

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Cabo Verde Design Report 2018-2020

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Executive Summary: Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde's first action plan comes in the context of the country's recent steps to open government. Through OGP, Cabo Verde committed to further reforms such as the establishment of an open data portal. Future co-creation processes should prioritize equal and ongoing engagement with civil society. Familiarity with OGP processes will contribute to more ambitious commitments aligned with OGP values in future action plans.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a global partnership that brings together government reformers and civil society leaders to create action plans that make governments more inclusive, responsive, and accountable. The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) monitors all action plans to ensure governments follow through on commitments. Cabo Verde joined OGP in 2015. This report evaluates the design of Cabo Verde's first action plan.

General overview of action plan

Cabo Verde's first OGP action plan follows recent measures to increase citizens' access to information and promote transparency and accountability. This includes the creation of new government institutions and the publication of budget information. Cabo Verde is one of Africa's best performing countries in quality of democracy and governance. While the action plan attempts to address some of these challenges, it would benefit from a clearer connection with OGP values and an increase in civil society involvement in the development process.

Led by the Office of the Prime Minister, Cabo Verde formed a government-led working group to create its first action plan. Although the group organized consultations with state and non-state actors, the plan primarily reflected government priorities, given limited input from civil society. The government could strengthen the process by improving the transparency of rules and decision-making, publishing OGP-related information, diversifying the co-creation process to include more non-state actors, and formalizing the group's mandate and functions.

Government leadership of the action plan design process led to commitments aligned with government objectives, such as addressing barriers to ease of doing business, infrastructure development, and data-sharing to foster innovation. Cabo Verde's most notable open government commitment is the promising launch of an open data platform.

Table 1. At a glance

Participating since: 2015
Action plan under review: 1
Report type: Design
Number of commitments: 3

Action plan development

Is there a Multistakeholder forum: Yes
Level of public influence: Consult
Acted contrary to OGP process: Yes

Action plan design

Commitments relevant to OGP values:	3 (100%)
Transformative commitments:	0
Potentially starred:	0

Table 2. Noteworthy commitments

Commitment description	Moving forward	Status at the end of implementation cycle
<p>3. Develop and Launch Open Data Platform</p> <p>Deploy an open data platform for the purpose of data visualization, research, and sharing with the public and across government agencies.</p>	<p>This commitment has the potential to significantly increase citizens’ access to information if fully implemented. For successful implementation, the government should convene a multistakeholder group with both government and nongovernment representatives to oversee implementation. This group can then consult with the public to determine the content, scope, and format of data to make public and prioritize. It may also partner with civil society to test the usability of the portal and conduct public outreach to increase citizens’ knowledge and use of the portal. Finally, the government can work with civil society to consider how this commitment can be adapted to the COVID-19 context. See the Open Gov Guide to Open Data for suggestions and examples.¹</p>	<p><i>Note: this will be assessed at the end of the action plan cycle.</i></p>

¹ A Guide to Open Government and the Coronavirus: Open Data. Open Government Partnership. 4 May 2020. <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/a-guide-to-open-government-and-the-coronavirus-open-data/>.

Recommendations

The IRM recommendations aim to inform the development of the next action plan and guide implementation of the current action plan.

Table 3. Five KEY IRM Recommendations

1. Establish a formal and inclusive multistakeholder forum and create an online OGP repository or website
2. Increase public consultation and civil society participation to identify commitments that address issues of national importance
3. Collaborate with civil society to design commitments relevant to OGP values
4. Collaborate with civil society to design ambitious, specific, and verifiable milestones
5. Increase outreach and awareness for the OGP process

ABOUT THE IRM

OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) assesses the development and implementation of national action plans to foster dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.

Edalina Rodrigues Sanches collaborated with the IRM to conduct desk research and interviews to inform the findings in this report. Edalina Rodrigues Sanches is Assistant Professor in African Politics at ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa.



I. Introduction

The Open Government Partnership is a global partnership that brings together government reformers and civil society leaders to create action plans that make governments more inclusive, responsive, and accountable. Action plan commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate action in an entirely new area. OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) monitors all action plans to ensure governments follow through on commitments. Civil society and government leaders use the evaluations to reflect on their own progress and determine if actions have made an impact on people's lives.

Cabo Verde joined OGP in 2015. This report covers the development and design of Cabo Verde's first action plan for 2018–2019.

The Independent Reporting Mechanism of OGP has partnered with Edalina Rodrigues Sanches of ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, who carried out this evaluation. The IRM aims to inform ongoing dialogue around development and implementation of future commitments. For a full description of the IRM's methodology, please visit <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/independent-reporting-mechanism>.

II. Open Government Context in Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde is one of Africa's best performing countries in terms of quality of democracy. The government should capitalize on its strong good governance foundation to take on ambitious open government aims in future action plans. Upcoming co-creation processes should prioritize dialogue with civil society to ensure that commitments reflect issues of national interest, such as anticorruption and the right to information.

Political Background

Cabo Verde joined the OGP in 2015. With a score of 92% in the OGP eligibility criteria (budget transparency, access to information, asset declaration, and citizen engagement), it is Africa's second best rated nation after Uganda, in 2017.²

The current government has been in office since the parliamentary elections of 2016. The party of *Movimento para Democracia* (MpD) won the election, and it replaced the *Partido Africano da Independência de Cabo Verde* (PAICV) that had been in government for 15 years. Regular and peaceful alternation of power between these two political parties has been a highlight in Cabo Verde's striking democratic trajectory.

Cabo Verde currently ranks 33 out of 178 countries in the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute Liberal Democracy index, which places the country not only among the top position in Africa but also above Western democracies such as Spain and Greece.³ The country's position is higher in the liberal (23), electoral (38), and egalitarian components (40) of democracy when compared with the deliberative (57) and participatory (90) components. Moreover, the country stands out in terms of the overall governance level (3 out of 54) in 2018 in the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, which measures safety and rule of law, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity, and human development.

Transparency and Access to Information

According to the Africa Integrity Indicators published by Global Integrity,⁴ Cabo Verdeans have limited access to information. There is no law granting citizens the right to request public information from state bodies. Most public entities "either don't have websites, or their websites are not updated." Citizens still need to pay the Official Gazette to access legislative records, and information on procurement contracts are out of their reach.⁵

The Government Program for 2016–2021 foresees measures that will increase transparency and access to information. The program highlights the need to implement an efficient legal information system that disseminates information of key legislation, notably with regard to fundamental rights and citizens' duties. The government has also pledged to make the internet more accessible to citizens, to transform Cabo Verde into "cyber islands," and to place Cabo Verde in the Top 50 of the World

² Open Government Partnership '2010–2017 OGP Eligibility Database,' <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/process/joining-ogp/eligibility-criteria/>

³ "Democracy for All?" – The V-Dem Annual Democracy Report 2018, https://www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/3f/19/3f19efc9-e25f-4356-b159-b5c0ec894115/v-dem_democracy_report_2018.pdf, p. 72.

⁴ Africa Integrity Indicators – Country Findings, <https://www.globalintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/All4-Findings-Cape-Verde.pdf>, p. 3

⁵ Africa Integrity Indicators – Country Findings, <https://www.globalintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/All4-Findings-Cape-Verde.pdf>

Bank's Doing Business Index.⁶ The country currently ranks 131 out of 190 countries.⁷ Some of the measures in the government program that are expected to improve the country's performance strive to make business documentation available online.

In August 2018, the government launched the Project to Improve Access to the Technological and Private Network of the State (RTPE).⁸ At the launch, the Secretary of the State for Innovation and Skills Mr. Pedro Lopes declared that the initiative aimed to improve access to information and to better serve citizens and those collaborating with the government at the central and local level. In yet another landmark step, in October 2019, the Parliament will discuss a draft bill on the Principle of Transparency in Public Administration in Cabo Verde. This bill was initiated by the PAICV, but it will be discussed in Parliament alongside other reforms the government has led.⁹ The reforms are intended to further increase transparency and the availability of information.

