

INDEPENDENT REPORTING MECHANISM:

CANADA PROGRESS REPORT 2012-13



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First Progress Report



Carleton
UNIVERSITY

Open
Government
Partnership

INDEPENDENT
REPORTING MECHANISM

INDEPENDENT REPORTING MECHANISM: CANADA PROGRESS REPORT 2012-13



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INDEPENDENT REPORTING MECHANISM (IRM): CANADA PROGRESS REPORT 2012-2013

Canada made significant progress on the implementation of the majority of its Year 1 commitments. Commitments such as the Open Government Licence have strong potential to impact government practice in the coming years. The government should take advantage of the next phase of OGP to go beyond opening data and develop ambitious open government commitments together with civil society.

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 biannual review of the activities of each OGP participating country.

Canada officially began participating in September 2011, when John Baird, Minister of Foreign Affairs, declared the government's intent to join.

OGP in Canada is led by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS), which includes a dedicated Open Government Secretariat that manages the overall coordination, monitoring, and reporting of its implementation activities. TBS leads the Open Government Steering Committee (OGSC) comprised of the departments and agencies tasked with implementing components of the action plan. TBS President, Tony Clement, also established an Advisory Panel on Open Government comprised of members of civil society, business and academia who were invited to provide advice and guidance on open government activities.

OGP PROCESS

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

The consultative process during the development of the action plan was weak. The consultation, which was only done online, including a Twitter chat session with the TBS President, took place during a public holiday and no draft plan was circulated in advance for discussion. There was minimal awareness raising around the consultation process, which resulted in low participation.

The IRM researcher found minimal evidence of attempts to engage civil society during implementation of the action plan with the exception of the consultation on open data and the Open Government Licence. Consultation on commitments in these areas was seen as significantly stronger and more productive than the consultations for development of the action plan and the year one government self-assessment.

Consultation of the self-assessment report was carried out online and was not widely publicized, resulting in a limited level of participation. A full draft of the self-assessment report was also not provided.

AT A GLANCE

PARTICIPATING SINCE: 2011
NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS: 12
NUMBER OF ACTIONS: 20

LEVEL OF COMPLETION

COMPLETED:	12 OF 20
SUBSTANTIAL:	0 OF 20
LIMITED:	8 OF 20
NOT STARTED:	0 OF 20

TIMING

ON SCHEDULE:	10 OF 20
AHEAD OF SCHEDULE:	5 OF 20

COMMITMENT EMPHASIS

ACCESS TO INFORMATION:	16 OF 20
PARTICIPATION:	3 OF 20
ACCOUNTABILITY:	3 OF 20
TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY:	10 OF 20
UNCLEAR:	1 OF 20

NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS WITH

CLEAR RELEVANCE TO AN OGP VALUE:	19 OF 20
MODERATE OR TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACT:	7 OF 20
SUBSTANTIAL OR COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION:	12 OF 20

ALL THREE (★): 6 OF 20

COMMITMENT IMPLEMENTATION

As part of OGP, countries are required to make commitments in a two-year action plan. Canada developed a three-year plan. Table 1 summarizes each commitment, its level of completion, its ambition, whether it falls within Canada's planned schedule, and the key next steps for its commitment in future OGP action plans. The Canadian action plan focused heavily on technological development and administrative change. Progress was made on many of the Year 1 commitments, but the commitments themselves were not seen as ambitious.

Each commitment in the Canadian action plan spanned over two to three years (Year 1: 2012-13; Year 2: 2013-14; Year 3: 2014-15) with activities assigned to each year. The table below reflects activities that were to be accomplished in Year 1, as well as Year 2 activities that the government began implementing ahead of schedule. Canada completed nine of its Year 1 activities and two of its Year 2 activities.

Table 1 | Assessment of Progress by Commitment

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME		POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION				TIMING	NEXT STEPS
		NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE		
✦ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.											
1. Open Government Directive – Confirm Canada's policy direction for open government by issuing a new directive on open government.										Behind schedule	Further work on basic implementation
✦ 2. OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENCE											
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	Issue a new universal Open Government Licence with the goal of removing restrictions on the reuse of government information.									On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
Milestone 2 (Year 2)	Federal departments adopt Open Government Licence.									Ahead of schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME		POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION				TIMING	NEXT STEPS
★ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.		NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE		
		3. MODERNIZING ADMINISTRATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION									
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	Pilot of online request and payment service to submit and pay ATI requests online.									On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
Milestone 2 (Year 2)	Implement ATI solution.									Ahead of schedule	Further work on basic implementation
Milestone 3 (Year 3)	Make completed ATI request summaries searchable.									Ahead of schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
4. Virtual Library – begin design of online searchable repository of published government documents of all kinds.										Behind schedule	Further work on basic implementation
★ 5. INTERNATIONAL AID TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE (IATI)											
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	Review IATI requirements and publish plan to make information about CIDA activities available and accessible.									On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
Milestone 2 (Year 2 & 3)	IATI requirements implementation and reporting.									Ahead of schedule	Further work on basic implementation
6. OPENING GOVERNMENT RECORDS											
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	Increase access to archived federal documents.									On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
Milestone 2 (Year 1)	Issue new mandatory policy about document classification practices.									Behind schedule	Further work on basic implementation

COMMITMENT SHORT NAME		POTENTIAL IMPACT				LEVEL OF COMPLETION				TIMING	NEXT STEPS
★ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.		NONE	MINOR	MODERATE	TRANSFORMATIVE	NOT STARTED	LIMITED	SUBSTANTIAL	COMPLETE		
7. GCDOCS – Deploy wave one of an enterprise solution for electronic record and document management.										On schedule	None: abandon commitment
8. GCWEB – Devop and approach for a new user-centri, consolidated online presence for the government of Canada.										Behind schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
9. DATA.GC.CA											
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	Expand number of datasets made available on open data platform.									Behind schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
Milestone 2 (Year 2 & 3)	Design and implement data.gc.ca portal.									Ahead of schedule	Maintenance and monitoring of completed implementation
★ 10. Government of Canada resource management data – Publish resource management and performance data through open data portal.										On schedule	Further work on basic implementation
11. CONSULTING CANADIANS											
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	Explore options for development of Web 2.0 citizen engagement platform.									On schedule	Further work on basic implementation
Milestone 2 (Year 1)	Develp standard approach to use of social media and Web 2.0.									On schedule	None: completed implementation
Milestone 3 (Year 1)	Pilot crowdsourcing initiative.									On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation
★ 12. Open Regulation – Federal regulators to electronically post regulatory plans										On schedule	New commitment building on existing implementation

Table 2 | Summarizes the IRM assessment of progress of each commitment

NAME OF COMMITMENT		SUMMARY OF RESULTS
<p>★ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p>		
<p>1. Open Government Directive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Transformative • Completion: Limited 		<p>A draft of the government of Canada's new Directive on Open Government has been developed, but has not been made public. This commitment is particularly important because of the potential for proactive disclosure to become the default position within the federal government. The impact of this commitment is difficult to measure given the fact that CSOs were not consulted in the Directive's development and the draft document has not been made public.</p>
<p>★ 2. OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENCE</p>		
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	<p>Issue licence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Transformative • Completion: Complete 	<p>The Open Government Licence was issued in June 2013. Its goal is to remove restrictions on the reuse of published government information. The Licence is seen as an important change is facilitating the reuse of government data. The IRM researcher recommends continuing dialogue with concerned stakeholders to inform proposals for future iterations of the Licence.</p>
Milestone 2 (Year 2)	<p>Adopt licence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Transformative • Completion: Complete 	<p>The Licence is based on international standards and has been adopted by the government of Canada as well as three provincial governments and several municipalities. The multi-jurisdictional adoption of the Licence, while not an original milestone of the action plan, is seen as important. The government has committed to promoting further adoption of the Licence at the sub-national level. This Year 2 milestone was ahead of schedule.</p>
<p>★ 3. MODERNIZING ADMINISTRATION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION</p>		
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	<p>Pilot of online request and payment service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 	<p>The government launched the Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) online request pilot in April 2013. The ability to submit and pay for ATIP requests electronically brings Canada in line with existing standards. Stakeholders interviewed would like to see the ATI issues that they have identified as more pressing to be dealt with moving forward. Among other things this includes the timeliness, cost, and broad exemptions. Revisiting the Act, or at a minimum considering its expansion to institutions not currently covered, such as the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada, is desirable.</p>
Milestone 2 (Year 2 and 3)	<p>Implement ATI solution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 	<p>A request for information was issued to industry in November 2013 to support procurement of ATI solutions.</p>
Milestone 3 (Year 2 and 3)	<p>Make completed ATI request summaries searchable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 	<p>Making ATI request summaries searchable, a Year 2 and 3 milestone, was accelerated and delivered in Year 1.</p>

NAME OF COMMITMENT		SUMMARY OF RESULTS
<p>★ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p>		
<p>4. Virtual Library:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 		<p>A preliminary conceptual design has been drafted to support internal consultations on the Virtual Library as an online searchable repository of published government documents. While the Library has the potential to improve information flow, concerns were raised regarding digital preservation. To alleviate these concerns, a strategy for the digitization of documents and the preservation of materials should be elaborated. Furthermore, the government should consult with CSOs to ensure that the Virtual Library is designed in a way that fulfills its potential.</p>
<p>★ 5. INTERNATIONAL AID TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE</p>		
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	<p>Publish IATI plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Transformative • Completion: Complete 	<p>The implementation schedule for IATI was published in December 2012. CSOs interviewed were happy with the progress made to date. Stakeholders would like to see the same commitment to financial transparency made within the extractives industry.</p>
Milestone 2 (Year 2)	<p>IATI plan implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Transformative • Completion: Limited 	<p>The government has released quarterly data files complying with the IATI standard for aid transparency. The government should engage with CSOs to determine what additional data is needed and how it can be made more transparent.</p>
<p>6. OPENING GOVERNMENT RECORDS</p>		
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	<p>Increase access to archived federal documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 	<p>Library and Archives Canada has removed restrictions on nearly 3.2 million pages of federal archives. While there is support for removing restrictions on documents, stakeholders interviewed expressed concerns regarding recent budget and library cuts that have limited public access to information. Support and resources must be provided for the digitization of non-digitized materials and access points to government records must be preserved as well.</p>
Milestone 2 (Year 1)	<p>Issue new mandatory policy on document classification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 	<p>The new policy regarding document classification has been delayed until 2014 as it is part of a larger revision of policies around securities and standards. A commitment to reformatting as standards change is necessary, given the emphasis on electronic access to documentation in the action plan.</p>

NAME OF COMMITMENT		SUMMARY OF RESULTS
<p>★ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p>		
<p>7. GCDOCS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Unclear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 		<p>GCDOCS is a hosted government-wide solution for record and document management. While the commitment might be useful to the internal function of the government, as worded, it is unclear how it will improve access to information, participation or accountability. The IRM researcher and stakeholders suggest GCDOCS be removed from future action plans.</p>
<p>8. GCWEB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 		<p>The government gathered input from industry to develop a procurement strategy for GCWeb. A new GCWeb portal was launched in December 2013. CSOs were not consulted or shown proposals for GCWeb before it launched. Moving forward, it will be important to consult with the public in the creation of a centralized online presence. Clear standards and criteria for populating, removing and preserving information on the website will also need to be formulated and made available to the public.</p>
<p>9. ODATA.GC.CA</p>		
<p>Milestone 1 (Year 1)</p>	<p>Expand number of datasets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 	<p>Given updates made to data.gc.ca, it is unclear how many new datasets were added during the implementation period. Users of the portal indicated frustration with the scope and format of the data, amongst other things. The government needs to take users' feedback into consideration and improve the quality of the datasets as well as their usability. It also needs to consider points of data and the long-term ramifications of cutting programs aimed at data collection, such as the long-form census.</p>
<p>Milestone 2 (Year 2)</p>	<p>Design and implement portal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 	<p>The next generation open data platform was launched ahead of schedule in June 2013, following a citizen consultation with citizens and the open data community. Government should consider implementing tools to support CSOs that may not have technical expertise to use raw data and reduce processing time for responding to questions about the portal.</p>
<p>★ 10. Government of Canada Resource Management Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Complete 		<p>The government launched a new expenditures database in April 2013. It enables citizens to search for spending information for all federal departments across three categories. The database is a useful foundation on which the government can expand. Suggestions include incorporating historical data, expanding the release of a wider range of resource management information and clearly articulating the type of resource management information it holds.</p>

NAME OF COMMITMENT		SUMMARY OF RESULTS
<p>★ COMMITMENT IS CLEARLY RELEVANT TO OGP VALUES AS WRITTEN, HAS SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACT, AND IS SUBSTANTIALLY OR COMPLETELY IMPLEMENTED.</p>		
11. CONSULTING CANADIANS		
Milestone 1 (Year 1)	<p>Develop new platform for consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Limited 	<p>According to the government self-assessment report, this commitment will be combined with GCWeb (see commitment 8). It states that GCWeb will feature a platform to consult with citizens online. Industry has been consulted, but there has been no public consultation on any prospective plans. Moving forward, citizens should be consulted on proposed models for participation.</p>
Milestone 2 (Year 1)	<p>Develop standard approach to the use of social media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 	<p>Measures have been taken around the development of standards related to social media use by civil servants.</p>
Milestone 3 (Year 1)	<p>Pilot crowdsourcing initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Minor • Completion: Complete 	<p>Employment and Social Development (formerly Human Resources and Social Development Canada) and the Canadian Transportation Agency have explored some crowdsourcing and consultation options.</p>
<p>★12. Open Regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGP value relevance: Clear • Potential impact: Moderate • Completion: Complete 		<p>According to the self-assessment report, thirty-two forward regulator plans have been posted online. This commitment is part of Canada's Open Dialogue strategy however it was not clear to stakeholders how open dialogue is achieved. The Annual Scorecard Reports, planned for fall 2013, may improve openness and accountability around this commitment.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS

