



IRM in a Box: A Toolkit for OGP Local Monitoring Bodies



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Introduction

The Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) developed this voluntary guide for OGP Local members to support them in creating local monitoring bodies, and monitoring and evaluating the OGP process. It offers tools and recommendations based on the IRM's experience in accountability and learning to improve participation in OGP. These tools build on best practices and lessons from the IRM's 10 years of assessing national action plans and five years of assessing local action plans. These practices can be adapted to each locality's context.

The guide has three sections:

- *Section I: Guiding principles for monitoring and evaluating.* There are five fundamental principles of monitoring and evaluating OGP processes, as learned from the IRM's experience in evaluating the design and implementation of action plans.
- *Section II: Recommendations for creating a monitoring mechanism.* The IRM suggests steps for OGP Local participants to create a monitoring body that is tailored to their context.
- *Section III: IRM Recommendations for developing assessments based on the templates provided by the OGP Local Staff.* The IRM offers tools for developing the inception assessment, the end-of-commitment assessment, and the final learning exercise.

To help local members navigate this guide, the IRM will work closely with OGP Local Staff to carry-out training and capacity-building sessions. The IRM will also share with local monitoring bodies a network of IRM researchers and experts with knowledge on the IRM assessment practices that will be available to answer questions as needed. Additionally, the IRM will publish a report every two years analyzing the overall performance of the OGP Local Program on specific themes and co-creation to provide deeper insights into their performance.

For information about the IRM's support to OGP Local members or questions about the use of this guide, please contact the IRM at: irmlocal@opengovpartnership.org.



Section I. Guiding principles for monitoring and evaluating

Building on the IRM experience in assessing the design and implementation of action plans, there are five basic principles for approaching the OGP process.

1. Independence: guarantee the independence of the monitoring mechanism

The independence of the monitoring process is key to guaranteeing the credibility of the findings presented to local stakeholders. The IRM recommends developing a Conflict of Interest Policy to review and address candidates' actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest across the assessment process:

- Conflict of self-interest: The IRM recommends avoiding appointing individuals who might have a vested interest in the results of the report. This includes people from multilateral, civil society, or government entities or agencies that are directly involved with developing or implementing the action plan.
- Conflict of bias due to political, ideological, social, or familial ties: The IRM recommends avoiding appointing individuals with direct ties of familiarity to a government or civil society employee directly involved with OGP in the jurisdiction to be assessed, as well as individuals who carry out partisan political activities at the time of the implementation of the action plan, supporting a particular candidate or political party as part of his or her regular work.
- Conflict due to inappropriate influence or external pressure over members of the monitoring body: The IRM recommends avoiding appointing individuals who could be subject to inappropriate influence or external pressure that can affect their capacity to conduct independent analysis and to make objective decisions.

To mitigate any potential risk of conflict of interest, the IRM recommends local members to secure the independence of the monitoring body members throughout the reporting process. For example, local members can develop an internal quality control process for all its products. This could include defining the details of the assessment in advance (as explained in point three of this section on due diligence), guaranteeing feedback from stakeholders throughout the report's production (point four of this section on seeking feedback), or forming teams with two to more people who reduce the probability of biases.

See [here](#) for a reference to IRM's conflict-of-interest policy and independence practices, which apply to all researchers at the national level. Note that the conflict-of-interest policy was developed for national level reporting; it is important that each local member adapts it to its own context. For example, the IRM avoids hiring people who work for the government. However, some localities may want to include government entities as part of their monitoring body (e.g., ombudsman, or comptrollers). In these cases, it will be particularly valuable to adopt safeguards that guarantee monitoring independence.



2. Objectivity: develop products that are neutral, constructive and evidence-based

The IRM applies multiple quality controls to all its products, focusing on both the content (assessment and conclusions) and the tone (the way messages are conveyed). Building on this, the IRM recommends local monitoring bodies develop products that are:

- Constructive: the monitoring body products aim at strengthening the local open government agenda. Their goal is not to discredit the government, civil society, or any other stakeholders.
- Neutral: the assessment should start from a position of neutrality without biases on the development and implementation of the action plan or the content of its commitments.
- Evidence-based: the monitoring body's products and their findings should be backed by evidence, such as primary sources or objective information that support the status of completion on the plan development and implementation.

