓
14.3. Legislation amendments	✓				Unclear				✓							✓

14.4. Implementation	✓					Unclear		✓									✓
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What happened?

This commitment seeks to restructure the media sector “to upgrade its performance.”

The media sector in Jordan is partially state-owned, and private media organisations are all subject to government supervision and regulation, in addition to being licensed and registered in advance by respective government agencies. Media in Jordan has historically been regulated by three sets of institutions: those governing print and publications, those governing audio and visual media, and those governing telecommunications and the Internet. The 1952 Jordanian Constitution grants limited freedom and expression for both citizens and the press.¹

Documentation provided by the Ministry of Public Sector Development (MoPSD) indicates that government institutions and media-sector regulations will be reformed through the Restructuring Government Institutions Law No. 17.²

Media reform in the Jordanian context however should be met with caution. Recent amendments to legislation—such as the 2012 amendments to the Press and Publications Law, which extend censorship to the online sphere, and amendments to the anti-terrorism law in April 2014, which crackdown on dissent—have been criticised by CSOs and international freedom-of-the-press organisations as significantly curtailing media freedom in Jordan.³

Journalists in Jordan need to be members of the Jordan Press Syndicate in order for them to be licensed. The Jordan Press Syndicate requires journalists to possess a bachelor’s degree and work in the field of journalism. However, the syndicate does not approve the membership of freelance journalists, as it requires the members to be devoted to journalism with no other full-time jobs.

Some press-freedom advocates in Jordan oppose the membership procedures in the syndicate. According to the Amman-based Centre for Defending the Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ), a third of journalists (close to 500) working in Jordan are not members of the syndicate and thus run the risk of facing prosecution for “impersonating a journalist.”⁴ The threat of significant penalties, which includes \$40,000 fines for defamation against the state or religion, as well as the need to vet foreign policy and military-related coverage has resulted in 95% of journalists reporting self-censorship, according to CDFJ interviews with journalists in 2014.⁵

Milestone 14.1: This milestone was fully completed in April 2014, prior to the beginning of the implementation of this action plan. Therefore, it is considered to have no potential impact. Parliament passed the Restructuring Government Institutions Law No. 17, which revises the structure of several key government institutions, including those responsible for regulating the media, by merging these institutions into one umbrella organisation.⁶ The new law converts the Audio Visual Communication Commission into the Media Commission, and it transfers the competencies of the Print and Publications Bureau to the Media Commission. The new commission is directly under the supervision of the prime minister or any minister designated by the prime minister. The law specifies that the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission should remain responsible for regulating communications infrastructure.⁷ According to MoPSD, the passage of the 2014 law represents a restructuring of media institutions in line with the commitment.

Milestone 14.2: This milestone was fully completed before the start of the action plan. Therefore, it has no potential impact. The ministry undertook the redistribution of employees and the revision of a number of regulations under the new law.⁸ Regarding the redistribution of employees, this restructuring had already been ordered through Article 7 of the Restructuring Government Institutions Law No. 17 of 2014.⁹

Milestones 14.3 and 14.4: The legislation amendments resulted in the creation of the previously mentioned Restructuring Government Institutions Law No. 17. The new Audio Visual Law No. 26, which was approved in April 2015, is another outcome of the legislation amendments, and this law outlines details about the commission's mandate and work.¹⁰ The MoPSD followed up with the implementation of these laws and the creation of the Media Commission, which acts as an umbrella organisation in merging the previous Audio Visual Communication Commission and the Print and Publications Bureau. The IRM researchers consider both of these milestones to be “completed” within the timeframe of the commitment. Although the implementation of the third and fourth milestones was after the release of the action plan. The milestones’ potential impact is considered to be “none” because the specificity of the milestone’s language is “none.”

Did it matter?

This commitment registered no potential impact. The first two milestones were completed before the release of the action plan, and it is impossible to ascertain the potential impact of the remaining two milestones because of a lack of specificity.

