

Creating OGP's Future Together

Strategic Planning 2023-2028

DRAFT STRATEGY

Open
Government
Partnership



At a Glance: Strategy 2023-2028

OGP's vision is of healthier democracies where governments are open and responsive, and everyone has the opportunity to shape and oversee public policies and services, so that better outcomes are delivered for all.

OGP's mission is to build, equip and inspire a growing movement of reformers inside and outside government who take action and learn together to make open government the norm.

Overview of Key Strategic Shifts

One of the key aims of the new strategy is ensuring a vision and strategic direction that resonates with and has roles for the entire Partnership. It is the collective efforts of everyone in the Partnership that will enable the following shifts as we move forward:

- Expanding the open government community to become **a much broader, more interconnected movement of open government reformers**
- Moving from individual actions and OGP commitments to **making open government the norm across all levels and branches of government**
- Welcoming diverse policy priorities but also setting **Partnership-wide, collective policy goals for all national and local members**
- Becoming the **home for inspiration, innovation, evidence and stories** on open government

Overview of Strategic Goals

| Goals | Strategies to pursue the goals |
|--|--|
| <p>Goal 1: Build the commitment and capability of a diverse, and growing community of inter-connected open government leaders driving reforms</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build a stronger political coalition for open government 2. Enhance the leadership skills and competencies of open government leaders, building cohorts that advance open government action through multi-stakeholder collaboration. 3. Partner with learning institutions to spread open government skills and knowledge 4. Build better public support for open government 5. Invest in strategic alliances and partnerships to reinforce and amplify open government principles |
| <p>Goal 2: Catalyze transformative action towards making open government the norm at all levels and branches of government</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen the action framework with attractive, fit-for-purpose options, to enable all levels and branches of government across different contexts to advance open government 2. Record, incentivize and recognize action beyond OGP action plans and processes and beyond OGP members 3. Support members to advance towards open government as a norm, particularly in windows of political opportunity or transition and in countries with vibrant open government ecosystems |
| <p>Goal 3: Drive collective ambition and sustained results on open government norms in key policy areas</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set thematic priorities and cultivate coalitions to define and drive collective ambition and results 2. Challenge the Partnership to make progress on key open government policy areas 3. Integrate a focus on inclusive public participation and accountability across all OGP strategies 4. Pursue expanded civic space through inspiring, action-first leadership |
| <p>Goal 4: Become the home of cutting edge open government inspiration, innovation, evidence and stories</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Showcase the most innovative and inspiring reforms in and outside of action plans and recognize the reformers (people and institutions) 2. Develop a high quality and inspirational content to meet the diverse needs of the community |

Background and Context

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) was launched in 2011 with a pledge by members to be more open and accountable, and to uphold the highest standards of integrity. At the time, there was a sense of hope and optimism about harnessing the role of new technologies to bring governments closer to people and a belief that by working together, everyone – despite different starting points – could make progress on ambitious reforms to tackle societal challenges. In the contest between open and closed government, OGP’s ambition was to tip the balance in favor of openness.

In its eleven years, OGP has evolved to respond to the changes in its environment and to lessons learned. Together, we have grown to a global platform including 76 countries, over 100 local governments and thousands of civil society organizations. Local governments, parliaments, judiciaries and accountability institutions have become involved in OGP. Reformers in OGP have shown that – when the founding principles of OGP are upheld – transformative change is possible. GovChat in South Africa, OpenCoesione in Italy, A Tu Servicio in Uruguay, Citizen Participatory Audits in the Philippines, Prozorro in Ukraine, and DecideMadrid in Spain are but a few examples of powerful, lasting reforms that originated in OGP processes, and have been fundamental game changers in their contexts, inspiring others to follow. In its first decade, the Partnership has also succeeded in forging connections between the access to information and open data communities, those working on sectoral policies, and advocates for greater participation and inclusion. With partners, we have helped accelerate adoption of policies and reforms in access to information, open contracting, beneficial ownership and extractive transparency among other areas. Ten years of evidence shows that the core model works – when civil society is involved in designing and implementing OGP action plans, commitments are more ambitious, better implemented, and produce more changes in government practices and result in better outcomes for people.

But, at the same time, the wider environment has continued to deteriorate. It has been a period marked by a steady decline in democracy and civil liberties, and a corresponding decrease – reaching an all-time low – in citizens’ trust in government. As grand promises to “leave no one behind” were left unfulfilled, people’s discontent has been stoked by authoritarian leaders and distrust has been fueled by the spread of misinformation and disinformation. The result has been to render democratic institutions weaker and more vulnerable to internal and external threats. Beyond this crisis of democracy, governments around the world are grappling with the convergence of other complex challenges, including climate change, war, economic instability, security challenges and uncertainty in global energy supplies. The magnitude and concurrence of these challenges make it vital to act with urgency.

