

# Open Government Partnership

Discretionary Special Session of the Steering Committee

Vital Signs Research - Call Summary

17 March 2021 | 08:00 - 9:30 EDT

## OGP Vital Signs

Reference Material: [Summary Document](#), [Presentation](#)

As part of the OGP Vital Signs project, the Support Unit analyzed data from nearly 150 IRM-assessed action plans to track progress on key outcomes, identify OGP strengths and weaknesses, and begin to explain the drivers of success and failure. Vital Signs is a key research deliverable for OGP's tenth anniversary and Global Summit. The research focuses primarily on the relationship between action plans and their results. Using data from Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) reports on 159 action plans dating back to 2012, the report asks:

1. Are action plans becoming more ambitious? Are they achieving better results?
2. Does a successful multi-stakeholder approach contribute to stronger reforms?
3. Are OGP reforms moving the needle across different policy areas?

The Support Unit presented a summary of the findings so far:

- 1) The evidence validates OGP's theory of change for action plans, as better processes result in better outcomes;
- 2) Ambition is lagging, and according to IRM data, low ambition remains the biggest binding constraint for stronger results; and
- 3) Process matters: OGP process is improving across several metrics, but government feedback to citizens lags - specifically providing a reasoned response to major categories of comment and maintaining public repositories of proceedings. This is important because feedback is closely related to other outcomes.

Following the presentation of the research methodology and findings, the Support Unit tabled the following potential implications of these findings for the Steering Committee:

- **Country level:** The continued and increased need to lead by example, by modeling government-CSO dialogue and feedback during co-creation and implementation.
- **Criteria & Standards:** In reviewing the Rules of the Game, Criteria & Standards should review the research to keep what is working and address the weak links where needed.
- **Global advocacy:** The Steering Committee should aim to demonstrate thematic leadership and cooperation, specifically in innovative, nationally-specific areas and in cross-cutting issues.

Some of the comments and feedback received from the Steering Committee members include:



- Consider if ‘ambition’ is still the most appropriate way to analyze the success of action plans, or if there is a way to incorporate more incremental progress into metrics, by finding a balance between a commitment being ambitious, useful, and realistic.
- Additionally, consider how to account for the success of getting a commitment into an action plan, rather than if it is considered “ambitious,” as that might be a significant win in itself.
- Consider reviewing why commitments fail in more detail to understand lessons learned more clearly. This [blog](#) by the Support Unit was shared with the group.
- Consider looking at the overall ambition of action plans, in addition to individual reforms within the plan.
- Consider if ‘feasibility’ should be added as a factor for consideration in reviewing action plans.

**Next Steps:** The Support Unit will consider this feedback as it revises the Rules of the Game in close coordination with the Criteria & Standards Subcommittee, and will integrate this feedback as it continues finalizing the Vital Signs research. Concretely, the research team is currently studying the final link in the action plan theory of change – whether action plan results lead to “real-world” changes. The full report will be launched at the OGP Summit in Korea.

#### **List of Attendees:**

- Government of Argentina: Carolina Cornejo & Desirée Gómez
- Government of Canada: Mélanie Robert, Darine Benkhala & Benoît Frenette
- Government of Germany: Sebastian Haselbeck
- Government of Indonesia: Ichi Cahyani
- Government of Italy: Marco Marrazza
- Maria Baron, Directorio Legislativo
- Anabel Cruz, ICD Uruguay
- Helen Darbshire, Access Info Europe
- Aidan Eyakuze, Twaweza
- Blair Glencorse, Accountability Lab
- Robin Hodess, B-Team
- Lucy McTernan, University of York
- Oluseun Onigbinde, BudgIT
- Delia Ferreira Rubio, Transparency International
- Steph Muchai, Hivos
- Zuzana Wienk, White Crow

