Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Sweden End-of-Term Report 2016-2018

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Overview: Sweden

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) End-of-Term Report 2016-2018

Sweden's third action plan led to greater access to public service information as well as the publication of datasets through the Digital First programme. However, commitments to improve foreign aid transparency and to create dialogue with civil society were less impactful. Future action plans could improve with the inclusion of more ambitious commitments and wider consultations during development and implementation.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary international initiative that aims to secure commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) carries out a review of the activities of each OGP-participating country. This report summarizes the results of the period July 2016 to June 2018.

Initially, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinated the OGP process in Sweden, but this role was taken over by the Ministry of Finance in June 2017. Only a few civil society organizations (CSOs) were involved in the action plan development. During the implementation period, consultations largely occurred in other, non-OGP-specific forums on aid and government digital services.

Sweden's third action plan saw relatively high levels of completion and shows clear relevance to OGP values. Most commitments have contributed to opening up government in Sweden, albeit marginally.

At the time of writing this report (September 2018), Sweden has not presented a new action plan.[1] The Ministry of Finance did not publish self-assessment reports for either the first year or the second year of the action plan.

Table 1: At a Glance		
	Mid-term	**End of term**
Number of Commitments	4	
Level of Completion		
Completed	0	1
Substantial	3	2
Limited	1	1
Not Started	0	0
Number of Commitments with...		
Clear Relevance to OGP Values	4	4
Transformative Potential Impact	1	1
Substantial or Complete Implementation	3	3
All Three (⊙)	1	1
Did It Open government?		
Major		**1**
Outstanding		**0**
Moving Forward		
Number of Commitments Carried Over to Next Action Plan		*N/A*

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[1] Email communication from Sumbat Sarkis, the Ministry of Finance, 14 September 2018.

This report was prepared by Alina Ostling, Independent Researcher.

Consultation with Civil Society during Implementation

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

Sweden did not hold any OGP-specific consultations during the implementation of the action plan. Some consultations regarding topics included in the action plan, such as aid effectiveness and digital services, took place in other, non-OGP-specific, forums.[1] However, these meetings did not address all the OGP action plan activities. During implementation of the action plan, the government offered stakeholders the possibility to comment on some of the commitment activities but did not provide feedback on how inputs were considered.

Table 2: Consultation during Implementation

Regular Multistakeholder Forum	Midterm	End of Term
1. Did a forum exist?	No	No
2. Did it meet regularly?	No	No

Table 3: Level of Public Influence during Implementation

The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) "Spectrum of Participation" to apply to OGP.[2] This spectrum shows the potential level of public influence on the contents of the action plan. In the spirit of OGP, most countries should aspire for "collaborative."

Level of Public Influence during Implementation of Action Plan		Midterm	End of Term
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		

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[1] For example, the MFA has a list of 78 NGOs from various sectors, which are regularly invited to participate in the framework of the "Joint Commitments between Swedish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs" (see Commitment 3 for more details). The government webpage summarising the process and containing links to relevant documents is available at: http://www.regeringen.se/artiklar/2017/05/Regeringens-och-svenska-civilsamhallesorganisationers-gemensamma-ataganden-for-starkt-dialog-och-samverkan-inom-utvecklingssamarbetet/. Moreover, the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority (Lantmäteriet) in the framework of its remit as pilot agency (see Commitment 1 for more details) has consulted a wide range of stakeholders (municipalities, authorities, and representatives of system suppliers and of the construction sector) through workshops and over 20 study visits to gain knowledge about good examples of digitalization.
[2] For more information on the IAP2 Spectrum, see: http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf

About the Assessment

The indicators and method used in the IRM research can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual.[1]

One measure, the "starred commitment" (✪), deserves further explanation due to its particular interest to readers and usefulness for encouraging a race to the top among OGP-participating countries. Starred commitments are considered exemplary OGP commitments. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:

- Starred commitments will have "medium" or "high" specificity. A commitment must lay out clearly defined activities and steps to make a judgment about its potential impact.
- The commitment's language should make clear its relevance to opening government. Specifically, it must relate to at least one of the OGP values of Access to Information, Civic Participation, or Public Accountability.
- The commitment would have a "transformative" potential impact if completely implemented.[2]
- The government must make significant progress on this commitment during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of "substantial" or "complete" implementation.

Starred commitments can lose their starred status if their completion falls short of substantial or full completion at the end of the action plan implementation period.

Sweden's action plan contained one starred commitment: Commitment 1 (Implementation program: Digital First).

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

About "Did It Open Government?"

To capture changes in government practice, the IRM introduced a new variable "Did It Open Government?" in end-of-term reports. This variable attempts to move beyond measuring outputs and deliverables to looking at how the government practice has changed as a result of the commitment's implementation.

As written, some OGP commitments are vague and/or not clearly relevant to OGP values but achieve significant policy reforms. In other cases, commitments as written appear relevant and ambitious, but fail to open government as implemented. The "Did It Open Government" variable attempts to captures these subtleties.

The "Did It Open Government?" variable assesses changes in government practice using the following spectrum:

- Worsened: Government openness worsens as a result of the commitment.
- Did not change: No changes in government practice.
- Marginal: Some change, but minor in terms of its effect on level of openness.
- Major: A step forward for government openness in the relevant policy area but remains limited in scope or scale.
- Outstanding: A reform that has transformed "business as usual" in the relevant policy area by opening government.

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

Readers should keep in mind limitations. IRM end-of-term reports are prepared only a few months after the implementation cycle is completed. The variable focuses on outcomes that can be observed in government openness practices at the end of the two-year implementation period. The report and

the variable do not intend to assess impact because of the complex methodological implications and the timeframe of the report.

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[1] IRM Procedures Manual, http://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-irm.
[2] The International Experts Panel changed this criterion in 2015. For more information, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/node/5919.

Commitment Implementation

General Overview of Commitments

As part of OGP, countries are required to make commitments in a two-year action plan. The tables below summarize the completion level at the end of term and progress on the "Did It Open Government?" metric. For commitments that were complete at the midterm, the report will provide a summary of the progress report findings but focus on analysis of the 'Did It Open Government?' variable. For further details on these commitments, please see the Sweden IRM progress report (2018).