It is clear that we must build on our current approaches and successes and learn from our failures. As the headwinds get stronger, we have to double down on making open government the norm in governance. OGP is made up of thousands of relentless, creative and inspiring trailblazers, innovators and deeply committed reformers striving to make a difference. Despite occasional fatigue with processes and plans, a growing number of actors are engaging with the Partnership. Transformative change will only be possible with their sustained commitment and leadership. The opportunity before us is to harness the collective insight and energy of all the different parts that make up OGP and reimagine it as an even bolder, more positive, values-based partnership that can help chart a more hopeful future.

It is with this backdrop that OGP set out to develop a new strategy for the Partnership for the next five years, embarking on the most comprehensive community engagement process to date, and aspiring to live up to OGP’s own Participation and Co-Creation Standards. The OGP community has risen to the task remarkably,

providing rich, nuanced and inspired ideas for how the Partnership can reinvent itself to be fit-for-purpose now and for the future. The strategy that follows is a product of the community's – your – collective wisdom and the lessons learned in the first decade of OGP.

You can read more about the insights and ideas we heard throughout the consultations and how the new strategy responds to them in the [Phase 1](#) and [Phase 2](#) reports.

Vision and Mission

OGP's vision is of healthier democracies where governments are open and responsive, and everyone has the opportunity to shape and oversee public policies and services, so that better outcomes are delivered for all.

As democracy remains under threat and many governments continue to fall short of expectations in fulfilling the needs and protecting the rights of people, OGP envisions a world where governments embed transparency, participation, inclusion and accountability in everything they do: Where governments involve people in shaping the policies and services that affect their lives, demonstrating democracy in action every day; Where governments deliver better outcomes with-and-for people, and are better prepared to respond to the complex challenges that we face today and tomorrow; And where governments are held accountable for their actions.

Achieving our vision fully requires:

- Everyone can access relevant, usable and timely information about government processes and decisions that impact their lives;
- Everyone has equal opportunity to participate freely in shaping the public policies and decisions that impact their lives;
- Everyone has the freedom and ability to seek effective redress when the rule of law is not upheld, people's rights are not respected or their needs are not met, without risk or harm, and where public officials are accountable for their decisions and actions;
- Everyone can see that public resources are managed transparently, fairly and equitably; and
- Open government is an accepted norm, embedded in the culture and practice of governments at all levels.

For much of our first decade, OGP focused on co-creation of reform commitments through action plans. OGP's strategy focused on maintaining high-level political leadership and commitment, fostering peer exchange between reformers, and supporting them with technical expertise and evidence, ensuring that members are held accountable through OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM). We have also increased diversity of those engaging with OGP processes and plans in order to ensure that these commitments are ambitious and credibly delivered.

We have learned now that transformative commitments made through OGP action plans – too few and far between – and the engagement of a growing number of actors in OGP are not changing the culture of governments at the pace and scale required. More significant and enduring changes will need to come from a growing number of reformers – political leaders, civil society, social movements, business leaders, public servants – who innovate and embed open government in their daily work. This demands a shift of approach where we focus on cultivating a much stronger movement of such reformers and leaders driving change and taking action, both through and beyond OGP, supporting them in their efforts to put people at the heart of their governments.

OGP's mission is to build, equip and inspire a growing movement of reformers inside and outside government who take action and learn together to make open government the norm.

The new mission implies a few key shifts in what we need to do that are detailed below.

Key Strategic Shifts in the New Strategy

The OGP community has grown into a large and diverse mix of national and local government reformers, civil society, multilateral partners, parliamentarians, foundations and much more. This strategy reflects shared goals for the entire community with roles and responsibilities for all, informed by an extensive co-creation exercise. The goals will only be achieved by the entire open government community owning this strategy and collaborating together to achieve them. In short, this is a **strategy for the whole Partnership** and will need the full community's help to deliver the shifts outlined below.

1. Expanding the open government community to become a much broader, more interconnected movement of open government reformers

In the first decade, our collective emphasis was on building a community around the Partnership, connecting different policy communities and providing a credible global and domestic platform for action. As we move forward, OGP will build on this effort and work with the community to cultivate a much bigger and stronger movement of individuals and groups who can drive change in and beyond their context. Our new strategy will focus much more on supporting reformers and leaders in developing the capabilities, competencies and connections needed to create support for, lead and sustain open government reforms, and to continuously grow and strengthen the movement (See [Strategic Goal 1](#))

2. Moving from individual actions and OGP commitments to making open government the norm across all levels and branches of government

OGP will retain its unique value-add – an action-oriented approach with co-creation, commitment, implementation and accountability at its heart – but as we move forward we will strive to take open government from its current niche to a more universally adopted norm. The new strategy will encourage and provide pathways for all members to go beyond standalone OGP commitments to longer-term integrated reforms or open government strategies, and to embed open government in priority national and local strategies, policies and programs. (See [Strategic Goal 2](#))

3. Welcoming diverse policy priorities but also setting Partnership-wide, collective policy goals for all national and local members

