

# THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP'S 2021 WORK PLAN

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Open  
Government  
Partnership



# OGP 2021 Work Plan

## Draft

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# 1. 2021 Objectives

2021 will be a landmark year for the open government movement and for the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which turns 10 (“OGP@10”).

The year 2020 saw a confluence of five profound crises:

1. A catastrophic health crisis unleashed by the most devastating pandemic in a hundred years.
2. A global economic crisis, now the worst recession since World War II, leaving millions unemployed and vulnerable around the globe.
3. An accelerating climate crisis.
4. A crisis of continued inequality, including systemic racism igniting global protests.
5. A continued crisis of democracy including 14 consecutive years of decline in political and civil rights according to Freedom House, reflecting eroding citizen trust in government and the unfettered rise of authoritarian leaders attacking democratic institutions and civil liberties, and spreading disinformation.

Open government has a role to play in tackling each of these crises, and the pandemic showed that open government should not be an afterthought but rather an essential tool. Open government approaches showed their potential to save lives and livelihoods like never before: from transparent disclosure of health risks that empowered citizens to take mitigating actions, to open contracting for better emergency health procurement, to open stimulus spending to ensure funds reach those that need it most, and are not lost to waste or corruption. The pandemic also galvanized the open government movement to innovate on rapid policy responses, collaborate across borders to share knowledge, and lead on the Open Response + Open Recovery (OR+OR) campaign at the global, regional and country level.

## 2021 partnership-wide objectives

2021 offers the open government movement a unique opportunity to showcase an alternative, more hopeful vision that tackles these crises using open government approaches and reforms. The election of President-elect Biden represents a major new political opportunity to galvanize a stronger coalition for open government and democracy globally. Our objective should be that countries — including OGP members at the national and local level — build a better version of democracy for a post-pandemic world, anchored in open government values of transparency, accountability, public participation and inclusion. Therefore, OGP’s goals for 2021 are:

1. Countries making an effective economic recovery through transparency, citizen input and public oversight over the massive COVID-19 stimulus and safety net packages. This would include advancing open budgets, open contracts and beneficial ownership transparency, with citizens shaping, and overseeing how funds are spent so they support long-term green growth and jobs rather than corporate bailouts or wasteful fossil fuel subsidies.
2. Countries tackling systemic inequalities laid bare by the pandemic, including vast economic disparities, gender gaps and systemic racism in the US and elsewhere. For example, countries advancing policies to ensure inclusion of women and historically



marginalized groups; tackling corruption and state capture so that health and education are properly funded through fair taxation; expanding open data to expose gender pay gaps and other biases; and ensuring transparency and accountability of law enforcement, to root out racial and other biases, while expanding access to justice so that all can get legal redress where needed.

3. Countries building more resilient democracies, through methods that could include combating digital disinformation, illicit money in politics and big tech impunity, strengthening the media environment and safeguarding the enabling environment for civil society.
4. Countries building trust and a more citizen-centred democracy. For example, through participatory budgeting, social audits, citizen assemblies and other deliberative democracy efforts.

Collectively, OGP members moving together on these systemic challenges will be a key part of the coalition to reinvigorate democracy, and push back on authoritarianism and illiberal democracy. This will be a strong theme of President-elect Biden, who plans to organize a Summit for Democracy in his first year in office, and looks increasingly likely to be part of other major global summits such as the G7 and G20. OGP is well-positioned to be a key partner for those summits, using them to link with the 100+ action plans due to be co-created and the 2021 OGP Global Summit in Seoul, which will be an opportunity to showcase reforms that illustrate this results vision and a coalition of world leaders, civil society activists and partners joining forces to sustain the vision beyond 2021.

## **So why is 2021 such a big opportunity for OGP?**

2021 represents the best alignment of local, national, thematic and global opportunities since our founding, as laid out in the [2020-22 3 Year Implementation Plan](#) (3YP). That 3YP remains the guiding framework, but it is the convergence of five opportunities that makes 2021 so important:

1. OGP turns 10 in 2021. This milestone offers a unique opportunity to leverage the global spotlight to consolidate and showcase a hopeful vision anchored in concrete reforms.
2. Building on the (continuing) first two phases of our current campaign — OR+OR — with a third phase on how we build back more resilient and responsive democracies for the future. This can showcase how more open democracies can address the confluence of multiple crises culminating in 2020.
3. 100+ expected new local and national action plans which can present an inspiring open government agenda for the years ahead, locked down in ambitious commitments that address the biggest societal challenges.
4. The salience of open government to tackling the crises of 2020 and the potential to use the 100+ action plans to commit to reforms in relevant policy areas, provide a great opportunity to leverage new or strengthened partnerships in key thematic areas relevant to global challenges such as shrinking civic space or unequal access to public services, as well as policies like tackling money laundering and misuse of digital technologies that help build more resilient economic and political systems.
5. A 2021 OGP Global Summit, which could be one of the largest gatherings to date (in-person, virtual, or a combination) of leaders, reformers, and civil society working on open government, bringing all of this together in a culminating moment to give OGP renewed political support, innovation and funding over the next 10 years. The Summit can showcase our brightest ideas, reformers and results as part of the coalition for open



government and democracy; the UNGA 2020 Virtual Leaders Summit provided a concrete example of OGP's convening power that can be leveraged for the 2021 OGP Global Summit and other opportunities.

## Key components of 2021 work plan

OGP's 2021 work plan seeks to leverage these unprecedented opportunities to achieve the 2021 goals laid out below. The work plan will be fully integrated into the 3YP, as with 2020's work plan. As the graphic below summarizes, the 2021 work plan follows the same framework of activities, including focus commitments, countries (including local), thematic, and global advocacy as well as universal platform including OGP's rules of the game, research and evidence, and organizational sustainability/fundraising. The goal is to ensure that the combination of these activities - including the 100+ action plans and OGP Global Summit in Seoul - together help achieve the 2021 objectives.