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

Table 4: Assessment of Progress by Commitment

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Did It Open Government?				
	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	(Midterm / End of Term)	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsened	Did Not Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
✪1. Digital First programme			✔		✔	✔						✔	Midterm			✔				✔		
													End of Term			✔				✔		
2. Public administration document access			✔		✔			✔		✔			Midterm			✔					✔	
													End of Term				✔				✔	
3. Aid effectiveness		✔			✔	✔					✔		Midterm		✔					✔		
													End of Term		✔					✔		
4. CSO dialogue			✔			✔					✔		Midterm			✔				✔		
													End of Term			✔				✔		

✪1. Implementation programme: Digital First

Commitment Text:

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

Main activities:

- *Improve whole-of-government governance of open government activities. This includes a new unit dedicated to eGovernment and improved frameworks for follow-up and benchmarks.*

- *Specific government assignments to seven pilot agencies in four sectors that need extra governance. The following value chains have been targeted: smarter planning and building process, a smarter food chain, smarter use of environmental information and simplified entrepreneurship. The agencies are required to work on open data, data maturity and open innovation.*

- *The pilot agencies are called to the Government's council for the digital transformation of the public sector. The council holds an 'open council' once a year to take in advice from digital change leaders in civil society, and from businesses and citizens.*

- *An agreement has been made with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions to strengthen collaboration around eGovernment and open government. The agreement includes a commitment by the Association to appoint pilot municipalities in the four targeted sectors.*

- *Spontaneous activities in terms of labs, hackathons, tech-fests and innovation hubs emerging from Sweden's current digital transformation are being supported by e.g. Vinnova.*

Responsible institution: Ministry of Finance

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

Start date: 2015   **End date:** 2018

Editorial note: This commitment text has been shortened for reasons of space. For full text, please see the Swedish action plan 2016-2018:
https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/sweden-third-national-action-plan-2016-2018.

Commitment Overview	Specificity	OGP Value Relevance (as written)	Potential Impact	Completion	Midterm	Did It Open Government?
					End of Term	

	None	Low	Medium	High	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsened	Did Not Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
✪1. Overall			✔		✔	✔						✔			✔ / ✔				✔		

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

Commitment Aim

Public agencies in Sweden are generally advanced in digital public services. However, there is an increasing polarization among the less digitally mature and more digitally mature agencies. The same is true among municipalities.[2] One key challenge is to improve digital management[3] and coordination.[4] To this end, the government launched a program for digital innovation in the public sector called "Digital First" that runs from 2015 through 2018.[5] More specifically, this commitment set out to:[6]

- Develop smarter and more innovative digital services by mandating seven pilot agencies in four sectors to work on open data, data maturity, and open innovation.[7]
- Improve governance by establishing new bodies to support digitization, including a forum for multilevel coordination, the "Council for the digital transformation of the public sector," established in 2015.[8] The Council consists of representatives from government agencies,[9] municipalities and county councils, including the pilot agencies mentioned above. Its remit is to discuss strategic issues, identify challenges during the implementation of "Digital First" and propose targeted measures to the Minister of Public Administration.[10] [11]

Status
Midterm: Substantial

This commitment was substantially completed by the midterm review. All seven pilot agencies submitted their first reports to the government in August 2016 (Milestone 1.1), and the final reports (Milestone 1.2) are due on 28 February 2019. The Council for the digital transformation of the public sector was expected to meet four times per year (Milestone 1.3). However, it met only twice.[12] The first meeting occurred in November 2016 during the DigiGov conference, and addressed the outcomes of the Open Council (see Milestone 1.4). The second meeting took place in May 2017, where Council members discussed (i) the government-commissioned report on effective management of digital services; (ii) a proposal to consolidate responsibility for related issues in a single body;[13] and (iii) a joint target for the development of the digital infrastructure.[14]

The first yearly Open Council (Milestone 1.4) in November 2016 at the annual DigiGov "Top Leader Forum for a Smarter Sweden"[15], was conducted in a workshop format and focused on citizen-centred development. The Council then discussed feedback during its regular meeting of the Council

for the digital transformation (see above).[16] For more information, see the 2016–2018 IRM midterm report.[17]

End of term: Substantial

The final reports from the pilot agencies (Milestone 1.2) are not due until February 2019. However, one of the agencies, the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority (Lantmäteriet), submitted its final report in January 2018.[18]

The Council for the digital transformation of the public sector was expected to meet four times per year (Milestone 1.3). The Council held three meetings during the end-of-term report timeframe (see below). The fourth meeting scheduled for 2018 did not take place due to national elections.[19]

    (1) in September 2017, to discuss the budget bill on the digitization of the public sector;

    (2) in January 2018, to discuss the OECD review of Sweden's digital management and the feedback from the Open Council held in December 2017, and the legal conditions for the coordination of digital management.

    (3) in May 2018, to discuss the practical arrangement of the new Agency for Digital Government, and the government assignment around basic data and information exchange.

The yearly Open Council meeting (Milestone 1.4) took place at the DigiGov on 5 December 2017 and focused on the management of digitization.[20] The aim was to produce concrete proposals for digital transformation.[21] Approximately 200-300 participants representing the state, municipal, private and civil society sectors engaged in the four Open Council thematic workshops:[22] (1) improved governance of Sweden's digitization, (2) government's commitment to open data and data-driven innovation, (3) the Innovation Lab, and (4) collaborative initiatives and digital infrastructure.[23]

The IRM researcher participated in the 2017 Open Council workshop and noted several drawbacks, including that most ideas were lost in the process. On the positive side, however, all participants had the opportunity to express their ideas in small working groups, and the participants were competent and listened to each other.

Considering that Milestones 1.1, 1.3, and 1.4 can be considered as completed, the IRM researcher concludes that the commitment is generally substantially complete by the end of the action plan period.

Did It Open Government?
Access to Information: Marginal
Civic Participation: Did Not Change

Sweden has faced issues with digital management and coordination for many years. A recent follow-up study by the Swedish National Financial Management Authority (ESV) found that progress towards digitization in the public sector varies significantly across different state and municipal organizations with a few excelling, while the majority lags behind.[24] According to the action plan, this commitment aimed to facilitate greater access to information through the re-use of open data, and allow external actors to provide government digital services.

The assignments given to the pilot agencies in the framework of the Digital First program have led to some improvements in terms of access to information. Several agencies have released substantial amounts of open data. For example, in September 2017, Lantmäteriet released open geographic data according to the CC0 license[25] (meaning that all rights are waived),[26] and the Environment Agency released data in July 2018 that should facilitate navigation in protected areas (for example, bike trails and restrooms), which are free to use in proprietary applications.[27] However, Lantmäteriet suggests that important obstacles remain, including a fragmented and partly analogous information supply. This impedes access to information, leads to unnecessary duplication of work for stakeholders, and to uneven development and progress.[28]

The Open Council directly targeted the OGP value of civic participation. The Open Council on 5 December 2017 somewhat improved opportunities for stakeholders to inform the Council on digital transformation. Feedback from participants was documented by the workshop chairs and discussed by the Council,[29] but the participation process was not fully effective (see the above section).

Carried Forward?