3. Due diligence: establish defined processes and ensure their consistent application

To ensure that products are constructive, neutral, and evidence-based, the monitoring body should establish procedures to guide their assessments and products. Regardless of who leads the monitoring body, these rules must be equal for all and applied consistently.

Due Diligence Guidelines are useful to outline the minimal steps the monitoring body should take to collect evidence to support their assessment and findings. They refer to good faith efforts to: 1) obtain all available information about commitment development and implementation, and 2) document this process. Examples of due diligence minimum requirements include:

- Search for information online, especially on the member's page and its OGP repository, if available;
- If the evidence is not found online, contact the official in charge through at least two different communication means; and
- Document the response received (or lack thereof).

Click [here](#) for a reference of the steps of the due diligence process that the IRM follows to gather evidence.

4. Seek out feedback: guarantee engagement with key government and civil society stakeholders throughout the process

The Monitoring Body should consider creating opportunities to receive feedback throughout the development of the assessments. A greater exchange of information between OGP stakeholders, citizens, and the Monitoring Body promises to triangulate information and provide quality control. For example, IRM reports undergo a prepublication review period and a public comment period:

- Pre-publication review: Reports are sent to government and civil actors who were directly involved in the development or implementation of the action plan for a period of 21 days. It is an opportunity for them to offer feedback on the first draft of IRM



findings. For more information on the process, you can view [IRM's guidance on the scope of comments](#).

- Public comment: Reports are published on the OGP website for 14 calendar days for public comment. At the end of the 14 days, the IRM reviews and incorporates comments received. Finally, the IRM publishes both the final version of the report and the list of comments received during this period.

This process is quality control for the findings of the monitoring body since it offers key actors several opportunities to provide information and viewpoints on the development and implementation of the action plan. Monitoring bodies should review all comments received and make the changes to their findings as needed.

See [here](#) for reference to the IRM report production process with details on the different steps that IRM takes to publish each of its products.

5. Results-oriented: focus monitoring assessments on results

The IRM recommends that the Monitoring Body seek to go beyond determining whether activities were completed to evaluate policy or reform-level outcomes. The Monitoring Body is encouraged to focus data gathering and analysis on how change occurs within a specific commitment, policy, or bill. This allows for a better understanding of how open government reforms impact citizens and government.

To evaluate a commitment beyond its level of completion i) consider the policy problem the commitment seeks to address ii) consider the baseline of where things stood before implementation iii) analyze the evidence on the extent to which the commitment addressed the policy problem during the implementation period and iv) analyze the results of implementation of commitments including what enabled or inhibited change or results.

Section II. Recommendations for creating a monitoring mechanism

1. Clearly define goals and scope

The monitoring body is an accountability and learning mechanism for local stakeholders. The *OGP Local Handbook* gives minimum rules for gathering evidence, assessing the co-creation and implementation of commitments, and conducting a final learning process. The IRM recommends the monitoring body clearly define its own scope of work. The body can limit itself to completing the two templates (for the inception and end of commitment assessments) required by OGP Local and leading a final learning exercise, or it can broaden its scope to support or lead additional activities that promote continuous improvements of the local member's performance. In addition, especially for monitoring institutions that predate membership of the local government in OGP Local, the monitoring body can connect to goals relevant to the local entity.

See [here](#) for examples of activities led by the IRM to support countries in their OGP process beyond the creation of reports.



2. Select the members of the monitoring group

The monitoring body can be an individual, a team, or teams from public or private institutions. The ORM recommends that they have enough time to systematize the information generated by the OGP process in their jurisdiction, as well as conduct interviews with government and civil society actors to collect the necessary input for the reporting process. As highlighted in the previous section, it is important for the researcher to be neutral during these tasks, regardless of whether the person comes from a public or private entity.

Additionally, the ORM suggests that participants of the monitoring body have some basic capacities that allow them to carry out their functions without the need for prior training. Within a wide range of options, it is important that monitoring bodies include people with experience in research, monitoring, or evaluation, particularly in areas related to open government, transparency, or governance.

