

OGP Multi Donor Trust Fund

EARLY REFLECTIONS

from the first round of
co-creation awards



Open
Government
Partnership



What is the OGP Multi Donor Trust Fund?

OGP and the World Bank (WB) established a dedicated vehicle for donor support to domestic and global OGP priorities. The OGP MDTF supports country and local members selected through a competitive process in co-creating and implementing OGP commitments and action plans, and generating, curating and disseminating knowledge on open government reform. The MDTF was endowed through the support of development partners including the UK Department for International Development, Agence Française de Développement and Global Affairs Canada.

OGP MULTI DONOR TRUST FUND (MDTF)

2018 Co-Creation Awards

In 2018, the OGP MDTF piloted the first round of co-creation awards consisting of financial support, technical assistance and structured learning opportunities to country and local participants developing action plans. Civil society organizations (CSOs) from five national and four local OGP members were selected through a competitive proposal process to work together with their Multistakeholder Forums (MSFs) and government counterparts. The goal of these awards was to improve the quality of the OGP co-creation process, raise awareness and broaden ownership, and enhance the ambition of commitments in their action plan.

This report looks at some early reflections based on reporting from CSOs during this period, as well as the experience of the OGP Support Unit, featuring highlights and lessons that can inform future support to OGP members. The report will be updated later in 2019 when a fuller picture emerges from each of the OGP members involved, including the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) assessments of the quality of co-creation processes and ambition of action plans.

Organizations that received MDTF co-creation support in 2018

ARMENIA

4th Action Plan Cycle

Armavir
Development
Center (ADC)

PARAGUAY

4th Action Plan Cycle

Fundación CIRD

KENYA

3rd Action Plan Cycle

Article 19
Eastern Africa

SERBIA

3rd Action Plan Cycle

Civic Initiatives (CI)

TUNISIA

3rd Action Plan Cycle

Tunisian
Association for
Local Governance

BOJONEGORO INDONESIA

2nd Action Plan Cycle

Bojonegoro Institute
(BI)

