

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Sweden Progress Report 2016–2017

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
I. Introduction	6
II. Context	7
III. Leadership and Multistakeholder Process	9
IV. Commitments	17
1. Implementation programme: Digital First	19
2. Increasing the supply of public administration documents	27
3. Improved opportunities for dialogue and transparency in aid management and implementation	35
4. Developing a new format for dialogue with CSOs	45
V. General Recommendations	49
VI. Method and Sources	51
VII. Eligibility Requirements Annex	54

Executive Summary



Sweden Year 1 Report

Action plan: 2016–2018
Period under review: July 2016–June 2017
IRM report publication year: 2018

Sweden's third action plan marks an improvement over its prior plans with a broadened focus that covers foreign aid, digital government, access to documents, and consultation. The next action plan could improve through wider consultation and clearer commitments.

HIGHLIGHTS

Commitment	Overview	Well-Designed?*
1. Digital First programme and public document access	A whole-of-government approach to improve public access to documents and data at all levels	Yes
2. Aid effectiveness	Promoting civic space and government-CSO dialogue in Sweden and beyond	No
3. CSO dialogue	New working method to bring expert voices into dialogue on key issues	No

* Commitment is evaluated by the IRM as specific, relevant, and has a transformative potential impact.

PROCESS

Sweden's consultations largely occurred during other forums on aid and government digital services. This is not inherently a problem, but there is no central forum for the intersectoral discussion and promotion of open government.

Who was involved?

Civil society	Government		
		Narrow/ little governmental consultations	Primarily agencies that serve other agencies
Beyond "governance" civil society			

Mostly “governance” civil society			
No/little civil society involvement			✓

Four government bodies are responsible for the implementation of the 2016–2018 action plan. Involvement from civil society was primarily from the technology and development aid sectors. There has been limited sector-specific dialogue but no monitoring or regular dialogue system was set up specifically for OGP.

Level of input by stakeholders

Level of Input	During Development
Collaborate: There was iterative dialogue AND the public helped set the agenda	
Involve: The public could give feedback on how commitments were considered	
Consult: The public could give input	✓
Inform: The government provided the public with information on the action plan.	
No Consultation	

OGP co-creation requirements

Timeline Process and Availability Timeline and process available online prior to consultation	No
Advance notice Advance notice of consultation	Yes
Awareness Raising Government carried out awareness-raising activities	No
Multiple Channels Online and in-person consultations were carried out	No
Documentation and Feedback A summary of comments by government was provided	No
Regular Multi-stakeholder Forum Did a forum exist and did it meet regularly?	No

Government Self-Assessment Report	No
Was a self-assessment report published?	
Total	1 of 7

Did not act contrary to OGP process

A country is considered to have acted contrary to process if one or more of the following occurs:

- The National Action Plan was developed with neither online nor offline engagement with citizens and civil society;
- The government fails to engage with the IRM researchers in charge of the country's Year 1 and Year 2 reports; or
- The IRM report establishes that there was no progress toward implementing any of the commitments in the country's action plan.

COMMITMENT PERFORMANCE

Most of Sweden's commitments are highly relevant and innovative, but several lack verifiability and a clear results-orientation. However, the verifiable activities seem to be proceeding according to schedule.

		Year 1	Year 2
COMPLETED COMMITMENTS	OGP Global Average *	18%	36%
	Action Plan 2016–2018	0 of 4 (0%)	
	Action Plan 2014–2016	0 of 5 (0%)	0 of 5 (0%)
	Action Plan 2012–2013	0 of 7 (0%)	N/A
TRANSFORMATIVE COMMITMENTS	OGP Global Average *	16%	
	Action Plan 2016–2018	1 of 4 (25%)	
	Action Plan 2014–2016	0 of 5 (0%)	
	Action Plan 2012–2013	0 of 7 (0%)	
STARRED COMMITMENTS	Most in an OGP Action Plan	5	8
	Action Plan 2016–2018	1 of 4 (25%)	
	Action Plan 2014–2016	0 of 5 (0%)	0 of 5 (0%)
	Action Plan 2012–2013	0 of 7 (0%)	0 of 7 (0%)

* This indicator is calculated using data from the most recent round of published IRM reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Consult a more diverse range of CSOs, provide systematic and more concrete feedback to consultation participants, and commission external evaluations of the dialogue process.
2	Develop systems to prioritise high-value data releases in more sectors; monitor use and effects.
3	Set concrete targets and indicators for the digitisation of the public sector, make provisions for inclusiveness and privacy, and adopt a clear open data remit for the Digital First programme.

4	Develop a formal and regular consultation mechanism to facilitate meaningful dialogue on the OGP commitments.
5	Improve progress monitoring of the Policy for Global Development (PGU).

COMMITMENTS OVERVIEW

Commitment Title	Well-designed *	Complete	Overview
☉ 1. Digital First programme	Yes	No	This commitment digitally transforms the public sector with pilot programs concerning food chains, environmental information, and entrepreneurship. It is on track for completion, increasing peer-to-peer collaboration among agencies, which is a key driver in the reform process.
2. Public administration document access	No	No	This commitment represents the start of a major whole-of-government (including local) approach to document and data release. It is on schedule.
3. Aid effectiveness	No	No	The commitment improves public dialogue about aid, effective research, and reporting corruption. It had less decisive objectives around the promotion of civic space, as it is unclear what the activities would do.
4. CSO dialogue	No	No	The Sakrád is a newer working method to include expert and civil society voices. Several CSO dialogues have occurred and an evaluation of the Sakrád method will probably be carried out in 2018.

* Commitment is evaluated by the IRM as specific, relevant, and has a transformative potential impact – a potential starred commitment.

☉ Commitment is evaluated by the IRM as being specific, relevant, potentially transformative, and substantially or fully implemented.

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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 dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.



I. Introduction

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is an international multistakeholder 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.

Sweden began its formal participation in September 2011, when Gunilla Carlsson, Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation, declared her country's intention to participate in the initiative.¹

In order to participate in OGP, governments must exhibit a demonstrated commitment to open government by meeting a set of (minimum) performance criteria. Objective, third-party indicators are used to determine the extent of country progress on each of the criteria: fiscal transparency, public official's asset disclosure, citizen engagement, and access to information. See Section VII: Eligibility Requirements for more details.

All OGP-participating governments develop OGP action plans that elaborate concrete commitments with the aim of changing practice beyond the status quo over a two-year period. The commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

Sweden started to develop its national action plan in Spring 2016. The effective period of implementation for the action plan submitted on 20 December was December 2016 through 30 June 2018. This midterm progress report covers the first year of implementation, from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. Beginning in 2015, the IRM also publishes end-of-term reports on the final status of progress at the end of the action plan's two-year period. Any activities or progress made after the first year of implementation (i.e. after 30 June 2017) will be assessed in the end-of-term report. This report follows an earlier review of OGP performance, "Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) Progress Report 2014-2015: Sweden," which covered development of the second action plan and implementation from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. The government has not yet published its self-assessment.

In order to meet OGP requirements, the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) of OGP has partnered with Alina Östling, an independent researcher, who carried out this evaluation of the development and implementation of Sweden's third action plan. To gather the voices of multiple stakeholders, Östling organised a stakeholder forum in Stockholm in August 2017. Östling did not review the self-assessment as it remained unpublished at the time of writing (October 2017).² The IRM aims to inform ongoing dialogue around development and implementation of future commitments. Methods and sources are dealt with in Section VI of this report (Methodology and Sources).

¹ This letter is available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/countries/sweden>.

II. Context

Sweden is a leader in transparency, accountability, and the use of information and communications technology (ICT), as well as one of the most committed donors and refugee recipients in Europe. A broader set of future commitments could better align with the progressive Swedish Policy for Global Development (PGU), which sets the overall goal of achieving equitable and sustainable global development through a human rights-based approach.

2.1 Background

Sweden is at the forefront of transparency, accountability, and technology. International indices generally rank Sweden high in terms of civil liberties and political rights,¹ a favourable legal framework, and access and use of ICT. Civil liberties and political rights are guaranteed in the legal framework and respected in practice, and Sweden has a strong rule of law.² Laws are generally transparent and enforced, and the public administration is impartial.³ Sweden has a robust civil society with extensive involvement of citizens in civil society organisations (CSOs), and the government routinely consults civil society.⁴

According to the latest edition of the Networked Readiness Index, Sweden has an excellent ICT infrastructure and a highly skilled population, most of which use the internet. However, the Swedish government lags behind other advanced economies in their use of digital technologies (ranked 23rd by Networked Readiness for government usage) and is not connecting as effectively to citizens (ranked 45th for government e-participation). Also, business executives believe that Sweden is not excelling on the digital front (ranked 20th for government ICT vision).⁵ While Sweden remains high in a number of open government and tech indices, its ranking is falling. Relevant rankings include the Networked Readiness Index (from 1st in 2012 to 3rd in 2016),⁶ the Web Index (from 1st in 2013 to 5th in 2015),⁷ the Open Data Barometer (from 3rd in 2013 to 14th in 2016),⁸ and the Global Open Data Index (from 8th in 2013 to 21st in 2016).⁹

One of the key themes of this action plan is development aid and, in this regard, Sweden is one of the most generous and committed donors in the world.¹⁰ Since 2006, Sweden allocates close to one percent of its gross national income to aid, which amounted to SEK 46.1 billion (USD 5.8 billion) in 2017.¹¹ Sweden has focused on aid transparency since its first action plan. On this front, Sweden has made significant progress which can be attributed to the New Public Management reforms (widespread across Europe), which aim at effective government measures in all areas, not only in development aid.¹² Today, Sweden is in the top ten countries on the 2016 Aid Transparency Index and one of the leading countries in implementing the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard.¹³

Progress can still be made in several open government areas. Most of the Swedish civil society and government stakeholders are not aware of OGP, and the action plan commitments are framed in a way that are not relevant to lay citizens. In order to boost stakeholders' interest, Sweden could consider future commitments on issues that are salient in the Swedish context, such as data protection. In Summer 2017, Sweden experienced a political crisis related to data protection. The crisis was triggered by the revelation that the Swedish Transport Agency outsourced its database to IBM, which resulted in leaks of classified information.¹⁴ This suggests that government agencies need to establish and uphold strong cyber security and data protection practices. Security experts consider that the digitalisation efforts in

the public sector have not assigned sufficient priority to data protection.¹⁵ Sweden could consider commitments in this field that would address not only technical weakness but also develop new organisational processes and functions. Sweden's work on enforcing the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR),¹⁶ EU's new act for harmonising data privacy laws across Europe, might be a good opportunity to improve data protection and avoid similar crises in the future. Even more important are coordinated efforts and collaboration between public agencies in the quest for solutions. A new digitalisation authority could play a significant role in coordinating data protection issues across agencies (see Commitment 1 for details).¹⁷

2.2 Scope of Action Plan in Relation to National Context

The main themes of the action plan include dialogue between the government and civil society, development aid and e-government. They reflect the OGP values of civic participation, transparency, and accountability as articulated in the OGP Declaration of Principles and the Articles of Governance. However, considering the above-mentioned issues faced by Sweden, it is worthwhile to look beyond these fields in the next action plan. Transparency and accountability commitments could be broadened to other, critical, areas of governance, such as data protection in the public sector. Greater emphasis should be placed on the implementation and monitoring of Sweden's PGU. The overarching goal of PGU is that all government policy areas in Sweden, including migration, security, and defence, should contribute to fair and sustainable development.

¹ The Freedom House assigns Sweden the highest possible freedom ratings on both civil liberties and political rights, and considers the Swedish press as "free." "Freedom in the World 2017" (Freedom House, 2017), <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/sweden>.

² *Id.*

³ Valeriya Mechkova, Frida Andersson and Staffan Lindberg, "Country Brief: Sweden" (The Varieties of Democracy Institute, University of Gothenburg, Jan. 2016), https://www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/61/81/61814e6b-ce4b-4122-9257-ef895ece35b2/country_brief_sweden.pdf.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ "Networked Readiness Index" (World Economic Forum, 2016), <http://reports.weforum.org/global-information-technology-report-2016/networked-readiness-index/>.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ "WebIndex Report 2014–15" (Washington DC: World Wide Web Foundation, 2014) 6, http://thewebindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Web_Index_24pp_November2014.pdf.

⁸ "OpenData Barometer," (World Wide Web Foundation, 2016), http://opendatabarometer.org/?_year=2016&indicator=ODB.

⁹ "Global Open Data Index" (Open Knowledge Network, 2016/2017), <https://index.okfn.org/place/?filter-table=swed>.

¹⁰ "DAC member profile: Sweden" *statistics from the Development Co-Operation Report 2016*, (OECD, accessed 21 Jul. 2018), <http://www.oecd.org/dac/sweden.htm>.

¹¹ "About us: Sida administers half of Sweden's development aid budget" (Sida, 3 Jan. 2018), <http://www.sida.se/English/About-us/Budget/>.

¹² Christopher Pierson, *Beyond the welfare state?*, 3rd ed. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007).

¹³ According to the IATI dashboard summary statistics, Sweden is ranked number two after the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). "Summary Statistics" (IATI Dashboard, accessed 29 Aug. 2017) http://dashboard.iatistandard.org/summary_stats.html.

¹⁴ "Opinion: Why care about the Swedish government crisis?," *The Local*, 9 Aug. 2017), <https://www.thelocal.se/20170809/opinion-why-care-about-the-swedish-government-crisis>.

¹⁵ Karin Lindström, "Security experts: The scandal opened their eyes - now the job has to be done" (IDG Sweden, 28 Oct. 2017), <https://computersweden.idg.se/2.2683/1.691335/sakerhetsexperter-transportstyrelsen?queryText=transportstyrelsen>.

¹⁶ "GDPR Portal: Site Overview" (Trunomi, accessed 22 Jul. 2018), <http://www.euqpr.org/>.

¹⁷ Lindström, "Security experts."

III. Leadership and Multistakeholder Process

The OGP coordinator, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with three other ministries during action plan development but not with civil society. A small number of civil society organisations, all focused on international development, gave email input. No other consultations related to the Open Government Partnership occurred.

The consequences of the institutional arrangements for OGP have limited the scope of consultation and innovation in Sweden’s action plan, as well as its leadership potential in the Partnership. This finding does not seek to discredit innovations that Sweden is making in development aid, but underscores similar conclusions from the prior two action plan evaluations: Sweden is not leading internationally (through OGP) in sectors beyond aid, which is a key expectation of OGP participation. Sweden could be a leader with commitments addressing corruption and data protection. Sweden also could model better processes of consultation and collaboration with CSOs beyond development sectors.

3.1 Leadership

This subsection describes the OGP leadership and institutional context for OGP in Sweden. Table 3.1 summarises this structure while the narrative section (below) provides additional detail.

Table 3.1: OGP Leadership

1. Structure	Yes	No
Is there a clearly designated Point of Contact for OGP (individual)?	✓	
	Shared	Single
Is there a single lead agency on OGP efforts?		✓
	Yes	No
Is the head of government leading the OGP initiative?		✓
2. Legal Mandate	Yes	No
Is the government’s commitment to OGP established through an official, publicly-released mandate?		✓ ¹
Is the government’s commitment to OGP established through a legally-binding mandate?		✓
3. Continuity and Instability	Yes	No
Was there a change in the organization(s) leading or involved with the OGP initiatives during the action plan implementation cycle?	✓	
Was there a change in the executive leader during the duration of the OGP action plan cycle?		✓

Sweden began its formal participation in OGP in September 2011, when Gunilla Carlsson, Sweden’s Minister for International Development Cooperation, declared her country’s intention to participate in the initiative through a letter of intent. Sweden

is a parliamentary democracy and has three levels of government: national, regional, and local. At the national level, the people are represented by the Riksdag (Swedish parliament), which has legislative power. Proposals for new laws are presented by the Government, which also implements decisions taken by the Riksdag. The government's commitment to OGP is not established through any official mandate.

The Department for Aid Management (UDSTYR) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has been the leading office responsible for Sweden's OGP commitments since Sweden's first OGP action plan. The mandate of UDSTYR is limited to foreign aid, and it does not have the authority to enforce policy changes on other departments within government. The UDSTYR handed over responsibility for the OGP commitments to the Ministry of Finance between May and June 2017 (see Table 3.1 OGP leadership). According to the government representatives interviewed by the IRM researcher, there are two key reasons for this transfer. First, the MFA perceived that they had fulfilled most of their commitments in the scope of the action plan. The second reason is the topical focus of Sweden's current OGP action plan; two of the key commitments concern government digitalisation and fall under the mandate of the Ministry of Finance, while the MFA is leading only one commitment on aid transparency.²

There is no dedicated byline in the MFA budget for OGP-related activities. The UDSTYR department had a clearly designated Point of Contact for OGP, Frank Svensson, who oversaw the implementation of the OGP action plan until June 2017. According to Svensson's estimation, he allocated approximately 20% of his full-time job to OGP-related issues.³

3.2 Intragovernmental Participation

This subsection describes which government institutions were involved at various stages in OGP. The next section will describe which nongovernmental organisations were involved in OGP.

