

Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Jordan Transitional Results Report 2018–2021

This report was prepared by the Open Government Partnership Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM).

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I. Introduction

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

The IRM aims to inform ongoing dialogue around the development and implementation of future commitments. For a full description of the IRM's methodology, please visit <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/independent-reporting-mechanism>.

This report covers the implementation of Jordan's fourth action plan for 2018-2021. In 2021, the IRM implemented a new approach to its research process and the scope of its reporting on action plans, approved by the IRM Refresh.¹ The IRM adjusted its Implementation Reports for 2018-2020 and 2019-2021 action plans to fit the transition process to the new IRM products and enable the IRM to adjust its workflow in light of the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on OGP country processes.

¹ For more information, see: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/process/accountability/about-the-irm/irm-refresh/>.

II. Action Plan Implementation

The IRM Transitional Results Report assesses the status of the action plan's commitments and the results of their implementation at the end of the action plan cycle. This report does not re-visit the assessments for "Verifiability," "Relevance," or "Potential Impact." The IRM assesses those three indicators in IRM Design Reports. For more details on each indicator, please see Annex I of this report.

2.1. General Highlights and Results

Jordan's fourth OGP action plan (2018-2021) achieved strong levels of completion, but limited impact on opening government during the implementation period. This reflects lack of prioritization of open government by the new administration, challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, a shift in government priorities, and shortcomings in commitment design. Of the five commitments, three saw either substantial or complete implementation (60% of commitments). This action plan's completion rate is lower than the previous action plan (2016-2018), in which 9 out of 11 commitments were substantially or completely implemented (82% of commitments).¹ Despite positive progress, none of the commitments demonstrated notable early results during the period under review. This can partially be attributed to the low level of ambition in the design of commitments, as highlighted by the IRM Design Report.² The two commitments identified as noteworthy (Commitments 1 and 4) saw limited completion, with key milestones incomplete by the end of the implementation period. The action plan implementation period was initially planned for September 1, 2018 to June 30, 2020, and was extended to June 30, 2021.

Progress under the action plan reflected government and civil society leads' active efforts to complete their commitments, guided by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit. Even after the implementation period ended in June 2021, stakeholders continued their commitment to complete outstanding elements of the action plan. The Open Government Unit took a methodical approach to implementation of milestones and opened communication channels with civil society. Commitment taskforces made up of government and civil society stakeholders sustained this engagement. The open government process saw positive collaboration between civil society and government against the backdrop of broader shrinking civic space. International funding and expertise also supported the action plan. Despite efforts, implementation was hampered by a shift in government priorities³ and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under this action plan, the commitments made productive headway on introducing feedback mechanisms and enabling citizen participation in the legislative process. Commitment 3 conducted a national dialogue related to the recent Local Administration Law. Changes to the law reflected some citizen recommendations, but were primarily shaped by the Minister of Local Administration.⁴ Following the end of the implementation period, Commitment 4 introduced a feature allowing for human rights complaints on a government platform for citizen feedback. Other commitments laid groundwork for access to information (Commitments 2 and 5) and civic space (Commitment 1), but had little impact during the period under review. Overall, local civil society organizations reported mixed perceptions of the reforms that took place under the action plan. In a 2021 survey of 184 civil society representatives, approximately half saw the open government process as contributing to the development of transparency, accountability, and participation in Jordan.⁵

Despite a high completion rate, none of the commitments in this action plan produced early results, as commitment design fell short of policy objectives. Incremental changes envisioned by the commitments did not sufficiently engage with an increasingly restrictive environment for access to

information⁶ and civic space.⁷ As of June 2021, Jordan fell short of the OGP values check, given repression of civil society organizations and control over their entry into and exit from public life.⁸ Future action plans would benefit from strategic targeting of opportunities to more substantially open government. Positively, commitment holders' continued efforts after the implementation period contribute to a stronger foundation on which to build the fifth action plan.

2.2. COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on Implementation

COVID-19 slowed implementation, caused staffing shortages, and resulted in a shift to online meetings. This impacted implementation planning sessions, discussions, and training. Limitations on in-person gatherings also put pressure on some commitments' activities, leading to shortcomings in achievement of planned outcomes within intended timelines. Restricted staffing hours delayed completion of the associations governance manual and voluntary civil society strategy outlined in Commitment 1.⁹ With regards to Commitment 4, COVID-19 delayed the launch of a human rights complaint mechanism until after the end of the implementation period. Commitment 5 made substantial progress, but due to COVID-19, on-site practical training for indexing and managing public records could not take place, thereby limiting the uptake of new access to information protocols.

The pandemic also resulted in obstructions to the wider context for the action plan. Civic space underpins effective implementation, but challenges arising from the pandemic exacerbated fundamental restrictions on civil society's operational environment. In response to COVID-19, and without significant consultation with civil society, Jordan mobilized the Defense Act of 1992 in March 2020. Since then, freedom of assembly and speech have faced limitations, including reporting on COVID-19.¹⁰ In terms of political will, the government's response to COVID-19 displaced prioritization of the open government process in favor of policies focused on health, the economy, and defense.¹¹

¹ Mai Eleimat and Amer Bani Amer, "Jordan 2014-2016 End of Term Report," *Open Government Partnership Independent Reporting Mechanism* (June 15, 2017), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/jordan-end-of-term-report-2014-2016/> (accessed November 9, 2021).