Civil Liberties and Civic Space

The absence of attacks on journalists, existence of exceptional media freedom, and the respect for fundamental political and civil liberties guaranteed by the Constitution are also key features of Cabo Verde. Freedom of the press has been improving since 2013, and Cabo Verde currently ranks 25 out of 180 countries in the 2019 World Press Freedom Index.¹⁰ Other fundamental rights are legally safeguarded both in law and in practice, namely the right to form parties, to campaign, to assemble, and to strike. Since 2017, several protests have occurred calling for increased decentralization and, more specifically, the creation of regions. About 10,000 people participated in a protest on 5 July 2019, Cabo Verde's Independence Day. In the aftermath, President Jorge Carlos Fonseca stated that it was important to listen to citizens' claims, while Prime Minister Ulisses Correia da Silva said that it was citizens' right to protest.¹¹

There are spaces and opportunities for citizens' political participation other than in elections. The law allows citizens to present candidates' lists in local elections, and since 2005, several municipalities have implemented participatory budget projects that involve citizens in the decision-making processes (public spending) at the local level. In 2017, the government gave citizens the opportunity to participate for the first time in the drafting of the state budget project for 2018. The citizens' proposals could be sent by email or on Facebook, and the minister of finance organized hearings and held meetings with organizations to listen directly to the proposals.¹²

Despite the global respect for democratic procedures and practices, Cabo Verdeans seem to be fairly dissatisfied with how democracy works in their country. According to the latest Afrobarometer survey, only 22% of the state report being fairly or very satisfied with the way democracy works.¹³

Accountability and Anticorruption

Cabo Verde is one of the best scoring countries in terms of the Corruption Perception Index, and went up three positions between 2017 and 2018. It currently ranks 45 out 180 with a score of 57¹⁴ and is thus the third best placed country in Africa after Seychelles and Botswana. Additionally, the 2019 Global Corruption Barometer Africa reveals that citizens in Cabo Verde (and Mauritius) think

⁶ Programa do Governo IV Legislatura, <https://www.iciieg.cv/images/phocadownload/Programa-do-Governo-da-IX-Legislatura-2016-2021.pdf>, p. 37

⁷ Doing Business 2019. Training for Reform: Economy Profile Cabo Verde, <https://www.doingbusiness.org/content/dam/doingBusiness/country/c/cabo-verde/CPV.pdf>

⁸ Projeto para a melhoria do acesso à Rede Tecnológica e Privativa do Estado (RTPE), <https://www.inforpress.cv/projecto-para-melhoria-do-acesso-a-rtpe-vai-melhorar-as-condicoes-de-quem-serve-os-cabo-verdianos/>

⁹ Radiotelevisão Caboverdiana, http://www.rtc.cv/index.php?paginas=47&id_cod=79978

¹⁰ Reporters Without Borders (RSF), <https://rsf.org/en/cabo-verde>

¹¹ Radiotelevisão Caboverdiana, http://www.rtc.cv/index.php?paginas=21&id_cod=21401

¹² Expresso das Ilhas, <https://expressodasilhas.cv/politica/2017/08/05/porta-entre-aberta-a-participacao-cidada/54225>

¹³ Afrobarometer online data analysis, <https://afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis/analyse-online>

¹⁴ Transparency International <https://www.transparency.org/country/CPV>

there is relatively little corruption in the public sector, with fewer bribes for public services.¹⁵ Despite this, 61% of the Cabo Verdeans think their government is doing a bad job of tackling corruption.

In 2017, the government presented a new law that enlarges the jurisdiction of the Court of Auditors and reinforces both its control over public finances and its technical and financial autonomy.¹⁶ The Regimento of the national assembly was also amended in 2017 to create a specialized Committee on Ethics and Transparency.¹⁷ In April of 2019, a New State Budget Law was approved defining the overall framework of its formulation, execution, approval, control, and accountability. In June, Deputy Prime Minister Olavo Correia announced the creation of the National Council for Public Finance and the Council for the Prevention of Corruption to increase transparency and good governance in Cabo Verde.¹⁸ Olavo Correia also declared that the government would “ensure that the Court of Auditors has access to the Integrated System of Budget and Finance Management (SIGOF) and all information on the processing of public resources in order to ensure maximum transparency and deliver results to citizens.”¹⁹

¹⁵ Global Corruption Barometer Africa 2019, https://www.transparency.org/files/content/pages/2019_GCB_Africa.pdf

¹⁶ Governo de Cabo Verde, <https://www.governo.cv/governo-aprova-proposta-de-lei-que-regula-organizacao-composicao-competencia-e-funcionamento-do-tribunal-de-contas/>

¹⁷ Terra Nova, <https://terranova.cv/index.php/actualidade/10-desporto/4979-novo-regimento-da-assembleia-nacional-conheca-as-novidades-do-diploma>

¹⁸ e-GLOBAL, Notícias em Português, <https://e-global.pt/noticias/lusofonia/cabo-verde/cabo-verde-governo-anuncia-criacao-de-conselho-nacional-de-prevencao-de-corrupcao/>

¹⁹ e-GLOBAL, Notícias em Português, <https://e-global.pt/noticias/lusofonia/cabo-verde/cabo-verde-governo-anuncia-criacao-de-conselho-nacional-de-prevencao-de-corrupcao/>

III. Leadership and Multi-stakeholder Process

Cabo Verde's first action plan is a notable achievement towards open government. To develop commitments, the Office of the Prime Minister formed a working group and held consultations. However, limited civil society participation resulted in an action plan that reflects government priorities. Future co-creation processes should prioritize an ongoing and equal dialogue between government and civil society.

3.1 Leadership

This subsection describes the OGP leadership and the institutional context for OGP in Cabo Verde.

The main government office to coordinate Cabo Verde's OGP participation is the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). Its mandate became legally binding in December 2017 following parliamentary approval of the country's OGP membership.²⁰ The OPM is responsible for maintaining executive oversight for the implementation of the action plan and coordinating tasks with ministries and other entities responsible for the management of commitments.²¹

The national point of contact (POC) is the chief of staff of the OPM. The POC is responsible for the implementation of the OGP process in Cabo Verde and for all external communications, including with the OGP Support Unit.²² Following Cabo Verde's official ascension as an OGP member in 2017, the government created a working group to elaborate the action plan and monitor its accomplishments.²³ The POC coordinates the working group, which includes OPM staff and representatives of relevant state and private sector institutions involved with the design and implementation of the action plan.

Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva has been involved in some high-level OGP meetings. In 2016, he attended the 4th OGP Global Summit in Paris from 7 to 9 December.²⁴ At this meeting, he presented the country's initiatives to promote government transparency and openness, namely making the Official Gazette available online and free of charge for citizens and increasing transparency in public administration, among other measures.²⁵ In September 2017, he visited OGP headquarters in Washington, DC, to meet OGP CEO Sanjay Pradhan and OGP Executive Director Joseph Powell.