3. Choose the methods for collecting and analyzing the relevant information

OGP Local offers monitoring bodies two evaluation templates to complete the inception and end of commitment assessments that define the basic information that they must research. Given the nature of OGP action plans, the monitoring bodies are likely to conduct qualitative research.

To complete the template for the inception assessment, the monitoring group should research the fulfillment of the co-creation requirements and recommended practices as well as on the design of the five initial commitments. For the end-of-commitment assessment, the monitoring body will need to research the completion of commitments and the preliminary results of their implementation.

To gather the information, monitoring bodies can use both online tools or face-to-face methods. For example:

- Online surveys (like SurveyMonkey or Google Docs);
- Online forms and journals (useful for stakeholders to share information with the monitoring body);
- Monitoring visits (to document commitment implementation progress); or
- Online tools and platforms that may be appropriate to use in different stages of the process. For a curated list of tools, please refer to the following [list](#).

The methods used to gather this information will depend on the staff and resources that the local entity allocates to the monitoring process. The OGP Local members will be responsible for securing available resources to allow for the monitoring body to fulfill its role.

The monitoring body is expected to complete the templates based on the information and data gathered throughout this process.

The information collection and analysis should:

- Be collaborative: government and civil society stakeholders should have the opportunity to provide input and evidence on progress and challenges of the action plan's development and implementation. This can be through virtual platforms or an email address. Some innovative tools for online collaboration include [Bang the Table](#), [Miro](#), [Wazoku](#) and [Tula](#).



- Generate objective and measurable evidence for analysis: the collected evidence cannot be based on subjective or unfounded statements. The monitoring body should be receptive to all feedback, however, monitoring should not become a compilation of opinions. To guarantee the robustness of this exercise, the monitoring body should:
 - i. verify any contentious statements or points of view with other sources from the government and civil society, and ground the analysis in evidence; and
 - ii. organize input according to the objectives of the monitoring body, which helps avoiding spending time and resources on information that is irrelevant to the action plan process.

Table 1. Four steps to create a monitoring body

Steps	Guiding questions
1. Define the goals and scope	What will be the main purpose of the monitoring body? Will it focus primarily on evaluation and monitoring for accountability or will it have clear responsibilities to facilitate learning? What topics will it work on?
2. Select the researcher or research team	What is the profile of the candidates? Does the researcher(s) have the time and resources available for the investigation? Are there possible conflicts of interest?
3. Establish the right mechanisms for gathering information	What information is necessary to complete the templates for the inception and end of commitment assessments? What other information do you need to carry-out the final learning exercise? What are the available human and other resources? What evidence-collection mechanisms (virtual or face-to-face) are available? Where will the evidence be documented?
4. Analyze the information	How much time is necessary for the organization and analysis of the information? What does the evidence say about the indicators? What opportunities will be available for key stakeholders to provide feedback on the findings before they are published?



Section III: IRM recommendations for developing evaluations based on the templates provided by OGP Local

The monitoring bodies should complete three assessments to assess local members performance in the implementation of commitments, based on the templates provided by OGP Local staff:

1. Inception assessment;
2. End-of-commitment assessment; and
3. Final learning exercise.

1. Inception assessment

As the *OGP Local Handbook* indicates, the inception assessment appraises the co-creation process as well as the design of the commitments at their inception. This assessment should be finalized within two months of the submission of the action plan. The template to complete the inception assessment is available [here](#).

The assessment should provide:

- The degree of compliance with requirements;
- Recommendations for co-creation; and
- The design or characteristics of the five initial commitments.

Requirements

The multistakeholder forum (questions 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 of the inception assessment)

Per the *OGP Local Handbook*, the local government, with the support of nongovernmental stakeholders, should have a space for participation in the development and review of the action plan.