Having multiple agencies regulate the media sector resulted in overlapping roles and responsibilities. According to the government, clarifying the government agencies’ roles and responsibilities in regulating the media sector would improve the sector’s performance and reduce confusion. The MoPSD reported that the restructuring of the media-regulating agency was one of the actions taken towards accomplishing that goal.¹¹

The IRM researchers’ consultations with media professionals revealed scepticism about the reforms. Some professionals stated that they believed the institutional changes were designed to exert more control over the media in Jordan by centralising control over the media. Others stated that after merging the old institutions in the Media Commission it takes more time and effort to get licences. Some journalists also pointed out that the Jordan Media Institute still interferes with the process of getting broadcasting and publishing licences and authorisations. Other journalists argued that the Media Commission produces a periodic report that criticises newspapers and media in Jordan for its unfavourable reporting on the government.^{12 13}

It is not clear how the Jordan Media Institute interferes with this process. In a meeting organised by the IRM researchers with the Media Commission, the general director and the head of the legal department at the commission stated that the Jordan Media Institute's role is limited to educational and training purposes, and it never interferes with the licensing and the authorisation process. They also stated that the Media Commission issues reports that study pressing regional issues and submits these reports to the prime minister and his cabinet. They asserted that these reports are for internal purposes and are never made public and that the aim is not to criticise the media or newspapers in Jordan.¹⁴

Some international watchdog organisations, such as Freedom House, criticised the ability of the Media Commission to issue orders without a court ruling to block foreign and domestic websites that fail to comply with the law, even though Jordanian law prohibits the Media Commission from taking action without court approval.¹⁵

The new Audio Visual Law has amended some articles that grant more press freedom in Jordan. The law cancelled the jail penalties on journalists and limited the penalties to financial fines. In Article 31, the law gave the Media Commission the authority to propose conciliation settlements with the journalists who face judicial cases, thereby solving the cases without resorting to the courts. Article 4/J of the same law established a commission to tackle complaints related to the media content of the registered media outlets.¹⁶

Still, press freedom in Jordan faces huge challenges. The law requires news websites to have an editor-in-chief who is a member of the Jordan Press Syndicate, to get a licence from the Media Commission, and to take responsibility for readers' comments on the website. There is much room for improvement in these laws that should be taken into consideration while preparing the third national action plan.

In terms of the open government values, reorganizing the structure of media regulatory agencies does not, in and of itself, promote any of the OGP values but instead aims to reduce redundancy as both agencies provide licences for radio stations, TV stations, newspapers, and news websites.

Moving forward

A free press is a fundamental right and is at the heart of an open and democratic society. The IRM researchers recommend that the government repeals all draconian legislation that negatively impacts press freedom. Also, the government should undertake a commitment that improves transparency into the membership criteria for the Jordan Press Syndicate.

Consultations with stakeholders revealed a consensus that addressing laws that restrict the media's work would be a better way to improve the sector's performance than changing government structures.¹⁷ There is great demand among media professionals for the government to relax media restrictions. Specifically, the stakeholders identified the need to revise Jordan's Access to Information Law in order to improve press freedom. This law needs to be given priority in case of conflict with other laws.

In addition, government institutions need to classify all information in a methodological way to simplify access. The government should give employees training in the mechanism of access to information, and there should be deterrent penalties for government workers who impede access to information requests. In addition, media professionals suggested that the State Secrets Law, which is often used to prevent the release of information in conjunction with the Access to Information Law, should be amended.

Given that this commitment was completed prior to the release of the action plan, it would enhance overall transparency if the government engaged in more publicity around implementation of this and other commitments to let citizens know what restructurings have taken place and to explain what it means for them practically. The IRM researchers recommend that the government focuses on modifying the regulations that limit the freedom of speech in Jordan and make commitments related to OGP values.

¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1952 Jordanian Constitution, Article 15, Section 1 and 3.

³ Freedom House 2015 Report: Jordan, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2015/jordan>.

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- ⁴ "Jordan's Online Media Freedom at Stake," International Press Institute, http://cdfj.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Jordan-Online-Media-Freedom-at-Stake_OK1_19112015-1.pdf.
- ⁵ "Situation 'grimmer than ever' for Jordan Press Freedom," Al Jazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/06/situation-grimmer-jordan-press-freedom-150609062800930.html>.
- ⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Restructuring Government Institutions Law [Arabic] No. 17, 2014, Official Gazette 5283, 30 April 2014.
- ⁷ Law No. 17 of 2014, Article 5.
- ⁸ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 39-40.
- ⁹ Law No. 17 of 2014, Article 7.
- ¹⁰ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Media Commission, The Audio Visual Law No. 26 of 2015, Gazette 5714 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1M4q8PL>.
- ¹¹ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Sector Development, "Report on the Cumulative Progress of the Open Government Initiative through June 2015," received by the researchers, 9 September 2015, p. 25.
- ¹² Stakeholders meeting, Amman, 1 October, 2015.
- ¹³ Stakeholders meeting, Amman, 1 October 2015.
- ¹⁴ IRM researchers' personal interview, the Media Commission, Amman, 29 March 2016.
- ¹⁵ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Press and Publications Law No. 8 of 1998 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1pIEcd1>.
- ¹⁶ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Media Commission, The Audio Visual Law No. 26 of 2015, Gazette 5714 [Arabic], <http://bit.ly/1M4q8PL>.
- ¹⁷ Stakeholders meeting (Media Sector), Amman, 1 October 2015.