At the time of writing this report (September 2018), Sweden had not finished developing its fourth action plan. Based on desk research and interviews with stakeholders, the IRM researcher recommends improving national coordination in access to basic public sector information,[30] and to invest in skills necessary for public sector digitization.[31]

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[1] The e-government strategy in Swedish: Med medborgaren i centrum, Regeringens strategi för en digitalt samverkande statsförvaltning Diarienummer:
N2012.37, http://www.regeringen.se/informationsmaterial/2012/12/n2012.37
[2] Magnus Enzell (Ministry of Finance), comment to the draft IRM report, December 2018.
[3] Swedish National Audit Office, "Riksrevisionens" RiR 2016:14.
[4] "Communications" government proposals for the state budget for 2017 to Parliament, submitted to Parliament 20 September 2016 (PROP. 2016/17:1 UTGIFTSOMRÅDE 22) 100–102,
http://www.regeringen.se/4a6638/contentassets/e926a751d9eb4c978c4d892c659ebc8e/utgiftsomrade-22-kommunikationer
[5] "Digital first" (ESV, 19 Dec. 2017), http://www.esv.se/effektiv-statsforvaltning/digitalisering/digitalt-forst/
[6] The aim of the commitments, http://www.naringsbloggen.se/digitalt-forst/2016/04/28/ett-program-for-digital-fornyelse-av-det-offentliga-sverige/ The "Digitalt forst" blog by the Ministry of Finance seems to have been discontinued and the link is no longer valid.
[7] Mehmet Kaplan, "Now we digitise the public Sweden" (Government Offices, 29 Oct. 2015),
http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2015/10/nu-digitaliserar-vi-det-offentliga-sverige/
[8] The council for the digital transformation of the public sector was established on 29 October 2015.
[9] The Council consists of Director Generals/Heads of Municipalities that are elected members of the council, thus also establishing a true mandate to represent their organization. Sumbat Sarkis (Ministry of Finance), comment to the draft IRM report, December 2018.
[10] Id.
[11] Magnus Enzell (Ministry of Finance), interview with IRM researcher, 4 August 2017.
[12] Two meetings are documented on the blog of the Ministry of Finance in the period July 2016-June 2017: meeting on 29–30 November 2016, during the DigiGov 2016 conference, where the outcomes of the Open Council (also held at the DigiGov) were discussed (http://digitaltforst.se/lyckat-toppledarforum-och-oppet-rad-genomfordes-pa-digigov-29-30-november); and meeting on 10 May 2017 (http://digitaltforst.se/delbetankandet-digitalforvaltning-nu-pa-agendan-under-dagens-radsmote).
[13] The interim report on the inquiry about the consolidation of responsibility for the digital transformation of the public sector was published on 15 March 2017 and the final report was due on 31 December 2017. "Utredningen om effektiv styrning av nationella digitala tjänster i en samverkande förvaltning" reference to the inquiry (N 2016:01); "Regeringen utreder hur digitaliseringen i den offentliga sektorn kan stärkas genom att samla ansvaret hos en myndighet." (Government Offices, 2 Dec. 2016), http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2016/12/regeringen-utreder-hur-digitaliseringen-i-den-offentliga-sektorn-kan-starkas-genom-att-samla-ansvaret-hos-en-myndighet/
[14] Alexander Wall, "Delegation digitalforvaltning.nu on the agenda during yesterday's council meeting" (Stockholm: Digital first, 11 May 2017), http://digitaltforst.se/delbetankandet-digitalforvaltning-nu-pa-agendan-under-dagens-radsmote/
[15] DigiGov is organised by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) in cooperation with the government, and is a place for discussing societal development based on digitization. Website of DigiGov: http://digigov.se/
[16] See more details in the IRM midterm report (2018).
[17] OGP commitments: Citizen-Centered E-Government, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/commitment/01-citizen-centered-e-government.
[18] "Digital First- For a smarter community-building process" (The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority (Lantmäteriet) January 2018), https://www.geodata.se/globalassets/dokumentarkiv/styrning-och-uppfoljning/geodatastrategin/slutrapport-digitalt-forst.pdf
[19] Sumbat Sarkis (Ministry of Finance), comment to the draft IRM report, December 2018.
[20] Open Council meeting at DigiGov, 5 December 2017, http://digitalainvesteringar.se/aktuellt/kom-och-ge-rad-till-regeringen-om-hur-styrningen-av-det-offentliga-sveriges-digitalisering-kan-forbattras/
[21] Proposals for digital transformation, https://digigov.se/oppna-radet/
[22] Email communication from Sumbat Sarkis, the Ministry of Finance, 14 September, 2018.
[23] Proposals for digital transformation, https://digigov.se/oppna-radet/
[24] "Digitalization of public Sweden - a follow-up". (The Swedish National Financial Management Authority (ESV), March 2018), https://www.esv.se/publicerat/publikationer/2018/digitaliseringen-av-det-offentliga-sverige--en-uppfoljning/
[25] Creative Commons CC Zero License (cc-zero) is intended to be a 'public domain dedication,' i.e., a waiver of all rights including those of attribution. ("Creative Commons CC Zero License (cc-zero)" (Open Definition, 22 July 2018),

http://opendefinition.org/licenses/cc-zero/.) CC0 is currently recommended as the preferred method for releasing software to the public domain by the Free Software Foundation. ("Various Licenses and Comments about Them" (Free Software Foundation, 27 June 2018), https://www.gnu.org/licenses/license-list.html). CC0 is also used by major players such as Open street map on Wikipedia.

[26] "Now it becomes easier to use the Lantmäteriets open data" (Geoforum Sweden, 14 August 2017), https://geoforum.se/nyheter/266-oppna-data/3173-nu-blir-det-enklare-att-anvaenda-lantmaeteriets-oeppna-data

[27] Geoforum Sverige, 16 July 2018, https://geoforum.se/nyheter/266-oppna-data/3484-naturvardsverket-slapper-oppna-data-som-forenklar-friluftslivet

[28] "Digital First- For a smarter community-building process" (The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority (Lantmäteriet) January 2018), https://www.geodata.se/globalassets/dokumentarkiv/styrning-och-uppfoljning/geodatastrategin/slutrapport-digitalt-forst.pdf

[29] Email communication from Sumbat Sarkis, the Ministry of Finance, 14 September, 2018.

[30] "Digital First- For a smarter community-building process" (The Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority (Lantmäteriet) January 2018), https://www.geodata.se/globalassets/dokumentarkiv/styrning-och-uppfoljning/geodatastrategin/slutrapport-digitalt-forst.pdf

[31] "Digitalization of public Sweden - a follow-up". (The Swedish National Financial Management Authority (ESV), March 2018), https://www.esv.se/publicerat/publikationer/2018/digitaliseringen-av-det-offentliga-sverige--en-uppfoljning/

2. Increasing the supply of public administration documents

Commitment Text:

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

Main activities:

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

Responsible institution: Ministry of Finance

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

Start date: 2015   **End date:** 2019

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion		Midterm / End of Term		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	Worsened	Did Not Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
2. Overall			✔		✔			✔		✔					✔					✔	
																✔					
2.1. Systematic reports of agencies work on publishing data and public documents	✔				Unclear				✔				✔								
																✔					

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

Commitment Aim

Sweden's rank in several international open data indices has dropped in recent years, including in the Open Data Barometer[1] and the Global Open Data Index.[2] This commitment aimed to improve the re-use of public sector information (PSI) by increasing the supply of information, in particular the four milestones targeted the facilitation and follow-up of the re-use of PSI, as well as alignment with the EU's standards for publishing data.

