

OGP Steering Committee Meeting Ministerial Level

Virtual | June 10, 2021 | 07:00 - 09:00 EDT

Call Summary

Session 1

State of democracy in the world & the imperative for the OGP leadership

OGP CEO Sanjay Pradhan opened the meeting with a brief update on OGP's progress in leveraging the confluence of opportunities in 2021, including i) the record 100-plus new national and local OGP plans that will be co-created this year, and ii) the opportunity to catalyse a stronger global coalition for openness and democracy, through the 10th anniversary Global Summit hosted by the Republic of Korea on December 13 - 17, and other significant, relevant global summits.

Meeting halfway through a vital year, both for OGP and for the state of democracy, there is still much to be done ahead of the 2021 OGP Global Summit in December. There are four areas under OGP's [Open Renewal](#) campaign that together can showcase what better democracy looks like:

1. Reforms to **fight corruption**, by advancing open budgets as in Colombia, open contracts as in France and Indonesia, and open company ownership as in Kenya and Nigeria.
2. Reforms to **tackle systemic inequalities** in race, gender and income such as Germany monitoring the status of women in leadership positions, or Canada, Indonesia and Kenya improving access to justice for marginalized groups.
3. Inspiring the partnership by **advancing reforms for a more responsive, citizen-centered democracy** by empowering citizens to shape budgets as in Decide Madrid and monitor public services as in Italy's Open Coesione, or advancing work on citizen assemblies to tackle societal polarization as in Ireland, France and the UK.
4. As outlined in the Korea-Maria Baron call to action, each Steering Committee member is encouraged to **advance one commitment to protect civic space**.

The Steering Committee is exceptionally well placed to lead by example across these areas. Steering Committee Ministers can work to ensure that their political leadership delivers ambitious open government reforms in their countries to inspire others in the partnership. Civil society leaders can push for reforms that really matter to citizens. Together, government and civil society leaders can advance strong co-creation that underpins the best action plans.

Sanjay Pradhan highlighted the need to showcase a global coalition of leaders spearheading these reforms, renewing democracy and forging a countervailing force against the rise of authoritarianism. To achieve this, Steering Committee Ministers were called on to help ensure the participation of their Heads of State/Government, specifically in December's OGP Global Summit, and for civil society leaders to mobilize the community that gives OGP its vibrant energy.



Guest speaker Tom Carothers, interim president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, provided context by speaking on the current state of democracy worldwide. In the years leading up to the pandemic, the world was facing rising crises of both democracy and governance, as citizens protested against political stagnation, corruption, economic exclusion and inequality, and governmental incompetence. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these trends, with increases in authoritarianism, political polarization, inequality and corruption. As the pandemic slows, the world enters a defining moment to achieve solutions in the next few decades, rethink the ways to approach these problems, and an opportunity for OGP to act as an example of how to move forward with aspiration and ambition.

Steering Committee members reinforced that this is the time for action, as civic freedoms shrink while citizen activism reaches new heights. Civil society can be key partners in the fight against the trend of democratic backsliding in helping governments co-create action plans and translate commitments into action.

Session 2

The role of open government for pandemic response, recovery and renewal, and where OGP can help

The COVID-19 pandemic remains the top priority for governments worldwide, with countries at different stages of their pandemic response and recovery. Over the past year, some of the more effective and inspiring COVID-19 responses have utilized open government approaches, from disclosing life-saving healthcare related data, ensuring transparency of recovery funds, to cooperating with civil society and other actors to develop innovative responses, and ensuring vaccine procurement and rollout is transparent, effective, equitable and efficient.

Steering Committee members were asked to reflect on the following questions:

- A. What ambitious reforms are Steering Committee members advancing in their own countries related to COVID-19 recovery and renewal, and how can Steering Committee members use OGP to build back better democracies post pandemic?
- B. What actions can Steering Committee members take to encourage the rest of the Partnership to advance ambitious reforms to be showcased at the Seoul Summit?

Steering Committee Co-Chairs the Republic of Korea and Maria Baron (Directorio Legislativo) reinforced their global [call to action](#) launched in April 2021, centered on their co-chair priority topics of civic space, anti-corruption, and digital governance and innovation as an effort to incentivize ambitious reforms in these areas across OGP, reinforce the Open Renewal campaign, and showcase concrete results at the OGP Global Summit in December.

Steering Committee members recognized the challenges presented by COVID-19, as well as the opportunities to promote democracy and transform society. The following themes were surfaced during the discussion as particularly important to focus on in the upcoming Action Plans, both to recover from the pandemic and to heal some of the trust that has been lost between citizens and governments:



- Inclusive policy-making, and increasing the inclusion and accessibility of policies by engaging civil society and citizens, and responding to their needs;
- Digital governance and open data policies;
- Beneficial ownership transparency and open contracting, especially as a way of responding to increased government borrowing, and procurement of emergency supplies and vaccines during the pandemic;
- Access to justice, especially for marginalized populations;
- Freedom of expression and protection of civic space, both online and offline;
- Equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

Concerns were also raised regarding the Twitter ban in Nigeria and the disproportionality of shutting down social media outlets as a means of addressing external threats, including dis/misinformation and national security.