ELGEYO MARAKWET KENYA

2nd Action Plan Cycle

Center for
Innovations in Open
Government

SÃO PAULO BRAZIL

2nd Action Plan Cycle

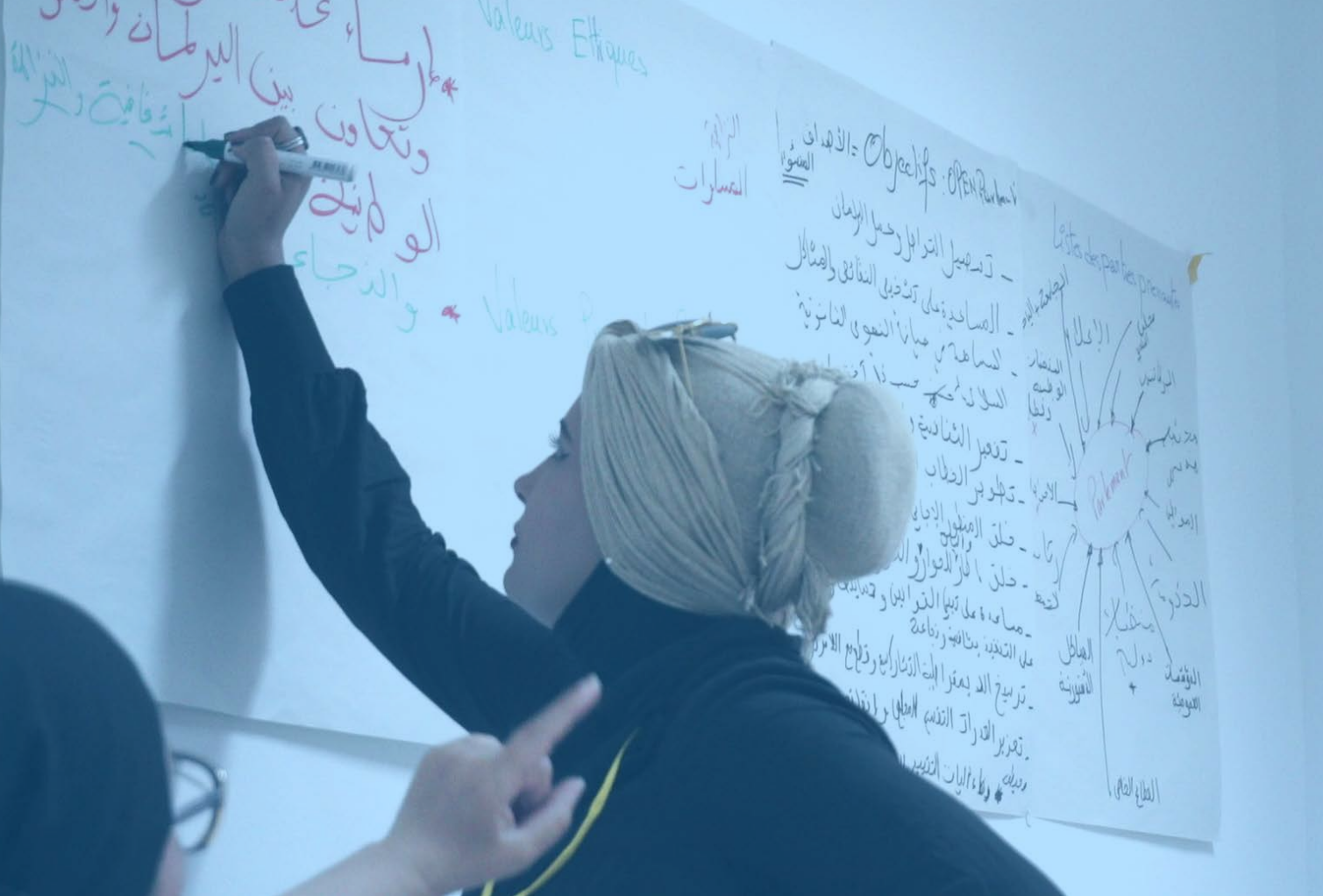
World Resources
Institute (WRI)

SEKONDI-TAKORADI GHANA

2nd Action Plan Cycle

Friends of the
Nation (FoN)





NEW VOICES BROUGHT IN DIVERSITY TO OGP CONSULTATION PROCESSES

BROAD-BASED AND INCLUSIVE CONSULTATIONS, HOWEVER, DID NOT ALWAYS TRANSLATE TO BETTER ACTION PLAN COMMITMENTS



POLITICAL TRANSITIONS CREATED BOTH OPPORTUNITIES AND DISRUPTIONS IN THE CO-CREATION PROCESS

Four OGP members underwent political transitions during the course of the MDTF support to CSOs. In Armenia and São Paulo, CSOs capitalized on the new administrations' commitment to open government, and used MDTF support to improve the quality and breadth of consultations for the action plan. In Bojonegoro on the other hand, despite MDTF assistance to build new alliances and ownership with the new administration, efforts to ensure continuity on the open government agenda have so far been unsuccessful. In Paraguay, Fundación CIRD's innovative process to consult with marginalized communities faced disruptions, in part due to the lack of strong relationships with the new administration.

BUILDING ENDURING ALLIANCES WITHIN AND ACROSS GOVERNMENT HAS TO BE PRIORITIZED

Many CSOs actively engaged government to build more ownership during the action plan co-creation process. In Armenia, Tunisia, Elgeyo Marakwet, Sekondi-Takoradi and São Paulo, CSOs engaged horizontally across government, involving more line ministries, agencies and relevant departments, as well as parliaments, councils and assemblies. In Kenya, Serbia and Tunisia CSOs also targeted vertical engagement, advocating for municipalities and provincial governments to conduct consultation activities of their own and develop action plans locally. Yet, a much deeper focus on conducting joint planning, developing clear terms of partnership, roles and responsibilities, and utilizing coalition building methods to engage government actors is needed in order to set the grounds for success during the implementation phase.