Status

Midterm: Substantial[3]

In June 2016, the government assigned the National Archives to assist agencies in publishing PSI (Milestone 2.4). This involved providing government authorities with guidelines and tutorials on how to collect and publish PSI, and developing the national open data portal (oppnadata.se).[4] The National Archives was to complete these activities by 31 December 2018, with the final report due by 31 January 2019.[5] Moreover, an evaluation of the re-use of PSI by the Agency for Public Management (Milestone 2.3) that assesses the implementation of the overall government mandate in this area was due by 19 January 2018.[6]

Sweden also aimed at ongoing participation in the European Commission's work on DCAT-AP (Milestone 2.2). The DCAT Application profile for data portals is a specification for describing public sector datasets,[7] which could play an important role in realising the pan-European Data Portal.[8] At the time of the IRM midterm report, the National Archives was preparing guidelines on how to create and publish PSI lists according to the DCAT-AP format, to support coordinated development and publishing of lists in Sweden.[9] Moreover, Sweden's innovation agency (Vinnova) funded projects that enable organizations to quickly publish metadata according to the DCAT-AP on the oppnadata.se-portal[10] and an "Open Data Sandbox" facilitating DCAT-AP validation, testing, and online verification.[11] For more information, see the 2016–2018 IRM midterm report.[12]

End of term: Complete

The National Archives completed this assignment ahead of time and the final report was submitted on 27 June 2018.[13] The new Agency for Digital Government (DIGG) took over work on open data on 1 September 2018.[14] The evaluation of the re-use of public documents carried out by the Agency

for Public Management (Milestone 2.3) was published 10 days ahead of the deadline, on 9 January 2018.[15]

Milestone 2.2, focusing on ongoing participation in the European Commission's work on DCAT-AP, is also complete. The National Archives developed a national adaptation of the DCAT-AP specification. Given that public authorities have stressed that it is cumbersome to describe open data according to the DCAT-AP specification before publishing (a pre-condition for their open data to be visible on the portal), the National Archives has also investigated the possibility of developing a tool that would help authorities with the description of data, by holding a hackathon and through further development of the existing source code.[16] Moreover, Vinnova-funded projects aiming at facilitating the use of DCAT-AP, including the "Open Data Sandbox", have been implemented.[17]

Did It Open Government?
Access to Information: Major

The implementation of this commitment has facilitated the opening up and re-use of PSI and has led to a major change in government practice. Sweden has increased both the number of PSI datasets published and the number of visitors on the national open data portal. According to the European Commission, Sweden has reached 'portal maturity' and is now an open data 'fast-tracker'.[18]

The National Archives has further developed the national open data portal, and has almost tripled the number of datasets since the last verification by the IRM researcher in July 2017 (from 494[19] to 1,432 in August 2018).[20] The number of organizations posting dataset links on the portal also increased during the same period from 19 to 33.[21] The top-four dataset posters have all posted more than 100 datasets, while at the last verification (in July 2017) only one organization had provided links to over 100 datasets.[22] The number of unique visitors per month increased from 330 in 2016[23] to 2,000 in 2017, and it contains 90-99 percent of all openly licensed datasets.[24]

The portal allows a search of datasets, and there is a possibility to provide feedback and to suggest datasets.[25] According to the European Data Portal (maintained by the European Commission) that measures Open Data maturity of countries, Sweden advanced from being a 'follower' to a 'fast-tracker' between the 2016 and 2017 assessments.[26] The country ranks slightly above the EU average on 'portal maturity', but below average on open data policy, use and impact.[27] This indicates that access to PSI has increased, although more needs to be done in order to increase the re-use of this information, including a strategy that outlines the long-term priorities and necessary measures in the field of open data.

The national evaluation of the re-use of PSI by the Agency for Public Management concluded that the possibilities for re-use of PSI have improved in recent years but that progress overall has been slow. More initiatives are needed to spur national and local authorities to progress in their work on more ambitious targets. Many authorities remain uncertain about how to facilitate opening data, and lack concrete incentives for driving the work forward. Progress has not been uniform across authorities[28] and tends to concern only some spearheads in the public administration.[29] The responsibility to promote PSI and open data, as well as to assist public agencies in publishing such data will be taken over by the new Agency for Digital Government (DIGG). This means that one major actor, DIGG, will now handle the temporary assignments previously given to various agencies.[30]

Carried Forward?
At the time of writing this report (September 2018), Sweden had not finalized its fourth action plan. To move the commitment forward, the IRM researcher concurs with the recommendations of the Agency for Public Management, which asserts that the government could address resource shortages, improve operating systems that impede access to information, and resolve difficulties in identifying relevant information. In particular, smaller municipalities that have not begun work to make information available for re-use need support to enhance legal and technical skills that would help them get started.[31]

[1] "Open Data Barometer," (World Wide Web Foundation, 2016), http://opendatabarometer.org/?_year=2016&indicator=ODB

[2] "Global Open Data Index – Place overview" (Open Knowledge Network, 2016/2017), https://index.okfn.org/place/?filter-table=swed

[3] Please note that Milestone 2.1 "Systematic reports of agencies work on publishing data and public documents" was unclear in terms of its aims and potential impact, as written in the OGP action plan. Its objectives remain unclear despite interviews with government officials. Source: Magnus Enzell, Ministry of Finance, interview with IRM researcher, 3 August 2017. Also see interview references in the 2016–2018 midterm IRM report.

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

[5] "Assignment to the National Archives," 1 July 2016.

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

[7] The Data Catalogue vocabulary (DCAT)-AP gives information about data sources (i.e. metadata), which describes the format of the data source, who is responsible for publishing it and under what conditions data may be used. It enables portal searches for datasets and makes public sector data more searchable across borders and sectors. "DCAT Application Profile for Data Portals in Europe – Final," (European Commission, 2014), https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/asset/dcat_application_profile/asset_release/dcat-application-profile-data-portals-europe-final

[8] For more information, please see the 2014–2015 midterm IRM report.

[9] "The national data portal for open data and PSI" (National Archives, 2016), http://www.vidareutnyttjande.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Anv%C3%A4ndarbehov_rapport.pdf

[10] The Metasolutions project was implemented between 2015–2016. "Open data sources", http://www2.vinnova.se/sv/misc/Utlysningar/Effekta/Oppna-datakallor/ (site discontinued).