² "Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Jordan Design Report 2018–2020," *Open Government Partnership* (19 September 2021), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/jordan-design-report-2018-2020/>.

³ "Report on Dr. Bisher Al-Khasawneh's Government Performance in its First Year," *Al-Hayat Center-Rated* (October 25, 2021), 10, <http://www.hayatcenter.org/publications/report-on-dr-bisher-al-khasawneh%e2%80%99s-government-performance-in-its-first-year/> (accessed November 9, 2021).

⁴ Osama Muhsen (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung), interview with IRM researcher, November 26, 2021.

⁵ "Baseline Study on Promoting the Principles of Open Government in Jordan," *We Participate* (September 30, 2021).

⁶ "The Global Expression Report 2021: Country rankings," *Article 19* (2021), <https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/GxR-2021-Country-Rankings-Final.pdf> (accessed December 13, 2021).

⁷ "People Power Under Attack 2021: Middle East & North Africa," *CIVICUS* (2021), <https://findings2021.monitor.civicus.org/middle-east-north-africa.html> (accessed December 13, 2021).

⁸ "Eligibility Criteria & OGP Values Check Assessment," *Open Government Partnership* (June 7, 2021) <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/process/joining-ogp/eligibility-criteria/>.

⁹ Lama Qutaishat (Companies Control Department), interview with IRM researcher, November 24, 2021.

¹⁰ Nikhil Dutta and Tinatin Ninua, "Civic Space as a Key Prerequisite of Open Government Reforms in the MENA Region," *Open Government Partnership* (November 3, 2020), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/civic-space-as-a-key-prerequisite-of-open-government-reforms-in-the-mena-region/> (accessed December 21, 2021); "Jordan: Freedom in the World 2021," *Freedom House* (2021), <https://freedomhouse.org/country/jordan/freedom-world/2021> (accessed March 8, 2022).

¹¹ Mai Eleimat (Edmaaj), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

2.3. Early Results

The IRM acknowledges that results may not be visible within the action plan's two-year time frame and that at least a substantial level of completion is required to assess early results. For the purpose of the Transitional Results Report, the IRM will use the “**Did It Open Government?**” (DIOG) indicator to highlight early results based on the changes to government practice in areas relevant to OGP values. Moving forward, new IRM Results Reports will not continue using DIOG as an indicator.

None of the commitments in this action plan produced early open government results during the implementation period. Typically, this section would focus on outcomes from the implementation of commitments that had an ambitious or strong design per the IRM Design Report assessment or that may have lacked clarity and/or ambition but had successful implementation with “major” or “outstanding” changes to government practice.¹ Commitments considered for analysis in this section would need at least a “substantial” level of implementation, as assessed by the IRM in Section 2.4.² None of the commitments in this action plan met these criteria at the time of review. However, it can be noted that commitment holders continued efforts following the implementation period. Section 2.4 includes an overview of the level of completion for all the commitments in the action plan.

In future action plans, the IRM offers the following recommendations on achieving early results in opening government practice:

- Enable civil society organizations to set the agenda and develop bold policies that open civic space. These policies can address significant restrictions to civic space, including burdensome registration and regulatory requirements for associations, interference with those exercising rights to expression and peaceful protest, and restrictions on online expression and access to websites.
- Replicate government-civil society engagement enabled by Jordan's OGP processes in other areas of government, institutionalizing public participation in critical policy areas, such as responses to public health crises.
- Empower participation by handing decision-making power to members of public and civil society, with beneficiaries at the center of each stage of implementation. Measure the success of future action plan design on their proximity to citizens' needs.
- Pursue ambitious and transformative reforms, maximizing the longer timeframe of Jordan's next action plan to move beyond incremental or bureaucratic changes to government practice.

¹ IRM Design Reports identified strong commitments as “**noteworthy commitments**” if they were assessed as having a verifiable, relevant, and “transformative” potential impact. If no commitments met the potential impact threshold, the IRM selected noteworthy commitments from the commitments with “moderate” potential impact. For the list of Jordan's noteworthy commitments, see the Executive Summary of the 2018-2020 IRM Design Report: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/jordan-design-report-2018-2020/>.

² The following commitments assessed as noteworthy in Jordan's IRM Design Report are not included in this section because their limited implementation meant that there was not enough progress to assess results:

Commitment 1: Public Sector and Civil Society Partnership and Dialogue
Commitment 4: National Human Rights Violations Complaints Mechanism

2.4. Commitment Implementation

The table below includes an assessment of the level of completion for each commitment in the action plan.

