

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM)

Seoul Final Report 2017

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The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary international initiative that aims to secure commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. In 2016, OGP opened to subnational participants in their own right as part of a pilot program. The OGP Subnational Pilot Program, consists of 15 subnational governments who submitted Action Plans and signed onto the Subnational Declaration at the Paris Global OGP Summit. This report summarizes the results of the development and implementation of Seoul's pilot subnational action plan from January 2017 to December 2017.

The IRM reports for OGP pioneers will be published online primarily. As a result, this template is outlined in terms of the final site layout of the report.

Site map

- [Overview page](#)
- [Context and scope of action plan](#)
- [Development process and monitoring of the action plan](#)
- [Commitments](#)
- [OGP method and sources](#)

Overview

Period under Review

Action Plan under Review	2017
Dates of Actions under Review	01/2017 – 12/2017

Summary of IRM Findings

Seoul's action plan focused on leveraging technology to improve access to information through data disclosure and civic participation. With high-level political support, the Seoul Metropolitan Government completed most of the commitment milestones. However, future action plans could maximize the diversity of CSO to include more ambitious anti-corruption reforms.

Participation in OGP

Action Plan Date	10/2016 – 12/2017
Lead Agency (Office, Department, etc.)	Information Planning Information System Planning Bureau, Seoul Metropolitan Government

At a Glance

Table 1: At a Glance	
Number of Commitments	4
Level of Completion	
Completed	2
Substantial	2
Limited	0
Not Started	0
Number of Commitments with...	

Clear Relevance to OGP Values		4
Transformative Potential Impact		0
Substantial or Complete Implementation		4
All Three (★)		0
Did It Open Government?	<i>Major</i>	1
	<i>Outstanding</i>	0

Action Plan Priorities

1. Increasing public engagement to define data disclosure policies
2. Harnessing technology and innovation to promote the use of government data
3. Improving information disclosure practices from the Seoul Metropolitan Government's committees.

Institutional Context

This section summarizes the Institutional and Subnational Context section. It emphasizes the description of the lead institutions responsible for the action plan, their powers of coordination and how the institutional set-up boosts or affects the OGP process.

OGP leadership in the Seoul Metropolitan Government

The Information System Planning Bureau (ISPB) within the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) was designated as the team responsible for coordinating the government's participation in the OGP Subnational Pilot Program, today known as the OGP Local Program. It is led by a single agency and, in terms of OGP leadership, there has been an active support and interest from the current Mayor, Mr. Park Won-Soon.¹ Five officials from the Information System Planning Bureau were in charge of the OGP subnational process, with one point of contact. Four additional officials within the ISPB were assigned to each commitment.

The SMG created an official and publicly released mandate², albeit the lack of a legally binding mechanism. However, civil society organizations participating in the co-creation process considered this institutional set-up created for the OGP subnational process as a positive step forward in the inclusion of civil society in public policy decision making.

Nevertheless, there was little coordination or cooperation between the SMG and other bureaus and divisions within the government. According to a number of civil society groups that wished to remain

anonymous, the OGP initiative was sometimes seen as a project exclusively undertaken by and for the Information System Planning Bureau.

Table 2. Summary of OGP leadership in the Seoul Metropolitan Government

1. Structure	Yes	No
Is there a clearly designated government lead for OGP?	✓	
	Shared	Single
Is there a single lead agency or shared leadership 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?	✓	
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?		✓

Participation in OGP by Government Institutions

This sub-section describes which government institutions were involved at various stages in OGP.

Institutional participation in the subnational OGP pilot process was limited mostly to the Information System Planning Bureau (ISPB) with collaboration from the Administration Affairs Bureau (AAB) in commitment four. The ISPB was designated as the main team for the OGP's subnational process and led the development and implementation of the action plan. As of February 2018, four government members were charged with the actual implementation process: three representatives from the Data & Statistics Division, Geospatial Information Division and Information Planning Division within ISPB and one member from the Information Policy Division within the AAB. These four civil servants were in charge of the implementation of the action plan commitments. Table 1.2 below provides details of the other institutions that were involved in the OGP process.

In January 2017, the head of the ISPB changed, as part of a mandatory and standard rotation of personal. This did not affect the OGP process, as it was an expected change.

From the onset, the ISPB led the design of the action plan and created a Government/Civil Society Organization (“CSO”) consultative group. During the process of development of the action plan, SMG officials proposed three out of four commitments. As noted in the general recommendations section, some members of civil society noted in a survey that some commitments were projects that had already been undertaken by SMG later labeled as OGP commitments.

Additionally, during the implementation stage, two SMG institutions known as the Big Data Campuses, located in Sangam-dong and Gaepo-dong, provided a physical venue for citizens where they could interact and benefit from the implementation of commitment #1.

Table 3. Participation in OGP by Government Institutions

How did institutions participate?	Ministries, Departments or agencies	Legislative (parliaments or councils)	Justice institutions (including quasi-judicial agencies)	Other (special districts, authorities, parastatal bodies, etc.)
Consult: These institutions observed or were invited to observe the action plan, but may not be responsible for commitments in the action plan	0	0	0	0
Propose: These institutions proposed commitments for inclusion in the action plan	0	0	0	0
Implement: These institutions are responsible for implementing commitments in the action plan whether or not they proposed the commitments	4 ³	0	0	2 ⁴

¹ “Please share ideas for transparent and open governance of Seoul,” Yonhap News Agency, 30 August 2016, <http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/bulletin/2016/08/30/0200000000AKR20160830077300004.HTML?input=1195m>

² Seoul city’s OGP website (mandated dated 25 August 2016, uploaded on 6 October 2016), <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03#view/1>

³ Four government divisions were involved during implementation of the action plan: three divisions within the Information System Planning Bureau: Data & Statistics Division, Geospatial Information Division and Information Planning Division and one division from the Administrative Affairs Bureau: the Information Policy Division.

⁴ Two Big Data Campuses under commitment #1 were involved in the implementation where citizens could visit and use facilities to analyze data. SMG Big Data Campus website is here: <https://bigdata.seoul.go.kr/main.do>

Commitment Overview

SMG's four commitments addressed sharing real-life data, disclosing public information, participatory map-making together with citizens, and sharing official meeting minutes in a more efficient way. Expected beneficiaries include civil society organizations and the citizens of Seoul. The main focus of this action plan was to improve access to information through the disclosure of data in new and innovative ways. Additionally, it aimed to foster civil society and citizen engagement in public policy decision-making. Although the implementation of the commitments led to better and improved information, they fell short on improving civic participation in the local government. Participation of ordinary citizens and civil society organizations outside those who were active members active of the Seoul OGP Consultative Group was poor. Additionally, general understanding or awareness of OGP was limited as a result of little promotion of the activities carried out by the government during the action plan implementation period.

However, overall, these frameworks and systems are significant achievements from Seoul's participation in the OGP process. These will play a role as a steppingstone to a more open government if continuously utilized in the future.

Table 4. Overview: Assessment of Progress by Commitment

Table 4. displays for each commitment the level of specificity, relevance to OGP values, potential impact level of completion.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion				Did It Open Government?				
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsens	No evidence yet	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
1. Collaborative data analysis			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓					✓				✓		
2. Public information sharing in a timely matter		✓			✓	✓		✓			✓				✓					✓	

3. Crowdsourcing map-making			✓			✓		✓		✓					✓			✓		
4. Transparent meeting information and minutes.			✓		✓						✓				✓			✓		

General Recommendations

Moving forward, the SMG should continue to promote and improve the systems put in place as a result of the commitments. Also, the OGP process and the outcomes should be maximized to positively influence the daily lives of citizens in terms of four OGP values: access to information, accountability, civic participation, and technology and innovation. More specifically, the SMG could:

- 1. Include a wider group of civil society organizations and government institutions in the OGP process:** One of the biggest characteristics of OGP process is the cooperation between the government and civil society, instead of a top-down approach from the government. However, the SMG's OGP process relied on a limited participation of a small group of civil society members. The members of civil society themselves noted in a survey that while the SMG's efforts in the pilot program are laudable, it should expand the lineup of civil society partners from their usual suspect list and invite more stakeholders, including participants with diverse expertise.⁵ Additionally, the government should not limit participation to the Information System Planning Office, but extend its reach to other institutions like the Urban Space Improvement Bureau or the Engineering Review Bureau.
- 2. Maximize the diversity of views during the development of action plan:** Three out of four commitments were proposed by the SMG. Some members of civil society claimed in a survey that some commitments were projects that had already been undertaken by the SMG and that they were labeled as OGP commitments⁶. For a stronger action plan, that reflects citizen needs, the SMG could widen the scope of consultations and improve the partnership with CSO in the Gov/CSO consultation group for effective cooperation and dialogue. Future action plans could better reflect the priorities of stakeholders.
- 3. Promote the SMG's participation in the OGP process to ordinary citizens in a more effective way:** In line with recommendations 1 and 2 above, a more effective and efficient promotion of the process to ordinary citizens is needed. Active members of civil society that participated in the process said that it is doubtful that ordinary citizens are aware of or heard of the OGP process or what it stands for in the survey (See Methods and Sources Section). While approximately 15 news articles can be found about Seoul's joining the OGP process as the first local entity to do so from major news outlets⁷, there has been no article or media review on the early outcome, process, or uptake by citizens.
- 4. Design more specific and clear commitments:** The titles of the four commitments and their milestones are coined and written in broad and ambiguous terms that make it difficult for ordinary citizens to have a clear idea of what SMG is trying to achieve. The government could aim for result-oriented and specific commitments, written in a clear language.

⁵ Civil society's answers to survey questions B.2 and B.4, available at "Survey Result' saved at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QMeyvOaBmmK4tAtU5MBVwXQpVUDp2Zc->

⁶ Civil society's answers to survey question B.2, *ibid*.