The action plan states that the Council of Ministers will meet annually to formally assess the plan's execution and strengthen its connection to other key decision-making processes. It also states that the prime minister will publicly report the results of the plan within two years of its transmittal (by 2020).²⁶ So far, as reported by the POC, there have been no meetings specifically aimed at monitoring how the activities have evolved since the approval of the action plan in late 2018.²⁷ The POC indicated that since the commitments overlap with government priorities, they are monitored in the scope of ordinary government projects. The POC sees this step as a positive development resulting from the OPM leading the OGP process. At the time of writing, the POC notes that the first working group

²⁰ Resolução n.º 75/IX/2018 de 2 de março – Aprovação, para adesão, da Declaração do Governo Aberto (Open Government Partnership – OGP): <http://www.parlamento.cv/GDiploApro2.aspx?CodProposta=70286>

²¹ Cabo Verde 2018-2020 National Action Plan, accessible at: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Cabo-Verde_Action-Plan_2018-2020.pdf

²² It includes Joseph Powell (OGP executive director), Maureen Kariuki (OGP coordinator for Africa and the Middle East) and Theophilous Chiviru (the OGP government support and exchange officer for Africa)

²³ Cabo Verde 2018-2020 National Action Plan, accessible at: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Cabo-Verde_Action-Plan_2018-2020.pdf

²⁴ Governo de Cabo Verde: <https://www.governo.cv/primeiro-ministro-participa-na-4a-cimeira-global-open-government-partnership/>

²⁵ Governo de Cabo Verde: <https://www.governo.cv/ogp-primeiro-ministro-partilha-medidas-de-uma-governacao-aberta/>

²⁶ Cabo Verde 2018–2020 National Action Plan, accessible at: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Cabo-Verde_Action-Plan_2018-2020.pdf

²⁷ Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 July 2019.

meeting would take place in November or December 2019 and that CSOs would be invited to participate.²⁸

No budget is allocated exclusively to the OGP. The OPM budget funds all OGP-related activities (e.g., workshops, meeting, and dissemination). This budget also covers other government initiatives. A budget allocated exclusively to the OGP would help institutionalize the OGP process in the country and strengthen the government's decision-making. It would facilitate the setting of priorities and the execution of activities and help forecast their financial sustainability. Finally, it would allow a clearer separation between the OGP action plan and the government program. The OPM has about six staff members who are more directly involved with the OGP. They include consultants, translators, and civil servants.²⁹

Cabo Verde's OGP leadership benefits from clear organization and support within the government. However, there is an absence of nongovernmental participation in OGP leadership. The POC acknowledged that civil society engagement remains an important area for growth. Lack of CSO participation resulted in commitments that reflect government priorities and decision-making.

3.2 Multi-stakeholder process throughout action plan development

In 2017, OGP adopted the OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards intended to support participation and co-creation by civil society at all stages of the OGP cycle. All OGP-participating countries are expected to meet these standards. The standards aim to raise ambition and quality of participation during development, implementation, and review of OGP action plans.³⁰

OGP's Articles of Governance also establish participation and co-creation requirements a country or entity must meet in its action plan development and implementation to act according to OGP process.³¹ Cabo Verde **acted contrary** to OGP process because the working group did not include civil society members and because there is no evidence that the government provided feedback to civil society during the co-creation process. Additionally, the IRM researcher did not find evidence that the working group met at least four times per year.³²

Please see Annex I for an overview of Cabo Verde's performance implementing the Co-Creation and Participation Standards throughout the action plan development.

Table 3.2: Level of Public Influence

The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) "Spectrum of Participation" to apply to OGP.³³ This spectrum shows the potential level of public influence on the contents of the action plan. In the spirit of OGP, most countries should aspire for "collaborate."

²⁸ Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 July 2019.

²⁹ Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 July 2019.

³⁰ OGP Participation & Co-Creation Standards, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation-co-creation-standards/>

³¹ Open Government Partnership Articles of Governance. 2019. Accessible at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/articles-of-governance/>

³² Acting Contrary to Process – Country did not meet (1) "involve" during the development or "inform" during implementation of the NAP (2) government fails to collect, publish, and document a repository on the national OGP website/webpage in line with IRM guidance.

³³ "IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum," IAP2, 2014.

http://c.yimcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/foundations_course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum_FINAL.pdf

Level of public influence		During development of action plan
Empower	The government handed decision-making power to members of the public.	
Collaborate	There was iterative dialogue AND the public helped set the agenda.	
Involve	The government gave feedback on how public inputs were considered.	
Consult	The public could give inputs.	✓
Inform	The government provided the public with information on the action plan.	
No Consultation	No consultation	

Multi-stakeholder forum

In May 2016, the OGP Support Unit and the OPM organized a workshop in Praia, the country's capital on the island of Santiago. The workshop introduced OGP and gathered contributions for the action plan. The workshop involved members of the government—namely President Jorge Carlos Fonseca and Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva—and representatives of civil society and the public and private sectors.³⁴ The government and national OGP officials held a series of preparatory workshops in October 2016. These workshops provided space for discussion of Cabo Verde's overarching objectives, namely promoting good governance and democratic principles, strengthening and modernizing core structures to help achieve development, stimulating entrepreneurial spirit, and investing in human capital and innovation.³⁵

In 2017, the OPM designated a working group to identify possible commitments for the first action plan.³⁶ However, the working group fell short of its aim to provide a multistakeholder forum, as it only included representatives from government and the private sector. OGP activities were entirely led by the OPM and POC. The working group did, however, include representatives from each lead agency. These include the Competitiveness Unit of the Ministry of Finance (commitment 1); the Ministry of Infrastructure, Territorial Planning, and Housing (commitment 2); and the Operational Nucleus for Information Society (NOSi) and National Directorate for Telecommunication and Digital Economy (DGTED) (commitment 3).

Civil society engagement was not sustained throughout the action plan design process. Some civil society organizations accepted the government's invitation to participate during early stages. Consultation that did occur was often informal and lacked clear rules regarding procedure, timelines, and dialogue. Gradually, CSO engagement faded away.³⁷ The IRM researcher was unable to identify any CSOs that participated in the co-creation process. Consequently, the IRM researcher was unable to interview any civil society representatives prior to this report's publication. Interviews with civil society members may have revealed why they did not remain engaged in the co-creation process.

According to the POC, the short window of time to submit the action plan contributed to limited civil society participation and the working group's choice to focus on government priorities. The novelty

³⁴ Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 July 2019; Governo de Cabo Verde, <https://www.governo.cv/governo-organiza-workshop-ogp/>, OGP News, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/news/ogp-in-the-news-week-of-may-15-2017/>

³⁵ Cabo Verde 2018-2020 National Action Plan, accessible at: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Cabo-Verde_Action-Plan_2018-2020.pdf

³⁶ Cabo Verde 2018-2020 National Action Plan, accessible at: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Cabo-Verde_Action-Plan_2018-2020.pdf

³⁷ Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 July 2019.

of OGP processes also informed the working group's decision to begin with modest commitments.³⁸ The POC acknowledged that the lack of CSO involvement was a major challenge. The government is exploring avenues to increase CSOs' role in implementation of the action plan. For example, the OPM intends to identify a contact point in the *Plataforma das ONGs de Cabo Verde*³⁹ and to recruit a member of civil society to gauge the plan's follow through, support affiliated programming, and offer additional recommendations to improve civic participation.⁴⁰

Cabo Verde does not have an OGP website and did not engage in public outreach following the action plan's formation. Outreach for the first action plan was limited to a post on the OGP Facebook page.⁴¹ Cabo Verde has not yet created an OGP webpage, which could communicate the ongoing results, raise public awareness, and help maximize the OGP impact in the country. The POC stated that the country's OGP webpage is pending due to budgetary issues.⁴²

According to OGP's Articles of Governance, "OGP participants commit to developing their country action plans through a multistakeholder process, with the active engagement of citizens and civil society."⁴³ Member countries must meet the level of "involve" for public participation in the development of the action plan to comply with OGP processes. To achieve "involve," a government must (i) have a multistakeholder forum and (ii) provide a reasoned response as to what was included or excluded from the action plan.⁴⁴ Cabo Verde's working group did not include civil society members, beyond representatives from the private sector. The IRM researcher did not find evidence of an ongoing dialogue between the government and civil society. Therefore, the IRM did not find evidence that Cabo Verde met the OGP requirement to provide civil society and the public with a reasoned response. Thus, Cabo Verde acted contrary to OGP processes.