The division of power between levels of government adds an element of complexity to the way that Canada approaches open government. The dated federal access to information legislation has, at times, restricted access to information and the federal access regime was widely identified by CSOs as one that is fundamentally broken. Inter-jurisdictional collaboration and the engagement of civil society are vital **to developing a more ambitious plan for the future.**

- 1. Specificity and Ambition of Commitments:** The language used to elaborate future commitments should be much more specific. The commitments should include more detailed timelines, and targets and should be measurable. CSOs interviewed felt the Canadian commitments needed to be much more ambitious. In some cases the commitments were not new, but were a reframing or extension of initiatives that pre-date Canada's OGP membership.
- 2. Prioritize open government, not just open data:** The Government has demonstrated a commitment to future progress through its participation in the OGP Working Group on Open Data. However, there is concern that open data has become prioritized and open government has become a subset of open data – the fact that the open government web portal has been rebranded to an open data portal is evidence of this. Open government itself needs to be prioritized. It requires higher-level political support than it is currently receiving and it requires supports, including budget.
- 3. Engage Citizens:** The mechanism for engaging citizens in a meaningful and ongoing way needs to be developed. The Government needs to develop an awareness raising strategy so that Canadians are more knowledgeable about the OGP and Canada's commitments and so they can better understand how they might contribute to discussions and activities around open government.
- 4. Recognize the Digital Divide and the Data Divide:** Many of the commitments in the current action plan are oriented toward developing online solutions, but this should not be done at the expense of those who may have no or limited access and capacity to use online tools.
- 5. Existence of Access to Information Legislation Does Not Ensure Open Government:** Those participating in the IRM evaluation consistently noted the deteriorating state of access to information in Canada. The online request pilot the Government has been working on is not seen as particularly revolutionary and is not seen as addressing any of the more fundamental problems facing Canada's access to information regime.
- 6. Improving Information Management Practice Would Fuel Open Information and Open Data:** The current action plan has a number of commitments that attempt to centralize access to information and data, but they do not provide clear direction to Government departments and agencies on standards and best practices. Many CSOs also questioned whether centralization was an appropriate strategy for improving the flow and preservation of information.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: 2012

To participate in OGP, governments must demonstrate commitment to open government by meeting minimum criteria on key dimensions of open government. Third-party indicators are used to determine country progress on each of the dimensions. The OGP Support Unit converts the raw data into a four-point scale, listed in parentheses below. For more information, visit <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/how-it-works/how-join/eligibility-criteria>. Raw data has been recoded by OGP staff into a four-point scale, listed in parentheses below.

BUDGET TRANSPARENCY:

Not assessed

ACCESS TO INFORMATION:

Law Enacted

(4 OF 4)

ASSET DISCLOSURE:

Senior Officials and Politicians

(4 OF 4)

CIVIC PARTICIPATION:

10 OF 10

(4 OF 4)



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The Open Government Partnership (OGP) aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and 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 improve accountability.

I | BACKGROUND

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder international initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to their citizenry to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. In pursuit of these goals, OGP provides an international forum for dialogue and sharing among governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector, all of which contribute to a common pursuit of open government. OGP stakeholders include participating governments as well as civil society and private sector entities that support the principles and mission of OGP.

INTRODUCTION

Canada officially began participating in OGP in September 2011 when the Minister of Foreign Affairs, John Baird, declared the government's intention to join.¹

To participate in OGP, governments must exhibit a demonstrated commitment to open government by meeting a set of minimum performance criteria on key dimensions of open government that are particularly consequential for increasing government responsiveness, strengthening citizen engagement, and fighting corruption. Indicators produced by organizations other than OGP to determine the extent of country progress on each of the dimensions, with points awarded as described below. Canada entered into the Partnership meeting the maximum requirements for eligibility. At the time of joining, the country had an access to information law,² the highest possible rankings in asset disclosure for senior public officials and elected officials,³ and a score of 10 out of a possible 10 on the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index Civil Liberties sub score.⁴ Because it is not part of the Open Budget Index review conducted by the International Budget Partnership, Canada did not receive a score in this area.

All OGP participating governments must develop OGP national action plans that elaborate concrete commitments over an initial two-year period. Governments should begin their action plans by sharing existing efforts related to a set of five "grand challenges," including specific open government strategies and ongoing programs (see Section 4 for a list of grand challenge areas). Action plans should then

set out each government's OGP commitments, which stretch government practice beyond its current baseline with respect to the relevant grand challenge. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

Along with other Cohort 2 OGP countries, Canada developed its national action plan from September 2011 to April 2012. The effective start date for the action plan submitted in April was officially 1 July 2012 for implementation through 30 June 2013. It published its self-assessment in October 2013. According to the OGP schedule,⁵ officials, in consultation with CSO members, are to revise the first plan or develop a new plan by April 2014, with consultation beginning in January 2014.

Pursuant to OGP requirements, the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) of OGP partnered with an experienced, independent local researcher to carry out an evaluation of the development and implementation of the country's first action plan. In Canada, the IRM partnered with Dr. Mary Franco, Assistant Professor at Carleton University, who authored this progress report. It is the aim of the IRM to inform ongoing dialogue around development and implementation of future commitments in each OGP participating country.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

OGP in Canada is led by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). According to the government's self-assessment report, "a dedicated Open Government Secretariat within TBS manages overall coordination, monitoring, and reporting of implementation activities."⁶ TBS leads

an Open Government Steering Committee (OGSC). The OGSC is comprised of a number of departments and agencies that are tasked with implementing a component of the existing action plan. The OGSC is, “responsible for enterprise-wide governance of all federal Open Government initiatives, including the implementation of the commitments in Canada’s Action on Open Government.”⁷

While TBS is the lead Canadian institution for OGP and the majority of the commitments made in the national action plan, it did inform the IRM researcher that the IATI commitment was led by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (formally the Canadian International Development Agency). Additionally, elements of the Opening GC Records commitment were led by Library and Archives Canada. In 2013, leadership of the GCDOCS commitment moved from TBS to the Department of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

TBS President, Tony Clement, also established an advisory panel on open government. The Panel is comprised of twelve (12) members from civil society, business, and academia, including independent commentators. Panel members were invited by the government to, “provide advice and guidance on open government activities, including:

- Finding ways to improve the delivery of open data and open information to citizens;
- Considering how to make the most of open government to maximize innovation and knowledge sharing; and
- Exploring how federal organizations can do an even better job of consulting Canadians.”⁸

The advisory panel did not meet in person, but held teleconferences around the development of the

action plan, progress in meeting the action plan commitments, the Open Government Directive, and the government’s self-assessment report. Notes from the February 2012 and March 2012 advisory panel meetings are posted on the data.gc.ca website.⁹

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The IRM partners with experienced, independent national researchers to author and disseminate reports for each OGP participating government. In Canada, the IRM partnered with Dr. Mary Francoli, Assistant Professor at Carleton University. The IRM researcher reviewed the government’s self-assessment report, gathered the views of civil society, and interviewed appropriate government officials and other stakeholders. The report was reviewed by OGP staff and a panel of experts.

To gather the voices of multiple stakeholders, the IRM researcher organized four stakeholder meetings, which were conducted according to a focus group model. Two of the meetings were held in Ottawa, Ontario. The other two meetings were conducted by teleconference. In addition to the meetings, a number of interviews with key government and civil society representatives were conducted. An online survey ran from 4 October to 8 November 2013 (see appendices).

The IRM researcher also reviewed two key documents prepared by the government: Canada’s first national action plan¹⁰ and the self-assessment¹¹ published by the government in October 2013. Numerous references are made to these documents throughout this report.

Summaries of these meetings, interviews, and the survey are given in the Annex to this report along with more detailed explanations.

¹ Canada, Open Government Partnership, <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/canada>

² Access to Information Act, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-1/>

³ Simeon Djankov, Rafael La Porta, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, and Andrei Shleifer, “Disclosure by Politicians,” (Tuck School of Business Working Paper 2009-60, 2009): <http://bit.ly/19nDEFK>; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), “Types of Information Decision Makers Are Required to Formally Disclose, and Level Of Transparency,” in *Government at a Glance 2009*, (OECD, 2009). <http://bit.ly/13vGtqS>; Ricard Messick, “Income and Asset Disclosure by World Bank Client Countries” (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2009). <http://bit.ly/1clokyf>

⁴ Economist Intelligence Unit, “Democracy Index 2010: Democracy in Retreat” (London: Economist, 2010). Available at: <http://bit.ly/eLC1rE>

⁵ OGP Calendar for all Countries, <http://bit.ly/1gHJxrM>

⁶ Implementation of Canada’s Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

⁷ Implementation of Canada’s Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

⁸ Advisory Panel on Open Government, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/advisory-panel-open-government>

⁹ Advisory Panel on Open Government, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/advisory-panel-open-government>

¹⁰ Government of Canada’s Action Plan on Open Government, <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/canada/action-plan>

¹¹ Implementation of Canada’s Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

II | PROCESS: DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PLAN

The Canadian government only held public consultations online. Interviewed stakeholders decried the low-level of awareness raising around these activities resulting in limited participation. The government did not publish a draft action plan at the consultation stage, which undermined the quality of the consultation.

Countries participating in OGP follow a set process for consultation during development of their OGP action plan. According to OGP's Articles of Governance, countries must:

- Make the details of their public consultation process and timeline available (online at minimum) prior to the consultation
- Consult widely with the national community, including civil society and the private sector; seek out a diverse range of views; and, make a summary of the public consultation and all individual written comment submissions available online
- Undertake OGP awareness-raising activities to enhance public participation in the consultation
- Consult the population with sufficient forewarning and through a variety of mechanisms—including

online and through in-person meetings—to ensure the accessibility of opportunities for citizens to engage.

A fifth requirement, during the consultation, is set out in the OGP Articles of Governance. This requirement is dealt with in Section III: Consultation during implementation:

- Countries are to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation. This can be a new or existing entity.

This is dealt with in the next section, but evidence for consultation both before and during implementation is included here and in Table 1 for ease of reference.

Table 1 | Action Plan Consultation Process

PHASE OF ACTION PLAN	OGP PROCESS REQUIREMENT (ARTICLES OF GOVERNANCE SECTION)	DID THE GOVERNMENT MEET THIS REQUIREMENT
During development	Timeline and process: Prior availability	No
	Timeline: Online	Yes
	Timeline: Other channels	Yes
	Advance notice	No
	Awareness-raising activities	Minimal
	Online consultations	Yes
	Online consultations: Link	http://data.gc.ca/eng/open-government-consultation-report

	In-person consultations	No
	Summary of comments	Yes
	Summary of comments: Link	http://data.gc.ca/eng/open-government-consultation-report
During Implementation	Regular forum	Yes

ADVANCE NOTICE OF CONSULTATION

The four OGP requirements for the consultation outlined above were not well met. A consultation was held during the development phase of the Canadian action plan. It is unclear whether notice had been given prior to the start of the consultation. A press release was issued on the first day of the consultation, but no evidence of prior notice was identified.¹ The press release did, however, give prior notice to the Twitter chat component of the consultation and it also detailed the consultation timeline.

The consultation ran online from 6 December 2011 to 16 January 2012. The consultation prompted respondents to comment on three questions:

- “What could be done to make it easier for you to find government information online?”
- “How would you use or manipulate this data?”
- “Do you have suggestions on how the Government of Canada could improve how it consults with Canadians?”²

According to the government’s consultation report, 260 Canadians participated in the online consultation.³ Some departments, including the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada, submitted written feedback.⁴

As part of the consultation, the TBS President, Tony Clement, also held two Twitter chats on 15 December 2011 – one in each of Canada’s official languages. Each chat was 45 minutes in length. The hashtags used were #opengovchat and #parlonsgouvert. The transcripts of the Twitter chats can be found on the data.gc.ca portal.⁵ In total, Mr. Clement responded

to 37 questions during the English chat in which 94 unique authors issued 442 tweets. He responded to 21 questions from 113 tweets from 21 unique authors during the French chat.

The Advisory Panel on Open Government discussed in Section 1 also fed into the consultation, but it only met once prior to the adoption of the action plan and again, no draft plan was circulated.

The government indicates a meeting that was held with federal, provincial and territorial clerks of legislative assemblies and Cabinet secretaries in January 2012 as part of its consultation report.⁶ Minutes of this meeting, a list of participants and the agenda are not available online, but according to the government consultation report, all in attendance expressed a, “desire to continue to share best practices and to collaborate on opportunities, where possible.”⁷

QUALITY AND BREADTH OF CONSULTATION

Interviews indicated that minimal OGP awareness-raising activities were undertaken, which in turn limited participation. This conclusion was supported by the IRM survey findings in which 21 of the 34 unique respondents indicated that they did not participate in the survey. Of those, 19 did not know about the consultation and 2 indicated that they only learned about it too late in the process and, as a result, did not have time to participate.