⁷ "Seoul City Joining OGP, First at the Local Level," Korea Broadcasting System, 13 April 2016, <http://news.kbs.co.kr/news/view.do?ncd=3263570&ref=A>, "Seoul City Joining OGP along with Paris and Madrid," Kyunghyang Shinmun, 13 April 2016, http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=201604131350001&code=940100

Institutional and Subnational Context and Scope of Action Plan

This section places the action plan commitments in the broader context. The emphasis of the IRM report is on the development and implementation of the OGP action plan. However, to ensure the credibility of the report and of OGP more broadly and to inform future versions of the action plan, researchers are asked to briefly consider the institutional context within which the OGP action plan is framed. Consider significant actions not covered by the action plan that are relevant to OGP values and the entity's participation in the Partnership. The emphasis should be on the specific subnational context, although researchers may make some reference to the broader national context as it affects implementation at the subnational level (in county, referring to ward level or in the Municipality, referring to State and Federal context).

Background

Structure of Government

Seoul is the capital of the Republic of Korea with a population of 10,178,395 people (2017)⁸ It is responsible for all matters pertinent to the lives of Seoul citizens ranging from urban planning and economy & investment to traffic, environment, welfare, health & security and education, women & children. Seoul City's mayor is elected by seoul citizens to serve the four-year terms, and the latest local election was held on 13 June 2018. Under current Mayor Park Won-soon who is a third-time mayor, there are six distinctive organs and three Vice Mayors who, in turn, lead seven other organs.

The six organs under the Mayor are: 1) Spokesman's Office, 2) Seoul Innovation Bureau, 3) Public Communications Bureau, 4) Audit & Inspection Commission, 5) Citizens' Ombudsman Commission, and 6) Planning and Administration Office.

The three vice mayors under Mayor Park Won-soon are:

- Vice-Mayor I for Administrative Affairs, who leads five bureaus or offices that exist to address issues such as city transportation and finance (among other): 1) Women & Family Policy Affairs Office, 2) Emergency Planning Bureau, 3) Information System Planning Bureau, 4) Especial Enforcement Division for Public Safety, and 5) Employment & Labor Policy Bureau.
- Vice-Mayer II, who supervises the 1) Urban Space Improvement Bureau and 2) Engineering Review Bureau, under which eight sub-bureaus work to address issues such as urban regeneration to water circulation safety.
- Vice Mayor III, in charge of political affairs.⁹

The Information System Planning Bureau under Vice Mayor I is in charge of leading the Seoul's OGP initiatives.

The budget for the year 2017 was KRW 29,801,117,123,000 (approximately USD 26 billion).¹⁰

Government Institutions Involved in OGP

The SMG, through a single agency, pushed forward the OGP commitments under the leadership of Mayor Park Won-Soon. The SMG tasked officials in the Information System Planning Bureau (ISPB) with managing the process from the onset, which cultivated a sense of ownership over the implementation of the commitments. This, coupled with an active support from the Mayor, boosted implementation of the

plan. However, because the ISPB bore the main responsibility for the OGP process, other bureaus and divisions within SMG did not assume open government activities outside their daily tasks.

While there are city ordinances pertinent to data and information disclosure, there was no legally binding mandate for Seoul's participation in OGP. For the 2017 subnational pilot program, there was no budget specifically assigned to the OGP process as the budget compilation for the fiscal year 2017 had taken place in 2016 prior to the participation in OGP. However, the SMG dedicated five ISPG officials to carry out the OGP process. In addition, four officials were in charge of each commitment. For OGP activities in the year 2018, the SMG had an operation budget of KRW 6,400,000 (USD 5,981).

Significant Events

At the national level, during implementation, citizen-led movements against former President Park Geun-hye, resulted in her incarceration on 31 March 2017 over a corruption scandal.¹¹ She was sentenced to 24 years in prison on 6 April 2018.¹² Although this didn't directly affect Seoul's OGP process, civil servants and the public were affected as the impeachment shook the whole nation. This event underlined the importance of all OGP related activities in the country.

At the subnational level, no significant political events affected the OGP process during the implementation cycle. However, it is worth mentioning that the 7TH local elections took place on 13 June 2018. As incumbent Park Won-Soon won his third term as mayor of Seoul, it increased public's expectation for the continued and successful participation in the OGP process.

Stakeholder Priorities

The OGP action plan for Seoul included four commitments out of which only one was proposed by a civil society group. Mr. Park Jihwan, the civil society representative in the Gov/CSO consultative group, stated that commitment #4 had the highest priority for non-governmental stakeholders.¹³ This commitment addresses the lack of information on public-policy decision making. It aims to promote the disclosure of information with the creation of standardized guidelines for all offices within the SMG. The CSOs involved in the OGP process considered that, if successfully implemented, this commitment could be carried forward focusing on how to enhance citizen participation in policy-making for the effective use of this newly shared information. In addition, CSOs also considered commitment #1 to be of high priority due to the gap between CSO needs of government data and what was being supplied. The continuation of Big Data Campuses could provide an opportunity to draw policies that would benefit citizens based on the combination of public and private data.

Civil society stakeholders prioritize the enhancement of the role of citizens in policy-making. They considered that Korea also needs a public policy that could guarantee the practicality and accuracy of online civic participation, in light of the recent cases of online opinion forgery and election meddling by National Intelligence Services (NIS).¹⁴ NIS's former Director Mr. Won Sei-Hoon was convicted on the charges of manipulation of public opinion during the Presidential Election in 2012 and sentenced to four years in prison in April 2018.¹⁵ Other trials for allegations on misuse of public funds etc. are currently underway in September 2018.

Specifically, the CSO stakeholders envisaged a practical study on the best and desirable way to collect input and promote discussions on potential policies in the digital era. An example cited by CSOs was the

case of the Federal Communications Commission in the US. The Commission receives online, public comments from ordinary citizens in order to change the policy of net neutrality; it is acknowledged that while over 90% of citizens answered against the change in new neutrality policy in the poll, the US government is pushing for the amendment; it is also alleged that the pro-change answers have been submitted by robots disguised as real citizens.

It is important to mention that the SMG has led activities to involve citizens in policy-making. The “Seoul Policy Exhibition” that took place on 7 and 8 July 2017 is one example. Titled as “Seoul is Democracy” and subtitled as “Citizens Suggest, Citizens Discuss and Citizens Decide,” this Exhibition has been held since 2012 annually. The Exhibition is modeled after the Sweden’s ‘Almedalen Political Week’ where citizens, political parties, labor unions, and civil society groups gather together for one week in July to discuss over 20 policy proposals presented by the SMG and conclude the nation-wide referendum to vote on 5 final proposals to carry forward.¹⁶ From the first Exhibition in 2012 until last year, a total of 1,931 policy options have been proposed and 150 of them became real policies. These type of initiatives enable more citizens to participate and raise their voices. They provide citizens with opportunities to address issues affecting them and participate in decision-making at the grassroots level. However, CSOs consider that more can be done for effective and systematic participation.

Scope of Action Plan in Relation to Subnational Context

While it is not the job of the IRM to tell governments and civil society organizations what can or cannot be in action plans, the IRM Guiding Principles do require the IRM to identify, “The extent to which the action plan and its commitments reflect, in a certain subnational context, the OGP values of transparency, accountability, and civic participation, as articulated in the OGP Declaration of Principles and the Articles of Governance.

Seoul Government’s vision to drive open government initiatives started in 2012 with the “Open Government 2.0” Policy under the Mayor Park. The City has shared all data with its citizens unless marked confidential: on the Open Information Communication Plaza, the public can access all official documents, and the Seoul Open Data Plaza shares quantitative datasets ranging from all public records in health, welfare to environment and transportation and these efforts have been praised by other governments, such as Singapore, in the Asia-Pacific region.¹⁷

While these initiatives are strong strides towards open government, in addition to the four commitments ranging from urban data analysis to transparent meeting minutes sharing, there has also been a call for anti-corruption measures which has not been fully addressed. For example, Seoul city’s Gwanghwamun Square became the venue for the large candlelight vigil with more than 200,000 protesters, a political movement that started in October 2016 requesting the former President Park Geun-hye’s resignation.¹⁸ Considering this national context where ordinary citizens actively raise their political voices, it is crucial to continue to guarantee their right to know and political participation.

There are increased citizen demands for more anti-corruption measures, which the 2017 action plan does not address.

⁸ Seoul Metropolitan Government’s official English website. <http://english.seoul.go.kr/get-to-know-us/seoul-views/meaning-of-seoul/4-population/>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Seoul Metropolitan Government’s official Korean website. Finance Section. <http://finance.seoul.go.kr/files/2017/01/5893bcb286d3e3.07920855.pdf>

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- ¹¹ “Ex-President Park arrested,” Korea Times, 31 March 2017, http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2017/03/113_226761.html
- ¹² “South Korea: former president Park Geun-hye sentenced to 24 years in jail”, The Guardian, 6 April 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/06/former-south-korea-president-park-geun-hye-guilty-of-corruption>
- ¹³ Email interview with IRM researcher dated 27 November 2017.
- ¹⁴ “Ex-spy chief grilled over political meddling,” Korea Times, 26 September 2017, http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2017/09/113_237046.html
- ¹⁵ “Top court upholds prison term for former spy chief, Korea Times, 19 April 2018, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2018/04/356_247561.html
- ¹⁶ “Seoul city to ‘carry on the candlelight vigil spirit’, Policy Exhibition to be held in July,” Newsis, 11 May 2017, http://www.newsis.com/view/?id=NISX20170511_0014887125&clD=10201&pID=10200
- ¹⁷ “Smart City, Smart Residents: Seoul’s ‘Smart’ Transformation Accelerates Under Mayor Park”, Center for Liveable Cities <https://www.clc.gov.sg/docs/default-source/commentaries/smart-city.pdf>, Open Information Communication Plaza, <http://opengov.seoul.go.kr>, Seoul Open Data plaza, <http://data.seoul.go.kr>
- ¹⁸ “Public anger shows no signs of subsiding,” Korea Times, 6 November 2016, http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2016/11/113_217590.html

Process of Development and Monitoring of the Action Plan

Process of Development of the Action Plan

Governments participating in the OGP follow a process for consultation during development of their OGP action plan and during implementation. This section summarizes the performance of the Seoul Metropolitan Government during the development of their first action plan.