To support the 2021 objectives, the institutions of OGP will have a key role. OGP's rules of the game will be refreshed to ensure they are incentivising ambition, including through inclusive co-creation and more flexible action plans cycles. The OGP Support Unit (SU) will also need to ensure it has the capacity to support its members effectively, including through a fundraising campaign for 2021. OGP will also work to strengthen its resilience as an organization, stay agile in the face of COVID-related uncertainty and change, and consider mitigation strategies in the case of a worsening pandemic crisis.

## 2. 2021 Global Campaign

In 2021 OGP will continue with an umbrella global campaign to ensure that we maximize the unique set of 2021 opportunities for advancing open government, as a way to tackle major societal challenges at the global, thematic and country (including local) level. The campaign will

build on the ‘Open Response + Open Recovery’ theme of 2020, by adding a third dimension: Open Reset/Reform/Renew (TBD). Open Reset/Reform/Renew (TBD) will seek to ensure that systemic inequalities and threats to democracy - many which predate the pandemic - are proactively tackled by OGP members, so that we can build back stronger and more citizen-centric democracies for a post-pandemic context. The campaign will encourage OGP members to adopt commitments in their action plans that address the four partnership-wide objectives for 2021. The pandemic is still raging in many parts of the world and countries are still in the ‘response’ and ‘recovery’ phases, so the campaign will continue to promote the vital role open government can play in supporting medical procurement, open data for health, effective stimulus, and the efficient and inclusive distribution of a vaccine.

The campaign will include the following key activities:

- **January:** Call to action from the OGP co-chairs to the full national and local membership calling for a step up in: (i) ambitious commitments in 100+ actions advancing open government reforms such as anti-corruption reforms, digital governance, and civic space to tackle major challenges facing the world; and (ii) stronger, more inclusive co-creation. The call will signal that Heads of States/Government will be invited to the Global Summit, where ambitious commitments will be recognized through an awards program, as well as the launch of a new storytelling platform crowdsourced from the OGP community to surface bottom-up innovations and results, to be piloted at the local level and then scaled nationally.
- **January-March:** Research will be conducted on an OGP data-driven “health check” called Vital Signs, to be published later in the year.
- **March (TBC):** Open Gov Week to ensure co-creation processes have started in the 100+ action plans due in 2021, and to provide policy guidance and connect partners to members in need of support.
- **May:** Launch of 10th anniversary OGP awards program, which seeks to showcase some of the most promising open government innovations from across the partnership at the OGP Global Summit in Seoul.
- **July:** Release of 50+ new OGP Local action plans.
- **July-September:** Ministerial roundtables for each region to push for action plan ambition and delivery and to prepare for the 10th anniversary summit.
- **July-December:** Release of 10 results stories across OGP thematic priority areas that demonstrate the impact of open government on citizens’ lives.
- **December (TBC):** 10th anniversary OGP Global Summit, hosted by the Republic of Korea, to showcase the new national and local action plans and other innovations from OGP members to the world.

In addition, the campaign will leverage the UNGASS (Special UN Session on Anti-Corruption), G7, G20 and U.S.-hosted Summit for Democracy (TBC), where democracy and open societies are likely to be a key theme. The strategy will be to ensure that the political statements and commitments made at these global fora are locked down in specific commitments in OGP action plans, making OGP the platform for participation, implementation and accountability around democracy and corruption pledges made in 2021.



# 3. 2021 Activities

## Themes

*As endorsed by the Steering Committee (SC) in the 3YP, while the OGP SU will provide timely advice and universal support to any member looking to advance a thematic policy area, it will focus its technical support and capacity on a few focus themes. In 2021, OGP will continue to focus on open government for COVID-19 recovery, anti-corruption, civic space, and gender and inclusion, as well as justice and public service reform. In addition, climate change and innovative participation will continue as growing thematic priorities. The aim for 2021 is to see uptake across these themes in the 100+ new action plans, and to showcase emerging global norms in the run up to and at the 10th anniversary summit.*

### Focus Themes

Support to focus themes will include:

- Promote uptake of commitments on OR+OR thematic topics by members co-creating action plans in 2021.
- Support thematic ambition in OGP Local members through dynamic learning modules, identifying local-relevant partners and ongoing support for ambitious local action plans.
- Organize group-based learning for peer reformers, opportunities for bilateral and multilateral peer exchange, and advocacy support to civil society.
- Sharpen narrative and messaging — including through OGP@10 thematic 2-pagers — with data and OGP value proposition, and contributions to highlight how OGP has helped advance these policy areas over the past 10 years.
- Strategic planning and execution of the 2021 OGP Global Summit and campaign to advance the 2021 thematic result areas that are relevant and responsive to the current global context and collective ambitions of the open government community.
- Leverage key global or regional forums (G7 UK, G20 Italy, Biden Summit for Democracy, UNGASS, etc) to advance country action.
- Support the implementation of the pilot OGP Leaders' Network.
- Mobilize political leadership from the SC on focus themes, in particular the Governance and Leadership (GL) and Thematic Leadership (TLS) subcommittees for their work on Co-Chair priorities and thematic oversight, respectively.

The following policy areas will receive high intensity focus, including through work with partners, research and mobilizing cross-country coalitions:

1. The **Open Response + Open Recovery** approach will remain a cross-cutting framework for OGP's thematic support. The OR+OR campaign has brought into sharp relief the foundational issues of governments, from access to information and fiscal openness to tax and domestic resource mobilization. Some specific support activities include:
  - Targeted research on domestic Resource Mobilization, equity, oversight and suggested reforms for OGP members.
  - Strengthen partnerships with multilateral organizations including IMF and World



Bank, especially where OGP countries are leveraging their action plans to advance on commitments made to these institutions.

