

Open Government Partnership

Steering Committee Working-Level Meeting Minutes

14 & 15 December 2020 | Virtual

Welcome & introduction

Commenced 07:04 EST, December 14

The meeting was opened by the Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee (SC), the Government of South Korea and Maria Baron, Global Executive Director of Directorio Legislativo. The Co-Chairs recognized the challenges of 2020, many of which will continue into 2021 and beyond, and the opportunities for open government values in moving forward and building back better post-COVID-19. The Co-Chairs also extended a welcome to the new members of the SC: Blair Glencorse, Stephanie Muchai, Anabel Cruz, Oluseun Onigbinde, and the government of Kenya.

Session 1: State of the Partnership, opportunities for OGP in 2021

Reference Material: [2021 Draft Work Plan](#)

During this session, the OGP CEO Sanjay Pradhan presented an overview of the vision for 2021, including Partnership-wide objectives, and ways to leverage the unprecedented opportunities in the coming year such as the 100+ action plans that are due, OGP's 10th anniversary, the next phase of the Open Response + Open Recovery (OR+OR) campaign focused on "Renew" or "Reset" (TBC), and the Global OGP Summit in Seoul in Q4.

This session also focused on the vital leadership role of the SC. In early 2021, the Co-Chairs will issue a Call to Action to challenge the full Partnership to make at least one new ambitious commitment in 2021. The commitment should use open government approaches like anti-corruption, digital, and civic space to tackle the major global challenges and build a better version of democracy for a post-pandemic world. Globally, all OGP members are also called to mobilize and showcase a global coalition advocating open government and openness.

For the SC, this concretely means:

- At the **country level**, SC members role modeling ambition in each result area in their government or organization. Collectively, the SC can engage and lift up other countries to advance ambitious reforms in each region.
- At the **thematic level**, each SC member championing specific thematic areas and collectively support and strengthen existing, or lead and form new thematic coalitions.
- At the **global level**, each SC member leveraging global fora to help position OGP as an implementation platform. Collectively, the SC can help build high level political commitment and explore ways to engage ministries of foreign affairs.

Further explanation of the objectives and strategies of OGP in the coming year, as well as the events leading up to the Summit, can be found in the 2021 OGP Work Plan.

The OGP Support Unit (SU) also provided an overview of the 2021 Work Plan and planned activities at the country (including local), regional, thematic and global levels. The following sessions were structured around these components of the work plan to focus on the concrete



implementation of the workplan and receive feedback on specific areas. **After reviewing the draft Work Plan, the SC provided following feedback on the overall strategy for 2021 across both days of the meeting, which has been condensed here:**

- Civic space concerns continue to be one of the biggest issues for the partnership; the SU should ensure it has enough prominence both as a values issue and as a commitment area.
- Integrate the Leaders Network engagement as an important new asset across the work plan.
- Ensure monitoring, learning and evaluation components are properly explained, including opportunities to learn from vital signs work and OGP evaluation.
- Integrate more flexibility and scope for mitigation measures for continued COVID-19 disruptions.
- Carefully consider SU capacity in delivering the new work plan.
- There is a key role for the private sector in many of the thematic priorities.
- It is important for OGP to be more vocal, especially on policy issues that are organizational priorities.

The following feedback was provided on the **Country** strategy:

- Highlight ideas on how to make the OGP process more inclusive on both the government and civil society side more clearly.
- Look into what else OGP (both the SU and SC) can do to support civil society to secure funding to work on OGP processes.
- Consider using “challenge commitments” to be piloted in 2021 to address emerging issues (“challenge commitments” can be brought forward by either government or civil society, and agreed upon by the national forum, to be included in a live action plan to address emerging national priorities).

The following feedback was provided on the **Thematic** strategy:

- Specify the open government entry points for environmental topics including climate change and energy transition leading up to Conference of the Parties (CoP) in 2021.
- Strengthen the narrative around open gov and related thematic areas, and connect better across thematic silos.
- Use the Leaders Network more proactively for learning around using OGP, and on advancing issues.
- Maintain a connection to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a globally agreed framework.