V. Process: Self-Assessment

In August 2015, the government released its self-assessment report ahead of schedule to the OGP website. However, the report was not available on any Jordanian government websites, making it difficult for stakeholders not familiar with OGP to find it.

Self-assessment checklist

Was the annual progress report published?	Yes
Was it done according to schedule?	Yes
Is the report available in the administrative language(s)?	Yes
Is the report available in English?	Yes
Did the government provide a two-week public comment period on draft self-assessment reports?	No
Were any public comments received?	N/A
Is the report deposited in the OGP portal?	Yes
Did the self-assessment report include review of consultation efforts during action plan development?	Yes
Did the self-assessment report include review of consultation efforts during action plan implementation?	Yes
Did the self-assessment report include a description of the public comment period during the development of the self-assessment?	Yes
Did the report cover all of the commitments?	Yes
Did it assess completion of each commitment according to the timeline and milestones in the action plan?	No
Did the report respond to the IRM key recommendations (2015+ only)?	No

Summary of additional information

In August 2015, the government published its self-assessment report ahead of schedule on the OGP website. The report, which is in Arabic, covers Jordan's progress in the OGP action plan. The report covers the period of implementation of January 2014 to June 2015. The government did not provide civil society the mandated two-week comment period on the self-assessment report.

The self-assessment report included a summary of achievements, followed by details on progress for each of the commitments. However, in most of the commitments, it only included a list of what has been done, with no details on the dates, actors responsible, or references to check the validity of the information.

Follow-up on previous IRM recommendations (2015 +)

In the last IRM progress report, the researchers made a number of recommendations for the government of Jordan to improve the OGP process in the country and to bring it in line with OGP values. These recommendations were meant to make the process more transparent, more open to participation, more accountable to the needs of citizens, and relevant to openness. However, in most cases, the government did not incorporate the recommendations made by the first IRM progress report into the second action plan.

The following are the recommendations made by the IRM and the results or lack thereof:

Recommendation: Transparency of Government Operations

Result: The process of creating the second action plan was not transparent. The government did not publicly announce that it would continue its work with OGP, and it did not release any information on the preparation or implementation of the action plan (with the exception of the single clause on the MoPSD website referenced in the preceding section). The IRM researchers were only able to find out which government body was responsible for OGP after directly engaging with government officials. Because there was even less public outreach for this action plan than the former one, the transparency of government operations surrounding the OGP process has decreased.

Recommendation: Awareness-Raising Activities

Result: The government did not engage in any awareness-raising activities related to OGP. It did not publish any information related to its involvement in OGP.

Recommendation: Enhance Public Consultation of Universities, Academics, and Research Centres

Result: The government did not hold any consultations in the preparation of the second OGP action plan.

Recommendation: Enhance the Partnership between Government and CSOs

Result: The government did not engage any CSOs as part of the OGP process.

Recommendation: Advancing the Work of Community Based Organisations

Result: The government did not engage any CBOs as part of the OGP process.

Recommendation: Enhance the Use of Technology for Openness and Accountability

Result: The government did not use technology as part of the OGP process.

Recommendation: Enforce Legislation that Forces the Government to Approach More Consultative Efforts

Result: There was no effort in this area.

VI. Country Context

This section places the action plan commitments in the broader national context and discusses concrete next steps for the next action plan.

Jordan's national reform effort kicked off in 2005 with the establishment of the Jordanian National Agenda, which outlined the country's roadmap for instituting political, economic, and social reform. This document was developed in consultation with a variety of actors to include members of the government, civil society members, the private sector, media, and others. This group created a specific and detailed plan containing a timeline and milestones for reform.¹ Since then, the reform process has been hindered by many factors.