- Group-based learning and targeted co-creation support on commitments related to stimulus and safety net monitoring.
- Broaden the base of reformers engaged in OR+OR co-creation conversations and related global and regional forums, including youth groups, parliaments, private sector, and Supreme Audit Institutions.
- Create a value proposition for the private sector on OR+OR-related reforms, along with case studies from OGP members; to be developed in collaboration with The B Team.

2. **Anti-corruption** supports several result areas: catalyzing economic recovery, tackling systemic inequality, and strengthening democracy by stemming the flow of dark money into politics that is weakening our democratic institutions. Focused support will continue to be provided on beneficial ownership, open contracting, political integrity (including lobbying reform and money in politics), and extractives transparency. Rather than promote these issues in isolation, efforts will be made to strengthen the anti-corruption ecosystem as a whole.

Regional objectives for each set of issues will differ, but overall objectives for these policy areas include: continued support for open and public registers of beneficial ownership, including to support implementation of commitments already made; advancing implementation of the open contracting data standard, and going beyond transparency to participation and closing the feedback loop across contracting sectors; implementation of lobbying registers and linking to asset declaration and other conflict of interest policies; and advancing the implementation of the EITI standard through OGP action plans.

Key activities will include:

- Organize targeted group learning through regional and sub-regional workshops, in collaboration with partners.
- Engage private sector representatives across OGP's work, especially in advancing anti-corruption reforms at the country level through co-creation engagement and consultation on implementation of specific commitments. OGP will also organize regional and other events in collaboration with partners including The B Team, CIPE and others.
- Mobilize coalitions to raise collective ambition and advance action, including through the Beneficial Ownership Leadership Group and the Americas Beneficial Ownership Community of Practice.
- Establish a new, informal coalition of countries (and civil society within these countries) advancing lobbying reform through OGP action plans in Europe.
- Link across key global fora and provide accountability for implementation of pronouncements and principles emerging from them, including G7 UK, G20 Italy, UNGASS and others.
- Highlight value proposition and relevant stories of the anti-corruption subthemes to the OR+OR agenda and 2021 global campaign.





- Production of research on data availability, verification, and policy frameworks related to political integrity and offer findings to partners engaged in OGP co-creation processes. This work will cover (i) lobbying; (ii) open decision-making; (iii) company ownership disclosure; (iv) open contracts; (v) right to information; (vi) may form all or a part of a 2021 Global report.
3. **Civic space** is a co-chair priority and an important condition to rebuild trust and a citizen-centric democracy, bolster democratic resilience, and tackle inequality by enabling civil society to reach under-represented communities. Beyond supporting uptake in action plans of civic space related commitments, the OGP SC and SU will work to promote civic space through the OGP co-creation processes, the rules and policies governing OGP, and global advocacy moments.

Activities will include:

- Strengthen the local and national OGP processes to ensure all members have a protected space for genuine government-civil society dialogue. In OGP-3YP focus countries in particular (see Countries section), this will include political engagement to help re-start the OGP processes that have stalled post COVID-19.
- Where there is opportunity and an entry point, facilitate inclusion of a civic space-related commitment in the forthcoming action plans, with a focus on countries demonstrating political leadership on the issue or where the research identifies a prominent gap (such as a drop in the [values check](#)).
- Work with partners to identify a set of thematic issues that serve as open government entry points for civic space reform - such as media freedom, NGO law reform, access to justice, digital governance - that could serve as a gateway to advance trickier civic space issues through OGP action plans. Develop a set of sample commitments and value propositions on these issues.
- Identify civic space concerns and civil society capacity post-COVID-19 through regular communication with civil society partners, research and tracking efforts, and with the Independent Research Mechanism (IRM) researchers' network.
- Encourage SC members to involve their Ministries of Foreign Affairs where there are colleagues working on issues of civic space, to join efforts across global forums.
- Organize high-level forums and peer learning opportunities related to civic space, such as the partner-funder-ministerial "brain trust" convened in collaboration with Ford Foundation to support the Co-Chair priorities.
- Convene national and local coalitions for learning and reflection on civic space issues, including a virtual civic space event in Asia, supporting South Korea/Maria's priorities call to action on this theme.
- Develop an internal OGP SU standing group monitoring civic space and at-risk countries, and invite external partners and experts to join relevant meetings.
- Establish a periodic SC review of at-risk countries, based on OGP and third-party data.
- Highlight stories of civic space bright spots, including those from SC and Co-Chair countries.



4. To advance reforms on **gender and inclusion** as a cross-cutting issue, the OGP SU will aim to deepen policy traction on issues particularly relevant in the post-pandemic context, including gender-based violence and promoting a more equitable space for all communities online.

