

**OGP STEERING  
COMMITTEE MEETING**  
14 October 2021  
Virtual Meeting

**Pre-Meeting Briefing Packet**

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# Logistical Note

## How to Connect

Connect on Zoom a few minutes before 07:00 Washington, DC Time with the following link. **We recommend that you join via the Zoom desktop app** so that you can utilize the interactive features such as the chat and live interpretation.

French live interpretation will be available during this call.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://opengovpartnership-org.zoom.us/j/85214396208?pwd=WUZJUFNLWjBmcUw5bk80aTVEdU5kUT09>

Meeting ID: 852 1439 6208

Passcode: 640279

Find your local number:

<https://opengovpartnership-org.zoom.us/u/kbcS2nCikl>

Join by Skype for Business:

<https://opengovpartnership-org.zoom.us/skype/85214396208>



# OGP Steering Committee Meeting

Virtual | October 14, 2021 | 07:00 - 10:00 EDT

## Agenda

### I. Welcome and introductions | 15 min

### II. OGP support to Afghan open government community | 30 min

The Support Unit will provide an update on the OGP efforts to support the open government community in Afghanistan following the crises that unfolded in late August of this year, and discuss what additional potential support could be provided by the Steering Committee.

### III. Briefing on the OGP Global Summit and strategic priorities | 45 min

The Support Unit will provide a briefing on the upcoming OGP Global Summit against the current geopolitical backdrop and within the context of OGP's 10th anniversary.

During this session the Support Unit and current government co-chair Korea will share an overview of the strategic objectives for the Summit, the proposed approach to achieve them, and discuss the role of the Steering Committee.

*Reference Materials:*

- Four Ways the OGP Global Summit Can Build Back Better Democracy ([pg 6](#))

### IV. Rules of the Game: Participation & Co-Creation Standards & Parliamentary Engagement Guidelines | 45 min

The Chairs of the Criteria & Standards (C&S) Subcommittee and the Support Unit will present two core policies and guidelines that aim to help inform ambitious national OGP processes and how Parliaments can be leveraged in this process:

- A. The revised **Participation & Co-Creation Standards** seek to foster ambition and clearly outline the minimum requirements that are expected from all participating countries. The C&S Subcommittee endorsed the version that will be presented to the Steering Committee, and that is currently up for public comments from the OGP community.
- B. The revised **Parliamentary Engagement Guidelines** were developed following an extensive review process designed to identify the key challenges and opportunities for parliamentary engagement in OGP.

Both items are being presented for **Steering Committee feedback, and to discuss any outstanding concerns to be addressed** before these can be approved by the Steering Committee in November. This session also seeks to discuss how Steering Committee members could leverage the new Standards and Parliament guidelines in their own OGP processes.



*Reference Materials:*

- Revised OGP Co-Creation and Participation Standards ([page 8](#))
- Guidelines for Parliamentary Engagement in OGP ([page 10](#))

**V. Election of the new incoming co-chairs of OGP | 30 min**

Following a call for candidates from government and civil society to serve as the next Co-Chairs of OGP, the Support Unit has received expressions of interest from the governments of Estonia and Nigeria, and from Anabel Cruz (ICD - Uruguay) from civil society.

All candidates will have the opportunity to present a brief overview of their candidacies during this session. As outlined in the OGP [Articles of Governance](#), the Steering Committee elects all new co-chairs. A voting period of 48 business hours will open directly following the Steering Committee meeting. All 22 SC members – government and civil society – will be invited to vote. Additional details and instructions will be sent directly, and will be available in English, French and Spanish.

*Reference Materials:*

- Steering Committee Co-Chair Expressions of Interest ([pages 19 - 23](#))



# Draft List of Attendees

## Government Steering Committee Members

### Government of Canada

Melanie Robert Executive Director, Open Government, Chief Information Officer Branch (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat)

### Government of Estonia (new member)

Taimar Peterkop Secretary Of State

Ott Karulin Advisor, Government Office

### Government of Georgia

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

### Government of Germany

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

### Government of Indonesia

Maharani Putri S. Wibowo Deputy Director for Institutional and States Apparatus Capacity , OpenGov Indonesia Secretariat

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

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

Ernesto Belisario Senior Expert, Open Government Task Force

### Government of Kenya

Philip Thigo Senior Advisor, Data, Innovation and Open Government, Office of the Deputy President

### Government of Morocco (new member)

Ahmed Laamoumri Secretary-General, Ministry of Administration and Public Service Reform of Morocco

Sarah Lamrani Director of Communication and Cooperation in the Ministry of Reform of Administration and Civil Service

### Government of Nigeria

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

Anne Nzegwu Nigeria OGP National Coordinator

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

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

Minchan Park Ministry of the Interior and Safety



## Government of the United Kingdom (new member)

Isabella Fudge

Policy Advisor, Government Digital Service, Cabinet Office

## Civil Society Steering Committee Members

María Baron (Lead Civil Society  
Co-Chair 2020 – 2021)

Directorio Legislativo

Anabel Cruz

ICD Uruguay

Helen Darbishire

Access Info Europe

Aiden Eyakuze (Incoming Civil Society  
Co-Chair 2021 - 2022)

Twaweza

Blair Glencorse

Accountability Lab

Lysa John

CIVICUS

Lucy McTernan

University of York

Stephanie Muchai

International Lawyers' Project

Luben Panov (new member)\*

European Center for Not-for-Profit Law

Elisa Peter

Publish What You Pay

Doug Rutzen (new member)

International Center for Not-for-Profit Law

Zuzana Wienk

White Crow

*\*Formal term with voting privileges begins on January 1, 2022.*

**For any changes to this list, please send to [jaime.mercado@opengovpartnership.org](mailto:jaime.mercado@opengovpartnership.org).**



# Four Ways the OGP Global Summit Can Build Back Better Democracy

*This blog was originally published [here](#).*

This year, the Open Government Partnership (OGP) turns 10 and the Republic of Korea will host the [2021 OGP Global Summit](#) to mark the occasion from December 15-17, 2021. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic means the Summit will be almost entirely virtual, but it remains a crucial opportunity to reinforce the importance of open government in strengthening and renewing democracy, recovering from the pandemic, and countering the 15 year-trend of rising authoritarianism. This is reflected in OGP's current global campaign, which started last year calling for an [Open Response and Open Recovery](#) to COVID-19 in areas like government procurement for health services which were found deficient in so many countries. OGP is now urging an [Open Renewal](#) that tackles the systematic weaknesses in our societies that, for too long, have held too many back.

Politically, the Summit comes at a vital time to showcase a strong global coalition for democracy and open government. In recent years, the rise of authoritarian leaders driving an illiberal democratic model rooted in corruption, disinformation, and restricting space for dissent and civil society has often gone unchecked. Recent events in Afghanistan are just the latest reminder of how fragile democratic gains can be, and how quickly they can be eroded. There have been some signs of a more proactive group of countries coming together, for example with stronger coordinated international action being taken on democratic backsliding from Belarus to Hong Kong, and an increasing number of global fora focused on democracy issues. For this effort to succeed it must be done with humility, with an equal focus on strengthening democracy at home as well as abroad. Countries need to show, through the power of example, how a more citizen-centred model of democracy can build trust in the democratic model and deliver better results. This is where the global community of reformers in OGP can play a vital role, and the OGP Global Summit can help in four significant ways.

First, the Summit is an opportunity for OGP members to recommit to open government and democracy principles at the highest levels. Heads of State and Government will be invited to signal their political support as part of a virtual opening plenary that will include leaders from across the world. Leaders at the local government level will also have a chance to show their support. OGP's efforts on this front will [complement other multilateral events](#) aimed at reinvigorating the coalition standing up for democracy, including the planned [U.S. Summit for Democracy](#), and the [G7's Open Societies](#) agenda. With the U.S. Summit planned the week before the OGP Global Summit, it represents a unique opportunity to rally support as part of a "Democracy Fortnight" of action.

Second, the Summit is an opportunity to demonstrate what better democracy looks like for citizens through the 100 national and local OGP action plans due by the end of this year. Right now, civil society and reformers in government are co-creating the content of these plans to make them as relevant as possible to the current context. Open government can help in at least four dimensions: speeding up the recovery of both the health systems and the economy from the pandemic; addressing systemic inequalities in society, many of which have been deepened by





COVID-19; tackling threats to democracy, such as eroding space for civil society, disinformation and digital surveillance; and building more participatory, open democratic models for the future. The OGP [Co-Chair Global Call-to-Action](#) articulates how open government policies can achieve these goals. It specifically calls for every OGP member to co-create ambitious commitments on anti-corruption, civic space and participation, and digital governance in their action plans. Again, the link to the U.S. Summit for Democracy will be key, with relevant commitments made across the two events being taken forward as part of OGP action plans in years to come.

