

## **Civil Society Steering Committee**

Monthly Call | 9 July 2025

9:30-10:30 AM ET

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Natalia Carfi, Anabel Cruz, Blair Glencorse, Katerina Hadzi-Miceva Evans, Zuki Kota, Steph Muchai, Laura Neuman, Doug Rutzen (and Nikhil Dutta as a Second), Barbara Schreiner, OGP Support Unit (SU)

**Apologies:** Eka Gigauri, Cielo Magno

#### **1. United States Response Policy Case- 20 min**

- a. The SU provided an overview of a [Letter of Concern](#) from U.S. civil society organizations, which triggered OGP's [response policy](#) process. The SU is conducting an initial review of the eligibility of the request (not on the merits) and will inform all stakeholders of the next steps. The U.S., which sits on the Criteria and Standards Subcommittee, will recuse itself from all decisions and discussions of the case.
- b. Civil Society members shared suggestions on the approach for the case, including on the tentative timeline in line with Response Policy guidelines.

#### **2. Ministerial Steering Committee Meeting (October 7) - 20 min**

- a. The SU presented an overview of a revised draft agenda of the in-person ministerial Steering Committee meeting, scheduled for October 7 at the 2025 OGP Global Summit. Civil Society members shared initial feedback and suggestions on the format and content of the agenda:
  - i. 1. Members proposed framing the sessions more explicitly on tackling the particular challenges of the current political moment, including with a forward-looking perspective on the next 15 years of the Partnership.
  2. Members cautioned covering too many topics during the meeting, which may prevent deep engagement on any one issue.
  3. Members emphasized the importance of finding ways to incentivize robust engagement outside of pre-prepared remarks.
  4. Members supported the idea of endorsing the Vitoria-Gasteiz Declaration in advance of the summit, while ensuring that the declaration is raised at the meeting.
  5. Members cautioned against the unintended consequences of promoting digital public participation, which may exacerbate the digital divide.
  6. Members suggested that the co-chairs play an active role throughout the meeting, including by moderating segments of the meeting.

#### **3. Vitoria-Gasteiz Declaration - 20 min**

- a. The Civil Society SC discussed a tabled draft of the summit high-level declaration, which will serve as a vehicle to reaffirm global political commitment to open government values at the summit, and the key role of OGP as a delivery mechanism.
- b. Members shared initial feedback and suggestions on the declaration text, including:

- i. 1. Consider linking closer to the current political moment, with greater action-focused language to meet the moment of urgency in response to threats to open government values. 2. More clearly showcase how OGP has delivered and can deliver in the future. 3. Ensure the text reflects it is a joint government-civil society declaration.

c. **Next steps:**

- i. The cohort requested to share any additional feedback in writing by July 14.
- ii. SU will collate feedback from cohort and government SC members and circulate a revised version.
- iii. After the revised version is circulated for internal consultations, the cohort agreed to channel any further feedback through Civil Society SC co-chairs to negotiate on the final text, as needed.
- iv. Detailed timeline:
  - 1. **By July 14:** Gather initial feedback from SC POCs and CS SC members.
  - 2. **July 15:** SU circulates revised draft.
  - 3. **July 15- August 11:** SC POCs to conduct internal consultations and share any feedback in writing. CS SC chairs share written input on behalf of the cohort.
  - 4. **August 18:** Support Unit collates government and civil society feedback and circulates final draft for SC endorsement.
  - 5. **September 12:** Deadline for SC members to endorse the final version of the declaration (via circular).
  - 6. **September 16 - October 10:** Declaration is circulated for community-wide sign-on (before and during the Summit).
  - 7. **October 7:** Proclamation of summit declaration.