The use of a variety of mechanisms was not fulfilled when it came to interacting with CSOs and with citizens more generally. The consultation with CSOs only took place online.

Civil society representatives were not satisfied with the consultation process. As the Centre for Law and Democracy pointed out in its assessment of Canada's Year 1 progress, 260 responses was a small number given the expansive nature of the issue of open government.⁸ It also expressed concern over using Twitter, a micro blogging website where feedback is confined to 140 characters, to collect feedback on a substantial policy issue. This concern, along with a concern that the Twitter chats could be somewhat exclusionary (only those with the proper technology who might be available during the specified 45 minute period were able to participate), was also highlighted in interviews done by the IRM.

The Canadian self-assessment report released in October 2013 acknowledged deficiencies in its consultation process and in raising awareness. It also recognized the importance of using multiple channels for engagement.⁹ In addition to addressing these challenges, CSOs noted that they would have liked to have been able to comment on a draft version of the action plan. This would have improved the quality of the consultation. It was also widely found that the three questions used to guide the consultation were limiting.

¹ Minister Clement Announces Open Government Consultation, <http://bit.ly/1n35xOV>

² Open Government Consultation Report, <http://bit.ly/1eDArJi>

³ Open Government Consultation Report, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/open-government-consultation-report>

⁴ Letter on Open Government to the President of the Treasury Board on January 19, 2012, <http://bit.ly/1eDAvJ8>

⁵ English transcript <http://bit.ly/1frNsc6> and French transcript <http://bit.ly/1lpXaS0>

⁶ Open Government Consultation Report, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/open-government-consultation-report>

⁷ Open Government Consultation Report, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/open-government-consultation-report#toc6>

⁸ Centre for Law and Democracy, 'Canada: OGP First Year Progress Review', <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Canada.Y1-assessment.pdf>

⁹ Implementation of Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

III | PROCESS: CONSULTATION DURING IMPLEMENTATION

The consultation during implementation of Canada's OGP action plan took a different form from the prior consultation. While the consultation process on few of the commitments was extensive, most of the others did not benefit from such a process.

As part of their participation in OGP, governments commit to identify a forum to enable regular multi-stakeholder consultation on OGP implementation as part of a larger ongoing consultation strategy—this can be an existing entity or a new one. This section summarizes that information.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Stakeholders pointed to the evolution of the Open Government Licence commitment as the primary example of good consultation practice. Some suggested it as a model that the government might look to in running future consultations. Unlike the consultation on the action plan, where no draft was posted for comment, a draft of the Licence was posted online in a consultation that was held between 26 November 2012 and 11 December 2012. Another Twitter discussion was also held.¹ Comments received during the consultation were posted online in a timely fashion. In addition, there was collaboration with several provincial governments.

Those participating in the IRM evaluation indicated more publicity about OGP and the Open Government Licence consultation would have been beneficial.

Many were not aware that it had happened. Twenty of those surveyed were unaware of the consultation. Others, however, indicated that they did not respond because the consultation appeared to, "have a lot of activity," including subject matter experts. As such, they felt their feedback was not required.

A series of in-person round table discussions were held around the data.gc.ca commitment. In total there were five meetings across the country, with 82 stakeholders.² Many CSOs thought the discussions were valuable, while others noted that the meetings were exclusive and that widespread public consultation could be improved.

CSOs interviewed indicated a desire for consultations around some of the other commitments in the action plan, particularly around the Virtual Library. Here, public consultation in addition to targeted outreach to specialist communities would be beneficial. Many had concerns about the way the Virtual Library would be constructed and populated.

¹ Open Government Licence Consultation Report, <http://bit.ly/1frNPh4>

² Open Data Roundtables Summary Report,

IV | IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMITMENTS

All OGP participating governments develop OGP country action plans that elaborate concrete commitments over an initial two-year period. Governments begin their OGP country action plans by sharing existing efforts related to their chosen grand challenge(s), including specific open government strategies and ongoing programs. Action plans then set out governments' OGP commitments, which stretch government practice beyond its current baseline with respect to the relevant policy area. These commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete on-going reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area.

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OGP commitments are to be structured around a set of five "grand challenges" that governments face. OGP recognizes that all countries are starting from different baselines. Countries are charged with selecting the grand challenges and related concrete commitments that most connect to their unique country contexts. No action plan, standard, or specific commitments are to be forced on any country.

The five OGP grand challenges are:

1. **Improving Public Services**—measures that address the full spectrum of citizen services including health, education, criminal justice, water, electricity, telecommunications, and any other relevant service areas by fostering public service improvement or private sector innovation.

2. **Increasing Public Integrity**—measures that address corruption and public ethics, access to information, campaign finance reform, and media and civil society freedom.
3. **More Effectively Managing Public Resources**—measures that address budgets, procurement, natural resources, and foreign assistance.
4. **Creating Safer Communities**—measures that address public safety, the security sector, disaster and crisis response, and environmental threats.
5. **Increasing Corporate Accountability**—measures that address corporate responsibility on issues such as the environment, anti-corruption, consumer protection, and community engagement.

While the nature of concrete commitments under any grand challenge area should be flexible and allow for each country's unique circumstances, OGP commitments should be relevant to OGP values laid out in the OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration signed by all OGP participating countries. The IRM uses the following guidance to evaluate relevance to core open government values:

- **Access to information** — These commitments:
 - o pertain to government-held information;
 - o are not restricted to data but pertains to all information;
 - o may cover proactive or reactive releases of information;
 - o may pertain to strengthen the right to information; and,
 - o must provide open access to information (it should not be privileged or internal only to government).

- **Citizen Participation** — governments seek to mobilise citizens to engage in public debate, provide input, and make contributions that lead to more responsive, innovative and effective governance. Commitments around access to information:
 - o open up decision-making to all interested members of the public; such forums are usually “top-down” in that they are created by government (or actors empowered by government) to inform decision-making;
 - o often include elements of access to information to ensure meaningful input of interested members of the public into decisions;
 - o often include the enhancing citizens’ right to be heard, but do not necessarily include the right to be heeded.

- **Accountability** — there are rules, regulations, and mechanisms in place that call upon government actors to justify their actions, act upon criticisms or requirements made of them, and accept responsibility for failure to perform with respect to laws or commitments.
 - o As part of open government, such commitments have an “open” element, meaning that they are not purely internal systems of accountability without a public face.

- **Technology and Innovation** — Commitments for technology and innovation:
 - o promote new technologies offer opportunities for information sharing, public participation, and collaboration;
 - o should make more information public in ways that enable people to both understand what their governments do and to influence decisions;
 - o may commit to supporting the ability of governments and citizens to use tech for openness and accountability; and,
 - o may support the use of technology by government employees and citizens alike.

Countries may focus their commitments at the national, local and/or sub-national level—wherever they believe their open government efforts are to have the greatest impact.

Recognizing that achieving open government commitments often involves a multiyear process, governments should attach timeframes and benchmarks to their commitments that indicate what is to be accomplished each year, wherever possible.

This section details each of the commitments Canada included in its initial action plan. Please note that the Canadian action plan is broken down into yearly activities and only commitments projected to be completed during Year 1 were assessed in this report.

A number of the commitments have a single milestone, while others have multiple milestones. In these latter cases, the milestones have been evaluated together on a single fact sheet in order to avoid repetition and make reading easier for OGP stakeholders.

While most indicators given on each commitment fact sheet are self-explanatory, a number of indicators for each commitment deserve further explanation.

- **Relevance:** The IRM researcher evaluated each commitment for its relevance to OGP values and OGP grand challenges.
 - *OGP values:* Some OGP commitments are unclear in their relationship to OGP values. In order to identify such cases, the IRM researcher made a judgment based on a close reading of the commitment text. This identifies commitments that can better articulate their relationship to fundamental issues of openness.
 - *Grand challenges:* While some commitments may be relevant to more than one grand challenge, the reviewer only marked those that had been identified by government (as almost all commitments address a grand challenge).
- **Ambition:**
 - *Potential impact:* OGP countries are expected to make ambitious commitments (with new or pre-existing activities) that stretch government practice beyond an existing baseline. To contribute to a broad definition of ambition, the IRM researcher judged how potentially transformative commitment might be in the policy area. This is based on researcher's findings and experience as a public policy expert.
 - *New or pre-existing:* The IRM researcher also recorded, in a non-judgmental fashion whether a commitment was based on an action that pre-dated the action plan.
- **Timing:**
 - *Projected completion:* The OGP Articles of Governance encourage countries to put forth commitments with clear deliverables with suggested annual milestones. In cases where this information is not available, the IRM researcher makes a best judgment, based on the evidence of how far the commitment could possibly be at the end of the period assessed.

1 | Open Government Directive

In Year 1 of our Action Plan, we will confirm our policy direction for Open Government by issuing a new Directive on Open Government. The Directive will provide guidance to 106 federal departments and agencies on what they must do to maximize the availability of online information and data, identify the nature of information to be published, as well as the timing, formats, and standards that departments will be required to adopt. Our ongoing consultations with our Open Government Advisory Panel will inform the development of the Directive.

Moving forward in Years 2 and 3, we will progressively implement the Directive in order to establish consistency and standard practices with regard to open publishing across government departments and agencies. The clear goal of this Directive is to make Open Government and open information the 'default' approach.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	None				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		High (Commitment language provides clear, measurable, verifiable milestones for achievement of the goal)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	Increasing public integrity				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Issue Directive on Open Government	X				
	2. Implement Directive on Open Government	X				
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Issue Directive on Open Government	New	Transformative (the commitment entails a reform that could potentially transform "business as usual" in the relevant policy area)				
2. Implement Directive on Open Government	New	Transformative (the commitment entails a reform that could potentially transform "business as usual" in the relevant policy area)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
1. Issue Directive on Open Government			
START DATE: July 2012	END DATE: June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal timeline with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A green triangle is positioned at the COMPLETE stage, indicating 100% completion.</p>
2. Implement Directive on Open Government			
START DATE: July 2012	END DATE: June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal timeline with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A green triangle is positioned at the NOT STARTED stage, indicating 0% completion.</p>
NEXT STEPS			
1. Issue Directive on Open Government		Further work on basic implementation	
2. Implement Directive on Open Government		Further work on basic implementation	

What happened?

The Government Self-Assessment Report indicated that: “A draft of the Government of Canada’s new Directive on Open Government has been developed to support internal consultations with government departments and agencies to be completed this fall. The draft Directive provides proposed direction to departments and agencies on specific requirements to maximize the release of government data and information to the public. Departments and agencies would be required to develop and publish a Departmental Open Government Plan that would include specific information on what data and information is to be published and by when. Consultations with members of the President’s Advisory Panel on Open Government have also been used to review key concepts for inclusion in the Directive.”¹ The draft has not been made available to the public. In its Self-Assessment Report, the government has indicated that the Directive will be released “later this year.” While the IRM and CSOs interpreted this as the end of 2013, the government has since clarified that it meant the end of the fiscal year, 31 March 2014. As stated in the Self-Assessment Report, there is a need to ensure the Directive aligns with Canada’s commitments to the G8 Open Data Charter. The draft referenced in

the government Self-Assessment Report was not made available to the general public or the Advisory Panel.

Did it matter?

The impact of this commitment is unclear given the incomplete nature of this commitment at time of writing and the fact that the Directive has not been made publically available. Many of those interviewed and surveyed were very interested in the Open Government Directive. It is thought to be a particularly important commitment because of the potential for proactive disclosure to become the default position within the federal government. It is one of the few commitments that addresses the OGP grand challenge of increasing public integrity.

There was not widespread consultation on this commitment. The Advisory Panel was consulted once, but was not provided with a draft of the directive at that meeting.² CSOs were not consulted.

Moving forward

A more fulsome discussion of this commitment with CSOs is desirable given its importance and given that it is one of Canada’s foundational commitments, the other being the Open Licence, for which a consultation was held. CSOs have signalled a desire to comment on and engage in discussions around the Directive.³

¹ ‘Implementation of Canada’s Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report’ <http://bit.ly/1bl8ori>

² Centre for Law and Democracy, ‘Canada OGP First Year Progress Review,’ <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Canada.Y1-assessment.pdf>

³ Canadian Association of Research Libraries, ‘Comments on the Implementation of the Open Government Action Plan,’ <http://bit.ly/1lpXsbC>; Centre for Law and Democracy ‘Canada OGP First Year Progress Review,’ <http://bit.ly/1hYun1z>

2 | Open Government Licence

To support the Directive and reduce the administrative burden of managing multiple licensing regimes across the Government of Canada, we will issue a new universal Open Government Licence in Year 1 of our Action Plan with the goal of removing restrictions on the reuse of published Government of Canada information (data, info, websites, publications) and aligning with international best practices. In developing this new licence we will also coordinate with other OGP members to allow more seamless collaboration across borders.

