

# OPEN BUDGET COMMITMENTS FACT SHEET

Transparency, public participation, and legislative oversight in the creation and execution of national and local budgets and fiscal policy allows citizens to hold their government accountable and reduce waste. Over time, open budgeting can ensure that government spending reflects the people's interests and needs.

## Key Takeaways:

- Open budget commitments that focus on public participation get results.
- Sector-specific open budgeting improves public service delivery.
- Members need to focus on gender-budgeting and increased inclusion.

## Numbers at a Glance

**81** OGP members have included open budget commitments in their action plans to date.

**508** open budget commitments to date

**159** currently being implemented

**358** commitments have been assessed by the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM).

**61** have transformative potential impact.

**27** are starred.

**30** have shown significant early results in increasing government transparency, citizen participation, or public accountability.<sup>1</sup>

## How many OGP participants are doing open budgeting?

Roughly half of OGP members (**50**) have at least one open budget commitment. It is the 4th most popular theme in OGP, behind public participation, capacity-building, and open data.

## What are OGP participants doing about open budget?

- **424 of 508 (83%)** open budget commitments focus on increasing transparency through the publication of budget/ fiscal information.
- **84 of 508 (16.5%)** open budget commitments are trying to improve public participation across the budget process.
- **71 of 508 (13%)** open budget commitments focus on the oversight of budget and fiscal policies.

<sup>1</sup>As of November 1, 2018. Since delays can occur between Action Plan submission, IRM report releases, and when data are updated in OGP databases, data may not reflect the most up to date information for every country/local entity. Scored Major or Outstanding on the Independent Report Mechanism's (IRM) Did It Open Government metric.



## So what?

The IRM assesses commitments for whether they are verifiable, relevant to open government principles, would create change on the ground, and are on their way to credible completion. We call these “**starred commitments.**” **27 of 358 (7.5%)** commitments to date are starred commitments. This is slightly higher than the overall average of **5%**. Breakdown by sub-category below:

**19 of 303 (6.3%)** commitments about budget/fiscal policy publication are starred.

**3 of 44 (6.8%)** commitments about public participation in budgeting are starred.

**7 of 49 (14.3%)** commitments to date about oversight in budgeting are starred.

## Do we know anything about early results?

Less than half (**150 of 358, 42%**) of IRM-assessed open budget commitments to date are complete or near completion, which is above average for OGP commitments (**36%**). Commitments about budget transparency (publication) are completed at higher rates than commitments about public participation or oversight of budget/fiscal policy.

**132 of 303 (43.5%)** IRM-assessed commitments about publication of budget/fiscal policy are complete or near complete.

**15 of 44 (34%)** IRM-assessed commitments about public participation in budget/fiscal policy are complete or near completion.

**18 of 49 (37%)** IRM-assessed commitments about oversight of budget/fiscal policy implementation are complete or near completion.

**30 of 112 (27%)** open budget commitments assessed for early results made “major” or “outstanding” improvements to government openness, which is about average for OGP commitments. Globally, **20%** of all commitments assessed for early results scored “major” or “outstanding” on the same measures. **Public participation** commitments are more frequently **impactful** than budget publication and oversight commitments.

**23 of 88 (26%)** IRM-assessed commitments about publication of budget/fiscal policies scored major or outstanding results.

**8 of 19 (42%)** IRM-assessed commitments about public participation scored major or outstanding results.

**2 of 13 (15%)** IRM-assessed commitments about oversight scored major or outstanding results.

Note, assessment comes at the end of the second year of action plan implementation.

## What does it all mean?

- **Momentum:** There is extraordinary momentum behind open budgeting. Nearly 75% of OGP members have an open budget commitments in their current action plan, up from 50% in 2015.
- **Participation gets results:** IRM reports show that commitments about public participation in budgeting lead to changed government behavior and increase government openness at twice the rate of other open budget commitments.<sup>2</sup>
- **Sector-specific budgeting:** Open budget commitments seldom take a sector-specific approach. Members should consider applying open and participatory budgeting to the health, education, and environmental sectors, etc. to help improve public service delivery.
- **Gender-responsive budgeting:** OGP members should use budgeting as an opportunity to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment by including gender-responsive budget review – budgeting that ensures that public resources are allocated in ways that promote gender-balanced spending and address the different needs of men and women.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Measured using the IRM’s Did It Open Government metric.

<sup>3</sup>UN Women National Committee Australia, <https://unwomen.org.au/our-work/focus-areas/what-is-gender-responsive-budgeting/>.

## Notable Commitments

### Madrid: Publishing a list of mandatory public information on the environment

In 2016, Madrid committed to participatory budgeting through which the city council allowed the public to decide the allocation of 60 million Euro. In particular, citizens proposed potential expenditures through a co-creation process that facilitated deep collaboration among citizens as they drafted and refined their proposals. The populace then voted on the finalized proposals.

### Tbilisi, Georgia: Accountability through access

In 2017, Tbilisi also committed to implement a participatory budget mechanism with the goal of increasing the government's accountability to citizens and improving cooperation between citizens.