Third, the Summit will be an opportunity to reflect on 10 years of OGP. The aim is to tell the story of how reformers have used OGP to transform the way governments serve their citizens. There will be impact awards for some of the strongest reforms that have demonstrated clearly how democracy and open government delivers results for citizens. A series of video stories shown throughout the Summit will bring reforms like these to life. OGP will also publish a much anticipated report looking at ten years of lessons learned from the Partnership, as well as the findings from an independent evaluation of five countries' journeys in OGP.

Finally, there will be space for the growing open government community to share innovations, successes and failures. Although this will look different from traditional OGP summits, where thousands of people have gathered as part of an intensive programme, it is still central to OGP's DNA that there is space for interaction and learning. For example, reformers inside and outside of government in Korea will be sharing their experience of citizen engagement strategies, including the [Gwanghwamun 1st Street initiative](#).

Taking a summit online, of course, needs some different approaches. Our [Summit webpage](#) and a soon-to-be-launched Summit website will be continuously updated with guidance on how best to participate. There will also be a series of pre-Summit events in the next several months, such as an OGP Academy focused on the evidence for open government and a week dedicated to OGP's [Independent Reporting Mechanism](#).

But one thing remains the same. The OGP Global Summit should be more than a place to exchange ideas; it should also prompt action. During the few months, whether you are a civil society leader or government reformer, there is an opportunity to use this year's Summit to move the agenda forward in your country. This could take the form of finalising an ambitious new action plan, encouraging your Head of State or Government to record a video pledging their support to this agenda, or making an ambitious new commitment on a topic like civic space, anti-corruption or digital governance.

There is a gathering momentum behind the conviction that our democracies need to improve in order to deliver for citizens, and show a more hopeful path away from closed government and authoritarian leaders. Our first decade together has demonstrated the remarkable progress to be made when reformers across our communities work in partnership. The OGP Global Summit is a key moment in the next leg of our journey together.



# Finalizing the New OGP Co-Creation and Participation Standards

*This blog was originally published [here](#). The full text for the new Co-Creation and Participation Standards is available for review [here](#), and in the annex of this document. To comment on the Standards through the public platform, please visit this [site](#).*

The current [Participation and Co-creation Standards](#) were introduced in 2016 to improve the requirements for participation and quality of public consultations, and provide guidance on the ongoing dialogue between government and civil society throughout the OGP action plan cycle. However, the current 60 standards often lead to overlaps, make the process too rigid at times, and create difficulty to follow and measure them. The use of proxy measures to identify the minimum requirements also adds an unnecessary layer of complexity.

Over the last 24 months, the [OGP Criteria and Standards Subcommittee and OGP Support Unit](#) have consulted the global community, reviewed results from the first ten years of OGP, and debated the key elements that lead to strong results while enabling flexibility and innovation. This newer version of the Standards seeks to foster ambition and clearly outline the minimum requirements that are expected from all participating countries. Furthermore, for the first time since OGP launched a decade ago, we are proposing for greater flexibility on the length and delivery date of action plans.

The new Participation and Co-creation Standards are structured very differently from the previous version. The introduction outlines the content, ambition and overarching principles (full text [here](#)). Five proposed standards follow, each dealing with a key component of the OGP action plan cycle:

- [Standard 1](#): Establishing a space for ongoing dialogue and collaboration between government, civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders.
- [Standard 2](#): Providing open, accessible and timely information about activities and progress within a member's participation in OGP.
- [Standard 3](#): Providing inclusive and informed opportunities for public participation during co-creation of the action plan.
- [Standard 4](#): Providing a reasoned response and ensuring ongoing dialogue between government and civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders as appropriate during co-creation of the action plan
- [Standard 5](#): Providing inclusive and informed opportunities for ongoing dialogue and collaboration during implementation and monitoring of the action plan

All standards have the same structure and include an outline of what ambition looks like, scope of application, guidelines on how to apply the standard, minimum requirements, and how compliance will be assessed.



The final section outlines the proposed new rules regarding [action plan length and delivery dates](#). The proposal would allow for two and four-year action plans that can be delivered in two windows over the calendar year.

A dedicated [platform](#) was developed to allow the community to interact and comment on the proposed new standards. The consultation process will close on 13 October 2021. A final version that incorporates the input received will be presented to the OGP Steering Committee for approval. We will also publish a report on what we heard from the consultation process.



# Guidelines for Parliamentary Engagement in OGP

## Background

This document provides an update to OGP's guidelines for parliamentary engagement set out in the [Legislative Engagement Policy Guidance](#) approved by the Steering Committee in 2017 to facilitate and encourage parliamentary engagement within OGP.<sup>1</sup>

These updated guidelines are informed by five years of practice since 2017, captured through an [evidence paper](#) based on OGP and IRM data published in July 2021, and consultations carried out with members of the OGP community between April 2021 and September 2021.

### Support Unit is seeking future endorsement of the following:

- Reaffirmation of the important role of parliaments in advancing open government reforms
- The direction and guidelines for parliamentary engagement set out in this document
- Mandate to the OGP Support Unit to commission further research and develop guidance materials to support more effective parliamentary engagement in OGP.

Details of the review process and findings can be found in the appendix to this document.

## Guidelines for Parliamentary Engagement in OGP

These guidelines for parliamentary engagement in OGP set out the rationale and approach for parliamentary engagement in OGP. For easy reference, any additions or modifications to the existing rules are clearly identified in the text.

Note that parliamentary engagement is not a *requirement* for participation in OGP. The updated guidelines are therefore intended to provide OGP stakeholders with a menu of options to consider where such engagement is desirable or feasible, while noting that in most cases such engagement can be beneficial to the national or local OGP process. The guidelines build on existing practices and lessons learned, and revise those aspects of the 2017 guidance that currently fall short in enabling meaningful parliamentary engagement.

### The Rationale for Engagement

Realizing the ambition of the Open Government Partnership, as articulated in the [Open Government Declaration](#), [OGP's Strategic Refresh](#) and the more recent [Three-Year implementation plan](#) requires a whole-of-state approach, with all branches of government playing their part. Many of the key aspirations of the open government movement - pursuing rights-based approaches to open government, institutionalising reforms, promoting and protecting civic space, defending democratic processes, and ensuring an open response, recovery, and renewal from the Covid-19 pandemic - require the support of parliaments.

This is not new: different branches of government - parliaments, local governments, and more recently judiciaries - are already becoming increasingly involved in OGP processes. That involvement ranges from actively participating in national multistakeholder fora and leading commitments in the national action plan to convening their own co-creation processes. For example, over two thirds of OGP countries include local governments in their OGP processes, at least 7 countries and 2 OGP Local members include the judiciary, while the Philippines, Georgia

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<sup>1</sup> Note: the 2017 Legislative Engagement Policy Guidance called for a review of the guidance 18 months after its adoption to see if the guidance needed to be amended and/or if additional efforts by OGP on legislative openness needed to be considered.



and others have seen oversight institutions like the Supreme Audit Institution engage. To date, parliaments have been engaged in 34 OGP member countries and local jurisdictions.

Parliaments, specifically, have a role to play in:

- **Taking legislative action:** Championing open government values by introducing or reviewing and ratifying legislation relevant for open government.
- **Ensuring parliamentary oversight:** holding governments accountable for open government reforms and opening up its own oversight processes to public scrutiny.
- **Opening up parliamentary processes:** Adopting open government principles - transparency, accountability, participation and inclusion - in the parliamentary institution and processes.
- **Creating space for dialogue:** Fostering inter-party dialogue and support needed to advance and institutionalise open government reforms.

Engagement of parliaments in OGP - whether through formal participation in co-creation or other means of coordination - stands to benefit all OGP stakeholders.

For the executive branch, parliamentary engagement opens up opportunities for securing legislation that enables executive branch commitments, resourcing for implementation, and institutionalizing reforms. When the executive branch engages citizens and civil society in their OGP national action plan co-creation processes, inputs from these groups often reflect aspirations or grievances that cannot be addressed by the executive branch alone.

For parliaments themselves, engagement with the OGP platform domestically provides an additional mechanism to hear from citizens and civil society between electoral cycles on how they can better serve the people they represent, and stay abreast of the commitments governments are taking on and need to be held accountable for. Internationally, OGP provides a global platform for peer learning, accessing expertise from OGP's vast network of practitioners, and showcasing successes.