Activities will include:

- At the global level, position OGP as a means for bridging global advocacy to country action, at the Commission on the Status of Women and Generation Equality Fora and UN Women's Gender Equality initiative.
- In targeted national and local members, leverage OGP action plans to strengthen equality reforms or reflect gender-mainstreamed approaches, including through sharing of model commitments and linking to resources, research, and relevant expertise identified during the Break the Roles campaign.
- Coordinate and deepen cross-country exchanges, including through the OGP Gender Coalition to promote learning and help produce guidance documents on a variety of issues. Potential topics will include inclusive co-creation, creating a more inclusive civic space online, and how open government can better promote and preserve LGBTQIA+ rights.
- Create and pilot a robust gender and political economy analysis tool for open government in 2-3 Global South countries, building on the CARE International tools curated in the Philippines as part of their Feminist Open Government (FOGO) I action research. This gender analysis guidance would integrate existing research and GBA+ guidance, with options to adapt for OGP Local governments and civil society partners working in-country to integrate gender perspectives into open government processes.
- Curating an accessible package of gender and inclusion guidance for all OGP government and civil society partners that leverages the best practices from FOGO research and recommendations.
- Facilitate regional feminist open government convenings in up to two regions, bringing government, civil society partners, and women's organization representatives together to identify gender priorities for their region.
- Identify entry points to advance inclusion of under-represented communities including youth, people living with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ communities, among others.
- Building on the lessons learned and outcomes of previous efforts such as the launch of the OpenGov Youth Collective at the Ottawa Global Summit in 2019 and the Youth Summit co-hosted with Accountability Lab and Restless Development in 2020, we will work with SC members to maximize opportunities to further engage young people in domestic OGP processes, cross-cutting themes, and key global moments.

The following policy areas will receive ongoing (medium-intensity) support as outlined in the 3YP:

- To advance reforms on **digital governance** that safeguard against digital threats to democracy and build more resilient democratic institutions, the OGP SU will focus support to promote more ambitious commitments in OGP action plans. This will include : i) use of digital technologies to deliver public services, ii) accountability for the use of digital technologies for governance (accountability of automated decision-making systems), iii)



accountability of digital technologies in political communication (including political advertising), and iv) protection of inclusive civic space online. The issue of inclusive digital technologies has also been prioritized by the OGP Co-Chairs.

Activities will include:

- Mobilize collective action through a network of OGP members advancing accountability of automated decision-making (algorithms and AI), and a network of civil society and members in Europe exploring reforms around transparency of political advertising, linked to the European political context and regional policy opportunities.
  - Undertake research on related topics, including accountability of automated decision-making and intersections between technology and democracy (including political communication, disinformation, and civic space online).
  - Provide dedicated support to the OGP Co-Chairs and SC to convene a cross-country, cross-sector conversation among a coalition of countries on global norms related to specific issues within digital governance.
  - Provide support to implement focus commitments (see Commitments section below - e.g. protection against illegal surveillance by Mexico).
- To advance reforms on **justice**, the OGP SU will aim to support more ambitious commitments on open justice and access to justice, especially in the context of the further marginalization of under-served communities during and post COVID-19, the call for criminal justice reforms to safeguard against targeting specific communities, and the need for mechanisms to maintain/enforce open government in the face of pressure on laws such as on access to information.

Activities will include:

- Coordinate, alongside key supporters such as the government of Canada and Pathfinders, the emerging OGP coalition on justice, including ongoing cross country learning and at least one in-person meeting of the coalition.
  - Coordinate high-level OGP member participation at key global events such as the HiIL Innovating Justice Forum and the Justice for All Summit where OGP will be promoted as the mechanism for translating global norms such as SDG16 into concrete domestic actions.
  - Provide targeted peer learning through regional or country-based workshops (at least one cross-country learning event in Africa).
  - Use new OGP resources on access to justice and open justice (part of a 3-part justice series) as well as an upcoming policy paper on how justice institutions can enforce open government to support OGP members interested in pursuing and adapting reforms on these topics.
- To advance thematic traction on **citizens shaping public services**, support will include:
    - Targeted co-creation and implementation support at the subnational level through OGP's new OGP Local strategy.
    - Strengthened and new partnerships on sectors including education, health, water, among others, especially in sub-regions such as the Eastern Partnership where



this is an explicit priority, and Western Balkans and South East Asia where there is explicit demand.

- Bilateral peer exchange between countries seeking to improve public services through reforms in budgets, contracting, and citizen oversight, including in collaboration with social accountability partners and Supreme Audit Institutions.

A few policy areas that are only just emerging in OGP action plans, but are relevant to the OR + OR agenda and the 3YP, will receive opportunistic support from the OGP SU:

- Open government approaches can play a vital role to support reforms on **climate and environment**. This is a critical reform area to ensure a just economic recovery and tackle generational inequality. The OGP SU will work with partners to support members in using the open government lens to promote climate justice and a green recovery. Support will include:
  - Collaborate with partners to identify sample commitments for diverse regional contexts and broker technical assistance for co-creation.
  - Mobilize and support relevant groups in the Americas advocating for the implementation of the Escazu agreement through OGP action plans.
  - Conduct targeted research on green/just transitions, climate risk disclosure, among other sub-themes relevant for OGP members.
- **Innovative participation** methods, both on- and offline, are growing in OGP as a way to promote more resilient, citizen-centric democracies and to rebuild trust. These methods are being used both for inclusive OGP co-creation processes, and as part of specific OGP commitments. Support will include:
  - Leverage networks such as the OGP Practice Group on Open Dialogue and Deliberation, partner expertise, and internal research to inform peer learning across countries.
  - Prioritize engagement and piloting in: (i) Europe and focus countries; (ii) Local members' orientation and Action Plans, including through partners focused on social accountability approaches to improving public service delivery.

### Universal Services

Partners and OGP members will continue to lead initiatives and commitments to advance reform on any societal challenge where open government approaches can help, and the OGP SU will continue to offer targeted support to them. This includes::

- Strategic coordination with thematic partners, including the recipients of the thematic window of the OGP Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) supporting learning on anti-corruption, climate change, fiscal openness, gender and natural resources, parliamentary strengthening, and water and sanitation.
- Where relevant and feasible, broker technical assistance on specific thematic issues from strategic partners and experts.
- Ongoing data production and research to identify trends, examples and emerging practices that can be adopted and adapted across contexts, and curation and creation of learning content on thematic policy areas, including webinars and case studies from across the Partnership and OGP partners.



