

Independent Reporting Mechanism

United Kingdom Co-Creation
Brief 2026

Open
Government
Partnership



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Overview

This brief from the OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) supports the co-creation process and design of the United Kingdom (UK)'s seventh National Action Plan (NAP). It provides an overview of NAP 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 the UK](#), the [OGP National Handbook](#), [OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#), and IRM guidance on [the minimum requirements](#). Section 1 offers guidance for NAP 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 NAP's trajectory and content.

The co-creation process for the [UK's sixth NAP](#) had improved organisation and higher quality of government-civil society dialogue compared to the previous plan. The Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office participated in the multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) meeting where stakeholders selected the commitments to take forward. This underscores the UK government's dedication to collaboration and fostering a more informed decision-making process. The process benefited from significant civil society and government time and expertise. However, limited resourcing across government-civil society partnership constrained the scale and consistency of wider outreach. Recently, the UK Open Government Network (UK OGN) was [awarded](#) a grant from the OGP Helen Darbishire Fund for Civil Society to "coordinate civil society input for the seventh action plan, secure sustainable funding, and build a "network-of-networks" to ensure broad, inclusive participation across all UK nations."

For the seventh NAP, the Cabinet Office and the UK OGN can build on the momentum from the sixth NAP. For the co-creation process, the IRM recommends the following steps:

- Continue good practices in providing reasoned response to stakeholders and publishing information on NAP co-creation and implementation.
- Use the seventh NAP to create a strong foundation for the UK's co-chairing of OGP, both domestically and internationally.
- Use the NAP co-creation and implementation as trailblazers for OGP's refreshed Action Framework.

Section I: Action Plan Co-Creation

The following recommendations present opportunities for national reformers to strengthen OGP institutions and processes in the country.

Recommendation 1. Continue good practices in providing reasoned response to stakeholders and publishing information on NAP co-creation and implementation.

During the co-creation process of the sixth NAP, the Cabinet Office and the UK OGN organised an [Open Gov Meetup](#), where almost 50 representatives from civil society attended to receive explanations on how commitment decisions were made. Additionally, stakeholders who submitted ideas received a personalised email from the UK OGN, in which the Chair informed them whether or how their suggestions were incorporated. This personalised feedback and proactive communication marked a substantial improvement to the [fifth NAP](#) and fostered greater transparency and trust between the government and civil society. For the seventh NAP, the Cabinet Office and the UK OGN could continue the good work providing a reasoned response and ensuring ongoing dialogue between government and non-governmental stakeholders during co-creation of the NAP.

During the co-creation process of the sixth NAP, the [UK OGN's website](#) served as the UK's OGP online repository. The UK OGN website is maintained through a largely volunteer-led model, which can limit the speed of updates during peak periods. The Cabinet Office is also [publishing](#) on GOV.UK official information and documents pertaining to the UK's NAP process. For the seventh NAP, the Cabinet Office and the UK OGN could continue publishing official announcements, information, and documents about the UK's NAP process on both websites (GOV.UK and the UK OGN). The Cabinet Office and the UK OGN could also continue to publish this information on their social media platforms.

Recommendation 2. Use the seventh NAP to create a strong foundation for the UK's co-chairing of OGP, both domestically and internationally.

As the incoming co-chair of OGP, the UK could include ambitious commitments that have both domestic and international dimensions and can resonate across OGP. Towards this aim, the UK could include commitments that are also Open Government Challenges (OGCs), building on the UK's [OGC submission on open contracting](#), which won an Open Gov Award. For example, [Spain's 2025-2029 action plan](#) includes seven OGCs submissions (including two from regional governments). Internationally, it will be important to involve the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) in the co-creation process to ensure a strong link to co-chairing and the international dimension of commitments (building on previous FCDO commitments in UK NAPs).

Recommendation 3. Use the NAP co-creation and implementation as trailblazers for OGP's refreshed Action Framework.

The UK government has taken a leading role in [OGP's Action Framework review](#). The co-creation and implementation for the seventh NAP offers the UK an opportunity to make use of the new flexibilities within the action framework. The UK could develop an initial set of commitments and then add others on timelines that align with relevant policy cycles.

Section II: Action Plan Design

The following recommendations offer policy areas for national actors to consider in the next action plan. They may represent opportunities for new commitments to address issues of national importance or to advance existing reforms.

Area 1. Open contracting

The UK has used past OGP NAPs to strengthen its position as a global leader in public procurement transparency. The sixth NAP included a commitment to implement the Procurement Act 2023 (which took effect in February 2025), develop secondary legislation for the Procurement Act, launch a “Learning and Development Programme” procurement, develop a civil society community of practice, and develop strategies for data use. This commitment was expanded through a standalone Open Government Challenge commitment, which [won](#) an Open Gov Award. The Cabinet Office has developed a [National Procurement Policy Statement](#) that lays out the government’s wider strategic priorities for public procurement and how contracting authorities could support their delivery. It has also established the Procurement Review Unit to oversee the implementation of the Procurement Act.