[11] "Vinnova -- Sweden's innovation agency", https://entryscape.com/project/vinnova/.

[12] OGP, Re-use of Public Administration Documents and Open Data, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/commitment/02-re-use-of-public-administration-documents-and-open-data

[13] Final report on completion of assignment, https://oppnadata.se/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Slutrapport-regeringsuppdrag-Riksarkivet-180627.pdf

[14] Geoforum Sverige, https://geoforum.se/nyheter/266-oppna-data/3483-riksarkivet-lamnar-slutrapport-om-regeringsuppdraget-kring-oppna-data

[15] Evaluation of the re-use of public documents, Agency for Public Management, http://www.statskontoret.se/globalassets/publikationer/2018/201802.pdf

[16] A tool to help authorities with the description of data, https://oppnadata.se/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Slutrapport-regeringsuppdrag-Riksarkivet-180627.pdf

[17] "Vinnova -- Sweden's innovation agency", https://entryscape.com/project/vinnova/.

[18] European Data Portal, Open data maturity dashboard, 24 August 2018, https://www.europeandataportal.eu/en/dashboard#tab-detailed

[19] The IRM researcher verified the number of available datasets during the data collection for the second IRM mid-term reports on 17 July 2017, on the oppnadata.se portal.

[20] The IRM researcher verified the number of available datasets during the data collection for the second IRM end-of-term reports on 24 August 2017, https://registrera.oppnadata.se/status/overview

[21] The IRM researcher verified the number of available datasets during the data collection for the second IRM end-of-term reports on 24 August 2017, https://registrera.oppnadata.se/status/overview

[22] On 17 July 2017, the top poster, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, had posted 256 datasets, while the second-best poster, the Swedish Tax Agency, only 33 datasets.

[23] "Sweden – Overview", European Data Portal, https://www.europeandataportal.eu/sites/default/files/country-factsheet_sweden.pdf.

[24] "Sweden – Overview", European Data Portal, https://www.europeandataportal.eu/sites/default/files/country-factsheet_sweden_2017.pdf

[25] The portal allows a search of datasets, https://oppnadata.se

[26] The rank ladder of the European Data Portal has four categories: Beginners, Followers, Fast Trackers and Trend Setters, European Data Portal, Open data maturity dashboard, https://www.europeandataportal.eu/en/dashboard#tab-detailed

[27] European Data Portal, Open data maturity dashboard, https://www.europeandataportal.eu/en/dashboard#tab-detailed

[28] About 40 percent of the national authorities and 60 percent of municipalities and county councils have not implemented any specific measure at all to make available for re-use. Source: The evaluation of the re-use of data and public documents carried out by the Agency for Public Management (Milestone 2.3.) published on 9 January 2018, http://www.statskontoret.se/globalassets/publikationer/2018/201802.pdf

[29] The evaluation of the re-use of data and public documents carried out by the Agency for Public Management (Milestone 2.3.) published on 9 January 2018, http://www.statskontoret.se/globalassets/publikationer/2018/201802.pdf

[30] The website of DIGG with a description of the scope of the Agency: https://www.digg.se/utveckling--innovation/oppna-data-och-datadriven-innovation

[31] http://www.statskontoret.se/globalassets/publikationer/2018/201802.pdf

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

Commitment Text:

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

Main activities:

- *Promote **independence and autonomy** by working towards a favourable environment for civil society organisations, safeguarding their autonomy to carry out their own activities and promoting their role as collective voices and opinion makers.* [No corresponding Milestone]

- *Maintain a good **dialogue** by informing and consulting civil society at an early stage on upcoming strategies, key decisions or changes in Swedish development cooperation.* [Milestone 3.1: Consult civil society ahead of overarching and key decisions on Swedish aid policy; Milestone 3.2: Create space for civil society to hold a dialogue and develop information exchange on various policy issues.]

- ***Promote quality*** *in development cooperation by conducting continual evaluation and research on development cooperation, spread knowledge and work for increased aid and development efficiency and work for increased aid and development.* [Milestone 3.5: Evaluations and research, and Milestone 3.6: Knowledge building to increase efficiency]

- *Promote **a long-term approach** and sustainability in development cooperation by ensuring clear and long-term conditions for civil society organisations to pursue their activities.* [No corresponding Milestone.]

- *Take action to increase **openness and transparency** in development cooperation by* (Milestone 3.4: :
  - *working in these areas at bilateral, EU and multilateral level,*
  - *where relevant, giving civil society organisations access to contacts, information and knowledge in the area of development cooperation,*
  - *strengthening a free and open exchange of views on development cooperation*
  - *combating corruption within the framework of handling Swedish aid funds and setting requirements for and supporting cooperation partners' effort to combat corruption*
  - *promoting openness in relationships and the dialogue between the Government and civil society organisations*

- *Apply a **diversity principle** by promoting a variety of civil society organisations and showing new civil society actors openness and development cooperation methods.* [Milestone 3.3: Diversity principle]

- *Further develop **procedures for managing reports of suspected corruption and other complaints** that impact Swedish aid funds.* [Milestone 3.8: Supporting cooperation partners' anti-corruption efforts, and Milestone 3.9: Corruption reporting procedures]

Responsible institution: Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA)

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

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion / Midterm End of Term				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	Worsened	Did Not Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
3. Overall		✔			✔	✔					✔			✔					✔		
														✔							
Milestone 1: Civil society dialogue and exchange		✔				✔						✔			✔						
															✔						
Milestone 2: Consult civil society on aid policy		✔				✔						✔			✔						
															✔						
Milestone 3: Diversity principle		✔				✔					✔		✔								
													✔								
Milestone 4: Give civil society access to information		✔			✔						✔			✔							
														✔							
Milestone 5: Evaluations and research		✔			✔						✔				✔						
															✔						
Milestone 6: Knowledge building to increase efficiency		✔			Unclear				✔					✔							
														✔							
Milestone 7: Improve efficiency and effectiveness		✔			Unclear							✔		✔							
														✔							
Milestone 8: Supporting cooperation partners' anti-		✔			Unclear							✔		✔							
														✔							

				Unclear					✔		
corruption efforts											
Milestone 9: Corruption reporting procedures		✔		Unclear			✔			✔	
										✔	

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to (1) improve the quality of Swedish development aid and broaden opportunities for dialogue with CSOs (Milestones 3.1 to 3.6), (2) increase aid efficiency and effectiveness (Milestone 3.7), and (3) promote anti-corruption measures (Milestones 3.8 and 3.9).[1] Milestones 3.1 to 3.6 are mainly based on the "Joint Commitments between Swedish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs".[2] The Joint Commitments seek to enhance dialogue and relations between the government and CSOs in Swedish development aid, and emphasize the important role of CSOs in development. Despite the laudable goals, several milestones were vaguely formulated and lacked means for verification.[3]

Status
Midterm: Limited

Given that only one milestone had a specific end date (2016 for Milestone 3.2), the IRM researcher could not assess whether the overall commitment was on schedule and considered the overall completion to be limited at the midterm.