## Countries

*In 2021, over 100 OGP members at the national and local levels will be co-creating new action plans, many of which were delayed from 2020 due to COVID-19. The main goal for 2021 is to support the inclusive co-creation of ambitious action plans that aim to tackle major challenges facing member countries and address the 2021 results areas, delivered before or at the 10th anniversary Summit.*

### Local level

OGP Local will continue to be a major focus, and has the potential in 2021 to showcase reforms that bring citizens and government closer together around public services and other local priorities.

- **Deliver up to 70 new OGP Local action plans** that are ambitious and contribute to the thematic OGP vision for 2021. This will be supported by a mentorship program to provide advice and support to government and civil society working on open local government, by the OGP Local Compass knowledge hub (see next bullet), and by assessing and testing applications and platforms to allow reformers to connect directly with each other. The IRM will provide guidance and resources to OGP Local members as they develop the monitoring mechanisms for their action plans.
- **Launch OGP Local Compass as the go-to knowledge hub** for local open government resources, relevant OGP and partner-developed content on open local government, contact information for government, civil society and other partners working on local open government, data and evidence, and guidance and learning materials. This is a pilot that will be rolled out for all OGP members in future years if successful.
- **Promote national-local collaboration** to strengthen multi-level governance of key policy areas and improve the strategic integration of local jurisdictions and commitments beyond OGP Local members into national action plans. This will be supported by a handbook with guidance, examples and different approaches to promoting national-local collaboration on open government through OGP national platforms, and providing virtual learning and peer exchange opportunities amongst countries.
- Develop **new narratives for storytelling** that can expand formats and editorial angles to showcase people, ideas and projects in order to bring more creativity, inspiration and support for OGP Local members. Inspiring stories can demonstrate the potential for more open and participatory local government to build trust with citizens, and provide opportunities for direct citizen engagement on public services.
- Develop **opportunities for global governance and development institutions** to work with OGP Local on local open government through joint activities and strategic partnerships.

### National level

OGP will continue the approach of providing intensive support to a subset of **focus countries**, based on an assessment of needs and opportunities to empower country reformers to better use the OGP platform to showcase results in thematic priorities and 2021 results areas.

- Focus countries under consideration for 2021 include (largely following the 2020 selection): **Armenia, Colombia, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Latvia, Mexico, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Senegal, South Africa, South Korea, and U.S.A.**



- As a pilot in 2021, OGP will also provide focused support to a set of members from **Eastern Europe and the Caucasus** (Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan), through support and funding of the EU4Integrity program of the European Commission. This will include a specific emphasis on innovation and building communities of practice around anti-corruption, justice, and public services.

In 2021, OGP will further **refine its approach to focus countries**, which currently involves providing deeper strategic advice and support to government and civil society, engaging SC members and donors to support country strategies, in-depth analysis and insights from the IRM, advanced co-creation and implementation support, and communications support. Specifically this will include:

- **Group-based structured learning and peer exchange opportunities** to improve co-creation, including co-creation planning, commitment design, deliberation and prioritization, gender and inclusion mainstreaming, and monitoring and evaluation processes within OGP national dialogues and fora, with the aim of bringing co-creation processes in these countries to a standard that can be exemplary for the rest of the partnership. This will be done by bringing in relevant experts and practitioners, process facilitators, and the IRM into the design and delivery of these programs. Given the travel and convening restrictions due to the ongoing pandemic, and learning from ways of working in 2020, this work will primarily be delivered online and will engage non-focus countries where there is an opportunity, appetite and capacity to receive such support. Where available, programs like the EU4Integrity Program (for the Eastern Partnership countries) or PAGOF2 (Programme d'Appui aux Gouvernements Ouverts Francophones - for the West African Francophone countries) will be leveraged to provide a package of advanced services to countries.
- **Group-based thematic support and coalition building** through peer exchange, action learning, and coalition-building support to countries pursuing common reforms through their OGP commitments, particularly in the 2021 results areas, with the help of thematic partners, peer countries, and development partners. These will include both high-level political meetings and technical meetings to build momentum for progress that can be showcased at the 2021 Global Summit.
- Support the **development of country communications plans and strategies** that can be activated on-the-ground to support awareness raising on OGP and open government and secure engagement in OGP from relevant stakeholders.
- Where clear opportunities exist, **working with partners to promote an open state approach** by deepening engagement of the legislature, judiciary and local governments in national OGP processes, and encouraging them to take complementary action in the 2021 results areas.

### **Universal services to all countries**

- The major focus in 2021 in improving the universal services available to all members will be on **updating the OGP mechanism and rules, and improving tools and guidance** to ensure that the rules incentivise great ambition, inclusion and relevance of action plans, are light touch and flexible, and that reformers are equipped with better guidance to be able to use OGP to respond the biggest societal challenges. This will include:
  - **Streamline and simplify the OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards** to remove redundancies, raise the bar on required standards, and allow for flexibility



to adapt guidance to specific country contexts. The IRM will ensure new products adapt to the adjusted and approved standards.