A core design principle of OGP is a domestically-owned framework where members and partners pursue reforms that are fit-for-purpose in their own contexts. While we will continue to retain this principle, in order to show collective progress over the course of the strategy period, OGP will invest in demonstrating progress in a few fundamental open government policy areas. Based on the consultations and evidence, these will include: a) anti-corruption, with a stronger emphasis on political integrity related reforms; b) reforms that embed and mainstream inclusive public participation, with a stronger push to strengthen civic space and public accountability across institutions, policies, and services that affect people's lives; c) digital governance,

especially focused on public impacts of digital technologies; d) transparency, accountability and participation approaches to tackle the climate crisis. Inclusion (with explicit focus on gender) will be seen as a cross-cutting objective, especially with respect to increasing the diversity of voices in policymaking. (See [Strategic Goal 3](#))

4. Becoming the home for inspiration, innovation, evidence and stories on open government

To enable all these shifts, the OGP Support Unit and the IRM will become much more deliberate, strategic and creative in unlocking inspirational open government content at a bigger scale to support reformers, incubate innovation, facilitate learning and guide action to streamline open government practices across all levels of government. OGP will become the home of cutting-edge inspiration and innovation by building a much stronger 'conveyor belt' of high quality, practical and inspirational content, together with the community, recognizing and showcasing the most inspiring stories, evidence and innovation in and outside of action plans. (See [Strategic Goal 4](#))

Strategic Goals

For the next five year period – 2023 to 2028 – OGP will pursue four mutually reinforcing strategic goals. As with the goals, the sub-strategies that highlight how these goals will be pursued in the next five years are also inter-linked and mutually reinforceable. The next section lays out these goals and provides details for how we will pursue these goals and key things we are changing as we move forward.

It is important to note here that, for OGP to accomplish any of these goals, three fundamental pre-conditions need to exist: visible and genuine high-level political leadership, resourcing for open government reforms and reformers, and civic space for civil society and the public to be able to play their roles. Strategies for securing these pre-conditions are integrated within the strategy (see 1.1 below for building a stronger political coalition; and 3.4 on building and protecting civic space. A resource mobilization plan will be included in the final strategy document).

Strategic Goal 1: Build the commitment and capability of a diverse and growing community of inter-connected open government leaders driving reforms

It is very positive that the community of leaders that makes up OGP today is vastly different from that of 2011. There are local leaders, parliamentarians, gender-focused partners, youth organizations and many others who were not part of OGP's founding, and now have a major stake in the Partnership. To achieve our vision, we must collectively build a much bigger and stronger movement of open government leaders and coalitions who drive change in their contexts, embed open government in their work, learn from and support one another. We must also ensure that these leaders have the mindsets, skills, networks, resources and tools to strengthen and expand the open government movement, and mobilize political and public support for the agenda. Most importantly we must actively cultivate connections between these leaders and coalitions to strengthen their collective impact.

For the 2023 -2028 strategy period, OGP will:

1. Build a stronger political coalition for open government

Visible, genuine and continuous political leadership – individually and collectively – is critical for shaping, delivering and sustaining ambitious open government reform. Over the last few years this has waned, with the risk of making OGP a less attractive platform for reformers to pursue their agendas. In the coming years, the Partnership will need to collectively invest in mobilizing a much broader spectrum of political support for open government and OGP, including from mayors, members of parliament, ministers and heads of government/state. This will also help to make the Partnership less vulnerable to political changes.

Concretely, this means collectively investing more in understanding how to make open government more politically relevant, backing this up with the compelling value propositions, political incentives, powerful evidence and inspiring stories to appeal to political leaders with different backgrounds and priorities, and thereby equipping the community with the tools needed for outreach to a broader cadre of prospective and future leaders. It means the OGP Support Unit and Steering Committee, working with local actors to identify and spotlight such leaders much more prominently in OGP activities.

Secondly, it means raising and codifying expectations of political leadership from the OGP Steering Committee, requiring them to bring cross-government support domestically as well as internationally to lead on outreach to their peers in the wider Partnership and to bring political weight and heft to the launch and implementation of the new strategy.

Thirdly, it means using OGP regional events and summits to bring in more political actors and politically relevant discussions to these fora, and secure concrete commitments from leaders. This includes capitalizing on the political convening power of other platforms and partners.

Fourthly, it means strengthening engagement with the foreign offices of members to ensure continuity of support across administrations and linkages with other international priorities and pledges.

Relatedly, this means investing in senior civil servants in a similar manner, given their important role in advising and engaging their political principals, leading policy change, and providing continuity across changes in political administration.

2. Enhance the leadership skills and competencies of open government leaders, building cohorts that advance open government action through multi-stakeholder collaboration

To promote open government as a norm, investing in reformers who can drive, scale and sustain ambitious open government reforms and encourage others to do the same is essential. The strategy consultations pointed to strong support for investing in the ability of reformers to deliver by building their commitment, knowledge, skills and leadership capabilities. Open government approaches are often not known or attractive enough for public officials to adopt. This is even more pertinent in the difficult political environment that reformers in many contexts need to navigate. Similarly, such skill and competency building can benefit civil society advocating for and partnering on implementing open government reforms. While peer exchange and learning – focusing on sharing knowledge and knowhow, and technical assistance through partners – have long been part of the OGP offering, efforts to do so in a systematic way that builds a broader range of skills and capabilities are still nascent.

