

# OGP Steering Committee

## Virtual Working-Level Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

### 09:00 - 11:30 ET | April 4, 2019

#### I. Update on the 2019 OGP Global Summit and high-level priorities

The government of Canada presented an overview of the Summit priorities (participation, inclusion, impact) and the activities (found in slide deck [here](#)) taking place during the week of the 2019 OGP Global Summit . The government of Canada also briefly spoke on the expectations of SC members in the lead up to and during the summit, particularly on the Call to Action on gender and inclusion (full document [here](#)) and strengthening democracy and protecting civic rights in the digital era (full document [here](#)). The discussion was opened for SC comment and input which is summarized below.

#### A. Overview of Summit Week Activities

- The timings of the SC meetings conflict with the summit side events taking place on Wednesday May 29th. The SC was concern that there would not be SC representation at some key summit side events occurring on May 29th (i.e. FOGO). The Support Unit (SU) responded by providing additional context that the SC meetings were scheduled on Wednesday May 29 to allow SC civil society members to participate in Civil Society Day, in response to SC feedback received during the July 2018 SC meetings in Tbilisi. The government of Canada proposed moving the working-level SC meeting to start one hour later, at 10:00 am, to allow for SC members to attend some of the side events. ***Moving forward, the SU will work on timing changes to the agenda of the working-level meeting to accommodate the 10:00 am start.***

#### B. Priorities for the Ottawa Global Summit

- The SC was concerned about bringing in commitments that are outside of the OGP action plans (APs). The SU emphasized that gender and inclusion and strengthening democracy and protecting civic rights in the digital era are important thematic areas where OGP is currently weak and clarified that the Call to Action serves as a nudge to the full partnership to encourage the partnership to be more aware of these themes and to integrate them in the creation of future APs.
- The SC was supportive of the co-chair letters to OGP Ministers with the Call to Action for the Summit and emphasized that this type of substantive content is something that ministers would appreciate and resonate with. The SC also suggested that this co-chair letter be shared with civil society. The SC responded to this suggestion by proposing that the POC webinar, hosted by Canada to provide guidance and answer questions on the Call to Action, should be opened to civil society.

- The SC noted that there is a delay in communicating decisions on the Summit from the Governance and Leadership subcommittee (GL) to the broader SC and suggested that sharing periodic updates on the development of the summit agenda would be a way to broaden SC involvement in the Summit planning beyond GL.

The SU acknowledged the comments and summarized the timeline of the next steps for the Call to Action:

- April 5 - Email to OGP POCs previewing the Co-chair Call to Action;
- April 9 - POC webinar (English and French) to provide guidance and answer questions;
- April 18 - Letter from co-chairs to all OGP Ministers with Call to Action;
- April 26 - POCs to communicate commitments to OGP;
- May 29 - Announce deliverables and release fact sheets on commitments;
- September - OGP to follow-up with POCs on progress;
- December - OGP to present an update on the outcomes to the Steering Committee.

## II. **May 29 Ottawa Steering Committee Meetings**

The SU presented the [draft agendas](#) of the working-level and ministerial SC meetings in Ottawa. The key decisions to be taken by the SC at these meetings are:

1. Endorsement of the next phase OGP Local Strategy;
2. Endorsement of the direction of travel of the 2019 IRM Charter Refresh;
3. Resolutions that reaffirm the importance of collective leadership in the two priority areas of the Summit and Call to Action for all OGP members; and
4. Selection of the new incoming co-chairs to follow the government of Argentina and Robin Hodess.

The SU opened the discussion for SC input and comment which is summarized below.

- The ministers should have a discussion on the structure of the SC and determine whether the current structure: 1) maximizes the political capital that OGP can mobilize and 2) is the most conducive mechanism towards achieving the partnership's ambitions. Since the SC ministers are not in permanently established positions, they should be challenged to reflect on how to provide more permanent leadership to OGP beyond their roles. The SU proposed framing this message to the ministers by emphasizing their role as custodians of a valuable partnership and that their collective leadership is essential to recognizing OGP's potential impact at the global, country and thematic levels.
- The SC and SU should consider how to use the gathering of the OGP Local participants to inform the SC discussion and decision on the next phase strategy of the program. The SU noted that the SC meeting agendas had been structured to allow for consensus to be reached on the next phase strategy at the working-level and then formal sign-off at the ministerial level.

***As next steps, the SU will finalize the meeting agendas based on the SC feedback and comments and will circulate the agenda along with reference materials and the pre-meeting packet at least two weeks in advance of the May 29 meetings.***

### **III. Update on Government and Civil Society Steering Committee Elections**

The Support Unit provided an update on the 2019 Steering Committee elections process.

- **Government elections:** Three government SC seats are opening up for the 2019-2022 period. Croatia and Mexico will end their second and final terms and Georgia will conclude its first term. The SU has received candidacy letters from Armenia, Georgia, Germany, Indonesia and Kenya. Once endorsed by GL, the Support Unit will publicly announce these countries' candidacies and will commence the formal voting process. The elected SC governments will be announced at the end of April and they will be formally invited to attend the May 29 SC meetings as observers. *Full details on the 2019 Government SC elections process can be found [here](#).*
- **Civil Society elections:** Five civil society seats are opening up for the 2019-2022 period, as well as two additional supportive (non-voting) seats. Suneeta Kaimal will end her second and final term and Aidan Eyakuze, Maria Baron, Helen Darbshire and Zuzana Wienk will conclude their first terms. Eleven individuals (out of the 28 nominations) were shortlisted and interviewed by the selection committee and were also invited to attend two public webinars to present their candidacies to the broader OGP community. As next steps, the selection committee will present the finalists to the civil society SC for their endorsement in writing after which the civil society SC lead co-chair will inform the SC of its decision shortly after. The elected civil society candidates will be formally invited to attend the May 29 SC meetings as observers. *Full details on the 2019 Civil Society elections process can be found [here](#).*

## **List of Attendees**

### **Government Attendees**

1. Government of Canada
2. Government of Argentina
3. Government of Croatia
4. Government of France
5. Government of Georgia
6. Government of Italy
7. Government of Mexico
8. Government of Romania
9. Government of South Africa
10. Government of South Korea

### **Civil Society Attendees**

1. Maria Baron, Directorio Legislativo
2. Nathaniel Heller, Results for Development
3. Robin Hodess, The B Team
4. Helen Darbishire, Access Info Europe
5. Aidan Eyakuze, Twaweza
6. Delia Ferreira Rubio, Transparency International
7. Giorgi Kldiashvili, Institute for Development of Freedom of Information
8. Tur-Od Lkhagvajav, Asia Democracy Network
9. Lucy McTernan, University of York
10. Zuzana Wienk, Fair Play Alliance

### **Apologies**

1. Government of Nigeria
2. Suneeta Kaimal, Natural Resources Governance Institute
3. Scott Miller, Trust Democracy Australia