For civil society organizations, parliamentary engagement is a crucial aspect of securing the sustainability of reforms across administrations and political cycles, and for advocating for citizen interests and rights.

### **OGP's approach to engagement**

Recognizing the benefits of parliamentary engagement in OGP for the reasons discussed above, this section details OGP's approach to facilitate and encourage engagement.

The approach can be summarised as follows (further details below):

1. OGP's preferred approach is for parliaments to engage in the national or local OGP process and action plan. A single plan and process presents the best opportunities to pursue synergies on the open government agenda across all branches of government.
2. OGP recognizes that, despite the strong and compelling reasons for a single OGP process and plan per country or local jurisdiction, differences in systems of governance, diverse political environments, and different levels of readiness for engagement across branches of government mean that a "one-size-fits-all" approach is not possible everywhere. In such cases, parliaments convene their own co-creation processes to develop independent open parliament plans, under the OGP framework.



3. OGP also recognizes that for some members, it may not be essential or desirable to engage parliamentarians formally under the framework of OGP. In such cases, collaboration and engagement can be pursued beyond OGP.

## **1. Parliaments participating in the national or local OGP process**

**Parliaments participating in a single national or local OGP process offers opportunities to explore synergies and coherence on the open government agenda across branches of government.** It is worth noting that as of 2020, approximately 10-15% of all OGP commitments made require legislative action, underlining how parliamentary engagement in OGP can help ensure successful implementation. A single national or local process also allows more efficient use of the time and resources allocated to co-creation and consultation, and reduces the transaction costs for civil society in engaging in OGP related activities. Further, as different branches of government are increasingly becoming involved in OGP, a single process avoids creating parallel tracks of engagement that might be more difficult to manage for OGP. **Therefore, this is OGP's recommended approach for parliamentary engagement.**

It is worth noting that **this is the model of engagement already pursued in the majority of countries with parliamentary involvement in OGP. To date, parliaments have participated in national or local OGP processes in 34 OGP members.** However, some countries have cited formal or informal codes of conduct regarding the separation of powers that may not permit such engagement in their contexts. In pursuing this model, it is important that the rules and procedures governing the separation of powers are observed. The OGP Support will commission research into how this approach might work in countries with different parliamentary systems, and issue guidance accordingly. Beyond any potential procedural issues, it is also possible that the prevailing political dynamics within parliament, or between the parliament and executive branch, make it difficult for some members to pursue this approach. Once again, it is worth noting that parliamentary engagement is not a requirement for OGP membership. **A single process and plan is the preferred model of engagement, where parliamentary engagement is desirable and feasible.**

Finally, **participation by parliaments in the national or local process can take many forms. It can be formal or informal, closely or loosely coordinated, and deliver any number of results: commitments from the parliament in the OGP action plan, collaboration and coordination on reforms, and ensuring oversight of implementation - or, of course, a combination thereof.**

**The Co-creation and Participation Standards will govern the co-creation and implementation of these plans.** The practical implications of this are listed below. Elements that are new or different from the 2017 guidelines are indicated in parentheses, where relevant. All other elements represent continuation of the 2017 guidelines.

- **Participation in the co-creation process:** Parliamentary representatives (either parliamentary administrative staff or parliamentarians or both) can participate in the consultations and other co-creation and implementation activities. The scope of participation ideally includes both consideration of commitments parliaments can make, but also includes ways in which they can support commitments made by the executive branch.
- **Representation in OGP multi stakeholder forums (MSF) and spaces for dialogue:** Ideally, parliaments have representatives in the national or local multistakeholder fora or similar spaces for continuous dialogue with civil society. Whether such representation is from parliamentary staff or parliamentarians themselves, or both, may vary from country to country, depending on the context (note: all three practices exist amongst OGP countries currently). Where formal MSF representation is not possible, there exists



agreed upon, regular communications and coordination mechanisms between the MSF and the POC and those involved from the parliament in the process. In countries where thematic working groups exist, stakeholders involved in these ideally engage parliamentary representatives where those themes can benefit from such engagement. *[New in 2022 guidelines to clarify engagement in MSFs].*

- **Inclusion of commitments in the action plan:** Where participation by parliaments in the national process results in commitments made by the parliament, these must be integrated within the overall action plan. Any commitments adopted by the parliament as part of the action plans are co-created with civil society and/or citizens' groups. These commitments adhere to the overall start and end dates for the OGP action plan.
- **Obligations around monitoring and reporting:** Parliaments adhere to the regular reporting and monitoring mechanisms required from all commitment implementers (where parliaments adopt commitments). All parliamentary commitments are included in the Independent Reporting Mechanism's review of the Action Plans (or in the case of OGP Local, the selected review mechanism), in line with the rules prevailing at the time.
- **Encourage engagement beyond the commitments:** Beyond commitments, the executive and parliamentary branches explore other forms of coordination and collaboration. This could include engaging relevant parliamentary committees and staff members in thematic working groups and discussions; organizing briefings for relevant parliamentary groups during action plan development; implementation and IRM launches to enable parliamentary oversight and support for legislation; engaging parliamentary research services and relevant committee processes on legislation impacted by the executive's commitments; including parliamentary stakeholders in the formulation of broader open government strategies and relevant thematic and policy discussions. *[New in 2021 guidelines to recognize that parliamentary engagement can take different forms and results of such engagement are not limited to action plan commitments by the parliaments].*

To encourage consideration of how parliaments can support commitments made by the executive branch, a **'legislative scan' will be introduced to the commitment template.** This scan will encourage dialogue and consensus building amongst those proposing and adopting commitments by prompting them to consider the role the parliament might (need to) play, whether by advancing supporting legislation, codifying reforms, or allocating resources for implementation. Recognising that not all commitments will be relevant for parliamentary engagement, this will be an optional field in the template. *[New in 2021 guidelines to encourage deeper reflection on the role of parliaments in advancing specific commitments, and the strategies to engage them, where relevant].*

- **Encourage parliamentary focal points:** When feasible, parliaments are encouraged to appoint a focal point for ease of communication and coordination with the executive branch, with other OGP stakeholders and with the Support Unit. Identifying a formal parliamentary focal point will allow for efficient information exchange about OGP events, the release of IRM reports, and progress on developing and implementing action plans, among others. In addition, parliamentary focal points will have a role in facilitating peer exchanges and learning between participating parliaments. Lastly, a direct line between the executive and legislative helps facilitate inter-branch collaboration and dialogue related to OGP. The selection of the focal points is left to the parliaments but could be successfully filled by a senior administrative or technical officer, an advisor to the presiding officer, or a staffer for a relevant committee, for example. Beyond the focal point, OGP members are encouraged to explore spaces for inter-party collaborating through existing committees or working groups, to ensure high-level political support for





the open government reform agenda. Further guidance will be issued to illustrate current practices and suggest potential options for parliaments to consider.

- **Procedural matters:** Note that the appointment of parliamentary focal points does not change the role of the official OGP Points of Contact, who remain the primary channel of communication between the Support Unit and OGP countries, and the overall point of contact with respect to the OGP process where there is a single integrated action plan. Procedural reviews of the country are applied at the level of the action plan and the overall national or local process.

## **2. Parliaments convening their own co-creation processes to produce independent open parliament plans, under the framework of OGP**

In some member countries and locals (currently approximately 10 members in OGP), it may not be possible for parliaments to engage fully with the prescribed timelines of the national or local OGP process or action plan even as they desire formal association with the OGP platform. This applies, for example, when parliament is not in session while an action plan is being finalized. This is especially the case where parliaments are just starting to engage and do not have adequate time to plan in a manner that synchronizes calendars with the executive branch ahead of time.

Equally, in some countries there may be formal rules of procedures or formal and informal protocols that govern the ways in which different branches of government can engage in such processes, limiting the communication and coordination needed to facilitate parliamentary engagement in a single national or local process. Finally, some parliaments may see value in pursuing independent open parliament plans, in addition to engaging with the national process and plan, focusing more on ways to open up parliamentary processes and systems. The experience from the implementation of the 2017 guidelines has shown the limitations of requiring that such parliaments submit chapters jointly with the executive. As of 2021, approximately 10 OGP members have parliaments convening their own co-creation process to produce open parliament plans, appended to and submitted at the same time as the executive branch-led plan.