### Philippines: Transparency in extractives

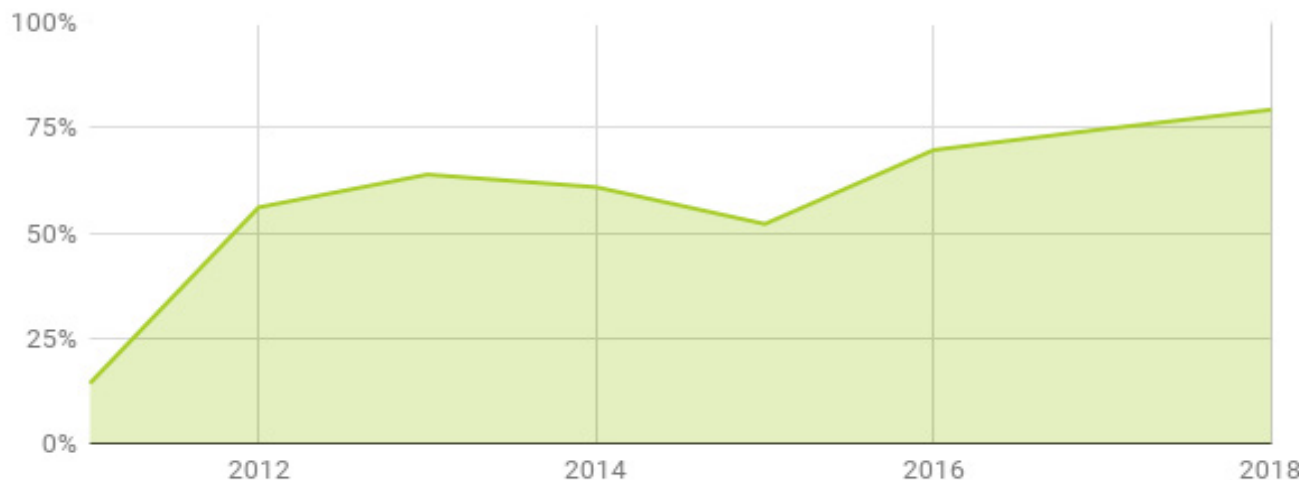
In 2013, the Philippines committed to great fiscal transparency in the extractives sector, demonstrating the ways in which open budgeting commitments can be used to improve service delivery at the sector level.

### Ghana: Participatory budgeting

In 2013, in addition to adopting measures to increase fiscal transparency, Ghana introduced a participatory budget through which the government collaborated with relevant civil society organizations. The commitment sought to encourage the production and dissemination of a budget that more directly reflected citizens' wants and needs.

## Open Budget Commitment Growth

■ Proportion of members implementing open contracting commitments



## Members Working on Open Budget

### Members with Active Commitments in 2011:

- Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, United Kingdom, United States

### Members with Active Commitments in 2012:

- Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Montenegro, Macedonia, Malta, Peru, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Turkey, Tanzania, Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, United Kingdom, United States

### Members with Active Commitments in 2013:

- Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Finland, Ghana, Hungary, Indonesia, Liberia, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, United States, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Montenegro, Macedonia, Malta, Peru, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Turkey, Tanzania

### Members with Active Commitments in 2014:

- Albania, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mongolia, Paraguay, Serbia, Sweden, Sierra Leone, Spain, Tunisia, Tanzania, Ukraine, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Finland, Ghana, Hungary, Indonesia, Liberia, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, United States

### Members with Active Commitments in 2015:

- Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, France, Hungary, Liberia, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Slovakia, United States, Albania, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mongolia, Paraguay, Serbia, Sweden, Sierra Leone, Spain, Tunisia, Tanzania, Ukraine, Uruguay

### Members with Active Commitments in 2016:

- Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austin, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Bojonegoro Regency, Brazil, Buenos Aires, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Chile, Dominican Republic, Elgeyo Marakwet, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Jalisco, Jordan, Kenya, Kigoma, Lithuania, Macedonia, Madrid, Mongolia, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Paraguay, Paris, Romania, Scotland, Serbia, Sweden, Sekondi-Takoradi, Seoul, Sierra Leone, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tbilisi, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, France, Hungary, Liberia, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Slovakia, United States

### Members with Active Commitments in 2017:

- Afghanistan, Argentina, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Israel, Liberia, Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Slovakia, Spain, Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austin, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Bojonegoro Regency, Brazil, Buenos Aires, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Chile, Dominican Republic, Elgeyo Marakwet, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Jalisco, Jordan, Kenya, Kigoma, Lithuania, Macedonia, Madrid, Mongolia, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Paraguay, Paris, Romania, Scotland, Serbia, Sweden, Sekondi-Takoradi, Seoul, Sierra Leone, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tbilisi, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay

### Members with Active Commitments in 2018:

- Afghanistan, Argentina, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Israel, Liberia, Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Slovakia, Spain, Albania, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bojonegoro Regency, Buenos Aires, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Elgeyo Marakwet, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, Kaduna State, Kigoma, Lithuania, Macedonia, Madrid, Morocco, Norway, Peru, Romania, Scotland, Sekondi-Takoradi, Seoul, Sierra Leone, South Cotabato, South Korea, Sweden, Tbilisi, Ukraine, Uruguay

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