

**Open Government Partnership (OGP)
Governance & Leadership Strategy Meeting Minutes**

Mexico City, Mexico

January 28-29, 2014

Tuesday, January 28, 2014: OGP Governance and Leadership Subcommittee Strategy Session

1. Welcome

Alejandra Lagunes and Ambassador Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, as government support chairs of OGP and hosts of the meeting, welcomed the members of the Governance and Leadership subcommittee (GL) to Mexico. They emphasized Mexico's strong commitment to OGP and excitement about assuming the co-chairmanship. The lead government co-chair, Indonesia, and lead civil society co-chair, Rakesh Rajani, then outlined their primary objectives for the meeting, including: reconfirming and refining OGP's strategic priorities agreed last year, discussing how best to operationalize these priorities both this year and in the longer-term, and establishing strong working relationships among GL members.

The Executive Director of the OGP Support Unit (SU) reviewed the meeting agenda, highlighting the following topics to be discussed:

- OGP strategy and roles within the partnership
- Support Unit work plan and staffing
- OGP funding model and organizational structure
- OGP Steering Committee rotation
- September 2014 OGP Event in New York

2. OGP Theory of Change and Long-term Strategy

The SU Executive Director summarized the vision statement and 2-year strategic priorities endorsed by OGP's Steering Committee (SC) in April 2013. The members of GL reconfirmed their support for the current vision statement. They made several suggestions on the proposed theory of change, including:

- Clearly explain in accompanying text what it will take to deliver the intermediate outcomes
- Include as intermediate outcomes: 1) an active, engaged citizenry and 2) improvement in government responsiveness to citizens.
- Include as an ultimate outcome a more efficient and effective government.

GL also reconfirmed support for the three strategic priorities agreed by the SC last April:

- Enable country-level success
 - maintain high-level political commitment
 - support domestic reformers in implementing OGP commitments
 - increase civil society engagement
- Promote accountability for results
- Strengthen OGP governance and build the infrastructure to deliver

The group then discussed the idea of developing a 4-year strategy document that would serve two primary purposes: 1) a comprehensive reference document for the OGP Steering Committee and other OGP partners; 2) a compelling proposal for longer-term donor investments that will allow OGP to build the necessary infrastructure to deliver results.

It was agreed that this consolidated strategy document would largely build on existing documents (e.g. OGP's 2013-2014 strategy and the 2014 Support Unit Core Program of Work). However, in extending the time frame to four years, it will also need to tackle questions about what it will take to build and sustain OGP's momentum over the longer term. The consolidated strategy should also include new sections on context analysis, theory of change, learning & evaluation, and governance & staffing.

GL members committed to work with the Support Unit in the coming months to seek input on this consolidated strategy document from the OGP Steering Committee and other key partners. After incorporating this input, it is hoped that the SC can discuss and approve a draft at its next meeting in April. GL members also individually committed to invest time and energy in a concerted fundraising effort following the next Steering Committee meeting.

Finally, Indonesia presented its strategic priorities as OGP lead government chair in 2014. The overarching theme of Indonesia's chairmanship will be strengthening public participation. Domestically, Indonesia will focus on engaging new stakeholders – particularly youth and the private sector – in OGP. It will also seek to expand open government initiatives in Indonesia to the sub-national level. Internationally, Indonesia will encourage OGP to find ways to include and showcase innovation at the local government-level, and to influence the transparency, accountability and participation content in the post-2015 UN development framework. As lead chair Indonesia will actively promote the Open Government Awards, which will focus this year on the theme of citizen engagement. With the objective to further strengthen public participation as an OGP core value, Indonesia proposed that OGP participating countries be asked to announce at least one new commitment in 2014 to promote public participation in their country.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of Key OGP Actors

The SU Executive Director introduced Purnima Chawla of the Center for Non-Profit Strategies (CNPS), which is currently advising the Support Unit on the institutional structure, processes and mechanisms needed to help make OGP successful and sustainable. Purnima began by addressing the role of the OGP Steering Committee, the co-chairs, and the Support Unit. She recommended that in OGP's next phase, the Steering Committee should focus squarely on strategic guidance and high-level outreach, while the SU should lead on implementation. She also suggested that the Steering Committee – and particularly GL – would likely need to play a much more active role on fundraising, particularly if OGP decides to shift to a dues model (see below).

