OGP Openness in Natural Resources Working Group
Launch Meeting

Wednesday, 28 October 2015, 5-6:30pm
Salón Piranesi, Palacio de Minería

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I. Introductions

Suneeta opened the meeting by discussing the evolution, mission, vision and goals of the working group, and the intention for its re-launch. The working group is intended as a space for peer learning and exchange, with focus countries and issues to ensure effective and impactful support for its countries. The intent is to make the services of the working group demand-driven, and with that in mind, each member stated what he or she expects to benefit or gain from the working group.

a. Lourdes Melgar (Mexico)

Lourdes, the working group co-anchor from Mexico, discussed the focus of Mexico on transparency and accountability, and how her country has been progressing with EITI compliance in the energy sector. Mexico has established independent regulators, improved public access to information, checks and balances system for contracts and bidding, and visibility and transparency in public procurement. In addition, a Mexican Petroleum Fund has been created, where petroleum revenues go to a fund managed by the Mexican Central Bank, which is an autonomous organization. The government does not have control over the fund.

Mexico has also been working on the social component of the hydrocarbon sector. Specifically, the country has initiated a social impact study before bidding the area out, to know the area subject of the bid. This is done regardless of the presence of indigenous peoples.

As regards disclosure, Mexico expects resistance from both the government and companies on this score. Nevertheless, the goal is to create a change of paradigm in the energy sector, to change the relationship between all the actors. According to Lourdes, disclosure paves the way for consensus and trust building.

b. Michael Jarvis (World Bank)

Michael would like to leverage the working group to showcase experiences of other countries.

c. Jonas Moberg (EITI)

Jonas commended how OGP was used to push countries to commit to the EITI. He hopes that the working group members would continue to use the OGP and the working group to make links between initiatives, and to encourage, explore, profile, and share innovation and good practice in other areas.

d. Aroa de la Fuente (Mexico)

Aroa would like to capitalize on the working group's expertise to push the discussion deeper into environmental information disclosure, and for environmental information to be included in the EITI.

e. Gubad Ibadoglu (Azerbaijan)

Gubad would like to receive help for the country's EITI implementation.

f. Isabel Munilla (Oxfam America)

Isabel would like to be able to identify leaders or champions for natural resource commitments. She would also like to push the discussion into cutting-edge practices and challenges in implementing such commitments. She raised the question of what the role of civil society is in helping to address these challenges, and what kind of support governments require to fulfill their commitments.

g. Ali Kaba (Liberia)

Ali would like to leverage the working group's expertise, logistics, and knowledge to improve management of resources.

h. Rizky Ananda Wulan Sapta Rini (Indonesia)

Rizky views the working group as a space for collaboration.

i. Yanuar Nugroho (Indonesia)

One challenge for Indonesia's government is managing natural resources sustainably and transparently. The challenges include EITI compliance and the development of the OneMap portal. The new deputy for natural resources, Monty Girianna, will be part of the working group and they are eager to use the working group to deal with their challenges.

j. Gay Ordenes (Philippines)

Gay would like the working group to share best practices, and learn how other countries are pushing openness in their respective countries. Specifically, she would like to know how countries adhere to or use open data standards in their natural resource commitments.

k. Teresa Habitan (Philippines)

Teresa is looking forward to having a support network for natural resource commitments that will disseminate information to inform the public debate on natural resources.

l. Joe Krauss

Joe envisions the working group to be a space for local support, and hopes that the work of the group will not be a rhetorical exercise. He posed the question – what's next for natural resource commitments?

m. Manish Bapna (WRI)

Manish highlighted the opportunities for the members to work together, given the few number of commitments related to natural resources.

n. Mark Robinson (WRI)

Mark emphasized the working group's ability to mobilize a group of champions for natural resources. He asked whether there was a possibility of including a few OECD countries to be part of the working group.

o. Carole Excell (WRI)

Carole highlighted the need to prioritize deliverables and support natural resource champions through the working group.

p. Kais Mejri (Tunisia)

Kais wanted the working group to capitalize on open data standards, and how to make environmental data useful for citizens.

q. Andres Hernandez (Colombia)

Andres would like to leverage the group for its knowledge on EITI and environmental commitments, given the strong commitments in the NAPs to transparency.

II. Discussion of the Issues

Christina provided an overview of the natural resource commitments of the working group, and the cluster of commitments over the priority issues of the working group, as follows:

COUNTRY	BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP	OPEN DATA	CONTRACTS	ENVIRONMENTAL DATA	EITI
PERU		●			●
CHILE		●			
SIERRA LEONE		●	●		●
INDONESIA				●	●

COLOMBIA				●	●
LIBERIA				●	●
MEXICO			●	●	●
PHILIPPINES					●
GHANA		●			
TUNISIA		●		●	
UK	●				●
US	●				●
KENYA		●			
GUATEMALA					●

Suneeta also mentioned that part of the ambition of the working group is to focus on the countries and issues on the table, to promote effective exchange and support between the members. However, there is a tension between this ambition, and the demand to continue to broaden the number of country members and issues. Suneeta posed this question to the members, and asked for input on the challenges faced by the members in dealing with these priority issues.

