

Independent Reporting Mechanism

New Zealand Co-Creation
Brief 2025

Open
Government
Partnership



Independent
Reporting
Mechanism

Overview

This brief from the OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) supports the co-creation process and design of New Zealand's fifth action plan. It provides an overview of OGP processes in the country and presents recommendations based on collective and country specific IRM findings. The co-creation brief draws from prior IRM reports for [New Zealand](#), the [OGP National Handbook](#), [OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#), and IRM guidance on [the minimum requirements](#). Section 1 offers guidance for OGP processes and co-creation and Section 2 for commitment design. Government and civil society can determine the extent to which this brief is used to shape the next action plan's trajectory and content.

Since joining OGP in 2013, New Zealand has implemented four OGP action plans. New Zealand began [co-creation of its newest OGP action plan](#) in September 2025. This Co-Creation Brief takes into account that the Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (PSC) has already set out its timeline and activities to develop the next action plan as well as the overall and thematic scope for action plan commitments. Therefore, this Co-Creation Brief focuses its recommendations on enhancing already-planned activities as part of the action plan development process made available online. The brief later highlights thematic areas that could be explored and developed into commitments, based on the PSC Action Plan to Strengthen Integrity 2025-2028 and New Zealand's previous OGP action plan commitments.

Section I: Action Plan Co-Creation

The following recommendations present opportunities for national reformers to strengthen OGP institutions and processes in the country. They take into consideration that this Co-Creation Brief is being presented after the start of the action plan development process.

Recommendation 1. Renew a Space for Ongoing Dialogue on Open Government

During the previous cycle, the OGP process was impacted by communication breakdown between government and civil society stakeholders, as well as by more limited resourcing. To meet the minimum requirements of Standard 1 of the [OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#), the Public Service Commission | Te Kawa Mataaho (PSC) will need to form a new multi-stakeholder space for dialogue with civil society and government representation. Learning from previous experience, it could be built and structured based on the outcomes of upcoming co-creation workshops with civil society and the [2024 Allen & Clarke assessment](#), commissioned by the PSC.

Ultimately, the space for dialogue aims to ensure shared understanding and oversight of the OGP process, reforms and outcomes, which can build stronger relationships between civil society and government members. The [OGP handbook on designing and managing OGP multi-stakeholder forums](#) offers useful guidance, including the variety of formats and structures, formal and informal that maybe considered for establishing such a space.

Recommendation 2. Ensure Interested Stakeholders are Clear About the Scope of their Engagement

New Zealand's action plan development process already planned an online information session to answer questions about the process and how to get involved. This seeks to encourage interested individuals or organisations, including those without prior knowledge of the process for developing an open government action plan, to participate in the upcoming workshops to co-create commitments.

PSC has also outlined clear focus areas within its integrity plan that are to be the basis for discussion during these workshops. Knowing this, PSC could proactively reach out to organisations, experts and individuals from outside government working on these themes to participate. As well as new stakeholders, involving those with already-established relationships may help to ensure productive and constructive discussions to develop commitments. In doing so, PSC will need to be clear that the scope of engagement is looking at how best to align the OGP national action plan with the integrity plan to enhance policy design or implementation. This may mean incorporating elements of transparency, accountability and public participation and/or by strengthening government-civil society relationships throughout implementation.

Section II: Action Plan Design

The following recommendations offer policy areas for national actors to consider in the next action plan, based on the Public Service Commission | Te Kawa Mataaho Action Plan to Strengthen Integrity 2025-2028. They may represent opportunities for new commitments to address issues of national importance or to advance existing reforms or previous action plan commitments.

Area 1. Lobbying Transparency

A focus area of the Public Service Commission | Te Kawa Mataaho (PSC) Action Plan to Strengthen Integrity 2025-2028 addresses improving conflict of interest identification and management. It includes a potential option for action that has yet to be fully scoped on strengthening transparency around lobbying/‘revolving doors’ for senior public service leaders. PSC and the Ministry of Justice could therefore leverage the fifth OGP action plan to strengthen transparency around lobbying and revolving doors for Ministers and their staff.

In New Zealand, regulation of lobbying activities has lagged compared to [other OECD members](#). Some OECD members have leveraged their OGP action plans to improve the transparency of lobbying. For example, a commitment in Estonia, led to the government to proactively publish quarterly data on lobbying meetings with ministers and high-level public officials. France has required the registration of lobbyists on a portal that is updated annually and in an open data format as part of a longer process to increase lobbying transparency. Reformers could draw on lessons from [Ireland](#), which used its OGP process to review and amend the country’s lobbying law.

