

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

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Table of Contents

Overview: Canada	2
About the Assessment	6
Commitment Implementation	8
Theme I: Open by Default	11
1. Enhance Access to Information	11
2. Streamline Requests for Personal Information	14
3. Expand and Improve Open Data	17
4. Provide and Preserve Open Information	21
5. Define an Approach for Measuring Open Government Performance Commitment	24
6. Develop Open Government Skills across the Federal Public Service	27
7. Embed Transparency Requirements in the Federal Service Strategy	30
Theme II: Fiscal Transparency	32
8. Enhance Access to Culture & Heritage Collections	32
9. Enhance Openness of Information on Government Spending and Procurement	35
10. Increase transparency of Budget and other Department of Finance information	39
❖ 11. Increase Transparency of Grants and Contributions Funding	42
12. Improve Public Information on Canadian Corporations	45
Theme III: Innovation, Prosperity, and Sustainable Development	48
13. Increase the Availability and Usability of Geospatial Data	48
14. Increase Openness of Federal Science Activities (Open Science)	52
15. Stimulate Innovation through Canada's Open Data Exchange (ODX)	56
16. Align Open Data across Canada (Open Data Canada)	59
17. Implement the Extractives Sector Transparency Measures Act	62
18. Support Openness and Transparency Initiatives around the World	65
Theme IV: Engaging Canadians and the World	69
19. Engage Civil Society on Open Government	69
20. Enable Open Dialogue and Open Policy Making	71
21. Promote Open Government Globally	75
22. Engage Canadians to improve key Canada Revenue Agency services	78
Methodological Note	81

Overview: Canada

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

Canada made important advancements during implementation of this action plan, completing most of its commitments and making substantial progress on all commitments. However, several important milestones were left incomplete, and civil society stakeholders engaged in the Open Government Partnership criticised a broader lack of ambition. Moving forward, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat should embrace a robust co-creation model for future action plans.

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 summarises the results of the period July 2017 to August 2018.

The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) leads Canada's participation in OGP. The TBS coordinates action plan commitments involving eight different ministries and departments, as well as seven additional quasi-judicial or autonomous bodies and five sub-national governments.¹ Early in the action plan's implementation, civil society engagement came through an advisory panel on open government. Civil society later gave feedback through a new Multi-stakeholder Forum. The Forum includes substantial civil society representation.

Important highlights from the implementation of this action plan include a relatively high rate of completion. The country completed 13 of the 22 commitments and made substantial progress on all of them. (However, low levels of milestone specificity made progress easier to claim.) The following are also worth noting: the significant progress in opening access to scientific research, a stronger international presence for Canada through its adoption of a leadership role in OGP, and substantial progress in enhancing open data offerings. However, Canada did not make significant progress in some reform areas which had been rated important by civil society members engaged in OGP, particularly on the Access to Information Act and clarification of the rules regarding political engagement by charities.

Canada published its draft end-of-term self-assessment report for public comment on 18 September 2018, ahead of schedule.² It published its draft fourth action plan on 14 August 2018.³ This latest action plan carried forward many of the same themes from the previous plan. Such themes included

Table 1: At a Glance

	Mid-term	End of term
Number of Commitments	22	
Level of Completion		
Completed	1	13
Substantial	18	9
Limited	3	0
Not Started	0	0
Number of Commitments with...		
Clear Relevance to OGP Values	21	21
Transformative Potential Impact	1	1
Substantial or Complete Implementation	19	22
All Three (☺)	1	1
Did It Open Government?		
Major	6	
Outstanding	2	
Moving Forward		
Number of Commitments Carried Over to Next Action Plan	15	

access to information, open science, open data, and corporate transparency, as well as a new focus on feminist and inclusive open government.

¹ For more information on participation of government institutions during the co creation of the action plan, please refer to p. 22 of the IRM midterm assessment report: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_MidTerm-Report_2016-2018_EN.pdf

² The draft end-of-term self-assessment was released for public comment on Canada's Open Information Portal: <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

³ The fourth action plan is available at <https://open.canada.ca/en/4plan/creating-canadas-4th-plan-open-government-2018-20>.

Consultation with Civil Society during Implementation

Countries participating in OGP follow a process for consultation during development and implementation of their action plan. In Table 3 below, the level of public influence is coded as “consult.” The government did maintain several avenues for the public to provide feedback, including through the comment system on its open government website. However, no information exists regarding how these inputs were considered or resulted in changes in approach.

Under previous action plans, consultation during implementation was managed through an advisory panel on open government. This panel included members from civil society, the business arena, and academia. The members provided guidance on open government activities. However, engagement with the panel was very low, and it did not meet over the course of Canada’s third action plan. An important aspect of the action plan itself involved establishing a new multi-stakeholder consultation mechanism (Commitment 19). The new mechanism launched on 24 January 2018, and it comprises 12 members. Four are from government, six are from civil society, and two are from other sectors.¹ The new mechanism held two meetings in December 2017 and four meetings over the course of 2018.²

Partly because of this transition, consultation during implementation was relatively low for this action plan. Civil society stakeholders focused their energies primarily on the new mechanism and its role in developing the fourth action plan. Government, for the most part, treated the commitments in the third action plan as relatively settled. It solicited little additional engagement unless it was explicitly included in the commitment (such as for Milestone 22.2).

Table 2: Consultation during Implementation

Regular Multi-stakeholder Forum	Midterm	End of Term
1. Did a forum exist?	No	Yes
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.³ 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		

¹ The members of the Multi-stakeholder Forum on Open Government are Rob Davidson of Veracify, Cara Zwibel of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Claire Woodside of Publish What You Pay-Canada, Jean-Noé Landry of Open North, Lindsey Marchessault of the Open Contracting Partnership, Michael Lenczner of Powered by Data, Pamela Robinson of Ryerson University, Dr. Tracey Lauriault of Carleton University, Mélanie Robert and Jaimie Boyd of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, Laura Wesley of the Privy Council Office, and Sandy Kyriakatos of Employment and Social Development Canada.

² A folder of meeting agendas and minutes is available at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oK-uXOs0ih1fTNbB8LbvQnUXxY3nwYqB>.

³ "IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum," International Association for Public Participation, 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.

In the midterm report, Canada’s action plan contained one starred commitment. At the end of term, based on the changes in the level of completion, Canada’s action plan still contained one starred commitment.

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 Canada, 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 capture 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 time frame of the report.

¹ IRM Procedures Manual, “About the IRM,” Open Government Partnership, <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-irm>.

² The International Experts Panel changed this criterion in 2015. For more information, visit “IRM to Raise the Bar for Model Commitment in OGP,” Open Government Partnership, <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 summarise 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 2017 IRM progress report for Canada.¹

Canada organised its action plan in four major themes: open by default; fiscal transparency; innovation, prosperity, and sustainable development; and engaging Canadians and the world. The plan is generally quite diverse in its thematic focus, including commitments addressing all four OGP values as well as a variety of subthemes. Those subthemes include freedom of association and the civic space, the volume of open data available, the accessibility and usability of open data, engagement with the public and in particular with Canada’s indigenous peoples, public reporting and performance measurement systems, and access to cultural materials.

Table 4: Assessment of Progress by Commitment

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. Enhance Access to Information			✓		✓	✓				✓					✓				✓		
2. Streamline Requests for Personal Information			✓		✓			✓			✓			✓					✓		
3. Expand and Improve Open Data			✓		✓	✓		✓			✓				✓	✓				✓	
4. Provide and Preserve Open Information		✓			✓			✓		✓					✓				✓		
5. Define an Approach for Measuring Open		✓			Unclear					✓					✓				✓		

Government Performance																			
6. Develop Open Government Skills across the Federal Public Service		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓					✓	
7. Embed Transparency Requirements in the Federal Service Strategy		✓			✓			✓					✓					✓	
8. Enhance Access to Culture & Heritage Collections		✓			✓			✓					✓					✓	
9. Enhance Openness of Information on Government Spending and Procurement			✓		✓				✓				✓						
10. Increase Transparency of Budget and Other Department of Finance Information			✓		✓				✓				✓					✓	
11. Increase Transparency of Grants and Contributions Funding				✓	✓	✓		✓					✓						✓
12. Improve Public Information on Canadian Corporations			✓		✓			✓										✓	
13. Increase the Availability and Usability of Geospatial Data			✓		✓				✓				✓					✓	
14. Increase Openness of Federal Science Activities (Open Science)			✓		✓	✓			✓				✓						✓
			✓		✓	✓			✓				✓					✓	

Theme I: Open by Default

I. Enhance Access to Information

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will move forward on a first round of concrete proposals to improve the Access to Information Act, informed by the views of Parliament, the Information Commissioner, and consultations with Canadians, and will then undertake a full review of the Act by no later than 2018.

Milestones:

I.1. Seek input from Parliament, the Information Commissioner, stakeholders and through consultations with Canadians on how to revitalize access to information.

I.2. Introduce legislation to move forward on improvements to the Access to Information Act.

I.3. Once this first round of improvements has been implemented, undertake a full review of the Access to Information Act by no later than 2018.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Supporting institutions: Justice Canada and the Privy Council Office

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
I. Overall			✓		✓	✓				✓					✓				✓		
I.1. Access to information consultations			✓		✓	✓				✓						✓					
I.2. Introduce legislation			✓		✓					✓						✓					
I.3. Full Access to		✓			✓					✓			✓								

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to improve the Access to Information Act through consultations with Parliament, the information commissioner, stakeholders, and the public. The Access to Information Act has not been substantially updated since it was first passed in 1983. Successive IRM reports have suggested that this commitment stands among the most important areas of reform. The commitment calls for consultation on how to revitalise the act (1.1), legislation with preliminary improvements (1.2), and a full review of the act (1.3).

Status

Midterm: Substantial

The consultation (1.1) took place before the beginning of the current action plan, wrapping up in June 2016. The government's response to this consultation, and to a parliamentary committee report on this subject, was published in October 2016.¹ An initial reform package, Bill C-58, was introduced in the House of Commons on 19 June 2017 (1.2).² This bill would make several changes to the act. It would enhance the power of the information commissioner and expand proactive disclosure among over 200 government institutions. It would also allow government institutions to dismiss requests which are vexatious or in bad faith, with the information commissioner's approval. Civil society reactions to the bill have generally been negative, calling for a more ambitious reform effort.³ For more information, see the 2016-2017 IRM midterm report.⁴

End of term: Substantial

Bill C-58 passed third reading in the House of Commons on 6 December 2017. As of August 2018, it is under consideration by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.⁵ Milestone 1.2 has therefore been completed. However, Canada made no progress under Milestone 1.3. The government has scheduled Milestone 1.3 work to begin within one year of the passage of Bill C-58.⁶

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Civic Participation: Marginal

The passage of Bill C-58 would improve Canada's access to information system, notably by providing new powers to the Information Commissioner, and by expanding proactive disclosure requirements. However, civil society has reacted negatively to these changes. Critics note that most of the important reforms have been pushed beyond the current action plan.⁷ For example, the reforms do not address the Access to Information Act's overbroad exceptions. Other areas of priority, as identified by civil society, include expanding the right to file access requests to the Cabinet and prime minister's offices, creating a duty to document for officials, creating binding timelines for responding to requests, and formalising fee waivers contained in the May 2016 "Interim Directive on the Administration of the Access to Information Act." In addition, the consultation completed under Milestone 1.1 generated conclusions which were very similar to those produced in earlier processes in 2016 and 2015. Such repetition suggests that the additional consultations may not have been necessary. Given these reasons, and the fact that the commitment was not fully completed, the IRM assesses it as having had only a marginal impact on access to information and civic participation.

Carried Forward?

Canada carried this commitment forward in the next action plan in Milestone 7.1, which calls for a full review of the Access to Information Act. Commitment 7 of the next action plan also includes plans to develop a guide to exceptions and exclusions, increase the availability of information about previously completed requests, improve the online requesting service, and enhance capabilities to respond to requests electronically.

¹ Both are available at <http://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/ETHI/report-2>.

² An Act to Amend the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act and to Make Consequential Amendments to Other Acts, Bill C-58, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament (2017), <http://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-58/first-reading>.

³ “Joint Letter to the Canadian Government on Its Proposals to Reform the Access to Information Act,” Centre for Law and Democracy, 28 September 2017, <https://www.law-democracy.org/live/letter-to-the-president-of-the-treasury-board-demanding-access-to-information-reform/>.

⁴ Michael Karanickolas, Canada Progress Report 2016-2017 (Washington, DC: Open Government Partnership Independent Reporting Mechanism), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/canada-mid-term-report-2016-2018>.

⁵ The bill’s progress can be viewed at <https://www.parl.ca/LegisInfo/BillDetails.aspx?billId=9057528&Language=E>, accessed 11 September 2018.

⁶ An Act to Amend the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act and to Make Consequential Amendments to Other Acts, s. 93(1).

⁷ See, for example, “Joint Letter to the Canadian Government on Its Proposals to Reform the Access to Information Act.” Responses from civil society, academia, and the information commissioner are discussed in more detail in the 2017 midterm assessment, available at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/canada-mid-term-report-2016-2018>.

2. Streamline Requests for Personal Information

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will make it easier for Canadians to access their own personal information held by government.

Milestones:

2.1. Develop a central website where Canadians can submit personal information requests to any government institution, with first phase of roll-out targeted for 2018.

2.2. Implement a 30-day guarantee for requests for personal information, backed by a commitment to provide a written explanation to the requester and the Privacy Commissioner should a request take longer than 30 days to fulfill.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Supporting institution(s): N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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. Central website for requests			✓		✓			✓			✓			✓							
2.2. Written explanation for delayed response			✓		✓						✓			✓							

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to simplify and expedite the process for filing a request for disclosure of personal information that a government body holds about the requester. It proposed developing a centralised website for submitting requests and implementing a 30-day guarantee for responses. It would require the government to provide a written explanation to the requester and the privacy commissioner if response times ran longer than 30 days.

Status

Midterm: Limited

The midterm assessment identified significant challenges for completion of each milestone. For the centralised website (2.1), the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat had identified business requirements and completed usability testing. However, it had not commenced any form of public piloting of the site.¹ For the 30-day guarantee, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat had shared implementation options with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner. However, it had not commenced concrete steps toward implementation. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner expressed confusion regarding how to move forward. The midterm assessment judged that this commitment was not on schedule for completion.

End of term: Substantial

The government's end-of-term self-assessment reports that the centralised website is still under development, with rollout planned for fall 2018.² The central website will incorporate a functionality for filing **both** access to information **and** **personal information** requests, which was one of the recommendations mentioned in the 2017 midterm assessment. In discussions with the IRM researcher, representatives from the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) attributed the delay to time taken for further site improvements after a first round of usability testing. Feedback from the testing had suggested improvements to the tool's interface.

In June 2018, the president of the TBS issued the "Directive on Personal Information Requests and Correction of Personal Information." As of 1 October 2018, that directive requires institutions to provide a written explanation to the requester when a request for access to personal information takes more than 30 days to fulfil. The body also must give more detail on the reasons for extensions in the institution's annual report to Parliament.³ Canada's end-of-term self-assessment states that the TBS encourages institutions to begin implementing this directive earlier than October. However, since the milestone calls for the implementation of the 30-day guarantee within the action plan two-year cycle—and this deadline extends beyond that time—the milestone is coded as having substantial progress.⁴

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Canadians requesting personal information held by the government face challenges in determining the appropriate agency to approach, as well as delays in receiving their information. This commitment aimed to improve this process by centralising it and expediting timelines for response. Although the first milestone has the potential to be a major step forward, it was not completed during the action plan.

For the second milestone, the language of the directive could represent important progress by improving the accountability for departments which fail to meet the 30-day timeline. However, its full implementation will not occur until well after the conclusion of the action plan.

As a result, while this commitment has the potential to have a moderately positive impact, its outcomes thus far are assessed as marginal. The coding would have been higher had the commitment been completed.

Carried Forward?

The first milestone of this commitment was carried forward. Canada's fourth action plan includes an expansion of the Access to Information and Privacy Online Request Service to 50 new institutions in each year of the action plan.

¹ This is according to the 2017 midterm self-assessment report, which can be accessed at <https://open.canada.ca/en/commitment/mtsar/2016-2018>.