Commitment	Completion: <i>(no evidence available, not started, limited, substantial or complete)</i>
I. Public Sector and Civil Society Partnership and Dialogue	<p>Limited:</p> <p>Based on consultations with civil society, a new foreign funding mechanism was developed. This mechanism was approved by the Council of Ministers in December 2019 (Letter 56/10/6/50635) and was amended and re-approved in July 2020.¹ According to the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) and We Participate, the updated mechanism somewhat streamlined the funding process. Civil society organizations can now reach out to a single government committee for approval, rather than three government bodies.² Under the current mechanism, the Companies Control Department conducts an initial screening of applications from nonprofit companies, and associations send applications directly to the Associations Register for administrative screening. This is followed by consideration by the committee and finally the cabinet. The Department reports emailing status updates to applicants at each stage of the application process, which were previously not shared.³ The approval timeline has also shortened to nearly a month, instead of six months – although it still sometimes extends over a longer period. Outstanding issues with the new procedures for approvals on foreign funding include continued government interference with civil society program activities and length of approval process.⁴ Transparency International Jordan explains that rejections of civil society projects based on “alignment” with state priorities results in restrictions to civic space.⁵ In addition, in-person components of the approval process, such as submitting hard copies of forms, are obstacles to organizations based outside of Amman. Given these issues, two committees were assigned to update the procedures again after the end of the implementation period.⁶ In terms of the intended associations governance manuals and voluntary civil society strategy, the Companies Control Department reported that neither were completed by the end of the implementation period due to COVID-19 related delays, and development efforts remain underway,⁷ with public commenting periods in December 2021.⁸ With a limited number of activities completed during the implementation period, the IRM did not find evidence during initial research that this commitment contributed to opening up CSOs’ operational environment. Looking ahead, the IRM recommends partnering closely with civil society to ensure that reforms decrease unwarranted government oversight and facilitate access to foreign funding.</p>
2. Government Open Data Policy Development and Enhancement	<p>Complete:</p> <p>This commitment included engagement from Al-Hayat Center-Rased, Transparency International Jordan, the Jordan Open Source</p>

	<p>Association, the Information and Communications Technology Association. Under this commitment, the Council of Ministers issued Instructions for Publishing Open Government Data on the Open Government Data Platform in February 2019, and the Open Government Data Quality Framework was approved in September 2020.⁹ In September 2019, new standards on open data were added to the King Abdullah II Award for Excellence in Government Performance and Transparency.¹⁰ From March 2019 through February 2021, workshops fostered government stakeholders' engagement with open data.¹¹ As of October 2021, the Open Data platform included 894 datasets from 82 government bodies,¹² rising from 230 datasets from 35 government bodies in March 2020.¹³ Transparency International Jordan also notes that by the end of the implementation period, most government websites listed a form for data requests.¹⁴ However, the World Bank reports relatively limited usage of open government data by civil society organizations and businesses, indicating issues with prioritization criteria, quality, or relevance to users.¹⁵ Al-Hayat Center-Based and Transparency International Jordan clarify that data is often not disclosed in an up-to-date, digestible format, with shortcomings in data quality limiting usability for the public. They call for efforts to build political will on access to information.¹⁶ While all activities within this commitment were completed, the IRM did not find evidence that implementation contributed towards the stated policy objective of public access and use of government-held data. This gap between implementation and evidence of early results indicates an opportunity for stronger commitment design. In the future, the IRM recommends that government reformers closely consult with data users during the commitment design process to ensure that planned activities address existing obstacles to data use and reflect public priorities.</p>
<p>3. National Dialogue for Political Reform</p>	<p>Complete:</p> <p>A national dialogue was held between the end of 2018 and May 2019, focusing on potential reforms to Jordan's Decentralization and Municipalities Law, Election Law, and political parties.¹⁷ This followed several previous national dialogues, most recently in 2011, which had generated public disillusionment with such processes.¹⁸ Under this commitment, facilitated by the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs and Al-Hayat Center-Based, the dialogue included 53 sessions across Jordan's governorates, with 1,568 participants (36% female). The participants included representatives of parliament, political parties, governorate councils, municipal councils, local councils, civil society organizations, labor unions, and chambers of commerce, as well as legal experts, women, and youth, among others. More than one thousand recommendations were collected, which were collated into recommendations in a report published in June 2019.¹⁹ Two years later, approximately twenty of the former dialogue participants were appointed to the Royal Committee for Political Reform, a 92-person committee that drafted reforms to the Decentralization and Municipalities Law and Election Law.²⁰ The new Decentralization and Municipalities Law of June 2021 may have represented a recommendation of the national dialogue, but</p>

	<p>was primarily driven by the Minister of Local Administration (formerly the Minister of Municipalities).²¹ Critics of the new law emphasize that it does not shift authority to elected representatives, for example, pointing to new stipulations allowing the Cabinet to appoint Amman's mayor and one-third of its council members.²² Compared to previous national dialogues, Al-Hayat Center-Rased considers this national dialogue to have achieved greater policy impact.²³ However, according to the Berghof Foundation, the lack of an advisory role and decision-making powers in previous national dialogues may have increased political frustration and disengagement.²⁴ Elements of these shortcomings persisted in the recent national dialogue. This commitment may prove to have open government results in the longer term but, at the time of writing, citizen participation had only resulted in incremental changes to law, with impact diluted by the two-year gap between the dialogue and development of new legislation.</p>
<p>4. National Human Rights Violations Complaint Mechanism</p>	<p>Limited:</p> <p>A legislative and regulatory framework for the Office of the Government Human Rights Coordinator was developed during the implementation period, according to the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit.²⁵ Following the end of the action plan's implementation period, the Bekhedmetkom platform²⁶ launched a feature for human rights complaints in September 2021, also accessible through the National Contact Center phoneline.²⁷ This platform was updated under the previous action plan and provides Jordanians with a means of submitting and tracking questions, suggestions, compliments, complaints, and reports to the government.²⁸ With the platform's new feature, human rights complaints can be classified as dangerous, medium, or regular, eliciting responses within three days, one week, or a month, respectively. Lawyers Without Borders and the Office of the Government Coordinator for Human Rights see this feature as easing human rights complaint submission and processing.²⁹ In terms of uptake, over 50,000 users had downloaded the app since 2017, but rated it 2.6/5 and reported technical issues.³⁰ In preparation for the new feature, training was held in May 2021 for government focal points on human rights, the Bekhedmetkom platform, and the process of responding effectively to human rights complaints.³¹ According to the Office of the Government Coordinator for Human Rights, this began to bridge relevant gaps in institutional culture.³² Overall, the IRM assessed this commitment to have achieved limited completion, as key milestones were not accomplished during the implementation period. Given the feature's delayed launch, the Office of the Government Coordinator for Human Rights has not yet published a periodic report on complaints.³³ Evidence of open government results in the long-term center on a strong level of government response to human rights complaints, open reporting on complaints, and continued efforts to ensure user uptake of this platform.</p>