OGP Basic Requirements

Subnational Governments received the following guidance on participation during action plan development and execution:

May – November 2016: Development of commitments: Participants set up ways to work with civil society organizations and other groups outside government and use these mechanisms to identify priority areas for commitments. Specific commitments should then be developed in partnership with civil society, allowing them the opportunity to support governments in drafting them and establishing milestones. Draft commitments should be shared with the OGP Support Unit as they are being developed and for comment and advice in October-November. Commitments should be finalized and agreed by the end of November, so they can be published and announced at the OGP Summit in December.

The SMG laid out a master plan for their participation in the OGP subnational pilot program.¹⁹ As part of this plan, SMG set up a special website designated to the promotion of Seoul's efforts and progress on OGP commitments on 25 August 2016. Through Seoul's official website and a news release, the government announced that an information session would be held on 21 September 2016, where the selection of final commitments would be made.²⁰

In parallel, the SMG created a consultative group together with civil society organizations ("CSOs") on 10 October 2016 and actively engaged with them in the development of the action plan. This group served as a participatory mechanism that allowed citizens and organizations to raise their voices and contribute in the development of action plan and implementation process. The SMG sent out general email invitations to CSO networks to become part of the group, which it was open for any organization to join. The group's constitutive document states that it consists of seven SMG officials, nine CSO members and one representative from academia. It also states that it is to function from October 2016 to March 2018. It establishes that both regular and ad hoc meetings would be held. It does not mention how the decision-making system works, however, meeting minutes show that the decisions on the commitments were made through discussion and mutual agreement among all members of the group, rather than voting.

In terms of priority identification, from 25 August to 5 September 2016, the SMG led a citizen consultation process and received suggestions on the potential commitments for the action plan on the website. All Seoul citizens were eligible to provide suggestions and ideas. After this process, the SMG organized an information session on 21 September 2016 to vote for four commitments from eight suggestions from the consultation process. Five CSOs and nine individual citizens showed interest and participated in the session in response to the announcement of the meeting, along with 17 SMG officials.

Following the establishment of the four commitments, the above-mentioned CSOs and citizens also participated in the drafting of the commitment and general action plan content.

Overall, the SMG established mechanisms for civil society organizations and citizens to play a role in the formulation of the action plan and meeting all OGP basic requirements. All evidence of the participation is documented on the Seoul's OGP website including the meeting minutes, photos and other details.²¹ The website is available in the Korean language only and users can download the PDF files of meeting records.

Table 3.1: Basic Requirements

1. Participatory Mechanism: Was there a way of working with CSOs and other groups? Guideline: Participants set up ways to work with civil society organizations and other groups outside government and use these mechanisms to identify priority areas for commitments.	Yes
2. Priority Identification: Was civil society able to help identify priority areas for commitments? Guideline: Participants set up ways to work with civil society organizations and other groups outside government and use these mechanisms to identify priority areas for commitments.	Yes
3. Commitment Development: Did civil society participate in the development/drafting of commitments and milestones? Guideline: Specific commitments should then be developed in partnership with civil society, allowing them the opportunity to support governments in drafting them and establishing milestones.	Yes
4. Review: Were commitments submitted for review to the Open Government Partnership Support Unit prior to finalization? Guideline: Draft commitments should be shared with the OGP Support Unit as they are being developed and for comment and advice in October-November.	Yes
5. Submission: Were commitments submitted on time? Guideline: Commitments should be finalized and agreed by the end of November, so they can be published and announced at the OGP Summit in December.	Yes

Openness of Consultation

Who was invited?

The SMG communicated all of OGP events and meetings through the website created for the OGP

process along with news releases issued by them. All events were announced and open to all who wished to participate. Additionally, the SMG sent a general email invitation to civil society organizations through pre-existing networks.

On 25 August 2016, the government announced that an information session would be held on 21 September 2016, where the selection of final commitments would be made. A total of 31 persons participated in this session, 8 individual citizens who suggested ideas through the online consultation mechanism, 6 civil society representatives and 17 SMG civil servants.²² All relevant information including the photos and list of participants is available on the Seoul's OGP website.

How was awareness raising carried out?

As soon as the SMG joined the OGP's subnational pilot program on 12 April 2016, a number of news articles were published promoting the OGP's vision and Seoul's participation.²³ More specific and detailed awareness-raising efforts to promote open government and Seoul's participation in OGP have been made through the Seoul's official OGP website since August 2016. All evidence is available on the website.

More specifically, the SMG communicated the Government's master plan for the OGP process made public on 25 August 2016 through its official website. This plan states the "rules of the game" during the formulation of the plan and beyond, including the timeline, the method for consultation, the direction for future activities etc. It was also distinctly explained how Seoul citizens could contribute with their ideas for potential commitments on the Seoul's OGP website. However, this general announcement seems to have reached a limited group of citizens: those already involved in the open government issues. As a result, 10 members of civil society organizations showed interest and initially joined the formal Government/CSO consultative group (increased to 12 CSO members as of July 2017).

Which parts of civil society participated?

The consultative group originally included 10 reputable, non-governmental stakeholders. Nine CSOs that work on open government related fields, many of which have already worked on the national South Korea OGP process. Such is the case for Open Net Korea, Transparency International Korea, IndiLab and C.O.D.E. A researcher from the Geospatial Information Lab at Ewha Womans University represents the academia. None participated from other branches of the government. The list is available on the Seoul's OGP website.

In terms of the diversity of views, it is evaluated that various perspectives were well reflected with respect to the four commitments. All views and ideas presented during the consultation meetings were recorded in the official reports which are available on the Seoul's OGP website.

The SMG also actively sought opinion from ordinary citizens in order to guarantee the diversity of views. When the commitments were finalized in November 2016, the Government through the city's Call Center blog announced that it would listen to people's opinions from 7 to 16 November 2016 on the final commitments and milestones.²⁴

Level of Public Input

The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) “Spectrum of Participation” to apply to OGP.²⁵ 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.”

Overall, the IRM researcher considers that the level of public input during the development of Seoul’s action plans was of “involve” in the IAP2 Scale.

The general public and organizations were kept informed throughout the formulation process via the Seoul OGP website, which also allowed anyone interested to provide input and suggestions to the SMG. The specific period allocated to the general consultation process was of 11 calendar days (from 25 August to 5 September, 2016).

Moreover, the information session organized in 21 September 2016 served as a mechanism for the SMG to consult on CSO and citizens’ priorities. Taking the eight suggestions received during the open consultation period, the participants discussed and voted upon four final commitments. The session lasted two hours and 50 minutes. The eight proponents presented their idea for a commitment (four from the SMG, two CSO representatives, and two ordinary citizens). Following the presentations, an open discussion was held and four proposals were selected and finalized into official commitments in 20 minutes. The short discussion time could be attributed to the fact that two out of eight options were undoubtedly not possible to become commitments, (considering that one was a general recommendation to the government, while the other was already being implemented). Thus, the participants chose four out of six options.

In an e-mail interview with the IRM researcher dated 28 July 2017, Mr. Park Jihwan, representing 12 CSOs in the consultative group, noted that “Numerically, the ideas of the civil society were represented at 25%, as three commitments were proposed by SMG, and one commitment was proposed by the civil society. Nevertheless, this could be attributed to the small number of participants from civil society. Therefore, we can say that the civil society perspectives were fully reflected.”

Following this session, the SMG later organized the first meeting of the official Government/CSO consultative group. They presented the four commitments chosen and formed four sub-groups for separate discussions. Each sub-group had at least two CSO representatives and they would later hold further online and offline meetings with the aim of drafting each commitment. On a final council meeting with all representatives in attendance, the final action plan was agreed upon by members. Meeting minutes available on the Seoul’s OGP websites meticulously describes the process of the meetings. It also contains all remarks by participants (each statement was noted anonymously in the files), recording the complete process of “involvement” without omission.

Answering a question on how to improve the consultation process, Mr. Park added, “It’s desirable to have a clear decision-making method [in the consultative group] to reach a final agreement on the selection of commitments, whether by a majority vote or unanimous vote, by having a steering committee with all stakeholders.” This proves that while various perspectives and public input were well reflected in the co-creation process, the deliberation and decision-making process could be made more explicit from the beginning.

In terms of the nature and accessibility of the mechanism, it is clearly seen that young people who have access to the Internet and Seoul’s OGP website rather than the older generation, and active members of CSOs that wish to join in efforts in the decision-making showed more interests and participated in the process.

Table 5. Level of Public Input

Level of public input		During development 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 government gave feedback on how public inputs were considered.	✓
Consult	The public could give inputs.	
Inform	The government provided the public with information on the action plan.	
No Consultation	No consultation	

¹⁹ The master plan (Seoul City Mayor's Policy No. 248) can be downloaded on the SMG's OGP website, 25 August 2016, uploaded on 6 October 2016, <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03#view/1>

²⁰ The announcement made on 25 August 2016 on the SMG's official website, <http://gov.seoul.go.kr/archives/92970>, and the news release made on 30 August 2016 http://spp.seoul.go.kr/main/news/news_report.jsp#view/28646

²¹ SMG's OGP website that serves as repository of documents is available here: <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03#list/1>

²² SMG noted in the meeting minutes that it originally expected to have about 200 participants in the information session, but it turned out to show low participation among ordinary citizens. From the SMG's OGP website, 21 September 2016, uploaded on 6 October 2016, <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03#view/2>

²³ "Seoul City Joining OGP, First at the Local Level," Korea Broadcasting System, 13 April 2016, <http://news.kbs.co.kr/news/view.do?ncd=3263570&ref=A>, "Seoul City Joining OGP along with Paris and Madrid," Kyunghyang Shinmun, 13 April 2016, http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=201604131350001&code=940100

²⁴ "Seoul City Receiving Citizens' Opinion on OGP Action Plan," Seoul City Dasan Call Center blog, 9 November 2016, <http://blog.naver.com/120seoulcall/220857101238>

²⁵ IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum", International Association for Public Participation Federation (2014) http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf

Process of Monitoring Implementation of the Action Plan

OGP Basic Requirements

Subnational governments received the following guidance on participation during action plan development and execution:

December 2016 – December 2017: Implementation of Commitments

The guidance below provides more information about the best way to manage implementation of commitments, internal reporting and consultation with civil society throughout.