Table 3.2: Participation in OGP by Government Institutions

How did institutions participate?	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies	Legislative	Judiciary (including quasi-judicial agencies)	Other (including constitutional independent or autonomous bodies)	Subnational Governments
Consult: These institutions observed or were invited to observe the action plan but may not be responsible for commitments in the action plan.	Ministries of: Foreign Affairs, Finance, Culture, Enterprise and Innovation.	0	0	0	0
Propose: These institutions proposed commitments for inclusion in the action plan.	Ministries of: Foreign Affairs, Finance, Culture, Enterprise and Innovation.	0	0	0	0
Implement: These institutions are	Ministries of:	0	0	0	0

responsible for implementing commitments in the action plan whether or not they proposed the commitments.	Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Culture.				
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In Sweden, four ministries participated in the consultation and proposal stages that resulted in the OGP action plan, while only three of these ministries were involved in the implementation of the action plan (see Table 3.2). The exclusion of government bodies such as the legislature, judiciary, or subnational governments from the OGP process can be explained by the narrow scope of the action plan. The four ministries involved were the appropriate ministries for the OGP action plan areas concerned. While the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation was involved in the consultation and proposal stages of commitment development, it was not responsible for implementing any of the commitments because its e-government mandate was recently transferred to the Ministry of Finance. As mentioned above, The Department for Aid Management (UDSTYR) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has handed over the responsibility for the OGP commitments to the Ministry of Finance given the topical focus of the commitments.⁴

Three of the ministries have collaborated on the framework of Sweden’s two previous OGP action plans; the only newcomer is the Ministry of Culture. The MFA invited the Ministry of Culture to participate because it was developing a new format for civil society consultation, which was deemed relevant to the OGP value “Public participation.” This institutional composition is well-reflected in the content of the action plan: The Ministry of Finance is in charge of Commitments 1–2, the MFA of Commitment 3, and the Ministry of Culture of Commitment 4. All but one of the commitments was transferred from the previous action plan. The only new commitment is the one implemented by the Ministry of Culture.

During the three phases (consult, propose, and implement), the Ministries communicated by email and telephone, and met ad hoc to discuss the scope of the action plan.

3.3 Civil Society Engagement

Countries participating in OGP follow a set of requirements for consultation during development, implementation, and review of their OGP action plan. Table 3.3 summarises Sweden’s performance during the 2016-2018 action plan.

Table 3.3: National OGP Process

Key Steps Followed: 1 of 7						
Before	1. Timeline Process & Availability			2. Advance Notice		
	Timeline and process available online prior to consultation	Yes	No	Advance notice of consultation	Yes	No
			X		✓	
	3. Awareness Raising			4. Multiple Channels		
	Government carried out awareness-raising activities	Yes	No	4a. Online consultations:	Yes	No
			X	4b. In-person consultations:	✓	
				Yes	No	
					X	
5. Documentation & Feedback						

	Summary of comments provided			Yes	No	
					X	
During	6. Regular Multistakeholder Forum					
	6a. Did a forum exist?	Yes	No	6b. Did it meet regularly?	Yes	No
			X			X
After	7. Government Self-Assessment Report					
	7a. Annual self-assessment report published?	Yes	No	7b. Report available in English and administrative language?	Yes	No
			X			X
	7c. Two-week public comment period on report?	Yes	No	7d. Report responds to key IRM recommendations?	Yes	No
			X			X

The MFA met with three Ministries (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, and Ministry of Culture) during the OGP action plan development but did not organise any specific meetings with civil society to discuss the potential content of the action plan. Civil society organisations (CSOs) were consulted by email with the support of CONCORD Sweden, which is a platform of 61 civil society organisations working in the field of development.⁵ CONCORD Sweden sent the draft action plan to members of its the working group on aid issues, consisting of 15 CSOs.⁶ The draft action plan was not discussed in any physical meeting but was only introduced by email. Because CONCORD is largely focused on international development, this may have limited the breadth of expertise provided by civil society.⁷

The MFA did not provide any specific criteria for how the comments should be structured.⁸ The CSOs had approximately two weeks to provide comments on the draft,⁹ which could be considered as a reasonable advanced notice. CONCORD Sweden received comments from five organisations, removed the identities of the commenting organisations, and forwarded the comments by email to the MFA.¹⁰ The comments were not made publicly available. Nonetheless, the IRM researcher was able to access the comments and found that most of the comments were substantive and relevant.¹¹ Given the thematic interest of CONCORD's members, comments primarily focused on dialogue and transparency in aid management. For instance, comments included the recommendation that the government be clearer about which actors are invited to consultations, and that consultations are carried out early in the decision-making process. Other comments regretted the fact that the government is not continuing their commitment to the Swedish PGU in the present action plan. The MFA claims that some of the recommendations were adopted, while others might be integrated into the next action plan.¹² Based on the IRM researcher's review of the CSO comments that CONCORD Sweden submitted to the MFA,¹³ her impression is that only one minor comment was adopted in the final version of the action plan.¹⁴

During the first year of implementation, Sweden had not yet held any OGP-specific consultation during the implementation of the action plan.

3.4 Consultation During Implementation

Table 3.4: Level of Public Influence

The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) "Spectrum of Participation" to apply to OGP.¹⁵ This spectrum shows the potential level of public influence on the contents of the action plan. In the spirit of OGP, most countries should aspire for "collaborative."

Level of public input		During development of action plan	During implementation of action plan
Empower	The government handed decision-making power to members of the public.		
Collaborate	There was iterative dialogue AND the public helped set the agenda.		
Involve	The public could give feedback on how commitments were considered.		
Consult	The public could give inputs.	✓	
Inform	The government provided the public with information on the action plan.		
No Consultation	No consultation		✓

The IRM researcher coded the level of public influence during the development of the action plan as “Consult” given that the OGP coordinator at the time, the MFA, gave a number of CSOs the possibility to comment on the draft action plan (see Table 3.4). It is worth noting that the relevant stakeholders and the public at large did not have the possibility to comment on the action plan since the government did not provide any public access to the draft (e.g. on its website).

As part of their participation in OGP, governments commit to identify a forum to enable regular multistakeholder consultation on OGP implementation. This can be an existing or new entity. This section summarises that information.

At the time of the writing (June 2017), Sweden has not yet held any OGP-specific consultations during the implementation of the action plan. However, the MFA stresses that several consultations concerning action plan commitments have taken place in other, non-OGP-specific, forums. These had a focus primarily on aid effectiveness and digital services, but not under the banner of OGP. (For example, the abovementioned MFA-CSO meeting regarding Commitment 3, “Joint Commitments between Swedish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,”¹⁶ adopted by the government in July 2015.¹⁷) However, these meetings did not discuss specific OGP commitment activities so there was no real opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on the action plan’s implementation. Moreover, the consultations in non-OGP-specific forums did not address all the action plan activities.

3.5 Self-Assessment

The OGP Articles of Governance require that participating countries publish a self-assessment report within three months of the end of the first year of implementation. The self-assessment report must be made available for public comments for a two-week period. This section assesses compliance with these requirements and the quality of the report.

Sweden did not provide a self-assessment report by last year’s deadline. The IRM researcher has asked both the MFA for information regarding a draft version of the report, and later the Ministry of Finance about when a final version will be made available, but has received no information beyond that the government is aware such a report should be produced. Therefore, OGP issued Sweden a “procedural” notice.¹⁸

If it receives another such notice in the next year, the government will need to develop remedies in concert with the OGP Steering Committee.

3.6 Response to Previous IRM Recommendations

Table 3.5: Previous IRM Report Key Recommendations

	Recommendation	Addressed?	Integrated into Next Action Plan?
1	Broaden the transparency guarantee beyond aid-specific data to government transactions in general. As a first step in this direction, Sweden could apply IATI standards to data in at least one government area closely related to development cooperation, such as trade.	X	X
2	Apply the principles of the Policy for Global Development (PGU) to government decisions about arms exports by adopting concrete steps proposed in Section VII: "General Recommendations."	X	X
3	Enhance public participation by allowing early and deeper involvement of citizens and civil society in decision-making processes, by implementing a citizen centred approach to e-government and by including CSOs in recipient countries in decision making on aid strategies and budgets.	Partly	Partly in Commitment 4 ¹⁹
4	Adopt a systematic approach to open data by developing a roadmap setting out what data should be open and when, and by designing a funding model for joint solutions across government entities.	X	X
5	Improve the OGP consultation process by developing a formal mechanism for dialogue, by involving a broader range of stakeholders and by improving the transparency of the consultation process.	X	X

Of the five recommendations outlined in Table 3.5, the government addressed and integrated only one (partially) in the current action plan. This partial integration is through Commitment 4 about a new format for dialogue with the civil society, which thereby addresses recommendation 3 (i.e. enhance public participation by allowing better involvement of citizens and civil society in decision-making.) The IRM researcher received a written response from the MFA outlining some measures that have been taken based on the above recommendations. The MFA response is summarised in bullets below:²⁰

- Recommendation 1: Government offices, with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) as the implementing agency, are working to broaden the scope of transparency tools. Currently, Sida is developing the use of the IATI format for visualising climate financing data. The work is based on Openaid.se and will be completed in 2020.
- Recommendation 2: Aspects of the PGU are taken into account in assessments of Swedish exports of military equipment, including through (i) application of the EU Common Position governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment; (ii) support of capability development at

the Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP) with regard to application of sustainability aspects in Criterion Eight in the EU's Common Position; (iii) inclusion of the PGU aspect in a government proposal updating arms export control legislation and several modernisations of the Swedish guidelines on arms export controls, which are currently under legal review; and (iv) the largest Swedish trade association, the Swedish Security and Defence Industry Association (SOFF), requires prospective members to sign and comply with its Code of Conduct on Business Ethics. Representatives of the companies also undergo special e-training on anticorruption that has been developed jointly by SOFF and the Defence Materiel Administration (FMV).

- Recommendation 5: A general mechanism for civil society dialogue on development cooperation exists in Commitment 3 of the current action plan ("Improved opportunities for dialogue in aid management and implementation"). This mechanism may potentially focus on transparency issues and include OGP-specific consultations.

¹ Sweden began its formal participation in OGP in September 2011, when Gunilla Carlsson, Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation, declared her country's intention to participate in the initiative through a letter of intent.

² Frank Svensson (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), interview with IRM researcher, 15 Jun. 2017; Magnus Enzell (Ministry of Finance), interview with IRM researcher, 4 Aug. 2017.

³ Svensson, interview.

⁴ Svensson, interview; Enzell, interview.

⁵ CONCORD Sweden is a branch of the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development (CONCORD) with 61 Swedish CSO members. CONCORD Sweden's mission is to conduct information and advocacy on EU development cooperation and policy, with a focus on poverty reduction.

⁶ Peter Sörbom (CONCORD Sweden), interview with IRM researcher, 22 Sept. 2017.

⁷ It should be acknowledged that there are relevant civil society voices in Sweden beyond CSOs, such as private sector actors and individuals who disagree with the level of spending on development aid.

⁸ Frank Svensson (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), email to IRM researcher, 30 Aug. 2017.

⁹ Peter Sörbom (CONCORD Sweden), interview with IRM researcher, 22 Sept. 2017.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ The comments were shared with the IRM researcher by Peter Sörbom. Sörbom, interview; Svensson, email.

¹² Frank Svensson (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), interview with IRM researcher, 15 Jun. 2017.

¹³ Sörbom, interview.

¹⁴ The comment that was presumably integrated into the action plan by the MFA regarded the recommendation to clearly reference the "enabling environment and shrinking space" for CSOs, and suggested Sweden commit to working on this topic internationally.

¹⁵ "IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum" (IAP2 International Federation, 2014), http://c.yimcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf.

¹⁶ At a meeting held 13 Feb. 2017, high-level officials participated in a forum on the Joint Commitments, including the Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, Isabella Lövin. CSOs were able to ask questions and a few presented their work around the joint commitments. Several CSOs stated that the forum was valuable. ("Minnesanteckningar, arbetsgruppen för Gemensamma Åtaganden, GÅ" (16 Mar. 2017),

http://www.regeringen.se/49b881/contentassets/5c5ec6059051492099de6372662fdc05/gemensamma-20170316_minnesanteckningar-arbetsgrupp-for-ga.pdf); At the same time, some civil society representatives emphasised that the Joint Commitments are relatively unknown among many CSOs and some participants therefore came unprepared to the forum. (*Id.*)

¹⁷ The MFA has a list of 78 CSOs, mostly professional NGOs from various sectors, invited to participate in the framework of the Joint Commitments and 18 CSOs that are formal members, which means that they are committed to an active participation in the development and the implementation of the Joint Commitments. The Joint Commitments have a working group consisting of government and civil society representatives, which meets 3–4 times a year in Stockholm. The last working meeting was supposed to take place in June 2017 but had not taken place at the time of writing this report (June–October 2017). The meeting notes are published on the government webpage. The government webpage summarising the process and containing links to relevant documents is available at: <http://www.regeringen.se/artiklar/2017/05/Regeringens-och-svenska-civilsamhalletsorganisationers-gemensamma-ataganden-for-starkt-dialog-och-samverkan-inom-utvecklingsarbetet/>.

¹⁸ "Sweden 2017 Late SAR Letter - February 2018" (OGP, 2018),

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/sweden-2017-late-sar-letter-february-2018>.

¹⁹ Commitment 4, about the new format for dialogue with civil society in the current action plan, addresses the recommendation to enhance public participation by allowing early and deeper involvement of citizens and civil society in decision-making processes.

²⁰ Svensson, email.

IV. Commitments

All OGP-participating governments develop OGP action plans that include concrete commitments over a two-year period. Governments begin their OGP action plans by sharing existing efforts related to open government, including specific strategies and ongoing programs.

Commitments should be appropriate to each country's unique circumstances and challenges. OGP commitments should also be relevant to OGP values laid out in the OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration signed by all OGP-participating countries.¹

What Makes a Good Commitment?

Recognising that achieving open government commitments often involves a multiyear process, governments should attach time frames 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 analyses the first year of their implementation.

The indicators used by the IRM to evaluate commitments are as follows:

- **Specificity:** This variable assesses the level of specificity and measurability of each commitment. The options are:
 - High: Commitment language provides clear, verifiable activities and measurable deliverables for achievement of the commitment's objective.
 - Medium: Commitment language describes activity that is objectively verifiable and includes deliverables, but these deliverables are not clearly measurable or relevant to the achievement of the commitment's objective.
 - Low: Commitment language describes activity that can be construed as verifiable but requires some interpretation on the part of the reader to identify what the activity sets out to do and determine what the deliverables would be.
 - None: Commitment language contains no measurable activity, deliverables, or milestones.
- **Relevance:** This variable evaluates the commitment's relevance to OGP values. Based on a close reading of the commitment text as stated in the action plan, the guiding questions to determine the relevance are:
 - Access to Information: Will the government disclose more information or improve the quality of the information disclosed to the public?
 - Civic Participation: Will the government create or improve opportunities or capabilities for the public to inform or influence decisions?
 - Public Accountability: Will the government create or improve opportunities to hold officials answerable for their actions?
 - Technology & Innovation for Transparency and Accountability: Will technological innovation be used in conjunction with one of the other three OGP values to advance either transparency or accountability?²
- **Potential impact:** This variable assesses the *potential impact* of the commitment, if completed as written. The IRM researcher uses the text from the action plan to:
 - Identify the social, economic, political, or environmental problem;
 - Establish the status quo at the outset of the action plan; and

- Assess the degree to which the commitment, if implemented, would impact performance and tackle the problem.
- **Starred commitments** are considered exemplary OGP commitments. In order to receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:
 - Starred commitments will have “medium” or “high” specificity. A commitment must lay out clearly defined activities and steps to make a judgement about its potential impact.
 - The commitment’s language should make clear its relevance to opening government. Specifically, it must relate to at least one of the OGP values of Access to Information, Civic Participation, or Public Accountability.
 - The commitment would have a "transformative" potential impact if completely implemented.³
 - The government must make significant progress on this commitment during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of "substantial" or "complete" implementation.