In the coming years, the OGP Support Unit will invest in developing the leadership and adaptive skills as well as key technical competencies and skills of core community leaders, in partnership with others. The target group will be – both at the national and subnational levels – senior bureaucrats, civil society leaders, (junior) ministers, emerging political leaders, parliamentarians, and critical reformers in other sectors, each with the potential to inspire others or move open government reforms forward. The focus will be on enhancing their leadership and adaptive capabilities to navigate complex change, secure the political and public support needed to help spread open government reforms, and acquire fundamental open government skills such as embedding inclusive public participation in government practices, policies and services, connecting to people's movements, meaningful and proactive transparency, and expanding civic space.

Building on the successful pilot phase of the Open Government Leadership Collaborative (OGLC), the OGP Support Unit will purposefully expand its executive leadership programmes, selecting regional and/or thematic cohorts of reformers that can drive change in their contexts, creating a network of alumni that support one another. Over time, OGP will explore partnerships with leadership institutes (e.g., African Leadership Institute) in delivering such programs and consider introducing a certification scheme for quality control and recognition.

3. Partner with schools of government, public service academies, and other learning institutions to spread open government skills and knowledge

Where the above mentioned curated leadership programme will focus on building the skills and knowledge of a small core group of leaders, scale will come through partnerships with schools of government, public policy and political academies, and other learning partners. The focus here will be to expose both current and new actors and leaders to open government thinking and approaches, create networks of alumni that have participated in open government and OGP courses and bring those skills and knowledge into their domain of work, and thereby grow the open government movement. The ultimate aim here will be to ensure the diffusion of open government skills across government and beyond.

There are already several countries where civil servants are being officially trained on open government (e.g., Estonia, Kenya, Spain, Nigeria) and other learning partners and networks such as ReSPA in the Balkans region, CEPAL in the Americas, etc. working towards similar aims, working with a broader range of stakeholders and often using OGP material. The OGP Support Unit will encourage other countries to adopt similar approaches and provide high-quality base material to do so. It will also formalize a select number of partnerships nationally and internationally (e.g., Apolitical) to accommodate multi-level and differentiated approaches and a variety of audiences (e.g., political leaders, senior officials, working level officials, and civil society). The content will emphasize core open government approaches, knowledge, value propositions and experiences, as well as skills needed to deliver (e.g., coalition building, effective and inclusive public participation).

An OGP and open government 101 course focused on onboarding new Point of Contacts, members or administrations, or civil society actors new to open government, will also be rolled out.

4. Explore how we can build better public support for open government values and reforms

For open government to truly be accepted as a norm, there needs to be strong public demand for it that creates incentives for political leaders and public officials to adopt and advance reforms. For many such reforms to succeed, active public participation in designing, implementing or overseeing them is also key. The OGP Support Unit will partner with others to invest in creating the value propositions, evidence and stories to appeal to the informed and engaged public from different backgrounds and with different priorities. It will provide these materials to the community for use in their direct engagement activities at national/local level with the public and with the media. These will also go on to inform the curricula for open government leadership courses, both those offered to small cohorts and en masse through partnerships with learning institutions. Additionally, in a few countries a more proactive approach to building public support will be piloted.

5. Invest in strategic alliances and partnerships as reinforcers and amplifiers of open government principles

Consultations have shown strong appreciation for the role OGP has played in catalyzing the broader open government field, connecting conversations as well as reformers, to partners and platforms. This role is recognized as having been important in diffusing open government principles and support for it beyond OGP. Moving forward, the OGP Steering Committee, Support Unit and members will take a more intentional and strategic approach in leveraging alliances, platforms and partnerships as a prime opportunity to strengthen the movement, further advance thematic priorities and diffuse open government approaches.

The OGP Steering Committee and Support Unit will systematically forge stronger and more strategic linkages with a handful of critical global and regional agendas and platforms (e.g., G7, S4D, COP, IACC) that aim to advance relevant themes/policy areas. Effort will be placed on ensuring that in big moments the Partnership leverages its collective power and voice, using the strength and access of the Steering Committee and the broader action network, for example, to maximize advocacy opportunities for ensuring these platforms require their participants to advance open government policies and practices. OGP can serve as the connective tissue between these platforms and be positioned as a domestic implementing mechanism. Efforts will also be made to ensure that they embed open government principles in their own processes (e.g., advocating for them to engage civil society as equal partners to governments).

The OGP Steering Committee and Support Unit will also invest in creating stronger partnerships with key allied organizations and institutions – old and new – that have the ability to support reformers driving change. This includes international organizations (e.g., EU, WB, OECD), technical implementation partners (e.g., GIZ, Expertise France) at global, regional, and national levels. Together, we will also deepen relationships with organizations with aligned missions that can amplify and anchor open government as a norm by embedding open government principles in their own strategies and operations. Existing examples include the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Open Government (and their open government scans) or the inclusion of open government criteria in the World Bank IDA18. As part of this effort, OGP will explore the development of a global coalition to advance the norms, rights and practices of public participation.