The purpose of the new Open Government Licence will be to promote the re-use of federal information as widely as possible. It is our goal that federal departments will have adopted this new universal Open Government Licence by the end of Year 2 of the Action Plan.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Public Works and Government Services Canada				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		High (Commitment language provides clear, measurable, verifiable milestones for achievement of the goal)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	Improving public services				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Issue Open Government Licence	X			X	
	2. Adopt Open Government Licence	X			X	
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Issue Open Government Licence	New	Transformative (the commitment entails a reform that could potentially transform "business as usual" in the relevant policy area)				
2. Adopt Open Government Licence	New	Transformative (the commitment entails a reform that could potentially transform "business as usual" in the relevant policy area)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
1. Issue Open Government Licence			
START DATE: July 2012	END DATE: June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal timeline with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A green triangle is positioned at the 'COMPLETE' stage, indicating 100% completion.</p>
2. Adopt Open Government Licence			
START DATE: July 2013	END DATE: June 2014	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal timeline with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue triangle is positioned at the 'COMPLETE' stage, indicating 100% completion.</p>
NEXT STEPS			
1. Issue Open Government Licence	New commitment building on existing implementation		
2. Adopt Open Government Licence	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?

The government issued the Open Government Licence on 18 June 2013, following a consultative process.¹ The Licence is based on international standards and has been adopted by the Government of Canada as well as the provincial governments of Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and several municipalities.

Did it matter?

There was some debate over whether the Licence was an ambitious commitment in stakeholder meetings, given that other countries have had similar licensing regimes in place for some time. For some, this commitment brought Canada in line with existing standards, and was not a stretch. The UK, for example, released the first version of its Open Government Licence three years ago and it is now in its second iteration.

Ambition aside, the Licence was seen as an important change. The multi-jurisdictional adoption of the Licence, while not an original goal of the action plan, is seen to be important. As the DataBC Team noted, “the benefits of a common license are primarily about using

data. When people use data from multiple sources but licensed under the Open Government License, they aren’t dealing with the need to meet different terms and conditions from each provider.”² This new Licence is also about multi-jurisdictional legal interoperability, which is seen as positive for Canada. It is seen as a good way to address the restrictive nature of Crown Copyright and promotes greater access to data. Some CSOs noted a possible concern over its lack of applicability to crown corporations.

Moving forward

Moving forward, the government has committed to promoting further adoption of a standard Open Government Licence across the country at the sub-national level. This commitment is laudable and is a clear next step in moving forward as is continued inter-jurisdictional engagement. In addition, the IRM researcher recommends continuing dialogue with CSOs and data users, as people learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of the Licence, to inform proposals for future changes.

¹ Open Government Licence, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/open-government-licence-canada>

² British Columbia Adopts Canadian Open Government Licence, <http://bit.ly/1hYASBt>

3 | Modernising Administration of Access to Information

To improve service quality and ease of access for citizens, and to reduce processing costs for institutions, we will begin modernizing and centralizing the platforms supporting the administration of Access to Information (ATI). In Year 1, we will pilot online request and payment services for a number of departments allowing Canadians for the first time to submit and pay for ATI requests online with the goal of having this capability available to all departments as soon as feasible.

In Years 2 and 3, we will make completed ATI request summaries searchable online, and we will focus on the design and implementation of a standardized, modern, ATI solution to be used by all federal departments and agencies.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Citizenship and Immigration Canada				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Medium (Commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but does not contain specific milestones or deliverables)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	Improving public services				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Pilot of online request and payment service	X			X	
	2. Implement ATI Solution	X			X	
	3. Make completed ATI request summaries searchable	X			X	
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Pilot of online request and payment service	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				
2. Implement ATI Solution	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				
3. Make completed ATI request summaries searchable	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
1. Pilot of online request and payment service			
START DATE: July 2012	END DATE: June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>NOT STARTED LIMITED SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETE</p>
2. Implement ATI Solution			
START DATE: July 2013	END DATE: June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>NOT STARTED LIMITED SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETE</p>
2. Make completed ATI request summaries searchable			
START DATE: July 2013	END DATE: June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>NOT STARTED LIMITED SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETE</p>
NEXT STEPS			
1. Pilot of online request and payment service	New commitment building on existing implementation		
2. Implement ATI solution	Further work on basic implementation		
3. Make completed ATI request summaries searchable	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?

The government launched the Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) Online Request pilot on 9 April 2013.¹ Initially three departments participated: Citizenship & Immigration Canada, Shared Services Canada, and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. Participation has since expanded. According to the government Self-Assessment Report, “Canada is extending the pilot to 20 additional federal departments in the next year.”² As of January 15, 2014, the pilot had been extended to include 14 institutions.

The Self-Assessment Report indicated that, “Early results have been very positive with over 10,000 ATIP requests received in the first five months of operation, and with over 90% of clients rating the service as “easy” to “very easy” to use.”³ As of January 15, 2014 the Government reported that approximately 22,000 ATI requests had been processed through the new pilot portal.

Making completed ATI request summaries searchable was initially scheduled as a Year 2 and 3 milestone in the Canadian action plan. However, this accelerated and was delivered in Year 1.

A ‘Request for Information’ was issued to industry on 21 November 2013 to support procurement of the ATI solution referenced in the action plan.⁴

Did it matter?

The ability to submit and pay for ATIP requests electronically is seen as a very welcome but equally unambitious change by many of the stakeholders interviewed. Again, it was seen as simply bringing Canada in line with standards that exist in other countries, such as the United States and Mexico which both have freedom of information portals. The majority of those interviewed and who submitted comments to the online survey felt that this commitment failed to address the OGP grand challenge of improving integrity. It was largely viewed by CSOs as an administrative change that may constitute improvement of a public service or improving efficiency, but overwhelmingly was not seen as a change that contributed to improving integrity. It does not deal with the speed of the request being completed or the extensiveness of the results/information provided to the requestor.

Those interviewed by the IRM researcher said they wanted to see more substantial change to Canada's Access to Information regime. One participant questioned why the government would, "work toward modernizing something that is so fundamentally broken?" Canada has one of the oldest Access to Information laws. OGP only acknowledged the existence of the law when awarding points that determined entry. It did not look at the state of the ATI regime. In Canada, the current Information Commissioner, Suzanne Legault, and other past Commissioners, have vocalized their concerns with the state of ATI and each have made a number of recommendations for improvement that go beyond the way the requests are currently submitted.

The primary concerns around access to information heard by the IRM researcher were (1) the timely fulfillment of requests, (2) over broad exceptions in the grounds to refuse access, (3) limitations in the scope of public bodies not covered by the Access to Information Act, and (4) high fees. Many of those who participated in the IRM process cited long extensions to the 30-day limit for the government to fulfill an access request. In 2013, the Information Commissioner of Canada went to the Federal Court after one ATI requester was told the Department of Defence required an 1100-day extension to complete an access request.⁵ The list of institutions that are excluded, and therefore not subject to the access to information legislation, is lengthy and includes key decision-making offices, such as the Federal Cabinet, the House of Commons, and the Senate.

The ability to search ATI request summaries online is also seen as unambitious. Many of those interviewed, including the Information Commissioner of Canada, noted that a similar system called the Coordinated Access to Information System (CAIRS) had been in place between 1989 – 2008 at which point the Government cancelled it without putting a replacement system in place.⁶ The CAIRS system was internally facing, only accessible within

government; however, it did also exist publicly via a portal operated by a CSO who requested the information monthly and published it online. The cancellation of CAIRS meant the parallel CSO portal could not be updated. The action plan commitment is seen as a revival of a pre-existing initiative.

Moving forward

The dated nature of Canada's Access to Information Act and its many problems have been well documented.⁷ The legislation itself is in need of some updating. Some of those participating in the IRM evaluation, including the Information Commissioner of Canada, noted that federal access to information legislation is having a negative impact on provincial legislation, which, in some cases, has been amended in a way that weakens access by bringing it in line with federal standards. The Information Commissioner of Canada recently completed a public consultation on improving the right to information in Canada.⁸ The results of this should be considered moving forward.

Short of legislative change, the government should commit to completing ATI requests in accordance with the statutory delays and to ensuring that departments and institutions have the resources they need to do this. A commitment to ensuring that consistently negligent government organizations comply with ATI requests is necessary (notably including the Privy Council Office and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police).⁹

The government should also commit to providing the Information Commissioner of Canada with better information about the access to information requests it receives. In addition, the mandate of the Office of the Information Commissioner is worthy of attention. Currently, the Information Commissioner is the only federal commissioner with no public education or research mandate. It is also an office that may benefit from order-making power in the resolution of 'administrative' complaints.

¹ Access to Information and Privacy Requests Now Easier with New Online Tool, <http://bit.ly/1gy1vQV>; Online Request System, <https://atip-aiprp.apps.gc.ca/atip/welcome.do>

² Implementation of Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

³ Implementation of Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

⁴ 'Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) Solution', <http://bit.ly/1frODIE>

⁵ Jim Bronskill, 'Ottawa Running Late on Access to Information Responses Watch Dog Says,' The Globe and Mail, <http://bit.ly/Lxi41u>

⁶ The Coordination of the Access to Information Requests System, <http://bit.ly/1cDI5YF>

⁷ Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada, Strengthening the Access to Information Act To Meet Today's Imperatives, <http://bit.ly/1fi2Ypf>

Parliament of Canada, The Access to Information Act: First Steps Toward Renewal Report, 2009, <http://bit.ly/1fEBevt>

Canadian Press, 'Information Watchdog alarmed by Harper government clampdown,' <http://bit.ly/1cDIg6b>

Global Right to Information Rating, <http://www.rti-rating.org>

⁸ Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada, Open Dialogue on Modernizing the Access to Information Act, Summary of Submissions, <http://www.oic-ci.gc.ca/eng/summary-submissions-sommaire-soumission.aspx>

⁹ Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada, Annual Report 2012-2013, <http://bit.ly/1blfRGJ>

4 | Virtual Library

To simplify access to a range of government information available to the public in Year 1, we will begin the design of an online searchable repository of published Government of Canada documents of all kinds (e.g., publications, consultant reports, ATI summaries, government research, presentations, white papers, etc.).

Moving forward in Years 2 and 3, we will launch this Virtual Library through a pilot which will provide public access to federal publications and documents via a single window. Public input will be sought throughout this pilot to make sure that the Virtual Library reflects the needs of citizens.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Library and Archives Canada				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Low (commitment language describes activity that can be construed as measurable with some interpretation on the part of the reader)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	Improving public services				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Begin design of virtual library	X			X	
	2. Launch virtual library		X		X	
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Begin design of virtual library	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				
2. Launch virtual library	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
1. Issue Directive on Open Government			
START DATE: July 2012	END DATE: June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A green triangle marker is positioned at the 'COMPLETE' stage.</p>
2. Implement Directive on Open Government			
START DATE: July 2013	END DATE: June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A green triangle marker is positioned at the 'NOT STARTED' stage.</p>
NEXT STEPS			
1. Begin design of Virtual Library	Further work on basic implementation		
2. Launch Virtual Library	Further work on basic implementation		

What happened?

According to the government's Self-Assessment Report, the Year 1 commitment has been met. "A preliminary conceptual design has been drafted to support internal consultations on the Virtual Library as an online searchable repository of published Government of Canada documents."¹ The designs are not publically available which makes it difficult to assess level of completion.

Did it matter?

There is great interest in the Virtual Library. It was widely thought that the Virtual Library had the potential to improve information flow; however, those consulted by the IRM researcher noted that the fulfillment of this potential would be dependent on the way in which the Virtual Library was populated and updated, and how the materials would be preserved in the long term. The digital nature of the Library makes it easy to update and change government information or to take down information without preserving old versions. Numerous participants raised the issue of digital preservation during stakeholder meetings.

Also raised at stakeholder meetings were concerns that the ways to access government information and data were decreasing. This concern was born, in part, from the changes made to the Federal Depository Services Program (DSP) that will no longer be, "producing,

printing or warehousing hardcopies of publications as of 2014."² These changes will make it more difficult for people to access government publications. It also releases institutions that have previously partnered with the DSP, such as university libraries, from their obligation to house and preserve documents. This could mean that many older government publications that are not digitized and included in the Virtual Library may be lost.³

Given the digital divide in Canada, the move toward a Virtual Library could also make it more difficult for those with little to no Internet access to find and use government information and data.⁴

Moving forward

There has been no CSO consultation on this commitment. CSOs, particularly those involved in information and library sciences and those providing information services to the public, should be consulted to ensure that the Virtual Library is designed in such a way that it fills its potential. Done properly, the Virtual Library would enable the government to move beyond the OGP grand challenge it identified for this commitment of 'Improving Public Service' to improving integrity and transparency.

Clear strategies for the digitization of older government publications and for the preservation of material that is born digitally should be elaborated. This approach would strengthen the holdings of the Virtual Library.

The government of Canada should also consider measures for addressing the digital divide in Canada to ensure that everyone has the ability to access the Virtual Library. Community access programs used to address this, but were cancelled in 2012.⁵

¹ Implementation of Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/implementation-canadas-action-plan-open-government-year-1-self-assessment-report>

² The 2012 Budget and Publishing and Depository Services, <http://bit.ly/MFnbh0>

³ Amy Kaufman and Jeff Moon, 'Farewell to Depository Services, a building block of democracy', <http://bit.ly/1bd0Uzz>

⁴ Michael Geist, 'Statscan data points to growing digital divide', <http://bit.ly/1b9LWY>

⁵ Industry Canada CAP Letter, <http://bit.ly/1em0PLm>

5 | International Aid Transparency Initiative

The International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) will make information about Canadian aid spending easier to find, use, and compare. Transparency is key to fostering accountability which is a hallmark of Canada's tradition in providing international aid. Those involved in aid programs will be able to better track what aid is being used for, and what it is achieving, helping us to ensure that each dollar goes as far as possible toward stated goals.