Based on these criteria, Sweden’s action plan contained one starred commitment, namely:

- Implementation programme: Digital First

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 Sweden and all OGP-participating countries, see the OGP Explorer.⁴

General Overview of the Commitments

Sweden’s action plan included four commitments. Commitments 1 and 2 focused on e-government and the re-use of public sector information, two topics that are closely interrelated. Both commitments fall under the mandate of the Ministry of Finance, which is also the implementing institution. Commitment 3 focuses on development aid and is implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Commitment 4 is concerned with enhanced dialogue with the civil society in broader terms, embracing all fields where CSOs are operating in Sweden.

¹ “Open Government Partnership: Articles of Governance” (OGP, June 2012 (updated March 2014 and April 2015)), https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/attachments/OGP_Articles-Gov_Apr-21-2015.pdf.

² IRM Procedures Manual. Available at: http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/IRM-Procedures-Manual-v3_July-2016.docx.

³ The International Experts Panel changed this criterion in 2015. For more information visit: <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/node/5919>.

⁴ OGP Explorer: bit.ly/1KE2Wil.

★ 1. Implementation programme: Digital First

Commitment Text:

The current programme, *Digital First*, is designed to implement the goals of the government strategy *Bringing the Citizen to the Heart of Government*,¹ and is structured around three focus areas: governance, smart solutions and infrastructure.

Main activities:

- Improve whole-of-government governance of open government activities. This includes a new unit dedicated to eGovernment and improved frameworks for follow-up and benchmarks.
- Specific government assignments to seven pilot agencies in four sectors that need extra governance. The following value chains have been targeted: smarter planning and building process, a smarter food chain, smarter use of environmental information and simplified entrepreneurship. The agencies are required to work on open data, data maturity and open innovation.
- The pilot agencies are called to the Government's council for the digital transformation of the public sector. The council holds an 'open council' once a year to take in advice from digital change leaders in civil society, and from businesses and citizens.
- An agreement has been made with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions to strengthen collaboration around eGovernment and open government. The agreement includes a commitment by the Association to appoint pilot municipalities in the four targeted sectors.
- Spontaneous activities in terms of labs, hackathons, tech-fests and innovation hubs emerging from Sweden's current digital transformation are being supported by e.g. Vinnova.

Please note that the commitment text has been shortened for reasons of space. For full text, please see the Swedish Action Plan 2016-2018:

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/sweden-third-national-action-plan-2016-2018>.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Finance

Supporting institutions: Government Offices, the Swedish National Financial Management Authority, the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority, the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the National Food Agency, the Swedish Board of Agriculture, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, the Swedish Companies Registration Office, the National Archives, eGovlab, Stockholm University, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions.

Start date: 2015

End date: 2018

Commitment Overview	Specificity	OGP Value Relevance	Potential Impact	On Time?	Completion
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	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
1. Overall			✓		✓	✓						✓	Yes			✓	

Editorial note: This commitment is clearly relevant to OGP values as written, has transformative potential impact, and is substantially or completely implemented and therefore qualifies as a starred commitment.

Context and Objectives

Sweden is an advanced e-government nation and the public sector invests around SEK 45 billion (USD 5.5 billion) on information technology (IT) every year.² In international comparisons, Sweden ranks very well in terms of internet usage, both by individuals and by businesses. However, the Swedish government lags behind other advanced economies in their use of digital technologies³ and “business executives feel that it (Sweden) has somewhat been losing sight of the digital agenda.”⁴ The Swedish government is aware of the untapped digital potential in the public sector.⁵ Since the mid-1990s, the government has appointed numerous investigations, councils, commissions, delegations, collaborative projects, and organisations to improve e-government in Sweden. Nevertheless, issues have not been fully addressed.⁶ A 2016-report by the National Audit Office showed that e-government investments do not generate sufficient value for their cost and that there is room for improving digital management and coordination.⁷ The same year, the National Financial Management Authority stressed that the monitoring of the digital development in Sweden should be improved and that public organisations must enhance their skills to manage efficiently the digital transformation.⁸

According to the description of this commitment in the Swedish Action Plan, “The biggest driver of the open data agenda is the economic potential of re-use since Sweden is already a very open, transparent and low-corruption country. The challenge is to increase digital openness without limiting the long and deeply rooted paper-based tradition of openness.” To address these challenges and opportunities, the government has launched a programme for digital innovation in the public sector, “Digital First,” that runs from 2015 through 2018.⁹ The aim of the Digital First programme, to make Sweden the world leader in using the potential of digitisation,¹⁰ is very ambitious and could have a strong impact in the long-term. The IRM designated this commitment as potentially high-impact as it both entails a whole-of-government approach, including local governments, and places priority on four key, high-impact areas. Particularly important, the digitalisation reform in Sweden concerns all public authorities, both at the national and the local level, and is conducted in cooperation with municipalities and county councils.¹¹

The Digital First programme is based on three pillars:¹²

- (i) Digital infrastructure: Improving the national digital infrastructure with measures targeting access to basic data, standards, and national digital services.
- (ii) Smart Sweden: Smarter and more innovative digital services. The government has mandated seven pilot agencies in four sectors to work on open data, data maturity, and open innovation (see Milestones 1.1 and 1.2).¹³

- (iii) Better governance: Establishment of governance bodies to support digitisation. A forum for multilevel coordination, the “Council for the digital transformation of the public sector,” was established in 2015¹⁴ (see Milestones 1.3 and 1.4).¹⁵ The Council consists of representatives from government agencies, municipalities and county councils, including the pilot agencies mentioned above. Its remit is to discuss strategic issues, identify challenges during the implementation of the government's commitment to e-government and propose targeted measures.¹⁶ The Council is not a decision-making body but purely consultative. It aims to increase the competencies of the Minister of Public Administration and help him set priorities concerning the digital transformation of the public sector.¹⁷ The government is also planning to form a distinct governmental body that will have the overall responsibility for the digital transformation of the public sector as of mid-2018.¹⁸ In addition, a unit dedicated to digital government and the implementation of Digital First was created within the Ministry of Finance in May 2016.¹⁹

The individual Digital First activities included in this action plan contribute to a larger multiyear programme, involving many other important measures outlined above. In addition to its clear aims of improving access to information, the commitment would improve citizen participation with the development of the open council (Milestone 1.4), where the Digital First programme can be debated with stakeholders.²⁰ Open data experts interviewed in the preparation of this report describe the program as a large improvement.²¹

Completion

Overall, this commitment is substantially completed and incomplete activities are on track for full implementation during the second year.

All pilot agencies submitted their first reports to the government 1 August 2016. According to a summary of the reports provided by the government, the reports highlight a need for developed cooperation between government institutions and for improved coordination of new initiatives. The reports also contain strategies for future work of the pilot agencies with a focus on promoting innovation, making information available, and developing data standards.²² The follow-up activity of final reports from the pilot agencies was not started during first year of implementation. However, these reports are not due until 2018 and will be assessed in the second annual report.

Reporting from the council for the digital transformation of the public sector is on-going and is expected to continue through the second year of action plan implementation. In total, the council has met five times since its establishment in Autumn 2015.²³ Two meetings occurred during the evaluation of the OGP action plan.²⁴ The first was in November 2016, during the DigiGov conference, and addressed the outcomes of the Open council (see Milestone 1.4). The second was in May 2017, where council-members discussed: the government-commissioned report on effective management of digital services; a proposal to consolidate responsibility for related issues in a single body;²⁵ and a joint target for the development of the digital infrastructure.²⁶

The government also held a public consultation (“remiss” according to the Swedish terminology)²⁷ in June 2017²⁸ about proposals contained in the above-mentioned report regarding a new government body coordinating digital transformation efforts. The response rate was very high; of 121 organisations invited in writing to the consultation, 107 replied. This suggests that the stakeholders consider this an important issue. All consultation replies were published openly on the government website and the Ministry of Finance is currently preparing a summary report.²⁹

An open council was held in November 2016 at the annual DigiGov “Top Leader Forum for a Smarter Sweden.”³⁰ The open council focused on citizen-centred development and was conducted in a workshop format, where smaller groups provided feedback about the measures planned by Digital First. Feedback was then discussed in the regular meeting of the council for the digital transformation of the public sector, which also occurred during the DigiGov forum, under the chairmanship of the Minister for Public Administration. The majority of the 300–400 participants in DigiGov represented public authorities and municipalities, but experts and leaders from academia and the private sector also participated.³¹ The open council activity was not fully completed during the first year of implementation but is considered on-going with full completion expected by the end of the action plan implementation period (2018).

Early Results

To date, the programme does not show many tangible results, which is unsurprising considering the time necessary to coordinate hundreds of public agencies and authorities, both at the national and local level.³²

The pilot reports (Milestones 1.1 and 1.2) are only a first step toward establishing Digital First. One of the reports analysed by the IRM researcher presents generic descriptions of the processes and stakeholders involved, and gives some examples of the types of initiatives that might be implemented, but lacks specificity of what will be done and how. This specificity will be decided in the next step of the process, to be carried out jointly with the relevant stakeholders in each area.³³ However, the assignments received by the pilot agencies in the framework of Digital First have already had some effect, according to an open data expert interviewed by the IRM researcher.³⁴ The pilot agencies are now leading the way for the other public authorities and the peer-to-peer collaboration among agencies has become one of the key drivers in the reform process.³⁵ For some agencies, such as the Swedish Environment Agency, the assignment has become a driving force for change and an incentive for extending cooperation to other authorities.³⁶ The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority has also made good progress,³⁷ which is confirmed by its release of a significant amount of open data.³⁸ Beginning 1 September 2017, it will be easier to use the authority’s open geographic data, released according to the CC0 license³⁹ (meaning that all rights are waived),⁴⁰ which is expected to generate societal benefits.⁴¹

In terms of early results regarding increased civic participation, it is worth noting that the pilot agencies are trying to involve stakeholders and ordinary citizens in the implementation of Digital First. The pilot agencies have carried out consultations with stakeholders, and several of these have been open to the general public, e.g. via webinars. The agencies also provide a dedicated email address on Digital First websites and publish newsletters about Digital First progress.⁴²

Although the pilot agencies are trying to involve stakeholders in Digital First’s implementation, one of the experts interviewed by the IRM researcher expressed concerns about the top-down tendency of the programme, focussing on increased efficiency and minimised costs, while citizens’ needs and user-demand are potentially overshadowed.⁴³

Next Steps

The IRM researcher concludes that this commitment should be carried forward in the next OGP action plan considering its ambition, importance, and comprehensiveness. Prior to the Digital First initiative, governance of public sector digitisation lacked

coherence and coordination, and there were limited incentives for authorities to cooperate in developing standardised systems and services.⁴⁴ After a desk analysis of documentation and consultations with experts, the IRM researcher concludes that a new action plan should include a clear overall strategy with concrete targets and indicators in order to strengthen and develop the digitisation of the public sector. The IRM researcher also agrees with the expert interviewees who stressed that the Digital First programme should aim at having a stronger open data remit.⁴⁵

In terms of next steps, the IRM researcher agrees with the following suggestions made by interviewed stakeholders:

- **Form the new authority and provide it with adequate resources:** The government should create a new authority with the overall responsibility for the digital transformation of the public sector, as suggested by this commitment. These types of (permanent) authorities are already operating in other Nordic countries that are more advanced on public sector digitisation.⁴⁶ The IRM researcher agrees with the view of several stakeholders⁴⁷ that the new authority should be allocated adequate resources, particularly personnel, to fulfil its mission.⁴⁸
- **Extend mandates to more agencies⁴⁹ and develop models for joint-funding solutions:** In order to deliver joint results, the new authority and relevant agencies will need sustainable, long-term funding solutions,⁵⁰ including development resources and funds to cover costs (e.g. for joint licenses.)⁵¹ The IRM researcher made a similar recommendation in the previous IRM report.⁵² Several stakeholders stress that some of the pilot agencies need more funding in order to make progress,⁵³ and a recent academic report affirms that a prerequisite for opening up geographic data, one of the most requested types of data, is the replacement of user fees by additional government funding of around SEK 130 million per year.⁵⁴
- **Develop assessment indicators:**⁵⁵ The government should develop effective indicators for assessing the progress of digital transformation efforts, in particular measuring: (i) the user perspective (e.g. assessing 'user journeys' across public services); including of categories of people that have limited or no digital skills;⁵⁶ (ii) the extent different authorities use digitisation; and (iii) the innovation potential of public bodies.⁵⁷
- **Report in an open data format:** The commitment also targets the need to monitor the digital transformation process. To align the monitoring needs with the OGP values, the government should publish the expenses of digitisation as open data. This would create more transparency, legitimacy, and a better understanding of public digitalisation efforts.⁵⁸ The IRM researcher made a related recommendation in the previous IRM report.⁵⁹
- **Prioritise personal data protection:** Digitisation poses risks for protecting personal data. To prioritise data protection, the new authority should encourage the creation of codes of conduct under the Data Protection Ordinance for e-government⁶⁰ and collaborate with the Data Inspectorate, the Swedish Civil Protection Agency, and the National Post and Telecom Agency to facilitate the authorities' work on information security and to ensure uniform handling of data protection and personal privacy issues.⁶¹
- **Digital inclusion:** One interviewed expert recommended the Digital First programme account for people who are excluded from the Internet,⁶² which is presently 7% of Sweden's population.⁶³ This need for targeted measures and continuous capacity building to ensure everyone's

participation in a digital society, especially elderly people and people with lower education, also emerges from a report by the Swedish Digitalisation Commission.⁶⁴

During the open council (Milestone 1.4), participants also suggested the following regarding the future implementation of the Digital First programme:⁶⁵

- Setting a clear focus and offering strong incentives for open collaboration.
- Enhanced cooperation and concrete partnerships based on common digital platforms and open data are key success factors.
- Legal and budgetary barriers to cooperation at all levels must be identified and solved.
- National frameworks in the form of common standards and services are important components to enable increased cooperation.
- Openness, transparency, and co-creation with users are necessary to create trust, confidence, and innovation.

Moreover, several of the stakeholders interviewed by the IRM researcher pointed out that the Ministry of Finance could make the next open council (Milestone 1.4) more result-oriented and involve potential developers, users, and the middle-management of public agencies, as well as use more experimental hackathon methods.⁶⁶ The Ministry should also clearly communicate to participants how the results of the open council will feed into the decision-making process.⁶⁷

¹ Link to the e-government strategy in Swedish: Med medborgaren i centrum, Regeringens strategi för en digitalt samverkande statsförvaltning Diarienummer:

N2012.37, <http://www.regeringen.se/informationsmaterial/2012/12/n2012.37>.

² Ardan Shekarabi (Minister of Civil Affairs), "Digitalisation of the public sector should now be accelerated on" *DN Debate* (Government Offices, 2 Dec. 2016),

<http://www.regeringen.se/debattartiklar/2016/12/digitaliseringen-av-offentlig-sektor-ska-nu-snabbas-pa/>.

³ In terms of overall ranking, Sweden ranks number three on the Network Readiness Index 2016. However, Sweden ranks less well on government readiness – "government usage" (23rd place) and on "government ICT vision" (20th place). *Global Information Technology Report 2016* (World Economic Forum, 6 Jul. 2016), www.weforum.org/gitr.

⁴ *Id.*; Webpage for Sweden: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-information-technology-report-2016/economies/#indexId=NRI&economy=SWE>.

⁵ "Ett program för digital förnyelse av det offentliga Sverige" (Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, 28 Apr. 2016), <http://www.naringsbloggen.se/digitalt-forst/2016/04/28/ett-program-for-digital-fornyelse-av-det-offentliga-sverige/>.

⁶ Lilian Klasson (CEO at Stratvise, a management network in Sweden), "Think about the Digitalisation Authority - focus on national cooperation!" (IDG, 30 May 2017), <https://computersweden.idg.se/2.2683/1.683443/tank-om-digitaliseringsmyndigheten>; "Riksrevisionens granskning av den offentliga förvaltningens digitalisering. Riksrevisionen" RiR 2016:14 (Swedish National Audit Office, 2016),

http://www.riksrevisionen.se/PageFiles/24636/RiR_2016_14_DIGITALISERING_ANPASSAD.pdf.

⁷ Swedish National Audit Office, "Riksrevisionens" RiR 2016:14.

⁸ "Communications" government proposals for the state budget for 2017 to Parliament, submitted to Parliament 20 Sept. 2016 (PROP. 2016/17:1 UTGIFTSOMRÅDE 22) 100–102,

<http://www.regeringen.se/4a6638/contentassets/e926a751d9eb4c978c4d892c659ebc8e/utgiftsomrade-22-kommunikationer>.

