

Independent Reporting Mechanism

Cabo Verde
Co-Creation Brief 2022

Open
Government
Partnership



Independent
Reporting
Mechanism

Introduction

This brief from the OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) serves to support the co-creation process and design of the second action plan and to strengthen the quality, ambition, and feasibility of commitments. It provides an overview of the opportunities and challenges for open government in the country’s context and presents recommendations. This brief does not constitute an evaluation of a particular action plan and its purpose is to inform the planning process for co-creation based on collective and country-specific IRM findings.

The Co-Creation Brief draws on the results of the research in the prior IRM reports for Cabo Verde. The brief also draws on other sources such as [OGP National Handbook](#), [OGP Participation and Co-creation Standards](#), and IRM guidance on [online OGP repositories](#) and [the minimum threshold for “involve”](#), to ensure that recommendations provided are up-to-date in light of developments since those IRM reports were written, and to enrich the recommendations by drawing on comparative international experience in the design and implementation of OGP action plan commitments as well as other context-relevant practice in open government. The co-creation brief has been reviewed by IRM senior staff for consistency, accuracy, and with a view to maximizing the context-relevance and actionability of the recommendations. Where appropriate, the briefs are reviewed by external reviewers or members of the IRM International Experts Panel (IEP).

The IRM drafted this co-creation brief in March 2022.

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Section I: Action Plan Co-Creation Process

In 2022, Cabo Verde will co-create its second OGP action plan. Cabo Verde's development of the previous [2018-2020 action plan](#) provided the opportunity to become accustomed to OGP processes. However, Cabo Verde [fell short of meeting](#) OGP's minimum requirements for the level of public influence in the development process. Meeting the minimum requirements under the updated [Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#) during the upcoming action plan cycle provides the opportunity for Cabo Verde to formalize its OGP structures and processes. If met, Cabo Verde will also no longer be considered to be acting [contrary to process](#). To establish an inclusive and ongoing dialogue around open government reforms, the IRM recommends that:

1. The Office of the Prime Minister and civil society partners develop a strategy to use the action plan co-creation process as an opportunity to establish Cabo Verde's OGP structures and processes.
2. The Office of the Prime Minister and civil society partners designate a platform or space for ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue on Cabo Verde's OGP process.
3. The multi-stakeholder forum or government develop an OGP website and repository to ensure transparency and accountability of Cabo Verde's OGP processes.
4. The multi-stakeholder forum or government document and respond to stakeholders on how their contributions influenced the action plan's content.
5. The multi-stakeholder forum or government establish inclusive mechanisms to oversee and guide commitment progress throughout the implementation period.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The Office of the Prime Minister and civil society partners develop a strategy as an opportunity to use the action plan co-creation process to establish Cabo Verde's OGP structures and processes.

The co-creation of Cabo Verde's second OGP action plan provides the opportunity to develop inclusive and sustainable OGP structures and processes. Cabo Verde is encouraged to reach for the full ambition of the [OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#) that outline steps for collaboration throughout the action plan cycle. In particular, the IRM recommends that stakeholders consider the following sequence of activities to ensure the minimum requirements of the standards are met during development of the second action plan:

- **Conduct outreach activities** to raise awareness of OGP and opportunities to get involved in the development of the action plan. This should include the **development of an OGP website and repository** (see recommendation 3).
- **Designate a platform or space** for ongoing government and civil society dialogue on Cabo Verde's OGP process (see recommendation 2).
- **Develop and publish a timeline and overview of opportunities to participate** in the co-creation process on Cabo Verde's OGP website/page at least two weeks before the start of the action plan development process.
- **Develop a mechanism to gather, document, and respond back to inputs** on the content of the action plan from a range of stakeholders (see recommendation 4). For advice on virtual consultations, see [Taking the OGP Co-Creation Process Online](#).

Recommendation 2: The Office of the Prime Minister and civil society partners designate a platform or space for ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue on Cabo Verde's OGP process.