- **Develop a flexible, multi-year action plan model**, under the leadership of the Criteria & Standards subcommittee, to enable greater flexibility on the length of action plans, delivery deadlines, and implementation dates in order to better align to electoral and budgetary cycles, while ensuring active engagement of civil society and other stakeholders throughout the action plan cycle.
  - **Update existing guidance materials** to make them more user-friendly and accessible, once changes to rules and processes are approved. Unlocking key guidance through the website will be critical for this.
  - **Revise the Legislative Openness Policy** to ensure a more systematized engagement of parliaments in delivering key open government reforms, including in the 2021 results areas.
- **OGP will also refine its universal support offer**, which includes providing basic OGP guidance and support to governments and civil society organizations in all member countries to successfully use the OGP platform, producing timely IRM assessments and advice, helping ensure the continuity of the OGP agenda in at-risk countries or countries undergoing political transition, and facilitating peer exchanges. In 2021, this will include:
    - **Transitioning to a more group-based support and peer exchange model** for meeting OGP rules and requirements, understanding and using IRM assessments to inform co-creation and implementation of action plans, taking OGP co-creation processes online, addressing common thematic priorities, and socialising the global campaign and the support available to countries to embed the campaign's objectives within their OGP national processes and plans. This will be done with the support of relevant partners, practitioners and SC members.
    - **Better engaging resources** including the SC, OGP's Action Network (composed of OGP Envoys, Ambassadors and the newly launched Leaders Network) and partners to enable them to directly support members and lead on outreach to countries at-risk or undergoing political transition.
    - **Launching the 2021 OGP Survey** as a health check of the partnership and to solicit ideas from the global community, including government POCs and civil society organizations for how OGP can continue to deliver for all of our stakeholders and keep them inspired and engaged as OGP approaches its 10th Anniversary.
    - **Producing timely new IRM products and delivering a dissemination strategy** to inform the co-creation of 100+ Action Plans and OGP@10. This includes Action Plan Reviews for 2020-2022 action plans and adapted Results Reports for action plans that finalized implementation in 2020 and 2021. The IRM will also host a second edition of its flagship dissemination event, "IRM Week". This event aims to create a space for dialogue and reflection on IRM findings from 2021 with a country, regional and thematic focus.

### Regional priorities

- In **Europe**, continue to build stronger collaboration with European Institutions and connect to EU policy, leveraging the Open Government Network for Europe and EU Council Presidency (Portugal). Use G20 (Italy) and G7 (UK) Presidencies to position OGP, and ensure connections to Italy's forthcoming co-chair priorities. Foster sub-regional



networks in collaboration with relevant bodies, including the Regional School of Public Administration for the Western Balkans and the Nordic Council for the Nordic+ region. Explore potential sub-regional cooperation in Western Europe. Develop thematic networks/peer exchanges on lobbying regulation, beneficial ownership and digital governance. Build on 2020 success of smaller virtual (thematic) gatherings.

- In **Africa**, work with regional institutions such as the Africa Peer Review Mechanism, PAGOF, UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the African Development Bank to secure high-level political and technical support for open government. Explore a series of at least three (sub)regional (virtual) convenings to support thematic focus with leadership from SC members (civil society, Governments of Nigeria and Kenya) on beneficial ownership, open contracting, service delivery, access to justice, and civic space as cross-cutting issues for political and process progress in the region.
- In **Asia Pacific**, work with government and civil society from South Korea to prepare for the 10th anniversary OGP Global Summit in 2021; specifically (i) identify how it can be used for building political momentum for OGP in the region, and map a pipeline of government and civil society thought leaders and innovators to engage in OGP efforts at country, and regional levels; (ii) work with partners to facilitate peer exchange and learning and technical on focus themes in the region (fiscal openness, justice and open contracting); (iii) provide opportunities for civil society to strategize and mobilize on using the OGP platform for addressing civic space challenges, leveraging the prioritization of civic space by the OGP Co Chairs; and (iv) undertake preparatory work and convene key stakeholders to identify and explore entry points for advancing digital governance both in high-income and developing countries in the region.
- In the **Americas**, continue work with civil society groups to reshape the value proposition for civil society in a changing political context for OGP in the region; support development and implementation of ambitious commitments in strategic regional themes of anti-corruption (open contracting and beneficial ownership transparency), justice, and by working on Escazu Agreement commitments: climate and civic space; and build on the success of 2020 regional pilots such as virtual sub regional gatherings, communities of practice, stage zero meetings, and close collaboration with regional allies like Charities Aid Foundation, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Inter-American Development Bank, Organization of American States, OECD, and the World Bank.

## Commitments

*In 2021, there are three main objectives for OGP's work at the commitment level. First, to support the implementation of a small number of potentially high impact and thematically relevant commitments to help them across the finish line. Second, to tell results stories of commitments that can inspire the partnership. Third, to continue developing tools, guidance and support to all OGP members looking to improve their commitment implementation rate.*

### Focus commitments





- In 2021, the OGP SU will identify and provide advanced support, which includes: group-based or individual support, and a combination of technical support provided by OGP's thematic partners, the OGP SU and IRM or from multilateral organizations; high-level political outreach and engagement to ensure reformers have the necessary political backing to implement the commitment; communications services to provide visibility and accountability for the commitments' progress, inspire others, and give recognition to the stakeholders/champions that delivered it; learning, adaptation and coalition building support; and where possible, broker additional financial support for the implementation of the commitment through multilateral or development partners, and encourage governments to allocate budgetary resources.
- Focus commitments for 2021 are listed below. This list largely continues 2020 focus commitments (**Armenia, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Ghana and Panama**) with the addition of **Mexico, North Macedonia and South Africa**. Additional candidates will be considered during the year, including commitments resulting from the OR+OR campaign and those relevant to other 2021 results areas:

Country/ Local	Thematic Area	Commitment Description
Armenia (non-MDTF)	Beneficial Ownership	Develop and implement a common mechanism for identifying the real owners of companies operating in Armenia, by creating and launching a comprehensive open and freely accessible register of beneficial ownership.
Burkina Faso	Citizen Engagement	Enhance the national complaint tracking system with the goal of sharing more and better information by policy makers and raising citizens' awareness on how government agencies respond to concerns they have submitted.
Nigeria	Beneficial Ownership	Enhance transparency in Nigeria's business environment by creating a publicly accessible register of beneficial ownership that will contain information on ownership structures of companies in the country.
Sekondi Takoradi, Ghana	Public Service Delivery (Water and Sanitation)	Strengthen the model of collaboration between the Metropolitan Assembly and landlords to address sanitation challenges related to provision of household toilets in underserved communities.
Panama (High-income)	Open Contracting	Create capacities in different sectors of society on the regulation and use of the country's contracting portal to increase demand for and use of information disclosed and lead to an overall increase in transparency and accountability with contracting entities.



