

Pre-Meeting Brief for the OGP Steering Committee

5 September 2023 | Tallinn, Estonia

Session 1: Open government approaches to strengthen democracy and the opportunity for the Steering Committee to lead and inspire an open government movement

Background and context:

- The Open Government Partnership has entered its second decade and charted its [strategic direction](#) for the next five years. This comes against the backdrop of continued democratic backsliding and rise of authoritarianism, and a confluence of political, environmental, societal and international security challenges. These issues affect all societies and therefore require a comprehensive, collective and coordinated response.
- In the face of these pressing global challenges, OGP government and civil society reformers drive forward commitments and actions that make governance more transparent, inclusive, and accountable. They do so through a unique co-creation process that provides everyone a seat at the table, generates concrete reform commitments, and is monitored by an in-depth reporting process. OGP's new 2023–2028 strategy offers an opportunity to translate the energy of the vibrant open government community into concrete long-lasting reforms to help tackle current and future challenges.
- Political leadership is essential for shaping and sustaining such reforms. Yet, ministerial and head-of-government level engagement in OGP has decreased over the years. Securing political support for open government reforms and building a pipeline of future champions for the Partnership, including for the Steering Committee, will help reduce the vulnerability of this agenda in the uncertain geopolitical context.

Why is this relevant and what is the role of the OGP Steering Committee?

- One of the key priorities in OGP's new strategy is to build a stronger, more political global coalition for open government and OGP. The Steering Committee, as the Partnership's leadership body, plays a key role in achieving this goal. Some ways in which Steering Committee members can do this include:
 - Leveraging their collective and individual influence to build relationships with key stakeholders and inspire them towards achieving OGP's goals.
 - Raising the Partnership's profile globally by positioning it as an implementing platform for pledges and commitments made on other global fora such as the G7, G20, and the S4D.
 - Strengthening engagement with their foreign ministries in open government/OGP activities to ensure linkages with other international priorities and pledges and, with that, continuity of support across administrations.
 - Leading by example in their own countries through robust domestic OGP processes and influencing other ministries to participate.

Session 2: Building high-level political support for the Open Government Challenge

Background and context:



- The SC Meeting in Tallinn will focus on the high level, political role the SC will play to promote the Challenge across the Partnership.
- At this Global Summit, OGP is launching the Open Government Challenge to challenge all members of the Partnership to take up at least one thematic area and show tangible progress over the five year strategy period. The aim is to raise the volume of ambitious commitments within specific policy areas, so they eventually become new global norms.
- The Challenge will serve as the overarching frame for OGP's thematic work and to link together activities and incentives to promote open government ambition across thematic areas - such as awards, technical guidance, financial support, thematic coalitions, events, peer exchange opportunities, campaigns and other communications efforts, among others.
- A key aspect of the Challenge is its partnership-wide approach, inviting all national and local members to take on at least one Challenge area. The Support Unit provides the support architecture for the challenge, and the Steering Committee will provide the political leadership, but it is the national and local members who will drive the concrete reforms.
- The Challenge aims to increase the flexibility available to members to advance reforms both through action plans and beyond, encouraging wider application of open government approaches across policy sectors, agencies and processes.
- Members are encouraged to discuss the Challenge areas with their multi-stakeholder forums and civil society partners. Where desired, members are also encouraged to leverage this OGP mechanism to advance implementation and accountability of pledges made at other global fora.
- After the launch at the Summit, all OGP national and local members will have the opportunity to signal their interest in specific Challenge areas.
- The Challenge gives a menu of options for OGP stakeholders to pick what is relevant for their contexts. The Challenge consists of 10 foundational and strategy open government areas, including those that emerged prominently from the strategy consultations.

Foundational open government norms and mainstreamed policy areas

- **Access to information:** Improve effectiveness of access to information legal frameworks.
- **Civic Space:** Strengthen enabling environment and spaces for civil society and civic action.
- **Media Freedom:** Develop or reinforce legal frameworks that protect the rights of journalists and independent media.
- **Fiscal openness:** Advance reforms public oversight, transparency, and inclusion across the budget and spending cycle.
- **Gender:** Adopt open government reforms to promote the full participation of women politically, socially and economically.
- **Public Participation:** Mainstream or embed fit-for-purpose, high quality and inclusive public participation practices across key government sectors, processes, and institutions.



Additional strategy-endorsed policy areas

- **Anti-corruption:** Develop or strengthen a whole-of-government anti-corruption strategy or roadmap.
- **Climate and environment:** Use open government to implement strategies or agreements on climate and environment.
- **Digital governance:** Strengthen transparency and public oversight of AI and data protection frameworks.
- **Open Justice:** Develop an open justice policy to advance reforms that are people-centered and improve public trust in the justice system.

Why is this relevant and what is the role of the Steering Committee?