- Commitments should be developed in partnership with civil society and should seek to engage the widest possible input from citizens. [This note](#) provides guidance about how to conduct successful engagement with civil society and provides advice about ongoing consultation with civil society.
- Governments should conduct regular internal assessment, to make sure that commitments are on track and that there is an ongoing role for civil society. This assessment should be carried out along the lines of the OGP template for self-assessment, to make it easier for the IRM researcher to gather information.
- At regular intervals governments should publish a brief update on progress against commitments and use that as an opportunity to invite any comments. To complement any tracking system, governments are strongly encouraged to maintain a public, online repository of all documents giving evidence of consultation and implementation of commitments.

The SMG's OGP consultative group, composed of CSOs and government officials from the Information Systems Planning Bureau, as explained in the section above, met five times to track progress in the implementation of commitments. It is important to note that Seoul began the implementation of its plan in mid-2016, therefore two of these meetings were held before January 2017, period assessed in this report. The SMG uploaded the record/minutes of the consultative group's meetings held in October 2016, November 2016, April 2017, October 2017 and November 2017 on the Seoul's OGP. ²⁶

The group conducted these internal assessments to provide general information on status, success and shortcomings of the action plan. Additionally, the consultative group was divided in sub-groups to more specifically discuss the commitments and its milestones. CSOs chose to participate in each sub-group according to their interests. CSOs were paired with the relevant officers-in-charge to participate in the implementation monitoring. Each sub group decided on their own how to meet and work under the guidance of the respective officers-in-charge. CSO representatives who participated in these sub-groups showed varying levels of satisfaction regarding how they operated. For instance, CSO members in sub-group one (tasked with overseeing the implementation of commitment one), reported that communication among the group was sporadic and that their input was not considered appropriately. Based on these, two CSO members of the group decided not to attend the final two meetings of the sub-group .

The website, which served as a repository, was well managed and updated throughout the implementation period and all ten members of civil society said to have visited and used the website to stay updated on the process.

Table 6. Basic Requirements

<p>1. Internal Assessment & Participatory Mechanism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Did the government conduct regular internal assessments? b. Did the government ensure an ongoing role for civil society in monitoring of the action plan? <p>Guideline: Governments should conduct regular internal assessment, to make sure that commitments are on track and that there is an ongoing role for civil society.</p>	1.a Yes
	1.b Yes
<p>2. Regular Updates & Opportunity to Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Did the government publish updates on progress at regular intervals? [at least once every four months] b. Were civil society organizations provided the opportunity to comment on progress of commitment implementation? <p>Guideline: At regular intervals governments should publish a brief update on progress against commitments and use that as an opportunity to invite any comments.</p>	2.a Yes
	2.b Yes
<p>3. Online Repository:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Did the government create a public online repository of documents? <p>Guideline: To complement any tracking system, governments are strongly encouraged to maintain a public, online repository of all documents giving evidence of consultation and implementation of commitments.</p>	3.a Yes

Openness during Implementation

Who Was Invited?

The SMG invited the Gov/CSO consultative group members to participate during the implementation process. As members of the consultative group, they were invited to join in the sub-groups under each commitment. Additionally, other nongovernmental groups were asked to participate for the implementation of commitments. For example, for commitment one, the SMG invited seven groups. These include CSO that work on environmental issues, transportation and justice, as well as the academic sector through Hongik University²⁷.

How Was Awareness Raising Carried Out?

The SMG shared a timeline with the consultative group members at the beginning in August 2016.²⁸ Most communication was conducted online, such as through emails. The consultative group meeting minutes describe offline meetings held to discuss the implementation activities of each commitment. They account for five meetings.

Which Parts of Civil Society Participated?

As explained earlier in the “Who Was Invited” on page 15, the CSOs who most actively participated in the group were the ones in the consultative group, most of which have worked in the open government field. The members include Open Net Korea, the Center for Freedom of Information and Transparent Society, Civic Tech Group “Team Mondrian”, Center for Civic Awareness and Policy Making, Together Civic Action, Progressive Network Center, IndiLab, C.O.D.E., and the Geospatial Information Lab at Ewha Womans University. In addition to the above-mentioned groups as of May 2016, two additional groups, Dotface and Code Tree, joined the initiative in October and November 2017 respectively. Also in April 2017, the Seoul Social Economy Center joined as a civil society member.

Level of Public Input

The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Scale of participation for use in OGP. The table below shows the level of public influence on the implementation of the action plan. From left to right, features of participation are cumulative. In the spirit of OGP, most countries should aspire for “collaborate.”

Overall, it is evaluated that the level of public input during the implementation of Seoul’s action plans was at the level of “involve” in the IAP2 Scale. SMG informed the sub-group members under each commitment on how much progress was being made and “consulted” them on how to better implement the goals outlined in the action plans. Then it “involved” them by asking for suggestions and/or ideas for the implementation while providing feedback on how the SMG considered their input.

Through the sub-group, there was constant meeting and dialogue between the government and CSOs. For commitment #4, a CSO provided input. And it was taken into account by the government.

Table 7. Level of Public Input

Level of public input		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 government gave feedback on how public input was considered.	✓

Consult	The public could give inputs.	
Inform	The government provided the public with information on the action plan.	
No Consultation	No consultation	

²⁶ SMG's OGP website that serves as repository of documents is available here: <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03#list/1>.

²⁷ According to information provided by the SMG, they invited the following organizations to participate in the implementation of commitment one: Seoul City NPO Support Center, Hope Dongjak, Environment Justice, Environment and People, Green Transportation Movement, BOAZ (Coalition of college student groups on big data analysis), Green Seoul Citizen Council, Hongik University

²⁸ "OGP Timeline", Seoul's OGP website, <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub02>

Commitments

I. Analyze data to resolve urban problems in Seoul through cooperative governance with civil society.

Commitment Text

Identify the urban problems in Seoul and analyse the related data which can lead to solutions with multiple stakeholders and contribute to creating a data-driven social innovation ecosystem.

- *Together with CSOs and experts, identify urban problems in Seoul and analyse the related data to resolve them through cooperation.*
- *Design the system in which the data generated from the daily lives of the citizens can be safely stored without a breach of privacy.*
- *Try to apply the insight which is driven from the data analysis results into policy-making.*
- *Open the results of the data analysis to citizens in order to raise the level of citizen engagement in policy making.*

Milestones

- 1. Select and agree on the urban problems to analyze based on data and design data protection system with CSOs.*
 - 1.1. Agree on the urban problems to analyze by utilizing data with CSOs.*
 - 1.2. Together with CSOs, design data protection policies.*
 - 1.3. Based on the agreed data policies, realize the system which facilitates collection, storing and analysis of data.*
- 2. Analyze the data with CSOs and experts and disclose the results of the data analysis to citizens.*
 - 2.1. Analyze the data with CSOs and experts.*
 - 2.2. Open the results of the data analysis to citizens and try to apply the insight gained from data analysis in policy making.*

Commitment Overview

Status of completion	Substantial
Start date in action plan	January 2017
Intended completion date	December 2017
Responsible office	Data and Statistics Division in cooperation with all departments, Seoul Metropolitan Government
Did it open government?	Marginal

<p>Is it a STAR commitment?</p> <p>commitments are considered exemplary OGP commitments. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It must be specific enough that a judgment can be made about its potential impact. Starred commitments will have “medium” or “high” specificity. - The commitment’s language should make clear its relevance to opening government. Specifically, it must relate to at least one of the OGP values of Access to Information, Civic Participation, or Public Accountability. - The commitment would have a "transformative" potential impact if completely implemented. - Finally, the commitment must see significant progress during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of "substantial" or "complete" implementation. 	No
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Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				Completion				Did It Open Government?				
	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	Worsens	No change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
Overall			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓					✓				✓		
I. Select data and design data protection system			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓				✓							
I.2. Analyze data and disclose results			✓		✓	✓				✓						✓					

Commitment Aim

Overall Objective & Relevance

The City of Seoul’s first commitment, according to the action plan, addresses a need to improve systems for the collection of data that can be used by multiple stakeholders in the analysis and resolution of urban problems.

Prior to the formulation of this commitment, the SMG was already working on the creation of a “data-based social innovation ecosystem” where the government could benefit from citizens and CSO in the design of public policy and decision making. For example, during the second quarter of 2016, two *Big Data Campuses* were opened for anyone who wished to participate in analyzing real-life data on a range of issues. Through this experience, the SMG learned that the supply and demand of data is not balanced (CSO, research labs and citizens have little access to pertinent real-life data) and that collective intelligence is very useful for the formulation of public policies.²⁹ Additionally, during the formulation of the plan, strengthen the policies on protection of citizens’ privacy when publishing government datasets and with this in mind, the SMG decided to include this commitment, which aims to improve access to data and cooperation with multiple stakeholders in analyzing real-life related data to resolve various urban problems vis-à-vis transportation, environment, social welfare, safety, etc.

Specifically, the SMG proposes two main cumulative activities to reach this objective. First, they seek to engage with CSO in order to agree on specific urban problems that could be analyzed with the use of data, renew data protection policies by creating new guidelines and create a crowdsourcing platform that seeks solutions for the city. In regards to the new data policies, during the formulation of this commitment, the consultative group diagnosed that the issue of protection of privacy needs to be solved as to what data would be shared and analyzed with the public since certain data sets contain personal information.³⁰ Secondly, they propose to analyze the agreed upon data, make it public and “try to apply insight gained from the analysis in policy making”.

This commitment is relevant to the values of access to information, civic participation and technology and innovation, as it aims to analyze data together with citizens and share the result through pre-existing and newly-created platforms such as the big data campuses.