In the past five years, Jordan has experienced a period of social, political, and economic tension due to the influx of refugees from the Syrian crisis. In addition to the strains inflicted by the refugee crisis, the country struggles with a lack of transparency, accountability, and access to information. Freedom House's 2015 Annual Report on Jordan rates the country as "not free" based on their freedom rating and assessment of civil liberties and political rights. Since early 2011—following the outbreak of the Arab Spring—the kingdom has witnessed routine protests demanding "economic relief, more subsidies, political liberalization, and an end to corruption"² and signalling increased pressure for reform efforts.

Moreover, the government is trying to limit the scope of civil society organisations by passing the Law of Organisations and Civil Society Organisations. This law requires pre-approval of foreign funding for local CSOs, which limits the freedom of civil society organisations in obtaining funds and continuing their activities.

The reform efforts were largely stalled up until the establishment of the National Integrity System (NIS), an important governmental reform effort going on at the same time as the OGP effort. More about the NIS plan is explained in "Section II: Action Plan Development."

The NIS plan contains 134 commitments that deal with important areas of the national reform effort, and some of the commitments deal with issues of transparency, accountability, and access to information. Commitments were extracted from the original NIS plan as the basis for the first OGP action plan.

Among the most relevant areas are those that were addressed in the first OGP action plan but were not followed up on in the second, which include improving citizen feedback and complaint mechanisms (such as the Ombudsman Bureau); strengthening the independence of the National Centre for Human Rights; enhancing citizen participation in decision making; amending the access to information law; finalising implementation of the Jordan Aid Information Management System; publishing the reports of the Audit Bureau and Anti-Corruption Commission; being transparent in public spending; enhancing the transparency of the budget preparation process; increasing transparency and accountability in the use of public funds; and initiating discussions to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

Not all of these relevant commitments were included in the second action plan; nevertheless they are currently being implemented across the country. These reforms are making significant changes in key areas and creating substantial opportunities for increasing transparency and accountability. The reforms in the NIS plan deal with enhancing the quality of good governance in regulation of the private sector, enhancing transparency in the awarding of contracts and tenders, reforming the judicial system, reforming the education system, and strengthening the parliament. In addition, the NIS

plan deals with overhauling the electoral system, which is a major area where citizens and the government can benefit from more transparency and civic participation. The one-person, one-vote electoral system, which is currently used in Jordan, can result in electing parliament members based on personal and tribal connections, individuals who often lack the experience needed to deal with issues of national importance. This in turn weakens the performance of the parliament and hinders its ability to effectively discuss legislation as well as attract investment.

In addition, there is no mechanism in place to strengthen the participation of women in parliament. In Jordan, a portion of the seats in parliament are to be elected using a list system. However, women usually occupy the last positions in the national lists, which lowers their chances of getting elected. In conjunction with a number of other reform plans being implemented in Jordan, these efforts cover many policy areas and topics. The scope of these changes means that there is a significant opportunity for more efforts to mainstream considerations of openness and transparency in the government's future work.

Another major policy process going on in the country is the work on the Access to Information Law, which was an issue raised in the first national action plan.³ Citizens still face long wait times and difficult procedures for obtaining information, and compliance with the law is not uniform among all government agencies.⁴ News reports show that the law imposed new walls of secrecy and created more barriers to obtaining information.⁵ In addition, stakeholders reported that the Law for Protection of State Secrets is frequently evoked to prevent access to information, even in cases where it would not normally be considered applicable. The first national action plan called for amendments to the law to improve it and make it consistent with international best practices. The first IRM report showed that the cabinet drafted amendments to this law in 2012, but that after that the law made no further progress through the legislature. Since then, there has been no progress on the law, even though the researchers' consultations revealed that revising the law is a major priority for both media professionals and for a broad range of citizens.

Stakeholder priorities

IRM consultations with stakeholders revealed that improvement of service delivery, which is a large focus of the national action plan, is of major interest to citizens across the country. Citizens expressed an urgent need to see improvements in service delivery especially in rural areas. Citizens were interested in measures that could improve the accountability and efficacy of government employees by putting in place disciplinary mechanisms to hold them responsible to their duties and deter any violations of the law or the code of ethics.