² The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

³ The directive is available at <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32590§ion=html>.

⁴ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

3. Expand and Improve Open Data

Commitment Text: *The Government of Canada will increase the quality and visibility of federal data holdings and set measurable targets for the release of open data over the next five years.*

Milestones:

3.1. Develop and publish departmental inventories of federal data, as required by the Directive on Open Government, to support collaboration with the public on setting priorities for the release of open data.

3.2. Set a baseline for the total volume of open data to be released over time and establish departmental targets for the publication of releasable data over the next five years:

- Publish departmental targets and progress on departments' release of open data.

3.3. Develop and refine guidance to help federal departments and agencies set priorities for the release of high-value open data and understand the specific circumstances under which data cannot be released for privacy, security, and/or confidentiality reasons:

- Establish data quality standards for open data;
- Provide guidance on engaging with key communities in Canada (e.g., First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, etc.) to better understand their needs when setting priorities for the release of open data;
- Develop metadata standards to enhance data interoperability and discoverability; and
- Develop guidance on the anonymization of datasets.

3.4. Provide access to high-quality, open statistical data and information from Statistics Canada, free of charge, in machine-readable formats under an open license and accessible via open.canada.ca:

- Release the results of the 2016 Census (Short Form and Long Form) in 2017 based on a published release schedule; and
- Host on-line "Chat with an Expert" and in-person "Talking Stats" sessions to enable Canadians to interact with Statistics Canada analysts and better understand the published data.

3.5. Improve Canadians' access to data and information proactively disclosed by departments and agencies through a single, common online search tool:

- Enhance self-service tools for departments to publish proactive disclosure information to strengthen the quality of data being released.

3.6. Adopt the International Open Data Charter and initiate implementation of the Charter requirements:

- Encourage civil society and private sector organizations to open up their own data where this would be of public benefit; and
- Measure progress and report on Canada's implementation of Charter principles.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat; Statistics Canada

Supporting institutions: N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
3. Overall			✓		✓	✓		✓			✓				✓					✓	
3.1. Inventories of federal data		✓			✓						✓					✓					
3.2. Targets and progress reports			✓		✓						✓				✓						
3.3. Guidance for releases, engagement, and exceptions			✓		✓	✓					✓				✓						
3.4. Publish StatsCan data			✓		✓						✓				✓						
3.5. Unified online search tool		✓			✓			✓		✓					✓						
3.6. International Open Data Charter		✓			✓	✓				✓			✓			✓					

Commitment Aim

This commitment contained many milestones which aim to boost the quality, visibility, and accessibility of open data. In addition to expanding the total amount of information available, the commitment aimed to unify standards for publication and enhance systems for accessing data. Specifically, the commitment set out to:

- Develop and publish departmental inventories of federal data;
- Set overall baselines and departmental targets for publishing open data;

- Develop guidance for prioritising high-value open data and for privacy, security, and confidentiality restrictions;
- Expand Statistics Canada's open data offerings;
- Develop an online search tool for information disclosed by departments and agencies; and
- Adopt and initiate implementation of the Open Data Charter.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

As of the end of June 2017, 89 percent of large departments, 61 percent of small departments, and 4 percent of micro-organisations submitted their open data inventories. These inventories were published by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, fulfilling Milestone 3.1.¹ The government made substantial progress toward Milestone 3.2 by expanding overall publication. However, it had not yet set departmental targets.² The government had also commenced work on a guidance document, in line with Milestone 3.3.³ It had also disseminated 2016 census results⁴ and held a number of “talking stats” sessions in line with Milestone 3.4.⁵ The government made significant progress consolidating published information on the open.canada.ca website (Milestone 3.5).⁶ Furthermore, Canada has become a lead steward of the Open Data Charter (Milestone 3.6).⁷ For more information, please see the 2016-2017 IRM midterm report.⁸

End of term: Complete

Milestone 3.1 was completed in the first year of the action plan. For Milestone 3.2, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat released the departmental targets for 2018 and 2019 on its Progress Tracker for Open Data. That tracker was launched in June 2018.⁹ The government launched the guidance document under development for Milestone 3.3 on 27 June 2018. It includes guidance on data and information quality standards, anonymising datasets, public outreach and engagement, and the metadata elements used to describe datasets and assets added to open.canada.ca.¹⁰

Following the publication of the 2016 census results (3.4) in the second year of implementation, Statistics Canada published data from nine additional categories. These categories included education,¹¹ housing,¹² and immigration and ethnocultural diversity.¹³ Statistics Canada also held 10 additional “Chat with an Expert” sessions,¹⁴ three “Talking Stats” sessions,¹⁵ and two events as part of the Speaker Series for Canada 150 (3.5).¹⁶ In March 2018, Canada finally formally adopted the Open Data Charter.¹⁷ In June 2018, the government posted a document assessing progress toward full implementation of the charter's principles.¹⁸

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Major

Civic Participation: Major

Canada's previous action plans included a strong focus on open data. Such plans included passing the “Directive on Open Government.” That directive requires federal departments to maximise the release of eligible government data and to publish Open Government Implementation Plans outlining how they would implement the directive's requirements. In the current action, Canada aimed to build toward automating open data releases and ingraining transparency and openness into government processes. It also aimed to increase the diversity, timeliness, and quality of data released, and to maximise the potential impact of the data and its reuse by Canadians. Over the course of the current action plan, the government made substantial gains. In particular, it expanded the volume and quality of information available from Statistics Canada and other institutions. It also expanded information available through the open data inventories. The latter serve as a critical step to allowing the public to understand what information might be available.

In terms of civic participation, Canada's adoption of the Open Data Charter constitutes an important step forward. It involves collaborating with many of the world's leading nongovernmental organisations in the open data sector. Moreover, the public outreach sessions should also help to

facilitate data uptake by civil society and the public at large. Thus, the sessions will further benefit the open data landscape.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan includes commitments to improve the quality of open data available on open.canada.ca (Milestone 1.3). It also plans to enhance open data guidelines as they apply to privacy (Milestone 1.5).

¹ The draft self-assessment is available at <http://open.canada.ca/en/mtsar/draft-consultation-mid-term-self-assessment-third-biennial-plan-open-government-partnership>.

² "Directive on Open Government," Government of Canada, last modified 16 September 2016, <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=28108>.

³ The draft self-assessment is available at <http://open.canada.ca/en/mtsar/draft-consultation-mid-term-self-assessment-third-biennial-plan-open-government-partnership>.

⁴ Available at "Topics, 2016 Census," Statistics Canada, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/rt-td/index-eng.cfm>.

⁵ See "Transcripts," Statistics Canada, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/chatwithanexpert/transcripts>; and "Past Events," Statistics Canada, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/events/past-eng>.

⁶ See, for example, a template for reporting on grants and contributions at "Data Element Profile – Grants and Contributions," Government of Canada, <http://pilot.open.canada.ca/ckan/en/dataset/add1c674-6653-5b6f-bbd1-e9671112ef31>.

⁷ See "Who We Are," Open Data Charter, <https://opendatacharter.net/who-we-are/>.

⁸ Michael Karanicolas, Canada Progress Report 2016-2017 (Washington, DC: Open Government Partnership Independent Reporting Mechanism), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/canada-mid-term-report-2016-2018>.

⁹ See "Progress Tracker for Open Data," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/b94ff2b5-9adc-4951-ab07-c7430dee01d2>.

¹⁰ The Open Government Guidebook is available at <https://open.canada.ca/ckan/en/dataset/9eaa6d0e-4b8c-5241-acf7-c6885294b8c1>.

¹¹ See "2016 Census Topic: Education," Statistics Canada, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/rt-td/edu-sco-eng.cfm>.

¹² See "2016 Census Topic: Housing," Statistics Canada, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/rt-td/hous-log-eng.cfm>.

¹³ See "2016 Census Topic: Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity," Statistics Canada, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/rt-td/imm-eng.cfm>.

¹⁴ See "Chat with an Expert: Education Indicators in Canada: An International Perspective, 2018," Statistics Canada, <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/chatwithanexpert>.

¹⁵ See "Past Events," Statistics Canada, <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/events/past>.

¹⁶ See "Telling Canada's Story in Numbers," Statistics Canada, <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/canada150>.

¹⁷ See Scott Brison, president of the Treasury Board, Letter to Members of the Advisory Board of the Open Data Charter, 12 March 2018, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4pnyLgEjbl6SGItVlglM0xPSFZ3S0dZX0M3MUhOdHBDelE4/view>.

¹⁸ See Moses Iziomon, "Canada Open Government Working Group (COGWG)", available at: <https://gccollab.ca/file/view/903273/progress-on-open-data-charter-implementation> (registration required).

4. Provide and Preserve Open Information

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will establish government-wide initiatives, platforms, and tools to ensure that open information is discoverable and accessible for use by future generations.

Milestones:

4.1. Enhance the Open Information Portal on open.canada.ca to improve access to digital publications made available by the federal government and develop a strategy to ensure the sustainability of access over time.

4.2. Develop and publish clear guidelines on the preservation and retention of digital content.

4.3. Increase Canadians' access to records documenting the continuing memory of the Government of Canada.

4.4. Update Library and Archives Canada's online archive of the Government of Canada's web presence to ensure Canadians' long-term access to federal web content.

4.5. Expand the implementation of the government-wide information technology solution for the effective management of federal records and documents (GCDOCS) as a foundation for improved transparency:

- Roll out this common solution managed by Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) to 125,000 government workers across government departments by June 2018.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat; Library and Archives Canada; Public Services and Procurement Canada

Supporting institutions: N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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	
	4. Overall		✓			✓				✓						✓				✓		
	4.1. Open Information Portal		✓			✓				✓				✓			✓					

4.2. Data retention guidelines			✓		✓						✓				✓				
4.3. Access to records	✓				✓						✓						✓		✓
4.4. Update online archive		✓			✓						✓						✓		✓
4.5. Expand GCDOCS			✓		✓							✓					✓		✓

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to resolve challenges to the preservation and accessibility of information. Such challenges result from a lack of clear government guidance around how information should be found, used, shared, and preserved. The commitment planned to:

- Enhance the Open Information Portal on open.canada.ca;
- Develop and publish guidelines on data preservation;
- Increase access to historic records;
- Update Library and Archives Canada's online archive; and
- Expand the implementation of the government's GCDOCS to effectively manage federal records and documents.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

The midterm assessment rated substantial overall progress on this commitment, including the relaunch of the Open Information Portal (Milestone 4.1).¹ The Open Government Resource Development Working Group developed draft guidelines on retention and disposition of digital content for public comment (Milestone 4.2).² Library and Archives Canada placed several hundreds of thousands of historic files online (Milestone 4.3),³ and it collected an additional 4.34 terabytes of material for indexing (Milestone 4.4).⁴ According to the government's midterm self-assessment of Milestone 4.5, the GCdocs programme was rolled out to 85,000 federal government workers by the end of the action plan's first year.⁵

End of term: Substantial

All milestones, apart from 4.2, were completed.

The vague phrasing of Milestone 4.1 makes it difficult to assess, but it appears to have been completed. Completion includes the launch of the government's Open Government Metadata Application Profile and consolidation of multiple search functions on the open.canada.ca website.⁶ Regarding Milestone 4.2, discussion of the draft guidelines on retention and disposition of digital content are ongoing, according to the government's end-of-term self-assessment. The government has thus far been unable to reach consensus.⁷ Under Milestone 4.3, the government released substantial additional material. According to the self-assessment, the government made available 10,498,631 pages through block review and 7.8 million images of historical military records.⁸

Under Milestone 4.4, the self-assessment states that approximately six terabytes of data were made available during the second year of implementation.⁹ The self-assessment also notes that the data is being migrated to a new platform. The new platform will expedite data publication. Regarding Milestone 4.5, the self-assessment reports that the GCdocs programme was rolled out to 133,526 federal government workers over the course of the action plan. Of these programmes, approximately 50,000 participated in the second year of implementation. The number of programmes falls well ahead of the 125,000 targeted in the milestone.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

This commitment intended to address one of the IRM SMART recommendations included in Canada's 2015 IRM report, namely to develop a clear policy on the preservation of digital material. It also includes other measures aimed at enhancing the findability and digitization of historical data. The government also made available a large volume of additional material and improved the Open Information Portal. However, the data preservation policy was not completed. This constituted an important action area. The large volumes of information made available under Milestones 4.3 and 4.4 are relatively limited in scope. Enhanced information management stands as a potentially more important development (4.5). However, the GCDOCS system (4.5) has been rolled out to only a proportion of the federal public service, and the broader impacts of this rollout remain to be seen. This commitment is coded as having a marginal impact. It likely would have scored higher had the data preservation policy been completed.

Carried Forward?

The data preservation policy (4.2), which was not completed under the third action plan, has not been included in the fourth action plan. In response to queries from the IRM researcher, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat said that it was working with Library and Archives Canada to determine next steps. The two bodies will also identify how the work done thus far should be utilised going forward. This has implications particularly for developing the upcoming Government of Canada Digital Policy and regarding the broader work related to Canada's data strategy.¹⁰ In line with the recommendations in the 2015 midterm assessment—and reiterated in the 2017 midterm assessment—the IRM recommends that Canada develop a clear policy on the preservation of digital material. Ideally, the policy should also apply to raw research data.

¹ See "Open Government Portal," Government of Canada, http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset?portal_type=info&q.

² The draft guidelines are available at: <https://gccollab.ca/file/group/29260/all#> (registration required).

³ See "Personnel Records of the First World War," Library and Archives Canada, <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/personnel-records.aspx>.

⁴ The draft self-assessment is available at <http://open.canada.ca/en/mtsar/draft-consultation-mid-term-self-assessment-third-biennial-plan-open-government-partnership>.

⁵ Available at "Provide and Preserve Open Information—Commitment 4," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/commitment/mtsar/2016-2018/commitment-4-provide-and-preserve-open-information>.

⁶ See "Open Government Metadata Application Profile," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/ckan/en/dataset/dbe5e27e-cc10-5e2e-b116-8d9b977ae6fd>.

⁷ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

⁸ See, for example, "Personnel Records of the First World War."

⁹ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

¹⁰ Email received on 28 August 2018.

5. Define an Approach for Measuring Open Government Performance Commitment

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will integrate performance indicators for openness and transparency into a Performance Management Framework for Open Government.

Milestones:

5.1. Integrate key performance indicators related to openness and transparency as part of a Performance Framework for managing data and information government-wide.

5.2. Measure and report publicly on annual departmental progress on implementation of the Directive on Open Government.

5.3. Work on developing a performance management framework and indicators that can better measure a wider breadth of Open Government efforts and outcomes.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Supporting institutions: N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion		Midterm		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	
5. Overall		✓			Unclear					✓					✓	✓			✓			
5.1. Performance Framework		✓			Unclear					✓						✓	✓					
5.2. Report on the Directive on Open Government			✓		Unclear					✓					✓	✓						

progress. Further, its implementation and application remain in their early stages. Nonetheless, the development of this framework and indicators could deliver benefits in the future, even if it is too early to assess its results as having substantially contributed to open government.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan includes a commitment to publish data on service delivery performance at open.canada.ca (4.5). The plan also includes a commitment to use international events to drive peer learning in this area and to measure government and open data impact internationally (10.3).

¹ Available at "Progress Tracker for the Third Biennial Plan to the Open Government Partnership," Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/en/content/progress-tracker-third-biennial-plan-open-government-partnership>.

² The working plan is available for download at <https://gccollab.ca/file/view/62638/en1-pager-on-performance-measurementfr1-pager-on-performance-measurement> (registration required).

³ See <https://gccollab.ca/file/view/171990/draft-logic-model-for-the-government-of-canadas-work-on-open-government> (registration required); and "Management Accountability Framework," Government of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/management-accountability-framework.html>.

⁴ See "Progress Tracker for Open Data," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/b94ff2b5-9adc-4951-ab07-c7430dee01d2>.

⁵ See "Open Government Performance: Measuring Impact," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/ckan/en/dataset/f637580f-e0f7-5939-bf3f-ded35ce72d2a>.

⁶ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

6. Develop Open Government Skills across the Federal Public Service

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will support a shift to greater transparency and engagement within the public service through Open Government learning material and opportunities for public servants.