In Year 1, we will review all IATI requirements and publish our plan to make information about the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) activities available and accessible.

In Years 2 and 3, we will focus on implementation and reporting. As a result, donors, partner countries, civil society organizations and citizens will be able to access and use Canadian information and compare it with the data from other participating organizations and countries.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		High (Commitment language provides clear, measurable, verifiable milestones for achievement of the goal)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	More effectively managing public resources				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Publish plan to make CIDA activities available and accessible	X		X		
	2. Implement plan	X		X		
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Publish plan to make CIDA activities available and accessible	New	Transformative (the commitment entails a reform that could potentially transform "business as usual" in the relevant policy area)				
2. Implement plan	New	Transformative (the commitment entails a reform that could potentially transform "business as usual" in the relevant policy area)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
1. Issue Directive on Open Government			
START DATE: July 2012	END DATE: June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue downward-pointing triangle is positioned at the 'COMPLETE' stage, and a green upward-pointing triangle is positioned at the end of the bar, indicating 100% completion.</p>
2. Implement Directive on Open Government			
START DATE: July 2013	END DATE: June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue downward-pointing triangle is positioned at the 'LIMITED' stage, and a green upward-pointing triangle is positioned at the beginning of the bar, indicating approximately 25% completion.</p>
NEXT STEPS			
1. Publish plan to make CIDA activities available and accessible	New commitment building on existing implementation		
2. Implement plan	Further work on basic implementation		

What happened?

The implementation schedule for IATI was published in December 2012.¹ This publication fulfilled Canada’s Year 1 commitment. Canada is the first country to publish bilingually under IATI, and has released quarterly data files complying with the IATI standard.²

Did it matter?

Those who participated in stakeholder meetings were unclear if the IATI commitment constituted a new commitment for the purposes of OGP membership given that Canada signed on to IATI in November 2011, prior to the development of the national action plan or the action plan consultation.³ However, CSOs were very positive toward the progress made under this commitment.

Moving forward

CSOs are happy with the government’s progress and plan to, “continue to expand the scope and quality of international aid data available in accordance with Canada’s IATI implementation schedule.”

Government should engage with CSOs to determine what additional aid data are needed and how it can be more transparent. CSOs consulted for this report indicated that a commitment to a global standard of financial transparency and accountability in the extractive industries on the part of governments and companies, in line with the principles in the G8 Open Data Charter, would be beneficial.

¹ IATI Implementation Schedule, <http://bit.ly/1ftS1TR>

² International Aid Transparency Initiative, <http://bit.ly/1kJJH9>

³ IATI Annual Report 2013, <http://www.aidtransparency.net/reports/IATI-annual-report-2013.pdf>

6 | Opening Government of Canada Records

The Government of Canada archives contain a wealth of documentary heritage, and it is important that Canadians have access to this information. In Year 1 of our Action Plan, we will increase access to archived federal documents held by Library and Archives Canada by removing restrictions on this information wherever possible, thereby ensuring ongoing access to the preserved historical record of the Government of Canada. Additionally, in Year 1, we will issue new mandatory policy to drive consistent document classification practices across the federal government to reduce the volume of classified documents in the future.

In Years 2 and 3, we will work with departments to progressively make the classified documentation already held within the archives of the Government of Canada available online through Web 2.0 platforms and in formats accessible on mobile devices where possible.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Library and Archives Canada				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Low (commitment language describes activity that can be construed as measurable with some interpretation on the part of the reader)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	Increasing public integrity				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Increase access to archived federal documents at Library and Archives Canada	X				
	2. Issue new mandatory policy on document classification	X				
	3. Make classified information available online	X			X	

AMBITION		
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT
1. Increase access to archived federal documents at Library and Archives Canada	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)
2. Issue new mandatory policy on document classification	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)
3. Make classified information available online	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)

LEVEL OF COMPLETION

1. Increase access to archived federal documents at Library and Archives Canada

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue downward-pointing triangle is at the 'COMPLETE' stage, and a green upward-pointing triangle is also at the 'COMPLETE' stage.</p>
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2. Issue new mandatory policy on document classification

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue downward-pointing triangle is at the 'LIMITED' stage, and a green upward-pointing triangle is at the 'COMPLETE' stage.</p>
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3. Make classified information available online

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue downward-pointing triangle is at the 'NOT STARTED' stage, and a green upward-pointing triangle is also at the 'NOT STARTED' stage.</p>
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NEXT STEPS

1. Increase access to archived federal documents at Library and Archives Canada	New commitment building on existing implementation
2. Issue new mandatory policy on document classification	Further work on basic implementation
3. Make classified information available online	Further work on basic implementation

What happened?

According to the government's Self-Assessment Report, "Library and Archives Canada has already effectively increased access to archived federal documents by removing restrictions on nearly 3.2 million pages of its Government of Canada document holdings."¹

The new policy regarding document classification practices has been delayed until 2014 as it is part of a larger revision of policies around securities and standards.

Did it matter?

CSOs were unsure of what documentation had been released.² There is support for removing restrictions on public access to government documents, but this was not seen as the most effective way for improving access to the government of Canada's records. CSOs noted cuts to the budget of the Library and Archives of Canada as well as changes made under its recent modernization plan, as measures that have limited public access to information, particularly to information that is not digitized.³ The cancellation of the interlibrary-lending program is one example of this.⁴

Beyond cuts at the Library and Archives, many other federal libraries have either been closed or have had budget cuts. The Canadian Institute for Scientific and Technical Information reduced its staff by approximately 70%. Libraries at departments such as Transport Canada, Citizenship and Immigration, the Public Service Commission of Canada and the former Canadian International Development Agency (now the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development) have all had their libraries cut.⁵ Such measures limit access to the government of Canada's records.

Ambiguities in the government's Directive on Recordkeeping have meant some inconsistently in compliance to the Directive across government.⁶ The Directive requires that, "progress has been made towards integrating recordkeeping practices into day-to-day activities," and TBS does have a Recordkeeping Assessment Toolkit to support the implementation of the Directive, but research with those working within the government have indicated

that the metrics for evaluating progress are not always clear.⁷

Moving forward

The opening of Canada's records requires looking at the condition of Library and Archives Canada. Canadians need access not only to digital information and archives, but to the existing non-digital collection as well. Continued support and resources must be provided for the digitization of non-digital material if emphasis is going to be placed on allowing Canadians to access their documentary heritage via the Internet.

CSOs felt that the number of access points to the government of Canada's records have been increasingly limited. As noted earlier in this report with regard to Commitment 4, the Virtual Library, the changes made to the Depository Services Program (DSP) as well as the closure of many departmental and agency libraries are evidence of this.

In addition, stakeholders noted that it is not uncommon to find that government online information has been taken down, archived, and no longer available for direct public access. Often this is because standards have changed in an attempt to make information more accessible. Information that does not conform to new standards, such as updates to the Common Look and Feel Standards, is sometimes taken offline or archived instead of being reformatted - resulting in less access to government documentation.⁸ A commitment to reformatting as standards change is necessary, given the emphasis on electronic access to documentation made in the action plan.

¹ Implementation of Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/implementation-canadas-action-plan-open-government-year-1-self-assessment-report>

² After the independent researcher's interviews with CSOs were complete, the government informed the researcher that as of January 2014, 9,167,161 pages of closed GC records had been reviewed and 7,219,869 had been opened. This included: records documenting Canada's participation in the First and Second World Wars; records about Canada's international trade relations in the post World War Two era; records relating to the Custodian of Enemy Property's Prisoner of War Maltreatment Claims; records documenting Canada's Centennial Celebration in 1967; and records related to Canada's environmental history.

³ The 2012 Federal Budget outlined a \$9.6 million funding cut to Library and Archives Canada.

⁴ Joseph Hall, 'Historical Letters not wanted at Library and Archives Canada critic says', <http://bit.ly/1nwomNz>

⁵ Isla Jordan and Ulla de Stricker, 'Information Management in the Canadian Federal Government' <http://bit.ly/Lig0tz>

⁶ Isla Jordan and Ulla de Stricker, 'Information Management in the Canadian Federal Government' <http://bit.ly/Lig0tz>

⁷ Management Accountability Framework, <http://bit.ly/1bdpzKz>

⁸ Standards on Web Accessibility, <http://bit.ly/MmXile>

7 | GCDOCS

To support the implementation of recordkeeping policies and directives, and an advanced government-wide recordkeeping regime, we will establish a hosted government-wide solution for records and documents management to service government departments and agencies. During Year 1, we will deploy wave one of an enterprise solution for electronic record and document management across a number of departments.

Building on lessons learned, in Years 2 and 3, we will pursue deployment across the federal government.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Public Works and Government Services Canada				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Treasury Board				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Medium (commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but does not contain specific milestones or deliverables)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	More effectively managing public resources				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Deploy wave one of electronic record and document management solution					X
	2. Deploy across federal government					X
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Deploy wave one of electronic record and document management solution	Pre-existing	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				
2. Deploy across federal government	Pre-existing	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
1. Deploy wave one of electronic record and document management solution			
START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	
2. Deploy across federal government			
START DATE: 1 July 2013	END DATE: 30 June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	
NEXT STEPS			
1. Deploy wave one of electronic record and document management solution	None: Abandon commitment		
2. Deploy across federal government	None: Abandon commitment		

What happened?

Year 1 commitments have been met. According to the government's Self-Assessment Report, "four departments (Justice Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Public Works and Government Services, and Veterans Affairs Canada) are currently in the application deployment phase, and twenty-four additional departments are in preparation for implementation."

Did it matter?

The uptake of GCDocs is still in its infancy, making it difficult to assess its impact. One survey of information management professionals in the federal government noted that, "there is much hope that GCDocs will make managing information smoother and, with its look being similar to that of shared drives, facilitate uptake from government employees and migration of content from shared drives to GCDocs."¹

While CSOs recognized that the government fulfilled its Year 1 commitment in regards to GCDocs, they were doubtful about the appropriateness of this commitment to the goals of the Open Government Partnership.² The commitment itself is internally facing, and will not result in the further releasing of information to citizens.

Moving forward

Currently, the Canadian action plan indicates that it

will work toward deploying GCDocs across the federal government over the next two years. A survey of information management professionals has indicated that full cross-government implementation will be difficult. "A global upgrade to GCDocs from RDIMS (Records, Document and Information Management System) across the GC is not feasible because of the range of versions and customizations (implementations) in RDIMS instances across different departments."³

During stakeholder meetings, the move toward technical solutions such as GCDocs was highlighted as something to be done with caution, as there is potential for information to get lost if it does not fit well, or easily, with the new solution. The government will need to elaborate a strategy to ensure this does not happen as it continues to deploy GCDocs.

That said, moving forward, the IRM researcher and stakeholders suggest that GCDocs be removed from future action plans. It may be useful for the internal function of the public service; however, it is not in keeping with the spirit of the Open Government Partnership, whose goals transcend internal administrative change and focus on improving transparency and engagement with the public.

¹ Isla Jordan and Ulla de Stricker, 'Information Management in the Canadian Federal Government' <http://bit.ly/Lig0tz>

² Centre for Law and Democracy, Canada: OGP First Year Progress Review,' <http://bit.ly/1hYun1z>

³ Isla Jordan and Ulla de Stricker, 'Information Management in the Canadian Federal Government' <http://bit.ly/Lig0tz>

8 | GCWEB

Throughout our consultations with Canadians, it became clear that a more organized and accessible web presence for the Government of Canada is a key enabler for openness and transparency. To facilitate access to the wealth of information and services available to Canadian through the Web channel, we are committed to the development of an approach for a new user-centric, consolidated web presence for the Government of Canada within the first year of our Action Plan.

In Years 2 and 3, we will initiate the implementation of this new platform, which will include a one-stop, federated search window to government information to provide simultaneous searching of federal web pages, data, and publications.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Service Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Low (commitment language describes activity that can be construed as measurable with some interpretation on the part of the reader)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	Improving public services				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Develop a planned approach to a consolidated web presence	X			X	
	2. Implement new platform	X			X	
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Develop a planned approach to a consolidated web presence	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				
2. Implement new platform	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION

1. Develop consolidated web presence

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue triangle marker is positioned between LIMITED and SUBSTANTIAL, and a green triangle marker is positioned at the COMPLETE stage.</p>
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2. Implement new platform

START DATE: 1 July 2013	END DATE: 30 June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue triangle marker is positioned at the NOT STARTED stage, and a green triangle marker is positioned between NOT STARTED and LIMITED.</p>
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NEXT STEPS

1. Develop a planned approach to a consolidated web presence	New commitment building on existing implementation
2. Implement new platform	Further work on basic implementation

What happened?

Steps have been taken toward the development of GCWeb. The government indicated that it initiated a Request for Information (RFI) to industry during summer of 2013. The government hoped to gain, “insight and information from industry to develop a procurement strategy to support the Government of Canada’s Web presence, and to enhance the transparency and competitiveness of any required procurement activity” through the Request for Information. The new centralized website was launched on 18 December 2013.