The following feedback was provided on the **Global** strategy:

- Connect with the SDG “decade of action and delivery.”
- Consider CoP as another key global summit to link up with, beyond climate.
- Think through the strategies for G7 and G20 early, and advocate for specific campaigns and actions at each and between global moments, including how to support civil society campaigns and OGP Government priorities.
- Consider a bold statement or declaration for the OGP Global Summit done well in advance, and anchored in concrete actions.
- Use the opportunity of a hybrid OGP Global Summit format to be creative, and to bring in a broader community.
- Engage Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) in the activities leading up to the Summit, starting with SC members.

Following the meeting, the SU will continue to gather input from the SC about the upcoming



third phase of the OR+OR campaign, and will integrate feedback into the 2021 work plan draft, which will be sent in a final form with the minutes of the meeting.

Session 2: Leveraging the 100+ National and Local Action Plans in 2021

This session opened with a presentation of country-level data and learning from previous years to inform the approach for incentivizing ambitious action plans in 2021, given the opportunity around the expected delivery of 100+ action plans. Overall, ambition is OGP's dominant binding constraint, with a large design gap that prevents commitments from being considered 'ambitious'. To increase ambition in OGP Action Plans, especially important as we look toward the new plans due, recommendations were provided in improving the process through feedback and documentation, centralizing the coordinating institutions, and improving the presentation of the commitments.

The session then moved to an overview of the support that will be offered to national and local members next year. Due to the large number of action plans due throughout the year, support will be largely group-based and virtual, with a focus on improving the rules to be more flexible and clear, as well as a push on more peer-to-peer support. There will be a strong thematic focus on agreed priorities, and intense co-creation and implementation support in selected places.

The SU requested input from the SC on creative ways to support inclusive co-creation and ambitious commitments across the 100+ local and national action plans. The following feedback was provided:

- Involve the ministers responsible for the issues/commitments being advocated.
- Consider regional peer to peer support between POCs, as well as peer exchange opportunities between Multi-stakeholder forums (MSF), to complement 1-on-1 SU support.
- Provide guidance to ensure that all OGP members, including those not co-creating in 2021, can respond to the campaign and use their OGP fora to respond to the call to action.
- Consider creating space in the action plans for any pandemic-related actions taken with an open government lens.
- Consider integrating tech inclusion and rural connectivity as part of the digital governance thematic approach.
- In 2021, there is an emphasis on co-creation, with a strong set of incentives and support. Ensure that following delivery of action plans there is also strong support for implementation.

Session 3: Regional Breakouts

Reference material: [Regional reference sheets and guiding questions](#)

Following the presentation around the 100+ Action Plans and Local strategy in Session 2, the SC was divided into four regional breakouts to discuss region-specific strategies, highlighting challenges and opportunities, and specific actions that the SC could take within each region.

Africa & Middle East

Reference Material: [Powerpoint Presentation](#)



For next year the SU will focus attention on the basics of OGP standards for the Africa & Middle East. While the region has done well in co-creating ambitious action plans, implementation and keeping to the minimum standards of OGP and IRM remains a huge challenge. The proposed areas of focus in 2021 include raising the standard of the co-creation process (ensuring that countries meet the minimum standards and basic rules like repositories, submission of self-assessments), implementing commitments and powerful stories that showcase results, ensuring representation from heads of state in South Korea, and engaging the private sector. SC members emphasized:

- A need for a greater focus on civic space concerns in the region.
- The need to continue building strong collaborations with Pan-African institutions and regional partners.
- Considering country peer support and review opportunities where members can make recommendations to each other.

Americas

The SU expects the next year to be challenging within the Americas region. The SC was asked to help with high-level engagement within the region, and for advice in how to respond to rising civic space crises in Latin America. There is also a focus on engaging the new Biden administration in the US, for which the SC was asked for support to engage government and civil society actors. The SC provided the following suggestions:

- The SU should prioritize objectives for OGP in the region, , together with messaging, to enable the SC to consider possible entry points to help advance those goals in 2021.
- Streamlined messaging will be key to successful engagement of US government and civil society actors.
- The SC and SU must work together to make co-creation processes more inclusive, and help the OGP community tackle big challenges like civic space. To help do this, the SU will provide information on MSF membership to the SC.