Recognizing the hindering effect that these factors have had on the depth of co-creation and the time window for implementation, more flexibility will be offered in such cases. Going forward, parliaments will be allowed to submit these plans separately, to a timeline of their choosing. The 2021 guidelines will propose a new format, process and monitoring mechanism to ensure that: a) such plans are aligned with OGP's mission and strategic priorities, b) this option is scalable regardless of the resourcing of the OGP Support Unit, and in particular, the IRM.

Further flexibility is offered with the aim of improving the quality of open parliament plans, but OGP recognizes that this model can have different implications for civil society (once again, depending on context). In some cases, having a separate parliamentary OGP process would increase the time and resources civil society has to commit to OGP activities, especially where it is the same groups engaging across different co-creation processes. In others, where there is a difference in potential for ambition and opportunities for meaningful co-creation between the two processes, having a separate process may increase the opportunities available to civil society to further their advocacy.

The guidelines for this model of engagement are provided below. As with the previous section, any elements that are new or different compared to the 2017 guidelines are indicated in parenthesis:

- **Mandatory appointment of a parliamentary focal point and contact with the OGP Support Unit:** Parliaments considering this option will send a formal notification to the





OGP Support through its regional coordinators notifying them of the intent to co-create their own plan. A working level focal point will be mandatory. Ideally, there will also be some indication of commitment from senior parliamentary leadership of their intent to engage with this process. The Support Unit will in turn provide information and guidance on the process, and notify the official OGP Point of Contact and MSF members to encourage exploration of synergies between the two plans and processes. The official OGP Point of Contact will also be kept in copy on correspondence related to peer exchange and other opportunities to avoid any miscommunications. *[Shift from parliamentary focal points being optional to being mandatory. Also new is the formal notification needed from the parliament to the OGP POC and the Support Unit].*

Beyond the focal point, in order to ensure there is high-level political support for the agenda, members are encouraged to explore spaces for inter-party collaboration through existing committees or special working groups.

- **Action plans with high degree of flexibility:** Parliaments will be able to convene their own co-creation processes to develop, implement and monitor their action plans. The duration of the action plan and timelines for submission may be decided by the parliaments, in consultation with civil society, to allow optimal alignment with the parliamentary calendar. The end date of the plan must be clearly indicated at the time of submission. The Support Unit will upload these action plans on the OGP member country's page, alongside the executive branch's action plan.

Recognizing that some areas of parliamentary engagement cannot be properly captured within the existing framework of commitments - taking future legislative action, for example - the action plan template for these plans will be amended to include descriptive sections on past and future work on legislation to advance open government, oversight of open government reforms and OGP processes, and coordination with the executive branch's process and reforms. The new format will be developed by the Support Unit. *[The flexibility to submit the plan separately at a timeline of the parliaments' choosing is new to the 2021 guidelines, as is the proposed amended to the action plan format. Note, under the existing policy, parliaments are already convening separate co-creation processes but are appending the resulting plans to the executive branch plan].*

- **Encourage co-creation processes and spaces for dialogue:** It is recommended that parliamentary plans follow OGP's Co-Creation and Participation Standards and thus be developed and implemented in partnership with civil society. There is recognition that most OGP countries might already have highly developed processes for public participation in legislative work. Where a parliament decides to run a separate co-creation process following their standard public consultation processes, the parliamentary focal point should ensure that such a process meets OGP's minimum requirements. The Support Unit will issue additional guidance on this and on options to establish spaces for dialogue, such as the OGP multistakeholder forums. The burden of proof to demonstrate co-creation will lie with the parliaments.
- **OGP guided self-monitoring and reporting:** The OGP Support Unit and the IRM will provide detailed guidance and templates for parliaments to conduct their own monitoring in line with the IRM approach. Following IRM practice, monitoring efforts must include both parliamentary and non parliamentary actors to ensure that views and contributions from stakeholders are considered. The burden of proof falls on the parliament to provide evidence for their monitoring reports. For parliaments interested in working with (international) independent researchers to monitor their plans, the OGP Support Unit can facilitate connections to a trained pool of IRM researchers. The IRM will also be available to provide guidance and training. Additionally, OGP will conduct occasional deep dives on specific themes or overall co-creation if an increasing number of parliaments begin to



deliver such plans. The Support Unit will monitor any potential risks that may emerge from this approach to monitoring - failure to adhere to co-creation standards or issues around accountability and/or credibility, for example - and raise for Steering Committee consideration when required. *[Monitoring approach new to the 2021 guidelines].*

- **Encourage engagement beyond the action plan:** Parliaments convening their own processes and developing open parliament commitments, are also encouraged to establish communication and mechanisms for coordination with their counterparts in the executive-led process to consider inputs emerging from public consultations that are relevant to the parliamentary process, explore how the open parliament process and actors can extend support for the executive-led plan, explore coherence of agendas, and share information with civil society actors that are likely to have interest in both processes. Similarly parliaments will be encouraged to consider their role in the oversight of the governments' action plans.
- **Procedural matters:** Procedural review does not apply to separately co-created open parliament plans under OGP: OGP members will continue to be assessed at the level of the national/local OGP action plan. In instances where the executive branch risks acting contrary to OGP process whilst the parliamentary process demonstrates strength, the Support Unit will engage the parliamentary stakeholders to assess any assistance they might provide in bringing the executive process back on track.

Note parliaments convening their own processes do not have any additional decision-making or voting rights in OGP, which continues to rely on a single country view, coordinated via the official OGP Point of Contact, for any such matters (for e.g. voting in elections or any Steering Committee decisions, where relevant)

### 3. Parliamentary engagement beyond OGP.

Some parliaments may feel that it is not possible or necessary to work under the OGP framework. Similarly, a parliament in a country that is not participating in OGP may also wish to advance open parliament commitments or open government at large. However, plans that do not follow the OGP framework or plans that are developed by parliaments from non-OGP countries will not be directly supported by the OGP Support Unit or the IRM. They will not be considered formally part of OGP, and should not use OGP branding. However, OGP recognizes the value of these independent efforts to advance parliamentary openness and welcomes opportunities to share content and best practices from all parliaments involved, regardless of the particular mechanism chosen. OGP encourages peer learning across the broader community and will open up its resources - guidance, model commitments, learnings - to the full parliamentary community.

Overall, OGP's parliamentary engagement policy remains flexible and does not assume that "one-size-fits-all." **The space for, and specifics of, parliamentary engagement in each OGP process is primarily determined by domestic actors involved in the dialogue.** Parliamentary engagement is strongly recommended, especially where it can advance critical open government reforms, but it is not an OGP requirement for participation. These guidelines are simply meant to provide a coherent framework for engagement where it is pursued.

### Investing in Implementation

The revised guidelines aim to facilitate parliamentary engagement in OGP, but uptake and success will ultimately be determined by the energy and collective actions of the OGP community at national and global levels, and by the support, guidance and peer exchange opportunities extended to all stakeholders.



**The OGP Support Unit** will work with partners (where relevant) to provide the following areas of improved support. Note this is the most notable aspect of the updated guidelines - an increased emphasis on the importance of supplementary guidance and support:

### **Communications and Outreach**

- Standardised and proactive communication to the Speaker (or equivalent) of legislative branches in OGP member countries upon the formation of new parliaments, informing them of the opportunities for parliamentary engagement in OGP, copying and providing contact details for the OGP Point of Contact.
- Initiate a planning call between the Support Unit, Point of Contact, and parliamentary focal point at the start of co-creation (where this is of interest/desirable).
- Include parliamentary focal points on regular communications from the Support Unit, on matters of interest/relevance to them.
- Curate and disseminate stories of successful practices of parliamentary engagement in OGP, with a focus on achieving complementary action across the executive and legislature in support of open government reforms and incentivizing ambition.
- Create a dedicated space for parliamentary engagement on the OGP website to facilitate easy access to OGP materials.
- Create a communications package with value propositions, examples, OGP commitments and other open government reforms undertaken or supported by parliaments, for reference and use of actors looking to raise awareness of this agenda in parliament.

### **Guidance Materials and Model Commitments**

- Commission research on the practicalities of coordination and collaboration across branches of government in different systems of government and in light of the separation of powers.
- Update official OGP materials developed by the Support Unit to include guidance on parliamentary engagement. The Support unit will present concrete models for initiating or institutionalising parliamentary engagement in the OGP co-creation process as part of a menu of options for the OGP POC, MSF and civil society to consider, based on their context and needs.
- Develop guidance for parliamentary focal points and open government champions in parliaments on how to engage with OGP domestically and globally, and leveraging the OGP platform for knowledge sharing and peer exchange.
- Develop guidance materials and templates for co-creation, action plan templates, and monitoring for parliaments opting for independent co-creation under the OGP brand.
- Work with partners to curate model commitments on different aspects of parliamentary engagement.
- Review OGP's data tagging system to improve ease of access and analysis of commitments involving parliaments.