Milestones:

6.1. Provide enhanced information management learning opportunities and additional materials to raise public servants' awareness and understanding of open government principles and practices, including:

- Using open data and information to support policy analysis and development;
- Sharing best practices in digital public engagement;
- Setting priorities for the release of open data and information based on potential public impact and benefit; and
- Implementing the Directive on Open Government.

6.2. Lead and/or participate in educational forums and workshops designed to further the understanding of how to increase government transparency and foster civic engagement.

6.3. Through public consultation on the 2016 Government of Canada IT Strategic Plan, consider feedback on how software solutions, including open source, can be best leveraged to meet strategic objectives.

Responsible institutions: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat; Canada School of Public Service

Supporting institutions: GovLab; the Government of Canada's policy community

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
6. Overall		✓			✓	✓		✓		✓					✓	✓			✓		
6.1. Learning opportunities		✓			✓						✓				✓	✓					
		✓			✓					✓					✓	✓					

society felt that a culture of secrecy was well entrenched across the bureaucracy.⁹ This commitment constitutes an important action area—the 2017 midterm assessment recommended it be carried forward. However, it is difficult to assess results involving the institutional challenges at the heart of Canada’s open data limitations. Particularly, these challenges include the need to promote a culture shift toward broader acceptance of the importance of openness. As a result, the commitment is coded as having a marginal effect. This rating could have been improved if the commitment had set and achieved more specific and clearly defined outcomes.

Carried Forward?

The fourth action plan includes additional open data trainings in Milestone 1.2. That plan’s Milestone 4.4 includes further advances in open source government.

¹ Documents were received via email on 28 September 2017.

² See “Information Technology Strategic Plan 2016-2020,” Government of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/information-technology/information-technology-strategy.html>.

³ See, for example, “Open Source Software and Open Standards in Public Administration,” Canada School of Public Service, <https://csps-efpc.gc.ca/events/oss/index-eng.aspx>; “Open Government: An Ongoing Process,” Canada School of Public Service <https://www.csps-efpc.gc.ca/events/air/arc/2017-eng.aspx#a20171214>; and “Let’s Talk Digital First,” Canada School of Public Service, <https://www.csps-efpc.gc.ca/events/air/arc/2018-eng.aspx#a20180627>.

⁴ See “The Open Government Learning Hub,” Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/learning-hub>.

⁵ See “National Data Services Framework Summit 2017,” Research Data Canada <https://www.rdc-drc.ca/activities/national-data-services/>; “GovMaker Conference,” GovMaker, <https://govmakerconference.ca/>; and homepage, Go Open Data Conference, <http://2018.go-opendata.ca/>.

⁶ Available at “Government of Canada Strategic Plan for Information Management and Information Technology 2017 to 2021,” Government of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/information-technology/strategic-plan-2017-2021.html>.

⁷ Available at “Policy on Management of Information Technology,” Government of Canada, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12755>.

⁸ Available at “Open First Whitepaper,” GitHub, https://github.com/canada-ca/Open_First_Whitepaper.

⁹ Toronto consultation, 15 September 2017, and Montreal consultation, 20 September 2017.

7. Embed Transparency Requirements in the Federal Service Strategy

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will develop a new Clients-First Service Strategy that embeds requirements for openness and transparency in the delivery of government services.

Milestones:

7.1. Develop a Government of Canada Clients-First Service Strategy that aims to create a single, user-centric online window for all government services.

7.2. Establish new performance standards and set up a mechanism to conduct rigorous assessments of the performance of key government services, and report findings publicly.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Supporting institutions: Service delivery departments and agencies

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
7. Overall		✓			✓				✓						✓				✓		
7.1. Single window for government services			✓		✓				✓						✓						
7.2. Performance standards		✓			✓					✓				✓		✓					

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to ensure rigorous assessments of key government services. It also entailed publicly reporting the findings of such assessments. It would create a single online window for all government services and establish standards and a mechanism to assess and report on their performance.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

The government developed the new service strategy in the first year of implementation. It published the strategy in the Privy Council Office's *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service* (Milestone 7.1).¹ As of June 2017, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat was in the process of defining its key performance indicators and determining what data it could leverage for the assessment mechanism in Milestone 7.2.

End of term: Complete

According to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS), the online window is still under development and is viewed as a longer-term goal. The TBS considers Milestone 7.1 complete, with the publication of the service strategy document. The strategy discusses the creation of this online window. The specific language of the milestone supports this interpretation of the commitment as complete. As written, it promises a development process rather than the window itself as a deliverable. Under Milestone 7.2, the self-assessment cites the TBS's *Guideline on Service Management*, published on 23 March 2017.² The guideline's policy on service outlines the process for establishment and management of service standards and real-time performance information to support service delivery. According to the government's self-assessment, in summer 2017, the TBS launched a pilot project on service standards assessment of key service departments. In that period, it also established a new tool to help departments assess existing—and develop new—service standards.³

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

The 2017 midterm assessment noted that this commitment had questionable value to Canada's OGP progress. The milestones are vague and only very generally related to access to information. Though the government did make some additional material public as a result of this initiative, the overall level of progress in terms of access to information in Canada is relatively small. Moreover, while the public has access to the assessments, the public does not appear to have opportunity to actually hold officials accountable for their actions. The lack of opportunity there limits the commitment's relevance to the public accountability value. Also worth noting, the online window which is the focus of Milestone 7.1 does not appear to be close to launch.

Carried Forward?

This commitment, as written, was fully completed under the current action plan. In Canada's fourth action plan, Milestone 4.5 builds on this commitment to create a performance dashboard to track service delivery performance.

¹ See Michael Wernick, *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada* (Ottawa, Ontario: Privy Council Office), <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/pco-bcp/documents/pdfs/clerk-greffier/24rpt-eng.pdf>.

² See "Guideline on Service Management," Government of Canada, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=28422>.

³ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

Theme II: Fiscal Transparency

8. Enhance Access to Culture & Heritage Collections

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will expand collaboration with its provincial, territorial, and municipal partners and key stakeholders to develop a searchable National Inventory of Cultural and Heritage Artefacts to improve access across museum collections.

Milestones:

8.1. Develop authorities and standards to guide the consistent implementation of this approach.

8.2. Enhance the ability to search and browse across museum collections.

8.3. Expand the network of museums participating in this initiative and the links to related external resources.

8.4. Host digital collections for museums that currently do not have a digital presence.

Responsible institution: Canadian Heritage

Supporting institutions: N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
8. Overall		✓			✓			✓		✓				✓		✓				✓		
8.1. Develop standards		✓			✓					✓				✓		✓						
8.2. Enhance searchability		✓			✓			✓			✓			✓			✓					
8.3. Expand participants		✓			✓					✓				✓			✓					
8.4. Digital collections		✓			✓			✓		✓			✓				✓					

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to mitigate geographic limitations affecting Canadians' ability to access cultural and heritage artefacts by creating and expanding digital collections. The commitment also sought to network these collections together to develop a searchable national database of cultural works. It would do this by:

- Developing authorities and standards related to the preservation and presentation of cultural works;
- Enhancing the ability to search and browse across museum collections;
- Expanding the network of museums participating in this initiative and the links to related external resources; and
- Hosting digital collections for museums that currently do not have a digital presence.

Status

Midterm: Limited

Over the course of the first year of implementation, the Department of Canadian Heritage developed a pilot website. This website included 166,762 objects, with a variety of reference points and classifications to improve searchability (Milestones 8.2 and 8.4).¹ The work was carried out in collaboration with eight partner museums: the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the McCord Museum, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the National Gallery of Canada, and the Vancouver Art Gallery.² The government also commenced work on improving cataloguing tools. As a result of this endeavour, the government plans to eventually make material available through a Linked Open Data format. However, during the midterm assessment, it reported resource challenges connected with this effort (Milestone 8.1).

End of term: Substantial

The government's self-assessment reports that, over the second year of implementation, the Department of Canadian Heritage built further on its standard setting work. It developed the website Nomenclature for Museum Cataloging. The government launched the website in November 2018, after the end of the implementation period for this action plan.³ It plans to make available the Linked Open Data (LOD) format in 2020 (Milestone 8.1).⁴ This work has included developing new standardised values for Canadian material. The government self-assessment scores Milestone 8.1 as having been completed. However, since the main deliverable has not actually been launched yet, the IRM researcher considers the commitment as having made substantial progress toward achieving its objective. Under Milestone 8.2, the self-assessment notes a Department of Canadian Heritage demonstration project called 150 Years of Canadian Art.⁵ It also highlights the development of a prototype for enhanced search functions and continued work toward Linked Open Data models. The self-assessment scores Milestone 8.2 as having been completed. The IRM researcher agrees that milestone has been assessed accurately, though the implementation of these improvements is ongoing.⁶

In terms of the formal collaborations under this commitment (Milestone 8.3), the number of museums which are formally collaborating in the initiative remains the same as it was at the midterm assessment (eight). However, according to follow-up discussions with the Department of Canadian Heritage, the government has expanded the number of informal collaborators. It has created an advisory committee on the modernisation of Artefacts Canada. That work will be based on an LOD approach. Advisory committee participants include eight museums (Lougheed House Conservation Society, Saskatchewan Western Development Museum, Canadian Museum of History, Musée de la Civilisation, New Brunswick Sports Hall of Fame, Canada Science and Technology Museum, Yale Centre for British Art, and the McCord Museum). This milestone has been completed. Under Milestone 8.4, the self-assessment reports that the government launched a redeveloped version of its Artefacts Canada database in March 2018. The new version featured an advanced search function, incorporated in July 2018.⁷ However, regard Milestone 8.4, the self-assessment notes that the government needs to conduct additional foundational work to develop tools for harvesting or

collecting museum data. Therefore, the IRM researcher considers this milestone to have achieved limited progress, in line with what is reported in the government's self-assessment report.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Canada's geographical size limits access to cultural heritage and artefacts for many citizens. Digitization provides an opportunity to enhance access to Canada's cultural heritage. It does so particularly for Canadians who lack the economic resources to travel to urban centres where such artefacts may be housed. However, the expansion of material online brings additional organisation and accessibility challenges. The standardisation and nomenclature work (Milestone 8.1) constitutes a key building block to facilitating future connections across museums through the Canadian Heritage Information Network. Milestone 8.1 is foundational in particular to consolidating collections into a more accessible format. The 150 Years of Canadian Art demonstration project gives users the ability to view artwork across certain participating collections. However, the tool remains limited in terms of its searchability. According to the Department of Canadian Heritage, the tool's status as a pilot with a limited dataset limits its functionality. The department noted that the incorporation of a Linked Open Data model will substantially boost functionality in the longer term. Nonetheless, at this point, the commitment is assessed as providing a marginal expansion in access to information, though it has the potential to have a more significant impact down the road.

Carried Forward?

This commitment area has not been carried forward to the next action plan. However, a conversation with the Department of Canadian Heritage suggests that the department expects the project to be carried forward nonetheless. First Nation stakeholders interviewed as part of the development of the midterm assessment stressed the value of digitization to cultural preservation goals. These stakeholders also noted that robust tagging and organisation are critical to enhancing accessibility. The IRM researcher recommends that initiatives to expand the digitization of cultural works and enhance their accessibility and consolidated availability across collections be carried forward to completion.

¹ The website is at <http://chin-rcip.canadiana.ca/aclod2/search/artefact>.

² Responses received via email on 13 October 2017.

³ See: <https://app.pch.gc.ca/sgc-cms/nouvelles-news/anglais-english/?p=10450>.

⁴ For more information about this project, see "Nomenclature: A New Online Resource for Museum Catalogers," Government of Canada, <https://app.pch.gc.ca/sgc-cms/nouvelles-news/anglais-english/?p=10425>.

⁵ See "150 Years of Canadian Art: A Linked Open Data Project," Artefacts Canada, <http://chin-rcip.canadiana.ca/aclod/>.

⁶ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

⁷ See "Advanced Search," Government of Canada, https://app.pch.gc.ca/application/artefacts_hum/re_as.app?lang=en.

9. Enhance Openness of Information on Government Spending and Procurement

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will increase the transparency of government spending and procurement to hold government accountable for public expenditures.

Milestones:

9.1. Release an interactive tool that will increase the granularity of data and information made available and enable Canadians to better understand federal departmental spending:

- Expand the types of data, graphics, and analytics available including:
 - Planned and actual results;
 - Comparisons between historical and planned spending; and
 - Spending on specific components such as salaries, capital, transfer payments, etc.
- Enable users to explore government spending of the most interest to them based on key data elements (e.g., target group, program type, priority area, etc.).

9.2. Enhance online content pertaining to government finances on Canada.ca to make information and tools on government spending readily accessible to Canadians.

9.3. Provide targeted and timely material to make government accounting and financial reporting more consistent, transparent, and understandable to Canadians.

9.4. Pilot updating the buyandsell.gc.ca site to record the full details of contracts (in addition to awards), contract amendments, and the final termination of contracts.

9.5. Participate in a case study to share best practices from Public Service and Procurement Canada's pilot of the Open Contracting Data Standard on BuyandSell.gc.ca.

Responsible institutions: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat; Department of Finance Canada; Public Services and Procurement Canada

Supporting institutions: N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
9. Overall			✓		✓			✓			✓			✓					✓		
9.1. Interactive tool				✓	✓			✓			✓				✓						
9.2. Enhance content on Canada.ca		✓			✓					✓				✓							
9.3. Financial reporting		✓			✓					✓				✓							
9.4. Update BuyandSell website				✓	✓			✓			✓			✓							
9.5. Best practices case study			✓		✓					✓			✓								

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to unify and expand the information published online about government spending and procurement. It builds on Commitment 8 of the second action plan, to provide more easily searchable information on governmental websites, by:

- Releasing an interactive tool that will increase the information made available about federal departmental spending;
- Enhancing online content on Canada.ca pertaining to government finances;
- Making government accounting and financial reporting more consistent, transparent, and understandable
- Piloting an update of the buyandsell.gc.ca website to record the full details of contracts (in addition to awards), contract amendments, and the final termination of contracts; and
- Participating in a case study to share best practices from Public Services and Procurement Canada's pilot of the Open Contracting Data Standard on buyandsell.gc.ca.

Status

Midterm: Limited

Over the first year of the action plan, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's InfoBase website expanded to include an inventory of government of Canada organisations.¹ It also enhanced information about government spending² and improved its metadata tagging system (Milestone 9.1).³ Under Milestone 9.2, the Department of Finance added datasets to the Canada.ca website. These datasets included the Fiscal Monitor 2016-2017,⁴ data related to the International Aid Transparency Initiative,⁵ and data tables connected to the federal budget.⁶ In terms of budgetary information connected to Milestone 9.3, the government published an explanatory document connected to the 2017 budget.⁷ It also published a summary report of pre-budget consultations.⁸ Regarding Milestone 9.4, Public Services and Procurement Canada began to expand information on buyandsell.gc.ca by

releasing the Standing Offers and Supply Arrangements Application. It also reported plans to pilot the full Open Contracting Data Standard on the site.⁹ Milestone 9.5 was coded in the midterm assessment as having had limited progress. However, given that the case study did not take place, the correct coding should have been that this milestone was not started.

End of term: Substantial

As of June 2018, the InfoBase website includes a combination of financial and performance information data dating back to 2012 (9.1). This has resulted in broader availability of data, graphics, and analytics. The information includes actual and planned spending and results information, results narratives, a budget tracker tool, granular expenditure data, and enhanced metadata tagging.¹⁰ The government has completed this milestone.

Under Milestone 9.2, the government uploaded to open.canada.ca additional datasets related to government finance.¹¹ The government has completed this milestone.

Regarding Milestone 9.3, the self-assessment reports several steps that were taken to improve the transparency of accounting and financial reporting. These steps included shifting to a new budget publication format which makes it easier to track implementation of budget items (in particular, regarding how spending aligns with estimates). The new format also consolidates financial reports on the InfoBase website.¹² The government has completed this milestone.

Under Milestone 9.4, the government self-assessment reports that Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) was able to pilot aspects of the Open Contracting Data Standard related to the initiation (tender), award and contract stages. However, it was not able to do so with the planning and implementation stages.¹³ The self-assessment additionally points to several different types of procurement information which are being published. This information includes real-time information about tenders and awards, weekly information about standing offers and supply arrangements, and a monthly updated contract history.¹⁴ This represents limited progress.