Mexico	Surveillance (Civic space, digital governance)	Establish a multi-sectoral mechanism to develop public policy regarding the use of technology for the intervention of private communications, access to preserved data and geolocation, and to make proposals to modify regulatory and operational frameworks in both federal and state levels to avoid abuse or illegal use of this type of technology from governmental institutions.
North Macedonia	Open Justice	A set of commitments to be adopted in spring 2021 will focus on: improving the electronic judicial portal of North Macedonia; strengthening the quality and availability of data and information on the functioning of the Judicial Council; and strengthening the supervisory role of the Judicial Council on the transparency of the courts. Commitments will also unify the structure of court reports and data quality, and improve the electronic system for training of judges.
South Africa (Upper middle income)	Stimulus monitoring	Develop tools and mechanisms that empower citizens to monitor massive government interventions and stimulus safety net packages in the context of COVID-19.

- In addition to the above focus commitments, 10 results stories will be developed in 2021 that show countries making progress on OGP's thematic priorities for dissemination at the OGP Global Summit. Initial candidates include open contracting from Kyrgyz Republic, gender from Afghanistan, public services from the Philippines, access to justice from Senegal, environmental rights from Ecuador, and a set of commitments on lobbying transparency from Europe (e.g. Estonia, Finland, Latvia).
- The OGP SU will also explore additional vehicles to support the co-creation and implementation of high impact commitments in conjunction with partners and funders.

### Universal Services

To support stronger design and implementation of OGP commitments across all OGP member countries and locals in 2021, the OGP SU will:

- Better track OGP outcomes, impacts, and lessons to support members designing and implementing stronger commitments in the future.
- Share commitments with transformative potential with funders and encourage them to consider providing financial and technical assistance (where required).
- Run a crowdsourcing initiative to surface bottom-up results stories to complement results identified through the IRM assessments.

## Global Advocacy

*2021 will see a string of high-profile global summits and events themed around democracy and open government, including with the active engagement of the new US administration. Our goal is to position OGP as a key partner for each, to ensure commitments made on the global stage are translated into OGP action plans, to help connect the dots between different initiatives, and to ensure the 10th anniversary Global Summit is an effective action-forcing moment as the culmination of these events in 2021.*



## **OGP Global Summit**

- The overall objective of this 10th anniversary OGP Global Summit is to galvanise the open government community with fresh energy, political commitment, evidence, and support to build a stronger global movement for open government and democracy, and to position OGP for greater impact in the next 10 years. The Global Summit provides an opportunity to secure the political recommitment of heads of state and government, ministers, and civil society leaders to use OGP membership to advance ambitious open government reforms; showcase brightest light examples of the coalition; and push for delivery of the 100+ 2021 action plans.

## **Global Advocacy and Positioning**

- In 2021 there are several major global events related to revitalizing global democracy and tackling corruption, including UNGASS, Italian G20, UK G7, SDGs, IODC, IACC, U.S. Summit for Democracy (TBC), and the OGP Global Summit. This is a unique opportunity for OGP to forge stronger links between these multilateral moments and priorities made across these global forums so they do not risk operating on parallel tracks, fragmenting inter-governmental efforts. The objective is to position OGP as an implementation and accountability mechanism to translate global commitments into country-level action, and to showcase innovative reforms on the global stage.
- Work with the OGP Co-Chairs on the partnership-wide call to action in early 2021.
- Continue to hold smaller regional meetings and targeted thematic events aimed at building coalitions across government and civil society in different policy areas. Recognizing the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these will be hosted as virtual or hybrid events.
- Support advocacy campaigns by creating new value-add narratives, supporting coalitions, developing clear event goals and objectives, and aligning research, knowledge case studies and stories.
- Strengthen existing & forge new partnerships with multilateral organizations to expand the reach of OGP engagement, advocacy activities and help mobilize support to strengthen open government reforms across OGP members.
- Implement the new Action Network strategy to better leverage OGP's external allies composed of Ambassadors (high level public figures that help with the international policy landscape and raising the global profile of OGP), Envoys (former OGP SC members who help with international networking, advice on strategic initiatives, and sharing expertise and learning), and the pilot Leaders Network (groups composed of government teams and civil society organization working on cutting edge reforms).

## **Communications and Campaigns**

- Ensure the continued relevance and resonance of Open Response + Open Recovery by expanding to a third phase focused on reform and renewal (as outlined in the Global Campaign section above) and ensure integration across OGP communications products such as social media, website, blogs, newsletter, etc.
- Pilot socially-distanced and sustainable story collection processes with the goal of collecting 10 signature stories by the 2021 Global Summit. Stories to be featured on re-envisioned Citizengage storytelling platform; include new crowdsourcing feature.
- Launch OGP Awards in partnership with the OGP Learning and Innovation (L&I) team to incentivise ambition, and community crowdsourcing initiatives to surface bottom-up



innovation in OGP. In 2021, OGP will redesign the OGP awards to recognise the “best of” the last decade and incentivise new ambition ahead of the 2021 Global Summit. OGP will also launch initiatives to crowdsource community success stories for further dissemination within the partnership.