<p>5. Access to Information Law Enforcement Measures</p>	<p>Substantial:</p> <p>In December 2020, the Prime Minister approved three protocols on access to information and circulated them to relevant ministries and government institutions.³⁴ These protocols clarified procedures for providing access to information, identifying classified and non-classified information, and archiving and managing information.³⁵ They were prepared by committees of government and civil society experts, including Jordan Transparency Center, the National Center for Human Rights, and the Center for Defending the Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ).³⁶ In addition, CDFJ led an awareness campaign on access to information from September 2019 through October 2020. Following the end of the implementation period, progress was underway to begin monitoring government institutions' compliance.³⁷ Overall, this commitment's stated policy objective was to increase government compliance with the Access to Information Law. The co-creation of protocols is an important initial step towards clarifying access to information processes.³⁸ However, IRM research found that the protocols have not resulted in much change to government practices, as they are voluntary³⁹ and many agencies are instead waiting for the Access to Information Law to be amended.⁴⁰ Moreover, milestones implemented under this commitment failed to address significant obstacles to citizen access to government-held information. These include digitization of the information request process, training for government officials, and enforcement of the new protocols.⁴¹ Despite substantial completion of the milestones, many public institutions continue to deny access to information, according to CDFJ and Transparency International Jordan.⁴² As of October 2021, a poll of 3,290 Jordanians found that only 8.1% consider the government transparent in its provision of information to the public,⁴³ indicating a need for strengthened efforts in this area. Moving forward, the IRM recommends partnering with civil society to strategically identify activities that address the foremost obstacles to public access to information. The IRM also recommends investigating enforcement measures to ensure compliance with access to information legislation.</p>
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¹ "Progress Report-Commitment I_OGP 4th NAP_Jordan," *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit* (November 14, 2021), https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U6txIKDMKg2C-MeiCe2-Yzr09_IKuhzu/edit (accessed November 22, 2021).

² Haneen Al-Bitar (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law), interview with IRM researcher, November 1, 2021; Mahmoud Al-Sbaihat (We Participate), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

³ Lama Qutaishat (Companies Control Department), interview with IRM researcher, November 24, 2021.

⁴ Haneen Al-Bitar (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law), interview with IRM researcher, November 1, 2021; Mahmoud Al-Sbaihat (We Participate), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

⁵ Abeer Mdanat (Transparency International Jordan), interview with IRM researcher, November 9, 2021.

⁶ Haneen Al-Bitar (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law), interview with IRM researcher, November 1, 2021; Mahmoud Al-Sbaihat (We Participate), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

⁷ Lama Qutaishat (Companies Control Department), interview with IRM researcher, November 24, 2021.

⁸ The IRM received this information from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit during the pre-publication period (February 11, 2022).

⁹ "Open Data," *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, <https://portal.jordan.gov.jo/wps/portal/OpenData?lang=en&isFromLangChange=yes#/manageDataSets> (accessed October 21, 2021).

¹⁰ “Letter from the King Abdullah II Center for Excellence,” *King Abdullah II Center for Excellence* (September 14, 2019), <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZR3Kwv0eAhYiuMDtq74YayAsV57XXktj> (accessed November 10, 2021).

¹¹ For examples of the workshops, see: “Jordan: Open Government and Open Data,” *United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia* (March 24-25, 2019), <https://www.unescwa.org/events/jordan-open-government-and-open-data> (accessed November 10, 2021); “فيديو الورشة [Video of the workshop],” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit* (February 7, 2021), <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1BplhMXBX-K3pZGhwoVvzpfNE6sIS60AD> (accessed November 10, 2021).

¹² “Open Data,” *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, <https://portal.jordan.gov.jo/wps/portal/!OpenData?lang=en&isFromLangChange=yes#/manageDataSets> (accessed October 21, 2021).

¹³ “DATA PRACTICES IN MENA Case Study: Opportunities and Challenges in Jordan,” *World Bank* (2021), https://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/WDR-Jordan/Case_study_Jordan.pdf.

¹⁴ Abeer Mdanat (Transparency International Jordan), interview with IRM researcher, November 9, 2021.

¹⁵ “DATA PRACTICES IN MENA Case Study: Opportunities and Challenges in Jordan,” *World Bank* (2021), https://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/WDR-Jordan/Case_study_Jordan.pdf.

¹⁶ Muhanad Zuwayad (Al-Hayat Center-Rased), interview with IRM researcher, November 4, 2021; Abeer Mdanat (Transparency International Jordan), interview with IRM researcher, November 9, 2021.