In terms of openness and transparency, citizens wanted the government to be more transparent about its activities and to engage in more awareness-raising activities. In addition, they wanted to see more cases where the government consulted them on its actions, particularly those related to improving services. In general, the citizens consulted did not feel that the government was taking steps to involve them, leading to a sense of alienation and disillusionment.

With regards to the next action plan, the citizens participating in the consultations expressed a wish to see more of a focus on transparency, openness, and public accountability. Citizens were enthusiastic about the idea of OGP, and many expressed disappointment that the current action plan does not address the main OGP goals. Citizens suggested there is a great deal of work to do on issues such as access to information, public accountability, and greater transparency for reducing corruption.

Scope of action plan in relation to national context

As noted in the general overview of commitments section above, only three of the fourteen commitments in the second action plan address any OGP values. The rest are concerned with internal government reforms that may be important to increasing the quality of governance in Jordan, but are not relevant to OGP, leaving the public far removed from these reforms. Going forward, the government would do well to engage with civil society organisations in the development of the action plans and to promote their programs to support civic life in Jordan.

The first action plan was more comprehensive of different aspects of reform, where the second action plan was limited in OGP relevance. The government consultations held with stakeholders for the NIS action plan produced much more comprehensive commitments.

The government of Jordan could also work to promote transparency and accountability through a number of other ongoing legal reform efforts. The effort to promote decentralisation and strengthen municipal work, most recently advanced by the passage of the Decentralisation Law and the Municipalities Law in September 2015, could benefit from an increased focus on methods for citizen participation and transparency of information, especially as the government prepares bylaws and regulations to implement these laws in the near future. Similarly, the efforts to pass a new 2015 Elections Law would benefit from an increased government focus on ways to promote citizen participation.

¹ "A Decade of Struggling Reform Efforts in Jordan: the Resilience of the Rentier System," the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2011, <http://ceip.org/1Ox2M5j>.

² "Will Jordan Be the First Arab Monarchy to Fall?," *The Atlantic*, 8 January 2013, <http://theatlntc/1ZiRR7p>.

³ "Freedom on the net: Jordan," Freedom House Report, 2012, <http://bit.ly/1RDlKfl>.

⁴ "The right of access to information did not lift a finger in the evolution of media freedom," *Al-Ghad*, 20 August 2015, <http://bit.ly/1oM9oaW>.

⁵ "The Exemption of Organizations from the Right to Information," Khaberni, 15 January 2013

VII. General Recommendations

This section recommends general next steps for OGP in general, rather than for specific commitments.

Crosscutting recommendations

The government should make the OGP process in Jordan more transparent. This would entail informing the public, CSOs, and other interested actors about the OGP process through outreach and publicity efforts. Promoting greater transparency and awareness of OGP would be helpful both during the current period of implementation and during efforts to draft future action plans.

It would also be helpful if the government engaged in consultations with citizens and representatives of CSOs and CBOs during the current action plan cycle. By conducting consultations—either in person, through a public commenting system, or through a point of contact—the government could gain valuable insights about the second action plan process, and it could apply that knowledge to future reform efforts.

Finally, the government should seek to follow OGP guidelines and standards when designing the next action plan. This would include following OGP’s requirement of holding public consultations during the preparation and implementation of OGP plans, meeting OGP values, creating ambitious commitments, and publishing self-assessments according to the agreed upon timetable.

Top SMART recommendations

For future OGP national action plans, the government of Jordan can do a great deal to strengthen the openness of the process by following the guidelines of OGP.

<i>TOP FIVE ‘SMART’ RECOMMENDATIONS</i>
1. To start an open OGP consultation process involving citizens, civil society, and any other relevant stakeholders. This process should contain clear opportunities for public input to help decide what is included in the third action plan, as well as to oversee implementation of commitments. Outreach and awareness efforts should also be put in place to allow for active public participation.
2. Each of the commitments included in the third action plan should clearly address at least one OGP value instead of focusing on internal government procedures unrelated to open government. Otherwise, it is unclear what benefits Jordan can gain from being a member of OGP.
3. To improve the ability of CSOs to obtain funds and continue their activities, the government should remove the restrictions on pre-approval for foreign funding for civil society organisations within the Law of Organisations and Civil Society Organisations, especially those enforced in 2015.

4. Increasing citizens' access to information is key to improving government transparency in Jordan. To achieve this, the government needs to consider revising the Access to Information Law and the Law for Protection of State Secrets. In addition, it needs to consider improving the implementation of the laws in practice to ensure that all citizens have quick and reliable access to information, both through electronic and non-electronic means.