Specificity and Potential Impact

Although the action plan provides some verifiable activities like the design of new data protection policies, most of them require broad interpretation to be able to understand to what extent they could contribute to the commitment’s objective. For example, the action plan states that it would create an “ecosystem” that can be used for data sharing and policy-making; however, there is ambiguity as to what exactly the system means and what it would look like once created. The same goes for phrases like “try to apply the insight gained from data analysis in policy-making”, where it is not clear whether the outcomes will be easily and objectively measurable. Thus, this commitment is evaluated at medium specificity.

If fully implemented, it is envisaged that a mechanism will be established to compile and analyze data on matters pertaining to the everyday lives of citizens. However, Seoul already has a robust track record on publication of datasets for the use of citizens and businesses. One of the most active open data sites in Asia is the Open Data Plaza established in 2012 and managed by the SMG.³¹ This commitment could further encourage the use of data by promoting a formal space for citizens to request what data to be made public such as the two *Big Data Campuses* built in 2016. However, the commitment is limited in scope, considering the lack of specificity in language, which affects its potential impact. For example, as pointed out by an anonymous participant during the first meeting of the OGP Government/CSO consultative group, “the types of big data [to be published] by the SMG are not mentioned in the commitment, making it difficult to understand it”.³² More details regarding which type of data the Government commits to publish are necessary to be particularized in the commitment to assess the degree to which it would improve the analysis and resolution of urban problems. Thus, its potential

impact is evaluated as “minor”.

Completion

Substantial

By the end of the implementation period (December 2017), the commitment was substantially achieved. The evidence is available on the Seoul’s OGP website.³³

To implement the milestones, the SMG met with civil society organizations to select urban issues that needed to be solved. According to what is reported in the government repository, several issues were identified during these meetings. For example, the government held a meeting with the government Statistics Data Officer, representatives from the Green Transportation Movement and the Big Data Analysis Association to discuss and decide what data on transportation would be useful to publish for joint analysis. The group analyzed data on bicycle routes which was later made available for public consumption.³⁴ The SMG organized similar groups for the improvement of meal plan cards for children, and fine particle air pollution problems.³⁵ The aim of these analyses is to incorporate their conclusions in the government’s policy making process. All analytical information that was created as a result of this commitment was published in Seoul’s big data website: <http://bigdata.seoul.go.kr>. The SMG recognized several obstacles to collecting or using the data for analysis. Specifically, the found that 1) it contained personal information under the data protection system, 2) the data was of low quality or 3) private sector entities owned the data solicited.³⁶

However, the evidence shows that the SMG’s Data Statistics Division met most of what was expected from the milestones by selecting and agreeing on the urban problems to analyze, conducting the analysis and publishing it. However, there is no evidence to corroborate that the data protection policies in milestone I were designed. The system to facilitate collection, storing and analysis appears to have been done without specific guidelines.

Early results: did it open government?

Access to information: Marginal

Civic Participation: Marginal

The goal of the commitment was to enable citizens to contribute to the government’s policy making processes by jointly identifying priorities and analyzing data. To do so, it proposed to create a mechanism that would improve collection, storing and analysis of data on matters pertaining to the everyday lives of citizens.

Completing most of the commitment, the SMG, together with citizens, successfully identified and analyzed relevant issues. For instance, they decided on one particular urban problem: improvement of bicycle routes to reduce the amount of accidents. With the analysis of the bicycle routes data, the SMG was able to pull relevant statistics to determine which routes are most often used, which report the highest accident rates and which areas needs more amenities. Based on this, the SMG plans to further create measures to address the traffic-related accident rates. For example, to start, the government installed amenities on sites that were frequently visited by more cyclists. However, due to the short implementing period, no major changes in accident statistics have yet been recorded.

By the end of the implementation period, the commitment was still at the data analysis stage and awaits further deliberation on policy-making. A number of projects were currently under way including the

improvement of children's meal plan card, analyzing data of a non-profit organization 'Beautiful Store' in order to spread donation culture, analyzing comparative data between the amount of fine particle air pollution and traffic, and analyzing the effect of parks in the city on local economy, among others.

Moreover, it is important to highlight that the process to select and analyze data was criticized by a few participating CSOs. A civil society member participating in the sub-group for milestone #1 pointed out that while some parts of the milestones were completed, he felt that the implementation of these activities did not fulfil his expectations, considering that the government did not allow for actual collaboration in decision making. Because of this dissatisfaction, other sub-group members decided to no longer attend the consultative group meetings.³⁷ Additionally, in a survey responded by ten consultative group members, two other members of sub-group #1 also raised a communication issue with the government and gave a negative review that their ideas and suggestions were not reflected in the project. One person said that there is almost no communication on how much progress was being made and it was hard to set forth his views when the consultative group meeting took place occasionally. The two of them did not participate in the latest and fifth consultative group meeting on 23 October 2017.

Therefore, the IRM researcher considers that this commitment represented a positive step forward in improving access to information and civic participation, considering that some progress was made to offer better information from some of the subgroups created for data analysis. However, it is limited in scale, considering that the system to facilitate data collection, storage and analysis was not achieved and that civil society engagement has still seen major challenges to actually integrate CSO in policy making.

Recommendations

1. Improve the cooperation and communication with civil society.

Out of four commitments, this commitment received the most unfavorable feedback from the civil society in terms of the cooperation and communication. A number of civil society members mentioned that the low participation in the sub-group is due to the government's unproportionate influence compared to that of civil society's. Based on this feedback, SMG could adapt a bottom-up approach and better attend to the opinions from civil society as an equal partner by formalizing the process and providing clarity in the roles of each member of the subgroups. The government should consider carrying this commitment forward and collaborate with CSO to create the policy guidelines and the system to collect, store and analyze data.

2. Improve commitment text to ensure clarity of purpose.

The SMG could better articulate the specific outcome the commitment wishes to fulfill. Activities could be avoid ambiguities to specifically explain what is the result the commitment aims to achieve and what are the steps to meet that objective.

²⁹ Seoul's OGP action plan available in Korean and in English, <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03#view/6>

³⁰ From the second consultative group meeting minutes (page 2), Seoul's OGP website, 1 November 2016, <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03#view/5>

³¹ <https://knowledgedialogues.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/open-data-asia-09-2014.pdf>

³² From the first consultative group meeting minutes (page 8), Seoul's OGP website, 10 October 2016, <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03#view/4>

³³ Seoul's OGP Website: <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03-1#list/1>

³⁴ Seoul's OGP repository, description of project: <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03-1#view/229577>

³⁵ The results of each items are listed on the official OGP website: the analyses of bicycle routes (posting no. 23), improvement of meal plan cards for children (posting no. 24), and fine particle air pollution problem (posting no. 21) under the Commitment #I at <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03-I#list/I>

³⁶ Information provided to the researcher during the pre publication review period.

³⁷ This member was contacted for comments as he was the only member in the sub-group #I that participated in the latest consultative group meeting on 23 October 2017.

2. Strengthen the accountability of the Seoul Metropolitan Government by sharing public information with its citizens in a timely and swift manner.

Commitment Text

The Seoul Metropolitan Government aggregates administrative data that is fragmentarily scattered across departments, and then it structuralizes and visualizes the data to help its citizens to understand the work of the Seoul Metropolitan Government better, thus increasing its transparency and accountability.

- *Agree on what types of data set to open with CSOs and ways of communicating with them.*
 - *Consult with CSOs about open data sets, items, update frequency and agree on ways of communicating with them for further improvement.*
- *Agree on data visualization types and channels to provide the seamless and visualized data to citizens.*
 - *Decide whether selected data will be visualized as chart, map, figure or infographic, and find consensus on how they will be opened and which channel they will be opened through.*
- *Visualizing data and open it to citizens.*
 - *Develop content in the form of agreed visualization formats and open them to citizens through agreed channel.*

Milestones

- 1. Agree on what types of data set to open with CSOs and ways of communicating with them.*
- 2. Agree on data visualization types and channels to provide the visualized and seamless data to citizens.*
- 3. Visualizing data and opening it to citizens.*

Commitment Overview

Status of completion	Substantial
Start date in action plan	March 2017
Intended completion date	December 2017
Responsible office	Data and Statistics Division in cooperation with all departments, Seoul Metropolitan Government
Did it open government?	Major

<p>Is it a STAR commitment?</p> <p>Starred commitments are considered exemplary OGP commitments. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It must be specific enough that a judgment can be made about its potential impact. Starred commitments will have “medium” or “high” specificity. - The commitment’s language should make clear its relevance to opening government. Specifically, it must relate to at least one of the OGP values of Access to Information, Civic Participation, or Public Accountability. - The commitment would have a "transformative" potential impact if completely implemented. - Finally, the commitment must see significant progress during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of "substantial" or "complete" implementation. 	No
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Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				Completion				Did It Open Government?				
	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	Worsens	No change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
Overall		✓			✓	✓		✓			✓				✓					✓	
1. Agree on data sets and communications		✓			✓						✓					✓					
2. Agree on data visualization and channels		✓			✓			✓			✓					✓					
3. Develop content and publish		✓			✓	✓		✓			✓				✓						

Commitment Aim

Overall Objective & Relevance

This second commitment of Seoul's action plan, addresses the need to increase the publication of government data relevant for CSOs and to ease its access for citizens. According to the action plan, public information on the SMG's various policy indexes and projects has been provided in a disorderly and unsystematic manner. The Government believes that this limits citizen participation in policy-making processes, considering that they are only able to passively make complaints or suggestions.

Therefore, the objective of this commitment is to consult and agree with CSOs on how to aggregate, structuralize and visualize administrative data to help its citizens to understand the work of the SMG, thus increasing transparency and accountability. The SMG has planned a series of activities to reach this goal, including reaching consensus with CSOs on (1) what types of data sets to disclose (2) how to do so and (3) how to improve data visualization types and channels prior to sharing them with citizens.