Members emphasized again the importance of civil society partners in bridging the gap between ambition and implementation, as well as bringing inspiration and intention to tackling these topics. National action plans were also noted as a key tool in encouraging the Partnership to advance ambitious reforms to showcase at the OGP Global Summit, as well as motivating governments to pass new initiatives. Steering Committee members also highlighted the links made between their action plans and other upcoming global fora and convenings, including G7 and G20.

Steering Committee members are encouraged to engage with the OGP thematic coalitions on topics like gender equality, beneficial ownership, algorithmic accountability, open justice, and civic space. The Support Unit can connect interested Steering Committee members with these groups, and facilitate peer exchanges between countries in order to be able to showcase ambitious commitments at the Summit.

Session 3

Building high-level political support for open government on the global stage in 2021

A number of regional global fora in 2021 offer opportunities to chart the course toward building back better and renewing our democracies. Civil society champions and government reformers can use these summits to build international momentum around key policy goals, with the support of OGP.

During this session, Steering Committee members were asked to consider the role that OGP can play, both as a connector and implementing platform, for upcoming global summits in 2021 (e.g., at G20, COP26, OGP Global Summit, U.S. Summit for Democracy, etc.), and the role of Steering Committee Ministers and Heads of State/Government can play to help forge and mobilize a stronger political coalition for open government and democracy.

Steering Committee members presented how they are connecting global events and standards to their own OGP processes, including through promoting open government topics at the EU, using regional events to gather high-level representatives to talk through pandemic responses, and focusing on delivering ambitious commitments to the OGP Global Summit. Through leading by example, Steering Committee members can inspire the rest of the partnership to follow.



An example presented of the Steering Committee leading by example was through the recent [letter to El Salvador](#), signed by seven governments and all civil society Steering Committee members. The letter addresses recent democratic backsliding, and calls for true dialogue between the government and civil society, using the in-country OGP process to co-create and implement reforms that protect civic space, the freedom of the press, and strengthen democracy.

To support the work of OGP and to lead by example, Steering Committee members were asked to ensure their participation in making their [annual contribution](#) to the organization.



Draft List of Attendees

Government Steering Committee Members

Government of Argentina

César Gazzo Huck	Under-Secretary of Open Government and Digital Nation, Secretariat of Public Innovation – Chief of Cabinet Office
Carolina Cornejo	National Director of Open Government, Secretariat of Public Innovation

Government of Canada

Joyce Murray	Minister of Digital Government
Mélanie Robert	Executive Director, Open Government, Chief Information Officer Branch (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat)

Government of France

Amélie de Montchalin	Minister of Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service
Henri Verdier	Ambassador for Digital Affairs

Government of Georgia

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

Government of Germany

Markus Richter	Federal Government Commissioner for Information Technology
Tobias Plate	Head of the Digital State Division, Federal Chancellery
Sebastian Haselbeck	Policy Advisor, Division for Digital State, Federal Chancellery

Government of Indonesia

Dr. Ir. Slamet Soedarsono	Deputy Minister for Political Affairs, Law, Defense, and Security Ministry of National Development Planning/National Development Planning Agency
Prahesti Pandanwangi	Director for States Apparatus, Ministry of National Development Planning/National Development Planning Agency
Hari Prabowo	Director for Development, Economic, and Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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

Sabina Bellotti OGP Advisor, Administrative Innovation, Skills Development and Communication Office

Government of Kenya

Korir Sing'Oei Legal Advisor / Convener-OGP Lead

Government of Nigeria

Clement Ikanade Agba Minister of State Finance, Budget and National Planning

Stanley Achonu Civil Society Advisor, OGP Nigeria

Government of Romania

István Zahoranszki Deputy Secretary-General of the Government

Larisa Panait Advisor and OGP Point of Contact, Secretariat General of the Government

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

Jae-young Lee Vice Minister of the Interior and Safety

Sangmyeong Cho Director General of the Government Innovation Planning Bureau

Jihye Park Assistant Deputy Director, Innovation Planning Division, Government Innovation Planning Bureau

Minchan Park Ministry of the Interior and Safety

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
Olena Pavlenko (Substitute for Elisa Peter, Publish What You Pay)	DiXie Group
Zuzana Wienk	White Crow
Anabel Cruz (Additional Steering Committee member)	ICD Uruguay
Oluseun Onigbinde (Additional Steering Committee member)	BudgIT

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

For any changes to this list, please send to jaimemercado@opengovpartnership.org.

Additional Members and Guest Speakers

Tom Carothers	Interim president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Helge Braun (<i>via recorded message</i>)	Head of the Federal Chancellery and Federal Minister for Special Tasks, Government of Germany