Spotlight

For country and local actors, building an inclusive and collaborative space to work on meaningful open government reform can be a very challenging prospect. The government Point of Contact (POC) and lead ministry/ agency in tandem with CSOs and the domestic MSF have to conduct an expansive process of consultations, coordination and action with stakeholders, ranging from the most vulnerable communities to the highest levels of government. Done well, OGP can be a powerful platform for civic engagement and intra government coordination to improve governance. In this section we present snapshots of the activities MDTF support enabled in four of the nine members - Armenia, Paraguay, Tunisia and Elgeyo Marakwet County.

Overview

The creation of the fourth OGP action plan in Armenia coincided with a defining moment referred to as the Velvet Revolution, which led to drastic changes in the country's political leadership. While the development of the action plan had started before the political transition, civil society and government actors leveraged this moment to improve the co-creation process and secure stronger commitments.



ARMENIA

How was co-creation different?

Armavir Development Center in partnership with other active CSOs in Armenia's Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF), and the government point of contact, launched a broad-based consultation process, which extended to all regions of Armenia and almost all government agencies. This included:

- **Large-scale awareness raising:** Public engagement meetings were held in all 10 provinces of Armenia with participation from government officials, CSOs and active local citizens
- **Participatory approach to soliciting feedback:** ADC designed a customized online application form, as well as workshop-based public engagement meetings to collect ideas on potential action plan commitments. They received 89 proposals overall and 42 from public servants.
- **Refining and prioritizing commitments:** Through town halls and more targeted thematic working groups, ADC worked with other CSOs and the point of contact to help prioritize and refine the bulk of submitted ideas - however this was challenging to do in the absence of a pre-agreed criteria and process, and there remain areas to improve this process.

Early Outcomes

Through these mechanisms, participants including ordinary citizens, minority and vulnerable community groups, government actors, and technical experts were consulted to generate commitments for the action plan. Armenian stakeholders were able to leverage a key political opportunity, supplemented by MDTF support to facilitate a collaborative consultation process that reached many new actors.

According to preliminary IRM findings the government's commitment to reforms, including legislative reforms, enabled more ambitious commitments in the new action plan compared to the previous plan, including building a water cadastre, a publicly accessible register of beneficial ownership, and a pledge to build a platform for the electronic submission of petitions, which will enable citizens to gather support on issues and launch legislative initiatives.



Overview

2018 was an election year in Paraguay, with President Mario Abdo Benitez coming to power in August. Co-creation activities were well underway before the new administration came to power - 17 thematic tables had been established resulting in 20+ proposed commitments for the action plan. With this process ongoing, the MDTF support to Fundación CIRD specifically aimed to target the participation of marginalized communities in the co-creation process.



PARAGUAY

How was co-creation different?

- **Outreach to marginalized communities:** Fundación CIRD targeted constituents from largely rural locations surrounding the towns of Yrybucú (San Pedro), Yby Yau (Department of Concepción), Tacuaras (Department of Ñeembucú), Villa Hayes (President Hayes Department) and the city of Asunción. LGBTQi communities, women leaders, vulnerable families and traders representing indigenous communities were specifically targeted for outreach.
- **Unconventional approach to consultation:** Fundación CIRD used community engagement methods involving art and theater incorporating local cultural elements to convene groups, and hosted workshops that utilized role play to explain changes in state level policies as they would apply to their day to day lives. A guide on open government was translated into Guarani, and performers and facilitators would use local languages such as “Jopará”, a dialect combining Spanish and Guarani to raise awareness and solicit feedback.

Early Outcomes

The consultations revealed that the most pressing need for these communities is the lack of awareness, and information and engagement about policies, projects and plans developed by state actors in the health and education sectors. The consultations resulted in a commitment being added on to Paraguay's new action plan after its original submission. The commitment entails the socialization of rights of access to health and education services for vulnerable groups in the Departments of San Pedro and Central, which will be done in person as citizens preferred face to face interaction with relevant authorities through direct dialogue and in meetings with neighborhood commissions. The IRM assessment of the ambition of this commitment and on the design and quality of the co-creation process is forthcoming.