¹⁷ Muhammad Al-Zayoud, “[One Thousand Recommendations Collected by the National Dialogue on Decentralization]” *Al-Rai* (July 30, 2019),

<http://alrai.com/article/10495823/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%A3%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B5%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%AD%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%A9> (accessed October 20, 2021); “[Outcomes of the Decentralization National Dialogue]” *The Ministry of Political Affairs and Parliament, the Parliament Administrative Committee, and Hayat-Rased* (June 2019).

¹⁸ Marike Blunck, Luxshi Vimalarajah, Oliver Wils, Corinne von Burg, David Lanz, and Mir Mubashir, *National Dialogue Handbook A Guide for Practitioners* (Berghof Foundation, 2017), 252, <https://berghof-foundation.org/library/national-dialogue-handbook-a-guide-for-practitioners>.

¹⁹ Muhammad Al-Zayoud, “[One Thousand Recommendations Collected by the National Dialogue on Decentralization]” *Al-Rai* (July 30, 2019),

<http://alrai.com/article/10495823/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%A3%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B5%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%AD%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%A9> (accessed October 20, 2021); “[Outcomes of the Decentralization National Dialogue]” *The Ministry of Political Affairs and Parliament, the Parliament Administrative Committee, and Hayat-Rased* (June 2019).

²⁰ Muhanad Zuwayad (Al-Hayat Center-Rased), interview with IRM researcher, November 4, 2021.

²¹ Osama Muhsen (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung), interview with IRM researcher, November 26, 2021.

²² Anwar Ziyadat, “[The Jordanian Local Administration Law: Powers in the Hands of the Minister, Not the Elected Councils],” *The New Arab* (September 17, 2021),

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%84%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3> (accessed November 8, 2021).

²³ Muhanad Zuwayad (Al-Hayat Center-Rased), interview with IRM researcher, November 4, 2021.

²⁴ Marike Blunck, Luxshi Vimalarajah, Oliver Wils, Corinne von Burg, David Lanz, and Mir Mubashir, *National Dialogue Handbook A Guide for Practitioners* (Berghof Foundation, 2017), 252, <https://berghof-foundation.org/library/national-dialogue-handbook-a-guide-for-practitioners>.

²⁵ The IRM received this information from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit during the pre-publication period (February 11, 2022).

²⁶ “[Bekhedmetkom] بخدمتكم,” *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*,

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²⁷ Muath Al-Momani (Lawyers Without Borders), interview with IRM researcher, November 16, 2021.

²⁸ “[Bekhedmetkom] بخدمتكم,” *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*,

https://portal.jordan.gov.jo/wps/portal/!Home/CMU/CMU!/ut/p/z/1/04_Sj9Cpykssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfljo8ziTSl dPN2dvQ18Df wCXQ0CvQPcvH3CjI0tTE3Iw8EKDHAARwP9KEL6o_AqCTLEUOBmZGrg6GppbeltYmpsYGACVYDHDcGpefoFuREG mQHpigDIUu74/?uri=nm:oid:Z6_59DIGCK0M0NQE0QKPFKLV338R1 (accessed October 21, 2021).

²⁹ Muath Al-Momani (Lawyers Without Borders), interview with IRM researcher (November 16, 2021); Nathir Awamleh (Office of the Government Coordinator for Human Rights), interview with IRM researcher, November 22, 2021.

³⁰ “[Bekhedmetkom] بخدمتكم,” *Google Play*, https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.rolp.cs.rolp&hl=en_US&gl=US (accessed October 21, 2021).

- ³¹ Heba Al-Assis, “[Course on Standardizing the Complaints System for Human Rights Office Liaison Officers]دورة حول توحيد نظام الشكاوى لضباط ارتباط مكتب حقوق الإنسان,” Jordan News Agency Petra (May 30, 2021), https://petra.gov.jo/Include/InnerPage.jsp?ID=178923&lang=ar&name=news#.YLOKWLn_EN4.whatsapp (accessed October 20, 2021).
- ³² Nathir Awamleh (Office of the Government Coordinator for Human Rights), interview with IRM researcher, November 22, 2021.
- ³³ Muath Al-Momani (Lawyers Without Borders), interview with IRM researcher, November 16, 2021.
- ³⁴ “General Letter from the Prime Minister,” *Prime Minister* (December 22, 2020), <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xM5sknkc6eRBazmVWVJlmbz2oGwcGMAz8> (accessed November 8, 2021).
- ³⁵ Enaam Mutawe (Ministry of Culture Department of the National Library), interview with IRM researcher, November 15, 2021.
- ³⁶ Abeer Mdanat (Transparency International Jordan), interview with IRM researcher, November 9, 2021. For records of committee composition, see: “محضر اجتماع لجنة التصنيف” [Meeting Minutes of the Classification Committee], *The National Library*, (September 4, 2019), <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vfKhVV89A8-LNQgx8Pd215ls7dRI-UO7/edit> (accessed November 8, 2021); “محضر اجتماع لجنة اعداد بروتوكول لانفاذ حق الحصول على معلومات” [Meeting Minutes of the Committee to Prepare a Protocol for Enforcing the Right to Access Information], *Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists* (April 10, 2019), https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vAU_nrpvtftmp_3B0jyxfQEOvGCSsl (accessed November 8, 2021).
- ³⁷ “Progress Report-Commitment 5_OGP 4th NAP_Jordan,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit* (Updated November 7, 2021), <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C6ElqEdn9ivple8DgBwi2P7R8Ajk3yO9/edit> (accessed November 8, 2021).
- ³⁸ Enaam Mutawe (Ministry of Culture Department of the National Library), interview with IRM researcher, November 15, 2021; Mays Abdullah (Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists), interview with IRM researcher, November 8, 2021.
- ³⁹ Mays Abdullah (Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists), interview with IRM researcher, November 8, 2021.
- ⁴⁰ Enaam Mutawe (Ministry of Culture Department of the National Library), interview with IRM researcher, November 15, 2021.
- ⁴¹ Mays Abdullah (Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists), interview with IRM researcher, November 8, 2021.
- ⁴² Mays Abdullah (Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists), interview with IRM researcher, November 8, 2021; Abeer Mdanat (Transparency International Jordan), interview with IRM researcher, November 9, 2021.
- ⁴³ “Report on Dr. Bisher Al-Khasawneh’s Government Performance in its First Year,” *Hayat-Rased* (October 25, 2021), 3, <http://www.hayatcenter.org/publications/report-on-dr-bisher-al-khasawneh%e2%80%99s-government-performance-in-its-first-year/> (accessed November 9, 2021).