This commitment is relevant to three of the OGP values, access to information, civic participation and technology and innovation for transparency. It means to increase and improve access to government data through a mechanism that can allow better visualization and structure. Additionally, it provides CSOs an opportunity to engage with governments with the aim of agreeing upon data that should be made public, according to their needs. While the SMG claims that the commitment will increase public officials' accountability, as stated defined by the IRM, only releasing information to citizens with no explicit feedback mechanism in place calling upon governments to justify their actions upon citizen criticism or request, is not relevant to public accountability. Finally, out of five OGP Grand Challenges, this commitment addresses the challenge No. 1 "Improving Public Services".

Specificity and Potential Impact

The IRM researcher evaluates this commitment to be of low specificity. The objective of providing structuralized data and promoting collaboration with CSOs in decision making is greatly ambitious, however it does not clearly provide a specific roadmap to achieve it. It also says that all departments across SMG will be involved in this endeavor; however, more explicit details should be added, such as specific division of works and clear work plan. In addition, it is hard to say that the activities are measurable in a clear and objective way to track progress during the year of implementation. The commitment does not provide clear expectations of what type of data should be published, what format will the discussions with CSOs take, which organizations would be invited to participate, among other key details.

NGOs like Open Net Korea, working at the national level on free speech, open government and other issues, have reported the adverse effect of undisclosed data on citizens' lives. For instance, in 2014, the Seoul's Transport Operation and Information Service Center stopped sharing train arrival times. Numerous apps that provided citizens real-time data were unable to continue operating. This decision was later reversed due to insistence from the public.³⁸ Issues like these could be prevented if the government offered CSOs a seat at the table to decide which data sets should be accessible and in what format. If this commitment was fully implemented, Seoul citizens could have a mechanism to influence decisions on the publication of data. Additionally, the commitment could allow citizens to more easily understand data sets and information, not through reports and papers, but through a visualized format, enabling them to more actively participate and raise their voice in the decision-making processes. For this reason, the IRM researcher considers this commitment to have a moderate potential impact, because it could significantly change the way citizens engage on this issue. However, because of the lack of specificity, it is difficult to read whether it could transform the status quo.

Completion

Substantial

The status of completion for commitment #2 is overall substantial.

Milestone #1, “Agree on what types of data set to open with CSOs and ways of communicating with them,” was completed on time. The evidence is recorded on the 2nd consultative group meeting on 22 March 2017 where the types of data and ways of communication are agreed on and decided.³⁹ For example....

Milestone #2, “Agree on data visualization types and channels to provide the seamless and visualized data to citizens,” was completed. The evidence is again recorded on the commitment sub-group’s meeting minutes which took place on 1 November 2017 where data visualization types and channels were decided upon.⁴⁰ For example... Its completion was delayed from its original expected date of July to November 2017. It was delayed due to the increasing needs for additional data analysis such as status data and analysis data such as disaster safety. The reason for delay also includes additional requests for citizen feedback on the shared contents on the dashboard that led to the extension of project period in which the relevant departments had to consult with each other and work on the further development of the dashboard.

Milestone #3, “Visualizing data and open it to citizens,” saw substantial progress. This milestone was still underway by the time the implementation period ended. The dashboard was functioning and operational to visualize the data sets on issues pertaining to various areas of citizens’ daily lives from traffic to emergency information. The IRM researcher confirmed that by December 2017, the SMG data website had created a space for stakeholders to upload data for it to be processed for better visualization. The site is currently active and has multiple data sets available.⁴¹

Early results: did it open government?

Access to information: Major

Civic Participation: Marginal

With the goal of working together with CSOs to provide information in an easy-to-visualize way, three milestones were to be finished by April, July and December 2017. As mentioned above, in the potential impact section, the commitment aimed for Seoul citizens to be able to more easily understand various data and information, not through reports and papers, but through a visualized format, enabling them to check on relevant real-time data. The implementation of this commitment led to a significant change in government practice. The new system is up and shares real-time data that, prior to the action plan, was only available to the mayor. The government has opened government-held, confidential data that was exclusively reported to the mayor and made now available to citizens.

SMG now discloses more information and improved the way the relevant data is being shown to the citizens with data visualization. The IRM researcher considers that use of technology and innovation to improve access to information is visible and effective.

The early outcome of this commitment also received a very positive media review. Susan Crawford from the Harvard Law School visited the Seoul City’s “Digital Office for Citizens and Mayor Platform” and stated that: “What’s new is that Seoul is also measuring and reporting on—in real time—a wide range of other indicators of the city’s health and well-being.” Referring to the dashboard, she further noted, “It was opened for the mayor to view in May 2017, and much of this information will be also made available to citizens

by the end of the year. The government is committed to opening up its data.”⁴²

Mayor Park Won-Soon’s commitment to this initiative is also highlighted, “He wants to show citizens that their local government is doing all it can to understand and improve their quality of life. This dashboard seemed like a potential green shoot of democracy—a city doing what it can to show citizens why government should be trusted and that their quality of life, including the quality of the air they breathe, the prices of the apples they eat, and the traffic jams they face daily, is important.”⁴³ This review sums up the main goal of this commitment and promotes its outcome and Seoul’s digital initiative to the international audience.

Recommendations

While this commitment was mostly completed with substantial results on open government, there are two recommendations that could be carried forward:

1. **Make action plan text as specific and detailed as possible.** The action plan states that all departments across SMG will be involved in this endeavor; however, future commitments could provide more explicit details by adding information such as the specific institutions and provide a clear work plan. It also seems that intuitive understanding of the commitment might be difficult for ordinary citizens upon reading the action plan text and it should be written in a plainer language.
2. **Promote the Digital Office for Citizens and Mayor Platform to benefit as many citizens as possible.** Along with the future opening of the Digital Office, the government should promote the work of the office as an effective way to reach as many citizens as possible. SMG has invested a considerable amount of budget and workforce to this endeavor, therefore, they could consider establishing a dissemination strategy for its promotion among citizens.

³⁸ “[Seoul Subway Train Arrival Time Info is Public Data, not Owned by Anyone!](http://opennetkorea.org/en/wp/856)” Open Net Korea, 18 March 2014, <http://opennetkorea.org/en/wp/856>. This article by Mr. Park Jihwan is an example from 2014 when the SMG put a ban to the use of real-time train arrival data for public and revoked its decision.

³⁹ The progress is recorded on the Seoul’s OGP website. <http://ogp.seoul.go.kr/sub03-1#list/2>

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ SMG Data website with data visualization platform: <https://data.seoul.go.kr/visual/>

⁴² “How Seoul is Reinventing Itself as a Techno-Utopia,” Wired, 6 September 2017, <https://www.wired.com/story/how-seoul-is-reinventing-itself-as-a-techno-utopia/>

⁴³ Ibid.

3. Promote crowdsourcing map-making by facilitating the environment for citizens to make their own urban-life maps.

Commitment Text

- *The Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) and its citizens prepare a process to make maps that contain necessary information about urban life together.*
 - *The process of discovering sites with stories or significance and producing maps based on citizens' knowledge.*
 - *The process of involving citizens in making security maps for their neighborhood and cooperating with the related districts.*
- *The SMG improves the Geospatial Information Platform to make it easier for use among its citizens.*
 - *The SMG reflects citizens' opinions to improve the functions of the platform from its planning stage.*
- *The SMG and its citizens realize useful urban life map services based on citizen participation.*

Milestones

- 1. Make a guideline for designing the urban life maps.*
 - 1.1 Production and dissemination of educational and training materials.*
 - 1.2 Setting up a process to select topics and themes for producing crowdsourcing maps.*
- 2. Improve the functions of the map-making system.*
 - 2.1 Announcing plans for maintenance and getting feedback from citizens*
 - 2.2 Renewing the platform.*
- 3. Promote the production and use of crowdsourcing maps.*

Commitment Overview

Status of completion	Complete
Start date in action plan	November 2016
Intended completion date	December 2017
Responsible office	Geospatial Information Division in cooperation with all departments, Seoul Metropolitan Government
Did it open government?	Marginal

<p>Is it a STAR commitment?</p> <p>Starred commitments are considered exemplary OGP commitments. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It must be specific enough that a judgment can be made about its potential impact. Starred commitments will have “medium” or “high” specificity. - The commitment’s language should make clear its relevance to opening government. Specifically, it must relate to at least one of the OGP values of Access to Information, Civic Participation, or Public Accountability. - The commitment would have a "transformative" potential impact if completely implemented. - Finally, the commitment must see significant progress during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of "substantial" or "complete" implementation. 	No
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Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				Completion				Did It Open Government?				
	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	Worsens	No Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
Overall			✓			✓		✓		✓						✓			✓		
1. Make a guideline for designing the urban life maps.			✓			✓		✓		✓						✓					
2. Improve the functions of the map-making system			✓			✓		✓		✓						✓					
3. Promote the production and use of crowdsourcing maps.			✓							✓						✓					

Commitment Aim

Overall Objective & Relevance

This commitment aims to encourage citizens to “make and share crowd-sourced maps which contain safety and living information about their community with other citizens, thus raising awareness of their community,” as stated in Seoul’s action plan. By participating in this process driven by citizens, they could utilize maps that match their needs.

The SMG has been working with a geographic information system (GIS) to produce a series of maps with datasets collected by government institutions, such as public transportation data, city infrastructure (government buildings, hospitals, schools, parks, etc.), among other. Since 2004, Seoul developed a website exclusively for maps created with GIS (gis.seoul.go.kr). Beyond offering government-made maps, it allowed citizens to create their own maps with public datasets.⁴⁴ Although the city has created approximately 100 maps in the course of the years, citizens have only made two; none of these maps have been widely used. The SMG has determined that a key reason for the lack of use is because the maps do not contain information that citizens need. As such, this commitment was created to expand the use of co-created maps on the city of Seoul. For example, the Government considers that citizens would find it useful to have maps that contain information on the locations of automated external defibrillator in their districts. This commitment tries to create a digital map-making platform that will enable citizens to make maps that match their needs, instead of continuing with the current top-down approach when it comes to the map-making process. In order to achieve this commitment, three milestones have been proposed: (1) making a guideline for designing the urban life maps, (2) improving the map-making system, and (3) promoting the production and use of crowdsourcing maps.