For Milestone 9.5, the self-assessment notes that PSPC's inability to complete its pilot of the Open Contracting Data Standard meant that it was also unable to carry out its best practices case study.¹⁵ This milestone was not started.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Open contracting has been a feature of Canada's previous action plans. In the second action plan, Commitment 8 aimed to lower the threshold for reporting and introduce a pilot of the Open Contracting Data Standard. According to Lindsey Marchessault, the Open Contracting Partnership's director for data and engagement, the work carried out under this commitment represents only a marginal step forward in terms of improving access to information. Specifically, progress on Milestones 9.4 and 9.5 was limited. A particular problem involved the lack of meaningful progress on expanding the publication of planning and implementation information. Such achievements would likely have meant a difference in coding for this commitment. However, Ms. Marchessault noted that work over the past two years may have alerted the government to the importance of revamping the use of organisational identifiers. Doing so could improve the quality of data by standardising the way it is identified and tagged across departments. This realisation will hopefully precipitate more important changes going forward, even if the impacts have not yet been felt.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan includes a commitment on financial transparency and accountability. That commitment largely targets improving open contracting. It includes further improvements to the release of budgeting and spending information and a renewed effort to pilot implementation of the Open Contracting Data Standard (Milestone 2.3).

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- ¹ Available at “Inventory of Federal Organizations and Interests,” Government of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/reporting-government-spending/inventory-government-organizations.html>.
- ² See “Infographic for Government,” Government of Canada, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#orgs/gov/gov/infograph/results>.
- ³ See “Datasets,” Government of Canada, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#metadata>.
- ⁴ Available at “The Fiscal Monitor: 2016-2017,” Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/45eb6514-0e38-48da-9a12-233d16813f4b>.
- ⁵ Available at “International Aid Transparency Initiative, November 2018,” Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/65515b1b-b545-4ce5-8e96-bf51babcfb65>.
- ⁶ Available at “Federal Budget 2017,” Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/2a84c234-633c-4cc6-9282-f40ff12f5bc7>.
- ⁷ Available at “Budget 2017 in 3 Minutes,” Government of Canada, <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2017/docs/plan/3min-en.html>.
- ⁸ Available at “Finance Canada 2017 Pre-Budget Consultations Summary Report,” Department of Finance Canada, <http://www.fin.gc.ca/pub/pbc-cpb/2017-eng.asp>.
- ⁹ Available at “Standing Offers and Supply Arrangement,” Public Works and Government Services Canada, <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/standing-offers-and-supply-arrangements>, accessed 13 October 2017.
- ¹⁰ See “GC InfoBase,” Government of Canada, <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>.
- ¹¹ See “Government Finances,” Government of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/finances.html>.
- ¹² See “Estimates Reform Helps You Follow the Money,” Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/blog/estimates-reform-helps-you-follow-money>.
- ¹³ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.
- ¹⁴ See “Tenders,” Public Works and Government Services Canada, <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/tenders>; “Standing Offers and Supply Arrangements,” Public Works and Government Services Canada, <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/standing-offers-and-supply-arrangements>; and “Contract History,” Public Works and Government Services Canada, <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/contract-history>.
- ¹⁵ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

10. Increase Transparency of Budget and Other Department of Finance Information

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will provide access to the datasets used in the Federal Budget each year in near real time and proactively disclose the list of briefing note titles prepared on economic and other matters.

Milestones:

10.1. Starting with Budget 2017, make all data from Budget charts and tables available in near real time to facilitate analysis by citizens and Parliamentarians.

10.2. Post publicly the list of briefing note titles prepared by Department of Finance officials on a regular basis, in order to be transparent about issues raised.

10.3. Explore options to increase the transparency of the budget pre-consultation process.

Responsible institution: Department of Finance Canada

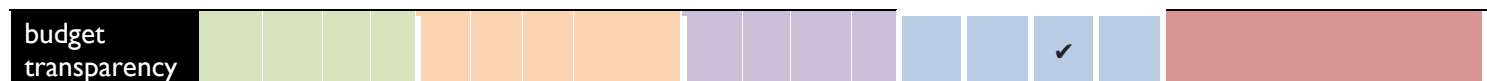
Supporting institutions: N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
10. Overall			✓		✓					✓					✓				✓		
10.1. Publish 2017 budget data			✓		✓						✓					✓					
10.2. Publish monthly briefing notes			✓		✓					✓						✓					
10.3. Explore additional	✓				✓					✓					✓						



Commitment Aim

This commitment built on a commitment from Canada's previous action plan to release information connected to the 2015 budget. Overall, this commitment sought to expand the availability of and expedite the release of information regarding the budget itself. It also sought to provide briefing notes from the Department of Finance related to underlying issues regarding the budgeting process. Specifically, the commitment called for the following:

- Expediting the delivery of all data from budget charts and tables;
- Posting the list of briefing note titles prepared by Department of Finance officials; and
- Exploring options to increase the transparency of the budget pre-consultation process.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

Milestone 10.1 was completed on 20 March 2017, with the publication of datasets connected to the 2017 budget.¹ The Department of Finance began publishing the titles of monthly briefing notes prepared by officials for the minister, the parliamentary secretary, and the deputy minister in August 2016. This fulfilled Milestone 10.2, though the titles were subject to significant redactions.² Regarding Milestone 10.3, as of June 2017, the Department of Finance had posted summary reports of the results of pre-budget consultations for the 2016 and 2017 budgets.³

End of term: Substantial

Although Milestone 10.1 was completed at the midterm, the government further published datasets from the 2018 budget on 27 February 2018.⁴ The government has also continued its monthly publication of the titles of briefing notes prepared by Department of Finance officials for the minister, the parliamentary secretary, and the deputy minister. However, approximately half of these titles continue to be redacted.⁵

Regarding Milestone 10.3, reporting in Canada's self-assessment appears to be identical to that found in the midterm assessment. The government provides the summary report of Canada's 2016 and 2017 pre-budget consultations to account for the completion of the milestone. It does not specifically state what new options were explored to increase transparency of the consultation process.⁶ Since the government did not provide evidence of additional activities in the second year of the action plan cycle, the IRM researcher still considers this milestone substantially complete. It is important to note the challenge in confirming completion of a milestone that does not have a properly defined endpoint.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Each year, in the course of developing the federal government's budget, the Department of Finance provides policy advice on a range of economic issues. The datasets underlying this advice serve as an important source of information. The same can be said for the list of briefing notes prepared by Department of Finance officials. However, despite the value of this data, and its high interest to Canadians, actual improvements in the release of such information constitute only a small step forward. Datasets were already being released publicly starting in 2015 (although the commitment has sped up this process). Moreover, the public gleans limited information from the titles of briefing notes, and only approximately half of these are actually being made available. As noted in the 2017 midterm assessment, this suggests an overzealous application of the classification procedures and undermines the actual impact on expanding access to information.

Regarding Milestone 10.3, there exists no indication that increases in engagement noted in the 2017 budget were carried forward into the 2018 budgeting process. The IRM researcher reached out to the Department of Finance lead to inquire into the 2018 consultations results. The researcher was told that "With the reliance on social media (i.e. Facebook live, twitter, LinkedIn) to interact and

exchange information with Canadians, the Department experienced challenges in compiling and condensing information from multiple sources. The Department was successful in publishing summary reports on pre-budget consultations in 2016 and 2017, however, issues relating to privacy, bilingualism and resource capacity impacted Finance Canada's ability to further increase transparency on pre-budget consultations. The 2018 public consultation results will not be released."⁷ The limited effect of the activities carried out to meet the objective of this milestone and the lack of evidence of sustainability, supports a coding of marginal.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan contains commitments targeting budget transparency. Notably, these commitments focus on the timeliness, completeness, and transparency of the budget estimates and spending plans (2.1). They also focus on the publishing of Gender-Based Analysis Plus findings for budget expenditure and tax measures (2.2) purposes.

¹ Available at "Federal Budget 2017," Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/2a84c234-633c-4cc6-9282-f40ff12f5bc7>.

² Available at "List of Briefing Notes Prepared for the Minister, the Deputy Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary," Department of Finance Canada, <http://www.fin.gc.ca/disclose-divulgate/bn-nb/index-eng.asp>.

³ See "Growing Our Economy Together: Summary Report on the 2016 Federal Pre-Budget Consultations," Department of Finance Canada, <http://www.fin.gc.ca/pub/pbc-cpb/2016-eng.asp>; and "Finance Canada 2017 Pre-Budget Consultations Summary Report," Department of Finance Canada, <http://www.fin.gc.ca/pub/pbc-cpb/2017-eng.asp>.

⁴ See "Federal Budget 2018," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/2cb957d4-1f7b-4a1b-ab5e-249f56a8b337>.

⁵ See, for example, "June 2018 List of Briefing Notes," Government of Canada, <https://www.fin.gc.ca/disclose-divulgate/bn-nb/2018-06-eng.asp>, in which 80 of 141 were redacted.

⁶ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

⁷ Email received on 29 August 2018.

★ 1.1. Increase Transparency of Grants and Contributions Funding

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will provide one-stop access to consistent, searchable data on grants and contributions (Gs&Cs) programs across the federal government.

Milestones:

1.1.1. Provide Canadians with centralized access to standardized information on grants and contributions funding that is proactively disclosed by federal departments via a common, searchable portal on open.canada.ca:

- Establish a standardized, common template for federal departments to publish their data through the centralized portal;
- Increase access to Gs&Cs information through a decrease to the required disclosure amount from \$25,000 to \$1;
- Provide training to federal departments on how to upload their data; and
- Ensure historical data previously disclosed by federal departments on grants and contributions funding is searchable via the central portal.

1.1.2. In consultation with internal and external stakeholders, expand the amount of information on grants and contributions funding disclosed by departments to align with international standards.

1.1.3. Pilot an approach to improving transparency in the delivery of grants and contributions by Canadian Heritage, including publication of:

- An increased level of detail in the data proactively disclosed on individual grants and contributions awarded by the department;
- Performance results against published service standards; and
- Data on events and celebrations funded by the department.

Responsible institutions: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat; Canadian Heritage

Supporting institutions: N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
★ 1.1. Overall				✓	✓	✓		✓				✓			✓	✓					✓
1.1.1. Centralise				✓	✓			✓				✓			✓						

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Outstanding

Civic Participation: Marginal

At the outset of this action plan, the system for reporting grants and contributions was distributed across government, was not standardised, and applied only to contracts over \$25,000. This commitment was the only one in Canada's third action plan marked as transformative, and its completion has had a strong positive impact on expanding the availability of information as well as its accessibility. In particular, the Department of Canadian Heritage's pilot programmes represent a significant expansion of the amount of information available on grants and contributions. The fact that advanced standards are now being rolled out across government significantly raises the impact of progress made during the action plan. In interviews with the IRM researcher, the Department of Canadian Heritage stressed that the implementation of the new Service Standards has had a strong positive impact on monitoring and tracking of programme implementation. As noted above, because of the internal nature of the dashboard, it does not directly count toward OGP goals. However, it does constitute substantive improvements to efficiency and performance from Canada's action plan programming.

Carried Forward?

This commitment does not appear to have been included in the fourth action plan. However, discussions with the Department of Canadian Heritage suggest that work to further develop this programming will likely continue.

¹ See "Search Government Grants and Contributions," Government of Canada, open.canada.ca/en/search/grants.

² Training materials are available at www.gcpcedia.gc.ca/wiki/Proactive_Disclosure_on_Open.Canada.ca. (This link is functional only on networked Canadian government machines. The IRM researcher viewed an offline copy with the assistance of Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat staff.)

³ See <https://open.canada.ca/en/grgca-ldrosc/guidelines-reporting-grants-and-contributions-awards>.

⁴ In response to queries, Jacob Topic of the Office of the Comptroller General provided a list of six external consultation meetings and 26 internal consultation meetings. External stakeholders consulted include Powered by Data, Imagine Canada, Open Calgary, and the Council of Ontario Universities.

⁵ See <https://open.canada.ca/en/grgca-ldrosc/guidelines-reporting-grants-and-contributions-awards>.

⁶ See "Search Government Grants and Contributions," Government of Canada, open.canada.ca/en/search/grants?_ga=2.162107004.1347862626.1499174882-1187550498.1490712190&f%5B0%5D=org_name_en%3ACanadian%20Heritage; and "Service Standards Result for Canadian Heritage Funding Programs," Government of Canada, www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/service-standards/service-standards-results.html.

⁷ See "Guidelines on the Reporting of Grants and Contributions Awards," Government of Canada, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32563§ion=html>.

⁸ The feedback process and a summary of responses are available at <https://open.canada.ca/en/grgca-ldrosc/consultation-guidelines-reporting-grants-and-contributions-awards>.

⁹ Interview by IRM researcher, 14 September 2018.

¹⁰ See "About Celebrate Canada Days 2019," Government of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/celebrate-canada-days/about-celebrate-canada-days.html>.

12. Improve Public Information on Canadian Corporations

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will provide searchable information on Canadian businesses that is held in business registries at the federal, provincial, and territorial level.

Milestones:

12.1. Launch a pilot project to provide citizens and business with online capacity to search existing federal and provincial (from Ontario, Québec, and Nova Scotia) business registries through a single search tool.

12.2. Develop a proof of concept and prototype of a digital solution for reducing burden in the areas of corporate search, registration, and reporting for Canadian businesses that is expandable to all registries across Canada in order to drive consistency in corporate data provided to the public by both federal and provincial governments.

Responsible institution: Innovation, Science, and Economic Development

Supporting institutions: N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Comple tion		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	
	12. Overall			✓		✓			✓		✓						✓			✓		
	12.1. Pilot programme			✓		✓			✓		✓						✓					
	12.2. Multi-jurisdictional prototype			✓		✓			✓		✓						✓					

Commitment Aim

Corporate accountability is an issue of growing interest and relevance, and robust access to information is an essential component of civil society oversight over private sector activities. This commitment aimed to enhance the searchability and availability of information on Canadian businesses held in business registries at the federal, provincial, and territorial levels. In particular, the commitment pledges to:

- Launch a pilot search function for federal and provincial business registries; and

- Develop a proof of concept and prototype for a digital solution for corporate search, registration, and reporting.

In the course of the first year of implementation, the government also added a separate milestone to this commitment. That milestone aimed to pilot the digital solution and release it for testing by users.

Status

Midterm: Complete

Under Milestone 12.1, Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada created a concept prototype in late 2016.¹ The department then partnered with seven provinces—British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador—to advance progress toward a digital solution, the Multi-jurisdictional Registry Access Service (MRAS) (12.2). The government approved MRAS in September 2016. The service facilitates searches across the different business registries and provides streamlined extra-provincial registration and direct notifications of changes in corporate information among registries. The prototype MRAS was completed in March 2017. Thus, by the time of the midterm assessment, both 12.1 and 12.2 had been completed.

End of term: Complete

In the midterm self-assessment, the government added a third milestone to the commitment text. However, the OGP Support Unit did not receive an updated version within a year of the due date for submission of Canada's action plan. Therefore, the IRM researcher cannot consider the new milestone in the overall assessment of the commitment.

The new milestone was presented as follows:

12.3 Launch a pilot of the digital solution using real data in a test environment. The online corporate search component will be released for testing by users.

Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada launched the Multi-jurisdictional Registry Access Service pilot in March 2018. It connected sample registries together to test the search, registration, and notification components. In June 2018, the search component of the pilot, Canada's Business Registries search service, was released as a beta version. It provides coordinated access to core business registry information for over 80 percent of corporations operating in Canada. The government currently has made it available for user testing.²

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Business identity information is distributed across jurisdictions in Canada. This poses access challenges for civil society watchdogs, journalists, and citizens, as well as for businesses themselves seeking to research the corporate landscape. This commitment aimed to simplify and consolidate this system. It planned to make information about Canadian corporations more accessible, discoverable, and usable. Several stakeholders—including the Centre for Law and Democracy,³ Publish What You Pay-Canada, and Canadians for Tax Fairness—have requested that Canada's OGP efforts include a focus on Canadian corporations.⁴ Additionally, data integration and the removal of cross-jurisdictional challenges to accessing information are important action areas.