A ‘Standard on Optimizing Websites and Applications for Mobile Devices’ was put in place in April 2013.¹ The government also updated its ‘Web Experience Toolkit’ in 2013. These two measures are seen by the government as facilitating the transition to GCWeb in the future.²

Did it matter?

Progress is currently too limited to assess the impact or utility of this commitment. The new centralized website had not been launched until after the interviews with CSOs were complete and the independent researcher’s report had been drafted. As such, stakeholders were not able to comment on the look or utility of the new website. CSOs did, however, note that they had not been consulted about GCWeb. Some indicated to

the IRM researcher that they worried that a centralized Web presence would constitute a control mechanism, making it increasingly difficult for public servants to get information onto the Web and increasingly simple for information to be taken down. The removal of some previously public information and access points from government websites has already been documented.³

Moving forward

Public consultation is necessary for the creation of a centralized Web presence. The government should engage with independent specialists in information sciences and management, to draw on their expertise on the consequences and issues associated with moving from the current decentralized system to the centralized system outlined in the action plan. Users will provide useful feedback regarding the features that would increase usability, to ensure that information is as easy to find as possible.

If this commitment moves forward, clear standards and criteria for populating and removing information from a centralized website need to be made clear to the public. In addition, there needs to be a clear and transparent process for migrating the decentralized sites to any new centralized platform, to avoid any possible loss of content and accessibility.

¹ Standard on Optimizing Websites and Applications for Mobile Devices, <http://bit.ly/1iUAWPZ>
² Implementation of Canada’s Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self-Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>
³ Vincent Gogolek, ‘Harper Government Centralizing, Slashing Federal Web Info,’ <http://huff.to/1bdqy48>

9 | Data.gc.ca

During the public consultations on the Digital Economy Strategy and Open Government, Canadians called for open data to be made available in more usable and accessible formats. Building on the successful open data pilot launched in 2011, we will implement the next generation platform for the delivery of open data. Over the past year, we have expanded the number of non-geospatial data sets available from 800 in April 2011, to more than 11,000 in April of 2012. When geospatial datasets are included, the total comes to more than 272,000 unique data sets. During Year 1 of our Action Plan, we will continue to expand on the number of datasets made available through the existing portal, and we will complete our requirements for the next generation platform.

In Years 2 and 3, we will design and initiate implementation of the new data.gc.ca portal, as well as further improve the level of standardization of data published by departments. The Government will make use of crowdsourcing, particularly among Canada's open data community, to make sure that this new open data portal meets the needs and expectations of those who will use it most, and provides the best possible opportunity to support entrepreneurs eager to make use of Government of Canada data.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Statistics Canada				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Medium (commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but does not contain specific milestones or deliverables)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	Improving public services				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Expand number of datasets available	X			X	
	2. Implement data.gc.ca portal	X			X	
3. Improve standardization of data	X			X		
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Expand number of datasets available	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)				

2. Implement data.gc.ca portal	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)
3. Improve standardization of data	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)

LEVEL OF COMPLETION

1. Expand number of datasets available

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A green triangle marker is positioned at the far right, indicating the project is complete.</p>
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2. Implement data.gc.ca portal

TIME BOUND?	END DATE: 1 July 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue triangle marker is positioned at the 'LIMITED' stage, indicating the project is partially complete.</p>
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3. Improve standardization of data

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A blue triangle marker is positioned at the 'LIMITED' stage, indicating the project is partially complete.</p>
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NEXT STEPS

1. Expand number of datasets available	New commitment building on existing implementation
2. Implement data.gc.ca portal	Maintenance and Monitoring of completed implementation
3. Improve standardization of data	Further work on basic implementation

What happened?

The next generation open data platform was launched on 18 June 2013 following a series of roundtable discussions with citizens and those involved in the open data community.¹ This was ahead of the schedule published in the action plan.

Part of the Year 1 commitment was to expand the number of datasets available on the data.gc.ca portal. When the action plan was released in April 2012, there were reportedly 272,000 datasets. The government highlighted 180,000 datasets in its Year 1 self-assessment highlights document.² In its official Self-Assessment Report, it indicated there were approximately 200,000 datasets.³ This was confirmed at the time of writing the IRM report in November 2013 when the number was 187, 188. Government officials interviewed for the IRM

evaluation noted that the numerical discrepancies are due to the updating of the data.gc.ca portal where the datasets were reviewed and some elements combined to create greater efficiencies. It was unclear how many new datasets were added in Year 1 given these changes. Stakeholders noted that the data remain difficult to find in the portal as descriptive metadata are poor, they are not uniformly aggregated into standard geographies that help citizens do cross matching analysis, and the data are presented in a location away from their producing and managing institutions and key curators.

Did it matter?

According to the Open Data Barometer 2013 Global Report, Canada ranked 8th in terms of its open data initiatives.⁴ This ranking signals a readiness to secure the benefits of open data. CSOs indicated that the

population of the data.gc.ca portal alone does not allow for open data to be as effective or open as it could be.

A range of diverse civil society actors indicated frustration with the data portal for five main interrelated issues:

1. A limited scope of the datasets. There are many geospatial datasets on the portal, but limited to no datasets on a range of other issues, including employment insurance, homelessness, seniors, health and aboriginal persons.⁵
2. The cancellation of the mandatory long-form census, which led to concern for the availability of updated datasets at smaller units of geography in the future.
3. The fragmented nature of the datasets. Stakeholders indicated that the datasets are released in bits and pieces instead of as complete and wide-reaching datasets, separate from their methodological and quality descriptions. Users need to invest time and require high levels of expertise to combine datasets.
4. The format of the datasets. Lack of standardization in formatting can make it difficult to combine and manipulate data. In addition, metadata is missing at times, further complicating the use and analysis of the data. With regard to format there was some concern among CSOs about the raw nature of the data. While some preferred and are comfortable working with raw data, others noted that they lacked the resources necessary to make effective use of the information, which for them, rendered it inaccessible.
5. Finally, the process for requesting information and help when using a dataset was a cause for concern. During interviews with the IRM researcher, TBS indicated that a procedure is in place for responding to questions about datasets. As the lead on data.gc.ca, the TBS policy has been to acknowledge queries within 24 hours. If TBS needs to consult with the department or agency that owns the data, the timeframe for a substantive response can become lengthy. This could be alleviated if the metadata included the authors of the data, contacts to thematic experts, and if the metadata pointed back to the data's producing unit.

Moving forward

The government's Year 1 Self-Assessment Report references continued citizen engagement and expansion of the number of datasets in its moving forward narrative on data.gc.ca. These are both welcome commitments, but engagement needs to go beyond social media and be inclusive. Moreover, the quantity of datasets alone is not a solid indicator of open data or open government. The quality and the scope, or nature, of the datasets is of much more concern to CSOs.

In addition, the government should address the issue of format to ensure greater usability of its datasets. This includes defining what constitutes a 'dataset', addressing the standardization of datasets, and ensuring completeness of the datasets and metadata. More importantly, data should be aggregated into standardized geographies to enable national scale and cross-jurisdictional analysis. Having clearly defined standards will not only help to ensure usability, but will also help to ensure good information management practices and prevent the numerical discrepancy that the government faces when updating its data portal.

Some CSOs noted that tagging systems need to be revisited to ensure good cataloging and searchability. Targeted consultation with communities working in this area would be beneficial to refining such data classifications.

The government should consider implementing tools to support CSOs that may not have the technical expertise to use data in a raw format. This would help to ensure both openness and transparency. Links to existing tools for working with datasets and visualization are examples that can be provided with limited financial resources.

Finally, a more effective process for responding to questions regarding data.gc.ca needs to be found so that substantive answers, not just acknowledgements, can be provided in a timely fashion. This otherwise impedes progress and innovation.

¹ Open Data Consultation Report, <http://data.gc.ca/eng/open-data-roundtables-summary-report>

² Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Highlights, <http://bit.ly/1iUAQy5>

³ Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

⁴ Open Data Barometer 2013 Global Report, www.opendataresearch.org

⁵ A Fed Open Data Ask! <http://bit.ly/1bldjbl>

10 | Government of Canada Resource Management Data

To fulfill its statutory responsibilities, the Government collects resource allocation and performance management information from all departments and agencies; not all of this information is currently provided online, nor is it easily searchable across departments. Through this initiative starting in Year 1, the government will use information collected from federal organizations to publish resource management and performance data through the open data portal.

Years 2 and 3 will build on usage and feedback to provide enhanced search and data visualization tools.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	None				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Medium (commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but does not contain specific milestones or deliverables)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	More effectively managing public resources				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Publish resource management and performance data	X			X	
	2. Enhance search and data tools	X			X	
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Publish resource management and performance data	New	Moderate (the commitment is a major step forward in the relevant policy area, but remains limited in scale or scope)				
2. Enhance search and data tools	New	Moderate (the commitment is a major step forward in the relevant policy area, but remains limited in scale or scope)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
1. Deploy wave one of electronic record and document management solution			
START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>NOT STARTED LIMITED SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETE</p>
2. Deploy across federal government			
START DATE: 1 July 2013	END DATE: 30 June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>NOT STARTED LIMITED SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETE</p>
NEXT STEPS			
1. Publish resource management and performance data	Further work on basic implementation		
2. Enhance search and data tools	New commitment building on existing implementation		

What happened?

The government launched a new Expenditure Database in April 2013, linked to the data.gc.ca portal.¹ A parliamentary committee recommended this initiative in 2012. The new Expenditure Database, “enables Canadians to search for spending information for all federal departments across three categories: by Authorities and Expenditures (which compares the amount of funding that was authorized to what was actually spent); by Standard Object (which details itemized government spending); and by Program. By clicking on any value presented in the database, users can compare and visualize one department’s spending data alongside that of any other organization in the federal government.”²

Did it matter?

The commitment itself is good and provides needed information on expenditure, but lacks specificity. It does not detail the time the expenditure database will cover. Currently, the new database covers a period of three years. This span enables people working with the data to get a sense of the recent resource management and performance environment, but it does not allow them to track long-term trends and change.

The database itself is easy to locate on the data.gc.ca portal.

While the database is a step forward, expenditure information could be seen as a narrow subset of performance management information.

Moving forward

The government has built a useful foundation upon which it can expand as it moves forward. Incorporating additional historical data would make the database more useful. Clearly articulating the type of resource management information it holds and expanding the release of a wider range of resource management information, beyond expenditure would strengthen this commitment.

The commitment does not define a mechanism for feedback, although it is key to enhancing the Database. A clear plan for engagement and consultation should be elaborated.

¹ Expenditure Database, <http://bit.ly/1eDDKjw>

² Implementation of Canada’s Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

11 | Consulting Canadians

To simplify access and participation in online consultations by Canadians, we will explore options in Year 1 for the development of a new Web 2.0 citizen engagement platform that federal organizations can use to conduct public consultations. Also in Year 1, we will develop a standard approach to the use of social media and Web 2.0 by federal departments to augment their engagement activities with citizens and businesses, as well as pilot a crowdsourcing initiative to involve Canadians in developing ideas and solutions for greater online dialogue and engagement on public policy initiatives.

In Years 2 and 3, we will enable the use of common online tools to support engagement activities.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	Shared Services Canada				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Low (commitment language describes activity that can be construed as measurable with some interpretation on the part of the reader)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	Increasing public integrity				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Explore options for the development of a new platform for consultation		X			
	2. Develop standard approach to use of social media		X			
	3. Pilot a crowd-sourcing initiative		X			
3. Enable use of common online tools		X				

AMBITION		
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT
1. Explore options for the development of a new platform for consultation	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)
2. Develop standard approach to use of social media	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)
3. Pilot a crowdsourcing initiative	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)
4. Enable use of common online tools	New	Minor (the commitment is an incremental but positive step in the relevant policy area)

LEVEL OF COMPLETION

1. Explore options for the development of a new platform for consultation

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	
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2. Develop standard approach to use of social media

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	
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3. Pilot a crowdsourcing initiative

START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	
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4. Enable use of common online tool

START DATE: 1 July 2013	END DATE: 30 June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	
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NEXT STEPS

1. Develop new platform for consultation	Further work on basic implementation
2. Develop standard approach to use of social media	None: completed implementation
3. Pilot a crowdsourcing initiative	New commitment building on existing implementation
4. Enable use of common online tools	New commitment building on existing implementation

What happened?

The government's Self-Assessment Report indicates that it has started to explore options for developing a new platform for consultation. The 'Request for Information' issued for GCWeb (discussed earlier in this report), incorporated requirements for a new consultation platform. In addition, Employment and Social Development (formerly Human Resources and Social Development Canada) and the Canadian Transportation Agency have examined some options for crowd sourcing and consultation.

Measures have been taken around the development of standards related to social media use by public servants, including a new Standard on Social Media Account Management and the establishment of new Technical Specifications for Social Media Accounts.

The government's Self-Assessment Report indicates that this commitment has been combined with the GCWeb commitment. "As part of GCWeb, a new enterprise-wide platform will be developed to enable all federal organizations to consult with citizens online, featuring two-way dialogue and the ability to link between consultations of similar topics and/or targeted at similar audiences."

Did it matter?