### **Peer exchange and engagement of parliaments in thematic work**

- Add a parliamentary lens to the Support Unit's prioritization framework. For example, OGP's work on priority commitments will explicitly assess the role of parliaments in advancing those commitments.
- Work with partners to explicitly expand parliamentary engagement, with an initial focus on selected pilot themes (these could include, for example, access to information, climate action, and fiscal openness). These themes will be identified in consultation with the OGP Thematic Leadership Subcommittee of the Steering Committee.
- Create spaces for parliamentary focal points and champions to connect with each other and opportunities for more frequent peer exchange.
- Facilitate peer exchanges and structured learning for national governments, parliaments and civil society on good practices and lessons learned regarding models for successful



coordination and collaboration on open government (peer exchanges will use existing OGP platforms and events wherever possible).

As emphasized above, the results of OGP's approach to parliamentary engagement will of course be driven by the collective efforts of the wider OGP ecosystem, beyond the Support Unit. The Steering Committee will have an important role in the global and national positioning of parliaments as partners for open government reforms, in particular at high-visibility occasions such as OGP Summits, global campaigns and high-level events, and in modeling recommendations and good practice. Partners at all levels - local, national and international - can help identify and facilitate concrete opportunities for parliamentary engagement and in the development of core materials for OGP stakeholders, in particular on specific policy areas and on model commitments. This applies to partners who engage in legislative advocacy as part of their core business as well as to partners who directly support and/or work with parliamentary institutions.

Note: the Support Unit will commission the aforementioned research and commence work on guidance materials upon the endorsement of the 2021 updated guidelines by the Steering Committee. The new guidelines will then take effect from 1 January 2022.

### **Additional Reference Materials**

- [2021 Parliament Guidelines: Review Process and Key Findings \(in Full\)](#)
- [2017 Legislative Engagement Policy](#) (currently in place)



# Civil Society Steering Committee Co-Chair

## Expression of Interest: **Anabel Cruz**

**Anabel Cruz - Open Government Partnership Co-Chair Candidacy Statement**  
**September 24, 2021**

Dear co-chairs of OGP:

María Baron, Global Executive Director / Directorio Legislativo

Aiden Eyakuze, Executive Director / Twaweza East Africa

Hae-cheol Jeon, Minister of the Interior and Safety / Government of the Republic of Korea

Renato Brunetta, Minister for Public Administration / Government of Italy

I am pleased to submit this statement in support of my candidacy for co-chair of the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

I have been involved with the OGP since its creation 10 years ago. I am deeply committed to the values and principles of Open Government, and I consider that access to information, citizen participation, transparency and accountability are the pillars of real democracy. After having advocated for the core OGP values on the national and global stage for several years, in 2020 I was nominated and further selected to join the OGP Steering Committee as an additional civil society member, to serve a one-year term. In 2021, I was nominated and selected to join the Steering Committee as a full member, to serve for 3 years.

My participation in diverse OGP spaces, and in different roles, has been a source of new learnings and challenges. Most recently, in the last months as a member of the Steering Committee, I have tried to bring to the Committee my knowledge of the situation of Latin American and the Caribbean, and of the open government processes at local and national level in several countries and my long-time involvement with civil society.

### **Priorities I would drive during my OGP co-chair term to advance OGP goals**

During my co-chair term, if elected, I want to give continuity to the good work being done by the OGP Steering Committee and the Support Unit. I would like to focus on three intertwined strategic dimensions of open government: Defending civic space; Localisation of OGP actions; Promoting an accountable and resourced civil society.

- a) **Defending civic space:** It is clear that if civic space is not open and enabling, the work that OGP wants to promote cannot be realized. Civil liberties – basic freedoms of expression, association, and assembly – are under threat across the world, and some governments have used the pandemic as an opportunity to introduce or implement additional restrictions on civic freedoms.
- b) **Localisation of OGP actions and the OGP agenda.** Taking the principles and mechanisms of inclusive open government to the subnational level has been a crucial innovation for OGP. And not only because of the interaction between citizens and government that happens at the local level, but because this is an ideal space for implementing real power shifts in the national and international agenda.
- c) **Strong, accountable, and resourced civil society.** Civil society organizations engage in the OGP process in different fora, participate of its governance, and help to co-create, implement, and monitor action plans. To play a relevant role, and to make sure that citizens voices are heard and taken seriously by decisionmakers, civil society organizations and movements must be strong, have access to resources, and practice what they preach in terms of transparency and accountability.





### **Leadership on open government and advance open government agenda leading by example**

I lead a national organization and coordinate a regional network whose missions are closely aligned to the OGP's core values and goals. Instituto de Comunicacion y Desarrollo, ICD in Uruguay, my original organization, has been working for more than 3 decades to promote citizen participation, to strengthen civil society, and to stimulate an enabling civic space. ICD has been a champion for open government in Uruguay.

Furthermore, I coordinate the regional initiative Rendir Cuentas, a regional network with members and partners in most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The network represents the coordinated efforts of a large group of organizations and networks of civil society from several countries in the region that have joined forces to promote transparency and accountability and that seek to establish systematic self-regulatory practices through mutual learning and the adoption of voluntary and common standards. Members of Rendir Cuentas are strongly involved in local and national open government processes in their communities and countries.

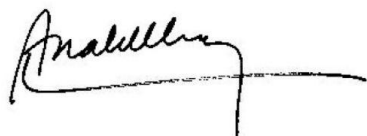
### **Foster a more cohesive leadership body within the Steering Committee**

I have really enjoyed my first year as a member of the Civil Society Steering Committee, a committee whose work is based on trust and commitment. I was able to support the call for action of the cochairs and I participated in regional and global actions agreed by the committee.

I hope that my cochair term, if elected, will represent new opportunities to build consensus across constituencies and to personally engage with the government representatives/Points of Contact on the Steering Committee, to encourage their efforts at inspiring their government peers to intensify the protection and expansion of civic space.

I want to offer, with great humility, my decades of experience to support the advancing of open government values and the goals and aims of the Open Government Partnership

Thank you for considering my candidacy as co-chair of the OGP



Anabel Cruz  
Director of ICD, Uruguay / Coordinator Rendir Cuentas Regional Network



# Government Steering Committee Co-Chair

## Expression of Interest: Estonia



RIIGIKANTSELEI

H.E Mr Hae-cheol Jeon  
Minister of the Interior and Safety  
Government of the Republic of Korea

H.E Mr Renato Brunetta  
Minister for Public Administration  
Government of Italy

H.E Ms María Baron  
Global Executive Director  
Directorio Legislativo

H.E Mr Aiden Eyakuze  
Executive Director  
Twaweza East Africa

Tallinn, 23 September 2021  
No 1-8/21-01504-8

### Letter of Candidacy

Republic of Estonia is hereby confirming its readiness to take the responsibility as one of the Open Government Partnership's co-chairs for 2022–2023.

Although Estonia is a freshly elected member of the Steering Committee, we strongly believe that since joining the Open Government Partnership in 2012 and after having implemented almost five national action plans, we have accumulated enough experience to contribute to the management of the Open Government Partnership and are ready to lead by example.

When Estonia ran for the government seat at the Steering Committee, we suggested that there was a lot of potential in increasing the peer-to-peer mentoring to share experiences and knowledge between the members of the Open Government Partnership on the national and local level in active dialogue with civil society organisations. Therefore, should we be elected, we see that one of our main tasks as an incoming co-chair would be to initiate and lead the conversation on how to best ensure that all of the knowledge on how to keep the principles of the Open Government Partnership at the core of policy decisions are constantly shared among all the members and beyond. Should the Open Government Partnership consider activities such as mentoring as a valid commitment of the national action plan? Are we using all the possible opportunities to present flagship projects and our failures as means of learning within and outside of the Open Government Partnership initiative?

Learning from each other is even more important now, when the whole world has lived in uncertainty and continuously changing circumstances for the last year and a half. This pandemic has underlined many areas where the principles of the Open Government Partnership should have been considered, but were perhaps sidelined. We believe that transparent, co-creative, and accountable policy decisions help the world to heal from the crisis and to nurture the trust

Stenbocki maja / Rahukohtu 3 / 15161 Tallinn / Estonia / registrikood 70004809  
+372 693 5555 / riigikantselei@riigikantselei.ee / www.riigikantselei.ee





between the state and its people. We will probably never get back to business as usual but let us approach the lessons from the past years as a booster for creativity and new ideas.