The creation of the Multi-jurisdictional Registry Access Service pilot is a positive step towards improving the accessibility and searchability of corporate registry information. It connects federal, provincial and territorial registry systems making data easier to find. However, it does not affect the main obstacle to accountability in this specific sector: namely the limited amount of information that the government collects, particularly around ownership and beneficial structures. Publish What You Pay-Canada—which referred to Canada's business registry system as “complicated” and “out-of-date”—described this commitment as “low-hanging fruit.”⁵ Similarly, in terms of integration, the projects certainly reflect the right direction to move in. However, given the narrow scope of the information being provided, it is difficult to score the projects as major steps forward. Further and

more ambitious steps to consolidate cross-jurisdictional information could certainly be scored as such.

Carried Forward?

The third commitment of Canada's fourth action plan addresses corporate transparency. It includes a requirement for federal corporations to hold beneficial ownership information. On this issue, civil society stakeholders have been highly vocal. The action plan also addresses jurisdictional challenges. One commitment includes a pilot project on common, cross-jurisdictional data standards in line with the Open Data Charter (10.5).

¹ The Business Registry Search Pilot was released online at <https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/067.nsf/eng/00003.html?OpenDocument>.

² The beta is available, as of 13 September 2018, at <https://beta.canadasbusinessregistries.ca/search>.

³ The Centre for Law and Democracy's 2016 submission is available at <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Canada.OGP-AP3-Ideas.May16.pdf>.

⁴ See "Beneficial Ownership Transparency," Government of Canada, http://open.canada.ca/en/Beneficial_Ownership_Transparency.

⁵ This was expressed at a consultation in Ottawa on 18 September 2017. It echoes sentiments expressed by a variety of stakeholders.

Theme III: Innovation, Prosperity, and Sustainable Development

13. Increase the Availability and Usability of Geospatial Data

Commitment Text: *The Government of Canada will make more high-quality, authoritative, and useable geospatial data available in open formats to support better services to Canadians.*

Milestones:

13.1. Improve access to open geospatial data through the expansion of open maps:

- *Increase the number of federal geospatial datasets available through a single window enabling Canadians to more easily find relevant geospatial data that can be mapped and visualized;*
- *Provide access to satellite imagery through an open licence; and*
- *Work with researchers, data enthusiasts, and developers who use geospatial data to share their work through the open maps gallery.*

13.2. Develop geospatial data and web service standards:

- *Increase the quality and standardization of critical geospatial data assets through strategic investments;*
- *Implement a management and investment framework for high value federal geospatial data assets; and*
- *Participate in geospatial standards bodies to ensure that Canada's data continues to be accessible and interoperable nationally and internationally.*

13.3. Develop Geospatial Applications:

- *Build mobile applications to disseminate key information to Canadians in an interactive format, which makes complex and large amounts of information easy to understand;*
- *Provide targeted applications, which use open geospatial data to address the policy priorities of government; and*
- *Provide the ability for Canadians to share data they collect through standardized tools.*

Responsible institution: Natural Resources Canada

Supporting institutions: Member departments of the Federal Committee on Geomatics and Earth Observations (FCGEO) supporting the Federal Geospatial Platform (FGP)

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

Commitment Overview	Specificity	OGP Value Relevance (as written)	Potential Impact	Completion	Midterm End of Term	Did It Open Government?
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	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
13. Overall			✓		✓			✓			✓				✓				✓		
13.1. Improve geospatial data access			✓		✓			✓			✓				✓						
13.2. Develop standards			✓		✓			✓			✓				✓						
13.3. Develop applications			✓		✓			✓			✓				✓						

Commitment Aim

The collection and sharing of geospatial data constituted an early focus of Canada's open data efforts, and Canada's public laboratories have strong expertise on this issue. This commitment includes milestones aimed at further expanding the information available and boosting its accessibility and uptake. The commitment intended to improve access to open geospatial data through the expansion of open maps, development of geospatial data and web service standards, and development of geospatial applications.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

Over the course of the action plan, Natural Resources Canada increased the number of records available on the Open Maps component of the Open Government catalogue from 200 to 573. The department made all of the records available through an open licence (Milestone 13.1).¹ In terms of progress to develop geospatial data and web service standards (Milestone 13.2), Natural Resources Canada engaged various entities on this endeavour. These entities included the US Federal Geographic Data Committee's Open Geospatial Consortium, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, and the World Wide Web Consortium.

Regarding Milestone 13.3, Natural Resources Canada developed several applications which use geospatial data. These applications include the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure,² the Demonstration Application of Arctic Food Security Policy,³ Clean Energy Resources and Projects in Canada,⁴ North American Cooperation on Energy Information,⁵ Ten Years of Drought in Canada,⁶ and the Crowdsourced Geographic Information Pilot Project.⁷

End of term: Substantial

Over the second year of implementation, Natural Resources Canada increased the number of records available on the Open Maps component of the Open Government catalogue further, from 573 to 781. It did so through contributions from 14 departments and agencies, up from the previously contributing eight departments and agencies.⁸ The government also completed the second

part of Milestone 13.1. It published a new collection of high-resolution elevation data derived from LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging). It also released a Canadian component of the Arctic DRM and Canadian flood mapping.⁹ However, Natural Resources Canada faced challenges in implementing the third aspect of Milestone 13.1, due to technical difficulties in establishing the Open Maps gallery. In a follow-up email, Natural Resources Canada noted the costs associated with responding to the “Directive on Open Government” made it difficult to sustain momentum on this milestone. It pointed out the high amount of human, technological, and bureaucratic energy required to make contributions under the directive available on the open government portal. The department further added that the Federal Geospatial Platform (FGP) “has been successful in quickly bringing a significant amount of geospatial data to the open government portal, primarily because FGP applications, standards and processes made the effort easier for departments but also because a significant amount of this data was relatively easy for departments to make available without impacting ongoing operations. This will not always be the case.”¹⁰ The self-assessment evaluates this milestone as having substantial progress. The IRM researcher concurs.

For Milestone 13.2, Natural Resources Canada created a National Elevation Data Strategy. The strategy’s goals include developing a national system for the management and dissemination of elevation data, national LIDAR data acquisition guidelines, and automated methods for extraction of additional cartographic features from the elevation data. The self-assessment lists several other standardisation efforts advanced through the FGP Initiative agreement and the FGP project. These efforts include collaborations with eight provinces and territories to carry out data and metadata inventories and exchange geospatial metadata and services. However, follow-up discussions with Natural Resources Canada revealed that strategic investment was not obtained in time for the end of the reporting period. The department also noted that the public cannot view or use the management and investment framework for geospatial data.¹¹ As a consequence, this milestone is marked as having substantial progress, rather than as complete.

Under Milestone 13.3, the self-assessment points to a number of applications which were developed over the course of this action plan. These include the Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure group on ArcGIS Online, the Inuvik Satellite Station Facility Story Map App, and a new version of the Data Extraction tool.¹² However, the milestone is scored as having substantial progress, rather than as complete, because many of these applications are not available to the public. The reasons for their unavailability include the following: the developer deems the content sensitive, the application contains data that is not available under the open licence, or the application does not meet the web accessibility guideline for the federal government.¹³ Moreover, the government developed no applications specifically for mobile devices. This task has proven more challenging than the development of web applications.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Geospatial data represents the largest quantity of publicly available data by a significant margin. Over the last five years, federal departments established a single platform to collect and share geospatial data. The focus of this commitment was to increase its quality and usability to derive additional information, solve problems, help with context setting, and assist with evidence-based decision making. Although geospatial data remains a leading component of Canada’s open data offerings, communications with Natural Resources Canada suggest that promoting uptake and use remains a challenge. Further progress requires not only that users be provided with problem-specific, relevant, and hands-on learning opportunities to empower them to use to data, but also that dataset owners embrace new users and uses of their data. Limited progress has been made in addressing the core cultural component. Hence, this commitment is coded as marginal. This rating should be understood in the context of the advanced nature of Canada’s geospatial offerings at the outset of the action plan.

Carried Forward?

The first commitment in Canada's fourth action plan focuses on user-friendly open government. Milestone 1.3 focuses on increasing the availability and standardisation of geospatial datasets.

¹ Available at "Open Government Portal," Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset?q=&collection=fgp>.

² See "ArcGIS," Esri, <http://msdi-idsm.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>.

³ See "Arctic Spatial Data Pilot Project," Esri Canada, <https://esri-ncr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=c8633273d784445a97473d699e8b9aac>.

⁴ See "The Atlas of Canada—Clean Energy Resources and Projects (CERP)," Natural Resources Canada, <http://atlas.gc.ca/cepr-rpep/en/>.

⁵ See "Energy Infrastructure and Resource Potential of North America," Natural Resources Canada, <http://geoappext.nrcan.gc.ca/GeoCanViz/map/nacei-cnaie/en/index.html>.

⁶ See "Ten Years of Drought in Canada," Government of Canada, <http://maps.canada.ca/journal/content-en.html?lang=en&appid=ec76e685b0fc41c69c566dd3a97f05bb&appidalt=08cf0944bfa847e9dba5614475e0d79>.

⁷ See "Flood/Ice Observations," NRCan Observer, <http://arcgis/2sXaHHB>.

⁸ See "Open Government Portal," Government of Canada,

https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset?q=&collection=fgp&sort=metadata_modified+desc&organization_limit=0.

⁹ See "High Resolution Digital Elevation Models (HRDEM)—CanElevation Series," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/957782bf-847c-4644-a757-e383c0057995> and "Floods in Canada—Current Year," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/b1afd8d2-6e14-4ec4-9a09-652221a6cb71>.

¹⁰ According to correspondence with Natural Resources Canada, received on 4 September 2018.

¹¹ Email received on 4 September 2018.

¹² See "MSDI Pacific," ArcGIS,

<http://www.arcgis.com/home/group.html?id=d00890035ad8418dba10b83c236a8ec8#overview>; "Inuvik Satellite Station Facility Story Map App," ArcGIS, <https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=83f52eea3b8643d78d476aa76c702580>; and "Geospatial Data Extraction," Government of Canada, <http://maps.canada.ca/czs/index-en.html>.

¹³ According to correspondence with Natural Resources Canada, received on 4 September 2018.

14. Increase Openness of Federal Science Activities (Open Science)

Commitment Text:

The Government of Canada will take appropriate steps to make the science performed in support of Government of Canada programs and decision-making open and transparent to Canadians.

Milestones:

Science-based Departments and Agencies

14.1. Create a Chief Science Officer mandated to ensure that government science is fully available to the public, that scientists are able to speak freely about their work, and that scientific analyses are considered when the government makes decisions.

14.2. Increase the public availability of data and publications produced from federal Science and Technology (S&T) activities.

14.3. Increase engagement with Canadians on federal S&T activities, including, as appropriate:

- Enhanced communication of scientific participation opportunities in support of federal S&T activities; and
- Targeted consultations on best practices for increasing the impact of federal S&T activities.

14.4. Develop metrics to track collective federal progress on open science activities.

Granting Councils and Grants and Contributions

14.5. Develop and implement an open access policy for scientific research funded through grants and contributions.

14.6. Work toward the development of policies on digital data management for research funded through the Granting Councils.

Responsible institutions: Environment and Climate Change Canada; Innovation, Science, and Economic Development

Supporting institutions: Science-based departments and agencies

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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

14. Overall			✓		✓	✓						✓					✓
14.1. Chief science officer			✓		✓						✓						
14.2. Increase S&T data	✓				✓					✓							✓
14.3. Increase S&T engagement		✓				✓				✓							✓
14.4. Open science metrics		✓			✓						✓						✓
14.5. Open access for scientific grants			✓		✓							✓					
14.6. Digital data management		✓			✓					✓							✓

Commitment Aim

This commitment includes deliverables which are targeted toward increasing the accessibility of government science. Such accessibility will help to ensure Canadians are informed of opportunities to engage in federal science and technology (S&T) activities and can explore ways to enhance the impact of government data and information. The commitment specifically pledges to:

- Create a chief science officer;
- Increase the public availability of data and publications produced from federal S&T activities;
- Increase engagement with Canadians on federal S&T activities;
- Develop metrics to track collective federal progress on open science activities;
- Develop and implement an open access policy for scientific research funded through grants and contributions; and
- Work toward the development of policies on digital data management for research funded through the Granting Councils.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

The government completed the selection process for the chief science officer (Milestone 14.1) by June 2017. The process led to the appointment of Mona Nemer to the position shortly after the first year of implementation.¹ Regarding Milestone 14.2, the government launched the Federal Science Library in March 2017. As of June 2017, the library hosted research and resources from seven departmental libraries.² Under Milestone 14.3, Environment and Climate Change Canada carried out several engagement activities. These included the use of social media by the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Women in Science Network, a series of short articles published about agriculture,³ a series of press briefings through the Science Media Centre,⁴ and a new website dedicated to citizen science.⁵

In efforts to complete Milestone 14.4, Kathleen Shearer developed a report on metrics for Environment and Climate Change Canada in January 2017.⁶ Under Milestone 14.5, a scoping paper was developed for Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada in May 2017.⁷ Under

Milestone 14.6, consultations on the development of a tri-agency policy on research data management began in the spring of 2017.

End of term: Substantial

All of the milestones, apart from Milestone 14.5, were completed.

The government completed Milestone 14.1 Mona Nemer's appointment as chief science officer on 26 September 2017.⁸ Given the relatively vague and open-ended nature of Milestone 14.2, it could be assessed as having been completed at the midterm. However, the end-of-term self-assessment cited a few additional activities to be done. These include updating the National Research Council's "Policy on Information Management." The policy has yet to receive final approval but was shared, in draft form, with the IRM researcher. The assessment also cited participation by Environment and Climate Change Canada and Natural Resources Canada in the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Open by Default pilot project.⁹

Milestone 14.3 is similarly difficult to assess. In this area, the self-assessment cited several activities designed to boost engagement across various departments. These activities include engaging First Nation populations in integrating traditional knowledge into fisheries science; participation in public-facing activities such as Doors Open Ottawa; and training on social media, plain language science, and general communications.¹⁰

Regarding Milestone 14.4, the metrics and indicators report was finalised in June 2018. It identified four core metrics and three supplementary metrics to track open science activities and assess their impacts and benefits.¹¹ The self-assessment states that, over the course of the action plan, it became clear that a single open access policy, of the sort envisioned by Milestone 14.5, was unfeasible. As a result, the government developed a draft *Statement of Principles on Open Access to Publications Supported through Grants and Contributions*.¹² The *Statement of Principles* has been shared with the community of practice for feedback, but it has not yet been finalised or implemented.

Under Milestone 14.6, the self-assessment cites the continuation of consultations which began in the spring of 2017. In particular, the assessment points to the launch of an online public consultation in June 2018 to solicit feedback on the draft policy and its usefulness. Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada shared with the IRM researcher an extensive list of stakeholders who were consulted as part of this effort. The department also shared an agenda from one of these meetings. The government plans to launch the policy in 2019.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Outstanding

Civic Participation: Major

This commitment marks an important shift away from the "muzzling" of Canadian scientists, which took place under the previous government,¹³ toward more open access to government scientific research. Open science constitutes an important area of focus. Civil society stakeholders consulted in the preparation of this report expressed a similar sentiment, as did the 2015 IRM progress report.¹⁴ This shift has clear implications for the expansion of access to research data. It also has implications for the promotion of civic engagement. It helps to re-establish a robust dialogue between nongovernmental organisations and government scientists, which had been severely chilled. The general language of Milestones 14.2 and 14.3 makes it difficult to assess whether and to what degree they have generated a net and sustainable improvement. However, the general consensus among civil society has been that the federal government is now far more open in terms of connecting scientists and researchers to the media and the public than during the previous action plan.¹⁵ The government took another important step with the appointment of a chief science officer.

On the whole, this commitment is coded as outstanding regarding access to information and as major regarding civic participation. The past two years' gains—and the processes which have commenced and which are being carried into the next action plan—will have a strong, positive effect on Canadians' access to and engagement with scientific results and resources. However, it is worth noting that Canada's self-assessment also points to important future challenges. Such challenges are particularly related to the disclosure of data that fulfils official language requirements, data fragmentation, de-identification of data to remove personal information, and the need for a culture change to address concerns about the popularisation of science. Nonetheless, the fact that these challenges have been identified constitutes a positive step, which bodes well for further progress.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan lists open science as the fifth commitment. The commitment includes milestones to enhance access to publications from federal scientists (5.1) and to advance work on the metrics developed under 14.4 (5.4).