The creation of the digital platform is directly related to the OGP value of technology and innovation for transparency. Additionally, the commitment aims to improve data collection by calling on citizens to proactively participate in the map-making process. This data could be on safety issues, general living information or any other determined as necessary. Because it aims to allow broad consultation as defined by the International Association for Public Participation, the IRM researcher considers the commitment to be relevant to civic participation. In addition, out of five OGP Grand Challenges, this commitment addresses the challenge No. 1 “Improving Public Services” as the milestones and activities were elaborated to crowdsource information that can result useful to citizens in their daily lives and could potentially inform civil servants on urban problems in Seoul that should be tended to.

Specificity and Potential Impact

In terms of specificity, this commitment is coded as medium. It identifies a set of activities to be achieved by a specific timeline, however it is not clear how the deliverables would achieve the expected outcome of the commitment. The action plan does not provide details on what data is to be gathered and under which criteria it would be taken into consideration for further action.

The City of Seoul has often used geographic information systems for the display of government-held data. Considering that they have discovered that these are not frequently used, this commitment could help close the gap between citizens’ data needs and government data supply, potentially increasing the use of maps. For this reason, providing citizens with a platform to decide on what these maps should include and what not could be a step towards improving access to data and gathering useful information. However, the lack of specificity limits this commitment’s potential impact, considering it is unclear what is the meaning of ‘urban life maps’ and how this could actually ensure better quality of useful information

to improve policy making and improve services. Therefore, this commitment is considered to have a minor potential impact.

Completion

Complete

The status of completion for commitment #3 is overall substantial.

Milestone #1, “*Make a guideline for designing the urban life maps,*” was completed by October 2017. The Geospatial Information Division created a guide that was published in the Seoul Map-Tagging website.⁴⁵ This guide to tagging in Seoul is in PDF format and is displayed next to a section with frequently asked questions to support users in map tagging.⁴⁶

Milestone #2, “*Improve the functions of the map-making system,*” was completed. The SMG used the consultative group to announce, discuss and get feedback from CSO groups. The main meeting took place on 7 November 2017, where the geospatial information platform was introduced and it was discussed on how to improve the Seoul Map-Tagging website.⁴⁷

Milestone #3, “*Promote the production and use of crowdsourcing maps,*” was completed. The Government promoted the information on map production at OGP Consultative Group meetings. Also, the Geospatial Information Division ran and continues to carry-out an ‘Online Citizen Participatory Group’ for this commitment consisting of ten citizens that participate in map-making and online promotional activities. Finally, the SMG identified during the implementation of this commitment that the organizational structure and mandate of the government at the city level limited access to citizens. Therefore, they decided to collaborate with district offices and universities to engage with residents and nongovernmental organizations. They worked with the Nowon and Geumcheon District Offices, with the University of Seoul and Kookim University, the Western Seoul Police Agency and a Korean startup called Connectus. Citizens from these districts and students of the universities mentioned participated in the creation of maps. One example is the Nowon District’s “Maps made with citizens”, which are available online.⁴⁸

However, the IRM researcher considers that the implementation of this commitment lacked coordination between government and CSO members of the consultative group during the development of the system itself. According to interviews with the IRM researcher, CSO had higher expectations for the fulfillment of this commitment, especially regarding the target goal for milestones 2 (improving the functions of the map-making system). Civil society groups have set a higher target, to enable citizens to freely use the citizen-created maps by the end 2017 and for the system to reach a much wider audience not restricted to the Consultative Group and the Online Citizen Participatory group.

Early Results: did it open government?

Access to information: Marginal

Civic Participation: Marginal

This commitment started under the context in which citizens should be able to create a user-friendly and citizen-created maps that display the information they choose to see. In terms of potential impact, as mentioned above, the citizens who own the best information when it comes to their neighborhood and its livability will be able to produce the most useful maps that will allow themselves and fellow

citizens to make the maximum use out of. Although the commitment was completed by the December 2017 deadline, it only contributed to opening government in a marginal way.

Citizens now have a system to create their own maps, and it was used to do so. A number of actual digital maps have been produced, for example, one created with respect to the children's safety (Seocho District), snow removal status information (Nowon District) and locations of automated external defibrillators (Nowon District). However, throughout the process, the CSOs consider the government did not meet the expectation to collaborate with CSOs and citizens in the development of the system itself. The spaces created for feedback from stakeholders were not considered open and conducive. According to a survey conducted by the IRM researcher, stakeholders in the sub group in charge to implement this commitment did not consider the process to be inclusive.

Additionally, the promotion of the system was limited to those in the consultative group and the citizens in the participatory group. Therefore, even though the system functioned well and allowed for the participation of citizens in map creation (crowdsourcing information), it was not yet available for widespread use by December 2017.

Recommendations

1. Promote the map-making platform more widely and effectively, in collaboration with CSO.

This initiative is very creative and SMG has invested a substantial amount of regular budget by outsourcing the production of the platform, yet the usage by citizens is very low as of November 2017. As mentioned in the Online Citizen Participatory Group meeting on 7 November 2017, SMG could attract more users through diverse means including using popular Korean portal sites such as Naver and Daum to show the map-making platform and various maps on the main page. It could also actively use social media such as Facebook to promote the initiative to the young generation.

2. Strengthen participation from civil society.

In addition to the three groups, namely Gov/CSO consultation group for the general OGP process, sub-group for this commitment and additional Online Citizen Participatory Group, a wider civil society should participate in the endeavor.

⁴⁴ Screenshot of Seoul's website (gis.seoul.go.kr) in July 2004. The screenshot was recovered using 'Wayback Machine'. To access: <https://web.archive.org/web/20040701161858/http://gis.seoul.go.kr:80/index.jsp>

⁴⁵ Seoul Map-Tagging website, <http://map.seoul.go.kr/smgis/webs/main/main.do>

⁴⁶ The PDF guide to map tagging can be downloaded here:

http://map.seoul.go.kr/smgis/webs/main/main.do?mode=division¬ice_id=286&menutype=1#

⁴⁷ Please refer to the file [Seoul_Commitment3_Milestone2.pdf] in the IRM repository:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1QMeyvOaBmmK4tAtU5MBVwXQpVUDp2Zc->

⁴⁸ http://www.nowon.kr/map/map_main.jsp?map_id=MAP_02

4. Provide more transparent meeting information and minutes.

Commitment Text

Increase the accessibility of meeting information and the corresponding minutes of the Seoul Metropolitan Government and its related sub-committees by systematically re-organizing the meeting information disclosure service.

- Improve functions such as adding a separate menu to easily view committee meeting information related to the Seoul Metropolitan Government policy decision making, improving organization format and disclosure of meeting lists.*
- Promote positive views on council department meeting disclosure by establishing meeting disclosure guidelines, staff education, and promotion to improve meeting disclosure rates.*
- These will improve citizens' right to know, transparency and accountability of the Seoul Metropolitan Government and eventually increase citizens' interest in city administration which may increase policy participation and the role of citizens.*

Milestones

- 1. Produce and distribute meeting opening guidelines and encourage application of the guideline.*
- 2. Improve functionality of the meeting opening website.*
 - 2.1. Opening the design and update plans and gathering user opinions*
 - 2.2 Figuring out improvements and complete website renewal*
- 3. Hold open committee meetings to improve public servants' awareness through education and promotion.*

Commitment Overview

Status of completion	Complete
Start date in action plan	October 2016
Intended completion date	December 2017
Responsible office	Information Policy Division in cooperation with all departments, Seoul Metropolitan Government
Did it open government?	Marginal

<p>Is it a STAR commitment?</p> <p>Starred commitments are considered exemplary OGP commitments. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It must be specific enough that a judgment can be made about its potential impact. Starred commitments will have “medium” or “high” specificity. - The commitment’s language should make clear its relevance to opening government. Specifically, it must relate to at least one of the OGP values of Access to Information, Civic Participation, or Public Accountability. - The commitment would have a "transformative" potential impact if completely implemented. - Finally, the commitment must see significant progress during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of "substantial" or "complete" implementation. 	No
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Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance				Potential Impact				Completion				Did It Open Government?				
	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	Worsens	No change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
Overall			✓		✓						✓					✓			✓		
1. Produce and apply meeting opening guidelines			✓		✓						✓					✓					
2. Improve functionality of the meeting opening website			✓		✓						✓					✓					
3. Open committee meetings		✓			✓						✓					✓					

Commitment Aim

Overall Objective & Relevance

This commitment was proposed by Mr. Kang Sung-gook, a representative of the Center for Freedom of Information and Transparent Society, during the action plan formulation process. It addresses the issue of citizens' right to know and right to information. The SMG is organized in general offices, bureaus and divisions. In total, there are 191 committees integrated in the structure of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG), grouped in eleven categories: health, economy, transportation and construction, culture and tourism, welfare, tax and finance, safety, women and family, housing and urban planning, administration and others, and environment. These committees are in charge of making public policy in their specific area.⁴⁹ Meeting information and minutes of these committees are not disclosed in a standardized manner, making it difficult for citizens to access information on government decision making. Accordingly, there is a lack of sufficient system that provides information on meeting minutes of various city committees in the city of Seoul.⁵⁰ As a result, according to the action plan and civil society actors, the citizens have difficulty in enjoying their right to information. The commitment addresses this problem by creating a standardized meeting disclosure guidelines and systems. In order to achieve this commitment, various activities have been planned and being implemented such as the production and distribution of the disclosure guidelines, improvement of disclosure websites, and awareness-raising education for public officials.

The SMG states that the overall objective is to “increase the availability of information about committee meetings in which Seoul’s policies are discussed to improve citizens’ right-to-know and strengthen transparency and accountability of SMG.” Thus, this commitment is relevant to the OGP value of access to information, considering that it aims to increase the amount of government-held information. In addition, among four OGP Grand Challenges, this commitment is related to the challenge No. 2 “Increasing Public Integrity” as disclosure of reliable information could potentially prevent corruption and strengthen public ethics in the governance.