III. Multi-stakeholder Process

3.1 Multi-stakeholder Process Throughout Action Plan Implementation

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

OGP's Articles of Governance also establish participation and co-creation requirements that a country or entity must meet in their action plan's development and implementation to act according to the OGP process. Jordan **did not act** contrary to OGP process.¹

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

Table [3.2]: Level of Public Influence

The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) "Spectrum of Participation" to apply it to OGP.² In the spirit of OGP, most countries should aspire to "collaborate."

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

Compared to the previous action plan, implementation of the fourth action plan saw improvements in government stakeholders' openness to communicating with some sectors of civil society, reflecting a shift in institutional culture.³ Four of the five commitment-level steering committees included civil society stakeholders. Under Commitments 3 and 4, the steering committees each included one civil society organization, central to the development of the national dialogue and the human rights complaints mechanism, respectively.⁴ Under Commitments 2 and 5, the steering committees included a more equal balance of civil society and government representatives.⁵ These commitments included civil society in preparing Instructions for Publishing Open Government Data on the Open Government Data Platform, the Open Government Data Quality Framework,⁶ and protocols on access to information.⁷ Civil society organizations also led workshops to build government stakeholders' engagement with open data⁸ and awareness campaigns on access to information.⁹ Although Commitment 1 did not include civil society organizations in its steering committee, it held four meetings with civil society organizations to prioritize implementation, assess

progress, and gather feedback on the new foreign funding mechanism.¹⁰ The associations governance manuals were also developed with civil society assistance.¹¹ Overall, stakeholders also noted open communication channels with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit.¹² However, civil society organizations focused on access to information reported only superficial government engagement and limited political will for reform, particularly under the new government.¹³ There is also a need to diversify participating civil society organizations beyond familiar stakeholders¹⁴ and increase engagement outside of Amman.¹⁵ With few implementation meetings in the municipalities, regional government and local community-based organizations were reportedly less aware of the open government process.¹⁶

On balance, IRM research found positive collaboration between civil society and government within the open government process, against the backdrop of broader shrinking civic space in Jordan.¹⁷ The IRM recommends leveraging this OGP progress to improve collaboration in other areas of government, institutionalizing public participation spaces in critical policy areas. Jordan would benefit from embedding public participation in the development of policies and responses to public health crises like COVID-19. The IRM also recommends developing ambitious future commitments that strengthen civil society organizations' operating environment to address significant restrictions, including burdensome registration and regulatory requirements for associations, interference with those exercising rights to expression and peaceful protest, and restrictions on online expression and access to websites.

¹ Acting Contrary to Process – Country did not meet (1) “Involve” during the development or “Inform” during implementation of the action plan, or (2) the government fails to collect, publish and document a repository on the national OGP website/webpage in line with IRM guidance.

² “IAP2’s Public Participation Spectrum,” IAP2, 2014.

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf.

³ Mahmoud Al-Sbaih (We Participate), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

⁴ “٢٠١٩-٥-٣ محضر الاجتماع ٣-5 [Meeting Minutes 2019-5-3],” Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit (March 5, 2019), https://docs.google.com/document/d/13ElnCxN9_3yT80J3p3-q0zGdEZ7tiLMq/edit (accessed December 8, 2021); كتاب موافقة رئاسة الوزراء على تشكيل اللجنة التوجيهية [The Prime Ministry’s Letter of Approval on Formation of the Steering Committee],” *The Prime Ministry* (January 6, 2020),

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wYvzeno_CBx_7adDv9OJRvoUhhkETtX0 (accessed December 8, 2021).

⁵ “Letter on Formation of the Committee,” *The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology* (April 22, 2019), https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wYvzeno_CBx_7adDv9OJRvoUhhkETtX0 (accessed December 8, 2021); “Letter on Formation of the Steering Committee for the Fifth Commitment,” *The Ministry of Culture Department of the National Library* (February 18, 2019),

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uo5PzCyc6Kw02p3-UfM0utDMfO6kk4b> (accessed December 8, 2021).