The Access to Information Law must be a priority for implementation over other legislation. The law should have implications or penalties to anyone who withholds information or gives wrong information.

5. To improve public accountability and transparency in the provision of public services, the IRM researchers recommend that the government improves the accessibility and quality of government websites. In order to achieve this it is recommended that civil society is involved in the development and design of public access criteria as part of the government's e-government reform strategy.

VIII. Methodology and Sources

As a complement to the government self-assessment, an independent IRM assessment report is written by well-respected governance researchers, preferably from each OGP participating country.

These experts use a common OGP independent report questionnaire and guidelines,¹ based on a combination of interviews with local OGP stakeholders as well as desk-based analysis. This report is shared with a small International Expert Panel (appointed by the OGP Steering Committee) for peer review to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied.

Analysis of progress on OGP action plans is a combination of interviews, desk research, and feedback from nongovernmental stakeholder meetings. The IRM report builds on the findings of the government's own self-assessment report and any other assessments of progress put out by civil society, the private sector, or international organisations.

Each local researcher carries out stakeholder meetings to ensure an accurate portrayal of events. Given budgetary and calendar constraints, the IRM cannot consult all interested or affected parties. Consequently, the IRM strives for methodological transparency, and therefore where possible, makes public the process of stakeholder engagement in research (detailed later in this section.) In those national contexts where anonymity of informants—governmental or nongovernmental—is required, the IRM reserves the ability to protect the anonymity of informants. Additionally, because of the necessary limitations of the method, the IRM strongly encourages commentary on public drafts of each national document.

Interviews and focus groups

Each national researcher will carry out at least one public information-gathering event. Care should be taken in inviting stakeholders outside of the “usual suspects” list of invitees already participating in existing processes. Supplementary means may be needed to gather the inputs of stakeholders in a more meaningful way (e.g. online surveys, written responses, follow-up interviews). Additionally, researchers perform specific interviews with responsible agencies when the commitments require more information than provided in the self-assessment or accessible online.

For this report, the IRM researchers conducted four roundtable discussions with local citizens to learn more about their priorities and concerns related to the OGP effort. The IRM researchers assembled groups of local citizens who were interested in issues of open government but were not specialists working in the field. This effort was made as an attempt to get a more realistic view of the concerns of everyday citizens, especially since most of the commitments were related to service delivery.

In addition, meetings also included active, local-level civil society organisations and community based organisations to obtain their opinions and recommendations on the OGP plan. The sessions were conducted in two cities in areas far from the capital: Irbid, and Karak, the main cities from the north and the south of Jordan respectively. One session was conducted in Amman, in the low-income neighbourhood of Jebel Nasr (East Amman in Wehdat Palestinian refugee camp). The IRM researchers intentionally kept the sessions under 20 participants in order to allow the participants more time to share their views and to explore the topics in depth.

The final session was a discussion with members of the media sector. The goal of the session was to gather the media sector's opinions regarding the commitments

(specifically commitment 14 on restructuring the media sector) and other issues related to the action plan, considering that they are professionals who are impacted in the field. Below are the details of participants in each meeting.

To verify and explain the plan's content, the IRM researchers also communicated with and interviewed the government agency in charge of the plan (Ministry of Public Sector Development) and obtained the necessary documents to verify some of the information on the achievements of the plan. The communications with MoPSD are through e-mails, phone calls, and personal meetings, and all the documents received by MoPSD are contained in the "Jordan IRM Report 2014–2015 Document Library" and listed by commitment. Please see <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER> for more details.

Stakeholders' meeting, Irbid, 30 September 2015

1. Mahmoud Al Tal, Jordan Charitable Foundation
2. Mohammad Khasawneh, Jordan Charitable Foundation
3. Mosaab Al Quran, Jordan Charitable Foundation
4. Amjad Abu Rjeea, National Human Rights Observatory
5. Amjad Abd Al Hakim, National Human Rights Observatory
6. Ahmad Bani Hani, National Human Rights Observatory
7. Razan Al Zawbi, National Human Rights Observatory
8. Rami Kareezem, National Human Rights Observatory
9. Abdullah Sabah, Jordan Charitable Foundation
10. Khawla Al Malak, Bazim Women's Center
11. Nihaya Rdaideh, Jordan Charitable Foundation
12. Wajeda Al Zawbi, Jordan Charitable Foundation
13. Ghada Al Najjar, National Human Rights Observatory
14. Zohair Ahmad, National Human Rights Observatory
15. Badia Ibrahim, National Human Rights Observatory
16. Myassar Sosbah, Irbid Municipal Council, Member of the National Human Rights Observatory
17. Nazeeh Othman, National Human Rights Observatory
18. Hamza Al Azzam, Jordan Charitable Foundation
19. Yasmin Al Zawbi, Jordan Charitable Foundation