Asia-Pacific

Two major challenges were identified in the region: a narrowing of civic space, and challenges around high-level engagement and restarting stalled processes. There will also likely be a further deterioration of financial situations of civil society organizations in the region, which will impact the capacity of those partners. The SC was requested to brainstorm how to best leverage the networks and resources in the region, and take advantage of opportunities presented by hosting the GOP Global Summit in the region, South Korea's Co-Chairship, and the new Local members in the region. The SU will share a roadmap of activities on civic space building up to the Summit, integrating ideas for activating youth around this issue digitally, and organizing national multistakeholder dialogues, and follow up with SC members on regional activities and fora they're engaging on beyond OGP. The SC provided the following suggestions:

- Civic space and road-to-Summit engagement should be built into the OGP Local strategy for the region.
- The SU will send resources including model commitments on civic space, civic entry points in other thematic areas, and regulations meeting international good practice.
- SC governments will help with outreach to countries with stalled OGP processes.

Europe

This session built on an earlier discussion with SC members in November around the objectives and direction of the work plan for the region. Suggestions from that discussion



included elevating procurement to a focus theme, convening a conversation on civil society funding, holding an online co-creation workshop. Some open questions remained around connecting the major fora in 2021, how to coordinate on the EU recovery plan, and what kind of regional community conversations are important in 2021. The SC provided the following suggestions:

- Consider developing a peer support plan to reduce the number of potential procedural review cases.
- Start working earlier on establishing synergies ahead of global events and fora to allow as much preparation time as possible.
- Identify and partner strategically with regional organizations on specific issues.
- Consider a working group model for SC collaboration for the Europe region to follow specific themes or issue areas throughout 2021.
- Strengthen peer-to-peer support during co-creation, including a community call on joint approaches/opportunities, and moments to share progress, particularly on themes.
- Work with France on preparing to build OGP into the 2022 EU Presidency agenda.
- Prepare more background/analysis on upcoming EU opportunities and legislation.

Session 4: Leveraging Thematic Opportunities + Breakouts

Reference material: [Thematic reference sheets and guiding questions](#)

This session opened with an overview of thematic progress within OGP which shows there is greater uptake in diversity of action plans (justice, inclusion, environment), seen in both countries and commitments. This uptake is the entry point into getting the theme into action plans, while recurrence between action plans creates the room for ambition to increase.

2021 is a critical opportunity to address the crises that the pandemic has exacerbated, and to reinvigorate the community to advance open government. The SC was asked to think through how to leverage the political leadership of the SC, individually and collectively, in order to support ambitious thematic commitments, advance cross-country norms, and forge and strengthen coalitions that advance these themes across the Partnership. The SC had the following feedback:

- Consider the infrastructure challenges that might be holding back thematic progress, rather than political buy-in.
- Consider a buddy system for countries with the same issues and interests to share experiences and lessons.
- Recognize that the new action plans are an opportunity to inject thematic ideas into the processes from the start.

The SC then split into breakout sessions on thematic focus areas (civic space, anti-corruption, and digital governance) in order to tackle each of these issues in a more focused manner.

Civic space

As a cornerstone of open government, the SC was asked to think through how to fully capitalize on the opportunities presented by the 100+ Action Plans and the upcoming Global Summit in order to advance this theme, as well as how to effectively advertise the benefit of civic space. SC governments were also called on to develop at least one commitment in civic space in 2021, which could be supported by analysis and support from partners like ICNL. All SC governments were asked to include at least one concrete commitment around civic space in their action plans. The SC provided the following feedback and next steps:

- Leverage the opportunity of the new 56 OGP local action plans to encourage greater



uptake of civic space commitments. To fully utilize this opportunity, ensure the right actors are included in conversations.

- There is a trust deficit between government and civil society that needs to be bridged. Developing solution-oriented narratives could be a more effective way to engage government counterparts.
- Journalists should be allies, and civic space discussions can be reframed into a positive discussion around positive and proactive defenses.
- Avoid putting civic space in a separate silo, and instead show how foundational and fundamental it is for improving service delivery and recovery.
- While partner organizations focus on addressing shorter-term actions like protection and response to violations in civic space, OGP is well-positioned to also incubate longer-term reforms to strengthen and protect open civic space.

Anti-corruption

Anti-corruption is a key policy area visible in many Action Plans across the Partnership, as well as a primary focus of the Co-Chairs. The SC was asked to consider how to best support the 100+ Action Plans as an opportunity to raise the ambition of anti-corruption reforms, encourage members to uptake anti-corruption themes in their plans, and how to link across the many global and regional opportunities throughout the year to take advantage of those key moments, and forge and strengthen coalitions across the Partnership. The SC provided the following suggestions:

- Identify a “portfolio” of issues that can be taken across the different global fora.
- Stronger narrative is needed to proactively link the anti-corruption agenda to COVID-19 recovery, inequality, and the erosion of democracy.
- Continue to broaden the base of stakeholders involved, including youth and private sector voices that can help advance anti-corruption reforms.
- Support CSOs to materialize their advocacy strategies and ideas into the new Action Plans.