⁹ "Digital first" (ESV, 19 Dec. 2017), <http://www.esv.se/effektiv-statsforvaltning/digitalisering/digitalt-forst/>.

¹⁰ "Targeting for digitisation policy" (Government Offices, 2 Nov. 2017),

<http://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/it-politik/mal-for-it-politik/>.

¹¹ Shekarabi, "Digitalisation of the public sector."

¹² <http://www.naringsbloggen.se/digitalt-forst/2016/04/28/ett-program-for-digital-fornyelse-av-det-offentliga-sverige/>

¹³ Mehmet Kaplan, "Now we digitise the public Sweden" (Government Offices, 29 Oct. 2015),

<http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2015/10/nu-digitaliserar-vi-det-offentliga-sverige/>.

¹⁴ The council for the digital transformation of the public sector was established on 29 October 2015.

¹⁵ Kaplan, "Now we digitise."

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- ¹⁶ *Id.*
- ¹⁷ Magnus Enzell (Ministry of Finance), interview with IRM researcher, 4 Aug. 2017.
- ¹⁸ Enzell, interview; "Regeringen utreder hur digitaliseringen i den offentliga sektorn kan stärkas genom att samla ansvaret hos en myndighet" (Government Offices, 2 Dec. 2016), <http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2016/12/regeringen-utreder-hur-digitaliseringen-i-den-offentliga-sektorn-kan-starkas-genom-att-samla-ansvaret-hos-en-myndighet/>; "Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv styrning av nationella digitala tjänster" *interim report on the inquiry into the coordination of national digital services* (Stockholm: Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2017), <http://www.regeringen.se/4948a6/contentassets/b1285825f50548eb83e23667b5130bc2/digitalforvaltning-nu-sou-201723>.
- ¹⁹ Enzell, interview.
- ²⁰ Please note that Milestone 1.3 is not related to any OGP Value.
- ²¹ Björn Hagström (Hagström Consulting AB), interview with the IRM researcher, 23 Aug. 2017; Angela Yong, interview with the IRM researcher, 30 Aug. 2017.
- ²² "Communications" (2016) 100–102.
- ²³ The council has met five times since its establishment in Autumn 2015. The last three meetings are documented on the blog of the Ministry of Finance: 3 May 2016 about open data and promotion of data-driven innovation (<http://digi.tforst.se/rad-for-digitalisering-av-det-offentliga-sverige-denna-gang-om-oppna-data>); 29–30 Nov. 2016, during the DigiGov 2016 conference, where the outcomes of the open council (also held at the DigiGov) were discussed (<http://digi.tforst.se/lyckat-toppledarforum-och-oppet-rad-genomfordes-pa-digigov-29-30-november>); and 10 May 2017 (<http://digi.tforst.se/delbetankandet-digitalforvaltning-nu-pa-agendan-under-dagens-radsmote>).
- ²⁴ 1 Jul. 2016–30 Jun. 2017.
- ²⁵ The interim report on the inquiry about the consolidation of responsibility for the digital transformation of the public sector was published on 15 March 2017 and the final report is due on 31 December 2017. "Utredningen om effektiv styrning av nationella digitala tjänster i en samverkande förvaltning" reference to the inquiry (N 2016:01); "Regeringen utreder hur digitaliseringen i den offentliga sektorn kan stärkas genom att samla ansvaret hos en myndighet." (Government Offices, 2 Dec. 2016), <http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2016/12/regeringen-utreder-hur-digitaliseringen-i-den-offentliga-sektorn-kan-starkas-genom-att-samla-ansvaret-hos-en-myndighet/>.
- ²⁶ Alexander Wall, "Delegation digitalforvaltning.nu on the agenda during yesterday's council meeting" (Stockholm: Digital first, 11 May 2017), <http://digi.tforst.se/delbetankandet-digitalforvaltning-nu-pa-agendan-under-dagens-radsmote/>.
- ²⁷ "Remiss" means that the government sends the inquiry report to relevant authorities, municipalities, and stakeholders on referral to gather the opinions of concerned parties and to understand if the inquiry proposals are supported. The general public is also entitled to comment.
- ²⁸ The consultation closed on 27 June 2017.
- ²⁹ "Reference of SOU 2017: 23" *Diary number: Fi2017 / 01289 / DF* (Government Offices, 10 Oct. 2017), <http://www.regeringen.se/remisser/2017/03/remiss-av-sou-201723-digitalforvaltning-nu/>.
- ³⁰ DigiGov is organised by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) in cooperation with the government, and is a place for discussing societal development based on digitisation. Website of DigiGov: <http://digigov.se/>.
- ³¹ Enzell, interview.
- ³² There are 290 municipalities and 20 county councils or regions in Sweden. "Municipalities and county councils" (Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting, 21 Dec. 2017), <https://skl.se/tjanster/kommunerlandsting.431.html>.
- ³³ "Digital first - smarter environmental information" (Swedish Environment Agency, 7 May 2018), <http://www.naturvardsverket.se/Miljoarbete-i-samhallet/Miljoarbete-i-Sverige/Regeringsuppdrag/Digital-forst-smartare-miljoinformation/#>.
- ³⁴ Hagström, interview.
- ³⁵ Hagström, interview; Yong, interview.
- ³⁶ Hagström, interview.
- ³⁷ *Id.*; Yong, interview.
- ³⁸ Yong, interview.
- ³⁹ Creative Commons CC Zero License (cc-zero) is intended to be a 'public domain dedication,' i.e., a waiver of all rights including those of attribution. ("Creative Commons CC Zero License (cc-zero)" (Open Definition, 22 Jul. 2018), <http://opendefinition.org/licenses/cc-zero/>.) CC0 is currently recommended as the preferred method for releasing software to the public domain by the Free Software Foundation. ("Various Licenses and Comments about Them" (Free Software Foundation, 27 Jun. 2018), <https://www.gnu.org/licenses/license-list.html>). CC0 is also used by major players such as Open street map on Wikipedia.
- ⁴⁰ "Now it becomes easier to use the Lantmäteriets open data" (Geoforum Sweden, 14 Aug. 2017), <https://geoforum.se/nyheter/266-oppna-data/3173-nu-blir-det-enklare-att-anvaenda-lantmaeteriets-oppna-data>.
- ⁴¹ Yong, interview.

- ⁴² See “Digital first - smarter environmental information” (Swedish Environment Agency).
- ⁴³ Serdar Temiz (Royal Institute of Technology (KTH)), interview with the IRM researcher, 25 Aug. 2017.
- ⁴⁴ “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv,” (Statens Offentliga Utredningar).
- ⁴⁵ Hagström, interview; Temiz, interview.
- ⁴⁶ “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv,” (Statens Offentliga Utredningar).
- ⁴⁷ Per Blom and Anders Persson, “Faster digitisation if we take care of neighboring countries” (*Dagens Samhälle*, 30 Mar. 2017), <https://www.dagensamhalle.se/debatt/snabbare-digitalisering-om-vi-tar-efter-grannlaenderna-32641>; The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket, 27 Jun. 2017) *response to* “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv styrning av nationella digitala tjänster” *interim report on the inquiry into the coordination of national digital services* (Stockholm: Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2017), <https://www.regeringen.se/4948a6/contentassets/b1285825f50548eb83e23667b5130bc2/digitalforvaltning.nu-sou-201723>; Sweden’s innovation agency (Vinnova, 21 Jun. 2017) *response to* “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv styrning av nationella digitala tjänster” (Stockholm: Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2017), <http://www.regeringen.se/4948a6/contentassets/b1285825f50548eb83e23667b5130bc2/digitalforvaltning.nu-sou-201723>.
- ⁴⁸ The 34 FTEs for the new authority proposed by the government inquiry is probably too limited considering that similar authorities in Norway and Denmark employ 200–300 FTEs. “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv,” (2017).
- ⁴⁹ Hagström, interview.
- ⁵⁰ “Riksrevisionens granskning av den offentliga förvaltningens digitalisering” Riksrevisionen (RiR 2016:14) (Swedish National Audit Office, 21 Jun. 2016), http://www.riksrevisionen.se/PageFiles/24636/RiR_2016_14_DIGITALISERING_ANPASSAD.pdf
- ⁵¹ The Swedish Agency for Public Management (Statskontoret, 20 Jun. 2017) *response to* “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv,” 2017.
- ⁵² See prior report’s “Top Five ‘SMART’ Recommendations,” recommendation 4: “Adopt a systematic approach to open data by developing a roadmap setting out what data should be open and when, and by designing a funding model for joint solutions across government entities” in the “Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) Progress Report 2014-2015: Sweden” (Washington DC: OGP, 2015) 5, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Sweden_Enq_14-15_0.pdf.
- ⁵³ Hagström, interview; “Now it becomes easier to use the Lantmäteriets,” 14 Aug. 2017.
- ⁵⁴ The report also states that open geographic data would give direct social benefits of at least around SEK 200 million. Moreover, it refers to a study by the European Commission pointing out that geodata is the most valuable source of data to open and make freely available. (Erik Lakomaa, “Socioeconomic effect of open geodata” *SSE Working Paper Series in Economic History No. 2016:3* (Institute for Economic and Business History Research, Department of Marketing and Strategy, Stockholm School of Economics, 2016).) Geodata is also supposedly one of the most widely requested data from the IT sector in Sweden. (“Now it becomes easier to use the Lantmäteriets,” 14 Aug. 2017.)
- ⁵⁵ The inquiry report points out the need to make sure that public bodies regularly report to the government about the measures undertaken to ensure digital access to information and to services. “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv,” 2017.
- ⁵⁶ This is an addition identified by the IRM research.
- ⁵⁷ Sweden’s innovation agency, 21 Jun. 2017, *response*.
- ⁵⁸ *Id.*
- ⁵⁹ See prior report’s “Top Five ‘SMART’ Recommendations,” recommendation 1: Broaden the transparency guarantee beyond aid-specific data to government transactions in general. As a first step in this direction, Sweden could apply IATI standards to data in at least one government area....” Please note that the IATI standard is an open data standard. “Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) Progress Report 2014-2015: Sweden,” (2015) 5.
- ⁶⁰ The title of the Ordinance in Swedish: Dataskyddsförordningen inom e-förvaltningen.
- ⁶¹ “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv,” 2017; The Internet Foundation in Sweden (19 Jun. 2017) *in response to* “Delbetänkande av Utredningen om effektiv,” 2017.
- ⁶² Temiz, interview.
- ⁶³ 630,000 persons in Sweden do not use the internet. *The Swedes and the internet 2016* (The Internet Foundation in Sweden, 2016), https://www.iis.se/docs/Svenskarna_och_internet_2016.pdf.
- ⁶⁴ “Make Sweden in the future - digital skills” ID-number: SOU 2015:28. (Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, 2015), <http://www.regeringen.se/rattsdokument/statens-offentliga-utredningar/2015/03/sou-201528/>.
- ⁶⁵ Magnus Enzell, “Digigov 2017” (Stockholm: Digital first, 24 May 2017) <http://digitalforst.se/diqigov-2017/>.
- ⁶⁶ Hagström, interview; Yong, interview.
- ⁶⁷ Hagström, interview.

2. Increasing the supply of public administration documents

Commitment Text:

Public information should be easy to access and re-use. Open data in particular can contribute to solutions to tomorrow's social challenges. Ultimately this can lead to entrepreneurs and businesses finding innovative solutions that create new jobs. Increased re-use of Government data means greater openness and transparency. It also enhances conditions for developing better or new services for the benefit of individuals, businesses and Government itself. This can also lead to new industries and businesses, resulting in increased employment. A uniform way of working may also mean future cost savings for authorities and for the state as a whole. The goal is to increase the supply of public information. Current initiatives are described above. In summary, Sweden has taken a further step to promote open data.

Main activities:

- Continue to facilitate actions to promote agencies' re-use of public administration documents at different levels.
- Support initiatives related to projects with the European Commission.
- Improve comprehensive follow-up and monitoring, including continuing to systematically require agencies to report on their efforts in relation to the re-use of public administration documents.
- Facilitate and coordinate agency information in a common portal and according to national guidelines.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Finance

Supporting institutions: National Archives, the Agency for Public Administration, the Swedish Competition Authority, the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority and Vinnova.

Start date: 2015

End date: 2019

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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
2. Overall			✓		✓			✓		✓			Yes			✓	
2.1. Systematic reports of agencies work on publishing data and public documents	✓				Unclear				✓				Yes	✓			

2.2. Participation in the European Commission's work on DCAT-AP	✓			✓			✓		✓			Yes			✓	
2.3. Evaluation of the reuse of data and public documents by the Agency for Public Management			✓	✓					✓			Yes			✓	
2.4. National Archives to facilitate agencies involved in publishing data and public documents		✓		✓					✓			Yes			✓	

Context and Objectives

Relative to its peers, Sweden has fallen behind on opening up data and on the re-use of public sector information (PSI). Sweden's ranking on several international open data indices has dropped. The Open Data Barometer (2016) places Sweden as number 14 of 114 countries (down from 3rd place in 2013)¹ and the Global Open Data Index (2016) ranks Sweden as low as number 21 (down from 13 in 2014). The latter shows that Sweden has only 33% data openness overall,² and is not open in 6 of 15 policy areas, including important areas such as procurement and government spending.³ In a recent opinion piece, representatives of both government authorities and companies jointly demanded that the government starts investing heavily in open data.⁴ Swedish authorities generally possess high quality data and the potential of its re-use is therefore strong. However, the majority of public organisations in Sweden do not even have a webpage with the essential PSI.⁵ An expert interviewed by the IRM researcher emphasises that the Swedish authorities have not released enough open data, particularly high-quality data. In the absence of a critical mass of data, it is challenging to develop quality services and applications, which in turn limits the number of developers interested in re-using PSI.⁶

The overall goal of this commitment is to address the above challenges by increasing the supply of public information. According to the action plan, this can lead to greater openness and transparency, better public services, and the creation of new jobs. The four commitment milestones target the facilitation and follow-up of the re-use of PSI, as well as alignment with the European Union's standards for publishing data. All of the milestones were present in Sweden's previous action plan.⁷ Currently, the milestones have a minor impact although they lay important groundwork for better access to information in the coming years.

The overall commitment is relevant to OGP values of access to information and technology and innovation for transparency and accountability. Three of the four milestones (2.2, 2.3, and 2.4) should improve opportunities for relevant stakeholders to get information and to work toward increased use of PSI, while one of them (2.2) also uses technological innovation in conjunction with access to more standardised information to advance transparency.⁸ The specificity of commitment activities varies significantly, which contributed to an overall coding of medium specificity (e.g. Milestone 2.3 that focuses on an evaluation of the reuse of data and public documents by the Agency for Public Management is very specific, while Milestone 2.1 could not be measured, see details below).

Milestone 2.1 “Systematic reports of agencies work on publishing data and public documents” is unclear in terms of its aims and potential impact. Its objectives remain unclear despite interviews with government officials.⁹ Milestone 2.2 focuses on the introduction of the DCAT Application profile for data portals, which is a specification based on the Data Catalogue vocabulary (DCAT) for describing public sector data sets in Europe.¹⁰ DCAT-AP gives information about data sources (i.e. metadata), which describes the format of the data source, who is responsible for publishing it and under what conditions data may be used. It enables portal searches for datasets and makes public sector data more searchable across borders and sectors. This new service should play an important role toward realising the objectives of the pan-European Data Portal.¹¹

Milestone 2.3. “Evaluation of the re-use of data and public documents by the Agency for Public Management” assesses the implementation of the government mandate on making data available for re-use by national and local authorities.¹² Milestone 2.4. focuses on the work of the National Archives to support agencies involved in publishing data and public documents. In June 2016, the government assigned the National Archives to be the expert agency for open data. The Archives will be in charge of providing support to state authorities in their efforts to open up public sector information (PSI). In particular, the National Archives is mandated to:¹³

- collect and publish lists about available PSI from government authorities;¹⁴
- encourage state authorities to publish open data according to common guidelines;
- manage and develop the national open data portal, opnadata.se;
- develop the web tutorial, vidareutnyttjande.se; and
- give support to individuals that want to find public data, including providing them with contacts to relevant authorities.