OGP's [Standards](#) require members to establish a space for ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue around the OGP process that meets at least once every six months. For the second action plan, Cabo Verde should designate a specific platform or space where government and non-government stakeholders come together to oversee the design and implementation of commitments. To do so, the IRM recommends that the Office of the Prime Minister:

- **Determine whether a formal [multi-stakeholder forum \(MSF\)](#) or an informal and flexible space would best facilitate ongoing dialogue** between government, civil society, and other relevant partners throughout the action plan cycle.
- **Develop and conduct an outreach strategy** to encourage civil society participation. Communicate a clear [value proposition for open government](#). This could emphasize where open government aligns with civil society priorities and how OGP processes can advance their policy aims.
- **Provide mechanisms for varying levels of participation.** Target civil society organizations (CSOs) working on governance such as *Plataforma das ONG* for ongoing participation while creating opportunities for broader participation at specific moments, such as determining action plan thematic areas.
- **Publish the basic rules on the space or MSF** such as information on how to participate, the mandate, composition, and governance structure to encourage transparency and inclusive participation.
- **Develop a fair and transparent process for participating** in the MSF or space and aim for equal representation and decision-making powers of civil society and government members.

Recommendation 3: The multi-stakeholder forum or government develop an OGP website and repository to ensure transparency and accountability of Cabo Verde's OGP processes.

OGP encourages members to practice maximum transparency to enable participation and accountability throughout the OGP process. In particular, countries must maintain an up-to-date OGP website that either functions as, or is accompanied by, a repository. Under the standards' minimum requirements, the multi-stakeholder forum or government must demonstrate that:

- The OGP website contains the latest action plan
- They published a co-creation timeline with/and information on opportunities for stakeholders to participate published at least two weeks in advance on the OGP website/page
- They published basic rules on participation in the MSF
- The repository includes at least one piece of evidence of co-creation and one piece of evidence of implementation from the past six months
- They documented input received from stakeholders on the action plan

Cabo Verde could establish an OGP website/page that is run by the government, MSF, or a partner. The website/page could be within a government website, stand alone, or make use of a free platform such as [Trello](#) or [Facebook](#). If the website does not also function as a repository with evidence of co-creation and implementation, then it could be linked to a

[Google Drive](#) or [DropBox](#) that serves this purpose. Examples of comprehensive OGP websites include [Morocco](#), [Tunisia](#), and [Jordan](#).

Recommendation 4: The multi-stakeholder forum or government document and respond to stakeholders on how their contributions influenced the action plan's content.

Provision of a reasoned response to stakeholder input and feedback is highly correlated with ambition, completion, and early results for OGP commitments. Cabo Verde is encouraged to develop a dialogue process that best meets its needs. However, at a minimum all countries are expected to document and report or publish written feedback to stakeholders on how their contributions were considered during the development of the action plan. Possible approaches to ensure documented and ongoing dialogue include:

- The government or MSF could respond to civil society input during meetings of the OGP multi-stakeholder forum and then publish minutes from the meetings.
- The government or MSF could publish a summary of input received and how input was considered on the OGP website, as done by [Canada](#).
- The government or MSF could publish a report on input received with an explanation of why suggestions were or were not incorporated into the action plan, as done by [Morocco](#).

Recommendation 5: The multi-stakeholder forum or government establish inclusive mechanisms to oversee and guide commitment progress throughout the implementation period.

Cabo Verde's first action plan saw limited levels of completion and early results, in part, due to the absence of a platform to oversee implementation progress. For the second action plan, the government should [establish mechanisms](#) to oversee commitment progress throughout the implementation period. To meet OGP's [minimum requirements](#), the multi-stakeholder forum or government should hold at least two meetings every year with civil society to present progress on the implementation of the action plan and collect comments. Possible mechanisms to oversee implementation include:

- A multi-stakeholder implementation committee comprised of responsible agencies and CSO partners that meets regularly to oversee progress of the entire action plan, as in [Morocco](#).
- Multi-stakeholder working groups organized by thematic area or commitment that meet regularly to oversee progress of commitments, as in Ghana.
- Each responsible government agency could sign a memorandum of understanding with a CSO establishing their partnership to oversee implementation.

For more information see the [OGP Consultation During Implementation Guidance Note](#), although the minimum requirements listed have since been updated.

Section II: Action Plan Design

AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMITMENTS

Some areas of opportunity for Cabo Verde's second action plan include strengthening civic space, opening parliament, fisheries transparency, opening government at the municipal level, and strengthening public service delivery through open government.

AREA 1. Civic Space

The Office of the Prime Minister and civil society partners could design a commitment to address challenges to civil society's operational environment such as clarity in the regulatory framework and funding sources. Such a commitment has the potential to address civil society priorities as well as ease CSOs' ability to engage in open government reforms. The government could partner with civil society to:

- **Develop a funding transparency portal** with information on opportunities and disbursement of grants, contracts, and international funding, as [recommended by the EU](#) and exemplified by [Morocco's Chakara Portal](#).
- **Establish a framework to standardize ministries and government bodies' consultation practices with civil society.** For example, [Norway](#) developed a declaration of principles, [Serbia](#) created a strategy, and [Slovakia](#) developed guidelines, training, and an interagency working group on government engagement with civil society.
- **Review and amend the legal and regulatory framework** to ease civil society's operational environment. For example, in 2018 [Jordan](#) partnered with civil society to simplify the CSO registration process. In 2021, [Mongolia](#) committed to review the legal framework, adopt a policy for CSO and state partnership, simplify registration, and establish a database of relevant information.