At the local level, the OGP Support Unit will expand its strategic alliances approach with local and/or regional associations. These associations play an important role both in the diffusion and in the institutionalization of public policy within their countries. Partners could include local associations which agglomerate subnational governments, relevant autonomous institutes (e.g., INAI, Mexico) or national governments. They would be advocates and custodians for an OGP-like co-creation process and action plans, adopted at scale and adapted to local needs.

Strategic Goal 2: Catalyze transformative action towards making open government the norm at all levels and branches of government

Action plans by OGP members have been at the heart of OGP. They have ensured that open government goes beyond rhetoric and that governments are required to work with civil society at regular frequency to commit to changes that they can later be held accountable by domestic stakeholders through the Independent Reporting Mechanism and other monitoring efforts. We have learned that the core OGP model of co-creation between governments and civil society, when led effectively, does produce strong results.

While consultations have clearly emphasized that one of OGP's unique value propositions is its model of co-creation, action, and accountability and that this on action must be maintained in the future, there are some limitations in the current model. For example, action plan processes have often led to standalone commitments rather than broader ambitious reforms that are implemented and sustained over longer time frames; there are no clear ways to recognize or incentivize open government reforms or innovation taking place outside the OGP action plan; and open government is still not being embedded in how governments approach governance or policymaking in general.

Moving forward, OGP will continue to emphasize and support the co-creation of transformative open government reforms through OGP plans and beyond, and encourage and incentivize all members to mainstream open government principles and practices across all areas of governance. For actions beyond the action plan, OGP will continue to emphasize co-creation, implementation and accountability and will only recognize those efforts that follow these principles.

For the 2023-2028 strategy period, OGP will:

1. Strengthen the action framework with attractive fit-for-purpose options, to enable all levels and branches of government across different contexts to advance open government

Over time, OGP will ideally be in a position to offer a single, flexible action framework that can be used by all branches and levels of government. During the strategy period, OGP will start moving in that direction.

- **We will improve the current OGP action plan model and accompanying guidance and support, to provide a clearer menu of options for members to pursue in different contexts.** Meeting the different needs in different contexts, that also change over time, presents significant challenges for continuing a one-size-fits all approach. In recent years, the OGP Steering Committee already approved a series of changes to the current action plan model to make it more flexible, adaptable and effective for members. In the coming year the OGP Support Unit, with the Criteria and Standards subcommittee of the OGP Steering Committee, will more clearly articulate different options for action within and beyond the current OGP Action Plan model. The menu of options will range from a) a more focused/narrow plan – for members with low capacity, low political support or political support limited to a sectoral pocket, b) an improved version of the current action plan to make it more flexible but impactful, c) to an Open Government Strategy – where a member is ready to move towards a longer-term, cross-government commitment. These options will come with improved guidance, support, services, and incentives, and updated rules and monitoring methods that are fit-for-purpose. The goal here will be to make the platform more attractive and easier to use, and support greater ambition, rather than lowering the bar of participation.

When OGP started, it primarily involved the executive branch of government. Now, in a growing number of countries, open government action plans are created across all levels and branches of government. During the strategy period, we will continue to encourage this diffusion of open government principles and practices across all branches and levels of government.

- The OGP Support Unit, in collaboration with domestic civil society and partners will continue to promote **parliamentary engagement in OGP**. Parliaments can legislate, ensure parliamentary oversight, open up parliamentary processes and foster the cross-party dialogue and support needed to advance and institutionalize open government reforms. The OGP Support Unit's focus will be on encouraging parliamentary participation in the national (or local) OGP process in an integrated manner, in line with OGP's 2021 Memorandum on Parliamentary Engagement. Over the course of the strategy period, we will explore how the engagement of the judiciary in OGP – still nascent in most contexts – may be improved.
- **OGP Local** will also continue to be important and central to OGP's success and there will be continued focus on attracting and investing in open government local members. The OGP Local track will be grown sustainably and will serve as a cohort of champions who inspire the

field and kick-start action. This will be done by redesigning the track, setting a cap to the number of members at any given time, upgrading 'self-service', with more agile rules for entry and exit to attract and retain potentially high performing jurisdictions. This will create the pathway for motivated Locals to join with relative ease, prioritizing support to where there is energy and ambition. The OGP Support Unit will develop an integrated approach to support and services for all members, including on guidance, inspiration and innovation, recognition and leadership development. A strong emphasis with OGP Local will be on encouraging and supporting reforms that mainstream and embed public participation in local government.

2. Record, incentivize and recognize action beyond OGP action plans and processes, and beyond OGP members

The OGP Support Unit will work with the rest of the Partnership to invest in better incentivizing, capturing, recognizing and inspiring open government action happening outside the OGP process and plans.