This government assignment has to be completed by 31 December 2018. A final report is due 31 January 2019 and an interim report was expected to be submitted to the Government by 1 September 2017.¹⁵

Completion

The commitment is on schedule according to the start and end dates indicated in the Swedish action plan.¹⁶ The most important of the milestones regards the government assignment to the National Archives to facilitate agencies’ publication of PSI (Milestone 2.4). The assignment is expected to be completed 31 December 2018.¹⁷ The National Archives has started its government assignment by studying the situation and by consulting both government and external stakeholders about how to best facilitate the re-use of PSI (Milestone 2.4). The National Archives has held many discussions, both face-to-face and online, organised forums for public agencies, and presented best practices. Progress on the assignment has been somewhat slow but

justified given the need to find common ground and a consensus among government agencies about the right way forward.¹⁸

In particular, the National Archives held an opening seminar on 3 May 2017, where they presented their objectives and ongoing work. The seminar was an open discussion with stakeholders. About 80 representatives of public authorities and companies participated.¹⁹ In June 2017, the National Archives also published a feasibility study on the collection and publication of PSI lists.²⁰ The study describes what type of PSI initiatives are implemented at national and European levels and provides suggestions on how the National Archives could collect and publish PSI lists. Based on the findings of the study, the National Archives is now preparing guidance on how to create and publish PSI lists according to the metadata format DCAT-AP, with the aim to support coordinated development and publishing of lists in Sweden. During the guidance preparation, the National Archives has also been consulting different types of stakeholders through surveys between March–June 2017 and online consultations in June–August 2017.²¹ The user-surveys collected opinions on the re-use of PSI from public authorities,²² and from users interested in using the datasets to create innovative services or applications.²³ The consultations during the summer of 2017 gathered comments from the general public,²⁴ who could provide feedback directly on the PSI re-use blog (vidareutnyttjande.se) or by email.²⁵

In order to increase the availability of open source data and, in particular to promote the use of DCAT-AP (Milestone 2.2), Sweden's innovation agency, Vinnova, held a call for open data sources in 2015, where organisations could also apply for grants to implement projects on DCAT-AP.²⁶ The budget for this call was SEK 4 million and Vinnova funded 45 projects with grants ranging between SEK 13,470–1,450,000 (around USD 1,700–180,000). One of the biggest budgetary projects was the “DCAT-AP Toolkit” (SEK 600,000/USD 74,000), carried out between December 2015–August 2016 by the company MetaSolutions. The project aimed at making organisations' development efforts more efficient and allowing them to quickly start publishing metadata according to the DCAT-AP on the Swedish open data portal (opnadata.se).²⁷ MetaSolutions also developed an “Open Data Sandbox” with DCAT-AP validation, testing, and an online check, which provides a valuable tool for monitoring the fulfilment of the EU's PSI Directive²⁸ in Sweden.²⁹

The evaluation of the re-use of data and public documents by the Agency for Public Management (Milestone 2.3) is still ongoing. The first report was published on 3 October 2015,³⁰ while the final report is due on 19 January 2018. Meanwhile, in May 2017, the Ministry of Finance also commissioned the Agency for Public Management to carry out an evaluation of the barriers to the use of open data by government agencies. The evaluation, expected in March 2018, will focus on published open data, and analyse the practical obstacles to its re-use in terms of availability, quality, usability, or interoperability.³¹

Early Results

Part of the assignment of the National Archives (Milestone 2.4) is to manage and develop the national open data portal (opnadata.se).³² The goal is that the portal should be simple to use, have clear licenses and conditions, support data's re-usability, and allow sharing of resources and solutions. The portal has increased the number of datasets and the variety of formats since its launch: from 100 datasets in October 2013 to 494 in July 2017.³³ However, only 19 public and private organisations or communities have posted dataset links on the portal. These public and private groups include the City of Gothenburg, the event Hack4Heritage, several municipalities, and the Trafiklab community.³⁴ The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has posted the most dataset links (256 datasets); the Swedish Tax Agency

follows with 33 datasets. However, many groups have posted only a handful of links.³⁵ The portal has 330 unique visitors per month.³⁶ This is low compared to other European data portals, which have more than a hundred times the visitors each month.³⁷

Vinnova is actively promoting the DCAT-AP specification by funding projects, and holding forum sessions and workshops on this topic (Milestone 2.2).³⁸ However, to date, the use of this specification in Sweden is limited: only about 2% of public organisations in Sweden have a DCAT-AP webpage.³⁹ The barrier to using the DCAT-AP is quite high for public authorities since they need to possess, or contract for, the technical skills necessary for converting data into a format that can be harvested according to DCAT-AP and added to the portal.⁴⁰

Next Steps

This is a wide-reaching commitment that should be pursued both in the framework of this action plan and in the next, given that many of the current measures will bear fruit only in the long term. Availability of open data is already on the political agenda but even more incentives are needed.⁴¹ The IRM researcher concurs with the interviewed open data experts, who recommend the government:

- **Release more data:** Given that a critical mass of data is a prerequisite for the use of data, the government should release more open data related to important aspects of government,⁴² including:
 - the national and local budgets,⁴³
 - information from government offices and ministries.⁴⁴ These government bodies have been heavily criticised in the past, both by the Committee on the Constitution⁴⁵ in the Swedish Parliament and by journalists, for offering limited access to information,⁴⁶
 - accounts payable (in Swedish: “leverantörsreskontra”). One of the interviewed experts recommends a standardised way of publishing information about accounts payable as open data (see footnote) to facilitate comparison of public sector purchasing patterns and trends.⁴⁷
- **Develop a digital platform for societal challenges:**⁴⁸ Public actors, including governmental agencies, could post concrete challenges and problems, which can be solved by using open data. This platform should enable external stakeholders (companies, organisations, and individuals) to suggest solutions and experiment with the data.⁴⁹
- **Give clear, open data mandates to public agencies:** Assign additional agencies more tasks to directly create open data,⁵⁰ provide them with an independent development budget and an organisational structure for open data, as well as the motivation and skills for promoting open data within the organisation.⁵¹
- **Set goals and monitor the use of open data:**
 - set the objective to become one of the top five countries in the Global Open Data Index (Sweden is presently ranked as 21st),⁵²
 - adopt the Open Data Charter⁵³ and make sure that Swedish authorities implement its principles,⁵⁴
 - set specific goals regarding the use of open data,⁵⁵ and
 - monitor the use of open data and the effects of such use, with an emphasis on qualitative rather than quantitative performance indicators.⁵⁶

Monitoring the use and effects of open data is particularly important, considering that this type of assessment is lacking across Europe,⁵⁷ and is a field where Sweden could lead the way.⁵⁸ In terms of relevant indicators, one of the interviewed experts emphasises that authorities should improve descriptions of data.⁵⁹

The IRM researcher also concurs with the below recommendations to the government of Sweden derived from a recent report by Capgemini Consulting⁶⁰ and from the European Data Portal:⁶¹

- Develop an action plan for opening up data,
- Enhance the regulatory framework in order to allow data sharing without compromising individuals' integrity,
- Allow users to provide feedback, such as commenting on datasets and providing information about what data they want to see on the oppnadata.se portal.⁶²

¹ "OpenData Barometer," (World Wide Web Foundation, 2016),

http://opendatabarometer.org/?_year=2016&indicator=ODB.

² 33% of datasets are fully open, as defined by the Open Definition by the Open Knowledge Foundation.

³ "Global Open Data Index – Place overview" (Open Knowledge Network, 2016/2017),

<https://index.okfn.org/place/?filter-table=swed>.

⁴ Ingrid Nordmark et al., "We demand the government to focus on open data" (Computer Sweden, 6 Sept. 2016), <https://computersweden.idg.se/2.2683/1.664888/regeringen-oppna-data>.

⁵ 381 of 616 public organisations (~ 62%) are categorised as "none," 220 as "only PSI page," 12 as "DCAT-AP & PSI page," and 3 as "DCAT-AP." The status report is available on opendata.se portal, accessed 3 Aug 2017, <https://sandbox.oppnadata.se/#view=visualization> (registration required).

⁶ Björn Hagström (Hagström Consulting AB), interview with the IRM researcher, 23 Aug. 2017.

⁷ For more information, please see the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report, Milestone 2.2 "Systematic reports of agencies' work on re-using public information," Milestone 2.3 "Participation in the European Commission's work on DCAT-AP," Milestone 2.4 "Continued actions to facilitate agencies' work on re-using public administration documents," and Milestone 2.5 "An evaluation of the reuse of public administration documents by the Swedish Agency for Public Management." (Washington DC: OGP, 2015), https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Sweden_Eng_14-15_0.pdf.

⁸ Please note that Milestone 1.3 is not related to any OGP Value.

⁹ Magnus Enzell (Ministry of Finance), interview with IRM researcher, 3 Aug. 2017. Also see interview references in the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report.

¹⁰ "DCAT Application Profile for Data Portals in Europe – Final," (European Commission, 2014),

https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/asset/dcat_application_profile/asset_release/dcat-application-profile-data-portals-europe-final.

¹¹ For more information, please see the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report.

¹² "Request to carry out a joint follow-up of government and municipal authorities' efforts to make documents available for re-use" Diary Number: S2014 / 3536 / (Government Offices, 2 Apr. 2015), www.regeringen.se/regeringsuppdrag/2014/04/s20143536sfo/.

¹³ The government assignment started on 16 June 2016. "Assignment to the National Archives to promote government agencies' efforts to make data available for reuse" (Government Offices, 1 Jul. 2016), <http://www.regeringen.se/regeringsuppdrag/2016/07/uppdrag-till-riksarkivet-att-framja-statliga-myndigheters-arbete-med-att-tillgangliggora-data-for-vidareutnyttjande/>.

¹⁴ This must be done in accordance with the Law (2010:566) on the re-use of public administration documents. Link to the law in Swedish: "Lag om vidareutnyttjande av handlingar från den offentliga förvaltningen Svensk författningssamling" (2010:566): https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2010566-om-vidareutnyttjande-av-handlingar_sfs-2010-566.

¹⁵ "Assignment to the National Archives," 1 Jul. 2016.

¹⁶ Please note that the IRM researcher could not assert whether Milestone 2.1 is on schedule since it was vaguely

formulated. However, its end date is not until 2019, as indicated in the action plan.

¹⁷ A final report is due on 31 January 2019 and an interim report shall be submitted to the government by 1 September 2017. "Assignment to the National Archives," 1 Jul. 2016.

¹⁸ Angela Yong, interview with the IRM researcher, 30 Aug. 2017.

¹⁹ In addition to information from the National Archives, presentations were made by the Ministry of Finance, the European Data Portal/Capgemini, and from Vinnova. "The national data portal for open data and PSI" (National Archives, 11 May 2017), <http://www.vidareutnyttjande.se/>.

²⁰ "The national data portal for open data and PSI" (National Archives, Jun. 2017),

http://www.vidareutnyttjande.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Riksarkivets_forstudie_om_PSI.pdf.

²¹ "The national data portal for open data and PSI" (National Archives, 2016),

http://www.vidareutnyttjande.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Anv%C3%A4ndarbehov_rapport.pdf.

²² The survey targeted public authorities that aim to list and publish data as open data, and display the data on the open data portal. It was sent to over 225 public authorities; 107 replied.

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- ²³ The second survey was distributed to the general public on the website [vidareutnyttjande.se](http://www.vidareutnyttjande.se), social media, and different networks; 51 individuals replied.
- ²⁴ The deadline for the consultation was set as 17 Jul. 2017.
- ²⁵ "The national data portal for open data and PSI" (National Archives, 28 Jun. 2017), <http://www.vidareutnyttjande.se/>.
- ²⁶ The end date of projects on DCAT-AP was set as 31 August 2016.
- ²⁷ The Metasolutions project was implemented between 2015–2016. "Open data sources" (Vinnova, accessed _____), <http://www2.vinnova.se/sv/misc/Utlysningar/Effekta/Oppna-datakallor/> (site discontinued).
- ²⁸ The goal of the PSI Directive is to make as much information available for reuse as possible.
- ²⁹ "Vinnova -- Sweden's innovation agency" (Vinnova, accessed 23 Jul. 2018), <https://entryscale.com/project/vinnova/>.
- ³⁰ The 2015 report described the reuse of PSI at the time of writing, and how authorities perceive and work on this issue. The report, based on a survey of 310 state and municipal authorities, showed that about half of them believe that they have information that may be of interest for reuse. At the same time, the survey revealed that the authorities have not come very far in making this information available. Only a few authorities had concrete plans to facilitate the reuse of information, and about 20% were not aware of the actual significance of the current law on the reuse of PSI. The report concludes that many public authorities were not making enough progress to reach the ultimate goal of the PSI Directive, which is to make as much information available for reuse as possible. The final report is due on 19 January 2018. "Authorities work with the reuse of information. The current picture," (Agency for Public Management, Sept. 2015), For more information, please see the IRM end of term report (2016).
- ³¹ "Evaluation of the barriers to the use of open data from government agencies" (Agency for Public Management, 2017), <http://www.statskontoret.se/var-verksamhet/utredningar-utvarderingar-och-uppfoljningar/utvardering-av-hinder-for-anvandande-av-oppna-data-fran-statliga-myndigheter/>.
- ³² The portal serves as a directory, i.e. it provides links to data sources, it is not a data depot.
- ³³ These figures were collected on 17 July 2017 on the opnadata.se portal. The IRM researcher verified the number of available data sets during the data collection for the first and second IRM reports. The second IRM report states that there were 280 data sets available in different formats (e.g. XLS, HTML, Shape) at the time of writing.
- ³⁴ Trafiklab has been developed in cooperation between Samtrafiken (a service development company in the public transport industry owned by 37 different carriers), Stockholm Transport, and Victoria ICT (a research initiative by the local industry in West Sweden).
- ³⁵ "The national data portal for open data and PSI" (National Archives, accessed 23 Jul. 2018), <https://opnadata.se/>.
- ³⁶ "Sweden – Overview" (European Data Portal 13 Sept. 2016), https://www.europeandataportal.eu/sites/default/files/country-factsheet_sweden.pdf.
- ³⁷ *Id.*
- ³⁸ "Forum open data # 10" was scheduled for 23 September 2016. (Vinnova, accessed 23 Jul. 2018), <https://www.vinnova.se/kalenderhandelser/2016/09/forum-oppna-data-10/>.
- ³⁹ Twelve are categorised as "DCAT-AP & PSI page" and 3 as "DCAT-AP." In total, 15 of 616 public organisations (~ 2%) have DCAT-AP pages. Status reports are available on opnadata.se portal. (National Archives, accessed 3 Aug. 2017), <https://sandbox.opnadata.se/#view=visualization>.
- ⁴⁰ Hagström, interview.
- ⁴¹ *Id.*
- ⁴² *Id.*
- ⁴³ Yong, interview; Hagström, interview; Serdar Temiz (Royal Institute of Technology (KTH)), interview with the IRM researcher, 25 Aug. 2017.
- ⁴⁴ Yong, interview; Hagström, interview.
- ⁴⁵ Swedish: "Konstitutionsutskottet, KU."
- ⁴⁶ "A sloping plan for Swedish transparency" (*Dagens Nyheter*, 26 Nov. 2012); <http://www.dn.se/nyheter/sverige/ett-sluttande-plan-for-svensk-oppnhet>; "KU: UD violates the law" (*Svenska Dagbladet*, 2013), <https://www.svd.se/ku-ud-bryter-mot-lagen>; "Sauditystnad och sekretesskrigande" (Sveriges Radio, 29 Oct. 2016), <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/avsnitt/812734?programid=2795>; Karin Östman and Leo Lagercrantz, "The KU has strong criticism of the UD and Carl Bildt" (*Aftonbladet*, 30 Jan. 2013), <http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article16154316.ab>.
- ⁴⁷ The specifications for 'accounts payable' and the data published using it are open and free to use, aimed primarily at the public sector. They are available at: <https://sambruk.github.io/Open-Accounts-Payable/>. Hagström, interview.
- ⁴⁸ This platform could also be part of the existing portal opnadata.se.
- ⁴⁹ "Hack for Sweden. Mid-term report to the Ministry of Finance. Version 2.0. An ecosystem for data driven innovation." (SMHI, 2017).
- ⁵⁰ Björn Hagström, interview.

⁵¹ "Hack for Sweden," SMHI.

⁵² "Global Open Data Index – Sweden" (Open Knowledge Network, 2016/2017), <https://index.okfn.org/place/se/>; Temiz, interview.

⁵³ The International Open Data Charter contains six principles: 1. Open by Default; 2. Timely and Comprehensive; 3. Accessible and Useable; 4. Comparable and Interoperable; 5. For Improved Governance and Citizen Engagement; and 6. For Inclusive Development and Innovation. "Principles," (Open Data Charter, accessed 27 Jul. 2018), <https://opendatacharter.net/>.