During the first year of implementation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) held regular meetings and discussions with CSOs on key decisions related to Swedish aid policy. The MFA involved a large number of CSOs in the development of the Joint Commitments. However, there were some limitations in the diversity of the CSOs involved and some variance between individual CSOs' roles in the process. According to one CSO participant, the MFA seemed to lack a structured approach for increasing the diversity of the involved CSOs.[4] Information sharing between the government and CSOs generally worked well, although in some cases, this principle was unevenly applied across Swedish institutions abroad (e.g. embassies), where information sharing often depends on institutional capacity and resource availability.[5]

The MFA also made progress on evaluation, aid efficiency and effectiveness (Milestones 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7). According to the MFA, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has in recent years strengthened its evaluation function in terms of both staff and strategy. Sida regularly conducts in-house evaluations (approximately 50 per year) and publishes them on its website.[6] It also commissions independent evaluations assessing Sida-financed development cooperation.[7] During the first year of the action plan period, Sida published two strategic evaluations.[8]

Regarding Milestones 3.8 and 3.9, the MFA reported that Sida continuously supports interventions that reduce corruption in partner countries (e.g. through funding for anti-corruption agencies and parliamentary oversight) and has continued to develop its procedures for corruption risk assessment and the management of suspected corruption. For more information, see the 2016–2018 IRM midterm report.[9]

End of term: Limited

The MFA made additional progress during the second year of the action plan, particularly on dialogue with CSOs (Milestones 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4) However, the lack of specific end dates or clear measurements of progress for most milestones make it difficult to assess the overall completion as higher than limited at the end of the action plan.

The government held its yearly CSO Forum on 16 February 2018, and included participants from civil society, government offices and the Swedish authorities. The Forum focused on strengthening collaboration between Swedish CSOs and foreign authorities in the field, and on further developing

Swedish advocacy work within multilateral organizations.[10] Moreover, to enhance regular communication with CSOs, the Joint Commitments working group put together a contact list, which will also be used for invitations to aid-related events. The list is available online and CSOs can request to be added to the list by email.[11]

To improve efficiency of management and operations, Sida carried out evaluations on learning and accountability.[12] Sida implements three categories of evaluations: (1) partner-led, commissioned and managed by Sida's cooperation partners; (2) decentralized, which are external evaluations for accountability purposes; and (3) strategic evaluations, decided by the Director General based on their strategic importance for Sida. In 2017, Sida published 33 decentralized evaluations commissioned by Sida units and foreign missions.[13] No additional strategic evaluations have been published since the IRM midterm review.[14] In 2017, Sida also finalized an evaluation handbook with internal and external guidelines, and a manual for conducting Sida evaluations.[15]

According to Sida's chief of staff, Sida is continuing to improve governance and control, and lessons learned from investigated corruption cases.[16] Its latest corruption report shows that, in 2017, Sida received the highest amount of corruption notifications and carried out the highest number of investigations since 2007.[17]

Did It Open Government?
Access to Information: Marginal
Civic Participation: Marginal

The implementation of this commitment has improved, albeit marginally, relations between the government and CSOs. Sida's evaluations and the corruption reports published during the reporting period have somewhat increased access to information on development aid.

CSOs involved in development aid have generally given positive feedback towards the Joint Commitment.[18] [19] The 2018 CSO Forum attracted strong interest, with a high number of participants (circa 130 participants, mostly from civil society).[20] The Forum resulted in a number of recommendations for how cooperation can be strengthened, and an action plan for the follow-up of these recommendations has been developed together with the permanent working group for the Joint Commitments.[21] The participants stressed that it is important for the government to work with CSOs in a more systematic and structured manner. Collaboration between government authorities abroad and civil society is often person-dependent, and institutional memory is in many cases insufficient to maintain valuable networking and skills considering the high rotation of staff based abroad.[22] The permanent working group on the Joint Commitments has met four times in 2018 but the last meeting notes published on the Joint Commitments webpage date back to March 2017.[23]

The fact that Sida received the highest amount of corruption notifications ever in 2017[24] could suggest that Sida is improving its capacity to detect cases of aid corruption,[25] or that corruption is on the rise. Sida considers that the large increase in reported cases is mainly due to a greater awareness of what and how to report by Sida's collaborating partners.[26]

Carried Forward?
At the time of writing this report (September 2018), Sweden had not finalized its fourth action plan. To move the commitment forward, the IRM researcher recommends the following regarding the Joint Commitments (JC), based on suggestions from consulted civil society representatives:
- increase the diversity of participants, especially smaller CSOs, in the implementation of the JC;[27]
- facilitate access to contacts: Improve information on who does what in the MFA and in CSOs working on aid development;[28]
- evaluate progress on the JC by the MFA and Sweden's authorities based abroad;[29],
- enhance transparency of the work on the JC, in particular on the process of endorsement of the JC by CSOs and on the tasks of the JC working group;[30]
- raise awareness of the JC, e.g. by creating an online calendar listing different forums available for CSO participation;

- improve the monitoring of progress on Policy for Global Development (PGU) and Agenda 2030 by developing measurable indicators that would allow assessing both the actions taken at the policy level and the actual results of the work on PGU and Agenda 2030 in Sweden, also through the Sida-managed openaid.se portal;[31] and
- develop concrete and measurable action plans for the implementation of PGU and Agenda 2030 and make them publicly accessible in order to enable their monitoring.[32] [33]

Moreover, the IRM researcher recommends making concrete commitments addressing corruption and other irregularities in aid. These could cover e.g. (i) support to advance the independence of the UN's Internal Audit and Ethics Office;[34] and (ii) involvement of civil society in discussions with international donor organizations when deciding priorities on transparency and anti-corruption work.[35] The special agreements on the exchange of information in the form of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with some multilateral organizations, which Sida is planning to implement, could be a good opportunity for involving CSOs.