As a first phase, this will entail country stakeholders capturing and sharing promising and inspiring open government efforts being made outside of OGP action plans, and supporting the reformers driving these efforts through OGP's leadership development and other types of support. Actions captured and recognized by OGP will be required to follow the OGP philosophy of co-creation and our values. The OGP Support Unit and IRM, in collaboration with relevant partners and experts, will provide guidance and resources on embedding open government principles and practices in key country strategies and reforms. In a second phase, OGP will consider if and how it should play a role – directly or through partners – in measuring open government progress within and beyond action plans on key open government topics or indicators. OGP will also design incentive programs for members to take action on key improvement areas, through and beyond OGP action plans.

The Partnership will also support and incentivize open government action – and co-creation – by non-members by sharing our tools and approaches, capturing and sharing their reform stories and achievements, and making them part of the community in an effort to encourage the adoption of open government approaches beyond our current membership. Priority will be on encouraging the self-service use of the OGP model and knowledge resources by eligible and near eligible countries, and current members providing bilateral support, hopefully inspiring such countries to formally join. The Steering Committee will also deliberate upon specific options for participation for non-universally recognized countries. At the local level, membership pathways for local jurisdictions from non-member countries will be developed.

3. Support members' advance towards open government as a norm, particularly in windows of political opportunity or transition and in countries with vibrant open government ecosystems

The ultimate vision for OGP will only be realized when open government is embedded in how governments govern – from open government action plans and strategies to ensuring that open government principles and practices are embedded in everything governments do.

Political transitions and windows of political opportunity in particular offer conditions to enable such shifts. The consultations have reinforced that all parts of OGP can be strategic and agile in more quickly identifying and preparing for windows of political opportunity and acting upon them so governments embed open government in how they implement their reform manifestos and agendas rather than see open government and OGP processes and plans as parallel, unrelated efforts. The

OGP Support Unit will invest in designing a strategic collective approach together with national actors and partners – including civil society and social movements – and global partners to engage swiftly before, during and after these windows emerge at the country or local level. Currently, the level, duration and intensity of support and who to whom it is directed often falls short. At moments like these, OGP members and the Support Unit will not necessarily be tied down by the action plan model and rules, and instead focus on using open government approaches to deliver on reform agendas or manifesto pledges. Elements of a renewed Partnership-wide approach could include a combination of rapid response approaches, recognition and incentives, political outreach, and dedicated peer support from the Steering Committee, donors and others.

For more regular political transitions, the OGP Support Unit will further codify and strengthen our approach to introduce OGP and open government values, advantages and approaches to the incumbent political leaders, aligning it to their political priorities. The Support Unit will invest in preparing different actors in the OGP ecosystem to engage and secure the commitment of political leaders pre- and post transitions. This will include the Steering Committee playing a more political and outward-facing leadership role in engaging high-level government peers, communicating OGP's value proposition, and securing their commitment. The work of an 'inspiration hub' (see Strategic Goal 4 below) will include providing value propositions, data and stories to support domestic efforts to introduce open government thinking to political parties and candidates. In line with a more networked and distributed model of support, OGP multi-stakeholder forums (MSF) members and civil society will be primed to support their peers undergoing transitions. The OGP Support Unit will also develop recommendations for members to institutionalize OGP through administrative, regulatory or legal instruments to ensure continuity of open government and OGP commitments across political cycles. Finally, with partners, and local actors, the OGP Support Unit will continue to focus on strengthening parliamentary engagement in OGP to ensure cross-party support for embedding open government in key governance processes, strategies and programs.

The OGP Support Unit, with the Steering Committee and partners, will additionally invest in deepening open government action, and moving towards making open government the norm, with a handful of countries where there is a **vibrant open government ecosystem and community** across all levels and branches of government, or in **countries where windows of opportunity emerge**. In this approach, governments will be encouraged to cross-fertilize and cooperate on reforms across levels and branches, and mainstream open government in key national and local strategies.

Strategic Goal 3: Drive collective ambition and sustained results on open government norms in key policy areas

OGP will continue to uphold one of its central design principles – a domestically-owned framework and process of determining priorities – and remain open to action across a broad spectrum of policy areas, acknowledging that members will have different priorities and maturity levels depending on their context. However, to enable and show collective progress, the OGP Steering Committee will also prioritize a subset of critical and promising themes on which the entire Partnership will be challenged to advance ambitious action.

For the 2023-2028 strategy period, OGP will:

1. Set thematic priorities and cultivate coalitions to define and drive collective ambition and sustained results

While members and partners will continue to be able to pursue diverse policy priorities through OGP, a subset of themes will be prioritized for showing collective progress as a Partnership during the strategy period. Based on what we have heard from the OGP community, the initial focus will be on 1) anti-corruption, including political integrity related reforms; 2) digital governance; 3) climate and environment, and 4) inclusive public participation, including reforms related to strengthening civic space and public accountability. OGP's values of transparency, participation, inclusion and public accountability will be emphasized across these priority areas. The OGP Co-Chairs and wider Steering Committee will be invited to champion the advancement of these themes during the strategy period, with space to pursue context specific approaches within them.