Next Steps

Cabo Verde achieved strong POC coordination and high-level political support. The country's first action plan provided a learning opportunity. Given the time constraints and the novelty of the process, only modest consultation efforts were made in the early stages of the process. There was no follow through of CSO contributions or institutionalized feedback mechanisms. To comply with OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards, the IRM researcher suggests the following:

- **Establish a multistakeholder forum:** the government must expand the working group to include equal representation of civil society and ensure that all members are selected through a fair and transparent process. The government should also broaden OGP consultation initiatives beyond the capital, including representatives from across islands and sectors. The IRM researcher also recommends setting up clear communication channels between ministries and CSOs. This could be done by identifying and formalizing the contact points on each side. The *Plataforma das ONG de Cabo Verde* could be a pivotal interlocutor in civil society, as it currently includes 298 organizations from eight of the 10 Cabo Verdean Islands.
- **Improving the MSF mandate:** the government should define clear and formal rules on who participates in the forum and how the deliberation process unfolds. This practice is crucial to increase transparency and trust in the decision-making process. In addition, it is important to define timetables for 1) meetings with stakeholders; 2) reporting the (interim) results of the actions carried out; and 3) duration of the consultation process. Finally, the instruments for collecting and documenting feedback – meetings, online forums, email, surveys. and so forth – should also be specified.

³⁸ Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 July 2019.

³⁹ Country Platform of NGOs (<https://www.platongs.org.cv/>)

⁴⁰ Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 July 2019.

⁴¹ "Cabo Verde delivered its first action plan last month committing to improving the delivery of public services, the development of an #OpenData platform, & the implementation of reforms to comply with the @WorldBank's Ease of Doing Business Index: <https://bit.ly/2HfY8Mb>."#

⁴² Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 July 2019.

⁴³ OGP Participation & Co-Creation Standards, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation-co-creation-standards/>

⁴⁴ IRM Guidance on minimum threshold for involve, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/IRM-Guidance-Involve.pdf>

- **Provide reasoned response:** the government should give priority to ongoing dialogue with civil society throughout action plan development. Contributions from the public and civil society as well as the government's response should be made public. The multistakeholder forum should also make public its reasoning for the final content of the action plan. The IRM researcher recommends two concrete steps to fulfill this OGP requirement, which includes 1) creating an OGP webpage to communicate progress and facilitate public engagement and 2) defining a communication plan. This plan could include a stronger social media presence and organized dissemination initiatives in partnership with CSOs on the different islands.

IV. Commitments

All OGP-participating governments develop OGP action plans that include concrete commitments over a two-year period. Governments begin their OGP action plans by sharing existing efforts related to open government, including specific strategies and ongoing programs.

Commitments should be appropriate to each country's/entity's unique circumstances and challenges. OGP commitments should also be relevant to OGP values laid out in the OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration signed by all OGP-participating countries.⁴⁵ The indicators and method used in the IRM research can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual.⁴⁶ A summary of key indicators the IRM assesses is below:

- **Verifiability:**
 - Not specific enough to verify: As written in the commitment, do the objectives stated and actions proposed lack sufficient clarity and specificity for their completion to be objectively verified through a subsequent assessment process?
 - Specific enough to verify: As written in the commitment, are the objectives stated and actions proposed sufficiently clear and specific to allow for their completion to be objectively verified through a subsequent assessment process?
- **Relevance:** This variable evaluates the commitment's relevance to OGP values. Based on a close reading of the commitment text as stated in the action plan, the guiding questions to determine the relevance are:
 - Access to Information: Will the government disclose more information or improve the quality of the information disclosed to the public?
 - Civic Participation: Will the government create or improve opportunities or capabilities for the public to inform or influence decisions or policies?
 - Public Accountability: Will the government create or improve public facing opportunities to hold officials answerable for their actions?
 - Technology & Innovation for Transparency and Accountability: Will technological innovation be used in conjunction with one of the other three OGP values to advance either transparency or accountability?
- **Potential impact:** This variable assesses the *potential impact* of the commitment, if completed as written. The IRM researcher uses the text from the action plan to:
 - Identify the social, economic, political, or environmental problem;
 - Establish the status quo at the outset of the action plan; and
 - Assess the degree to which the commitment, if implemented, would impact performance and tackle the problem.
- **Completion:** This variable assesses the commitment's implementation and progress. This variable is assessed at the end of the action plan cycle, in the *IRM Implementation Report*.
- **Did It Open Government?:** This variable attempts to move beyond measuring outputs and deliverables to looking at how the government practice, in areas relevant to OGP values, has changed as a result of the commitment's implementation. This variable is assessed at the end of the action plan cycle, in the *IRM Implementation Report*.

⁴⁵ "Open Government Partnership: Articles of Governance," OGP, June 2012 (Updated March 2014 and April 2015), https://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/attachments/OGP_Articles-Gov_Apr-21-2015.pdf

⁴⁶ "IRM Procedures Manual," OGP, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>

What makes a potentially starred commitment?

A potentially starred commitment has more potential to be ambitious and to be implemented. A good commitment is one that clearly describes the:

1. **Problem:** What is the economic, social, political, or environmental problem? Rather than describing an administrative issue or tool (e.g., ‘Misallocation of welfare funds’ is more helpful than ‘lacking a website.’).
2. **Status quo:** What is the status quo of the policy issue at the beginning of an action plan (e.g., “26 percent of judicial corruption complaints are not processed currently.”)?
3. **Change:** Rather than stating intermediary outputs, what is the targeted behavior change that is expected from the commitment’s implementation (e.g., “Doubling response rates to information requests” is a stronger goal than “publishing a protocol for response.”)?

Starred commitments

One measure, the “starred commitment” (★), deserves further explanation due to its particular interest to readers and usefulness for encouraging a race to the top among OGP-participating countries/entities. Starred commitments are considered exemplary OGP commitments. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:

- Potential star: the commitment’s design should be **verifiable**, **relevant** to OGP values, and have **transformative** potential impact.
- The government must make significant progress on this commitment during the action plan implementation period, receiving an assessment of **Substantial** or **Complete** implementation.

This variable is assessed at the end of the action plan cycle, in the *Implementation IRM report*.

General Overview of the Commitments

Cabo Verde’s first action plan includes three commitments that focus on business facilitation, urban development, and open data. All three commitments reflect government priorities and ongoing initiatives. Commitment 1 is relevant to the OGP value of access to information, as it makes some government-held information available to the public. Commitment 2 is relevant to the value of public participation, as the milestones include consultation with citizens. Commitment 3 is this action plan’s most ambitious open government initiative because it aims to establish Cabo Verde’s first open data portal.

I. Increase the Ease of Doing Business in Cabo Verde

Language of the commitment as it appears in the action plan:

“By 2027, Cabo Verde will have completed the necessary reforms and structural changes to earn a top-50 ranking on the World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business Index (...) Pursuing this commitment will contribute to a more open society by making it much easier for citizens to have access to credit, start a business, commence construction, pay/document taxes, and access an array of information and services online.”

Milestones:

1. Overarching milestones
 - a. Establish and empower Competitiveness Unit
 - b. Approach a top-100 ranking by 2020
 - c. Achieve a top-100 ranking by 2021
 - d. Continue to rise in rankings through 2022 and beyond
2. Improve online tax collection and documentation
3. Introduce a collateral registry and private credit bureau
4. Launch an online platform for starting a business
5. Launch a searchable platform for commercial licenses
6. Develop and execute a communication strategy for law of insolvency
7. Enact a new law to protect minority investors
8. Complete digital land registry for Praia/Santiago
9. Introduce a trade portal and a single form of trade procedures

Start Date: July 2018

End Date: July 2020

Editorial Note: the commitment description provided above is an abridged version of the commitment text; please see the full action plan [here](#).