⁵⁴ Opinion of Kristofer Sjöholm (Sweco) in Anders Frick, "Sweden Climbs the Global Open Data Index (The Internet Foundation, 15 Jun. 2017), <https://www.iis.se/blogg/oppna-data/sverige-klattrar-i-global-open-data-index/>.

⁵⁵ Hagström, interview.

⁵⁶ Hagström, interview.

⁵⁷ Temiz, interview.

⁵⁸ Hagström, interview.

⁵⁹ Hagström, interview.

⁶⁰ Wendy Carrara, Margriet Nieuwenhuis and Heleen Vollers, "Open Data Maturity in Europe 2016" (European Commission – European Data Portal, 2016), https://www.europeandataportal.eu/sites/default/files/edp_landscaping_insight_report_n2_2016.pdf; Sweden among the worst in Europe to make available open data" (Mynewsdesk, 30 Nov. 2016), <http://www.mynewsdesk.com/se/Capgemini/pressreleases/sverige-bland-de-saemsta-i-europa-paa-att-tillqaengliggoera-oeppna-data-1673773>.

⁶¹ "Sweden – Overview," European Data Portal.

⁶² The work on making oppnadata.se more interactive for users is already under consideration by the National Archives. "Development plan of the sites that the National Archives administer and further develop within the framework of the Government assignment to promote the authorities' work on the re-use of PSI" (National Archives, 2016), <http://www.vidareutnyttjande.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Utvecklingsplan-%C3%B6ver-webbplatserna.pdf>.

3. Improved opportunities for dialogue and transparency in aid management and implementation

Commitment Text:

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

Main activities:

- *Promote **independence and autonomy** by working towards a favourable environment for civil society organisations, safeguarding their autonomy to carry out their own activities and promoting their role as collective voices and opinion makers. [Milestone 3.1: Promote the role of civil society organisations as collective voices and opinion makers, in Sweden and nationally.]*
- *Maintain a good **dialogue** by informing and consulting civil society at an early stage on upcoming strategies, key decisions or changes in Swedish development cooperation. [Milestone 3.4: Consult civil society ahead of overarching and key decisions on Swedish aid policy; Milestone 3.3: Create space for civil society to hold a dialogue and develop information exchange on various policy issues.]*
- ***Promote quality** in development cooperation by conducting continual evaluation and research on development cooperation, spread knowledge and work for increased aid and development efficiency and work for increased aid and development. [No corresponding milestone].*
- *Promote a **long-term approach** and sustainability in development cooperation by ensuring clear and long-term conditions for civil society organisations to pursue their activities. [Milestone 2: Work to create a favourable environment for civil society organisations to operate in Sweden and internationally.]*
- *Take action to increase **openness and transparency** in development cooperation by:*
 - *working in these areas at bilateral, EU and multilateral level,*
 - *where relevant, giving civil society organisations access to contacts, information and knowledge in the area of development cooperation,*
 - *strengthening a free and open exchange of views on development cooperation*
 - *combating corruption within the framework of handling Swedish aid funds and setting requirements for and supporting cooperation partners' effort to combat corruption*
 - *promoting openness in relationships and the dialogue between the Government and civil society organisations*
- *Apply a **diversity principle** by promoting a variety of civil society organisations and showing new civil society actors openness and development cooperation methods. [No corresponding milestone.]*
- *Further develop **procedures for managing reports of suspected corruption and other complaints** that impact Swedish aid funds. [No corresponding milestone.]*

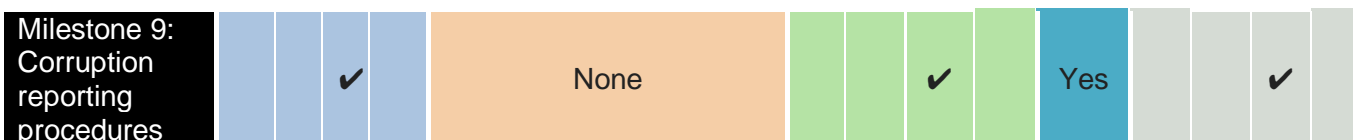
Responsible institution: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Supporting institutions: The Government Offices, including missions abroad and relevant authorities that have an overarching responsibility for state-financed Swedish development cooperation.

Start date: 2015

End date: None for most milestones

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	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
3. Overall		✓			✓	✓					✓		Yes		✓		
Milestone 1: Civil society dialogue and exchange		✓				✓						✓	Yes				✓
Milestone 2: Consult civil society on aid policy			✓			✓						✓	Yes				✓
Milestone 3: Diversity principle		✓				✓						✓	Yes	✓			
Milestone 4: Give civil society access to information		✓			✓							✓	Yes		✓		
Milestone 5: Evaluations and research		✓			✓							✓	Yes				✓
Milestone 6: Knowledge building to increase efficiency		✓			None				✓				Yes		✓		
Milestone 7: Improve efficiency and effectiveness		✓			None							✓	Yes		✓		
Milestone 8: Supporting cooperation partners' anti-corruption efforts		✓			None							✓	Yes		✓		



Context and Objectives

Sweden is a committed international donor with an aid budget of SEK 46.1 billion (USD 5.6 billion) in 2017.¹ The aid-effectiveness agenda referenced in the action plan requires strong governance, long-term commitment, and a role for internationally operating CSOs. This commitment includes a suite of activities to improve the quality of development aid coming from Sweden and to broaden opportunities for dialogue with CSOs. The latter aim is particularly important considering that recently, Swedish CSOs have emphasised they are not sufficiently involved in the development of aid policy.²

Many of the actions and milestones derive from the 2015 “Joint Commitments” between Swedish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which were partially the subject of earlier action plans. They follow six principles: (1) autonomy and independence, (2) dialogue, (3) quality, (4) sustainability, (5) openness and transparency, and (6) diversity. Because most of the activities and milestones promote strong, diverse dialogue and an operating role for CSOs in development aid, they are relevant primarily to the OGP value of civic participation. (However, the activity on effective research does not have a clear public-facing element as written.) Despite this, many of the actions, however laudable for overarching goals (e.g. “Work to create a favorable environment for civil society”), largely lack means for verification.

The key element is the “Joint Commitments between Swedish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,”³ which spans six milestones in this commitment (3.1 to 3.6).⁴ The Joint Commitments aim to enhance dialogue between the government and CSOs and define the role of CSOs in Swedish development aid. The government decided to launch the Joint Commitments to improve relations with CSOs and to emphasise the important role they play in development. The government and civil society jointly negotiated the Joint Commitments document through a series of face-to-face and written consultations that involved numerous CSOs. The document, adopted by the government in 2015, lays out six core principles of civil society-government cooperation. The milestones in this commitment fall under four of these principles: Milestones 3.1 and 3.2 are in line with the principle of dialogue, Milestone 3.3 with the principle of diversity, Milestone 3.4 with the principle of openness and transparency, and Milestones 3.5 and 3.6 with the principle of quality. Most of the Joint Commitment milestones (3.1–3.6) could have moderate to transformative impact. However, as written, the scope of most milestones under this commitment remains unclear (low specificity) and would benefit from a clearer formulation to measure progress.

The other milestones focus on increased aid development efficiency and effectiveness (Milestone 3.7) and on anti-corruption measures (Milestones 3.8 and 3.9).⁵ Milestone 3.7 concerns meeting participation and strategy revision (see more details below) but has low specificity and low potential impact, as worded. Milestones 3.8 and 3.9 have low to medium specificity considering their formulation. However, if these milestones are fully implemented, they could have at least moderate impact for several reasons. First, the number of corruption reports to Sida is growing (see more details under “Early results” below). Second, Sweden is a major international donor with a 2017 aid budget of SEK 46.1 billion.⁶ A large share of its development

assistance is unearmarked without direct Swedish control. It would therefore be very significant if the Swedish government were to advocate for and negotiate enhanced procedures for corruption and complaints handling in multilateral and bilateral partner organisations. Third, this type of commitment is especially imperative as large multinational organisations, such as United Nations (UN) organisations, tend to have very weak mechanisms for dealing with corruption and other irregularities. This weakness was exemplified by a recent whistleblowing case involving a Swedish national, a former director of field operations at the UN human rights office in Geneva, Anders Kompass. Kompass was suspended for exposing the sexual abuse of children by UN peacekeepers in the Central African Republic.⁷ Finally, the importance of such a commitment was also stressed by civil society stakeholders interviewed by the IRM researcher for the previous IRM report.⁸

The commitment is relevant to the OGP values “Access to information” and “Civic participation.” The first three milestones are relevant to civic participation:

- 3.1 seeks to create a space for dialogue with the civil society;
- 3.2 aims at improving consultations with civil society; and
- 3.3 seeks to diversify the range of CSOs consulted by the government.

Milestones 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6 aim to increase public access to information on development aid, conduct research on development cooperation, and promote knowledge for increased development efficiency. Milestones 3.7 and 3.8 have a very broad scope and are vaguely worded, and were therefore assessed as not relevant to OGP values by the IRM researcher.

Completion

Given that only one of the milestones had an end date (2016 for Milestone 3.2), the IRM researcher could not assess whether the overall commitment is on time.

The MFA has made progress on Milestones 3.1 and 3.2 by holding regular discussions with CSOs, including dialogue about key decisions on Swedish aid policy.

In the framework of Milestone 3.1 (creating space for CSO dialogue and information exchange), the MFA has held several meetings and events with a number of CSOs. The MFA regularly invites CSOs from a list of 78 organisations, mostly professional NGOs, to discuss the implementation of the Joint Commitments. These organisations all have endorsed the Joint Commitments and a number of them (18 organisations) are formal members, which means that they are committed to active participation in this venture. The Joint Commitments also have a working group consisting of government and civil society representatives, which is monitoring the implementation of the commitments. The working group meets regularly in Stockholm.⁹ The meeting notes are accessible to the public on the dedicated government webpage.¹⁰

The largest event organised by the MFA during this evaluation period was the annual civil society forum on 13 February 2017 in Stockholm, which focused on the Joint Commitments.¹¹ Forum participants discussed strategies in the field of development cooperation and a session was dedicated to the Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid,¹² which is in line with the goal of Milestone 3.2 (consulting CSOs prior to key decisions on Swedish aid policy). High-level government officials participated, including the Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, Isabella Lövin, who answered questions from civil society. It is worth noting that the civil society representatives were given an active role in the forum. For example, representatives from three CSOs presented the Joint Commitments at the opening of the forum and led the discussion about what the Commitments had meant in practice.¹³

The IRM researcher has found limited evidence regarding progress on the implementation of Milestones 3.3 and 3.4, which focus on the principles of diversity, and openness and transparency of the Joint Commitments. The MFA has managed to involve quite a large number of CSOs in the development of the commitments. However, there are some limitations in the diversity of the CSOs involved and some variance between individual CSOs' roles in the process. The MFA seems to lack a structured approach for increasing the diversity of the involved CSOs.¹⁴

The sharing of information and contacts between the government and the CSOs (Milestone 3.4) generally works well, although in some cases this principle is unevenly applied across organisations. One interviewee reflected that the situation is inconsistent among Swedish institutions abroad (e.g. embassies), where information sharing often depends on the capacity of the individual institution and the attitude of management.¹⁵ According to MFA representatives, this variation in dialogue with CSOs is unremarkable considering different country contexts and resource availability.¹⁶

Concerning Milestone 3.5, Sida conducts evaluations on a regular basis, approximately 50 per year, all published on Sida's home page.¹⁷ Sida's Unit for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation commissions independent evaluations assessing Sida-financed development co-operation. These "strategic evaluations" are often thematic and large-scale.¹⁸ In the OGP action plan period, two strategic evaluations were published.¹⁹ Sida also carries out decentralised evaluations, which means that Sida's departments, units, as well as the foreign missions evaluate development assistance efforts within their respective area of responsibility. Finally, the Swedish National Audit Office (Riksrevisionen) and the Swedish Agency for Public Management (Statskontoret) conduct external and independent evaluations of Sida's work. According to the MFA, in recent years, Sida has strengthened its evaluation function in terms of both staff and strategy. Furthermore, in 2013, the government established the expert group for aid studies (EBA), a committee with a high degree of independence, with the role of implementing and disseminating evaluations and analyses of Swedish development cooperation. EBA has so far published 33 studies and 23 summaries of academic theses, all public. In 2018, the government foresees to increase EBA's budget to SEK 17.7 million (about USD 2.2 million).²⁰ Sweden also funds various think tanks and research institutions studying development cooperation.²¹ In addition, Sweden stresses partner countries' role in evaluation, and since 2016, Sida is chairing OECD Development Assistance Committee's (DAC's) task force on national Evaluation Capacity Building.²²

Milestone 3.6, spreading knowledge for increased aid and development efficiency, is primarily based on the quality principle of the Joint Commitments.²³ In preparations for the high-level meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) in November 2016, the Swedish Government hosted meetings with CSOs. In addition, the Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, Isabella Lövin, raised the issue of development effectiveness in Swedish media.²⁴

Milestone 3.7 is focused on increased aid development efficiency and effectiveness in accordance with the declarations made in Paris, Accra, and Busan. According to the MFA, Sweden actively participated in the high-level meeting of the GPEDC in November 2016 in Nairobi. The Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate headed a large delegation including parliamentarians, CSOs, businesses, and a youth representative. During the preparations and the meeting itself, Sweden was a vocal advocate for ambitious commitments to development efficacy, particularly regarding gender equality, the role of civil society, and the

importance of effective development cooperation in fragile states.²⁵ During the action plan period, the government has also revised the “Policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance,” which is a key document that outlines the direction of Swedish development cooperation.²⁶ The framework emphasises development effectiveness principles, such as partner country ownership and broad development partnerships. The framework operates through strategies and guidelines, which also place emphasis on development effectiveness.²⁷

Milestone 3.8 is about setting requirements for and supporting cooperation partners’ efforts to combat corruption. The MFA reports that Sida continuously supports interventions that reduce corruption in partner countries either directly (e.g. through support for anti-corruption laws, anti-corruption agencies, and NGOs working against corruption) or indirectly (e.g. through supporting judicial reforms, independent media, public financial management, ombudsman bodies, and parliamentary oversight). Sida regularly assesses the cooperation partners’ internal control systems and their ability to manage corruption risks and take action when corruption is suspected. Sida also assess its own capacity to support partners in order to strengthen identified weaknesses in these areas. Recently, Sida has adopted a broader approach to support partner countries with an increased focus on corruption as a key obstacle to development. MFA expects the implementation of this broader approach to benefit cooperation partners’ efforts to combat corruption.²⁸

Milestone 3.9 is about developing procedures for managing reports of suspected corruption and other complaints that impact Swedish aid funds. The MFA reports that Sida has continued to develop its procedures for corruption risk assessment and the management of suspected corruption.²⁹

Early Results

Consulted civil society representatives affirm that the Joint Commitments are a valuable platform for raising issues with the government.³⁰ The Joint Commitments represent a structured space for dialogue; regular meetings between the government and CSOs contribute to the sustainability and progress of the commitments. MFA representatives assert that they are satisfied with the structure for implementing the Joint Commitments that is now in place.³¹ The MFA has also sent the Swedish authorities abroad a survey on the implementation of the Joint Commitments. The survey shows variances in how authorities have implemented the commitments. Certain authorities meet with CSOs on an ad-hoc basis, often at CSO's requests. Others are now carrying out more regular consultations with civil society and routinely include CSOs in ongoing work, while some have even developed dialogue platforms. The survey also indicates that the Joint Commitment principles and guidelines have worked well to support the daily work of authorities. The role of Swedish CSOs in reaching out to local partners is considered particularly valuable. However, some respondents see a challenge in the obligation authorities feel to prioritise Swedish CSOs ahead of foreign CSOs.³²

A civil society representative interviewed by the IRM researcher emphasises that implementation has been uneven over time.³³ At the moment, the participation from the CSOs seems to have stalled.³⁴ This is due to multiple factors, including a different political atmosphere than that at the time of the development of the Joint Commitments, and the existence of other, well-functioning forms of dialogue between the government and Swedish CSOs. At the same time, the interviewed CSO representative emphasises the commitments probably have a long-term value, as their principles have validity beyond changes in government.³⁵

The MFA has made good progress on Milestones 3.1 and 3.2 by holding regular discussions with CSOs and consulting them about key decisions on Swedish aid policy. Several CSOs praised the value of the civil society forum held in February 2017.³⁶ However, some civil society representatives emphasised that the Joint Commitments are relatively unknown among some CSOs, resulting in many participants unprepared to discuss commitment implementation.³⁷ There is little evidence of progress on Milestones 3.3 and 3.4 (applying the diversity principle and CSO access to information). The IRM researcher concludes that in order to have an objective assessment of these milestones, a more in-depth assessment of the Joint Commitments would need to be conducted by a third party.