Each of these themes will have different starting points on ambition and implementation, challenges and supporting ecosystems, which means desired results and tactics will also have to vary. The OGP Steering Committee and Support Unit will focus on cultivating or nurturing networks of leaders to model action, inspire and support others. These coalitions will be supported by approaches that OGP has successfully experimented with including cross-sector convening, campaigns, recognition, peer exchanges, brokering implementation support, thematic grants, awards, and using global platforms to spur domestic action. Approaches emerging from the new strategy (e.g., leadership development, collective challenge-based approaches) will also be deployed to encourage thematic ambition and sustained implementation.

While the Steering Committee and Support Unit will focus on cultivating or nurturing coalitions on selected priority themes, others in the community would be welcome to pursue similar approaches on their issue areas if they are able to initiate and sustain these activities without requiring additional, intensive assistance from the OGP Support Unit.

Finally, the OGP Steering Committee and Support Unit will align incentives and support to ensure that these priorities are reinforced across OGP work, and ensure that focus is maintained for longer periods of time to enable a positive cycle of global norms shaping national and local action and vice versa, while remaining open to responding to shifts and trends in our environment.

2. Challenge the Partnership to advance key open government policy areas

The OGP Steering Committee will launch a Partnership-wide challenge for all members to advance on key open government policy areas. This challenge will be accompanied by incentives, recognition approaches, leadership activities, political leadership and/or campaigns where appropriate.

In support of this, the OGP Support Unit will curate illustrative examples and approaches, supportive arguments, maturity models, references to existing third-party standards or ratings, and value propositions, through an inspiration hub (see Goal 4). This will aim to provide a clearer picture of what ambition can look like at different starting points and for different contexts, and across all dimensions of open government – transparency, participation, inclusion and accountability. At first, the focus will be on thematic priority areas, and over time it will be expanded to other policy areas. For areas where there are no existing benchmarks, maturity models or standards, members and partners of the OGP platform will be encouraged to help develop these, with the OGP Support Unit playing a convening role.

In the second half of the strategy period, we will explore whether and how the OGP Support Unit and IRM could provide member assessments of open government progress, within and beyond action plans, perhaps only on key open government topics or on a broader range of open government indicators. If pursued, this will ideally be done in partnership with or complementary to other benchmarking work (e.g. OECD Open Government Scans).

3. Integrate a focus on inclusive public participation and accountability across all OGP strategies

Participation is core to open government. All open government reforms require a foundation of democratic freedoms and civic space in order to function effectively, and involving people in government decisions, public service delivery and public accountability is central to a healthier democracy. But, until now, transformative public participation reforms have been few and far between within the partnership and, while lots of exciting public participation innovations have been developed around the world, these are typically reliant on individual political and/or policy entrepreneurs. We are still a long way from changing the culture of governments in such a way that inclusive public participation is woven into the fabric of institutions. The open government community has been emphatic that advancing public participation – both through protecting and extending civic spaces, and embedding inclusive participation within government decision-making, public service delivery, and accountability mechanisms – must be central to our collective efforts over the coming years.

During the strategy period, we will integrate the focus on inclusive public participation across all OGP strategies. This will include:

- Promoting and developing guidance, good practices, recommendations and maturity models for inclusive participation;
- Building a global coalition to advance the norms, rights and practices of public participation;
- Increasing understanding and support for participation by political leaders and cultivating a group of leaders to champion participation norms and reforms;
- Enhancing the leadership and skills of reformers implementing public participation norms and reforms;
- Supporting networks of reformers from governments and civil society and facilitating peer exchange and learning to deepen and extend the practice of participation;
- Facilitating inspiration, recognition and learning across the open government community to drive commitment, innovation and sustained results on public participation; and
- Supporting reformers at a local level to develop, embed and share reforms that involve people in meaningful and impactful ways to shape the decisions that affect their lives.

4. Pursue expanded civic space through inspiring, action-first leadership

A resounding concern facing the Partnership, across a majority of members, is the decline of people's ability to organize, mobilize and express themselves freely, which threatens the very premise upon which the OGP model is anchored – an equal partnership between government and civil society. For a while now, this threat has been recognized and surfaced in virtually all OGP settings. However, except for a handful of countries taking action, progress through OGP action plans has been limited. Over the course of this strategy, we intend to bring new strategies and tactics to bear to pursue the expansion of civic space.

We will nurture a counter-narrative and movement providing positive examples and leadership in pursuit of expanded civic space. This will include:

- Developing a multi-pronged civic space plan that builds on existing efforts and integrates civic space across the strategy and activities of OGP;
- Identifying thematic entry points and revisiting framing for ‘civic space’ in a way that it does not pose limitations to the traction it needs to get from both governments and civil society, and other sectors;
- Providing an open space for dialogue among reformers who are advancing local, national, and global efforts to protect and enhance democratic freedoms and civic space;
- Shaping, with partners, a coalition of political leaders/members that actually advance civic space at home and can authentically and actively champion it abroad; and,
- Embedding civic space in our leadership, inspiration and recognition activities and making it a priority angle for work in response to windows of political opportunities.

In addition to nurturing a positive counter-narrative and movement, the OGP Support Unit will work with partners to mobilize support for civil society operating in contexts of deteriorating civic space; mobilize the Steering Committee and other diplomatic channels to encourage countries to take remedial measures; and, more prominently spotlight progression and regression on civic space through OGP’s communication channels and platforms.