Commitment Overview	Verifiability		OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion				Did It Open Government?				
	Not specific enough to be verifiable	Specific enough to be verifiable	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsened	Did Not Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
I. Overall		✓	✓					✓			Assessed at the end of action plan cycle.				Assessed at the end of action plan cycle.				

Context and Objectives

The government’s priority is to undertake critical reforms that lead to job creation, economic growth, and social inclusion. To this end, this commitment seeks to improve the country’s business framework, which includes implementing technology innovations, improving access to information, and instituting legislation updates. Milestones aim to develop tools to collect

data on taxes, business platforms, land and collateral registries, and make information on business procedures and processes more available to citizens.

As stated in the action plan, the main problem this commitment seeks to address is Cabo Verde's high rate of unemployment and relatively weak economic growth over the past decade. According to the World Bank, GDP growth rates in Cabo Verde averaged 2.6% between 2010 and 2018 against 7.2% in the period of 2000 to 2009. Unemployment rates increased from 11.1% (2000–2009) to 11.8% (2010–2018).⁴⁷ Cabo Verde received a score of 53.4 in both 2016 and 2017 for ease of doing business.⁴⁸

The commitment milestones are specific enough to be verifiable. The activities are clearly stated, notably to improve online tax collection and documentation, to enact specific laws, and to launch an online platform for starting a business. Verifiability can thus be assessed by determining whether the online tools were created and laws enacted. How to measure progress on the development and implementation of the communication strategy for the law of insolvency is less clear (milestone 6). It is clear that these milestones will contribute to a high ranking in the Ease of Doing Business Index. However, it is less apparent how they will contribute to Cabo Verde's economic challenges and low employment rate as described in the commitment text. A closer connection between the milestones and the overall policy objective would have raised this commitment's level of ambition.

Several milestones in this commitment are not directly related to the open government values of transparency, civic participation, or public accountability. These include milestones 1, 2, 7, and 9. Milestone 1 aims to establish a Competitive Unit (CU) under the Ministry of Finance.⁴⁹ The unit will be responsible for the inter-sectoral coordination of policies to improve the country's ranking in the Ease of Doing Business Index. According to Luis Teixeira, the government point of contact for this commitment, the Unit aims to make public procurement more transparent and to improve the legal environment for doing business.⁵⁰ The unit's mandate will include revising the business registration law, companies' law, insolvency law, and movable property guarantee laws.⁵¹ Milestone 2 seeks to improve online tax collection and documentation to encourage companies to pay their taxes online. Luis Teixeira reports that only 3% of the companies currently pay their taxes online. The government intends to work with the private sector and professional associations to increase online tax payment.⁵² Although Milestone 7 is not related to the three OGP values this report assessed, this milestone may be relevant to open government if it promotes the inclusion of citizens otherwise not typically included in government processes.

A handful of milestones under this commitment are tangentially related to the OGP value of access to information. These milestones seek to make government-held information accessible to the public through online portals and communication strategies. However, it should be noted that the information to be made public is only useful to highly specific segments of the population, such as legal and business professionals. This is true of milestone 3, which intends to make a public collateral registry. Milestone 4 seeks to improve online platforms to make starting a business easier and increase citizens' awareness of online business resources, such

⁴⁷ Cabo Verde. National Action Plan. 2018-2020. https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Cabo-Verde_Action-Plan_2018-2020.pdf

⁴⁸ World Bank. Ease of doing business historical data. <https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/custom-query>

⁴⁹ The Competitive Unit was established in April 2018. The implementation of these milestones will be assessed in future IRM reports.

⁵⁰ Interview with Luis Teixeira, special adviser to the prime minister and executive director of the Competitiveness Unit, 17 November 2020.

⁵¹ The Competitive Unit shares its projects and results on the country's Doing Business Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/CVDoingbusiness>

⁵² Interview with Luis Teixeira, special adviser to the prime minister and executive director of the Competitiveness Unit, 17 November 2020.

as ProEmpresa.⁵³ Under milestone 5, the government aims to make commercial licenses publicly accessible on existing platforms.⁵⁴ Milestone 6 seeks to raise awareness of Cabo Verde's Insolvency Law, which was approved in 2016 but is poorly enforced. Therefore, the government's communication strategy targets entrepreneurs, judges, accountants and lawyers to increase understanding of the law.⁵⁵

Finally, under milestone 8, the government intends to create a public land registry. After collecting and digitizing the data, the government plans to make land data for Praia, Santiago, accessible online through the Registry, Notary, and Identification webpage. This milestone is intended as a pilot program that will then be extended to other locations and islands. Milestone 9 seeks to make a publicly accessible portal for trade information. As a result of these milestones, this commitment may change open government practices by increasing citizens' access to business information.

This commitment is expected to result in minor changes to the ease of doing business in Cabo Verde. The commitment clearly outlines the policy problems to be addressed. These problems are slow economic growth, bureaucratic obstacles for businesses, and high unemployment rates. The milestones listed begin to address the general business environment. However, it is not clear exactly how the milestones respond to the problems described. For example, it is not apparent how a higher ranking in the Ease of Doing Business Index will advance the overarching goal of economic growth. A closer connection between the milestones and ultimate policy objective would have increased this commitment's level of ambition. The milestones therefore outline important but only initial steps to promote job creation, economic growth, and social inclusion in Cabo Verde.

Next steps

The IRM researcher recommends greater interaction with the OGP values to increase the potential of the commitment. During the implementation of all milestones, it is important to:

- Convene a multistakeholder group with civil society, government, and private sector representatives to oversee implementation.
- Consult and involve the business community and civil society throughout implementation. For example, to design and test information portals and registries to make sure they are user friendly and meet citizens' needs. Include representatives from across sectors of society and the islands.
- Discuss with civil society and the public how to expand current milestones to include the release of government-held information to further commitment aims. For example, would a public land registry, open contracting, or beneficial ownership platform address Cabo Verdeans' priorities?

⁵³ The ProEmpresa was created in 2017, <https://www.proempresa.cv/>; Interview with Luís Teixeira, Special Adviser to the Prime Minister and Executive Director of the Competitiveness Unit, 17 November 2020.

⁵⁴ At the time of writing, the website <https://portondinosilhas.gov.cv/> enables citizens to search commercial licenses and state resource allocation.

⁵⁵ At the time of writing, three conferences and training sessions had been held on the law – in Sal in 2018 and Praia and Mindelo in 2019. Information on these events was disseminated on TV and radio. The government is currently reassessing the law. Implementation will be assessed in a future IRM report.

2. Develop and Execute Re-qualification, Rehabilitation and Accessibility Program (RRAP)

Language of the commitment as it appears in the action plan:

“The Re-qualification, Rehabilitation and Accessibility Program (RRAP) is an integrated operational instrument that renews social and urban infrastructure (housing, sanitation, urban regeneration) and aligns initiatives with economic development needs. PRRA is constituted by the following Axes of Intervention:”

- I. Re-qualification of Urban Areas and Neighborhoods
 - 1. Urban Areas
 - 2. Neighborhoods and Accessibilities
- II. Rehabilitation of Housing
- III. Regeneration of Historical Centers
- IV. Rehabilitation of Historical, Cultural, and Religious Heritage
 - 1. Historical and Cultural Heritage
 - 2. Religious Heritage
- V. Re-qualification of the Maritime Rim
- VI. Access Roads with High Agricultural and Tourism Potential
- VII. Construction / Rehabilitation of Landing Stages
- VIII. Special Projects
 - 1. Chã das Caldeiras
 - 2. Tarrafal of Monte Trigo and Monte Trigo
 - 3. Municipal Market of Coco
 - 4. Municipal Market of Assomada”

Milestones:

- 1. Develop operational instrument
- 2. Ongoing consultation with MOITH and approval process
- 3. Administer procurement process
- 4. Execute construction work

Editorial Note: the commitment description provided above is an abridged version of the commitment text; please see the full action plan [here](#).