A future ambitious commitment could [launch](#) an online lobbying register, that is publicly accessible and searchable, along with a mandatory code of conduct for lobbyists. A commitment could also establish a cooling off period to slow the revolving door between government and lobbying. These actions could be supported by introducing regulation and a commission responsible for enforcement. OGP’s [Open Gov Guide provides multiple resources on lobbying](#) regulation and transparency.

Area 2. Whistleblower Protection

New Zealand became one of the first countries with a whistleblower protection law in 2000, and passed a [new law in 2022](#). This was a critical step for good governance, with a significant increase in protected disclosures and enquiries over the following two years. Still, in 2024, a [Chief Ombudsman survey](#) found that less than half of people who had witnessed serious wrongdoing at work made a protected disclosure.

The PSC integrity plan’s focus on simplifying and improving complaints management identifies the potential for a policy review of the Protected Disclosures (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022 and related practices. The Commission could leverage the fifth OGP action plan to address this point. [Spain](#), [the Republic of Korea](#), and [Italy](#) are examples

of other OGP members that have used their action plans to strengthen whistleblower protections.

A future commitment could [support](#) every public sector agency to establish a clear internal whistleblowing policy, promote a work culture that normalises reporting wrongdoing, ensure protection of whistleblowers' identities, and provide disciplinary consequences for any reprisal against whistleblowers. It could also help agencies establish multiple reporting channels, including an independent third-party hotline.

Area 3. Beneficial Ownership Transparency

New Zealand's previous action plan undertook the country's first OGP [commitment on beneficial ownership transparency](#). As this was not completed, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and the Ministry of Justice could carry the effort forward to the next action plan.

However, the PSC integrity plan identifies the potential for scoping out policy options for re-starting work to implement a beneficial ownership register. A particularly ambitious commitment could launch a beneficial ownership register, along with a verification system. The register could publish interoperable information by applying the [Beneficial Ownership Data Standard](#). During design of the register, public input could help ensure that it benefits businesses and the public. The commitment could also include steps to encourage CSOs and the public to use beneficial ownership information to draw government attention to issues of concern. This could make use of lessons from [Canada](#), [Indonesia](#), and [Armenia](#), which offer different approaches to leveraging OGP to launch beneficial ownership registers, as well as [Open Gov Guide resources on beneficial ownership](#).

Area 4. Algorithmic Transparency

One focus of New Zealand's previous two action plans was [implementation of the Algorithm Charter](#). The value of algorithmic transparency has only grown, as 70 agencies reported 272 AI use cases in a June 2025 [cross-agency survey](#). As a next step, the fifth action plan could include a commitment led by the Government Chief Digital Officer to proactively provide the public with greater access to information on government algorithm usage. This could create a publicly accessible [register](#) on which all agencies publish up-to-date information on their GenAI and algorithm usage, including evaluations of their performance and their potential impact on equity. The commitment could widen the public and civil society's role in oversight of government GenAI and algorithm usage. New Zealand's [Responsible AI Guidance for the Public Service](#) also notes that this type of algorithmic transparency could help government agencies connect with each other on how GenAI is being used. This effort could draw on [Open Gov Guide resources](#) and the [OGP Open Algorithms Network](#), with the [United Kingdom](#), [Scotland](#), [Chile](#), and [Uruguay](#) offering different approaches to algorithmic transparency registers.

Area 5. Open Contracting

Commitments on procurement transparency were featured in New Zealand's previous two action plans. This remains a pressing issue, as most of New Zealand's government procurement is not publicly accessible through the Government Electronic Tender Service.

However, [a new platform under development](#) has the potential to expand the publication of government procurement information. A commitment led by the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment in the next action plan could raise the ambition of this reform effort by significantly widening release of government procurement information. This could include procurement through a panel of suppliers, all-of-government contracts, syndicated contracts, and common capability contracts. Collaboration with civil society partners could ensure that data releases benefit businesses and anti-corruption oversight by the public. The [guide on drafting open contracting commitments](#) and related [Open Gov Guide resources](#) may offer a useful reference for reformers.

The brief was reviewed by IRM senior staff for consistency, accuracy, and with a view to maximize the context-relevance and actionability of the recommendations. Where appropriate, external reviewers or members of the IRM International Experts Panel (IEP) review briefs.