OGP's Co-creation and Participation Standards define the multistakeholder forum as a group represented by the government, civil society, and other stakeholders elected through a just and transparent process, with a clear remit, membership, and governance structure that meets regularly to oversee the OGP process. Although the standards give multiple characteristics of forums, the IRM has basic elements that the forum should meet. To meet the minimum requirements, local members should demonstrate that:

- A forum exists: There is a space for interested parties to discuss progress on the implementation of commitments ;
- The forum is multistakeholder: The space allows participation by civil society or any other interested nongovernment stakeholder in the development of the action plan; and
- Regularity: The forum held at least one meeting with government and civil society stakeholders to develop the action plan.

Endorsement of nongovernment stakeholders (question 1.4 of the inception assessment)

According to the *OGP Local Handbook*, nongovernment stakeholders should endorse the final action plan. The government should submit with the action plan a list of nongovernmental stakeholders who endorse the final action plan. The monitoring body should verify with evidence (e.g., reports, videos, websites, etc.) or stakeholder interviews



whether nongovernment stakeholders endorsed or approved the action plan before its submission to OGP.

Recommended practices

The website or web page (question 2.1 of the inception assessment)

Local members can choose any platform or system to publish information on the OGP process. They can develop public websites with a given URL, a webpage hosted on the government website, or a hyperlink to a platform or digital folder hosted on the government website. OGP has no requirement on which format is used for sharing information.

Ideally, the platform should be archived or have a permanent link (permalink) and include interoperable data. In addition, the IRM recommends the webpage, website, or hyperlink to be clearly visible and easy to access. To determine whether the government hosts a website or webpage to proactively publish information about the OGP Local process, the monitoring body should determine that:

- The website or webpage is available online and without barriers to access (it does not require a password or credentials);
- It includes information on the OGP Local process (development and implementation of commitments), for example:
 - Evidence of public consultations held for developing the action plan,
 - Evidence of the creation of the multistakeholder forum, or
 - Documentation of the implementation of commitments; and
- Information is published proactively and regularly, at least every four months as recommended by the OGP Local Program.

Advance documentation (question 2.2 of the inception assessment)

According to the *OGP Local Handbook*, the government, with support from nongovernment stakeholders, should share information about OGP Local to stakeholders in advance to facilitate informed and prepared participation in all stages of the process. To determine whether the government met this requirement, at a minimum, the monitoring body should verify with evidence (e.g., reports, videos, websites, etc.) or through interviews with stakeholders whether, prior to the meeting(s) hosted for developing the action plan, the government shared relevant information with government and civil society stakeholders (at least those who endorsed the action plan).

Inclusiveness: the ability to contribute to the action plan (question 2.3 of the inception assessment)

The *OGP Local Handbook* states that the government, with support of nongovernmental stakeholders, should ensure that all interested members of the public can give input toward the action plan and observe or have access to decision-making documentation.

To determine whether the government guaranteed the opportunity to contribute to the action plan's development, the monitoring body should assess whether the government created a space to receive input from nongovernment stakeholders (e.g., public consultations held to gather input from civil society and the citizenry).



Feedback during the development of the action plan (question 2.4 of the inception assessment)

According to the *OGP Local Handbook*, the government should proactively communicate and report back on its decisions, activities, and results to wider government and civil society stakeholders. This includes how the government provided feedback during the co-creation process, including a summary of major categories and themes proposed for inclusion, amendment, or rejection. In addition, the government should respond to feedback submitted during the assessment of commitments.

Although the standard provides multiple ways in which governments can respond to stakeholder input on whether the government met this recommendation, the government should demonstrate that they informed stakeholders about how their input was considered during the creation of the action plan.

The monitoring body should have a neutral position regarding how governments or multistakeholder forums provide feedback to stakeholders. If there is no evidence showing a reasoned response (e.g., reports, videos, websites, etc.), the IRM recommends the monitoring body uses stakeholder interviews to understand whether this requirement was met.

Collaboration during the action plan development process (question 2.5 of the inception assessment)

According to the *OGP Local Handbook*, the government and nongovernment stakeholders should establish a permanent dialogue to identify priorities, set an agenda, and develop commitments.

To determine whether government and civil society collaborated on the action plan, the monitoring body should assess whether the government, civil society organizations, and/or other nongovernment stakeholders worked together to set an agenda (i.e., set priorities for commitments) and draft the final selection of commitments and their associated milestones.