The latter is also true regarding climate issues. Countries know what must be done and sometimes even have solutions, but the question of how to make sure that everyone can participate in making the decisions is something where the Open Government Partnership could and should take a leading role in the world.

There are more questions to ask, and we promise to search for the answers in co-operation with the Open Government Partnership family and to test the solutions we come up with together in our national action plans to test them out.

We would also like to see how to foster the principles of co-creation in the day-to-day processes of the Open Government Partnership itself. Perhaps there are areas to improve upon and ways to make every member of our global initiative feel even more attached to the topics discussed and decisions made by the governing bodies of the Open Government Partnership. Let us lead by example.

Only after discussions on these and other relevant topics raised by fellow members can Estonia propose a more detailed action plan for the year 2023 as a lead co-chair, if such a responsibility should be bestowed upon us. Estonia is seen by the world as one of the leaders in creating and implementing e-democracy solutions and this gives us a good starting platform to showcase internationally why the principles of the Open Government Partnership matter and how they could be integrated in the policy design processes.

For example, the Citizen Initiative Portal ([rahvaalgatus.ee](http://rahvaalgatus.ee)) is a solution through which everyone can raise a social problem or issue, hold a public debate on it, or initiate the preparation of a collective address to the parliament. Estonia is also leading by example with its e-Consultation Information System, which is currently being developed into a policy-making co-creation workspace that will provide a record of the law and other policy documents from their inception to their adoption and ex-post evaluation as part of our national action plans.

There are, of course, other ways to foster the principles of the Open Government Partnership than the e-solutions mentioned before, and we are eager to promote them based on the input of other members of the initiative. The State Secretary will lead Estonia's commitment as a member of the Steering Committee and hopefully as one of the co-chairs. In Estonia, the State Secretary participates in meetings of the Government with the right to speak and, as head of the Government Office, has the same authority that is granted by law to a minister of the Government for administering their ministry. Therefore, the State Secretary is working side by side with the Prime Minister and in continuous contact with other members of the Government.

In our long-term development strategy "Estonia 2035", we have set a goal for Estonia to be an innovative, reliable, and people-centred country. We see open governance as a vital building block of our country's development and are continuously looking for new ways to increase transparency and accountability of political decisions and to make co-creation with the people a norm in policy-making. We are prepared to continue this work internationally as one of the co-chairs of the Open Government Partnership.

Yours sincerely



Taimar Peterkop  
Secretary of State  
Government Office of the Republic of Estonia

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# Government Steering Committee Co-Chair

## Expression of Interest: **Nigeria**



### FEDERAL MINISTRY OF FINANCE, BUDGET AND NATIONAL PLANNING

OFFICE OF THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF STATE  
(BUDGET AND NATIONAL PLANNING)

C31010, Adekunle Fajuyi Street,  
Central Business District, Abuja.

☎: 0816 550 9225

✉: [info@nationalplanning.gov.ng](mailto:info@nationalplanning.gov.ng)

HMS/BNP/GCRS/VOL.II/ 09

20<sup>th</sup> September, 2021

Hae – Cheal Jeon  
Minister of the Interior and Safety  
Government of the Republic of Korea

Maria Baron  
Global Executive Director  
Directorio Legislativo

Renato Brunetta  
Minister for Public Administration  
Government of Italy

Aiden Eyakuze  
Executive Director  
Twaweza, East Africa

Dear OGP Steering Committee,

#### Nigeria's Candidacy to the OGP Steering Committee Chairmanship Election

I wish to express on behalf of the Government of Nigeria, our interest to run for the Chairmanship of OGP Steering Committee

2. As you are aware, Nigeria joined the partnership in July 2016 and has just won a second term in the Steering Committee while implementing her 2<sup>nd</sup> National Action Plan as a means of consolidating on government reforms aimed at drastically reducing corruption and opacity through beneficial ownership, open contracting, access to information and Service delivery in order to improve citizens' participation and trust in government.
3. The priorities my government will lead on to advance OGP Strategic objectives includes and not limited to supporting OGP international programs ongoing expansion, Increase the number of countries implementing the Beneficial Ownership transparency in National Action Plan, and encourage other countries to adopt OGP principles.
4. During Nigeria Chairmanship, we intend to inspire, mobilize and co-operate with all Steering Committee Members to advance public interest through robust open governance systems that are characterised by deep and meaningful citizen s engagement. This will also enable OGP agenda play its vital role in achieving sustainable development goals where no one is left behind and this will apply domestically in our country as well.
5. My Chairmanship will be lead by my current Ministry (Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning).
6. Please accept the assurances of my esteemed regards.

  
Prince Clem Ikanade Agba

Honourable Minister of State, Budget and National Planning /  
Government Co-chair, OGP Nigeria

[www.nationalplanning.gov.ng](http://www.nationalplanning.gov.ng)

# **Annex:**

## **OGP Participation and Co-creation Standards**

*Endorsed for public consultation by the Criteria & Standards Subcommittee on  
September 9, 2021*

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is based on the idea that an open government is more accessible, more responsive, and more accountable to citizens, and that improving the relationship between people and their government has long-term benefits for everyone. OGP is a global partnership that includes members at the national and local level and thousands of civil society organizations, working together to co-create action plans with concrete reforms – commitments – across a broad range of issues. This unique model of public participation aims to ensure that civil society has a role in shaping and overseeing governments. Furthermore, as OGP has developed, partnerships among open government champions inside and outside of government have become its driving force and one of its strongest results.

Thus, collaboration between government, civil society and other stakeholders (e.g., citizens, civil society organizations, government departments, subnational governments, parliament, academics, private sector, etc.) is at the heart of the OGP process. Research based on OGP data over the last ten years shows that a strong and inclusive co-creation process leads to well-designed and more ambitious commitments. Research also shows that stronger results are achieved when collaboration continues through the implementation of reforms. Public participation improves the quality of public services when everyone can speak and officials must consider and respond.

These Participation and Co-Creation Standards are intended to support this collaboration throughout all stages of the OGP action plan cycle, from development through to implementation and monitoring. They represent a consolidated version of the previous iteration of the standards into a simpler, more easily understandable set of standards which allow for greater flexibility and adaptability so that they can be applied to the diversity of situations across OGP contexts. They are not intended as detailed guidelines on running an OGP process but rather should be read and adopted alongside OGP's supporting material, which is available on the OGP website. Participating in the OGP is a continuous learning process.

Specifically, these Participation and Co-Creation Standards are designed for use by national governments, civil society, and other stakeholders to:

- Provide space and mechanisms for ongoing dialogue throughout the action plan cycle;
- Promote shared responsibility for action plan development and implementation between government and civil society;
- Encourage ambition and innovation by OGP members in the development of their action plans;
- Ensure a clear understanding of the minimum requirements expected of all OGP members in terms of participation and co-creation;
- Facilitate the assessment of compliance with the Standards for greater accountability and learning.

The final section of these Standards includes guidance on length and delivery date of the National Action Plans.



## Guiding Principles for the Standards

There are four overarching principles that guide the application of Participation and Co-creation Standards. These draw on the principles enshrined in the [Open Government Declaration](#), which all OGP members endorse at the time of joining:

1. **Transparency:** Information regarding OGP processes, activities, decisions and outcomes should be easily accessible by any interested stakeholder. Proactively publish and disseminate information in the most relevant format and through the most appropriate means throughout the action plan cycle and provide regular progress updates on commitment development and implementation.
2. **Inclusive participation:** Allow for a diversity of voices to meaningfully participate in the OGP process, identify priorities, and propose solutions. Conduct outreach to intentionally minority or traditionally underrepresented groups and ensure advance access to information regarding the opportunities for participation and input.
3. **Accountability:** Provide clear information about the results of consultation processes and the outcomes of commitment implementation. They should explain why certain stakeholder priorities were not included as well as the reasons for any changes or delays during commitment implementation.
4. **Innovation and ambition:** Strive to go beyond the minimum requirements outlined here and innovate on ways to develop, co-create and implement ever more ambitious and transformative open government reforms via highly transparent, participatory and collaborative processes. **Minimum requirements should be seen as the starting point, not the goal.**

## Structure of the Standards

To achieve the above objectives, the Standards are structured in a way that encourages members to strive for ambition, while ensuring that minimum requirements are met and exceeded where possible. Each Standard is structured as follows:

- **Ambition:** Why this Standard is important and what an ambitious application of the Standard could look like.
- **Scope of application of the Standard:** Where in the OGP action plan cycle the Standard should be applied, namely: (i) during development of the action plan; (ii) during implementation and monitoring of the action plan; or (iii) throughout the action plan cycle.
- **Guidelines on how to apply the Standard:** A set of guidelines and best practices, informed by past experience and collective learning over the past 10 years of OGP, to support application of the Standard in a way that is flexible and can be adapted to different contexts and needs. Further guidance will be provided on the OGP website.
- **Minimum requirements for participation and co-creation:** Clear and measurable minimum requirements that all OGP national members must meet under the Standard.
- **Assessment of compliance with the Standard:** Criteria to be used by the OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) to report on progress made on applying each Standard by OGP national members. For compliance purposes, the IRM will determine if there is evidence of action toward meeting the minimum requirements in each case.