- Streamline editorial calendar and events, especially aligned with the 2021 Summit, to create media moments and advance country specific narratives through pro-actively planned media and digital opportunities.
- Coordinate a virtual Open Gov Week in late March, that will help ensure the 100+ OGP members co-creating action plans in 2021 have started their action plan process.
- Continue development and expansion of the Comms Network to better streamline OGP’s communications outreach, work more efficiently with partners, and find opportunities for collaboration.

### Leadership and Governance

- Leverage the SC participation in global platforms and initiatives to serve as inspiring amplifiers of the open government agenda, and position OGP as an implementation mechanism. This includes making closer linkages between OGP and the open government reforms being championed by SC members.
- Amplify the high-level participation of SC members through targeted engagement of HOS/G and ministers in activities leading up to the 2021 Global Summit. This includes organizing ministerial-level SC convenings, and institutionalizing the role of the ministries of foreign affairs from SC governments in OGP.
- Support the SC’s governance role, including managing the SC and subcommittee agendas and convening issue-specific activities to gather strategic input and inform timely decision-making. This includes informing the SC of key developments, data-based trends and lessons learned, and innovative reforms happening across OGP. A light-touch check-in of OGP’s governance arrangements will be coordinated to identify any potential changes for 2022 onwards.
- Provide targeted support to the SC Co-Chairs to fulfill their leadership role and implement ambitious agendas that reinforce OGP’s strategy. This includes working with future Co-Chairs to ensure continuity and building on ongoing SC efforts.

## Universal Platform

*All OGP members can benefit from the wealth of knowledge, learning and data that OGP has amassed over its first 10 years. In 2021 the goal is to make OGP a much stronger hub for members to use for learning purposes, to showcase lessons from the first 10 years and to share the findings of OGP’s first country level independent evaluation. In addition, the rules of the game for all members will be updated to ensure incentives are correctly aligned to maximize the ambition, inclusiveness and relevance of action plans.*

### Communicate OGP’s impact

- **OGP Vital Signs and Contributions:** Present the latest trends, evidence and learning on how government and civil society are using OGP to have the most impact possible, and make recommendations for the partnership to have more impact in its second decade. In particular, the Vital Signs series, a data-driven look at what is working and what is not in OGP, will seek to reflect the quickly growing evidence base around the following



questions: How does a successful multi-stakeholder approach contribute to reform results? Can OGP reforms help explain variation in results across different policy areas? To what extent did the OGP process, community, and SU/IRM contribute to results? The outputs of this work will include a major document on OGP results after 10 years, a thorough technical paper and subsidiary communications materials.

- **OGP evaluation:** The multi-donor funded evaluation of OGP will come to an end in November 2021. The evaluation focuses on how OGP is contributing to design and implementation of reforms in three policy areas: beneficial ownership transparency, open contracting & citizen engagement in 7 OGP members: **Nigeria, Kenya, Ukraine, Colombia, Philippines, South Cotabato and Elgeyo Marakwet County**. The focus on a small set of policy areas and countries will allow deeper insights into specific strategies and parts of OGP's theory of change that have worked, and areas where OGP continues to face challenges. The findings of the evaluation will come at the cusp of OGP's 10th anniversary.

## Research and Knowledge

- Produce practical resources & research for stakeholders through:
  - **Practitioner resources:** Produce a set of do-it-yourself practitioner guides that help reformers design and implement action plans. These would include diving deeper into the 'how' of co-creation and implementation by promoting design thinking and problem identification, stakeholder mapping, identifying capacity gaps, building delivery teams and getting to quick wins.
  - **State of evidence reviews:** Continue curating, stimulating, and presenting new research on the effectiveness of open government reforms for use by OGP stakeholders.
- **Increase accessibility and use of knowledge products** by making OGP's wealth of data, research, knowledge and stories at the local and national level, thematic and global level much more easily accessible to users from across the partnership through a redesign of public-facing resource pages, member pages, and guidance.
- Strengthen internal knowledge management through:
  - **Reform tracking:** Utilize and strengthen the tracking of OGP results to pull together fit-for-purpose examples of evidence. To do this, the staff will strengthen the OGP Reform Catalog, which links major OGP reforms across action plans and centralizes resources (stories, evaluations, analysis) in one place.
  - **Data management and retrieval:** Emphasize the importance of being more informed and having the right tools, so that the OGP SU and IRM can help OGP members identify policy areas to build a better version of democracy post-COVID-19, by:
    - Providing and improving core data services, including data entry and tagging, quality control, and organization and visualisation of information included in OGP action plans and IRM reports.
    - Tracking, maintaining, and disseminating a database of case studies on open government reforms, and implementing a system for tracking the contribution of the OGP platform, the OGP SU, and IRM in helping countries strengthen the adoption, adaptation, and implementation of open government reforms.



## Operations and Fundraising

*With the multiple crises of 2020, it has become more important than ever for OGP to invest in the foundation of the organization through its staff processes and institutional structures, in order to strengthen resilience and stay agile in the face of uncertainty and change. OGP's 10th anniversary is also an important moment to put the organization on sustainable financial footing for the next several years, in support of the 2021 objectives and beyond.*

- Organize a 2021 OGP donor pledging meeting in the run-up or at the 2021 OGP Global Summit, to encourage (i) recommitment from current donors; (ii) new commitments from bilateral aid agencies and foundations that haven't supported OGP in the past; and (iii) an increase in the total amount received from annual country contributions. This fundraising strategy will also look to leverage funders interested in specific thematic or geographic programs, including OGP Local.
- Within the context of the COVID-19 global pandemic, OGP will work to ensure adequate infrastructure for evolving working arrangements, mitigate the financial implications of COVID-19 on staff and the organization, and promote staff physical and mental well-being.
- Deepen OGP's staff capacity through professional development, including heightened sensitivity to issues related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, drawing upon the DEI internal working group established in 2020.