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[1] The milestones of this Commitment are: 3.1. Create space for civil society to hold a dialogue and develop information exchange 3.2. Consult civil society on key decisions on Swedish aid policy 3.3. Apply a diversity principle 3.4. Give CSOs access to information 3.5 Conduct evaluations and research on development cooperation 3.6. Spread knowledge for increased aid and development efficiency 3.7 Work for increased aid development efficiency and effectiveness 3.8 Supporting cooperation partners' effort to combat corruption 3.9 Develop procedures for managing corruption reports and complaints.
[2] The adopted Joint Commitments (in Swedish), http://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/756e79c7e6d14aca966ab95c85d8bc50/150701-gemensamma-ataganden.pdf
[3] The IRM researcher could not establish what the milestone aimed to achieve despite interviews with the relevant MFA officials. The interviewees stated that the MFA and Sida continuously monitor Swedish aid funds through organizational assessments of the multilateral development organizations funded by Sweden or through similar means. See the second IRM report.
[4] Edvard Agrell (Secretary General of the Christian Democratic International Center), interview with IRM researcher, 8 September 2017.
[5] Marina Berg (MFA) and Johanna Teague (MFA), interview with IRM researcher, 25 September 2017.
[6] Frank Svensson (MFA), email to IRM researcher, 13 October 2017.
[7] Sida's evaluation page, https://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/evaluation/
[8] In the IRM evaluation period, two evaluations were published (both in 2016): "Evaluation of the extent to which Sida's contribution management system is fit for purpose" and "Evaluation of Sida's Use of Guarantees for Market Development and Poverty Reduction." Information verified on 25 August 2018, https://www.sida.se/Svenska/publikationer/publikationssok/?subject=%20Sida%20Evaluation&page=1&q=%20&fromDate=2016&toDate=2018
[9] OGP, Transparency in Aid Management, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/commitment/03-transparency-aid-management
[10] The government's yearly CSO Forum, https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/gemensamma-ataganden-for-internationellt-utvecklingssamarbete/
[11] The Joint Committee working group's contact list is available online, https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/gemensamma-ataganden-for-internationellt-utvecklingssamarbete/kontakter-och-anmalan/
[12] Evaluation at Sida, Annual Report 2017, https://www.sida.se/contentassets/3e7e493adecf40fcb23c7ec10b89d686/annual_report_sida_evaluations_2017.pdf.
[13] Evaluation at Sida – Annual Report 2017, https://www.sida.se/Svenska/publikationer/160433/evaluation-at-sida-annual-report-2017/
[14] In the IRM midterm review period, two strategic evaluations were published (both in 2016): "Evaluation of the extent to which Sida's contribution management system is fit for purpose" and "Evaluation of Sida's Use of Guarantees for Market Development and Poverty Reduction." Information verified on 25 August 2018. https://www.sida.se/Svenska/publikationer/publikationssok/?subject=%20Sida%20Evaluation&page=1&q=%20&fromDate=2016&toDate=2018
[15] Evaluation at Sida, Annual Report 2017, https://www.sida.se/contentassets/3e7e493adecf40fcb23c7ec10b89d686/annual_report_sida_evaluations_2017.pdf
[16] For example, Sweden has stopped the funding of the farmers' organization "Zambian Farmers National Union" (ZNFU) based on a corruption investigation. A suspicion of corruption at the ZNFU was reported by a whistle-blower in 2015. Sida then appointed two audits by two different accounting firms, and based on the outcome of the audits asked for recovery of the funds form ZNFU. The support from Sida to ZNFU is frozen from 2015. https://www.svt.se/opinion/joachim-beijmo-om-bistand
[17] Sida corruption report, https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159911/sidas-hantering-av-korruptionsmisstankar/

[18] An article by the Swedish Mission Council, an umbrella organization for churches and organizations on a Christian basis, who work with aid both in Sweden and internationally, https://www.missioncouncil.se/aktuellt/dialog-mellan-regeringen-och-civilsamhallet/

[19] An article by Forum Syd, a politically and religiously unaffiliated development cooperation organization with around 140 member organizations from Swedish civil society, https://www.forumsyd.org/sv/aktuellt/civilsamhallet-och-regeringen-starker-samarbetet

[20] The 2018 CSO Forum, https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/gemensamma-ataganden-for-internationellt-utvecklingssamarbete/

[21] Sarah Eriksson (Ministry of foreign affairs), comment to the IRM report, December 2018.

[22] The government must work with CSOs in a more structured manner, https://www.regeringen.se/496382/contentassets/4a58eec28f1d4503a11bfc146ce8346b/aterrapportering-fran-cso-forum-2018.pdf

[23] Sarah Eriksson (Ministry of foreign affairs), comment to the IRM report, December 2018. The webpage of the Joint Commitment: https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/gemensamma-ataganden-for-internationellt-utvecklingssamarbete/

[24] Sida corruption notifications 2017, https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159911/sidas-hantering-av-korruptionsmisstankar/

[25] Capacity to detect cases of corruption, https://www.sida.se/Svenska/aktuellt-och-press/Medieservice-och-presskontakt/pressmeddelanden/2017/effektivare-arbete-mot-korruption/

[26] Reporting by Sida's collaboration partners, https://www.sida.se/English/publications/159911/sidas-hantering-av-korruptionsmisstankar/

[27] Stakeholder consultation, 22 August 2017, Stockholm.

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

[29] Stakeholder consultation, Stockholm, 22 August 2017.

[30] Meeting notes, annual civil society forum, February 2017.

[31] Stakeholder consultation, Stockholm, 22 August 2017.

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

[33] *See* the second IRM report.

[34] This was recommended by the UN investigation of the whistleblowing case about sexual abuse of children by UN peacekeepers. This recommendation is also supported in a statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström, who suggested that the entire UN system should enhance its efforts against exploitation in the field and stressed the need to ensure that perpetrators are punished. "Statement by Foreign Minister Margot Wallström on the report of the Independent Investigation Panel on suspected abuse in the Central African Republic" (Government Offices, 19 December 2015), http://www.regeringen.se/uttalanden/2015/12/uttalande-av-utrikesminister-margot-wallstrom-med-anledning-av-den-oberoende-undersokningspanelens-rapport-om-missforhallanden-i-car/

[35] *See* the second IRM report.

4. Developing a new format for dialogue with CSOs

Commitment Text:

According to the six principles of the Government's Policy for Civil Society[1] and the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process, a new format for dialogue and exchange of information has been developed by the Government in close cooperation with more than one hundred CSOs at national level. The CSOs are not only crucial for democracy in itself; they are often also experts in their own field. The Government wants to be able to deepen its own knowledge by meeting experts from civil society in a structured way, with clear prior information concerning the expected outcome for each counterpart.