As we did not have time to cover all issues identified by NRGI and WRI, Marie asked the UK, US and Tunisia to share their experience with the following commitments:

   a. **Beneficial ownership**

Paul (USA) mentioned that the US has been focused on dealing with illicit flows and beneficial ownership disclosure. The challenges included not just obtaining data, but also publicly disclosing the data. Who has jurisdiction over disclosure?

David (UK) emphasized that public information is critical to start connecting the dots. Governments should also remember that it is not just the quantity, but the quality of data that must be focused on. Privacy challenges must also be considered.

   b. **Open Data**

Kais shared Tunisia's experience in making data open, and its role in pushing politicians to follow up with the engagement.

   III.   **Road Map**

Due to limited time, Carole opened the issue of how each member would like to leverage its membership in the working group. What should be the road map for the working group? What is the expected outcome? Carole provided a list of key activities that the members would most prefer the working group to focus on:

- Peer learning activity, workshops

- Data dives or Webinars to share information

- Sharing of Laws, Regulations, Practice

- Advice on Good Practice during implementation

- Tools and comparative analysis

- Awareness raising and Links to in country activities

- Opportunities for co-creation of commitments relevant to the SDGs

Lourdes would like to get a debate going on beneficial ownership and contract disclosure, most especially since beneficial ownership is a highly political issue. She suggested focusing on only a couple of issues to be able to measure impact.

Yanuar agrees with the approach of the working group, and would like to have the members' input on policy and legal frameworks, as well as the institutional setting of natural resource commitments. He highlighted the crucial role that civil society plays in improving natural resource commitments.

Paul posed the question of how relationship between OGP and EITI is viewed. Are these two initiatives complementary? Suneeta responded that the EITI provides a concrete ask for resource governance, and that the OGP is an opportunity to go above and beyond what the EITI requires (e.g. regarding beneficial ownership and contract disclosure).

Ali brought up the issue of availability of information even before the signing of contracts. Currently, in Liberia, regulations come after contracts are signed, and this is not effective. He would like the group to focus in sharing of laws, regulation and practice.

For David, he would like the working group to focus on engaging with the private sector. Hence, he would like the working group to provide space for sharing among multi-stakeholder groups.

Michael brought up the issue of value-added: what's the value added of the working group's space aside from peer exchange? He would like to underline timing, so that countries can showcase some of their experiences and challenges before new NAPs are created. It would be valuable to create a strategy to get the right information to decision makers at the proper time, so that these can be incorporated into the new NAPs.

For Andres, the value of the working group lies in how strong model commitments can be measured. He would like to leverage the working group to find and highlight strong model commitments for other countries to follow.

David wondered if it would be possible to have a group of countries make a commitment around a specific set of issues, which would be incorporated in these countries' NAPs.

Paul would like to ask the working group how to broaden the amount of stakeholders that consume data, and would value sharing experiences on capacity building.

An interesting query that Michael posed is, based on the working group's previous experience, is there anything that it should (or should not) do? Suneeta responded with three things: one, the group should be focused, and should have a concrete, demand-driven set of activities. Two, the group should focus on real champions, which are already part of the working group. The co-anchors intentionally picked countries where NRGI and WRI can leverage their organizations and entry points to maximize the impact of the group. Finally, the group should settle and discuss staffing issues.

Isabel asked when the group should meet again. The working group pointed out set milestones, which include the next EITI conference in Peru, when it would be possible to touch base once again.

IV.   Closing

In closing, Manish reminded the working group to remember and leverage OGP's distinct value proposition: that OGP brings together a broad network of performers that care deeply about these issues. Manish suggested that the working group should go beyond peer learning and sharing, and that members should bring color to their story. Members should highlight learning and bring to the table a discussion on the challenges and solutions that were created to overcome these challenges. Moreover, Manish mentioned that the working group will only be successful if it delivers demand-driven activities. To allow the co-anchors to craft the roadmap, Manish requested the members to indicate which activities will be most impactful to the country:

- Peer learning activity, workshops

- Data dives or Webinars to share information

- Sharing of Laws, Regulations, Practice

- Advice on Good Practice during implementation

- Tools and comparative analysis

- Awareness raising and Links to in country activities

- Opportunities for co-creation of commitments relevant to the SDGs

The co-anchors will send an email to request all members to follow-up on their response to this question. Responses will be documented and transformed into a roadmap.