¹ Ivan Semeniuk, "Ottawa Researcher Mona Nemer Named Canada's New Science Advisor," *Globe and Mail*, 26 September 2017, <https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/mona-nemer-named-canadas-new-science-advisor/article36401427/>.

² Available at "Federal Science Library," Government of Canada, <http://science-libraries.canada.ca/eng/home/>.

³ "Discover Agriculture," Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, last modified 14 September 2017, <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/publications/discover-agriculture/?id=1411999466585>.

⁴ See, for example, "SMCC Webinar: Water in a Changing Climate," Science Media Centre of Canada, 27 May 2017, sciencemediacentre.ca/site/?p=5441.

⁵ "Archived—Become a Citizen Scientist," Government of Canada, 10 February 2017, <https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/013.nsf/eng/00005.html>.

⁶ This is not available online. A copy has been shared with the IRM reviewer.

⁷ This is not available online. A copy has been shared with the IRM reviewer.

⁸ See "Dr. Mona Nemer," Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, <https://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2017/09/26/dr-mona-nemer>; and "Chief Science Advisor," Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, <https://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2017/09/26/chief-science-advisor>.

⁹ See "Open by Default Pilot," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/open-by-default-pilot>.

¹⁰ The government shared a course outline from the social media training sessions with the IRM researcher on 10 September 2018.

¹¹ Science-Based Departments and Agencies Open Science Metrics Working Group, Monitoring Open Science Implementation in Federal Science-Based Departments and Agencies: Metrics and Indicators, 27 June 2018, https://ecccdocs.techno-science.ca/documents/ECCC_STB_STSD_OpenScienceMetricsReportADMOvf-accessible.pdf.

¹² See "Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications," Government of Canada, http://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_F6765465.html?OpenDocument.

¹³ See "Most Federal Scientists Feel They Can't Speak Out, Even if Public Health and Safety at Risk, Says New Survey," Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, <http://www.pipsc.ca/portal/page/portal/website/issues/science/bigchill>; and Karen Magnuson-Ford and Katie Gibbs, *Can Scientists Speak?* (British Columbia: Simon Fraser University; and Ottawa, Ontario: Evidence for Democracy), https://evidencefordemocracy.ca/sites/default/files/reports/Can%20Scientists%20Speak_.pdf.

¹⁴ Mary Francoli, Canada Progress Report 2014-2015 (Washington, DC: Open Government Partnership Independent Reporting Mechanism), https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/1.Canada14-15_English_Final_0_0.pdf.

¹⁵ This was expressed by several stakeholders during consultations for the 2017 midterm assessment. Such stakeholders included Canadian Journalists for Free Expression and the Canadian Association of Journalists at the Toronto consultation on 15 September 2017.

15. Stimulate Innovation through Canada's Open Data Exchange (ODX)

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will partner with the private sector to better understand how companies are using open data, and raise awareness of the possibilities that exist for Canadian entrepreneurs to take advantage of the value of open data.

Milestones:

15.1. Complete a comprehensive mapping of 150 Canadian companies that are using open data to launch new products and services, create commercial and non-profit ventures, optimize their business processes, conduct research, and/or make data-driven decisions.

15.2. Launch an online platform at www.opendata500.com/ca to showcase Canada's Open Data 150.

15.3. Establish a national network of open data users within industry to collaborate on the development of standards and practices in support of data commercialization.

15.4. Collaborate with private industry on three demonstration projects to illustrate the commercialization potential of open data in priority sectors.

15.5. Incubate 15 new data-driven companies by June 2018.

Responsible institution: Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario in collaboration with Canada's Open Data Exchange

Supporting institutions: Communitex; Canadian Digital Media Network; OpenText; D2L; University of Waterloo

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
15. Overall			✓		✓	✓					✓				✓					✓	
15.1. Map 150 companies			✓		✓					✓						✓					
			✓		✓					✓						✓					

assessment states that 18 companies have been funded through the Open Data Exchange Ventures programme. Further, 261 companies have engaged using the mentor and concierge services, and the Communitex Data Hub (ODX's home base) houses over 40 companies.⁶ Therefore, the government has completed this milestone. However, the general terms of the reporting, and the lack of clarity on how these processes are interpreted in relation to the "incubation" process, suggest that, like 15.3, this milestone was treated as a continuation of ODX's core programming.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Major
Civic Participation: Marginal

The Open Data Exchange (ODX) was established in 2015 as a partnership among the private, public, and academic sectors. Its stated purpose involved supporting the commercialisation of open data by Canadian companies. Private sector development is an important benefit of open data, and some aspects of ODX participants' programming is very impressive. However, this commitment faces limitations because gains in access to information are mainly restricted to the programme's participants, as opposed to the public at large. Nonetheless, certain projects, such as the demonstrations in Guelph and Stratford, have substantial value. ODX's participants have spoken positively about their involvement.⁷

Additionally, this project has led to marginal changes regarding civic participation. There exists little indication that these programmes have helped to enhance public engagement or to influence government decisions. Indeed, consultations carried out as part of the midterm assessment exposed civil society's unease with the focus on private sector development with no concomitant programme to channel resources to nongovernmental organisations working in this space.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan does not include the Open Data Exchange.

¹ See Kelsey Vere, "OD150—Results of 150+ Canadian Companies for Canada Day," 4 July 2017, Open Data Exchange, <https://codx.ca/od150-results-of-150-canadian-companies-for-canada-day/>; and homepage, Open Data 150, <http://canada.opendata500.com/>.

² See John Chiappetta, "ODX Cross-Canada Trip Report: Atlantic Canada," 20 April 2017, Open Data Exchange, <https://codx.ca/odx-cross-canada-trip-report-atlantic-canada/>; John Chiappetta, "ODX Cross-Canada Trip Report: Central Canada," 15 June 2017, Open Data Exchange, <https://codx.ca/odx-cross-canada-trip-report-central-canada/>; and John Chiappetta, "ODX Cross-Canada Trip Report: Western Canada," 29 May 2017, Open Data Exchange, <https://codx.ca/odx-cross-canada-trip-report-western-canada/>.

³ See Open Data Exchange, OD 150: Celebrating the Next 150 Years of Canadian Business, 2017, https://codx.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/OD150_finalinfographic.pdf.

⁴ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

⁵ Email received from Kevin Tuer, managing director of Canada's Open Data Exchange, on 7 September 2018.

⁶ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

⁷ Michael Campanelli, interview by IRM researcher, 5 October 2017.

16. Align Open Data across Canada (Open Data Canada)

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will expand collaboration with provincial, territorial, and municipal partners on further standardizing and harmonizing the delivery of open government data across jurisdictions.

Milestones:

16.1. Foster the adoption of common open data principles that are consistent with the International Open Data Charter by all levels of government.

16.2. Develop a list of high-value, priority datasets for release in collaboration with key jurisdictions to make it easier for Canadians to compare data across different governments.

16.3. Launch an online, federated, multi-jurisdictional open data search service in partnership with one or more provinces and territories to allow Canadians to search and access data from across jurisdictions, regardless of its origin.

16.4. Host a national Open Data Canada summit in 2017 to bring together federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal officials to collaborate on setting a national agenda for aligning and improving the delivery of open data across the country.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Supporting institutions: Provinces, territories, municipalities, and Indigenous Peoples

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion		Midterm End of Term		Did It Open Government?				
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16. Overall			✓		✓						✓				✓					✓	
16.1. Common open data principles			✓		✓							✓			✓						
		✓			✓						✓			✓							

also noted that, while the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat has done a good job of working with provinces, there is room for stronger engagement with municipalities.

It is also worth noting that the output of the Canada Open Government Working Group appears to have thus far focused on prioritisation, rather than the more important task of standardisation. However, these collaborations should help to set the stage for valuable work going forward. Similarly, although the federated open data portal has, thus far, integrated information only from a single province, the development of this technical architecture should allow the system to be further scaled in future.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan contains a few milestones aimed at harmonising open data across the country. One commitment explores the adoption of common contracting data standards across Canada (2.4). Another involves coordination with provincial and territorial governments on improving beneficial ownership information (3.3). Yet another extends the federated open data portal to at least two additional provinces and municipalities (10.4).

¹ See "Coming Soon: Do-It-Yourself Open Data Toolkit!" Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/en/blog/coming-soon-do-it-yourself-open-data-toolkit>.

² The work plan is available for download at <https://gccollab.ca/file/view/71053/encogwg-work-plan-draft2017-06-19frcogwg-work-plan-draft2017-06-19> (registration required).

³ The work plan is available for download at <http://pilot.open.canada.ca/ckan/en/dataset/5cc8b7ea-1fb2-527c-a73f-824da6ef69a6>.

⁴ See homepage, Canadian Open Data Summit '18, <http://opendatasummit.ca/>.

⁵ See Scott Brison, president of the Treasury Board, Letter to Members of the Advisory Board of the Open Data Charter, 12 March 2018, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4pnyLgEjbl6SGltVlgIM0xPSFZ3S0dZX0M3MUhOdHBDeIE4/view>.

⁶ See "Multilateral Intergovernmental Collaboration on Identifying Datasets of High Value," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/blog/multilateral-intergovernmental-collaboration-identifying-datasets-high-value>.

⁷ See "Open Government Portal," Government of Canada, https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset?portal_type=dataset&jurisdiction=provincial.

17. Implement the Extractives Sector Transparency Measures Act

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will implement the Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act (ESTMA) that requires the reporting of certain payments made to governments related to the commercial development of oil, gas, and minerals.

Milestones:

17.1. Undertake outreach activities with reporting entities to ensure awareness and understanding of processes for publishing their reports based on a consistent template and format.

17.2. Improve public access to published reports through a common online window.

17.3. Seek broader alignment of ESTMA with other jurisdictions in Canada and around the world.

Responsible institution: Natural Resources Canada

Supporting institution(s): N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
17. Overall			✓		✓			✓		✓					✓	✓			✓		
17.1. Outreach with reporting entities				✓	✓					✓					✓	✓					
17.2. Common online window			✓		✓			✓		✓					✓	✓					
17.3. Align ESTMA across jurisdictions		✓			✓					✓				✓		✓					

Commitment Aim

This commitment built on a commitment from the previous action plan to pass legislation establishing new reporting and transparency obligations for the Canadian extractive sector: the Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act (ESTMA). This commitment aimed to improve the implementation of ESTMA, and the accessibility of information published under that law, by doing the following:

- Conducting outreach to reporting entities to raise awareness of the new standards;
- Developing an online window for access to reports submitted under ESTMA; and
- Engaging with other jurisdictions to align reporting standards.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

From July 2016 to June 2017, Natural Resources Canada conducted several outreach activities connected to Milestone 17.1. These included an online webinar, events in seven Canadian cities, and an article in an industry publication.¹ The department also developed a survey of reporting challenges, meant to inform and improve outreach and awareness-raising efforts going forward. Regarding Milestone 17.2, by the midterm, Natural Resources Canada had developed an online portal for Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act (ESTMA) reports.² Under Milestone 17.3, Natural Resources Canada reported having held bilateral meetings on ESTMA with Quebec, the United Kingdom, and France, to align standards for reporting. Such standards included those on payment categories and the definition of “payee.”

End of term: Complete

Building on the survey carried out in connection with Milestone 17.1, Natural Resources Canada developed a revised guidance document for reporting entities. The department provided this guidance to stakeholders in March 2018.³ It also formed a Stakeholder Advisory Group to collaborate on improving tools and guidance. Regarding Milestone 17.2, over the course of the second year of implementation, Natural Resources Canada uploaded 850 reports to the online portal, and 1,419 reports were available as of June 2018.⁴

Under Milestone 17.3, Natural Resources Canada reports that discussions about cross-jurisdictional reporting requirements continued during the second year of the action plan. The discussions covered the development of a memorandum with the government of Quebec regarding collaboration and the sharing of information.⁵ Natural Resources Canada also pointed to a determination they made that reports filed under the European Union Accounting and Transparency Directives are now determined to be an acceptable substitute for reporting under Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act. However, in the absence of more proactive measures to harmonise reporting, that seems to be less of a step forward in terms of expanding access to information. It appears to be a move to ease the burden on industry. Nonetheless, all three milestones have been completed.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Canada passed the Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act (ESTMA) in connection with its second action plan, and it came into force on 1 June 2015. Its passage was generally welcomed as an important step forward.⁶ Consequently, working on implementation and improving the accessibility of information published under ESTMA are natural areas for further engagement. However, during the consultations for developing Canada’s midterm IRM assessment, Publish What You Pay-Canada, a leading civil society stakeholder on this issue, noted that this commitment sets a relatively low bar. The organisation pointed to a need for additional actions, such as enhanced searchability, and for a requirement that reporting be done in machine-readable formats. Although a few of the latest reports are in an XLS format, the vast majority are in PDF format. This makes them more difficult to harvest, process and manipulate, though the search and filtering function seems to have improved and now permits users to sort the reports by date, name, size and type, as well as to find reports based on key words. The commitment constituted a step forward, as information is more available

and accessible than it was at the outset of this action plan. However, considerable work remains in terms of breaking down barriers to the information's use.

Carried Forward?

There are no commitments in Canada's fourth action plan related to the implementation of the Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act.

¹ See "Recorded Webinar on the ESTMA," Natural Resources Canada, <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/mining-materials/estma/18184#webinar>; and "ESTMA 101: Everything You Need to Know," Rock to Road, 2 February 2017, <https://www.rocktoroad.com/news/everything-you-need-to-know-5131>.

² "Links to ESTMA Reports," Natural Resources Canada, <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/mining-materials/estma/18198>.

³ The guidance document is available at <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/sites/www.nrcan.gc.ca/files/estma/pdf/ESTMA%20Guidance%20-%20Version%202017%20-%202018.pdf>.

⁴ "Links to ESTMA Reports."

⁵ "Entente de Principe Concernant la Coopération, la Consultation et l'Échange de Renseignements Relatifs aux Mesures de Transparence Conclue entre le Gouvernement du Québec, Ressources Naturelles Canada et l'Autorité des Marchés Financiers," 22 October 2017, <https://lautorite.qc.ca/fileadmin/lautorite/reglementation/mesures-transparences/Ententes/2017oct22-transparence-entente-echange-renseignements-fr.pdf>.

⁶ See, for example, the 2016 end-of-term IRM report, available at https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_EOTR_2014-2016_EN.pdf.

18. Support Openness and Transparency Initiatives around the World

Commitment Text:

The Government of Canada will work with international partners to increase the transparency of international development funding, and to share skills and knowledge with developing countries to ensure that everyone can reap the benefits of open government.

Milestones:

18.1. Endorse the Open Government Partnership's Joint Declaration on Open Government for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and leverage Canada's participation in the OGP to help support the declaration's commitments.

18.2. Leverage Canada's role as chair of the International Aid Transparency Initiative to support international good practices on aid transparency and greater interoperability among data standards (e.g., aid, public procurement, public accounts, corporate identifiers) to enable greater accountability and improve the effectiveness of development finance.

18.3. Provide training and peer-learning to at least 500 open data leaders in government and civil society in developing countries, provide technical assistance to at least 10 developing countries, increasing the quality and ambition of their open data policies, and assess how capacity-building activities affect communities.

18.4. Work with international organizations and partners in developing countries to implement innovative open data projects with impact on anti-corruption, local governance, health, and education.

18.5. In support of Canada's role as a partner in the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN):

- Increase the amount of high-value, reusable agriculture and nutrition data made available to Canadians in open formats under the Government of Canada's open licence; and
- Participate in the planning of the GODAN Summit in September 2016 in order to support the global agenda for opening agriculture and nutrition data around the world.