Commitment Overview	Verifiability		OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion				Did It Open Government?				
	Not specific enough to be verifiable	Specific enough to be verifiable	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsened	Did Not Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
I. Overall	✓			✓			✓				Assessed at the end of action plan cycle.				Assessed at the end of action plan cycle.				

Context and Objectives

This commitment seeks to address the country's housing and urban planning challenges. According to a study by the UN-Habitat and the National Statistics Office, there is a housing deficit of 70% in urban areas and substantial issues in terms of the quality of the households. In Cabo Verde, 40% of the urban households do not have access to the public network of water supply, and only 29.4% have access to basic sanitation facilities.⁵⁶ In addition, as reported in the action plan, urban areas have seen the steady degradation of residential and commercial structures along with the general deterioration of public spaces.⁵⁷ A lack of modern infrastructure, sanitation, and basic road networks, coupled with the poor financial standing of families, contributes greatly to social inequality.

As written, this commitment only appears relevant to the OGP value of civic participation, as milestone 2 mentions consultations. However, the IRM researcher's interview with Carlos Silva from Infrastructures of Cabo Verde⁵⁸ revealed that the Ministry of Infrastructure, Territorial Planning and Housing's (MOITH) activities will be conducted with a high level of public participation. Moreover, MOITH intends to expand citizens' access to information in the course of implementation. Therefore, this commitment may have a broader influence on open government practices if implementation extends beyond activities listed in the milestones. However, the milestones themselves lack details and are therefore not specific enough to be verifiable.

According to Carlos Silva, milestone 1 to "develop an operational instrument" will offer opportunities for public participation and oversight of government activities. This is a continuation of standard government practice, as MOITH usually meets with citizens to "align expectations" and eventually incorporate changes to the initial projects. MOITH will also oversee the consultation and approval process stated in milestone 2. MOITH ultimately determines which projects are approved and allocates the budget. Citizens may participate in the design and the implementation stage of the projects.⁵⁹

According to Carlos Silva, the government considered an interactive portal with information on the projects approved within RRAP. Currently, citizens can see basic figures on ongoing and concluded contracts and projects along with public procurement procedures on the Infrastructures of Cabo Verde webpage. Citizens can explore an interactive map that graphs construction projects territorially. However, because the map is not sufficiently detailed or user friendly, MOITH was exploring new solutions at the time of writing.⁶⁰

Milestone 3, although not explicitly written, intends to increase citizens' access to procurement information. The government aims to make more public procurement information available on the Infrastructures of Cabo Verde webpage.⁶¹ Finally, milestone 4 seeks to implement construction work with mechanisms for citizen oversight of government spending and progress on infrastructure projects. MOITH discusses projects with residents as part of its standard practice. Consultations are usually proposed by either the residents or technical team. Neighborhoods often have local leaders and community associations that encourage citizens to participate and mediate interactions with the government.⁶²

⁵⁶ Conferência das Nações Unidas sobre a Habitação e o Desenvolvimento Urbano - Habitat III, <http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/National-Report-Africa-Cabo-Verde-Portuguese.pdf>

⁵⁷ Cabo Verde Action Plan, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Cabo-Verde_Action-Plan_2018-2020.pdf

⁵⁸ Infra-Estruturas de Cabo Verde is a public entity responsible for the good management of public works construction projects, <https://www.infraestruturas.cv/>.

⁵⁹ Interview with Carlos Silva, CEO of Infrastructures of Cabo Verde, 1 December 2020.

⁶⁰ Interview with Carlos Silva, CEO of Infrastructures of Cabo Verde, 1 December 2020.

⁶¹ At the time of writing, the tender announcements were published on the Infraestruturas de Cabo Verde website and in the government public contracting portal: compraspublicas.cv

⁶² Interview with Carlos Silva, CEO of Infrastructures of Cabo Verde, 1 December 2020.

According to the text, this commitment's policy objective is to formalize and expand public participation in MOITH projects.⁶³ Additionally, interviews revealed that activities will be conducted in a highly participatory manner and increase citizens' access to government-held information. However, the milestones listed do not include activities that advance these goals. Rather, the milestones outline a project already underway outside of OGP processes. This project includes admirable open government practices. Yet IRM research suggests that public consultations are standard procedure for MOITH. Therefore, it is not clear how inclusion of this commitment in the action plan will result in a change in government practices. For this reason, this commitment is not considered to hold any potential impact. This commitment could have a notable impact on open government practices if implementation ultimately results in the expansion and formalization of public participation and oversight of infrastructure projects beyond standard practice.

Next steps

The IRM researcher recommends greater interaction with the OGP values to increase the potential of the commitment. During the implementation of all milestones, it is important to:

- Convene a multistakeholder group with both government and nongovernment representatives to oversee implementation.
- Involve civil society in the implementation process. Identify its role in supporting local governments in determining the most pressing RRAP-related needs and outline the participatory tools to promote ongoing civil society participation.
- Consult the public on how best to increase citizens' access to information to advance commitment aims. For example, discuss whether the development of tools for open contracting or tracking progress and spending on public infrastructure projects would meet citizens' needs.
- Engage civil society to consider opportunities for public accountability mechanisms during the implementation of this commitment. For example, see Kaduna State's "Eyes and Ears" project to track government infrastructure projects.⁶⁴

⁶³ Cabo Verde 2018-2020 Action Plan, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Cabo-Verde_Action-Plan_2018-2020.pdf

⁶⁴ Muhammad Sani Abdullahi. "How citizens have become 'eyes and ears' in Nigeria's Kaduna State," 16 July 2018. <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/how-citizens-have-become-eyes-and-ears-in-nigerias-kaduna-state/>

3. Develop and Launch Open Data Platform

Language of the commitment as it appears in the action plan:

“The commitment develops and deploys an open data platform comprised of: a data-cataloguing application (CKAN); a self-service information portal utilizing Joomla as a content management system; and a management application backend developed on IGRP. The data-cataloguing application allows for labelling, data visualization, research, and sharing. The self-service information portal contains an initial page and a variety of electronic forms to guide user interaction. The backend application provides a wealth of reporting, system, and statistical panels.”

Milestones:

1. Develop Information Portal
2. Develop Data Dictionary
3. Implement Backend Application
4. Deploy & Introduce Platform to Public
5. Launch Platform and Troubleshoot

Start Date: July 2018

End Date: May 2019

Editorial Note: the commitment description provided above is an abridged version of the commitment text; please see the full action plan [here](#).

Commitment Overview	Verifiability		OGP Value Relevance (as written)				Potential Impact				Completion				Did It Open Government?				
	Not specific enough to be verifiable	Specific enough to be verifiable	Access to Information	Civic Participation	Public Accountability	Technology & Innovation for Transparency & Accountability	None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed	Worsened	Did Not Change	Marginal	Major	Outstanding
I. Overall		✓	✓			✓			✓		Assessed at the end of action plan cycle.				Assessed at the end of action plan cycle.				

Context and Objectives

As stated in the action plan, this commitment aims to expand access to data and increase transparency and efficiency while creating the opportunity for self-service data retrieval to enhance decision-making, expand public knowledge, and drive innovation.