Concerning Milestone 3.5, focused on evaluations and research, it goes beyond the scope of the IRM report to assess the effects of all the evaluations commissioned by Sida and EBA in the OGP action plan period. Nevertheless, the IRM researcher notes that several EBA evaluations are cited in articles and opinion pieces by major Swedish newspapers, such as *Dagens Nyheter*, *Svenska Dagbladet*, and *Aftonbladet*, which indicates that they prompt public debate about issues raised in the evaluations.³⁸

Regarding Milestone 3.6, spreading knowledge for increased aid and development efficiency, the MFA has not analysed the milestone activities³⁹ and the IRM researcher has been unable to find any relevant external assessments or reports.

Regarding increased aid development efficiency and effectiveness (Milestone 3.7) and the GPEDC meeting in Nairobi, the MFA believes that documents from the meeting largely reflect Sweden's high ambitions for global development efficacy. However, the MFA has not analysed specific effects of Sweden's participation⁴⁰ and the IRM researcher has been unable to find any relevant external assessments or reports.

As regards to the management of corruption reporting (Milestone 3.9), the number of corruption reports to Sida is growing. In 2016, Sida received 225 notifications of corruption or irregularities, and claimed recovery in 73 cases for a total amount of SEK 70.2 million (USD 8.6 million), the highest amount since these types of statistics began to be compiled.⁴¹ According to a Sida report, this significant increase, specifically last year, is due to a wider awareness of what and how to report, both internally and among Sida's partners. Sida's report concludes that targeted initiatives are important in order to establish and keep open the information paths about irregularities. As of 2017, Sida is planning to further strengthen cooperation between Sida and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to both improve information exchange and cooperation on corruption issues and to establish Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with multilateral organisations on the exchange of information. Sida has previously signed an MoU with investigative units of the World Bank and the EU.⁴² Moreover, Sida has published 150 finalised corruption cases on Open Aid in 2016 and recently decided to improve institutional learning from corruption cases through the creation of a lessons-learned portfolio and staff training during 2017 and 2018.⁴³

Next Steps

The IRM researcher concurs with the following recommendations regarding the Joint Commitments (JC) that consulted civil society representatives put forward:

- **Increase the diversity of participants:** The MFA should adopt a structured approach for involving different types of government and civil society organisations, especially smaller CSOs, in the implementation of the JC;⁴⁴
- **Improve access to aid information:** Sida should improve access to aid information (i) on the level of country, regional and thematic portfolios, and (ii)

about the management of aid by Swedish authorities abroad in order to make it easier for CSOs to apply for funding and form project proposals. In particular, the civil society representatives recommended Sida:

- increase the involvement of civil society in the formulation of portfolios,⁴⁵
- provide clearer guidelines regarding the availability of portfolio funding per topic,⁴⁶
- consider introducing open calls for proposals,⁴⁷ and
- increase the amount and detail of forward-looking information on openaid.se;⁴⁸
- **Facilitate access to contacts:** Improve information on who does what in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in civil society organisations working on aid development in order to facilitate dialogue and cooperation;⁴⁹
- **Evaluate progress on the JC:** The MFA should commission an independent evaluation of the implementation of JC by the MFA and Sweden's authorities based abroad.⁵⁰ (The MFA is already planning an evaluation of the JC in 2018, which will be shaped by the involvement of the JC working group);⁵¹
- **Enhance transparency of the work on the JC:** The MFA should increase the clarity and transparency about the work on the JC, in particular about the process of endorsement of the JC by CSOs and about the tasks of the JC working group;⁵²
- **Raise awareness about the JC:** Specific suggestions from the CSOs include:
 - Creating an online calendar listing different forums available for CSO participation,
 - Developing an electronic "stamp." CSOs who endorse the JC could put the stamp on their website with a link to the CSO website, thus facilitating awareness-raising about the JC; and
- **Improve the monitoring of progress on Policy for Global Development (PGU) and Agenda 2030:**
 - The government should develop and give public access to clear and measurable indicators that would allow assessing both the actions taken at the policy level and the actual results of the work on PGU and Agenda 2030 in Sweden, also through the Sida-managed openaid.se portal,⁵³ and
 - All ministries should develop concrete and measurable action plans for the implementation of PGU and Agenda 2030, and make them publicly accessible in order to enable their monitoring.⁵⁴

If implemented, Sweden's commitments addressing corruption and other irregularities in aid (Milestones 3.8 and 3.9) could have a notable impact, particularly since Sweden presently can influence this topic as a member of the UN Security Council for the 2017–2018 term.⁵⁵ These are two specific recommendations by the IRM researcher based on a literature review and a consultation with CSOs:

- **Help advance the independence of the UN's Internal Audit and Ethics Office.** This was recommended by the UN investigation of the whistleblowing case about sexual abuse of children by UN peacekeepers. This recommendation is also supported in a statement by the Minister for Foreign affairs, Margot Wallström, who suggested that the entire UN system should enhance its efforts against exploitation in the field, and stressed the need to ensure that perpetrators are punished;⁵⁶ and
- **Involve civil society in discussions with international donor organisations.** The civil society stakeholders interviewed for the previous IRM report recommended the MFA involve CSOs when deciding priorities on

transparency and anti-corruption work with other donor organisations.⁵⁷ The special agreements on the exchange of information in the form of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with some multilateral organisations, which Sida is planning to implement, could be a good opportunity of involving CSOs (see details above in “Early results”).

¹ Sweden’s development aid budget amounts to 0.99% of its gross national income (GNI).

“Development aid budget” (Sida, 4 Jan. 2017), <http://www.sida.se/English/About-us/Budget/>.

² See Sweden’s second action plan: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/sweden-second-action-plan-2014-16>.

³ The adopted commitments are available (in Swedish) at:

<http://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/756e79c7e6d14aca966ab95c85d8bc50/150701-qemensamma-ataganden.pdf>.

⁴ It is also worth noting that the Joint Commitments were part of a milestone already in the previous OGP action plan. See Milestone 4.3, “A negotiated CSO compact, including regular follow-up on implementation” in Sweden’s second action plan.

⁵ Please note that Sweden has already made a commitment similar to Milestone 3.9 in the previous action plan (see Milestone “4.6 Establish procedures for corruption and complaints handling”). However, at the time, the IRM researcher could not establish what that milestone aimed to achieve despite interviews with the relevant MFA officials. The interviewees stated that the MFA and Sida continuously monitor Swedish aid funds through organisational assessments of the multilateral development organisations funded by Sweden or through similar means. When the MFA or Sida find gaps in the anti-corruption and complaints-handling procedures of multilateral development organisations, a dialogue with the relevant organisation is initiated to address the problem. See the second IRM report: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/sweden-2014-2015-irm-progress-report>.

⁶ Sweden’s development aid budget amounts to 0.99% of its gross national income (GNI).

“Development aid budget” (Sida, 4 Jan. 2017), <http://www.sida.se/English/About-us/Budget/>.

⁷ Sandra Laville, “Child sex abuse whistleblower resigns from UN,” (*The Guardian*, 7 Jun. 2016), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/07/child-sex-abuse-whistleblower-resigns-from-un>.

⁸ See the second IRM report.

⁹ In 2017, meetings took place in February, March and a working meeting was planned in June 2017.

¹⁰ The government webpage summarising the process and containing links to relevant documents: <http://www.regeringen.se/artiklar/2017/05/Regeringens-och-svenska-civilsamhallesorganisationers-gemensamma-ataganden-for-starkt-dialog-och-samverkan-inom-utvecklingssamarbetet/>.

¹¹ The programme of the civil society forum that took place on 13 February 2017:

<http://www.regeringen.se/4908a5/contentassets/7890481bc47748cb88c718be3189fe75/civilsamhallet-program-for-det-arliga-civilsamhallesforumet-den-13-februari-2017.pdf>.

¹² “Policyramverk för svenskt utvecklingssamarbete och humanitärt bistånd” ID-nummer: Skr.

2016/17:60 (Government Offices, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 14 Dec. 2016),

<http://www.regeringen.se/rattsdokument/skrivelse/2016/12/skr-20161760/>.

¹³ <http://www.forumsvd.org/Media-Opinion/Nyheter/2017/Forum-Syd-omvald-i-arbetsgrupp-for-starkt-civilsamhalle/>

¹⁴ Edvard Agrell (Secretary General of the Christian Democratic International Center), interview with the IRM researcher, 8 Sept. 2017.

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ Marina Berg (MFA) and Johanna Teague (MFA), interview with the IRM researcher, 25 Sept. 2017.

¹⁷ Frank Svensson (MFA), email to the IRM researcher, 13 Oct. 2017.

¹⁸ Sida’s evaluation web page: <http://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/evaluations1/>.

¹⁹ The two evaluations were published in August 2016: “Evaluation of the extent to which Sida’s contribution management system is fit for purpose” and “Evaluation of Sida’s Use of Guarantees for Market Development and Poverty Reduction.” (<http://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/evaluations1/Recent-evaluations/>.)

²⁰ Svensson, email.

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ The government submitted the Communication about the Policy framework to the Riksdag on 14 December 2016. Link to the “Policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance” Ref. ID 2016/17:60: <http://www.government.se/legal-documents/2017/05/policy-framework-for-swedish-development-cooperation-and-humanitarian-assistance/>.

²⁷ Svensson, email.

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ *Id.*

³⁰ The IRM researcher held the stakeholder consultation about Sweden's OGP Action Plan 2016-18 on 22 August 2017, in Stockholm.

³¹ Berg, interview; Teague, interview.

³² The aim of the survey was to get feedback on how Swedish authorities abroad have progressed on the commitments, as well as to collect suggestions about how the implementation of the Joint Commitments could be strengthened. This was an internal survey but the MFA kindly shared a summary of the questions and answers from the MFA's units and from over 40 foreign authorities that responded to the IRM researcher.

³³ Agrell, interview.

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ "Minnesanteckningar, arbetsgruppen för Gemensamma Åtaganden, GÅ" (16 Mar. 2017), http://www.regeringen.se/49b881/contentassets/5c5ec6059051492099de6372662fdc05/qemensamma-20170316_minnesanteckningar-arbetsgrupp-for-qa.pdf.

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ David Nilsson and Sverker Sörlin, "Debate: Global development research is not an aid issue" (*Dagens Nyheter*, 5 Jul. 2017), <https://www.dn.se/ekonomi/global-utveckling/debatt-forskning-for-global-utveckling-ar-inte-en-bistandsgrej/>.

³⁹ Svensson, email.

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ Sida has received 225 notifications of corruption or irregularities, which is the highest figure since the statistics began to be compiled in 2007. During the same year, Sida has claimed recovery in 73 cases for a total amount of SEK 70.2 million (USD 8.6 million), the highest amount since 2014 when recovery statistics began to be compiled. "Sida's handling of corruption suspicions" *2016 annual report* (Sida, 2017), <http://www.sida.se/contentassets/523bc20df4a1481282f8fe96ed49bf2b/eb2f8905-b081-437d-a0b3-9262c20ef457.pdf>.

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ Svensson, email.

⁴⁴ Stakeholder consultation, 22 Aug. 2017, Stockholm.

⁴⁵ *Id.*

⁴⁶ *Id.* Agrell, interview.

⁴⁷ Agrell, interview.

⁴⁸ Stakeholder consultation, 22 Aug. 2017, Stockholm.

⁴⁹ Meeting notes, workshop during the annual civil society forum in February 2017: <http://www.regeringen.se/49b881/contentassets/5c5ec6059051492099de6372662fdc05/qemensamma-cso-forum-13-februari-2017---minnesanteckningar-fran-gruppovningar.pdf>. The need to map Swedish CSOs that receive Swedish aid development funding was also emphasised by respondents to the MFA survey distributed among Swedish authorities abroad (see note 34).

⁵⁰ Stakeholder consultation, 22 Aug. 2017, Stockholm.

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² Meeting notes, annual civil society forum, Feb. 2017.

⁵³ Stakeholder consultation, 22 Aug. 2017, Stockholm.

⁵⁴ *Id.* "CONCORD Sweden's recommendations for a constructive action plan for Agenda 2030 where Sweden is put into a global context" ("CONCORD Sveriges rekommendationer för en konstruktiv handlingsplan för Agenda 2030 där Sverige sätts i en global kontext") (CONCORD Sweden, 18 Apr. 2017), <http://www.concord.se/wp-content/uploads/cs-rekommendationer-for-en-handlingsplan-for-agenda-2030.pdf>.

⁵⁵ On 28 June 2016, Sweden was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2017–2018 term. In 2017, Sweden took its seat on the Security Council with the five permanent members – China, France, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States – and the nine other non-permanent members. "Sweden in the UN Security Council" (Government Offices, accessed 25 Jul. 2018), <http://www.government.se/government-policy/sweden-in-the-un-security-council/>.

⁵⁶ "Statement by Foreign Minister Margot Wallström on the report of the Independent Investigation Panel on suspected abuse in the Central African republic" (Government Offices, 19 Dec. 2015), <http://www.regeringen.se/uttalanden/2015/12/uttalande-av-utrikesminister-margot-wallstrom-med-anledning-av-den-oberoende-undersokningspanelens-rapport-om-missforhallanden-i-car/>.

⁵⁷ See the second IRM report.

4. Developing a new format for dialogue with CSOs

Commitment Text:

According to the six principles of the Government's Policy for Civil Society¹ and the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process,² a new format for dialogue and exchange of information has been developed by the Government in close cooperation with more than one hundred CSOs at national level. The CSOs are not only crucial for democracy in itself; they are often also experts in their own field. The Government wants to be able to deepen its own knowledge by meeting experts from civil society in a structured way, with clear prior information concerning the expected outcome for each counterpart.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Culture

Supporting institutions: The Government Offices, municipalities, the Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), civil society and relevant government agencies.

Start date: 2016

End date: N/A

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				On Time?	Completion			
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Tech. and Innov. for Transparency and Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Yes	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Complete
4. Overall			✓			✓					✓		Yes			✓	
4.1. Evaluation of pilot projects and a hearing with CSOs				✓		✓					✓		Yes				✓
4.2. Follow-up on the new format of dialogue		✓				✓					✓		Yes	✓			

Context and Objectives

This commitment is aimed at developing and testing a new format for dialogue and exchange of information between the government and civil society called "sokråd" in Swedish, which could be translated as "issue-specific consultations." Sokråd has become a working method in government offices, and is used to acquire knowledge and perspectives from stakeholders on specific matters. The overall aim of sokråd is to increase the quality of decisions made by the government by (i) strengthening dialogue as a tool, (ii) taking better advantage of expertise, (iii) collecting a broader range of perspectives, and (iv) increasing the number of involved stakeholders.³ The method is flexible and can be used to varying degrees and in all areas of work within government offices, e.g. during early preparation of a decision, when evaluating a policy, or as a means of ad-hoc and rapid knowledge acquisition. It is a top-down

approach given that it is always a government institution that sets the agenda, chooses which organisations to invite, and shapes the consultation process.⁴

Sakråd does not replace but complements existing forms of consultation with CSOs. The government procedures for consultation with civil society are already rather developed in Sweden. However, the government has identified some gaps in the present consultation methods that sakråd could cover. First, it is appropriate for collecting opinions well in advance of the actual decision-making, e.g. recently a sakråd-process was started about EU-level policy on which decisions will be made in Brussels in two years. Second, sakråd is a format that allows gathering advice on specific and sometimes highly technical or operational issues, such as how to improve logistics (e.g. for transport and food distribution when there are large inflows of migrants).⁵ Considering that the commitment is targeted at getting constructive expert advice from the civil society and that this method will complement current consultation practices, the IRM researcher assesses that it could have at least a moderate impact in the long term.

The commitment pertains to the OGP value of civic participation. According to what is written in the OGP action plan, the government wants to access knowledge of experts from civil society in a structured, effective, and inclusive way. The government also stresses the importance of providing clear information concerning the expected outcome for each expert participant.

The commitment consists of two milestones. The first, 4.1, would evaluate 5–10 pilot projects implemented by government offices in September 2016 and hold a hearing on the findings with CSOs in October 2016.⁶ The second milestone, 4.2, would follow up on the new format of dialogue and exchange with CSOs, but it has no end date. The first milestone is highly specific, while the second has low specificity due to its generic description.