Overview

Tunisia's previous action plans, while representing major steps forward in some areas, lacked sufficient detail to be transformative in part due to frequent changes in administration. MDTF support was aimed largely towards helping to socialize the open government agenda more widely, highlight the important role of the MSF, and build the capacity of local actors to contribute to the co-creation process.



TUNISIA

How was co-creation different?

- **Socializing open government and building capacity of local actors:** The Tunisian Association for Local Governance (ATGL) and partners shepherded an ambitious plan to build awareness of open government among key actors. They coordinated a training of trainers for 27 local leaders from all 24 governorates on open government reforms, and organized 23 regional workshops with 100 municipalities participating in the co-creation process, with an emphasis on youth participation. Additionally, a significant focus during this action plan cycle has been the capacity building of new actors, piloting training programs in the University of Tunis El Manar and the Ministry of Interior.
- **Clarifying the role of the MSF:** ATGL helped improve coordination among MSF actors and raised awareness of the MSF's role and function - specifically by developing a charter for the MSF, and defining the vision and mission at national, local and parliamentary levels.
- **Engaging different branches and levels of government:** While there were continued challenges with securing ownership from key ministries in government, a notable step during this co-creation cycle was formally engaging with municipalities and local authorities through the support of the Ministry of Local Affairs, enabling consultations to go beyond the capital, and also engaging the Tunisian Parliament to raise awareness of OGP action plans.

Early Outcomes

ATGL and its partners' ambitious efforts to improve co-creation led to some new commitments in the action plan - such as a commitment to expand OGP at the local level with at least 10 municipalities expected to develop action plans. Other commitments that were informed by the consultations are on water governance and piloting open contracting in the energy sector. Outside of the action plan, increased involvement by Tunisian parliamentarians led to the development of an Open Parliament charter, outlining a mechanism for strengthened engagement with civil society.



Overview

Elgeyo Marakwet County (EMC) has enjoyed strong support from the Governor's office in pursuing an open government agenda. Through MDTF support, the Center for Innovations in Open Government (CIOG) worked towards leveraging this political commitment to build greater ownership among relevant government agencies and raise awareness among ordinary citizens on open government.



ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY, KENYA

How was co-creation different?

CIOG developed a roadmap approved by the MSF which provided opportunities for both online and offline participation. Over 500 people participated in the deliberation, development and prioritization of the action plan with even balance between government and non-government actors.

- **Community listening tours:** Four community listening tours were organized in each of the four sub-counties in EMC. 120 representatives were selected to participate in the meetings, representing registered citizen groups, youth and disability groups in the four meetings. Government officials were present to listen and provide guidance as requested. The tours focused on understanding open government approaches and what it means in the local context, challenges in accessing government services and potential ideas and priorities for the action plan.
- **Government listening tours:** CIOG closed the loop by conducting government listening tours, feeding back the outcome of the community listening tours to relevant government agencies. These sessions called attention to the problems faced by citizens and sourced input from government officials on potential commitments in the new action plan that could address these problems.

Early Outcomes

Issues raised during the consultations were refined and drafted into commitments by the MSF and thematic working groups. Those that did not make it into the action plan were still directed for redressal by the Governor. The final commitments include reforms around public procurement, budget and development data, healthcare, public participation and youth empowerment. While the IRM assessment is forthcoming, the commitments match the priority areas identified by government and citizens during the listening tours, and are largely considered to be of higher quality than the previous action plan according to preliminary assessments by the IRM.



WHAT SUPPORT DOES THE MDTF PROVIDE?

The OGP Support Unit provides country and local members with strategic, technical and political support to strengthen the action plan process. The MDTF is an additional vehicle that augments this work with financial assistance, and further leverages the strength of the WB and development partners. This allows OGP to scale up intensive support to members seeking to significantly enhance the development and implementation of action plans. Below are examples of how the MDTF Implementation Team supported the first cohort to receive co-creation awards:

On-the-ground support: Upon request, the MDTF Implementation Team provided on-the-ground support to government and civil society in Armenia and Tunisia. In Armenia, the Team advised on the development of a roadmap for prioritization and refining of commitments. In Tunisia, the Team provided guidance on approaches to strengthen the MSF, develop training curriculum, and engaging with municipalities and Parliament.