⁶ “الاستشارة العامة لمسودة تعليمات نشر البيانات الحكومية” [Public Consultation on Draft Instructions for Publishing Government Data],” *The Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship* (2018),

https://modee.gov.jo/AR/ListDetails/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9_%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA/15/20 (accessed December 8, 2021); إعلان تمديد الاستشارة العامة لمسودة

إعلان تمديد الاستشارة العامة لمسودة [Announcement of Extended Public Consultation on Government Framework],” *The Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship* (July 3, 2019),

https://modee.gov.jo/AR/ListDetails/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A9_%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA/15/16 (accessed December 8, 2021); “Progress Report-Commitment

2_OGP 4th NAP_Jordan,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit* (May 5, 2021),

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Um6NI4P0XqNG015yQz7Huw_8C75ejneC/edit (accessed December 8, 2021).

⁷ Aber Mdanat (Transparency International Jordan), interview with IRM researcher, November 9, 2021. For records of committee composition, see: “محضر اجتماع لجنة التصنيف” [Meeting Minutes of the Classification Committee],” *The National Library*, (September 4, 2019), <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vfKhVV89A8-LNOgx8Pd215Is7dRI-UO7/edit> (accessed November 8, 2021); “محضر اجتماع لجنة اعداد بروتوكول لانفاذ حق الحصول على معلومات” [Meeting Minutes of the Committee to Prepare a Protocol for Enforcing the Right to Access Information],” *Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists* (April 10, 2019), https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vAU_nrpvtftmp_3B0jyxfQEOnvGCSsI (accessed November 8, 2021).

⁸ “Progress Report-Commitment 2_OGP 4th NAP_Jordan,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit* (May 5, 2021), https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Um6NI4P0XqNG015yQz7Huw_8C75ejneC/edit (accessed December 8, 2021).

⁹ “Progress Report-Commitment 5_OGP 4th NAP_Jordan,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit* (November 7, 2021), <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C6ElqEdn9ivpJe8DgBwi2P7R8Ajk3yO9/edit> (accessed November 8, 2021).

¹⁰ قائمة الحضور [Attendance List],” *The Societies Registry, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, and the Companies Control Department* (June 25, 2019), <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/lyllMj3tOCi3c3aU-4r8VbSXjTVz6QSMh> (accessed December 8, 2021); قائمة حضور الورشة [Workshop Attendance List],” *OECD and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation* (September 30, 2019), <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Ld7g79hEorORHdS-JeOykgHBOsIeKxLq> (accessed December 8, 2021); “تقرير اللقاء الحواري حول "تطبيق آلية التمويل الأجنبي",” *The Societies Registry and the Companies Control Department* (January 1, 2020), <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nuPrcjZf8jPbBxPpMCjxolTMqUuGqga/edit> (accessed December 8, 2021); “Progress Report-Commitment I_OGP 4th NAP_Jordan,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit* (November 14, 2021), https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U6txIKDMKg2C-MeiCe2-Yzr09_IKuhzu/edit (accessed November 22, 2021).

¹¹ The IRM received this information from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit during the pre-publication period (February 11, 2022).

¹² Haneen Al-Bitar (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law), interview with IRM researcher, November 1, 2021; Mahmoud Al-Sbaihat (We Participate), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021; Muhanad Zuwayad (Al-Hayat Center-Rased), interview with IRM researcher, November 4, 2021; Abeer Mdanat (Transparency International Jordan), interview with IRM researcher, November 9, 2021.

¹³ Mays Abdullah (Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists), interview with IRM researcher, November 8, 2021; Abeer Mdanat (Transparency International Jordan), interview with IRM researcher, November 9, 2021.

¹⁴ Haneen Al-Bitar (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law), interview with IRM researcher, November 1, 2021.

¹⁵ Mahmoud Al-Sbaihat (We Participate), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

¹⁶ Mahmoud Al-Sbaihat (We Participate), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021; Muhanad Zuwayad (Al-Hayat Center-Rased), interview with IRM researcher, November 4, 2021.

¹⁷ “People Power Under Attack 2021: Middle East & North Africa,” *Civicus Monitor* (2021), <https://findings2021.monitor.civicus.org/middle-east-north-africa.html> (accessed December 13, 2021).

3.2 Overview of Jordan's Performance Throughout Action Plan Implementation

Key:

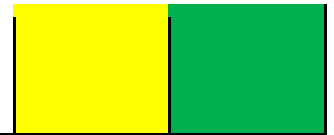
Green= Meets standard

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

Red= No evidence of action

Multi-stakeholder Forum	During Development	During Implementation
1a. Forum established: The Multi-Stakeholder Forum was formed on October 26, 2011.¹	Green	Green
1b. Regularity: The MSF met biannually before 2020 and met once during the rest of the implementation period, due to COVID-19. ²	Green	Yellow
1c. Collaborative mandate development: Members of the forum jointly develop its remit, membership, and governance structure	Yellow	Yellow
1d. Mandate public: During the implementation period, the national OGP website wrote that the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Open Government Unit is mandated to manage the country's action plans, ³ and partially listed the multi-stakeholder forum's membership. ⁴	Yellow	Yellow
2a. Multi-stakeholder: The forum includes both governmental and non-governmental representatives.⁵	Green	Green
2b. Parity: The MSF includes eight government ministries, two civil society organizations, and the Jordanian Businessmen Association. Representation on the MSF moved closer to parity during the implementation period. One of the civil society organizations, a network of non-governmental organizations called Himam, ⁶ now contributes three representatives, with two of these representatives added to the forum in 2019. ⁷	Yellow ⁸	Yellow
2c. Transparent selection: Nongovernmental members of the forum are not selected through a fair and transparent process.⁹	Red	Red
2d. High-level government representation: The forum includes high-level representatives with decision-making authority from the government. ¹⁰	Green	Green
3a. Openness: The Open Government Unit accepts input and representation on the action plan implementation from civil society and other stakeholders outside the forum, but implementing agencies were less responsive to civil society organizations in the access to information sector.	Yellow	Yellow
3b. Remote participation: There are opportunities for remote participation in at least some meetings and events.	Yellow	Green
3c. Minutes: The Open Government Unit proactively communicates and reports back on its decisions, activities, and results to wider government and civil society stakeholders and publishes a selection of meeting minutes	Yellow	Green

within the repository. Implementing agencies were less proactive in communicating with civil society organizations in the access to information sector.



Key:

Green= Meets standard

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

Red= No evidence of action

Action Plan Implementation	
4a. Process transparency: The national OGP website published reports on the progress of commitments, which were updated as commitment milestones were implemented. ¹¹ A new website was launched after the end of the implementation period, with more comprehensive features.	Green
4b. Communication channels: The national OGP website lists a phone number, fax, email, Facebook account, and Twitter account to allow the public to comment on action plan progress updates. ¹²	Green
4c. Engagement with civil society: For each commitment, two or three open meetings were held with civil society to discuss implementation. ¹³	Green
4d. Cooperation with the IRM: The Open Government Unit shared the link to the IRM report with some government institutions and stakeholders to encourage input during the public comment phase. ¹⁴	Green
4e. MSF engagement: The multi-stakeholder forum monitors and deliberates on how to improve the implementation of the NAP. ¹⁵	Green
4f. MSF engagement with self-assessment report: The government published reports on the progress of commitments, but did not submit these self-assessment reports to the national multi-stakeholder forum for comments and feedback on their content. ¹⁶	Red
4g. Repository: The government documented, collected, and published a repository on the domestic OGP website in line with IRM guidance.¹⁷	Green

¹ “The Fourth National Action Plan 2018-2021 Under the Open Government Partnership Initiative (OGP),” *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation* (October 31, 2018), https://ogp.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/en/eb_list_page/jordan_4th_nap_english-0.pdf.

² Mai Eleimat (Edmaaj), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

³ “About Us,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation*, https://ogp.gov.jo/En/Pages/About_Us (accessed November 16, 2021).

⁴ “Multi Stakeholder Forum,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation*, https://ogp.gov.jo/En/List/Multi_Stakeholder_forum (accessed November 16, 2021).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Mai Eleimat (Edmaaj), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

⁸ Note that this coding is an update on the Design Report, which previously coded parity as green. The coding in this report has been changed to reflect new information on the composition of the MSF during development of the action plan. Prior to 2019, the MSF included eight government representatives, two civil society representatives, and one representative of the Jordanian Businessmen Association. For prior coding rationale, see

“Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Jordan Design Report 2018–2020,” *Open Government Partnership* (19 September 2021), <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/jordan-design-report-2018-2020/>.

⁹ Mai Eleimat (Edmaaj), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

¹⁰ “Multi Stakeholder Forum,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation*, https://ogp.gov.jo/En/List/Multi_Stakeholder_forum (accessed November 3, 2021).

¹¹ “Jordan OGP 4th NAP Progress_Online,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation*, <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/IVAd6EhFcqlik2MWm9-Se6k0IGjY7tYGg> (accessed October 27, 2021).

¹² “Contact Us,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation*, https://ogp.gov.jo/EN/Pages/Contact_Us (accessed November 3, 2021).

¹³ Mai Eleimat (Edmaaj), interview with IRM researcher, November 3, 2021.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ “Jordan OGP 4th NAP Progress_Online,” *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation*, <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/IVAd6EhFcqlik2MWm9-Se6k0IGjY7tYGg> (accessed November 3, 2021).

IV. Methodology and Sources

Research for the IRM reports is carried out by national researchers. All IRM reports undergo a process of quality control led by IRM staff to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied.

The International Experts Panel (IEP) of the IRM oversees the quality control of each report. The IEP is composed of experts in transparency, participation, accountability, and social science research methods.

This review process, including the procedure for incorporating comments received, is outlined in greater detail in Section III of the Procedures Manual¹ and in Jordan's Design Report 2018-2020.

About the IRM

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) assesses development and implementation of national action plans to foster dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.



¹ IRM Procedures Manual, V.3: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>.

Annex I. IRM Indicators

The indicators and method used in the IRM research can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual.¹ A summary of key indicators the IRM assesses is below:

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

Results oriented commitments?

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

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

Starred commitments

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

- The commitment’s design should be **Verifiable, Relevant** to OGP values, and have **Transformative** potential impact. As assessed in the Design Report.
- The commitment’s implementation must be assessed by IRM Implementation Report as **Substantial** or **Complete**.

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

¹ “IRM Procedures Manual,” OGP, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual>.