GL members expressed general agreement with the core mandates assigned to the Steering Committee, the co-chairs and the Support Unit, and suggested that the other two OGP subcommittees be incorporated in the proposed OGP 'org chart' as well. Members also suggested that the language describing the Steering Committee's mandate be sharpened to describe specific activities or initiatives that SC members could lead in order to add value to the Partnership.

Purnima then summarized several recommendations to clarify the roles and relationship between the Support Unit, the Civil Society Coordination team, and the Independent Reporting Mechanism. With respect to the Civil Society Coordination team, Purnima outlined the pros and cons of integrating this team as part of the OGP Support Unit. After discussing these in light of OGP's overall strategic priorities, GL members all expressed support for bringing the Civil Society Coordination team into the Support Unit. The primary rationale for this would be to ensure that the mandate of the OGP Support Unit clearly reflects core OGP values by providing equal support and space to both government and civil society

constituencies. The SU Executive Director noted that the Support Unit and Civil Society Coordination team already work together closely in practice, so an integrated structure might better reflect the current reality.

Several GL members suggested that to ensure the necessary flexibility in the day-to-day work of the civil society outreach function within the Support Unit, it would be important to develop a set of guiding principles for civil society support that both the Steering Committee and SU Executive Director would commit to respect. All agreed that the recommendation to integrate the civil society coordination team should be discussed by the full Steering Committee at its next meeting.

Concerning the IRM, Purnima explained that after considering the pros and cons of various models (including a more autonomous structure for the IRM), her recommendation is essentially to maintain the status quo. She emphasized that while it is important to preserve a healthy degree of separation between the IRM and the Steering Committee, there is no need to create a firewall between the IRM and the Support Unit, since it is not part of the IRM's mandate to evaluate the performance of the Support Unit. Furthermore, she suggested that the advantages of close collaboration between the IRM and the Support Unit far outweigh the disadvantages. For example, the Support Unit should be doing more to ensure broad dissemination and uptake of the IRM findings, as well as to incorporate cross-country lessons from the IRM in the guidelines and case studies produced by the Support Unit.

To ensure close coordination between the Support Unit and the IRM, and to clarify the oversight function for the IRM, Purnima recommended that the SU Executive Director be assigned a clear mandate as hiring manager (including assessing performance) for the IRM Program Manager.

4. Support Unit Work Plan and Staffing

The SU Executive Director presented the current Support Unit work plan and staffing, covering the following program areas: Direct Country Support; Peer Exchange, Learning & Impact, External Communications, Basic Secretariat Functions, and Finance & Donor Relations. In order to deliver this program of work, the SU currently has six full-time staff. [The IRM has three full-time staff, but its work program was not discussed at the GL meeting.]

The SU Executive Director presented a draft organizational chart for the Support Unit and described the core responsibilities of each staff person. In the current structure, the Executive Director oversees overall strategy and staffing, core secretariat functions (including support to GL), finance and donor relations (including fundraising), and learning and impact. The Deputy Director oversees direct country support, peer exchange and external communications, as well as certain secretariat functions, including the upcoming Steering Committee elections.

GL members expressed support for the work plan and staff structure, but made several suggestions, including: 1) consider hiring an Executive Assistant to the Executive Director; 2) greater investment in the communications function, which may require more dedicated staff with specific expertise; and 3) more detail on how OGP's multilateral partners will augment the Support Unit's operational capacity, particularly in terms of Direct Country Support and Peer Exchange. Other comments emphasized the critical importance of developing very practical ways to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences across the partnership and noted that these areas may also need additional staff capacity.

5. Budget and Funding Model for OGP

Purnima Chawla gave a brief overview of the funding models of other multilateral initiatives. She emphasized that OGP's funding model will also impact other important factors, such as the level of ownership by OGP participating countries, where decision-making authority is housed, and the stability of funding (and therefore of programs.) Purnima presented three possible funding models for OGP: 1) Donor-reliant (outside donors, primarily foundations and bilaterals); 2) Donor contributions matched by annual dues from SC members (current model); or 3) Donor contributions combined with annual financial contributions from all participating governments.