In the spirit of OGP, members should aspire to collaborate and lead the partnership between government and civil society in creating and implementing action plans.

The following are examples of best practices of collaboration on designing local action plans:

- Basque Country (Spain): The 2018-2020 action plan was developed with direct collaboration between public agencies and civil society groups via a series of forums. The design and implementation of the action plan is led by a group of eight agencies, seven of which are executive, autonomous, local governments and Innobasque, an association with public and private stakeholders whose mission is to promote innovation. A multistakeholder forum of government and civil society representatives is a space for deliberation, development, and monitoring of the action plan.¹
- South Cotabato (the Philippines): Led by the Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO), the 2018-2020 action plan was developed through a collaborative process centered on decisions by multiple stakeholders. The multistakeholder forum (South Cotabato Integrity Circle) included members of the provincial government, civil

¹ Javier Yanguas, Ander Arriola, and Xabier Riezu, *Mecanismo de Revisión Independiente (MRI): País Vasco Informe sobre el Diseño del Plan de Acción 2018-2020* [Mechanism of the Independent Review (MRI): Vasco Country Information on the Action Plan Design 2018-2020] (OGP, 2 Jul. 2021), 2–4, [Basque Country Design Report 2018-2020 \(opengovpartnership.org\)](https://opengovpartnership.org/publications/country-design-report-2018-2020).



society, and the private sector. The co-creation of the action plan, as well as the overall OGP process, benefited from the high-level support and participation of the governor and legislative council through the vice-governor and was institutionalized through ordinances, rulings, and executive orders.²

- Buenos Aires (Argentina): According to CSO and government interviews, the relationship between stakeholders was productive and promoted mutual collaboration and understanding for the development of the 2018-2020 action plan. The general secretariat published a first draft of commitments in the digital repository and this, as well as the working group minutes, were discussed digitally. Representatives from civil society organizations highlighted difficulties of distributing resources and attending offline meetings. To address this challenge, the working group agreed to maximize collaboration through the online repository and to hold offline meetings also in CSO facilities. These decisions improved the consultation process.³

Assessing the design of commitments

According to the *OGP Local Handbook*, the monitoring body will assess the characteristics of the initial five commitments according to the following criteria:

- verifiability of the commitments;
- relevance to the OGP values of transparency, accountability, and public participation; and
- the commitment's potential for results.

Commitment verifiability (question 3.1.1 of the inception assessment)

To determine whether the commitment is verifiable, the monitoring body should assess whether the objectives and proposed actions are clear and include verifiable objectives to assess implementation. The IRM recommends monitoring bodies to identify if milestones have clear: i) outputs that can be verified; and ii) outcomes that can be measured as a result of their completion at the end of the commitment implementation period.

Relevance to open government values (question 3.1.2 of the inception assessment)

Commitments should relate to the open government values of transparency, public participation, or accountability, as defined by the “Open Government Declaration” and the “OGP Articles of Governance.” Based on the commitment text, the monitoring group must determine whether the commitment seeks to make a public policy area, institution, or decision-making process more transparent, participatory, or accountable.

When analyzing the commitments, the following questions can be used to identify the focus of commitments:

- Transparency: Will the government share more information; improve the legal or institutional frameworks to guarantee the right to access to information; improve the

² Jose Cortez, *Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): South Cotabato (Philippines) Design Report 2018-2020* (OGP, 9 Oct. 2020), 2–4, [South Cotabato Design Report 2018-2020 \(opengovpartnership.org\)](https://opengovpartnership.org/publications/south-cotabato-design-report-2018-2020).

³ Soledad Gattoni, *Mecanismo de Revisión Independiente (IRM): Informe sobre el Diseño del Plan de Acción 2018-2020 de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* [Revision mechanism Independiente (IRM): Information about the Design of Action Plan 2018-2020 of the City of Buenos Aires] (OGP, 17 Jun. 2021), 16, [Buenos Aires Design Report 2018-2020 \(opengovpartnership.org\)](https://opengovpartnership.org/publications/buenos-aires-design-report-2018-2020).



quality of the information shared with the public; or improve the transparency of the government's and public institutions' decision-making processes?