## The 5 Participation and Co-creation Standards

- **Standard 1:** Establishing a space for ongoing dialogue and collaboration between government, civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders.
- **Standard 2:** Providing open, accessible and timely information about activities and progress within a member's participation in OGP.



- **Standard 3:** Providing inclusive and informed opportunities for public participation during co-creation of the action plan.
- **Standard 4:** Providing a reasoned response and ensuring ongoing dialogue between government and civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders as appropriate during co-creation of the action plan.
- **Standard 5:** Providing inclusive and informed opportunities for ongoing dialogue and collaboration during implementation and monitoring of the action plan.

## **Standard 1: Establishing a space for ongoing dialogue and collaboration between government, civil society, and other non-governmental stakeholders**

**Ambition:** Ongoing dialogue between government and civil society (and other stakeholders as appropriate) is a core element of the OGP membership. It is a critical element to build relationships and trust which can lead to increased sustainability and ability to overcome challenges. Collaboration is crucial to make open government work at all stages - from development to implementation and monitoring of reforms. It can help support the identification of issues of most concern to a diversity of citizens and promote joint problem solving. Ultimately, it is at the heart of the democratic principle that citizens should have a say in the decisions that affect their lives, especially those who don't often have a seat at the table.

Having an established space for ongoing dialogue and collaboration (platform) for those involved in the development and implementation of OGP action plans has been found to be positively correlated with higher completion rates of commitments and stronger early results. Depending on their mandate, composition and structure, these platforms can empower civil society and foster shared responsibility for ambition of commitments and shared accountability for implementation between government and civil society. They can also act as a bridge between citizens and government reformers to help inform action plan design, implementation and monitoring.

Several countries have established formal multi-stakeholder forums (MSFs), commissions or secretariats that lead the OGP processes, although other less formal structures are also possible. More advanced models have clear rules about membership, decision-making processes and selection procedures for MSF members, often with an even balance of governmental and civil society representatives and other stakeholders and even joint chairing. In several cases it is the MSF that leads the OGP process, with the participation of high-level representatives with decision-making authority from government and a strong role for civil society in the development of commitments (and their implementation where applicable). Whatever the set-up, the MSF should not be an elite group, but drawn from as wide a constituency as possible. This may mean engaging both traditional government and organizational partners as well as broadening the base of participation to proactively include groups such as women, youth, elderly, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+ or indigenous communities, or other historically underrepresented groups who may have different needs or insights critical to shaping proposed government reforms.

**Scope of application:** Throughout the action plan cycle.

**Based on OGP experience and collective learning, below are a subset of guidelines that OGP members are encouraged to follow where possible:**

- A multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) or other space for dialogue (platform) between government and civil society is established to guide the OGP process in a country.





- The MSF/platform is inclusive and structured in a way that no constituency, government or civil society is over- or underrepresented.
- There are clear, published rules on selection processes for membership, decision-making, and external accountability mechanisms for the platform.
- Members of the MSF/platform meet regularly (at least every 6 months).
- The MSF/platform proactively communicates and reports back on its activities, decisions, and results to wider government and civil society stakeholders (see Standard 4).
- The MSF/platform has the necessary mandate (e.g., presidential decree, memoranda etc.) to advance the OGP process and should strive to make the decision-making process pertaining to the OGP process as inclusive as possible.
- Civil society members of the MSF/platform are selected through a fair and transparent process which is led by civil society members themselves.
- Establish ways for other non-governmental stakeholders, such as academia and the private sector to engage with the OGP process.
- Opportunities for remote participation are provided for at least some meetings and events to enable the inclusion of groups unable to attend in person.
- MSF/platform is representative and structured in a way that actively encourages meaningful participation of underrepresented groups such as women, youth, or persons with disabilities, keeping in mind that participation could be limited by lack of ability to travel or access the internet. Conducting a gender or diversity assessment may be useful in understanding which groups may have more or less access and influence over the process and inform an outreach strategy.

### Minimum requirements

OGP recognizes that each country has specific context needs and may adapt their OGP process accordingly. The guidelines offer multiple approaches to meeting the Standard. However, at a minimum, all OGP members are expected to comply with:

- 1.1 A space for ongoing dialogue with participation from both government and civil society members, and other non-governmental representatives as appropriate that meets regularly (at least every six months) is established. Basic rules on participation in the MSF/platform are public.

### Assessment of compliance with the Standard

*\*The IRM will develop this section once the Standards are approved by C&S.*

## Standard 2: Providing open, accessible and timely information about activities and progress within a member's participation in OGP.

**Ambition:** Access to relevant information is essential for enabling participation and ensuring accountability throughout the OGP process. OGP members should follow the principle of maximum transparency, whereby relevant information is published and disseminated proactively, in the most relevant format(s) and through the most appropriate means in order to reach as much of the population as possible. This can help raise awareness of OGP processes generally and opportunities for participation specifically (See Standards 3 and 5 below).

Information should be provided in such a way that it can be understood quickly and easily, reducing barriers to participation in OGP processes and levelling the playing field. Information



should be provided throughout the whole action plan cycle with regular updates provided on progress on commitment development as well as implementation.

**Scope of application:** Throughout the action plan cycle.

**Based on OGP experience and collective learning, below are a subset of guidelines that OGP members are encouraged to follow where possible:**

- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, maintains a public OGP website (or OGP subsite/web page on a government website) which is searchable.
- Relevant information on the OGP process is published on the OGP website/webpage, including but not limited to information about leading and participating government agencies, contact information, OGP processes and opportunities for participation, and all other relevant documents.
- The lead agency and government point of contact for OGP are clearly identified and their contact information is publicly available on the OGP website/webpage.
- Where available, information about the civil society organizations that participate in the MSF should be publicly available.
- The government publishes information and documents in non-technical language that is understandable to the widest possible extent of the general population.
- The government publishes key OGP information and documents in all administrative languages, and considers additional steps to make the information accessible by those with visual or auditory impairment as appropriate.
- The government publishes via the OGP website/webpage regular updates (at least every six months) on the progress of commitment implementation, including progress against milestones, reasons for any delays, next steps (see Standard 5).
- The OGP website/webpage has a feature to allow the public to comment on progress updates.

### **Minimum requirements**

OGP recognizes that each country has specific context needs and may adapt their OGP process accordingly. The guidelines offer multiple approaches to meeting the Standard. However, at a minimum, all OGP members are expected to comply with:

- 2.1 A public OGP online site dedicated to the members participation in OGP is maintained.
- 2.2 A publicly available document repository on the OGP online site which provides access to documents related to the OGP process, including, at a minimum, information and evidence of the co-creation process and of the implementation of commitments is maintained and regularly updated (at least twice a year).

### **Assessment of compliance with the Standard**

*\*The IRM will develop this section once the Standards are approved by C&S.*

## **Standard 3: Providing inclusive and informed opportunities for public participation during development of the action plan**

**Ambition:** Evidence from 10 years of OGP shows that high levels of public participation in action plan design is linked to more diverse action plans and more ambitious commitments. In order for



public participation to be meaningful, OGP national members should purposefully design the co-creation process so that it allows any interested stakeholders (citizens, civil society organizations, government departments, subnational governments, parliament, academics, private sector etc.) to provide ideas and feedback, identify priorities and propose commitments for the action plan.

The process should intentionally seek input from traditionally underrepresented groups in the definition of priorities through targeted awareness-raising and outreach to broaden the circle of engaged actors. It could also seek broader input from within the state structure including from other ministries, agencies or parliament(s).

OGP national members should offer advance and equal access to information regarding the rules of participation, timelines and background documents to ensure participants are well informed to provide input or participate in decision-making processes.