Box: Mainstreaming Gender and Inclusion Across OGP

The vision of OGP underscores that a diversity of voices informs government decision-making, especially those that are under-represented at policy tables. The 2023-28 strategy will build on recent experiences of catalyzing reforms that worked for better outcomes for women and LGBTQIA+ communities, and more diverse representation across the Partnership’s activities. This strategy will continue to empower OGP members and partners to mainstream gender and inclusion across policy objectives, and in particular focus on making participatory initiatives (including co-creation processes as part of OGP) more inclusive.

In particular, the Steering Committee, Support Unit and IRM will proactively work with gender and youth voices to invite them to leadership initiatives. Finally, the Support Unit will work with partners to promote and develop guidance and maturity models for inclusive participation as part of our work on providing universal references for thematic ambition, iterating on cross-cutting gender and youth guidance to ensure these reflect the diversity and representation of the Partnership.

Strategic Goal 4: Become the home of cutting edge open government inspiration, innovation, evidence and stories

Since the early days, OGP has invested in capturing and sharing examples from across the community, as well as recognizing reformers and reforms. Consultations pointed to the need for us to be more systematic, purposeful and creative in this domain. There was also a clear ask to invest much more in unlocking our assets – the examples and stories, the data, the evidence, the innovation and the networks – and making them much easier to access to the community in a diverse range of formats and products. Getting this backbone functionality right is of critical importance to enable the movement, to guide action towards making open government the norm and to drive ambition on key thematic priorities across the partnership.

To be successful in this approach, the OGP Support Unit and the IRM will need to be more deliberate, more strategic and more creative to unlock inspiration on a bigger scale to support reformers, incubate innovation, facilitate learning and guide action to streamline open government practices across all levels of government and enable the key shifts of the new strategy. This will only be successfully done if the content is sourced and shared from, by and with the community.

For the **2023 -2028 strategy** period OGP will:

1. Showcase the most innovative and inspiring reforms in and outside of action plans and recognize the reformers (people and institutions)

The OGP Support Unit will design an annual awards program, leverage peer learning platforms, use speaking opportunities at OGP and partner events, and offer opportunities to reformers take part in our leadership training programs and more deliberately curate a pipeline for leadership opportunities in OGP and the wider open government community (e.g., Steering Committee). This will require a second backbone functionality, which is to institutionalize the tracking, management and servicing of OGP's extensive network of leaders and alumni.

2. Develop high quality and inspirational content to meet the diverse needs of the community

The OGP Support Unit and IRM will work on developing a much stronger repository of high quality, practical and inspirational content with and for the wider community that meets their diverse needs, is easy to access and will find its way back to the community in a diverse range of formats and products. This will include serving a range of needs from communication to curriculums for capacity and leadership development.

This will include learning and advocacy resources, guidance, communications materials and other dynamic content they can use to make progress on key open government topics and in streamlining open government practices in their contexts. This will include working with partners to launch a refreshed version of the "Open Gov Guide," to serve as a backbone and beacon for the community in the coming years. It will focus on prioritized themes initially, and will be a dynamic resource, with illustrative examples and approaches, supportive arguments, maturity models, references to existing third-party standards or ratings, and value propositions. The aim will also be to make it much easier for reformers and partners to seek and support each more easily.

Box: Doubling Down On OGP Local in the New Strategy

OGP Local came up consistently in the strategy consultations as being an important and promising opportunity for us, that should be central to our work and integrated across OGP strategies. Consequently OGP Local and strategies to advance, support, and showcase open government at the local level have been embedded across all the abovementioned strategic goals. For ease of reference, the approach to OGP Local in the new strategy is summarized below.

- 1. We will strengthen the OGP Local membership track, focusing on attracting and investing open government champions [See strategic goal 2.2]**
- 2. In the next phase of implementing the OGP Local strategy, we will identify a set of countries with a strong and vibrant open government community and potential for more intense national-local collaboration and align support and incentives to enable progress.** This will entail better

coordination of national and local strategies, and be primarily advanced through domestic leadership from partners and supported by global partners working on decentralization. [See strategic goal 2.3]

3. We will also **build strategic alliances with local or regional associations to catalyze OGP-like co-creation of reforms.** [See strategic goal 1.3]
4. **Our efforts to build a stronger movement and political coalition for open government will include leaders – from government and civil society – working at the subnational levels** [See strategic goals 1.1 and 1.2]
5. **We will invest in inspiration and innovation at and from the local level as part of the OGP wide efforts** out under strategic goal 4
6. **Our selection of priority policies, political moments and partnerships** outlined in strategic goal 3 will be done with a view towards picking priorities that have resonance with both national and local
7. **Local will be a major area of focus within our goal to advance the norms, rights and practices of inclusive public participation.** [See strategic goals 3.3 and 3.4 }

Finally, as part of a governance review that will be undertaken in 2023, the OGP Steering Committee will consider how to better reflect Local in OGP's governance.