- The Steering Committee will be the political engine that drives the Challenge.
- Community ownership, including mobilizing OGP partners and the Steering Committee playing a visible leadership role, are key to the success of the Challenge.
- The discussion at the SC meeting seeks to focus on the bilateral and multilateral outreach needed to link the challenge to other policy fora, as a channel to accelerate policy uptake and implementation. It relies on SC engagement to address where it can complement existing fora, and bolster implementation of policy pledges made at global platforms, without links to direct implementation mechanisms at the country level.
- Some ways in which Steering Committee members can build political support for this initiative and mobilize the partnership around it include:
 - Lead by example by picking one or two areas of the Challenge to lead on, including through ambitious reforms within their domestic OGP processes.
 - Invest political capital to conduct outreach to government peers to encourage uptake of the Challenge.
 - Forge links between OGP and other global platforms in which Steering Committee members participate to elevate the Challenge and raise ambition for open government reforms (e.g. S4D, G7, G20, UNFCCC, etc.);
 - Position the Challenge during Steering Committee speaking engagements during the OGP Global Summit.
 - Leverage spaces such as this Ministerial Steering Committee meeting to share progress, difficulties, and hold each other accountable.

Session 3: Endorsement of the [“Tallinn Commitment”](#) by the OGP Steering Committee

Background and context:

- The Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee, the Government of Estonia and Anabel Cruz, are tabling a high-level statement of collective leadership actions by the Steering Committee to advance the new strategy. This applies to government and civil society members of the Steering Committee, including those whose terms officially start on October 1, 2023.
- This is drawn from the new OGP Strategy that the Steering Committee unanimously approved earlier this year, and includes four components: i) expressing recommitment



to OGP and the values & principles of the Open Government Declaration; ii) recognizing open government approaches as vital for strengthening democracies and OGP as an essential partnership for addressing pressing global challenges; iii) collective commitments drawn directly from the new OGP Strategy goals one through four; iv) calling on all OGP members, local and national, to join the Steering Committee in these collective commitments and efforts, particularly by responding to the Open Government Challenge.

- All Steering Committee members will have the opportunity to provide high-level comments with the aim to finalize and approve the text via circular, at working level, in the weeks leading up to the meeting. A final version will be circulated by the week of August 21 for sign-off by August 30, after which, further edits will not be allowed.

Why is this relevant and what is the role of the Steering Committee?

- The Tallinn Commitment is a key deliverable from this meeting, which will be disseminated through OGP channels, and highlighted in high-level plenaries throughout the summit.
- Upon its adoption on September 5th, all Steering Committee members are invited to disseminate the Commitment through their channels and networks.
- Future meetings will provide space for Steering Committee members to report back on progress made and challenges faced in regards to their individual commitments.
- In addition to the first two meeting items on this agenda, the Support Unit would like to capture other ways the Steering Committee is leading on different elements of the strategy. All Steering Committee members are invited to send information on how they or their governments are supporting key areas of the strategy in writing. These are not formal commitments, but rather an opportunity to map and share the ways SC members are already supporting the new strategy, and to inform future SC meeting agendas. **The deadline for submissions is August 31, and will only be collected through [this form](#).** Contributions submitted by this deadline will be circulated among the Steering Committee and included in the minutes of the meeting (unless explicitly requested otherwise). Contributions received after August 31 but before September 15 may also be included in the minutes, but are not guaranteed to be included in the briefing materials for the meeting.

Session 4: Endorsement of next two sets of Co-Chairs

Background and context:

- The leadership of the Steering Committee is made up of four co-chairs who provide strategic guidance and support to advance OGP's overarching priorities. Co-Chairs serve two-year terms beginning on October 1 of the year in which they are elected: the first year as Incoming, and the second as Leads. After their Lead year, co-chairs remain part of the leadership team in a 'troika' capacity, providing support to the new Leads.
- The Lead Co-Chairs (one government and one civil society) develop and implement a strategic agenda to lead on a set of focus areas during their tenure to help advance the overarching goals of the OGP Strategy. Incoming Co-Chairs (one government and



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one civil society) play an advisory role before formally assuming the role of Lead Chairs. Chairs are elected by the 22 members of the Steering Committee.

- The current Lead Chairs are the Government of Estonia and Anabel Cruz of ICD-Uruguay. Their term ends on September 30, 2023.
- The Government of Kenya and Blair Glencorse of Accountability Lab have been endorsed by the Steering Committee at working level to serve as the next Co-Chairs starting on October 1, 2023. The new Co-Chairs will present their vision for their co-chair year during the September 5 meeting.

Why is this relevant and what is the role of the Steering Committee?

- Co-chairs play a crucial role in shaping and implementing OGP's strategy, host and chair meetings of the Steering Committee, represent the Partnership, and are responsible for recommending key policies to advance OGP's strategic direction.
- The Steering Committee still has to elect a second pair of co-chairs to follow the Government of Kenya and Blair Glencorse. The elected candidates will serve as "incoming Co-Chairs" from October 1, 2023 until assuming the Lead Co-Chair role on October 1, 2024.
- The deadline for incoming co-chair candidates is September 5th 2023. Candidates will present their candidacies at the September 5 meeting. If there are more than one candidate from either government or civil society, a vote will be called for. More details will be provided in the lead up to the meeting, as necessary.