The group then discussed potential hybrid models and agreed on the following set of recommendations for discussion by the Steering Committee at its next meeting in April:

- 1) Beginning in 2015, all OGP participating countries should be asked and expected to make annual contributions according to a single sliding scale (based on income level). The Support Unit and CNPS will model various budget scenarios to inform the SC decision about where the sliding scale will be set. To help countries justify these payments internally, the SU will need compile a set of materials that can be used to explain what OGP is and the benefits of participating. [Note: CNPS estimates that the full transition to this model will take 2 to 3 years and at least one full-time staff person at the Support Unit to manage.]
- 2) For 2014, the current government SC members should contribute the previously agreed amounts. Beginning in 2015, SC members would be required to make an annual contribution based on the same sliding scale established for all participating countries. It will be particularly important for SC members to make timely, complete payments and encourage other governments to do the same, as this is the only way to establish a norm of compliance.
- 3) If a government fails to pay its minimum contribution for 2 years in a row, it would lose its voting rights in the annual Steering Committee election.
- 4) Reliance on member contributions carries substantial risk, particularly in the early years. It is difficult to know how member governments will respond to this ask and how long it will take to set up appropriate payment mechanisms. In the short to medium-term, OGP therefore will need to rely more heavily on outside donor funding (from foundations and bilateral agencies) in order to deliver on the 4-year strategy and ensure a smooth transition to the dues model.

Given point 4 and the morning's discussion on a long-term strategy, GL also agreed on the following principles in raising funds from outside donors:

- Seek 4-year funding agreements
- Avoid dependence on any one donor
- Pursue only core funding (vs. project grants)
- Develop one strategy, one proposal and one reporting schedule for all donors

Purnima and the SU Executive Director then briefly outlined the projected resource needs for the Support Unit and IRM, which they estimated at US\$4-\$4.5 million annually, not including the civil society coordination team. If that team is integrated, the annual budget would likely increase to approximately \$4.5 - \$5 million. GL agreed that for the next 4-year period (2014-2017), OGP should aim to raise US\$15-\$20 million, with approximately 1/3 coming from annual dues, 1/3 from private foundations, and 1/3 from bilateral or multilateral agencies. This will require significant effort in the coming year, but GL members felt this level of investment will be critical to ensure OGP's long-term success.

Wednesday, January 29, 2014: OGP Governance and Leadership (GL) Subcommittee Strategy Session

6. Steering Committee Rotation and Next Government Chair

The SU Executive Director reviewed the election calendar for Steering Committee rotation in 2014. Based on the timeline established in the Articles of Governance, it would be impossible for a newly elected member of the SC to immediately become an OGP co-chair (e.g. in September of this year). Therefore, the list of possible candidates for the next government co-chair includes the four SC members that have not yet served as chair: Norway, Philippines, South Africa and Tanzania.

GL agreed that the current OGP co-chairs will send a letter to these four governments requesting them to inform the co-chairs if they would be interested in serving as chair beginning in September 2014. GL hopes to be in a position to make a recommendation to the full Steering Committee at its next meeting.

The GL also asked the SU to develop a brief, accessible document, to be shared with all participating countries, explaining the Steering Committee election process and timeline. This document will include requirements for those governments that wish to stand for election, and will be posted on the OGP website by the end of February. GL also asked the civil society co-chairs to present an update at the next GL meeting on the process and timeline for rotation of the civil society members of the SC.

Finally, GL members agreed on the following language to describe the role of the immediate past government co-chair and immediate past civil society co-chair:

"In order to enable the OGP leadership to access and benefit from the experience, support, and institutional memory of outgoing chairs, the GL subcommittee will have the option to consult with the immediate past government and civil society chairs in their deliberations and meetings on an as-needed basis. The Support Unit Director and/or Lead Civil Society and Government Chairs may initiate this consultation as appropriate. When invoked, the participation of the immediate past chairs shall be noted in the minutes."