- **Public participation:** Will the government create or improve opportunities, processes, or mechanisms for the public to inform or influence decision-making? Will the government create, enable, or improve participation mechanisms for minorities or under-represented groups? Will the government enable a legal environment to guarantee the freedom of assembly, association, and peaceful protest?
- **Accountability:** Will the government create or improve opportunities for citizens to hold public officers accountable for their actions? Will the government create legal, political, or institutional frameworks to promote accountability of public officers?

Commitment novelty and potential for results (questions 3.1.3 and 3.1.4 of the inception assessment)

The monitoring body should determine whether the commitment is novel. To do so, it must analyze the text of the commitment to determine that it is:

- a continuation of ongoing legislative practices or existing policies, or
- a new regulation, policy or requirement

Next, the monitoring group must determine the commitment's potential for results. This assessment is only an early indication of the possibility the commitment has to yield meaningful results. It is based on the text of the commitment in contrast with the baseline in the respective policy area. To do this, the monitoring body must select one of the following three levels that best describes the commitment:

Level	Level description
The commitment's activities have no indication of the added value or enhanced open government approach in contrast with existing practice.	These commitments continue ongoing practices, requirements, or policies without adding value or improvement to an existing practice with an open government perspective.
The commitment's activities have the potential to be a positive change to a process, practice or policy but will not generate a binding or institutionalized change across government or specific institution(s).	These commitments bring about positive but isolated changes in policies or practices. They do not promote binding or institutionalized changes in government (e.g. specific institutions overseeing a public policy area). They often include the creation or improvement of tools such as websites, data publication, capacity building, or pilot projects.
The commitment's activities have the potential to result in a change of the rules, practices or policies that govern a policy area, public sector and/or relationship between citizens and the State and is binding or institutionalized across government or specific institution(s).	These commitments are a possible game changer for practices, policies, or institutions that govern a policy area, public sector, and/or relationship between citizens and the state. The commitment generates binding and institutionalized changes across government.



2. End of commitment assessment

As the *OGP Local Handbook* states, the end of commitment assessment analyzes the outcomes of each commitment after their completion or at the end of the action plan cycle, whichever happens first. This assessment should be submitted digitally no later than one month after the completion of commitments and will assess their completion and early results. The template to complete the end of commitment assessment is available [here](#).

Assessing the implementation of commitments

Level of completion (question 1.1 of the end of commitment assessment)

The monitoring body should assess the level of completion, i.e., whether the activities were implemented and to what extent, based on impartial facts that are objectively verifiable. The main question is: To what extent was the activity completed during the commitment implementation period? Other guiding questions for this assessment include:

- What progress was made in the first year of implementation?
- Was the commitment completed in the time stipulated in the action plan?
- What evidence supports commitment implementation?
- What is the government's perspective?
- What is the perspective of nongovernmental actors and how does it vary from that of the government?

Once the monitoring body has the necessary information, it should select one of the following options for the commitment:

- Not started;
- Limited completion;
- Substantial completion;
- Complete; or
- Withdrawn.

Commitment's results during its implementation (question 1.4 of the end of commitment assessment)

In 2015, the IRM introduced the variable, “Did it open government? (DIOG),” to measure commitment implementation. This variable assesses how government practice, in OGP-relevant areas, has changed as a result of commitment implementation. The IRM acknowledges that these results are often not visible during the two-year action plan and that at least a level of “substantial completion” is necessary to see preliminary outcomes.

DIOG uses the following spectrum:

- **Worsened:** Government openness worsened due to the commitment;
- **Did not change:** No change in government practice;
- **Marginal:** Some change, but minor in terms of its effect on level of openness;
- **Major:** A step forward for government openness in the relevant policy area but limited in scope or scale; and
- **Outstanding:** A reform transformed “business as usual” in the relevant policy area by opening government.



For this assessment, the IRM recommends the monitoring body offer a brief explanation in response to the template questions in a clear and concise manner. The reader must be able to understand the results (or lack thereof) and justify the assessment of the “Did it open government” variable. For national-level assessments, the IRM requires researchers to cite views from nongovernment stakeholders or their own views whenever necessary. Commitments assessed as “outstanding” must include the opinion of a third party or an expert.