Additional Actions to Support the Strategy:

Submitted by the Steering Committee

Government of Italy (Public Administration Department)

- Supporting: Goal 4 - Accelerate collective progress on open government reforms
- Description: Since 2020 the open source platform ParteciPa enables citizens and the OGP community to participate in national decision-making processes. Over 30 consultations have been carried out by different actors. In the framework of our 5 NAP a team of multilevel PAs and SCOs co-created the Public Participation Hub hosted by the platform, launched at the 2023 OG week. The national goal is to promote inclusive participatory practices by comparing approaches, sharing principles and tools to upskill the community of PAs, CSOs and interested citizens collaborating in the digital Community of practices.
- Link: <https://partecipa.gov.it> <http://open.gov.it>

- Supporting: Goal 4 - Accelerate collective progress on open government reforms
- Description: Since 2022 the National School of Administration manages the Community of Practice for Prevention of Corruption and Transparency Officers for collaborative learning, focusing on the National Recovery Plan. The Community is working together with SCOs on conflicts of interest and protection of whistleblowers, to define the skills needed for public decision-making processes, aiming at promoting an integrity culture. In compliance with the OCDS, all relevant information on public contracts are published in the National Public Contracts Database managed by the National Anticorruption Authority.
- Link: sna.gov.it

- Supporting: Goal 4 - Accelerate collective progress on open government reforms
- Description: Digital Republic is a national strategic concept to address the digital gap. It is implemented by the National Coalition for Digital Competencies, composed of public and private stakeholders. Since 2020 3.8 million students, 3 million citizens, 500.000 workers, 150.000 teachers have been trained. In combination with this policy our 5NAP is supporting a mechanism to prevent on line discrimination. The goal is to multiply physical access points promoting inclusion through targeted support activities for digitally illiterate citizens by spreading Digital Facilitation Points throughout the country
- Link: <https://innovazione.gov.it>

- Supporting: Goal 4 - Accelerate collective progress on open government reforms
- Description: The National Strategy for Gender Equality, launched in 2021 is being monitored since 2022 by the National Observatory for the Integration of Gender Equality Policies of the Prime Minister Office to assess impact and improve its effectiveness. The goal co-defined with CSOs and being implemented in the 5NAP is to support women's access to employment and professional leadership through a Gender Certification System by promoting incentives for enterprises that adopt women empowerment policies. This policy is promoted and supported by the National Recovery Plan and monitored by the OG Community.



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- Link: <https://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/>

Aidan, Twaweza East Africa

- Supporting: Goal 1 - Build a growing, committed, and interconnected community of open government reformers, activists, and champions
- Description: Working to support and facilitate Tanzania's formal rejoining of OGP as per the commitment of H E President Samia Suluhu Hassan made in March 2023 during the Summit for Democracy 2

Anabel Cruz, ICD Uruguay

- Supporting: Goal 4 - Accelerate collective progress on open government reforms
- Description: Civil Society Organizations will also raise the bar and deepen efforts on transparency, accountability, participation, and inclusion, one of the priorities for Strategic Goal 4. CSOs will go beyond transparency for transparency's sake and integrate open government approaches into own programs to deliver tangible outcomes. One form is by embracing voluntary accountability standards such as the 12 commitments of the Global Standard for CSO Accountability, which are very much aligned with open government principles. The GSPartnership will develop the campaign "Accountability to Build Trust".
- Link: www.csostandard.org / www.rendircuentas.org

Blair Glencorse, Accountability Lab

- Supporting: Goal 1 - Build a growing, committed, and interconnected community of open government reformers, activists, and champions
- Description: We are working with a variety of civil service training schools and related institutions in OGP countries (Nigeria, Liberia) to support more effective learning journeys for civil servants and to hard-wire integrity into learning pathways for bureaucrats.
- Link: <https://www.accountabilitylab.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/AL-Integrity-Innovation-Lab-3.pdf>
- Supporting: Goal 4 - Accelerate collective progress on open government reforms
- Description: We are working to connect dots across key open government processes globally- including OGP, the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group, the S4D, MDB reform and others- through aligning civil society demands and messaging and finding entry points for advocacy.
- Link: www.accountabilitylab.org

Nikhil Dutta, ICNL

- Supporting: Goal 3 - Protect and expand civic space
- Description: With inputs from local and international partners, ICNL has developed a resource on Enhancing Digital Civic Space through the OGP Process which sets forth principles, recommendations, and positive examples of reforms to expand space for the exercise of digital freedoms. ICNL will launch this resource at the 2023 OGP Global Summit and is planning engagements -- including a capacity-building workshop



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for partners at the Summit, outreach to leading governments, and continued collaboration with the Support Unit -- to encourage OGP commitments that preserve and protect digital civic space.

- Link:

<https://www.icnl.org/post/report/enhancing-digital-civic-space-through-the-ogp-process>

- Supporting: Goal 3 - Protect and expand civic space
- Description: In recent years, ICNL has provided technical assistance and support to partners in Argentina, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Mongolia, and Nigeria to facilitate their efforts to secure and advance implementation of OGP commitments to empower civil society and expand civic space. ICNL will continue to assist partners to engage in the OGP process to promote an enabling environment for civic freedoms, especially where windows of opportunity open to advance enabling reforms.