The problem this commitment seeks to address is the need for an accessible, online, and common data platform to make public administration responses more efficient. Cabo Verde is one of Africa’s top 10 countries in terms of e-government, but it still ranks 112 out of 193 in the United Nations’ E-Government Survey 2018.⁶⁵ The country scores particularly low in

⁶⁵ UN E-Government Survey 2018, <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2018>, p. 135

the Telecommunication Infrastructure Index and in the Online Service Index. The latter refers to open government data, e-participation, multi-channel services and innovative partnerships through the use of ICTs.⁶⁶

The Operational Nucleus for Information Society (NOSi) is the governing agency tasked with leading this commitment. NOSi has been involved in several projects to improve the efficiency of public administration in the sectors of finance, health, business, and education. Recent initiatives include the National Health Observatory,⁶⁷ launched in March 2018, which makes accessible geo-referenced health data. The data include information on mortality, the network of public health infrastructures, sanitation, services scope, and accessibility. The GOBAB-Open Government and SIMPLIMAC-Public Administration also aim to increase technological innovation in public administration, enhance information availability and transparency, and improve citizens' engagement. GOBAB and SIMPLIMAC were financed by the European Commission under the cooperation program INTERREG MAC 2014–2020.⁶⁸

The Information Portal is intended to house a wide range of government data, including public procurement and policy documents, reports, and administrative and fiscal forms in various formats, such as Excel files and PDFs. This could provide a significant boost to citizens' access to information. According to Global Integrity's 2020 Index, Cabo Verdeans do not have free or comprehensive access to public procurement information. Many budget and policy documents are not proactively published online. Citizen requests for information are not always honored, and responsiveness varies across institutions.⁶⁹ Aruna Pereira Handem, senior administrator at the Operational Nucleus for Information Society, states that the government intends to upload recent data in compliance with data protection rules in a user-friendly and sophisticated portal. The portal will be freely accessible to the public, which can also request data in specific formats.⁷⁰

NOSi is responsible for developing the portal (milestone 1), implementing the backend (milestone 3), and administering the portal before and after the public launch (milestone 4 and 5). Public institutions are expected to gather, clean, and upload the data to the back office of the portal (milestone 3) and develop a data dictionary (milestone 2). Each institution is expected to designate a point person to load the data. Both milestones imply a joint effort of public institutions and their technical staff. The government is responsible for deploying and introducing the platform to the public (milestone 4) and for authorizing the portal's launch (milestone 5).⁷¹ Aruna Pereira Handem reports that the government needs to take leadership of this commitment to raise awareness in the public institutions of the need to collect data and upload data, to authorize the launch of the portal, and to set a clear timetable for all these stages.⁷²

This commitment is relevant to the OGP value of access to information, as it seeks to allow citizens to access data that were not previously accessible due to their technical format. This commitment is also relevant to the OGP value of technology and innovation for openness and accountability, as it envisions developing technical tools for data sharing across government

⁶⁶ UN E-Government Survey 2018, <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2018>, p. xx

⁶⁷Instituto Nacional de Saúde Pública, <https://www.insp.gov.cv/index.php/observatorio-saude/sistemas-de-informacao-geografica-em-saude>

⁶⁸ NOSi, <https://www.nosi.cv/index.php/en/news/item/429-cidade-da-praia-acolhe-missao-internacional-de-cooperacao-projecto-gobab-e-simplimac>

⁶⁹ Global Integrity. African Integrity Indicators. Accessible at: <https://www.globalintegrity.org/resource/africa-integrity-indicators-rounds-2-8-xls/>

⁷⁰ Interview with Aruna Pereira Handem, Senior Administrator, Operational Nucleus for Information Society, 24 November 2020.

⁷¹ At the time of writing in December 2020, NOSi had developed the portal, but it was not yet available to the public. The portal is intended to be located at <http://opendata.gov.cv/>. Implementation of this commitment will be assessed in a future IRM report.

⁷² Interview with Aruna Pereira Handem, senior administrator, Operational Nucleus for Information Society, 24 November 2020.

agencies at the disposal of citizens. The milestones are verifiable, as they call for developing and launching a platform, developing a data dictionary, and implementing a backend application. Though the commitment mentions that data from both government and private institutions will be made available, it does not specify the policy areas, the nature of data, or the period covered. Furthermore, there are no clear communication strategies to increase citizens' access to information or to collect citizens' input and feedback. Finally, the lack of leadership and decision-making in this commitment may compromise its potential impact.

This commitment is expected to have a potentially moderate impact on government practices around open data. Currently, Cabo Verdeans have limited access to information, there is no law allowing citizens to request public information from state bodies, and most public entities either don't have a website or their websites are outdated.⁷³ Therefore, the development and deployment of a portal including data the government and private institutions generate could help mitigate the barriers to accessibility and increase transparency and accountability. If fully implemented as written, this commitment could result in notable achievements toward open data for the public and information sharing across government agencies.

Two factors limit this commitment's likelihood to facilitate transformative change. First, implementation of the platform without a supporting legal framework, through an access to information law, inhibits the government's ability to enforce ongoing data disclosure. Second, previous experience in the Africa region demonstrates that the creation of an open data platform alone is not sufficient to address an organizational culture not accustomed to transparency. It is important to complement open data tools with activities that address government culture around information sharing, such as training public servants on the importance of access to information. Undertaking a sensitization campaign on the right to information within and outside government is just one of many entry points for civil society to assist in the implementation of this commitment.

Next steps

The IRM researcher recommends the following measures to increase the potential of the commitment:

- Convene a multistakeholder group with both government and civil society representatives to oversee implementation.
- Consult with the public and civil society to determine the content, scope, and format of data to make public and give priority to.
- Partner with civil society to test the usability of the portal and conduct public outreach to increase citizens' knowledge and use of the portal.
- Define a clear timetable for the launch of the portal, and design a communication strategy.
- Work with civil society to consider how this commitment can be adapted to the COVID-19 context. See the Open Gov Guide to Open Data for suggestions and examples.⁷⁴

⁷³ Africa Integrity Indicators – Country Findings, <https://www.globalintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/AI4-Findings-Cape-Verde.pdf>

⁷⁴ A Guide to Open Government and the Coronavirus: Open Data. Open Government Partnership. 4 May 2020. <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/a-guide-to-open-government-and-the-coronavirus-open-data/>

V. General Recommendations

This section aims to inform development of the next action plan and guide implementation of the current action plan. It is divided into two sections: 1) IRM key recommendations to improve the OGP process and action plans in the country or entity and, 2) an assessment of how the government responded to previous IRM key recommendations.

5.1 IRM Five Key Recommendations

Cabo Verde has taken an admirable step through the creation of its first action plan. In particular, commitment 3 has the potential to significantly increase citizens' access to information. The first co-creation process offered the opportunity for the national OGP team to familiarize itself with OGP processes and values. Going forward, the government is better positioned to increase civil society engagement and public consultation. Including voices from outside the government will help ensure commitments align with issues of national importance. The following recommendations by the IRM researcher seek to enrich the conversation around future pathways of action plan development.

1. Establish a formal and inclusive multistakeholder forum and create an OGP repository or website

Cabo Verde should establish a multistakeholder forum with equal representation from government and civil society. The government should develop a process for transparent selection of members and establish a clear mandate. The government should also define formal rules for how the consultation and deliberation process unfolds. Quarterly meetings should be documented with agendas, meeting minutes, and decision outcomes published in an OGP repository or on an OGP website. The forum's mandate, procedures, and membership should also be published online. Establishing an online repository from the start will enable Cabo Verde to measure its open government progress moving forward. A repository will also ensure the wider public can keep abreast of action plan co-creation and implementation and identify opportunities to contribute. If budgetary constraints prevent the creation of a dedicated OGP website, a publicly accessible Google Drive is an efficient interim tool.

2. Increase public consultation and civil society participation to identify commitments that address issues of national importance

The Cabo Verde OGP team should engage civil society during all stages of the OGP cycle. The OGP team should identify obstacles to civil society engagement during the first co-creation process and create a dedicated engagement plan for the forthcoming cycle. Increased civil society input during co-creation will help ensure that commitments align with public priorities. For example, a significant number of Cabo Verdeans believe more can be done to address corruption. Therefore, future action plan discussions could consider relevant commitments, such as open contracting and beneficial ownership transparency. Civil society should also be represented in the working groups that oversee implementation. Opportunities for civic engagement can also be explicitly written into commitment milestones. For example in commitment 3, civil society organizations can help identify the data to be published and conduct public outreach activities once the open data platform is operational.