Additionally, the IRM provides the following questions to support the assessment:

- What are the outcomes? What changed? Was the change positive or negative?
- How broad has the change been since the starting point?
- What factors contributed to the successful (or weak) implementation?
- How did preliminary results contribute to addressing the public issue the commitment addresses? Did it exceed the commitment’s ambition? Did it meet it?
- In conclusion, in your view, did the implementation of commitment contribute to opening up the government? (Please touch upon the relevant OGP values)

3. Final learning exercise

As indicated by the *OGP Local Handbook*, the final learning exercise extracts and analyzes lessons once the action plan has reached the end date. The report analyzes information within the inception and end-of-commitment assessments. The final learning exercise must capture the successes and areas for improvement of the action plan as a whole—from co-creation to final implementation. It should go beyond assessing activity completion and elicit a meaningful reflection about the changes enabled by the reforms and co-creation process. It may also look at reasons for inadequate reform progress and describe how to overcome identified challenges. The *Handbook* further indicates that a report summarizing the lessons from the final learning exercise with suggested steps forward must be submitted online two months after the end of the action plan.

Recommendations for designing the final learning exercise

OGP local members are free to choose how to carry out the final learning exercise. The IRM suggests monitoring bodies to consider the following questions when designing the exercise:

- Functionality: What is its purpose?
- Audience: Who is it intended for?
- Structure and content: What will it look like?
- Development: How will it be created? and
- Delivery: When and how will it be shared with stakeholders?

These questions help define the form that the final learning exercise will take. The IRM suggests the monitoring body share the structure of the final report in advance, to help stakeholders frame their views around the exercise. It is normal that in this closing stage, each actor has a different opinion about the successes and limitations of the implementation, which can lead to disagreements between the participants. This exercise can reconcile different



views and provide clarity on what happened during the implementation with concrete evidence.

The final learning exercise could focus on:

- the obstacles and issues that occurred, allowing discussion among stakeholders;
- the strengths and results of commitment implementation and their future follow-up;
- lessons and recommendations for the local member's future action plan or commitments; or
- suggested steps for local governments about policy or management changes required to address similar challenges in the future; etc.

For reference, monitoring bodies can review the [IRM's "Co-Creation Brief"](#) template designed to provide recommendations for national governments on co creation processes and action plan design.

Recommendations for preparing the summary report

After conducting the final learning exercise, monitoring bodies should prepare a report summarizing the lessons from the exercise and steps moving forward. The IRM suggests that, at a minimum, the monitoring body gives those responsible for the local program a:

- 1–2 page summary of the most significant and relevant findings; and
- table of five recommendations moving forward.



Annex I. List of IRM tools for local monitoring bodies

All tools can be found in the links provided below or in the following public folder: “[IRM Tools for OGP Local.](#)”

Tool	Function
1. Conflict-of-interest policy	Aids in identifying conflicts of interest in candidates that wish to be members of the monitoring body.
2. Due-diligence policy	Provides guidelines for a protocol on the collection of evidence and stakeholder views. These guidelines should feed into the development of the assessment process and/or completion of OGP reports.
3. Commenting guide	Helps the monitoring body establish a mechanism for receiving, processing, and providing feedback on comments from stakeholders on preliminary findings before they are published.
4. “Process Pathway”	This details the IRM report production with a description of the steps, templates, and timeline for each of its products.
5. List of activities that the IRM offers countries to support them in their OGP processes.	These are complementary activities that a monitoring body can carry out, in addition to their core function of producing the inception assessment, end-of-commitment assessment, and final learning exercise.
6. Selection of tools and digital platforms for online co-creation	These references for the commitment co-creation process includes a list of digital mechanisms that can be used to universalize the participation of stakeholders and citizens in developing the action plan.
7. Template for developing the IRM’s “Co-creation Brief”	An example of how IRM produces a report of recommendations for co-creation based on findings and lessons from previous action plans and international good practices.