Specificity and Potential Impact

In terms of specificity, this commitment received a “medium” mark as specific targets (all councils and committee under SMG) and methods (disclosure of all meeting information and minutes on the updated websites) are laid out in a clear language. The objective and timeline are also specific. However, the commitment does not specify what type of information would be requested of committees to publish, which limits its measurability.

As pointed out by an expert and CSO representative from the Center for Freedom of Information and Transparent Society, the way that the SMG currently shares the information is ‘one-sided’, making it difficult to understand all government information and data in a holistic way. In addition, when searching for specific information, “[the data] is provided in a bulletin-style format, forcing individual users to rely on search results and not being able to look for certain information in the way they want.”⁵¹ As such, many users only retrieve the information that shows up in search results, which limits the accessibility of the new data.

If fully implemented, it could bring about a moderate change in government practice or in the lives of Seoul citizens as they would potentially be allowed to look up important government-held information relevant to their lives or interests on any city council meetings on the Internet. However, the impact is limited in scope as it does call for the installment of a strict rule and a detailed explanation of

consequences when minutes and other information from the closed meetings are not shared with the public.

Completion Complete

The status of completion for commitment #4 is overall complete.

Milestone #1, “*Produce and distribute meeting opening guidelines and encourage application of the guideline,*” is completed. The evidence is written in the 2017 Information Disclosure Manual (pages 111-131).⁵² In terms of timing assessment, it was delayed from its expected month of March to September 2017.

Milestone #2, “*Improve functionality of the meeting opening website,*” was on time and completed in September and October meeting the October deadline. The actual webpage can be found on the Seoul Information Communication Plaza website.⁵³ For example, the access route to find meeting information, it required to click eight separate menus and submenus previously. After the implementation, it now takes five steps. However, civil society organizations pointed out that SMG should disclose more high-level meeting minutes and recent information. Nevertheless, although there are still improvements to be made, this milestone was completed as was written in the action plan text.

Milestone #3, “*Hold open committee meetings to improve public servants’ awareness through education and promotion,*” was completed.

During the year of implementation, actual changes on the Seoul’s information disclosure website have been made where it became easier to look for particular information on the Seoul Information Communication Plaza website. First of all, the steps taken to find meeting minutes has been reduced from eight clicks to five clicks from the initial access to the website. Second, the information and results of the same meetings have now been grouped so that it’s easier to locate minutes of a certain meeting. Thirdly, the section “meeting information” has now been listed on the top menu, instead of being under a sub menu. All these changes have been documented in an official document submitted by SMG.⁵⁴

It is important to note that the lack of specificity of this commitment led to opposed views on what information should have been disclosed as a result of this commitment. SMG and civil society made conflicting evaluations for the completion statuses, since CSOs considered the government should have further improved the website and disclose more information. However, as written in the action plan, the IRM researcher considers that milestones were fulfilled. The low ambition stymied the results and possible improvements in open government, as explained below.

Early results: did it open government?

Access to information: Marginal

Under the aim of increasing citizens’ right to information by disclosing more council meeting minutes, three milestones were to be finished by March, October and December 2017 respectively. As mentioned above, in terms of potential impact, it will bring about a marginal change as citizens would be allowed to look up any information relevant to their lives or interests on any city council meetings in a more streamlined design. The government practice has changed in a way that it is opening up more information on city council meetings and it encouraged its officials to follow the initiative. However, it did not meet the standards of CSO participants.

For instance, completion of Milestone #2 improved the functionality of the main information disclosure website, however, according to CSO in the sub group for the implementation of this commitment, there is still need for much improvement. It was mentioned during the fifth consultative group meeting that the civil society's request for the strengthened access to city council meeting minutes in accordance with the ordinance on information disclosure has not been made and much is missing. The latest information made public on division chiefs meetings and other regular senior official meetings is from 2013 and 2014, thus more recent information should be disclosed. It was also pointed out by civil society members that the main meeting minutes of high importance must be disclosed to make effective changes. Because of this, the IRM researcher considers that this commitment only led to marginal changes. Much has yet to be done, however, citizens now have access to meeting minutes regarding issues that affect them.

Recommendations

1. Engage with civil society to determine the range of information to be disclosed under the commitment.

For the IRM researcher, as shown on the completion assessment, there is still a big gap between the government and civil society as to how much information and what types of meetings should be disclosed to the public. SMG should decide on the range of information by mutual consent and determine it specifically through an active dialogue with civil society.

2. Promote the information disclosure website to general citizens more effectively.

While recommendation 1 is more relevant to civil society groups that work on information disclosure and government accountability, recommendation 2 concerns ordinary citizens that have little understanding of how government is opening up its meeting information. SMG should promote the change in government practice to benefit the citizens and encourage them to visit, search, and find useful meeting information that they once had no access to.

⁴⁹ The complete list of committees is available on the Seoul Information Communication Plaza website.

http://opengov.seoul.go.kr/proceeding/clas_all?srchType=clasNm&p_cate_id=&items_per_page=50&search=

⁵⁰ While the Seoul Information Communication Plaza (<http://opengov.seoul.go.kr>) serves to provide the City's internal meeting and committee information including the minutes, it is hard to navigate the system and difficult for citizens to access the data without prior knowledge.

⁵¹ Article by Ms. Jin Im Jung at a Korean NGO, the Center for Freedom of Information and Transparent Society, 7 September 2017, <http://www.opengiok.or.kr/4521?category=218086> The same article was included in the Seoul Metropolitan Government's 2016 Information Disclosure Annual Report, available at <http://opengov.seoul.go.kr/paper/13124456#pdfview>

⁵² 2017 Seoul City Information Disclosure Manual, uploaded on 24 February 2017, <http://opengov.seoul.go.kr/public/11261699> and the Seoul City internal document from mayor that announces the opening (11 September 2017) of the improved webpage of the Seoul Information Communication Plaza website (5 September 2017) <http://opengov.seoul.go.kr/sanction/13166958>

⁵³ Seoul Information Communication Plaza website <http://opengov.seoul.go.kr> and Seoul Information Communication Plaza, meeting information disclosure <http://opengov.seoul.go.kr/proceeding/list>

⁵⁴ Please refer to the file [Seoul_Commitment4_Additional Info.hwp] on the IRM Library"

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QMeyvOaBmmK4tAtU5MBVwXQpVUDp2Zc-> and see Seoul City internal document that reports on the additional training for officials on meeting information disclosure which took place on 29 August 2017 (1 September 2017) <http://opengov.seoul.go.kr/sanction/13134554>

Method and Sources

The IRM report is written by well-respected governance researchers. All IRM reports undergo a process of quality control to ensure 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 assessments of progress put out by civil society, the government, the private sector, or international organizations.

The first and primary objective of the IRM is to verify completion of action plan commitments and the level of participation. Beyond this, the IRM seeks to assess potential impact and early changes in behavior around open government. There are two intended outcomes: accountability and learning. The method follows these aims. A second, important function of the IRM is to act as a “listening post” for the concerns of civil society.

Each report undergoes a 4-step review and quality control process:

- Staff review: IRM staff reviews the report for grammar, readability, content, and adherence to IRM methodology
- 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 realization of OGP values through the action plan as a whole
- Pre-publication review: Government and select civil society organizations (at the discretion of the researcher) are invited to provide comments on content of the draft IRM report
- Public comment period: The public is invited to provide comments on the content of the draft IRM report.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Each IRM researcher is required to hold at least one public information-gathering event. Care should be taken in inviting stakeholders outside of the “usual suspects” list of invitees already participating in existing processes. Supplementary means may be needed to gather the inputs of stakeholders in a more meaningful way (e.g. online surveys, written responses, follow-up interviews). Additionally, researchers perform specific interviews with responsible agencies when the commitments require more information than provided in the self-assessment or accessible online. If IRM researchers wish to substitute a stakeholder meeting with another format, they should communicate this to IRM staff.

On 14 September 2017, a consultation meeting with four members of civil society was held; the participants were among those working actively in the Gov/CSO consultative group.⁵⁵ An in-depth interview was carried out in a focus-group format where separate written survey consisting of fourteen questions was also conducted. In this face-to-face meeting, four participants shared their experiences and thoughts on the implementation of four commitments in an honest and genuine manner.

On 25 October 2017, online survey with the deadline of 1 November was sent out via email to eight other civil society members of the consultative group. Out of eight, two responded and shared their experience. Those that have not responded to the email were contacted by phone on 13 November and

two additional persons responded and sent their opinion the same day. In the end, a total of ten civil society members answered the survey.

While the researcher tried to collect opinions from people outside the civil society, with almost no participation of ordinary citizens in the Seoul's OGP process and their low understanding, no attempt was made to invite random citizens.

Document Library

The IRM will use a publicly accessible Google (or equivalent) library. The IRM team will create a page for each entity and send the researcher detailed instructions for how to upload important documents used in their research. Then, the researcher will be able to use those website permalinks to cite in the text of their report.

The document library for Seoul, Korea contains a total of 12 files on the implementation from the SMG in HWP and PDF formats. Additionally, the survey results of civil society consultation is also available in doc format. (Please see below "Survey-Based Data" section for details.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QMeyvOaBmmK4tAtU5MBVwXQpVUDp2Zc->

Survey-Based Data

Carrying out a survey can be helpful in gauging the interest of stakeholders in OGP commitments. However, it is not expected that a researcher would carry out this survey. If an online survey was carried out, this section provides links and provides the results of the survey, including number of respondents and findings. If no survey was carried out, the IRM researcher will delete this subsection.

Ten members of civil society who are well aware of the Seoul's OGP process responded to the fourteen questions in the survey. It consists of three sections: A) Background questions, B) Questions on the four commitments, and C) Seoul's participation in the OGP's subnational pilot program.

⁵⁵ The list of participants is as follows: Mr. Park Jihwan (Open Net Korea, also the representative of the consultative group), Mr. Lim Young-Je (Code Namu), Ms. Jun Jee Eun (Indi Lab), and Mr. Oh Wonseok (C.O.D.E.).