Furthermore, the co-creation process should try to incorporate appropriate methods of public participation for gathering inputs from each group of stakeholders, engage in dialogue or work together (general public, experts, government agencies, donors, underrepresented groups, minorities, grassroot organizations, private sector, etc.) which are made available for an adequate duration. This may include thematic working tables led by experts from government and civil society, or other non-governmental actors as appropriate, written feedback, online discussions, surveys, face-to-face or remote meetings. Meetings are conducted at times and in locations that maximize the chance of broader participation.

**Scope of application:** During the development of the action plan.

**Based on OGP experience and collective learning, below are a subset of guidelines that OGP members are encouraged to follow where possible:**

- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF develops a co-creation timeline outlining clear stages of the process, roles and expectations.
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF develops a methodology for the co-creation process that considers steps to raise awareness, ensure participation of diverse actors, gather inputs, process information, build commitment proposals, get final approvals, and finalize the decision-making process.
- The co-creation process includes a combination of open in-person meetings and online engagement adapted to the country context to enable remote participation for maximum inclusivity. Keep in mind that the digital gap in your context may inhibit some participation, so this combination of online and offline engagement may be needed to address gaps in access.
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF conducts outreach activities with relevant stakeholders to raise awareness of open government, the OGP and opportunities to get involved. This may include face-to-face outreach and engagement events, which are open and accessible to any interested members of the public, civil society and other stakeholders to attend. MSFs may also consider recruiting individuals or organizations to serve as liaison to specific underrepresented communities to support their engagement and consultation in the process, including targeted outreach to relevant groups such as women, youth, or disability organizations.
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF publishes, in advance, information on the timeline, methodology, and decision-making process (e.g., how commitments be drafted? How will language be proposed? How will final decisions be made? etc.) and provides appropriate notice of events, draft commitments, and other relevant information to facilitate the participation of any interested stakeholders.



- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF should share an agenda and reading materials in advance (at least one calendar week) in advance before any meeting where commitments or action plan drafts will be discussed or decided.

### Minimum requirements

OGP recognizes that each country has specific context needs and may adapt their OGP process accordingly. The guidelines offer multiple approaches to meeting the Standard. However, at a minimum, all OGP members are expected to comply with:

- 3.1 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF publishes on the OGP website/webpage the co-creation timeline and overview of the opportunities for stakeholders to participate at least two weeks before the start of the action plan development process
- 3.2 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF conducts outreach activities with stakeholders to raise awareness of the OGP and opportunities to get involved in the development of the action plan.
- 3.3 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF develops a mechanism to gather inputs from a range of stakeholders during an appropriate period of time for the chosen mechanism.

### Assessment of compliance with the Standard

*\*The IRM will develop this section once the Standards are approved by C&S.*

## Standard 4: Providing a reasoned response and ensuring ongoing dialogue between government and non-governmental stakeholders during co-creation of the action plan

**Ambition:** Reasoned response to stakeholder inputs and feedback has been shown to be highly correlated with ambition, completion, and early results. Evidence from more than 170 IRM reports shows that this is the best predictor of strong action plans. Providing a reasoned response as to why certain priorities, ideas or activities were or were not included in the action plan can also help ensure accountability and overcome resistance from those whose proposals were rejected.

Ongoing dialogue, whereby ideas received and decisions made are communicated back to stakeholders and then further refined through additional rounds of engagement can help ensure genuine, high-quality conversation and ultimately greater buy-in into the action plan itself. The greater the depth of dialogue, the greater the potential impact of commitments, the better the mutual understanding about ideas and reasonings, and eventually the more likely it is that actually co-created commitments will be effectively implemented.

**Scope of application:** During the development of the action plan.

**Based on OGP experience and collective learning, below are a subset of guidelines that OGP members are encouraged to follow where possible:**

- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, facilitates a mechanism for direct communication with stakeholders to respond to process questions around the development of the action plan.





- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, publishes and disseminates all written contributions (e.g., consultation input as well as responses) to the action plan development on the OGP website/webpage and via other appropriate channels.
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, publishes a summary of stakeholder contributions to the action plan on the OGP website/webpage (regardless of whether they were accepted).
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, assesses commitment proposals through an open and transparent process and publishes an overview of their response to proposals on the OGP website/webpage.
- Once commitments have been drafted, the MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, via the OGP website/webpage, presents its reasoning behind the selection of commitments, including justifications for commitment proposals not adopted, and other feedback as appropriate.
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, provides a range of options for stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft commitments and their rationale (e.g., written responses, online discussions, surveys, face-to-face or remote meetings) which are open for an adequate duration (e.g. at least 2 weeks). Where the co-creation process separates commenting from input-gathering, each of these phases should have at least this length.

### Minimum requirements

OGP recognizes that each country has specific context needs and may adapt their OGP process accordingly. The guidelines offer multiple approaches to meeting the Standard. However, at a minimum, all OGP members are expected to comply with:

- 4.1 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, documents and reports back, or publishes written feedback to stakeholders on how their contributions were considered during the development of the action plan.

### Assessment of compliance with the Standard

*\*The IRM will develop this section once the Standards are approved by C&S.*

## Standard 5: Providing inclusive and informed opportunities for ongoing dialogue and collaboration during implementation and monitoring of the action plan.

**Ambition:** Evidence from over 170 IRM reports shows that continued stakeholder dialogue and participation *during* the implementation process is highly correlated with high levels of completion and stronger results. This could include additional opportunities for civil society as well as other non-government actors to comment and ask questions during the implementation of commitments beyond the formal annual meetings (see minimum requirements below).

Ongoing engagement can help maintain momentum for implementation once the initial buzz following the publication of the action plan has subsided. This could include engagement of relevant ministries and civil society as well as other non-government experts to maximize impact of commitments, including through peer-to-peer and other knowledge exchange activities.

Engaging a minister or other high-level representative at least once a year during implementation to discuss progress, delays and opportunities to address challenges can also



help add impetus. It can help stakeholders hold the government, civil society or other partners accountable for results and encourage course correction if priorities or circumstances change.

In some cases, the MSF or government have added “challenge commitments” during the implementation of action plans to respond to emerging situations relevant to the context. In other cases, civil society and other non-government actors have had co-ownership over the implementation and reporting of commitments, sometimes via thematic working tables established during the action plan development stage (see Standard 3).

**Scope of application:** During the implementation and monitoring of the action plan.

**Based on OGP experience and collective learning, below are a subset of guidelines that OGP members are encouraged to follow where possible:**

- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, holds at least one open meeting with civil society per year (with a sufficient interval between meetings) on implementation of the action plan.
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, monitors and deliberates on how to improve the implementation of the action plan.
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, maintains a public dashboard with up-to-date information on progress on implementation of commitments, delays and other relevant information to corroborate the document repository (see Standard 2).
- The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, prepares a self-assessment report based on the information in the repository/dashboard once a year and holds at least a two-week public consultation to gather comments and feedback on the content of the report. This assessment could include reviewing commitments and implementation using inclusive analysis tools like a gender or diversity analysis to understand where there may be opportunities and gaps in citizen access or needs.
- The government, in collaboration with the MSF when possible, publishes the self-assessment report as well as all written comments and feedback received on the OGP website/webpage.

### **Minimum requirements**

OGP recognizes that each country has specific context needs and may adapt their OGP process accordingly. The guidelines offer multiple approaches to meeting the Standard. However, at a minimum, all OGP members are expected to comply with:

- 5.1 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, holds (at least) two meetings every year with civil society to present results on the implementation of the action plan and collect comments.

### **Assessment of compliance with the Standard**

*\*The IRM will develop this section once the Standards are approved by C&S.*

### **Action plan length and delivery windows**

**The following outline the rules related to action plan length, delivery and assessment schedule. Further guidance is provided on the OGP website.**



- **Action Plan length.** Countries can decide to develop a two-year or a four-year action plan. The countries that select for the four-year option will have to schedule a mandatory refresh period at the two-year mark. The refresh period will be outlined in the new co-creation and participation Standards and will consist of a shortened version of the co-creation process that allows for updating, modifying or including commitments. The minimum requirements for the refresh period are 3.1 and 4.1 and will be assessed by the IRM.
- **Delivery windows.** Moving forward, countries will be able to select from two implementation cycles that formally start on either June 30 or December 31, and that would end on the same date two or four years after. To allow for greater flexibility, action plans can be delivered up to six months before, or two months after the selected start date. Afterwards, a country would have to use the next delivery window.
- **Acting contrary to process due to delays.** Once these changes are approved, countries will be considered to have acted contrary to OGP process if they fail to deliver an action plan within one year after the completion of their previous action plan.