The Year 1 commitment was to look into a potential plan. There has been no public consultation outside of industry on any prospective plans. It is too early to assess whether this commitment matters. There is an unclear relationship with the existing Consulting Canadians portal which was established in 2003 and pre-dates Canada's membership in the Open Government Partnership.¹ This raises questions regarding the ambitiousness of this commitment.

Moving forward

This commitment requires a much higher degree of specificity moving forward. If it is to become part of GCWeb, which is a separate commitment, it should not be claimed as its own freestanding commitment. The government recognized this in its Self-Assessment Report and indicated that it may merge these commitments in the future.

Citizens should be engaged and consulted on proposed models for participation. One participant in the IRM process cautioned that engagement is not simply a, "two-way dialogue," to use the wording of the Self-Assessment Report. This approach sets up a government-citizen dichotomy that does not accurately describe the sort of authentic, inclusive discussion that is currently missing in Canada.

Moving forward, it would be useful to develop clear standards for consultation, based on best practice. It would also be useful to develop mechanisms for ongoing citizen engagement. This should include mechanisms for broad public consultation and targeted consultation with specialist communities. E-petitioning sites are one example, albeit limited. Mechanisms to comment on draft legislation, or draft guidelines and policy are other examples. Additionally, the development of mechanisms for assessing consultation should be developed. While these examples are digital solutions, care should be taken to incorporate a range of methods for engaging citizens and should not rely wholly on digital media, or social media in particular.

¹ Internet Archive WayBack Machine, <http://bit.ly/1cDnWAW>, <http://www.consultingcanadians.gc.ca>

12 | Open Regulation

To increase public engagement on regulatory activities in Year 1, federal regulators will be required to electronically post their forward regulatory plans so as to make the regulatory system more predictable and give Canadians and businesses early warning of upcoming changes and the opportunity to engage on regulatory plans. Regulators will also be required to post service standards and policies that clarify when stakeholders can count on receiving guidance in writing.

In Years 2 and 3, we will continue to simplify engagement activities to support more efficient and responsive regulatory activities, including posting annual scorecards on streamlining administrative burden.

COMMITMENT DESCRIPTION						
ANSWERABILITY	LEAD INSTITUTION	Treasury Board Secretariat				
	SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS	All Government of Canada Regulatory Departments				
	POINT OF CONTACT SPECIFIED?	Yes				
SPECIFICITY AND MEASURABILITY		Medium (commitment language describes an activity that is objectively verifiable, but does not contain specific milestones or deliverables)				
RELEVANCE	OGP GRAND CHALLENGES	More effectively managing public resources				
	OGP VALUES					
	MILESTONE	ACCESS TO INFORMATION	CIVIC PARTICIPATION	ACCOUNTABILITY	TECH & INNOVATION FOR TRANS. & ACC.	NONE
	1. Federal regulators to post forward regulatory plans	X		X		
	2. Simplify engagement activities		X			
AMBITION						
MILESTONE	NEW VS. PRE-EXISTING	POTENTIAL IMPACT				
1. Federal regulators to post forward regulatory plans	Pre-existing	Moderate (the commitment is a major step forward in the relevant policy area, but remains limited in scale or scope)				
2. Simplify engagement activities	Pre-existing	Moderate (the commitment is a major step forward in the relevant policy area, but remains limited in scale or scope)				

LEVEL OF COMPLETION			
1. Deploy wave one of electronic record and document management solution			
START DATE: 1 July 2012	END DATE: 30 June 2013	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A green triangle marker is positioned at the 'COMPLETE' stage, indicating 100% completion.</p>
2. Deploy across federal government			
START DATE: 1 July 2013	END DATE: 30 June 2015	Actual completion Projected completion	<p>A horizontal progress bar with four stages: NOT STARTED, LIMITED, SUBSTANTIAL, and COMPLETE. A green triangle marker is positioned at the 'NOT STARTED' stage, indicating 0% completion.</p>
NEXT STEPS			
1. Federal regulators to post forward regulatory plans	New commitment building on existing implementation		
2. Simplify engagement activities	N/A		

What happened?

The government launched a 'Red Tape Reduction Action Plan' in October 2012.¹ Initiatives in this area have shown that the government is responding to the Red Tape Reduction Commission.

According to the government's Self-Assessment report, thirty-two forward regulatory plans have been posted online. TBS links to all government forward regulatory plans are on its website.²

Did it matter?

Those consulted by the IRM researcher were hesitant to consider this commitment as a unique commitment made with the Open Government Partnership and its goals in mind. This hesitation comes from the fact that the Red Tape Reduction Action Plan flows from the work done by the Red Tape Reduction Commission which was established in January 2011, prior to Canada's first iteration of an open government strategy and well before it joined the Open Government Partnership.

This commitment is included as part of Canada's Open Dialogue strategy in the action plan. The fulfillment of Year 1 commitments can be considered

as improving the management of public resources or improving public service; however, it is not clear how this commitment has improved open dialogue. Those participating in the IRM evaluation felt that this commitment would be better described as open information, rather than open dialogue.

Moving forward

Implementing the Annual Scorecard Reports, which are currently scheduled to start in the fall of 2013, has the potential to improve openness and accountability. Clear metrics for evaluation should be provided.

Federal government departments and agencies will be required to post an evaluation of their performance in meeting their service standards on their websites in 2014. This also has the potential for enhancing openness and accountability. Again, clear metrics for evaluation should be provided.

The plans to implement scorecards and evaluations of performance in meeting service standards constitute an opportunity for government to engage with stakeholders.

¹ Red Tape Reduction Action Plan, Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Year 1 Self Assessment Report, <http://bit.ly/MFkZWI>

² Government-wide Forward Regulatory Plans, <http://bit.ly/MmXO2W>

V | SELF-ASSESSMENT

Public consultation around the Canadian government self-assessment report took place online and focused on three questions. Stakeholders attributed the scarcity of comments received to the timing and the lack of publicity surrounding the consultation.

The government published its self-assessment report on 25 October 2013. This is slightly off the OGP schedule of 30 September 2013. The report offers a description of the outcomes and progress made toward each of its Year 1 commitments.

There was a four-week public consultation period from 19 August 2013 to 16 September 2013 on Canada’s Year 1 progress.¹ A full draft of the self-assessment report was not provided to the public, but a document containing Year 1 progress highlights was provided for the purposes of public consultation.

The consultation asked the public to respond to the following three questions:

1. How do you think we did in meeting our Year 1 commitments of the action plan? (e.g., the Open Government Licence, modernizing the administration of Access to Information, the new data.gc.ca portal, etc.)
2. Of the 12 action plan commitments, which do you think still require the most attention to achieve the objectives identified, and why?
3. Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to make pertaining to the government of Canada’s open government initiative?²

Some of the IRM respondents indicated they felt the above questions attempted to frame feedback in a very narrow way. In total, the consultation received approximately 50 public comments. This was fewer than the government had anticipated.

Participants in the IRM evaluation widely agreed that the consultation was not widely publicized, which limited participation. The Information Commissioner of Canada indicated that she did not learn about the consultation until it was almost closed.

Finally, it should be noted that the self-assessment report does not contain a summary or overview of the feedback it received during the consultation period.

Table 2 | Self-Assessment Checklist

Was the annual progress report published?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Was it done according to schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the report available in the local language?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
According to stakeholders, was this adequate?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Is the report available in English?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the government provide a two-week public comment period on draft self-assessment reports?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Were any public comments received?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the report deposited in the OGP portal?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the self-assessment report include review of the consultation efforts?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the report cover all of the commitments?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Did it assess completion according to schedule?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Did the report reaffirm responsibility for openness?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report describe the relationship of the action plan with grand challenge areas?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

¹ Note: Initially the consultation was scheduled to close on 9 September 2013, but it was later extended to 16 September 2013.

² Canada's Action Plan on Open Government Consultation, <http://bit.ly/MmXLUN>

VI | MOVING FORWARD

This section puts the OGP action plan into a broader context and highlights potential next steps, as reflected in the preceding sections, as well as stakeholder-identified priorities.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

The division of power between levels of government adds an element of complexity to the way that Canada approaches open government. Education, for example, falls largely under provincial jurisdiction, but is an important element to open government. Similarly, each province has its own Access to Information regime. Open government in Canada must come from all levels of government, and the federal government has recognized that pan-Canadian collaboration is important. It is hoped that the Intergovernmental Forum – a working group with representation from all levels of government - discussed in the Canadian self-assessment report will serve as a mechanism for ensuring that all levels of government are working together and are represented in OGP.

Inter-jurisdictional collaboration and the engagement of civil society are vital to developing a more ambitious plan for the future, as open government has never been as needed as it is currently. Those who participated in this evaluation expressed concern over the lack of access to information. These concerns are supported by regular media reports highlighting the federal government's poor record in responding to access to information requests,¹ the muzzling of Canadian scientists,² and poor treatment of whistleblowers.³ Similarly, a great deal of concern has been raised regarding budget cuts to those working in information management and preservation, such as the Library and Archives. Many of those who participated in the IRM evaluation worried that such cuts were measures of indirect information control being used to circumvent open government efforts.

The elimination of the mandatory long-form census is also seen in the same light. Canadians have only now started to see the consequences of such cuts. Less information and data of quality are available, which greatly impacts research and evidence-based policy development.

A number of specific recommendations and suggestions for the next version of a Canadian action plan were spelt out in the Executive Summary to this report and in the section dedicated to each commitment. The IRM researcher heard many of the same concerns from all who participated in the evaluation.

STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIES

Canada's first action plan is seen by many as being overly focused on technological change, such as developing infrastructure to share information and data. Building infrastructure to support and organize the way people access information may be foundational to open government, but Canadians want the next version of the national action plan to address some of the complicated and ambitious challenges related to access to information, quality and usability of data, and meaningful and sustained citizen engagement.

Stakeholders identified a number of open government priorities, many of which are elaborated throughout this report. The full text of comments received on the online survey is provided in the Annex to this report. Some of the key themes can be found below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve Citizen Engagement

OGP is still in its infancy. Government and Canadians are still learning about it and about the role that they can play. Many people approached by the independent researcher during the IRM evaluation were hesitant to participate as they were unaware of OGP and the commitments made in Canada's action plan, even though they had considerable expertise in one or more of the areas touched on in the action plan. A strong awareness raising campaign would help to increase knowledge about OGP and would help to develop citizen engagement. Such engagement is key to the development of a more ambitious national action plan and to success in the area of open government.

That said, engagement has to be meaningful. The IRM researcher encountered people with high degrees of frustration and, at times, anger over the way that government consultations, both OGP-related and government consultations more broadly, have been run in the past. They found the processes to be highly controlled and they also did not feel that their input had been heard.

Government could draw on the work and expertise of Canadians to involve them in discussions and initiatives related to open government in a much more active way. Many civil society organisations, for example, could be drawn on as supports when it comes to specific OGP commitments.

Improve Information Flow

The IRM evaluation found widespread problems related to the flow of information in Canada. This was not taken into consideration by OGP when it assessed Canada's membership eligibility. A large part of this problem relates to Canada's antiquated access to information legislation. Issues such as fees, broad exceptions on the grounds to refuse access, the timeliness in which access to information requests are fulfilled, as well as the many offices and positions which are not subject to access to information, are well documented. Many CSOs indicated that ATI should be enlarged to include the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada. Extensive fees and exceptions are also problematic.

Successive Information Commissioners of Canada have made recommendations for improving the access to information regime and compliance with existing legislative provisions. Changing the way that access to information requests are made will not deal with the creation of government records and the lack of information flow, and does not deal with the more pressing issues facing the system.

In addition, the IRM evaluation showed frustration with the limiting of points of access to government information. Inaccessible Web content, the closure of federal libraries, and the changes made to the Depository Services Program, all contribute to this issue – as do cuts to important memory institutions, such as Library and Archives Canada.

Ensure Usability of Information and Data

A lot of emphasis has been put on simply publishing data, and information to a lesser extent, online. Arguably, this is a first step toward open government, but it is not sufficient. Quantity does not ensure quality. More attention needs to be paid to standards and formats of information and data. More needs to be done to ensure it is usable and of high quality.

Accessibility is a related issue that needs to be addressed as the digital divide does exist in Canada. A move toward technological solutions to open government means that some will be left out of discussions related to the open government agenda. Moreover, consideration should be given to how media and data literacy can be improved. In this area, there is potential to build on, or work with, CSOs such as the Data Liberation Initiative or the Canadian Council on Social Development Community Data Program.

Expand Integrity Commitments

Very few of the existing commitments address the OGP grand challenge of improving integrity. In the contemporary environment, integrity is a significant problem in Canada. The Senate spending scandal, along with an increasing number of media reports on the muzzling of scientists and others within the public service that try to relay information to the public, has led to a great deal of public cynicism toward the government. Lack of follow-up, or a clear response to previous consultations also fuels such cynicism

and hinders future consultation. This needs to be addressed if the government's relationship with civil society is to improve. Clear, ambitious and measurable commitments oriented toward improving integrity and addressing some of the problems inherent in the existing access to information system would go a long way. This includes having both the House of Commons and the Senate being subject to the access to information legislation.

Whole of Government Support is Required

Many of the changes required to move toward a system of government that is open by default are complicated. They require both a change in the culture of the public service and leadership from the top echelons of government and its political masters. This sort of change takes time and is difficult. That said, it would be facilitated by high-level political direction and bureaucratic support, as the TBS President, Tony Clement, has actively taken on the open government file in Canada. That said, it also requires the genuine and ongoing support of the Prime Minister and the Clerk of the Privy Council, Canada's Senior Public Servant.