Responsible institutions: Global Affairs Canada; the International Development Research Centre; Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, and Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Supporting institutions: Open Government Partnership; International Aid Transparency Initiative; Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition; Open Data for Development and associated networks

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
18. Overall			✓		✓	✓	✓			✓					✓					✓	
18.1. 2030 Agenda		✓			✓	✓	✓			✓					✓						
18.2. Chair IATI		✓			✓						✓				✓						
18.3. Global training			✓		✓					✓					✓						
18.4. Global open data projects		✓			✓					✓					✓						
18.5. Partner in GODAN			✓		✓						✓				✓						

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to equip global governments and civil society with the knowledge, tools, and expertise to support greater public access to open data and information. The commitment intended to achieve this through several international development mechanisms and programmes, including:

- The OGP Joint Declaration on Open Government for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- The International Aid Transparency Initiative;
- A package of international open data training programmes in 10 countries;
- Open data programming related to anti-corruption, local governance, health, and education; and
- The Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition partnership.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

As of the midterm assessment, Canada had endorsed the Joint Declaration on Open Government for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The government had also moved to support the Open Data Charter and to integrate open government principles into Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and reporting (18.1). Under Milestone 18.2, Canada executed many activities as part of its leadership of the International Aid Transparency Initiative. These activities included recruiting new participants and enhancing the data accessibility of Global Affairs Canada through the new Project Browser and search portal.¹ The Open Data for Development (OD4D) served as the main vehicle for programming under Milestone 18.3. OD4D carried out a series of trainings through the School of Data training programme.² It also conducted an Organisation of American States training for 79 participants from 10 countries³ and additional leadership support activities as part of a broader project across the Global South.⁴

The government's self-assessment cited several projects in connection with Milestone 18.4. These included the Edo AgriHub in Nigeria,⁵ the Agriculture Open Data Package,⁶ the Open Data Charter's Open Up Guide for Corruption,⁷ and a document on open data for climate change.⁸ Under Milestone 18.5, the government released 58 new datasets from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada onto the open data portal, and OD4D presented a session at the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition summit. However, this latter action does not quite align with the milestone language, which calls for participation in the summit's planning. According to the end-of-term self-assessment, the government did not participate in planning because it was too late in offering these resources.

End of term: Substantial

The government completed all of the milestones for this commitment, except participation in the planning of the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN) summit.

Canada became a supporting co-chair of OGP Steering Committee on 1 October 2017. Its end-of-term self-assessment includes several priorities that Canada will aim to promote as part of this role. These priorities include gender equality and better tracking of programming results.⁹ Under 18.2, the self-assessment points to Canada's role in chairing the 2017 International Aid Transparency Initiative's Members' Assembly. This role included advancing the publication of data published by organisations working in the development sector.¹⁰ Under Milestone 18.3, the self-assessment highlighted the International Development Research Centre's support for the 2017 Francophone African Conference on Open Data and Open Government as a major deliverable.¹¹ The assessment also noted the training and peer-learning opportunities provided to over 900 open data leaders in government and civil society in developing countries. In addition, the report noted the trainings and peer-learning opportunities provided to 14 governments through the Open Data for Development (OD4D) hubs. The details of these engagements were provided to the IRM researcher. OD4D also supported a session on best practices at the 2018 OGP Global Summit in Georgia. OD4D has also signed a memorandum of understanding with OGP to lead its strategic partnership on open data.¹²

Under Milestone 18.4, the end-of-term self-assessment points to the development of three "open up packages"; support to five scaled applications in health, anti-corruption, and open education; and many other pilot projects.¹³ Over the second year of implementation, the number of new datasets from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada on the open data portal grew from 58 to 68 (18.5).¹⁴ The end-of-term self-assessment notes that Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada supported an additional discussion in September 2017, titled "Farmers Sharing Their Data with Scientists," at the Research Data Alliance's Tenth Plenary Meeting in Montréal. GODAN sponsored the event.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Major

Civic Participation: Marginal

Public Accountability: Marginal

This commitment includes several international development projects. Most involve partnerships between Canadian international development organisations and counterparts in the Global South. As noted in the midterm assessment, although international collaboration stands out as a main feature of OGP, this evaluation aims purely to assess the impact of commitments within Canada. As a consequence, a project which had a transformative effect on openness in the target country might be scored as having only marginal impact on open government in Canada.

In terms of access to information, there are some signs that Canada's leadership role within OGP has given greater priority to access to information programming in the country. There also exist indications of Canada's willingness to take a leadership role in global open government issues. Such leadership helps to better form the nexus between open government programming abroad and improved domestic practice. As a result, the coding for this commitment on access to information has been increased to major. However, civic participation and public accountability are coded as undergoing marginal effects. The outward-facing nature of this commitment makes those two values more difficult to assess domestically.

Carried Forward?

Canada's latest action plan has a strong emphasis on developing Canadian leadership internationally. Specifically, it focuses on feminist open government. The corresponding commitment, Commitment 10, includes substantial international components. The International Development Research Centre and Open Data for Development also play prominent roles in Commitment 10, on leadership and collaboration.

¹ See "Project Browser," Government of Canada, <http://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/?lang=eng>; and "New d-Portal Search Features to Improve Data Use," International Aid Transparency Initiative, <http://www.aidtransparency.net/news/new-d-portal-search-features-to-improve-data-use>.

² Reporting for the trainings is available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_DxOK_q_jdweVWzamhRR3RxQ0E/view.

³ Reporting available in Spanish at <http://od4d.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/OAS-Jan-2017-Informe-Tecnico-Final-F.pdf>.

⁴ Reporting available at <http://od4d.net/result/odi-final-technical-report-2016-strengthening-southern-open-data-leadership/>.

⁵ "Impact Series: Using Open Data for Economic Impact in Nigeria," Open Data for Development, 7 June 2017, od4d.net/impact-series-using-open-data-for-economic-impact-in-nigeria/.

⁶ "Result—Introducing the Agriculture Open Data Package—BETA version," Open Data for Development, 24 April 2017, od4d.net/result/introducing-the-agriculture-open-data-package-beta-version/.

⁷ "Open Up Guide: Using Open Data to Combat Corruption," Open Data Charter, 18 May 2017, <https://opendatacharter.net/resource/open-guide-using-open-data-combat-corruption/>.

⁸ Available at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1D_Hz7o4h4ZyHxjpCgZ54UUM-BcM-YSM-zxb0JIW9h2Y/edit.

⁹ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

¹⁰ See "Membership," International Aid Transparency Initiative, <https://www.aidtransparency.net/governance/members-assembly/annual-members-assembly-meeting>; and "Annual Reports," International Aid Transparency Initiative, <http://iatistandard.org/en/about/governance/annual-reports/>.

¹¹ See "#CAFDO2017: The First Francophone African Conference on Open Data and Open Government," Open Government Partnership, 15 June 2017, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/cafdo2017-first-francophone-african-conference-on-open-data-and-open-government>.

¹² See "Open Government Partnership and the Open Data for Development Network Join Forces to Support Open Data Initiatives around the World," Open Government Partnership, 10 May 2018, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/open-government-partnership-and-open-data-development-network-join-forces-support-open-data>.

¹³ Links or background material for this programming has been shared with the IRM researcher. See, for example, the "Open Up Guide: Using Open Data to Combat Corruption" at <https://open-data-charter.gitbook.io/open-up-guide-using-open-data-to-combat-corruption/>; the "Government Open-Up Guide for Agriculture" at data-impact.com/agpack/; a description of open data programming for development in Nigeria at <http://od4d.net/impact-series-using-open-data-for-economic-impact-in-nigeria/>; and open data programming targeting open elections in Burkina Faso at od4d.net/burkina.

¹⁴ See "Open Government Portal," Government of Canada, https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset?q=&organization=aafc-aac&sort=metadata_modified+desc. The figure comes from Canada's self-assessment. As of September 2018, there were 283 datasets from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada available through the portal. However, it is difficult to confirm the number uploaded over the course of this action plan.

Theme IV: Engaging Canadians and the World

19. Engage Civil Society on Open Government

Commitment Text: *The Government of Canada will create ongoing mechanisms for strengthening dialogue with civil society in support of open government activities.*

Milestones:

19.1. Develop and maintain a renewed mechanism for ongoing, meaningful dialogue between the Government of Canada and civil society organizations on open government issues across the country.

19.2. Undertake targeted engagement activities to discuss open government issues in specific domains with key civil society stakeholders.

Responsible institution: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Supporting institutions: Civil society partners

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
19. Overall			✓			✓					✓				✓					✓	
19.1. Multi-stakeholder mechanism			✓			✓						✓			✓						
19.2. Targeted engagement activities		✓				✓				✓					✓						

Commitment Aim

This commitment sought to remedy the weaknesses of civil society consultation that occurred during Canada's first two action plans. Such remedies would improve engagement through the creation of a Multi-stakeholder Forum on Open Government, as well as a series of targeted engagement activities to discuss open government issues.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

Over the first year of implementation, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) consulted with civil society stakeholders to develop draft terms of reference for the Multi-stakeholder Forum. TBS also began planning for the representative nomination process. Under Milestone 19.2, the government carried out various consultations. These consultations included discussions on rules governing charities' political activities (Commitment 22)¹ and a cross-Canada tour by the Open Data Exchange (Commitment 15).² In addition, several stakeholders, including Open North and Powered by Data, reported that consultations continued with government agencies over the implementation of their OGP commitments.³

End of term: Complete

The Multi-stakeholder Forum on Open Government launched on 24 January 2018. The body met several times in the run-up to the release of Canada's fourth action plan. These convenings included brokering additional meetings, discussions, and working sessions among experts, stakeholders from civil society, and government programme leads.⁴

Milestone 19.2 has been completed. Regarding Milestone 19.2, the government held many consultations over the course of the third action plan, mostly in connection with the development of the next action plan. Some of these sessions, which are not mentioned elsewhere in this assessment, included a bilingual webinar by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat open government team on open data. Also included in these sessions are information sessions held by the nonprofit and private sectors on 21 June 2018; a series of information sessions and meetings on the Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act in Vancouver, Calgary, and Montreal; and a discussion on open science held on 22 January 2018.

Did It Open Government?

Civic Participation: Major

Engagement with civil society constitutes a core aspect of participation in OGP. This commitment addressed a recommendation in the 2015 IRM midterm assessment.⁵ The issue was also raised in each of the IRM focus groups in Halifax, Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal. The government held these sessions to inform the development of the 2017 IRM midterm assessment. As a result, the formation of the Multi-stakeholder Forum on Open Government has provided a significant step forward. However, it has not come without its growing pains. There remains a strong need to bridge cultural and expectational divides between government and civil society. According to Lindsey Marchessault of the Open Contracting Partnership, the Forum opened doors to engage departments on open government issues, but the current engagement could have offered further benefits had the Forum been given a role in shaping Canada's overall OGP engagement plans.

Carried Forward?

The government completed this commitment, and the Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Open Government is now up and running. The Forum, of course, has an important role to play in future action plans. However, it is not clear whether the Forum itself should be the subject of future action plan commitments, since it represents an infrastructural component of the OGP process, not a thematic focus area.

¹ See details of the consultation at <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/resources-charities-donors/resources-charities-about-political-activities/canada-revenue-agency-registered-charities-political-activities-consultations.html>.

² Notes from which are available at codx.ca/?s=cross+canada+tour.

³ Representatives from both organisations attended a consultation in Montreal on 20 September 2017.

⁴ See "Multi-stakeholder Forum on Open Government," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/multi-stakeholder-forum-open-government>.

⁵ Mary Francoli, Canada Progress Report 2014-2015 (Washington, DC: Open Government Partnership Independent Reporting Mechanism), https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/1.Canada14-15_English_Final_0_0.pdf.

20. Enable Open Dialogue and Open Policy Making

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will foster enhanced citizen participation through greater collaboration and co-creation with the public and stakeholders within and across government initiatives.

Milestones:

20.1. Promote common principles for Open Dialogue and common practices across the Government of Canada to enable the use of new methods for consulting and engaging Canadians.

- Engage with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis to ensure that these principles and practices support meaningful engagement and reflect the renewed nation-to-nation/Inuit-to-Crown/government-to-government relationships.

20.2. Identify necessary supports (e.g. skills development, resourcing, technological innovation) needed to deliver on the full potential of engaging with stakeholders.

20.3. Identify and support participatory processes undertaken by departments to share lessons learned and demonstrate the value of including stakeholders and members of the public throughout the policy, program or service design and implementation.

20.4. Develop, implement the measurement of, and promote indicators for open government to support benchmarking and continuous improvement.

Responsible institutions: Privy Council Office; Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Supporting institutions: Public servants, public engagement practitioners, civil society, civic tech, citizens.

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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
20. Overall			✓			✓		✓			✓				✓				✓		
20.1. Promote open dialogue		✓				✓					✓			✓							

20.2. Identify supports		✓					✓			✓					✓				
20.3. Identify best practices		✓					✓							✓					✓
20.4. Open government indicators				✓			✓					✓							✓

Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to improve public engagement by training public officials and instituting new technical solutions to facilitate communication with the public. The commitment would advance consultation and engagement practices—particularly with regard to Canada’s First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The commitment calls for identifying supports for stakeholder engagement and departments’ participatory processes, and for developing and implementing indicators for open government.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

For Milestone 20.1, the Privy Council Office, in collaboration with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, developed and posted a set of draft principles for consultations and public engagement.¹ The departments also arranged workshops for civil servants on engagement strategies and facilitated a workshop with Indigenous leaders at the Canadian Open Data Summit.² Under Milestone 20.2, the Privy Council Office fostered discussions at the Canadian Open Data Summit and the Ottawa Civic Tech workshops to improve online consultation tools and developed an eRegulations pilot.³ The departments also conducted training sessions for 135 participants and two trainings for trainers to equip them to deliver their own workshops in future.

Regarding Milestone 20.3, the Privy Council Office commissioned a study by EKOS, a social and economic research company, to assess public views on engagement and the government.⁴ The office also added material to the Consulting with Canadians webpage.⁵ Under Milestone 20.4, the government researched existing global indexes and developed a draft framework for its indicators.

End of term: Complete

The government completed all four milestones. However, considerable work remains on Milestone 20.1, as noted in the government’s self-assessment.

In December 2017, the government finalised and published the Public Engagement Principles (Milestone 20.1).⁶ However, the self-assessment notes that the government team did not have the skills to engage meaningfully with Indigenous peoples in a broad enough dialogue to support the development of engagement principles in that area. Under Milestone 20.2, the eRegulations prototype has been completed and is now available on GitHub.⁷ The government self-assessment also reports that the development of this tool has helped identify barriers to stakeholders participating online and internal barriers to creating online tools. The government also held workshops on designing public engagement approaches, including at a Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency retreat on 10 April 2018 and a train-the-trainer session for the Public Engagement Community of Practice.⁸

Under Milestone 20.3, the self-assessment reports many instances where the government published citizen feedback as open data.⁹ The Public Opinion Research team of the Privy Council Office also explored new approaches to more easily release datasets that were not in accessible formats, documenting the experience and lessons learned online.¹⁰ The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) also updated the “Cabinet Directive on Regulation.” The directive outlines the purpose, value, and process of engaging with stakeholders when developing or changing regulations.¹¹ TBS also posted guidance on conducting Gender-Based Analysis Plus for consultations issued by Status of Women Canada.¹² Regarding Milestone 20.4, the government published blog posts on principled

engagement measurement, on a trust and data, and on a citizen engagement study by EKOS.¹³ The self-assessment also refers to the performance management framework referenced in Milestone 5.3.¹⁴

Did It Open Government?

Civic Participation: Marginal

Most of the milestones in this commitment target long-term improvements. From that perspective, the IRM observed work to develop indicators to assess Canada's open government progress, even if the short-term results are not as visible. Improving engagement with Canada's First Nations, Inuit, and Métis to reflect a nation-to-nation/Inuit-to-Crown/government-to-government relationship is a challenge which extends beyond the life of any single action plan. Indeed, this multi-generational process must reconcile centuries of harm. Consultations with First Nations stakeholders revealed a measure of scepticism regarding expected levels of progress under this commitment.¹⁵ Further, there exist external indications that consultations between the government and First Nations remain challenging.

Notably, on 30 August 2018, Canada's Federal Court of Appeal released a high-profile decision challenging the construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline project. The decision concluded that in this instance, the federal government had failed in its duty to engage First Nations stakeholders in a "responsive, considered and meaningful dialogue" on the project.¹⁶ It is also worth noting that, based on reporting, it appears that Milestone 20.4 was mostly duplicative of Milestone 5.3. As a result, this commitment is assessed as marginal.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan contains some commitments which seem to expand on the indicators developed here. Particularly, the development of Gender-Based Analysis Plus indicators and their application to all national action plan commitments further this work.