3. Collaborate with civil society to design commitments relevant to OGP values

As written, the commitments in Cabo Verde's first action plan do not achieve their full potential regarding relevance to OGP values. For example, the milestones for commitment 2 do not fully describe its relevance to open government principles. Although one milestone

mentions consultations, it is not clear who is participating and what the purpose is. Therefore, it is difficult to assess whether this commitment is related to the OGP value of civic participation. Moreover, research revealed that implementation of the commitment will involve increased access to information and public accountability tools. These are admirable open government efforts. This commitment’s full ambition and relevance would be easier to appreciate if these activities were described in concrete and specific terms in the milestones.

4. Collaborate with civil society to design ambitious, specific, and verifiable milestones

OGP Cabo Verde should work closely with civil society during the next action plan cycle to design commitments with specific and verifiable milestones. The OGP team can improve commitment design by 1) connecting the policy objective to the milestones more systematically, 2) providing clearer indicators to assess their accomplishment and potential impact and 3) including actions that foresee the involvement of members of CSOs. For example, commitment 2 identifies a specific number of buildings and sites for renovation. However, it does not offer verifiable open government activities. An example of a relevant and verifiable milestone would be to hold a specific number of community consultations on renewal projects with details on how the government will consider and provide feedback on citizen input.

5. Increase awareness and outreach for the OGP process

Now that Cabo Verde is familiar with OGP processes, the government can conduct outreach to increase civil society and the public’s understanding and participation. An OGP government website/or Facebook page will increase awareness and public discussion on the ongoing results of the action plan, which is particularly important given the multi-island nature of the country. The government should also expand the OGP initiatives beyond the capital to include the voices and interests of rural constituencies and inhabitants of different Islands. Three concrete steps the government can take to increase awareness of OGP activities include 1) explore ways to generate more visibility and engagement using social media, organizing seminars, or holding meetings with stakeholders; 2) plan dissemination initiatives in collaboration with CSOs; and 3) provide full disclosure of the documentation, decisions, and achievements of the OGP process. Increased outreach will facilitate greater participation in public consultations during future co-creation processes.

Table 5.1: Five Key Recommendations

1	Establish a formal and inclusive multistakeholder forum and create an OGP repository or website
2	Increase public consultation and civil society participation to identify commitments that address issues of national importance
3	Collaborate with civil society to design commitments relevant to OGP values
4	Collaborate with civil society to design ambitious, specific, and verifiable milestones
5	Increase outreach and awareness for the OGP process

VI. Methodology and Sources

The IRM reports are written by researchers for each OGP-participating country or entity. All IRM reports undergo a process of quality control to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied.

Analysis of progress on OGP action plans is a combination of interviews, desk research, observation, and feedback from nongovernmental stakeholders. The IRM report builds on the evidence available in Cabo Verde's OGP repository (or online tracker)⁷⁵, website, findings in the government's own self-assessment reports, and any other assessments of process and progress put out by civil society, the private sector, or international organizations. At the beginning of each reporting cycle, IRM staff share a research plan with governments to open a seven-day period of comments or feedback regarding the proposed research approach.

Each IRM researcher carries out stakeholder interviews to ensure an accurate portrayal of events. Given budgetary and calendar constraints, the IRM cannot consult all interested parties or visit implementation sites. Some contexts require anonymity of interviewees and the IRM reviews the right to remove personal identifying information of these participants. Due to the necessary limitations of the method, the IRM strongly encourages commentary during the pre-publication review period of each report.

Each report undergoes a quality-control process that includes an internal review by IRM staff and the IRM's International Experts Panel (IEP). Each report also undergoes an external review where governments and civil society are invited to provide comments on the content of the draft IRM report.

This review process, including the procedure for incorporating comments received, is outlined in greater detail in Section III of the Procedures Manual.⁷⁶

Interviews and stakeholder input

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to collect the views of the relevant government actors involved with the OGP process in the country. The IRM researcher was unable to reach any CSOs involved in OGP processes in Cabo Verde prior to the publication of this report. The interviews conducted include:

- Interview with Harold Tavares, OGP Point of Contact, 22 June 2019.
- Interview with Luis Teixeira, Special Adviser to the Prime Minister and Executive Director of the Competitiveness Unit, 17 November 2020.
- Interview with Aruna Pereira Handem, Senior Administrator, Operational Nucleus for Information Society, 24 November 2020.
- Interview with Carlos Silva, CEO of Infrastructures of Cabo Verde, 1 December 2020.

⁷⁵ "Cabo Verde Member page," OGP, 2019, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/members/cabo-verde/>

⁷⁶ IRM Procedures Manual, V.3 : <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>

About the Independent Reporting Mechanism

The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) is a key means by which all stakeholders can track OGP progress in participating countries and entities. The International Experts Panel (IEP) oversees the quality control of each report. The IEP is comprised of experts in transparency, participation, accountability, and social science research methods.

The current membership of the International Experts Panel is

- César Cruz-Rubio
- Mary Francoli
- Brendan Halloran
- Jeff Lovitt
- Fredline M’Cormack-Hale
- Showers Mawowa
- Juanita Olaya
- Quentin Reed
- Rick Snell
- Jean-Patrick Villeneuve

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

Annex I. Overview of Cabo Verde performance throughout action plan development

Key:

Green= Meets standard

Yellow= In progress (steps have been taken to meet this standard, but standard is not met)

Red= No evidence of action 0

Multi-stakeholder Forum	
1a. Forum established: There is a forum to oversee the OGP process	Green
1b. Regularity: The forum meets at least every quarter, in person or remotely.	Red
1c. Collaborative mandate development: Members of the forum jointly develop its remit, membership and governance structure.	Red
1d. Mandate public: Information on the forum's remit, membership and governance structure is available on the OGP website/page.	Red
2a. Multi-stakeholder: The forum includes both governmental and non-government representatives	Red
2b. Parity: The forum includes an even balance of governmental and non-governmental representatives	Red
2c. Transparent selection: Non-governmental members of the forum are selected through a fair and transparent process.	Yellow
2d. High-level government representation: The forum includes high-level representatives with decision making authority from government	Green
3d. Openness: The forum accepts inputs and representation on the action plan process from any civil society or other stakeholders outside the forum	Yellow
3e. Remote participation: There are opportunities for remote participation in at least some meetings and events	Red
3f. Minutes: The OGP forum proactively communicates and reports back on its decisions, activities and results to wider government and civil society stakeholders	Yellow

Key:

Green= Meets standard

Yellow= In progress (steps have been taken to meet this standard, but standard is not met)

Red= No evidence of action

Action Plan Development	
4a. Process transparency: There is a national OGP website (or OGP webpage on a government website) where information on all aspects of the national OGP process is proactively published.	Red
4b. Documentation in advance: The forum shares information about OGP to stakeholders in advance to guarantee they are informed and prepared to participate in all stages of the process.	Red
4c. Awareness-raising: The forum conducts outreach and awareness raising activities with relevant stakeholders to inform them of the OGP process.	Yellow
4d. Communication channels: The government facilitates direct communication with stakeholders to respond to action plan process questions, particularly during times of intense OGP activity.	Yellow
4e. Reasoned response: The multi-stakeholder forum publishes its reasoning behind decisions and responds to major categories of public comment.	Red
5a. Repository: Government collects and publishes a document repository on the national OGP website/webpage, which provides a historical record and access to all documents related to the national OGP process, including (but not limited to) consultation documents, National Action Plans, government self-assessments, IRM reports and supporting documentation of commitment implementation (e.g links to databases, evidence of meetings, publications)	Red

Editorial note: If a country “meets” the six standards in bold IRM will recognize the country’s process as a Starred Process.