Tools and resources: There was high demand for structured approaches and tools to facilitate co-creation processes. For example, a common challenge across several CSOs was the need for improved information management and sharing. An open source tool was developed in conjunction with Madrid based ConsulOS, and is being piloted with Elgeyo Marakwet, Sekondi-Takoradi, Kenya and Tunisia. The platform addresses a number of challenges including the ability to conduct online consultations, open up proposals for public comment and review, tracking the progress of implementation and keeping the community updated on news and events. In Armenia, the MDTF Implementation Team supported CSOs and the point of contact in thinking through prioritization criteria and refining proposed commitments, considering the willingness and capacity of relevant government agencies to work on the issues.

Structured learning: The MDTF enabled additional opportunities for structured learning between CSOs, enabling reflection and exchange on how to hold broad based consultations, build stronger alliances with government and navigate political transitions. CSOs were brought together in Tbilisi, Georgia during the OGP Global Summit in 2018 and are being re-convened in Ottawa, Canada during the OGP Global Summit in 2019.





IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE MDTF SUPPORT

The experience with the 2018 Co-creation Awards surfaced lessons and actionable insights for future support to countries through MDTF and other mechanisms.

INVESTING IN CO-CREATION DESIGN AND PLANNING

A thorough problem analysis and stakeholder mapping which includes key government and civil society actors in the Multi-Stakeholder Forum is necessary to map opportunities and challenges at the start of the co-creation process and revisited iteratively when the context and actors change during the process. . Some CSOs were skilled at this process, others need more support to ensure that their activities are designed to produce outcomes aligned with contextual and political realities.

RETHINKING SUPPORT DURING MAJOR POLITICAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

An important consideration with future support is understanding how CSOs or government officials can be best supported to leverage a political climate that is about to change. There are many variables such as the strength and level of coordination within the MSF, capacity and stability of governments points of contact, degree of buy-in from all political parties, that need to be carefully weighed to determine what is essential to drive a strong co-creation process, especially before deciding on providing support through the MDTF.



IMPROVING QUALITY OF CONSULTATIONS AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

As experience with the first round showed, there was value in intensively supporting Armenia and Tunisia when they needed it—e.g. through better meeting facilitation, mechanisms for collecting and responding to inputs, developing priorities and drafting quality commitments. This reaffirms the need to continue to work to make this support accessible to more participants, either through additional on-the-ground support or through developing curated tools and resources that can be used at different points of a consultation cycle.

STRENGTHENING JOINT COORDINATION OF DEVELOPMENT

Working closely with international partners often helps to ensure both strong engagement from key actors in government as well as technical and financial support for potentially transformative reforms. For example, UNDP Armenia provided invaluable support convening donors, INGOs, CSOs and government actors to coordinate efforts for the development of the action plan. World Bank country offices were also able to provide valuable and timely support in a number of cases. Future efforts would benefit from coordinated efforts and strong involvement by development partners to open doors, provide technical support and secure project financing where there is alignment.

FOCUSING ON SUSTAINABILITY

Enhanced support to co-creation processes provides stakeholders on the ground with a unique window of opportunity to strengthen and build alliances, partnerships and coalitions that can positively impact the sustainability of domestic MSFs and OGP related activities. The lack of strong institutional grounding, either administrative or legislative, caused disruptions in a number of cases where there were political or rotational transitions. Using this opportunity to strengthen the authorizing environment, secure adequate resourcing and further institutionalize domestic MSFs should be a key component of future efforts. As we continue to evaluate locally led processes from the first round of enhanced MDTF support, we will draw lessons on how to ensure the continuity and sustainability of alliances and efforts beyond the duration of the MDTF awards.

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

is an international multi-stakeholder initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. To participate in OGP, countries must endorse a high-level Open Government Declaration, deliver a National Action Plan developed with public consultation with civil society, and commit to independent reporting on their progress.

www.opengovpartnership.org

For more information about the Open Government Partnership and its programmes, please contact the Support Unit.

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