¹ Dean Beeby, 'Access commissioner says government obstructs freedom-of-information law', The Globe and Mail, <http://bit.ly/1aNbTC6>

² Emily Chung, 'Muzzling of federal scientists widespread, survey suggests,' CBC News, <http://bit.ly/1e6QAs5>

³ Donovan Vincent, 'EI fraud investigator axed for leaking quota details,' The Star, <http://bit.ly/1nwrA3C>

ANNEX: METHODOLOGY

As a complement to the government's Self-Assessment Report, an independent assessment report is written by well-respected governance researchers, preferably from each OGP participating country.

These experts use a common OGP independent report questionnaire and guidelines,¹ based on a combination of interviews with local OGP stakeholders as well as desk-based analysis. This report is shared with a small International Expert Panel (appointed by the OGP Steering Committee) for peer review to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied.

Analysis of progress on OGP action plans is a combination of interviews, desk research, and feedback from nongovernmental stakeholder meetings. The IRM report builds on the findings of the government's own self-assessment report and any other assessments of progress put out by civil society, the private sector, or international organizations.

Each local researcher carries out stakeholder meetings to ensure an accurate portrayal of events. Given budgetary and calendar constraints, the IRM cannot consult all interested or affected parties. Consequently, the IRM strives for methodological transparency, and therefore where possible, makes public the process of stakeholder engagement in research (detailed later in this section.) In those national contexts where anonymity of informants—governmental or nongovernmental—is required, the IRM reserves the ability to protect the anonymity of informants. Additionally, because of the necessary limitations of the method, the IRM strongly encourages commentary on public drafts of each national document.

INTRODUCTION

During a period of approximately seven weeks from the end of September to early November 2013, the IRM researcher spoke to as many stakeholders as possible. Feedback was provided to the IRM researcher through a number of interviews as well as

four group meetings.

In the planning process for the review of the Canadian action plan, the IRM national researcher started by identifying assessments conducted by civil society. The Centre for Law and Democracy, for example, published its own full assessment of Canada's Year 1 progress. Interviews were held with persons who had been widely identified as key stakeholders in the Canadian open government dialogue. A snowball method was used, where each person suggested lists of additional contacts who were then contacted by the IRM national researcher. Efforts were made to include respondents from different parts of Canada. The short timeframe for the IRM evaluation made it difficult to interview all of the stakeholders identified, and many of those who were contacted declined to participate in the evaluation. In some cases, this was because of scheduling. In other cases, this was because there was a strong feeling that the government was not dedicated to open government.

Saturation was reached, through the interviews and meetings conducted by the IRM researcher as many of the same issues, problems and concerns were identified and repeated by stakeholders. The issues and opinions of CSOs highlighted in this report are those of the majority and do not constitute the opinion of any one person or group.

The national researcher found that the majority of interviewees were not overly familiar with OGP or Canada's commitments. Given this, it was not always immediately clear to people what value their input to the process would have. There is no large, coordinating civil society organization outside of government that brought diverse actors together on this issue. There are some organizations, such as the Centre for Law and Democracy, Democracy Watch, and the BC Freedom of Information and

Privacy Association, that have done work on open government. In general, such organizations tend to be stretched for resources to engage civil society, compared with large organizations, such as the Sunlight Foundation in the United States. Increasingly, though, CSOs appear to be identifying with OGP and seeing how it fits within their own mandates. Engineers without Borders and Publish What You Pay are good examples of organizations that joined OGP dialogue fairly recently.

A full list of those who participated in interviews with the IRM national researcher can be found below.

Interview Participants

John ApSimon, Carleton University

Samantha Burton, Engineers Without Borders

Duff Conacher, GoodOrg.ca Consulting

Niall Cronin, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development

Arthur Dunfee, ATIP Modernization, TBS

Vincent Gogolek, BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association

Sean Jones, Treasury Board Secretariat

Tracey P. Lauriault, Co-founder of Civicaccess.ca and co-author of datalibre.ca

Sylvain Latour, Treasury Board Secretariat

Suzanne Legault, Information Commissioner of Canada

Yohanna Loucheur, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development

David McKie, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

Toby Mendel, Centre for Law and Democracy

David Mitchell, Public Policy Forum

Alan Neeff, Treasury Board Secretariat

Steve Reitano, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council/ Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

Jeff Sallot, Carleton University

Stephen Walker, Treasury Board Secretariat

Claire Woodside, Publish What you Pay

STAKEHOLDER SELECTION

Four consultation meetings were held by the IRM national researcher. The meetings on 24 October 2013 and 5 November 2013 were held in Ottawa, Ontario. The meetings on 1 November 2013 and 4 November 2013 were held via teleconference. A summary of the transcripts from the meetings can be found at www.maryfrancoli.com.

STAKEHOLDER MEETING ONE

24 October 2013

Synopsis of Meeting

Access to information was a major point of discussion at this meeting. Problems with the existing system and the need to strengthen the Access to Information Act were articulated. Participants felt very strongly that the government did not support the notion of transparency or access to government information, as is claimed in the current version of the action plan. Participants that have used the data portal expressed frustration with the quality and quantity of data. They expressed even greater concern about the creating of information in records as well as their preservation, particularly as the action plan commits to a number of technological solutions for accessing information and data. Discussion also focused on problems faced by government IT departments and the potential difficulties implementing platforms such as GCDocs.

George Duimovich, Systems Librarian, Carleton University

Michel William Drapeau, Professor of Law, University of Ottawa and co-author of "Federal Access to Information and Privacy Legislation Annotated"

Vincent Kazmierski, Law and Legal Studies, Carleton University

Sylvie Lafortune, Head Maps, Data and Government Information Centre, Carleton University

Pat Moore, Associate University Librarian, Carleton University

STAKEHOLDER MEETING TWO

1 November 2013

Synopsis of Meeting

This meeting focused primarily on access to information. Participants noted major problems with the way that the federal access to information regime is currently functioning. The relationship between federal and provincial access laws was also discussed. The lack of high profile Canadian civil society organizations was raised as a potential weakness in Canada's relationship with OGP. Participants recommended that the Information Commissioner of Canada be given decision-making power, and that the process of government consultations be improved.

Rob Antle, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
Newfoundland and Labrador

Sean Murray, Office of the Information and Privacy
Commissioner Newfoundland and Labrador

Jamie Newman, JCN Performance Consulting

Fred Vallance-Jones, University of King's College, NS

STAKEHOLDER MEETING THREE

4 November 2013

Synopsis of Meeting

Open data was a major theme of this meeting. Accessibility and usability of data were key issues raised. There was support for the Open Licence and a discussion about the relationship between different levels of government in advancing an open government agenda. There was support for strengthening the federal access to information act. Expanding open information and open data to a wider range of subjects, such as security, was also discussed. The need to improve the role of civil society and further engage citizens was voiced.

David Hume, Executive Director, Citizen Engagement,
Government of British Columbia

David Wrate, Director, Design Strategy, Government
of British Columbia

David Eaves, Open Data and Open Government
Expert

Michael Gurstein, Executive Director of the Centre
for Community Informatics Research, Development
and Training

STAKEHOLDER MEETING FOUR

Synopsis of Meeting

This meeting focused largely on the supply of information. Participants pointed out documented problems with the silencing of scientists, cuts to data collection, cuts to data analysis and cuts to various points of access to government documentation. Concerns were raised over the commitments in the action plan that move to centralize government information and data. The usability of datasets found in the data.gc.ca portal was also a major theme. Suggestions regarding data literacy were offered. Concerns about the lack of citizen engagement were expressed.

Wendy Watkins, Librarian, Carleton University

Ernie Boyko, Library Data Centre, Carleton University

Amos Hayes, Geography and Environmental Studies,
Carleton University

Heather Morrison, School of Information Studies,
University of Ottawa

SURVEY

A survey was conducted to better understand civil society's engagement in the Canadian OGP process. The national researcher conducted a survey, available in both official languages, from 4 October 2013 to 8 November 2013. The survey is available at:

English:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ogpcanadaenglish>

Français:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ogpcanadafrancais>

The survey was promoted through several relevant mailing lists including: open-government, civicaccess, cracin-canada, and ottawadissenters. It was also circulated on Twitter using a range of hashtags such as #opengov and #opengovernment. Emails were sent to those identified as potential interview participants with the link to the survey.

Given the promotion, the level of feedback was disappointing. A total of 34 unique responses were received. Only two were in French. These results informed the IRM researcher during the evaluation, but were not statistically significant enough to include in the final version of this report.

That said, a number of insightful comments were provided to the question “What would you like a revised version of the action plan to include?” Generally, the answers received mirror the concerns and recommendations elaborated in this report. The IRM national researcher felt it important to have the full text of responses provided included in the IRM report:

- Open government is all about changing the relationship between government(s), individuals and organizations. It is fundamentally founded not only on the transformation of how services are provided, but the very nature of those services.
- Measurable commitments to increasing government accountability by ensuring that there is greater access to government information. This requires a commitment to modernizing the Access to Information Act (not just its administration).
- Metrics and auditing (reporting obligation) to confirm/monitor progress. “Stronger teeth” for enforcement of commitments. Big gap in access to substantive information. Sure, we can get all kinds of details on, say some official’s ‘meals and accommodations’ expenses, BUT really big ticket items (budgets, financial information) is really hidden from the public.
- Open dialogue is too weak in terms of consultation. Areas of decision-making and participation should be developed.
- Tools to help GoC Departments and Agencies to validate and identify public service information. In addition, awareness across GoC staff will be key to promote the importance of open data.
- A legislated requirement that the GoC may not restrict access to information whether by limiting resources, limiting access to data or putting it behind a paywall, or deeming employees talking about their work to be a “risk.”
- Less political intervention.
- In order to fulfill the requirements of being a member of OGP, the revised version of the Action Plan must include commitments to make the following changes:
 - enact a “Meaningful Public Consultation Act” to help ensure representative government decisions;
 - close secret lobbying loopholes in Lobbying Act and strengthen enforcement powers and mandate of the Commissioner of Lobbying;
 - strengthen the whistleblower protection system in the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act and strengthen enforcement powers and mandate of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner;
 - close loopholes that allow for unethical decision-making in the Conflict of Interest Act and related MP and Senate ethics rules, and strengthen enforcement powers and mandate of the Ethics Commissioner and Senate Ethics Officer;
 - close secrecy loopholes in the Access to Information Act and strengthen enforcement powers and mandate of the Information Commissioner;
 - Extend coverage of the Access to Information Act to include the House of Commons and the Senate;
 - close secret donation loopholes in the Canada Elections Act and strengthen enforcement powers and mandate of the Commissioner of Canada Elections; - amend the Parliament of Canada Act to give the Parliamentary Budget Officer the independence and powers needed to ensure truth-in-budgeting;
 - strengthen the Financial Administration Act to tighten up rules on sole-source contracting
 - strengthen the enforcement powers and mandate of the Auditor General under the Auditor General Act;
 - expand the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act to comply with the 2004 United Nations Convention Against Corruption by extending its bank account scrutiny measures to domestic politicians and government officials; and,
 - strengthen related TBS codes, policies and rules in all of the above areas.

- Formalize a commitment to mandatory disclosure standards for the natural resource sector, specifically regarding: payments companies make to governments in Canada and internationally; a commitment to greater, more consistent engagement and consultation with the Canadian CSO sector (as key end-users of data); and an expanded focus beyond publishing open data, to emphasize its application (e.g., to achieve broader transparency, accountability and anti-corruption goals)
- Change the management plan for shifting culture of government administration to foster more open government to publish all business of government, share all data, engage citizens in decisions of government, and create a platform for connections between citizens and between organizations.
- A significant commitment to citizen engagement in a meaningful way. The current government's so-called action plans - especially the economic action plan – seem to inspire citizen cynicism, not dialogue.
- The current action plan includes positive steps on opening data sets, but fails to address serious and ongoing flaws in Canada's access to information framework.
- All data **must** be public domain. In the United States, restrictive licenses (attribution, etc.) do not work for data, because typical usage may involve combining data from dozens or hundreds of sources.
- Serious amendments to the ATIA
- It is essential that the government commit to strengthening the Access to Information Act. This is a key transparency need in Canada.
- A more robust ATI to enforce compliance. Stronger emphasis on making government digital assets available. Procurement reform.
- Une modification à la loi sur l'accès à l'information pour rendre obligatoire la divulgation proactive de l'information publique en format ouvert.

ABOUT THE INDEPENDENT REPORTING MECHANISM

The IRM is a key means by which government, civil society, and the private sector can track government development and implementation of OGP action plans on a bi-annual basis. The design of research and quality control of such reports is carried out by the International Expert Panel, comprised of experts in transparency, participation, accountability, and social science research methods.

Current members of the International Expert Panel:

Yamini Aiyar

Debbie Budlender

Jonathan Fox

Rosemary McGee

Gerardo Munck

A small staff based in Washington, DC shepherds reports through the IRM process in close coordination with the researcher. Questions and comments about this report can be directed to the staff at irm@opengovpartnership.org

¹ Full research guidance can be found at <http://bit.ly/120SR0u>



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