Engagement with Canada's First Nations stands as a prominent feature of Canada's fourth action plan. In particular, Commitment 9 includes milestones to develop First Nations' open government and data governance skills, and to enhance consultation and engagement strategies. These are important priority areas, and their inclusion is consistent with the recommendations in Canada's 2017 IRM midterm assessment.

¹ These are available at: github.com/canada-ca/welcome/wiki/Draft-Guiding-Principles-for-Consultations-and-Public-Engagement.

² See homepage, Canadian Open Data Summit '18, <http://opendatasummit.ca/>.

³ See Lisa Fast, "A Government Minimum Viable Product—Learning from Small Successes & Small Failures," LinkedIn, 15 August 2017, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/government-minimum-viable-product-learning-from-small-lisa-fast/>.

⁴ "Rethinking Citizen Engagement 2017," EKOS, 31 March 2017, www.ekospolitics.com/index.php/2017/03/rethinking-citizen-engagement-2017/.

⁵ See "Consulting with Canadians," Government of Canada, <https://www1.canada.ca/consultingcanadians/>.

⁶ See "Principles and Guidelines," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/content/principles-and-guidelines>.

⁷ The code for this tool is available at <https://github.com/canada-ca/regs-consult-wet>.

⁸ The facilitator guide from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Retreat and the slide deck for the train-the-trainer session were shared with the IRM researcher.

⁹ For two such examples, see "Open Government Consultation Data: Canada's Third Biennial Plan to the Open Government Partnership," Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/8ef41d2e-9309-486a-9f9f-bfd11945a959>; and "Consulting on National Security Submissions," Government of Canada, <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/5e9433bf-2334-463a-bd48-03ba53a7051c>.

¹⁰ See "Canada-ca/devex," GitHub, <https://github.com/canada-ca/devex/issues>.

¹¹ See "Cabinet Directive on Regulation," Government of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/federal-regulatory-management/guidelines-tools/cabinet-directive-regulation.html>.

¹² "GBA+ IN CONSULTATIONS", GCcollab, available at: <https://gccollab.ca/file/download/60637> (sign-in required).

¹³ See "Does Principled Engagement Lead to Increased Trust?" Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/blog/does-principled-engagement-lead-increased-trust>; and "A Study on Citizen Engagement," Government of Canada, <https://open.canada.ca/en/blog/study-citizen-engagement>.

¹⁴ See “Open Government Performance: Measuring Impact,” Government of Canada
<https://open.canada.ca/ckan/en/dataset/f637580f-e0f7-5939-bf3f-ded35ce72d2a>.

¹⁵ Ottawa consultation, 18 September 2017.

¹⁶ The full decision is available at <https://www.canlii.org/en/ca/fca/doc/2018/2018fca153/2018fca153.html>.

21. Promote Open Government Globally

Commitment Text: The Government of Canada will work with international partners to promote the principles of open government around the world.

Milestones:

21.1. Participate in key forums internationally to learn from other countries and share our challenges and successes.

21.2. Strengthen the capacity to deliver open data in Francophone Africa through support to locally-led, multi-stakeholder processes and international conferences.

21.3. Promote the principles of the International Open Data Charter, participate in the development of enabling resources and tools for the Charter, and support the development of the World Wide Web Foundation's Open Data Barometer through the Open Data for Development (OD4D) network to measure the Charter's implementation by governments around the world.

Responsible institutions: Global Affairs Canada; Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat; the International Development Research Centre

Supporting institutions: Open Government Partnership; Open Data Charter; La Francophonie

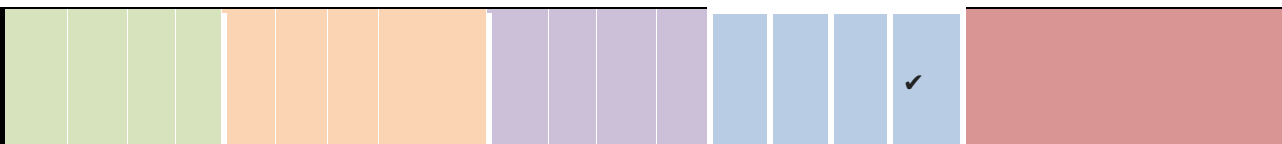
Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

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	
			✓		✓						✓					✓					✓	
		✓			✓						✓					✓						
			✓		✓					✓					✓							
			✓		✓					✓					✓							
			✓		✓						✓					✓						
			✓		✓						✓					✓						

21.3. Support international instruments



Commitment Aim

This commitment was designed to foster Canada's engagement and leadership on global open data issues. It called for participating in international forums on open government challenges, strengthening open data in francophone Africa, and supporting international instruments for open data.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

As of June 2017, Canada's government had participated in several international open data forums. These forums included the International Open Data Conference in Madrid,¹ the OGP Global Summit in Paris, and initiatives of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Inter-American Development Bank (21.1). Under Milestone 21.2, Open Data for Development co-hosted a regional stakeholders' meeting to commence work on a francophone Africa open data hub, the Francophone African Conference on Open Data and Open Government.² Regarding Milestone 21.3, Canada's midterm self-assessment cited the International Development Research Centre's support of the Open Data Barometer³ and Canada's assumption of a leading role in the Open Data Charter.⁴

End of term: Complete

Over the second year of implementation, Canada substantially boosted its international engagement after its election to the OGP steering committee, a position which is set to be followed by a term as lead Government Chair from October 2018-September 2019. It also raised its engagement through its chairmanship of the International Aid Transparency Initiative and the Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network (21.1). Under Milestone 21.2, Canada's self-assessment points to language on open government which was included in the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie's 2016 Antananarivo Declaration.⁵

In November 2017, Open Burkina was selected to coordinate the African francophone open data community and act as a regional hub to coordinate research, innovation, and capacity building in francophone Africa. As of June 2018, activities have commenced with local representatives in eight countries. Such activities include local capacity building, agenda building, and work with multi-stakeholder partners.⁶ Regarding Milestone 21.3, Canada signed the Open Data Charter in 2018.⁷ The fourth edition of the Open Data Barometer was published in May 2017 and covered 115 countries.⁸

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Major

The government designed this mostly outward-facing commitment to foster Canadian leadership on open government issues. As noted under Commitment 18, this evaluation aims to assess the results within Canada. Thus, projects which are valuable and highly impactful internationally may be scored here as creating only marginal change.

Nonetheless, indications show that Canada's participation in international fora are beginning to bear fruit in terms of opening government domestically. The following reflects this work: the networking of Canadian practitioners with international colleagues and the focus on the need to lead by example. The latter gives greater prominence to open data champions within Canada. For example, Canada's role in the Open Data Charter not only helps to generate support for this issue internationally, but also helps Canadian officials track the evolution of global open data standards. Similarly, the Open Data Barometer includes an assessment of Canada which, while favourable (the country ranked

second overall in the 2017 assessment), nonetheless helps to identify areas for improvement. Those areas include opening up national environment statistics. As a consequence, this commitment is scored as having a major impact.

Carried Forward?

Canada's fourth action plan includes international development initiatives under Commitment 8 (Feminist Open Government) and Commitment 10 (Leadership and Collaboration).

¹ See homepage, International Open Data Conference, <http://opendatacon.org/>.

² See homepage, CAFDO, <http://cafdo.org/>.

³ See "Acknowledgments," Open Data Barometer, <http://opendatabarometer.org/4thedition/acknowledgements/>.

⁴ See "The Open Data Barometer," http://opendatabarometer.org/?_year=2016&indicator=ODB; and "Who We Are," Open Data Charter, <https://opendatacharter.net/who-we-are/>.

⁵ XVI^e Conférence des chefs d'État et de gouvernement des pays ayant le français en partage Antananarivo (Madagascar), les 26 et 27 novembre 2016, available at: https://www.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/som_xvi_decl_antananarivo_vf.pdf (in French).

⁶ See homepage, Open Burkina, <https://www.openburkina.bf/>.

⁷ See Scott Brison, president of the Treasury Board, Letter to Members of the Advisory Board of the Open Data Charter, 12 March 2018, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4pnyLgEjbl6SGltVlgIM0xPSFZ3S0dZX0M3MUhOdHBDeIE4/view>.

⁸ See "The Open Data Barometer."

22. Engage Canadians to Improve Key Canada Revenue Agency Services

Commitment Text:

The Government of Canada will undertake public consultations and engagement to support improved access to high-value, statistical tax data and publications, increased fairness of the rules governing charities' political activities, and better understanding of factors affecting the low rates of benefit uptake.

Milestones:

22.1. Complete an online consultation with Canadians to measure public satisfaction with, and interest in, statistical tax publications and related data.

22.2. Engage with registered charities, the public, and other stakeholders in the charitable sector to help clarify rules governing charities' political activities:

- Conduct online and in-person consultations sessions on what information is needed, what form any future rules should take, and how best to communicate them to stakeholders and the general public.

22.3. Engage with indigenous Canadians to better understand the issues, root causes, and data gaps that may be preventing eligible individuals from accessing benefits.

Responsible institution: Canada Revenue Agency

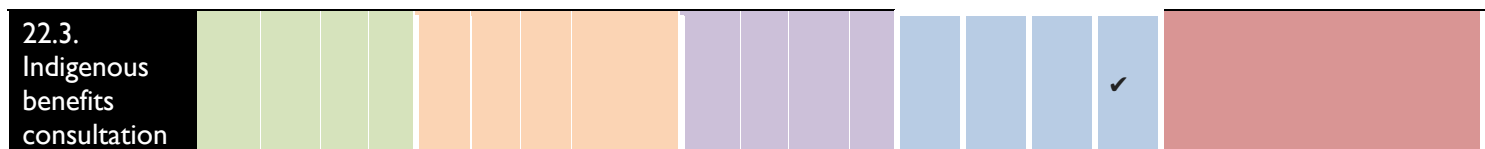
Supporting institution(s): N/A

Start Date: Not specified

End Date: Not specified

Editorial Note: The text of the commitment was abridged for formatting reasons. For full commitment text, visit http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/Canada_AP3.pdf.

Commitment Overview	Specificity				OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Comple tion		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	
			✓		✓	✓					✓				✓					✓		
	22. Overall			✓		✓	✓				✓				✓					✓		
	22.1. Tax statistics consultation			✓		✓					✓			✓								
	22.2. Clarify charities rules			✓			✓					✓			✓							
				✓		✓				✓						✓						



Commitment Aim

This commitment aimed to improve the landscape for civic participation in Canada. It focused on supporting Indigenous Canadians, vulnerable communities, and charities. The commitment called for carrying out a consultation on statistical tax data and consulting with charities to improve the rules around political participation. It also called for engaging with Indigenous Canadians to help them understand the rules around eligible benefits.

Status

Midterm: Substantial

Under Milestone 22.1, in August 2016, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) published an online survey on opinions about statistical tax data. Response rates were too low to generate significant data. As a result, the CRA committed to improve the survey for the second year of implementation. Regarding Milestone 22.2, the government conducted a robust series of consultations on clarifying the rules regarding charities and political engagement. It received almost 20,000 written submissions.¹ A Consultation Panel on the Political Activities of Charities, composed of experts in the charitable sector, reviewed the consultation feedback and developed a report that was presented to the Minister of National Revenue in March 2017.² Under Milestone 22.3, the CRA conducted public opinion research with Indigenous communities and vulnerable populations, including urban Indigenous Canadians, in spring 2017.³

End of term: Complete

Under Milestone 22.1, Canada released an improved, more user-friendly format of its survey in summer 2017. Participation remained low, partly due to technical difficulties, according to Canada's end-of-term self-assessment.⁴ By the end of the reporting period, only 34 responses to the survey had been obtained. This milestone has been completed, despite the low response rate. Regarding Milestone 22.2, the government completed the consultation during the first year of implementation. However, no responses or reforms have been implemented yet. The completion of this milestone is difficult to assess. Although the consultation has been completed, no changes were introduced during the action plan period, though Canada's end-of-term self-assessment claimed that a response will be issued in the coming months.⁵ On September 14, 2018, the Ministry of Finance released proposed amendments to the Income Tax Act, which ultimately fed in to Bill C-86, currently under consideration.⁶ Regarding Milestone 22.3, Canada's end-of-term self-assessment states that it continues to process the results from its previous engagement and consultations to try and improve participation by Indigenous peoples in the tax and benefits system.

Did It Open Government?

Access to Information: Marginal

Civic Participation: Marginal

Canada's civil society space faced substantial pressure at the outset of this action plan, particularly as a result of a series of government tax audits of charities engaged in political activities. Although these audits have been discontinued—and this commitment addresses a crucially important thematic area—the actual effect of this commitment on access to information and civic participation is assessed as marginal. The rating corresponds to the low response rate for the survey under Milestone 22.1, the unclear impact of the consultations and engagement under Milestone 22.3, and most importantly, the fact that substantial reforms have yet to materialise from the charities discussions that took place under Milestone 22.2, though it is important to note that some changes were proposed just after the end of the action plan. However, this report summarises the results

between July 2017 and August 2018 and, therefore, does not assess activities carried out beyond this period of time.

Carried Forward?

This commitment does not appear to have been carried forward in Canada's fourth action plan.

¹ "The Canada Revenue Agency's Online Consultation on Charities' Political Activities," Canada Revenue Agency, 20 December 2016, <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/whats-new/canada-revenue-agencys-online-consultation-on-charities-political-activities.html>.

² Report of the Consultation Panel on the Political Activities of Charities: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/cra-arc/migration/cra-arc/chrts-gvng/chrts/cmmnctn/plcl-ctvts/pnlrprt-eng.pdf>.

³ Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc., Qualitative Research: The Experiences of Indigenous Communities with Tax Filing (Ottawa, Ontario: Canada Revenue Agency), June 2017, epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/poreff/canada_revenue_agency/2017/040-16-e/report.pdf; and "Barriers Associated with Tax Filing in Vulnerable Populations Qualitative Research," Canada Revenue Agency, 24 March 2017, epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/poreff/canada_revenue_agency/2017/103-16-e/vulnerable_report_en_codes.html.

⁴ An archived version of the survey is available at <https://cra-arc-survey-sondage.ca/ff/s.aspx?s=c0cd518f-c04e-49e3-b3b1-628d79fc68a4&mode=44&lang=EN>.

⁵ The self-assessment is available at <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/9da9faf5-deb1-48db-8f16-91055d942d65>.

⁶ See: <https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-86/first-reading>.

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 organisations; and the previous IRM progress report.

In developing this report, the IRM researcher reviewed an early draft of Canada's self-assessment to gauge the activities the government viewed as complete under the rubric of its OGP programming. He then followed up by email with departmental leads for 17 of the 22 commitments. (For the other five, sufficient information was available online and in the links contained in the self-assessment, making targeted engagement unnecessary.) He also scheduled phone calls with:

- Mélanie Robert, the Executive Director Open Government at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat,
- Heritage Canada,
- Natural Resources Canada,
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada,
- Jean-Noé Landry of Open North,
- Lindsey Marchessault of the Open Contracting Partnership, and
- Don Bowser of I.M.P.A.C.T.

The IRM researcher also relied on responses from the consultations carried out in the development of the 2017 midterm assessment. These included sessions in Halifax on 12 September 2017, in Toronto on 15 September 2017, in Ottawa on 18 September 2017, and in Montreal on 20 September 2017.

Michael Karanicolas is a Halifax-based human rights advocate whose work focuses on freedom of expression, the right to information, transparency, and digital rights. He is the president of the Right to Know Coalition, which works to promote open government in Atlantic Canada, and the policy director of the Domain Name Rights Coalition, which works to promote human rights and transparency in Internet governance. Michael also serves on the executive committee of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) Non-Commercial Users' Constituency and heads working groups tasked with reshaping ICANN's approach to human rights and to transparency. Until 2017, he served as the senior legal officer for the Centre for Law and Democracy. He has authored 20 publications on human rights issues and coordinated advocacy projects in over a dozen countries. Michael has a BAH (dean's list) from Queen's University and an LLB (dean's list) from Dalhousie University. He is currently pursuing his LLM at the University of Toronto. You can follow him on Twitter at @M_Karanicolas and @NSRightToKnow.

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.

