

Governance and Leadership Subcommittee
Monthly Call Summary | 24 January 2019
09:00 - 10:30 EST

Attendees

- Government of Canada: Melanie Robert, Jaimie Boyd, Colum Grove-White, Natalia Little, Benoit Frenette
- Government of Argentina: Rudi Borrman, Carolina Cornejo
- Nathaniel Heller and Preston Whitt, R4D
- OGP Support Unit
- Apologies: Robin Hodess, The B Team

1. Ottawa Summit updates and check-in on key components

A. Updates and discussion re: Onboarding of Minister Philpott

The government of Canada updated the Support Unit (SU) and GL on the onboarding of Jane Philpott, the new President of the Treasury Board Secretariat and Minister of Digital Government. Minister Philpott has been broadly briefed on OGP, Canada's lead co-chair role, including the summit, which is part of the minister's open government portfolio and has communicated her interest and eagerness to work on open government, particularly on the linkages between democracy and open government. The government of Canada informed GL and the SU that the invitation letters inviting the OGP ministers to attend the summit will be brought to the minister's office for signature and sent shortly.

Nathaniel Heller and the SU extended the offer to travel to Ottawa to meet with Minister Philpott for a more in-depth OGP orientation. This will potentially be scheduled at a day and time that fits the minister's schedule.

B. Discussion of priority summit deliverables

The government of Canada updated GL and the SU on the status of the priority summit deliverables document. Currently, the document is still in the drafting phase and is not yet ready for review. Canada will utilize the gender and inclusion model to identify 2-3 additional outcomes and has suggested: 1) open government opportunities in the digital era (i.e. Artificial Intelligence) and 2) democracy and civic space, in continuation from the OGP Global Summit in Tbilisi, Georgia. The government of Canada also tabled the suggestion of incorporating SC input into the document and has proposed to arrange an SC call with GL to explore opportunities for SC members to collectively identify and lead the engagements on bringing specific deliverables that the SC would like to come with for the summit. The SU and GL suggestions for Canada as it moves forward with the process were the following:

- The summit needs to convey a strong message that OGP is platform that can be leveraged to help countries design and implement ambitious commitments and policy reform around the summit deliverables;
- The action plans are a mechanism that could be maximally leveraged in the process of identifying and featuring strong commitments at the summit. The timing of the action plan cycles could potentially work well for the summit where the cohort that is currently implementing their action plans could inspire the cohort that is presently developing their action plans.

C. SC meeting and high-level approach to Ministerial meeting

Drawing from the example at the December 5-6, 2018 SC meeting, the government of Canada suggested that an informational suggestion that is framed around a challenge and opportunity for OGP to take leadership on, such as the rise of populism and decline of democracy, could inspire a sense of collective ownership of OGP among the SC ministers. Canada encouraged the SU to share what has worked well for past ministerial level SC meeting.

Action Item: As a next step, GL will send their suggestions to SU who will then begin drafting the skeleton agenda for the ministerial meeting.

D. Call for Proposals and thematic plenaries

The government of Canada updated GL and the SU that the Call for Proposals for the summit has been launched and is looking to begin the review process after February 6. Canada then opened the discussion on the plenary sessions and speakers (inclusion, participation and impact). The key points made during the discussion were the following:

- It is important to figure out the balance between “star power” speakers with those that are aligned and knowledgeable around the plenary topics;
- There should be some room for flexibility to invite other organizations, stakeholders and partners that are aligned with OGP values (i.e. W20);
- Historically, at past summits, OGP has received good feedback from the plenary sessions when inspirational stories were incorporated into the plenary sessions.

E. Overview of POC/CSO day

The SU provided a high-level overview of CSO Day and POC Day. CSO day will be a larger event for ~500-600 people and could be an opportunity to feature some the panels that did not make it onto the summit agenda. POC Day is a smaller event for ~100 people that will constitute a series of smaller sessions to train and inform POCs about OGP procedures and priority themes. The SU also proposed joint welcome and closing ceremonies to bring civil-society and governments together. The government of Canada advised that this cross between government and civil society needs to be structured strategically.

2. OGP Local Program - Discussion of next steps

GL and the SU discussed the next steps of the next phase strategy of the OGP Local Program. The SU is currently conducting research into different models that could work for the next phase of the OGP Local Program. The main suggestions received during the discussion were the following:

- The model for the revised OGP Local Program needs to match the reality on the ground. In the research for viable models, the SU should consult the current OGP local participants and solicit their input on what works well with the program, what could be improved, and what could be changed;
- The model for the revised OGP Local Program should have a mechanism in place that establishes a good minimum baseline quality that is required to qualify for participation in the OGP Local Program;
- Politically, the OGP Local Program should enhance the capacity of participants to serve as a countervailing force when the OGP process at the national level goes awry (i.e. Tanzania, United States).

3. Parked for future calls due to time constraints:

- a. Rapid Response Mechanism case update - Georgia
- b. Open Gov Week (March 11-17) - Discuss GL role and potential activities to engage the broader SC + 99 governments