Stakeholders' meeting, Amman, 1 October 2015

1. Yosef Shraim, Community member and activist
2. Ahmad Shelbaya, Community member and activist
3. Abd Al Anthem Karaz, Community member and activist
4. Adel Salem Issa, Community member and activist
5. Warden Allosh, Community member and activist
6. Manal Ateyeh, Community member and activist
7. Omaima Qattan, Community member and activist
8. Soad Ibrahim, Community member and activist
9. Aisha Ktoot, Community member and activist
10. Nada Abo Khdeer, Community member and activist
11. Read Khresha, Community member and activist
12. Anwar Ateyeh, Head of Al-Saqiya Charitable Organisation

Stakeholders' meeting, Karak, 1 October, 2015

1. Haseen Mahadeem, Community member and activist
2. Ali Shemat, Community member and activist
3. Jihad Habashneh, Community member and activist
4. Abdullah Rqaqa, Community member and activist
5. Mohammed Al Namor, Community member and activist
6. Rami Asasleh, Community member and activist
7. Oudeh Jaafreh, Community member and activist
8. Mohammed Maaitah, Community member and activist
9. Suhail Bradee, Community member and activist
10. Nayaz Majali, Community member and activist
11. Mahmoud Habashneh, Community member and activist
12. Abdul Majed Thanebat, Community member and activist
13. Abdallah Habashneh, Community member and activist
14. Jadalla Maaitah, Community member and activist
15. Akram Masfeh, Community member and activist

Stakeholders' meeting, Media sector, Amman, 1 October 2015

1. Mustafa Ryalat, Al Dostoor Newspaper (independent news agency).
2. Hamza Akaileh, Al Dostoor Newspaper, (independent news agency).
3. Mohammed Al Zyod, Al Rai Newspaper, (independent news agency).
4. Maher Shraideh, Journalist, (independent news agency).
5. Jihad Al Masri, Al Ghad Newspaper, (independent news agency).
6. Gazi Al Awaideh, Jordan TV, (independent news agency).
7. Hekmat Al Momani, Petra News Agency, (state-owned news agency).
8. Majed Al Ameer, Al Rai Newspaper, (independent news agency).

Document library

The IRM uses publicly accessible online libraries as a repository for the information gathered throughout the course of the research process. All the original documents, as well as several documents cited within this report, are available for viewing and comments in the IRM Online Library: <http://bit.ly/1ZiHYER>.

Jordan IRM Report 2014–2015 Document Library

1. Commitment 2—Improving Service Delivery:
 - a. A report to reengineer the procedures in the Transportation Commission
 - b. The letter releasing the report to the prime minister
 - c. A press release regarding this issue
2. Commitment 6—Service Delivery Process Assessment:
 - a. An unannounced visit report
 - b. Prime minister's letter to the minister of health
 - c. The minister of health's letter to his ministry
 - d. A press release about the visit
3. Commitment 8—Develop a Services Monitoring Body:
 - a. The observatory's platform specifications
4. Milestone 9.3—Public-sector restructuring
 - a. Organisational structure for the social development directorates
 - b. The letter from the president of the Legislation and Opinion Bureau to the minister of public-sector development
 - c. The minister of public-sector development's reply