Responsible institution: Ministry of Culture

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

Start date: 2016   **End date:** N/A

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion		Midterm / End of Term		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	Worsened	Did Not Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
4. Overall			✔			✔					✔				✔				✔		
															✔						
4.1. Evaluation of pilot projects and a hearing with CSOs				✔		✔					✔					✔					
																✔					
4.2. Follow-up on the new format of dialogue		✔				✔					✔		✔								
													✔								

Commitment Aim

This commitment planned to develop and test a new format for dialogue and exchange of information between the government and civil society called "sakråd" in Swedish (which can be translated as "issue-specific consultations"). Sakråd aims to increase the quality of government decisions by (i) strengthening dialogue as a tool, (ii) taking advantage of specified expertise, (iii) collecting a broader range of perspectives, and (iv) increasing the number of stakeholders involved.[2] The government has identified gaps in existing consultation methods that sakråd could fill. First, it could better collect opinions well in advance of actual decision making. Second, sakråd helps gather advice on specific and sometimes highly technical or operational issues, e.g. the logistics of the reception and establishment of asylum seekers.[3]

Status
Midterm: Substantial

During the first year of the action plan, the Ministry of Culture completed the first milestone (4.1), which called for an evaluation of 5–10 pilot projects implemented by government offices and a hearing on the findings with CSOs.[4] Five pilot projects were implemented by September 2016. The pilots covered different formats of sakråd on several topics, including: (1) the refugee situation, (2) the forthcoming human rights strategy, (3) the UN General Assembly Special Meeting on Drugs (UNGASS), (4) the Popular Education Forum, and (5) the cultural heritage bill.[5] The Ministry of Culture carried out an in-house evaluation of the pilots and documented the findings in an internal document. The State Secretary presented the findings during a hearing with civil society on 28 September 2016 in Stockholm.[6] The hearing brought together 73 people from different types of organizations, indicating that a broad range of stakeholders see the new format as an important endeavor.[7]

Milestone 4.2, aiming to follow-up on the new format for dialogue and exchange with CSOs, was expected to start in 2016, but does not have a specific end date. The Ministry of Culture was discussing an evaluation for 2018, but, at the time of writing, no formal timeline had been set. The Ministry did not provide the IRM researcher with a reason for this delay.[8] For more information, see the 2016–2018 IRM midterm report.[9]

End of term: Substantial

At the end of the second year of the action plan, this commitment remains incomplete, since the follow-up on the new format for dialogue with CSOs has not taken place and is not planned at the moment. The Ministry of Culture has not indicated a reason for this delay, despite inquiries from the IRM researcher.[10]

Did It Open Government?
Civic Participation: Marginal

The government procedures for consultation with civil society are already highly developed in Sweden. However, sakråd serves as a useful complement by focusing particularly on gathering opinions in advance of decision making, and on specific or technical issues.[11] The ultimate aim is to harness civil society's unique knowledge to improve government's decision-making processes.[12]

The pilot projects have shown good results, thereby confirming that sakråd works in practice.[13] [14] [15] [16] After the pilots, the government carried out about 30 sakråd consultations on topics ranging from EU-related matters, establishment of migrants, to a national action plan against racism.[17] The government also developed sakråd guidelines, including methodological support, templates and checklists to maintain good quality during the process.[18] Furthermore, on 16 February 2017, the government formally institutionalized sakråd[19] as part of the core set of government consultation methods, which means that it could become a systemic practice across government institutions.

Although sakråd is a valuable addition to consultation procedures, opportunities for the public to influence government decisions have improved only marginally as a result of this commitment. Several CSOs that participated in sakråd expressed positive feedback, and emphasized that it improves the government-civil society relationship.[20] [21] [22] However, the government still faces challenges in its implementation, including the lack of clarity about how participants are selected,[23] the risk of excluding minor and lesser-known organizations,[24] and how participant feedback will be considered in decision-making processes.[25] [26] Moreover, according to an NGO representative, in some areas such as migrant integration, the sakråd process has slowed down, apparently due to the political situation (i.e. elections were held in September 2018 and there is still no government in place).[27]

Carried Forward?

At the time of writing this report (September 2018), Sweden has not finalized the next action plan. Considering that the commitment was not fully completed, the IRM researcher recommends carrying it forward to the next action plan. If carried forward, the Ministry of Culture could commission an external evaluation of sakråd which considers the views of organizations that have not had the opportunity to participate in it.[28]

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

[2] The aims of sakrad, http://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/civila-samhallet/fragor-och-svar-om-sakråd/

[3] Maria Nilsson (Ministry of Culture), interview with IRM researcher, 26 June 2017.

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

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

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

[7] A list of participants was shared by Maria Nilsson, Ministry of Culture.

[8] Maria Nilsson (Ministry of Culture), email to IRM researcher, 7 August 2017.

[9] OGP, Developing a New Format for Dialogue with CSOs, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/commitment/04-developing-new-format-dialogue-csos.

[10] Carl-Johan Friman (Ministry of Culture), email to IRM researcher, 10 September 2018.

[11] Maria Nilsson (Ministry of Culture), interview with IRM researcher, 26 June 2017.

[12] "En politik för engagemang – långsiktighet och oberoende för civilsamhället", Regeringens skrivelse 2017/18:246, Skr. 2017/18:246, Government Offices, 3 May 2018.

[13] "En politik för engagemang – långsiktighet och oberoende för civilsamhället", Regeringens skrivelse 2017/18:246, Skr. 2017/18:246, Government Offices, 3 May 2018.

[14] Göran Pettersson (Socialforum NGO), interview with IRM researcher, 13 September 2017.

[15] "The Government has decided to institute sakråd", Ideell kulturallians (*a national umbrella organization for CSOs working in the field of culture*, http://ideellkultur.se/nyhet/regeringen-har-beslutat-att-infora-sakrad.

[16] Nilla Helgesson (Skyddsvärnet NGO), interview with IRM researcher, 10 July 2017; Göran Pettersson (Socialforum NGO), interview with IRM researcher, 13 September 2017.

[17] "En politik för engagemang – långsiktighet och oberoende för civilsamhället", Regeringens skrivelse 2017/18:246, Skr. 2017/18:246, Government Offices, 3 May 2018.

[18] "En politik för engagemang – långsiktighet och oberoende för civilsamhället", Regeringens skrivelse 2017/18:246, Skr. 2017/18:246, Government Offices, 3 May 2018.

[19] Martin Kling, "Council of Ministers will strengthen dialogue between government and civil society", Government Offices, http://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2017/02/sakrad-ska-starka-dialogen-mellan-regeringen-och-civila-samhallet/

[20] Pettersson, interview.

[21] "The Government has decided to institute sakråd", Ideell kulturallians (*a national umbrella organization for CSOs working in the field of culture*, http://ideellkultur.se/nyhet/regeringen-har-beslutat-att-infora-sakrad.

[22] Nilla Helgesson (Skyddsvärnet NGO), interview with IRM researcher, 10 July 2017; Göran Pettersson (Socialforum NGO), interview with IRM researcher, 13 September 2017.

[23] State Secretary, 28 September 2016 presentation. *See note 7*.

[24] Helgesson, interview.

[25] Helgesson, interview.

[26] Pettersson, interview.

[27] Nilla Helgesson (Skyddsvärnet NGO), email to IRM researcher, 11 October 2018.

[28] For more information, please see the 2016–2018 IRM midterm report.

Methodological Note

The end-of-term report is based on desk research and interviews with governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders. The IRM report builds on the findings of the government's self-assessment report; other assessments of progress put out by civil society, the private sector, or international organizations; and the previous IRM progress report.

The IRM researcher based the end-of-term report on desk research and interviews with relevant stakeholders, both from the government and from NGOs.

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

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