7. September 2014 OGP Event in New York

OGP plans to hold a head of state/head of government-level event this September on the margins of the UN General Assembly. GL members agreed that the overarching theme of the event will likely focus on promoting public participation, which is Indonesia's top priority as lead chair and is also the theme of the 2014 Open Government Awards.

The current government co-chairs of OGP, Indonesia and Mexico, will host the meeting alongside their civil society co-chair counterparts, as well as the incoming government co-chair (which will join OGP's leadership group at the event.) The heads of state of all 63 OGP participating countries will be invited to the event, along with high-level representatives from civil society. Indonesia and Mexico agreed to consult on scheduling and set a date for the event as soon as possible. The GL subcommittee asked the SU to develop a short concept note as the first step in planning the event.

8. Open Government Awards

During the September 2014 event, OGP will recognize and honor the winners of the first annual Open Government Awards, which will focus this year on initiatives related to citizen engagement. Even though

there is a firm helping to design the awards competition, the SU asked GL members for volunteers to review and comment on the application materials that will be used for the awards. Several members of the Peer Learning and Support subcommittee will also serve as reviewers.

9. Responding to Disputed Status Applicants

GL members agreed to present the following language to the Steering Committee to clarify OGP's policy in responding to letters of intent submitted by territories whose status is disputed:

“Applicants that submit a letter of intent to join OGP whose status is disputed, will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the GL. Applicants must present clear evidence of meeting the eligibility criteria and will be considered without prejudice to current members' positions on recognition. If agreed by the GL, applicants may cooperate with OGP by abiding by the OGP principles and processes, including developing OGP action plans and being subject to the IRM. They may, when invited by the host, participate in OGP events, engage in learning exchanges and benefit from OGP materials and tools. Applicants will not be eligible to serve on the Steering Committee, or vote in Steering Committee elections.”

If there are no objections from OGP Steering Committee members, this consensus language will be incorporated in the latest revisions to the OGP's Articles of Governance.

10. OGP Biannual Calendar

The SC agreed in 2013 to shift to a biannual calendar for action plans and IRM reports. During this session, the SU presented a proposal on how the biannual calendar will operate in practice if we go with a rolling calendar. The Support Unit and IRM teams concur that the rolling calendar has two important benefits: 1) it avoids a long gap in implementation between action plans; 2) it ensures consistency and predictability of OGP deadlines so that countries know what to expect year after year.

The rolling biannual calendar will mean that countries begin implementation of the new action plan as soon as the previous one has finished. For the IRM, this would mean producing the following: 1) an initial report on the action plan content and development (including the consultation process) and the first 18 months of implementation; and 2) a short 'close-out' report to provide a final analysis of commitment implementation after the full 2 years of implementation. [This second point was particularly important to GL.]

The GL unanimously supported the SU/IRM recommendation to implement the rolling biannual calendar. This recommendation will also be discussed with the Criteria and Standards subcommittee in February.

Participant List
OGP Governance and Leadership Subcommittee Strategy Session

Government of Indonesia:

Tara Hidayat	President's Delivery Unit (UKP4)
Jourdan Hussein	President's Delivery Unit (UKP4)
Jane Runkat	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Government of Mexico:

Alejandra Lagunes	President's Office
Ania Calderon	President's Office
Guillermo Ruiz de Teresa	President's Office
Enrique Zapata	President's Office
Juan Manuel Gómez	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Roberto de León	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ana Paula Lavalle	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Civil Society Co-Chairs:

Suneeta Kaimal	Revenue Watch Institute
Rakesh Rajani	Twaweza

Outgoing Government Chair, Government of the United Kingdom:

Oliver Buckley	Cabinet Office
Kitty von Bertele	Cabinet Office

Observer (civil society Steering Committee member):

Alejandro Gonzalez	GESOC (Mexico)
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OGP Support Unit:

Linda Frey	Executive Director
Joe Powell	Deputy Director
Alonso Cerdán	Program Manager

Purnima Chawla	Consultant, Center for Nonprofit Strategies
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Regrets:

Warren Krafchik (outgoing civil society chair)