For more information see OGP's [Civic Space Fact Sheet](#) and list of [Actions to Protect and Enhance Civic Space](#).

AREA 2. Open Parliament

Cabo Verde could build on the National Assembly leadership and administration's [support for open government](#) to advance open parliament reforms. The Office of the Prime Minister could reinvigorate parliamentarians' understanding and engagement during the co-creation process through consultation, representation in the MSF, and/or presentation of the draft action plan to parliament. Parliamentary involvement could aim to advance open government through several possible roles as outlined by OGP's [Memorandum on Parliamentary Engagement](#):

- **Taking legislative action:** Championing open government values by introducing, reviewing, and ratifying legislation relevant to open government or approving budgets for open government reform.
- **Ensuring parliamentary oversight:** Holding governments accountable for open government reforms and opening up their 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 cross-party dialogue and support needed to advance and institutionalize open government reforms.

See OGP's [Open Parliament Fact Sheet](#) and [Policy Progress Report](#) for concrete recommendations for and examples of open parliament commitments.

AREA 3. Fisheries Transparency

Cabo Verde's second action plan is an opportunity to reinvigorate the country's commitment to greater transparency in the fisheries sector. OGP members such as [Seychelles](#) and [Senegal](#)

have used their action plans to advance [Fisheries Transparency Initiative commitments](#) and formalize FiTI processes. If Cabo Verde designs an FiTI commitment, the IRM recommends identifying specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound activities as commitment milestones, as demonstrated by [Senegal's 2021 commitment](#). However, the IRM also recommends designing the commitment with consideration of a longer-term strategy to ensure that transparency efforts ultimately build toward public accountability and participation in the fisheries sector. Commitment drafters are encouraged to consider possible synergies across commitments in the action plan, such as aligning FiTI and open budget efforts.

AREA 4. Open government at the municipal level

Cabo Verde's [decentralization process](#) is an opportunity to open government at the municipal level. The Office of the Prime Minister could work with the [National Association for Governments of Municipalities](#) and civil society to develop a commitment that establishes a foundation for ongoing ambitious open government reforms. The IRM recommends engaging local governments by communicating a clear value proposition for open government and addressing local governments' priorities when possible. OGP members have taken various approaches to incrementally build a solid foundation for open government at the local level including:

- **Providing guidance, training, and a clear value proposition on open government values and processes** to local governments, as illustrated by [Morocco](#), [Tunisia](#), and [the Philippines](#).
- **Strengthening transparency in local governments** to support future public participation and accountability reforms. For example, [Morocco](#) and [the Philippines](#) are implementing commitments on access to information at the local level.
- **Strengthening fiscal transparency at the local level.** The Philippines's fiscal transparency reforms under the [2015](#) and [2017](#) action plans provided a strong foundation to implement citizen monitoring and reporting of local government units' fiscal transactions in their [2019 action plan](#).

AREA 5. Strengthening public service delivery through open government

Civil society in Cabo Verde [is experienced](#) in assisting the delivery and monitoring of public services, such as education and social protection. A commitment to strengthen delivery of a specific public service through greater transparency, civic participation, or public accountability could reinforce CSOs' existing work under an open government approach. If included, the IRM recommends that drafters focus reforms on a particular sector, such as [education](#) or [health](#), and/or a specific moment in the delivery timeline. This could look like formalizing public participation in policymaking, [citizen participatory audits](#), or [monitoring delivery](#) in particular sectors.

Cabo Verde's first action plan included a [commitment](#) to strengthen public access to information and the ability to monitor and provide input on infrastructure rehabilitation projects. While relevant, the commitment text did not make explicit how implementation would change government practices. If this commitment is continued, or a similar one included, the IRM recommends that the milestones describe specific and measurable activities and intended outcomes. It should be clear how these intended activities will strengthen government transparency, civic participation, and/or public accountability. For example, if a commitment aims to increase civic participation, the text should describe the consultation mechanism, intended participants, and that the government will act on the input gathered.