Digital governance

Digital governance is still an emerging theme and has relatively few commitments within OGP, but there is a significant civil society push on this topic, and there are solid opportunities to make progress with the focus in 2021. Under the broader digital governance work, the SU will focus on data privacy and management, accountability of government’s use of digital technologies, accountability of digital technologies used for political communication, and online civic space. The SC had the following recommendations to push this work forward:

- Break down the big topic down into more manageable work streams.
- Demonstrate how open government tools are applicable across digital areas, and within the frame of OR+OR, such as open internet and regulating social media platforms.
- Speak to both the cultural and technical aspects of these issues, and create a set of tools that reformers can use to convince others in government and in other sectors.
- Work much more closely with the private sector (including with big tech), and help them bring their culture of openness to the public sector.
- Identify regional and global events where digital governance is addressed and where OGP participates or can take part in.

Session 5: Shaping OGP@10 global advocacy

Reference Materials: [OGP@10 special projects](#), [2021 Draft Work Plan](#)



This session provided an overview of the global fora on democracy and corruption taking place throughout 2021, and how the OGP can maximize these opportunities to position itself globally as an implementation platform and connecting tissue between these events. The OGP Global Summit in Seoul at the end of 2021 will serve as a culmination point where OGP can showcase concrete actions embedded in action plans resulting from these global events and other activities from its 2021 campaign. To do this, it was highlighted that OGP can play a unique role to:

- Translate global announcements and promises made by Heads of State/governments and ministers into concrete actions embedded in OGP action plans.
- Ensure that civil society is involved in the development of these reforms at the country-level and that it has a voice in these global events and summits.
- Provide an accountability and follow-up mechanism through the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM).
- Advance thematic coalitions of governments and civil society to implement reforms and advocate on the global stage.

The government of South Korea then presented an overview of the OGP 2021 Global Summit, to be held in late 2021 in Seoul. It was highlighted that a hybrid format - a combination of virtual and possible in-person participation - is being prioritized to ensure the engagement of multiple actors from OGP's membership despite the challenges for in-person gatherings presented by the ongoing pandemic. The agenda for the summit will be co-created, including SC engagement, and will have a focus on the three Co-Chair priority areas: civic space and public participation, anti-corruption, and digital innovation and governance.

The Government of Korea also provided a brief update on the recruitment of additional OGP Ambassadors in early 2021 to strengthen OGP's advocacy efforts and support positioning OGP in global fora. The shortlist of candidates reviewed by the Governance & Leadership Subcommittee will be sent to the full SC together with the minutes in order to check for any red flags before the candidates are approached in a prioritized sequence starting in 2021.

The SC provided the following ideas and feedback on how to effectively utilize the global events in the lead up to the OGP Global Summit:

- Start advocating to ensure OGP and/or open government is integrated in the agendas of global and regional events and summits as early as possible.
- Develop common messaging and ideas that can be used by OGP members participating in these events to articulate how OGP platform can be leveraged, and what linkages exist with OGP's vision and thematic focus areas.
- Clearly articulate the value add of OGP as a ready-made implementing mechanism.
- Draft a declaration or statement for the 2021 OGP Global Summit around the unique strengths of OGP as an action platform, and then merchandize it for maximum value throughout the year and beyond.

Session 6: Sign-off of the 2021 work plan and budget & financial health update

Reference material: [2021 Draft Work Plan](#), [memo to the SC on the 2021 budget](#), [2020 Q4 Country Contributions update](#)

The session opened with a summary of the input collected prior and throughout the meeting on the 2021 Work Plan, followed by a presentation on the 2021 proposed budget to support these activities. As part of this presentation, the SU provided an overview of the financial health of the Partnership, including an update on country contributions in 2020 as a core



strand of fundraising.

The Partnership expects to end 2021 with a 3 month reserve, but will organize a fundraising pledging moment to secure current funders and encourage new ones in order to maintain sustainable future finances. The SC was asked to help with a concerted effort to bring country contributions back to the level OGP received in 2019 ahead of the pandemic, by role modeling through their own country contributions.