Completion

The first milestone (4.1) was completed on schedule. Five pilots were implemented in 2016. The pilots covered different formats of sakråd on diverse topics, including: (1) the refugee situation, (2) the forthcoming human rights strategy, (3) the UN General Assembly Special Meeting on Drugs (UNGASS), (4) the Popular Education Forum, and (5) the cultural heritage bill.⁷ The Ministry of Culture carried out an in-house evaluation of the pilots and documented the findings in an internal document. The State Secretary⁸ presented the findings during a hearing with civil society on 28 September 2016 in Stockholm. The State Secretary discussed lessons learned from the sakråd pilots, and also reflected on challenges to overcome (see details below in “Next Steps”). The hearing had a high attendance of 73 persons from organisations working in different fields (e.g. The Swedish Disability Federation, the Christian Council of Sweden, and the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education), which indicates that a broad range of stakeholders see the new format as an important endeavour. Most participants were from CSOs but a few also represented government bodies and academia.⁹

Milestone 4.2, a follow-up on the new format for dialogue and exchange with CSOs, was expected to start in 2016 and does not have any end date. According to the Ministry of Culture, an evaluation might start in the beginning of 2018 but there is as yet no formal timeline. The Ministry gave no reason for this delay.¹⁰

Early Results

The five pilot projects for sakråd implemented by government offices in 2016 were shaped in very different ways. In the framework of the five pilots, 1–10 meetings

between the government and civil society occurred, some of which were large conferences. Attendance ranged from 17–46 participants representing civil society, the private sector, government institutions, and municipalities. The government's decision to formally adopt the new method has been well received¹¹ and several of the CSOs that participated in the development and implementation of sakråd are positive about the method.¹² One CSO interviewed by the IRM researcher emphasised that the sakråd method improves the government-civil society relationship, thereby reinforcing the government's decision-making basis.¹³

During the sakråd hearing in September 2016, the State Secretary presented lessons learned from the sakråd pilots and stressed that the main challenges are the lack of clarity and transparency in the process, as well as the way that participants are selected.¹⁴ Presently, the government is limiting the number of participants in order to maintain the efficiency of the process. One of the interviewed CSOs concurred that there is a risk of excluding minor and lesser-known organisations from sakråd.¹⁵

The government shows a commitment to transparency in the sakråd process by publishing information about ongoing and completed consultations on government offices' websites. The information includes invitation letters issued by the government and lists of organisations that were invited, as well as summaries of the meetings.¹⁶ These summaries are also sent to all the participants and circulated within government offices.

During the sakråd hearing, the State Secretary also asserted it is important that sakråd invitations clearly state their purpose and how participants' feedback will be processed and considered in the final decision.¹⁷ A civil society representative confirmed to the IRM researcher this concern about the efficacy of participants' feedback.¹⁸ Another CSO interviewee stated that the link between the input by CSOs and the decisions taken by the government varies across different sakråd; some sakråd show a clear link while others remain ambiguous.¹⁹

The key achievement on this commitment is the government decision to institutionalise the sakråd method on 16 February 2017.²⁰ This means that the method has gone from being a pilot to becoming part of the core set of government consultation methods. Institutionalisation of the sakråd method raises the probability that the method might become a systemic practice across government institutions. Sakråd is already starting to be used widely across the government. After the five pilots, five additional sakråd have been carried out by different government bodies (as of June 2017), e.g. by the office coordinating EU issues at the Prime Minister's Office; jointly by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs; and by the Ministry of Employment.²¹

Next Steps

This is an innovative and potentially high-impact public participation commitment that should be taken forward during this and the next OGP action plan. Below are recommendations about how the commitment can be improved during this action plan cycle based on feedback from civil society.

- **Enhance the diversity of participation:** In order to improve the diversity of participants, the government should:
 - Conduct information campaigns about sakråd and educate more umbrella organisations about this method;²²
 - Give CSOs the opportunity to comment on the invitation lists and to propose other organisations that should be invited;²³ and

- Advertise upcoming sakråd on a dedicated webpage well in advance, and allow all CSOs to submit an expression of interest.
- **Improve the feedback loop:** The government should provide systematic and more concrete feedback to participating CSOs about how CSO comments are used, e.g. by explaining if/how their suggestions have led to the development of training modules, reports, or new guidelines.²⁴
- **Carry out an external evaluation:** In order to monitor the development of sakråd in the framework of the next OGP action plan, the government should commission an external evaluation, which also considers views of organisations that did not have the possibility to participate in any sakråd.²⁵

¹ "En politik för det civila samhället" *ID-nummer: Prop. 2009/10:55* (Government Offices, 26 Nov. 2009), <http://www.regeringen.se/49b70c/contentassets/626c071c353f4f1d8d0d46927f73fe9c/en-politik-for-det-civila-samhallet-prop.-20091055>.

² "Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process" (Council of Europe, 2018), <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/civil-participation>.

³ <http://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/civila-samhallet/fragor-och-svar-om-sakrad/>

⁴ Government webpage describing the sakråd method: <http://www.regeringen.se/artiklar/2017/02/sakrad-ny-metod-for-att-inhamta-kunskaper-fran-civilsamhallet/>.

⁵ Maria Nilsson (Ministry of Culture), interview with IRM researcher, 26 Jun. 2017.

⁶ It is worth noting that the timeframe for this milestone is set before the actual start date of Sweden's OGP action plan (20 December 2016). This is due to Sweden's delayed submission of their OGP action plan, which should have been submitted before 1 July 2016 according to the regular OGP action plan calendar.

⁷ This is according to a powerpoint presentation by the State Secretary about the evaluation findings during the hearing with civil society on 28 September 2016 in Stockholm. The presentation was shared by Maria Nilsson, Ministry of Culture. To clarify, the Popular Education Forum is "Folkbildningsforum" in Swedish, and the Cultural heritage bill is "Kulturarvspropositionen" in Swedish.

⁸ The State Secretary of Culture and Democracy Minister Alice Bah Kuhnke is Per Olsson Fridh.

⁹ A list of participants was shared by Maria Nilsson, Ministry of Culture.

¹⁰ Maria Nilsson (Ministry of Culture), email to the IRM researcher, 7 Aug. 2017.

¹¹ "The Government has decided to institute criminal proceedings" (*Ideell kulturallians (a national umbrella organisation for CSOs working in the field of culture)*, 11 Mar. 2017), <http://ideellkultur.se/nyhet/regeringen-har-beslutat-att-infora-sakrad>.

¹² Nilla Helgesson (Skyddsvärnet NGO), interview with the IRM researcher, 10 Jul. 2017; Göran Pettersson (Socialforum NGO), interview with the IRM researcher, 13 Sept. 2017.

¹³ Pettersson, interview.

¹⁴ State Secretary, 28 Sept. 2016 presentation. See note 7.

¹⁵ Helgesson, interview.

¹⁶ The Government webpage on sakråd is available at: <http://www.regeringen.se/sakrad/>.

¹⁷ State Secretary, 28 Sept. 2016 presentation. See note 7.

¹⁸ Helgesson, interview.

¹⁹ Pettersson, interview.

²⁰ Martin Kling, "Council of Ministers will strengthen dialogue between government and civil society" (Government Offices, 16 Feb. 2017), <http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2017/02/sakrad-ska-starka-dialogen-mellan-regeringen-och-civila-samhallet/>.

²¹ "Sakråd" (Government Offices, accessed 25 Jul. 2018), <http://www.regeringen.se/sakrad>.

²² Helgesson, interview.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

V. General Recommendations

The commitments made in this action plan are important and relevant to OGP values. However, there remain priorities that could be addressed by the government including Sweden's Policy for Global Development, digitisation and open data, and civic participation. The government should collaborate actively with a broader range of stakeholders to develop and implement the next action plan, and include clearer and more measurable commitments.

This section aims to inform development of the next action plan and guide completion of the current action plan. It is divided into two sections: 1) civil society and government priorities identified while writing this report and 2) recommendations of the IRM.

5.1 Stakeholder Priorities

The consulted stakeholders considered important all of the commitments in the current action plan. They also suggested a range of priorities that could be addressed either within the framework of this action plan or through commitments in the next plan. Key recommendations are organised below by related commitment.

Commitments 1 and 2:

- The Ministry of Finance should issue an overall strategy with concrete targets and indicators of the digitisation of the public sector. The strategy should have a clear open data remit, enable the tracking of progress on the Digital First programme, and be inclusive towards different groups of citizens.
- Government authorities should release more open data to achieve a critical mass for their re-use; monitor the use and effects of the data; and aim to become one of the world leaders on open data, while respecting user privacy.

Commitment 3:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should adopt a more structured approach and clear targets with regard to the Joint Commitments, including measures for involving a more diverse range of CSOs, for improving access to information and contacts in the area of aid development, and for raising awareness about the Joint Commitments and its working methods.
- The government should develop and give public access to clear and measurable indicators for monitoring progress on PGU and Agenda 2030. As an important step in this direction, all ministries should develop concrete and measurable action plans for the implementation of PGU and Agenda 2030, and make them publicly accessible.

Commitment 4:

- The government should improve the diversity of participants in the new dialogue mechanism "sakråd" and provide systematic and more concrete feedback to participating CSOs.

5.2 IRM Recommendations

The IRM researcher concurs with the view of several CSOs that stress the importance of implementing Sweden's PGU. The goal of PGU is that all government policy areas should contribute to fair and sustainable development. The government should therefore follow up on PGU principles in order to identify and systematically handle conflicts of interest, especially regarding the way in which Swedish arms

exports, security, and migration policies are developed and conducted.¹ The government should also clarify how it aims to address and follow up conflicts of interest.

In terms of civic participation, the government should adopt a more structured approach and clear targets for improving the diversity of participants, for giving better access to information and for closing feedback loops in the framework of the new dialogue mechanisms such as the Joint Commitments and “sagråd” (see Commitments 3 and 4). Moreover, civil society should be involved in discussions with international donor organisations regarding priorities on transparency and anti-corruption work.

Regarding digitisation and open data in the public sector, the IRM researcher recommends that the Ministry of Finance develop concrete targets and indicators, and set a clear open data focus, in the Digital First programme. Government authorities should also release more open data and monitor the use and effects of the data.

In terms of the OGP process, the new OGP-coordinator, the Ministry of Finance, should develop a formal and regular consultation mechanism to facilitate meaningful dialogue on the OGP commitments with relevant stakeholders. Development of such a mechanism should be based on standards around the selection of members, their mandate and tenure, as well as the recording and publication of meeting proceedings. The new mechanism should also broaden the circle of consulted stakeholders beyond the current narrow circle of development aid CSOs and raise awareness on OGP. To this end, the Ministry could start with creating a national OGP website with a calendar for the different steps of the OGP process, information about upcoming and concluded consultations, a list of contacts for different commitments, and an archive with OGP-related documents to improve institutional memory.²

Table 5.1: Five Key Recommendations

1	The government should consult a more diverse range of CSOs, provide systematic and more concrete feedback to consultation participants, and commission external evaluations of its dialogue mechanisms.
2	The government should release more open data, monitor their use and effects, and aim to become one of the world leaders on open data.
3	The Ministry of Finance should set concrete targets and indicators for the digitisation of the public sector and adopt a clear open data remit for the Digital First programme.
4	The Ministry of Finance should develop a formal and regular consultation mechanism to facilitate meaningful dialogue on the OGP commitments.
5	The government should improve the monitoring of progress on PGU by developing related indicators, publishing concrete and measurable PGU action plans, and commissioning an external evaluation of PGU.

¹ “CONCORD Sweden's recommendations for a constructive action plan for Agenda 2030 where Sweden is put into a global context” (CONCORD Sweden, 18 Apr. 2017), <http://www.concord.se/wp-content/uploads/cs-rekommendationer-for-en-handlingsplan-for-agenda-2030.pdf>.

² See the same recommendation in the previous IRM report: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/sweden-2014-2015-irm-progress-report>.

VI. Method and Sources

The IRM progress report is written by researchers based in each OGP-participating country. All IRM reports undergo a process of quality control 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 IRM 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). Some contexts require anonymity of interviewees and the IRM reviews the right to remove personal identifying information of these participants. Due to the necessary limitations of the method, the IRM strongly encourages commentary on public drafts of each report.

Each report undergoes a four-step review and quality-control process:

1. Staff review: IRM staff reviews the report for grammar, readability, content, and adherence to IRM methodology.
2. International Experts Panel (IEP) review: IEP reviews the content of the report for rigorous evidence to support findings, evaluates the extent to which the action plan applies OGP values, and provides technical recommendations for improving the implementation of commitments and realisation of OGP values through the action plan as a whole. (See below for IEP membership.)
3. Prepublication review: Government and select civil society organisations are invited to provide comments on content of the draft IRM report.
4. Public comment period: The public is invited to provide comments on the content of the draft IRM report.

This review process, including the procedure for incorporating comments received, is outlined in greater detail in Section III of the Procedures Manual.¹

Interviews and Focus Groups

Each IRM researcher is required to hold at least one public information-gathering event. Researchers should make a genuine effort to invite stakeholders outside of the "usual suspects" list of invitees already participating in existing processes. Supplementary means may be needed to gather the input 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 is provided in the self-assessment or is accessible online.

The IRM researcher organised a stakeholder consultation about Sweden's OGP Action Plan on 22 August 2017 at CONCORD Sweden premises in Stockholm. She invited 33 CSO representatives to the meeting. CONCORD Sweden also sent out an invitation to their members. The meeting was attended by 11 people (five women and six men). Most of the participants (7) represented CSOs based in Stockholm, and there were two representatives of ministries and one representative of a public

agency (see the table below). The participants asked questions and commented on the current commitments, and proposed future commitments in the field of aid dialogue and transparency. Most of the participants were active and engaged, and the government and CSO representatives listened to each other.

The IRM researcher would like to acknowledge the support provided by CONCORD Sweden in organising the meeting and for the use of CONCORD's conference facilities.

List of attendees:

Åsa Thomasson	CONCORD Sweden
Per Fröberg	Svalorna
Tiina Nummi-Södergren	MyRight
Cecilia Nilsson Kleffner	Diakonia
Martin Ängeby	Swedish International Liberal Centre (SILC)
Henrik Brundin	We Effect
Monica Erwer	Kvinna till kvinna
Frank Svensson	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Alexander Wall	Ministry of Finance
Carl Elmstam	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
Alina Östling	IRM researcher (chair)

Interviews

The IRM researcher interviewed 12 people (5 women and 7 men). The list of interviewees is presented below. The interviews took place face-to-face and by telephone or Skype.

List of interviewees:

Edvard Agrell	Christian Democratic International Center
Peter Sörbom	CONCORD Sweden
Göran Pettersson	Forum
Björn Hagström	Hagström Consulting AB
Serdar Temiz	Royal Institute of Technology (KTH)
Nilla Helgesson	Skyddsvärnet

Angela Yong	Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI)/Hack for Sweden
Maria Nilson	Ministry of Culture
Magnus Enzell	Ministry of Finance
Marina Berg	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Frank Svensson	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Johanna Teague	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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 an 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

- César Cruz-Rubio
- Mary Francoli
- Brendan Halloran
- Jeff Lovitt
- Fredline M'Cormack-Hale
- Showers Mawowa
- Quentin Reed
- Rick Snell
- Juanita Olayo
- Jean-Patrick Villneuve

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

¹ "IRM Procedures Manual" v.3 (Washington, DC: OGP, 2016), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>.

VII. Eligibility Requirements Annex

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.

In September 2012, OGP officially encouraged governments to adopt ambitious commitments that relate to eligibility.

Table 7.1: Eligibility Annex for Sweden

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	4	4	No change	4 = Asset disclosure law, data public 2 = Asset disclosure law, no public data 0 = No law
Citizen Engagement (Raw score)	4 (10.00) 5	4 (9.41) ⁶	No change	<i>EIU Citizen Engagement Index</i> raw score: 1 > 0 2 > 2.5 3 > 5 4 > 7.5
Total / Possible (Percent)	16/16 (100%)	16/16 (100%)	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> at <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), <http://bit.ly/19nDEfK>; Organisation 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), <http://bit.ly/13vGtqS>; Ricard Messick, "Income and Asset Disclosure by World Bank Client Countries" (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2009), <http://bit.ly/1cloyf>. 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/1EjLJ4Y>.

⁵ "Democracy Index 2010: Democracy in Retreat," The Economist Intelligence Unit (London: Economist, 2010), <http://bit.ly/eLC1rE>.

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