5. Milestone 11.1—Code of Ethics
 - a. Proof of including the code in the employee orientation
 - b. The invitation of HR managers to attend Code of Ethics awareness workshop, 2-4-2014
 - c. The letter sending the Code of Ethics to all government institutions, 13-10-2014
 - d. The letter sending the Code of Ethics to the prime minister, 16-10-2014
 - e. The request for updating the Code of Ethics electronically, 11-6-2014
6. Milestone 12.1—HR Management Assessment and Operational Manuals
 - a. Proof of issuing HRM assessment and operational manuals to the prime minister, 16-10-2014
 - b. The letter sending HRM assessment and operational manuals to all government agencies
 - c. The HRM Assessment Manual
 - d. The Operational Manual
7. Milestone 12.2—HRM Assessment and Operational Manuals
 - a. The letter to the prime minister regarding the Ministry of Environment’s capacity-building assessment report, on 13-1-2015
 - b. The Ministry of Environment’s capacity-building assessment report
8. Commitment 13—Good Governance
 - a. A press release publicising the invitation to attend a workshop regarding good governance in the public sector, 25-1-2015
 - b. The invitation letter to attend the awareness workshop, 3-11-2014
 - c. The invitation letter to attend the awareness workshop, 25-1-2015
9. Editor's Notes on Translation

About the Independent Reporting Mechanism

The IRM is a key means by which government, civil society, and the private sector can track government development and implementation of OGP action plans on a bi-annual basis. The design of research and quality control of such reports is carried out by the International Experts’ Panel, comprised of experts in transparency, participation, accountability, and social science research methods.

The current membership of the International Experts’ Panel is:

- Anuradha Joshi
- Debbie Budlender
- Ernesto Velasco-Sánchez
- Gerardo Munck
- Hazel Feigenblatt
- Hille Hinsberg
- Jonathan Fox
- Liliane Corrêa de Oliveira Klaus
- Rosemary McGee
- Yamini Aiyar

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

¹ Full research guidance can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual, available at: <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-irm>.

IX. Eligibility Requirements Annex

In September 2012, OGP decided to begin strongly encouraging participating governments to adopt ambitious commitments in relation to their performance in the OGP eligibility criteria.

The OGP Support Unit collates eligibility criteria on an annual basis. These scores are presented below.¹ When appropriate, the IRM reports will discuss the context surrounding progress or regress on specific criteria in the Country Context section.

Criteria	2011	Current	Change	Explanation
Budget transparency ²	4	4	No change	4 = Executive's Budget Proposal and Audit Report published 2 = One of two published 0 = Neither published
Access to information ³	4	4	No change	4 = Access to Information (ATI) Law 3 = Constitutional ATI provision 1 = Draft ATI law 0 = No ATI law
Asset declaration ⁴	2	2	No change	4 = Asset disclosure law, data public 2 = Asset disclosure law, no public data 0 = No law
Citizen engagement (Raw score)	2 (3.82) ⁵	2 (3.53) ⁶	No change	EIU <i>Citizen Engagement Index</i> raw score: 1 > 0 2 > 2.5 3 > 5 4 > 7.5
Total / Possible (Percent)	12/16 (75%)	12/16 (75%)	No change	75% of possible points to be eligible

¹ For more information, see <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/how-it-works/eligibility-criteria>.

² For more information, see Table 1 in <http://internationalbudget.org/what-we-do/open-budget-survey/>.

For up-to-date assessments, see <http://www.obstracker.org/>.

³ The two databases used are Constitutional Provisions at <http://www.right2info.org/constitutional-protections> and Laws and draft laws <http://www.right2info.org/access-to-information-laws>.

⁴ Simeon Djankov, Rafael La Porta, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, and Andrei Shleifer, "Disclosure by Politicians," (Tuck School of Business Working Paper 2009-60, 2009): [://bit.ly/19nDEfK](http://bit.ly/19nDEfK); Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "Types of Information Decision Makers Are Required to Formally Disclose, and Level Of Transparency," in *Government at a Glance 2009*, (OECD, 2009).

[://bit.ly/13vGtqS](http://bit.ly/13vGtqS); Ricard Messick, "Income and Asset Disclosure by World Bank Client Countries" (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2009). [://bit.ly/1cl0kyf](http://bit.ly/1cl0kyf); For more recent information, see <http://publicofficialsfinancialdisclosure.worldbank.org>. In 2014, the OGP Steering Committee approved a change in the asset disclosure measurement. The existence of a law and *de facto* public access to the disclosed information replaced the old measures of disclosure by politicians and disclosure of high-level officials. For additional information, see the guidance note on 2014 OGP Eligibility Requirements at <http://bit.ly/1EjL4Y>.

⁵ Economist Intelligence Unit, "Democracy Index 2010: Democracy in Retreat" (London: Economist, 2010). Available at: [://bit.ly/eLC1rE](http://bit.ly/eLC1rE).

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