The consolidated input on the work plan can be found on Session 1 of this document. The proposed budget can be found on page 37 of the [pre-meeting packet](#).

One area of feedback from the SC on the OGP fundraising plan was to ensure that it also made the case for supporting funding to the field as a whole, especially civil society working on OGP at the national and local level.

Decision:

- The OGP 2021 Work Plan was approved by the SC contingent upon incorporating the edits noted throughout the SC meeting.
- The 2021 budget was endorsed by the SC, and will be sent to the Board for final review and approval, pursuant to the Board's legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

The Chair of the Board, Mukelani Dimba, presented a brief overview of the board's responsibilities, provided the update that the previous year's audit came back with no recommendations or requests, and asked for volunteers from the SC to join the board ahead of the expected vacancies in 2021. Interested parties were asked to contact Mukelani Demba or Sanjay Pradhan.

Following the meeting, a written update of MDTF activities has been sent to the SC.

Following closing remarks, the meeting was adjourned on **December 15 at 10:07 EST.**



List of Attendees

Government Steering Committee Members

Government of Argentina

Carolina Cornejo Director of Open Government, Secretariat of Public Innovation
Nicole Grünbaum Advisor of International Affairs

Government of Canada

Mélanie Robert Executive Director, Open Government, Chief Information Officer Branch (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat)
Benoît Frenette A/Director, Open Government (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat)
Darine Benkalha Policy Analyst, Program Implementation and Intergovernmental Relations, Open Government, Office of the Chief Information Officer (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat)

Government of France

Henri Verdier Ambassador for Digital Affairs
Clémence Pene Direction interministérielle de la transformation publique

Government of Georgia

Ketevan Tsanova Head of the Public Administration Unit, Policy Planning and Coordination Department

Government of Germany

Sebastian Haselbeck Policy Advisor, Division for Digital State, Federal Chancellery

Government of Indonesia

Erie Febriyanto Head, Open Government Indonesia Secretariat

Government of Italy (Incoming Government Co-Chair 2021 – 2022)

Marco Marrazza OGP Advisor, Department for Public Administration

Government of Kenya

Philip Thigo Senior Advisor, Data, Innovation and Open Government, Office of the Deputy President
Patita Tingoi Secretary, Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of The Deputy President

Government of Nigeria



Clem Agba	Minister of State for Budget and National Planning
Stanley Achonu	Civil Society Advisor, OGP Nigeria
Chidinma Ilechukwu	Team Lead, Programs and Administration, OGP Nigeria

Government of Romania

Larisa Panait	Advisor and OGP Point of Contact, Secretariat General of the Government
Iulia Vodislav	Advisor to the Open Government Department and Relations Department, with Civil Society
Robert Lazaroiu	New Counselor, Secretariat General of the Government

Government of South Korea (Lead Government Co-Chair 2020 – 2021)

Junny Kim	Director-General
Yujin Lee	Deputy Director, Innovation Planning Division, Government Innovation Planning Bureau
Jihye Park	Assistant Deputy Director, Innovation Planning Division, Government Innovation Planning Bureau

Civil Society Steering Committee Members

María Baron (Lead Civil Society Co-Chair 2020 – 2021)	Directorio Legislativo
Helen Darbishire	Access Info Europe
Aiden Eyakuze (Incoming Civil Society Co-Chair 2021 - 2022)	Twaweza
Delia Ferreira Rubio	Transparency International
Blair Glencorse	Accountability Lab
Robin Hodess	The B Team
Lysa John	CIVICUS
Lucy McTernan	University of York
Stephanie Muchai	HIVOS
Elisa Peter	Publish What You Pay
Zuzana Wienk	White Crow



Anabel Cruz (Additional Steering Committee member) ICD Uruguay

Oluseun Onigbinde (Additional Steering Committee member) BudgIT

Observers and Additional Members have no voting rights, but are welcome to actively participate in Steering Committee discussions.

Additional Participants

Mukelani Dimba (Chair of the OGP Board of Directors) International School of Transparency

Rachel Hanna Access Info Europe

Martina Tombini Access Info Europe

Patricia Gonzalez Access Info Europe

Jameela Raymond The B Team

Michelle Volpin Directorio Legislativo

Noel Alonso Murray Directorio Legislativo

Demba Seydi Publish What You Pay