For the seventh NAP, the Cabinet Office (through the Procurement Review Unit) and the Open Contracting Advisory Group could continue to support the implementation of the Procurement Act. This could involve activities to support the monitoring of data published to the [Central Digital Platform](#). Reformers could address the [recommendations](#) from the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP) to allow searching by IDs on the Central Digital Platform and displaying details from the notices across different phases of a procurement together. Reformers could also support devolved and local levels of government to encourage their engagement in open contracting, recognising that effective data use and strategy implementation will require the involvement of a wide range of public bodies.

Area 2. International illicit finance and beneficial ownership transparency

The UK continues to lead in the global fight to uncover international kleptocratic wealth. The sixth NAP included a commitment to involve civil society in the [UK Anti-Corruption Strategy](#) and to support civil society involvement in the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). It also committed to strengthen the Implementation Review Mechanism of the UNCAC as the foundational global treaty in combating corruption. In the fifth NAP, the UK continued to support the development of public registers of company beneficial ownership, particularly in Africa and in British Overseas Territories.

The UK is [planning](#) to host an international Summit on Countering Illicit Finance in 2026. The UK government and civil society could use this summit to reinvigorate and harmonise global transparency and anti-corruption efforts, building on the experience from hosting the 2016 London Anti-Corruption Summit. They could also leverage the UK’s co-chairing

of OGP, which commences on 1 October 2026, to encourage OGP members to deliver their reform ideas and promises at the Summit through their respective OGP commitments and provide support or convene a community of practice among those fulfilling these commitments.

In the seventh NAP, the UK could commit to implement the results of this summit, including declarations and communiqués. To foster coherence between national action and foreign policy, the UK could take the lead in making beneficial ownership transparency a global norm by supporting the inclusion of these reforms in OGP NAPs and as [Open Government Challenges](#). Domestically, the NAP could advance the provisions in the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023 and the implementation of the new Anti-Corruption Strategy. For example, by the end of 2026, Companies House is [expected](#) to require all limited partnerships to submit more beneficial ownership information, complete the transition for all individuals on the beneficial ownership register requiring identity verification, enforce compliance activity against those who have failed to verify their identity, and facilitate cross-checking of information and data between Companies House and other public and private sector bodies.

Area 3. Public participation

The [OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions](#) has found that people having a sense of agency over decision-making is the most important driver of public trust in government. In the seventh NAP, the UK government and civil society could explore commitments on strengthening public participation. Possible areas of focus could be:

- Leveraging the cross-government [Participatory Methods Forum](#) to identify and implement actions that embed public participation skills and practices across the civil service. The government could take into consideration the recommendations in [Demos and Involve's Citizens' White Paper](#) from 2024.
- Exploring how to apply a structural approach to public participation for one or more of the [government's core missions](#), such as kickstarting economic growth, a National Health Service fit for the future, safer streets, opportunity for all, and clean energy. For example, the UK could integrate public participation in the [2025 Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) to ensure community input in identifying and driving solutions to the undersupply of affordable housing.
- Using the UK's co-chairing of the new OGP Participation Action Group (together with France) to prioritise and drive progress on this topic, both in Europe and globally. As the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) participates in this group, the UK could focus on designing ways to improve participation in housing, local community development, and local government.

Area 4. Digital governance and artificial intelligence

During the fifth NAP, the UK government carried out activities supporting the [Algorithmic Transparency Recording Standard](#) and the [Data Protection and Digital Information Bill](#)

[2022-2023](#). The Central Digital and Data Office (now part of the Government Digital Service) and Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation also [published](#) the UK's first [algorithmic transparency](#) reports in June 2022. The sixth NAP did not include commitments on digital governance but [noted](#) this topic might be pursued in the next plan. Outside of OGP, the UK government has also implemented a cross-government [2022 to 2025 Roadmap for Digital and Data](#).

In the seventh NAP, the UK government could pursue commitments on digital governance, particularly the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the public sector. One area of focus could be ensuring that all algorithms used by government departments are published to the UK's [mandatory algorithms register](#). The UK could also consider embedding transparency and participatory practices in AI procurement in public services, such as [establishing](#) a multi-stakeholder oversight group to advise and report on AI procurement. The UK government could also conduct consultations with the public to inform the design and pilot stages of technology that affects them (such as algorithms used in automated decision-making systems). These consultations could target vulnerable communities, who tend to experience negative impacts from data collection and technology use. This could build on the [research](#) commissioned by the Department for Transport in 2023, exploring public perception of the use of AI in consultations and correspondence.

Lastly, the UK government could use the NAP to strengthen its position as a global leader in digital governance. Domestic commitments could align closely with the UK's international engagement in this area, such as its membership in OGP's [Open Algorithms Network](#) as well as the FCDO's support to digital governance reforms in OGP countries under the [Digital Development Strategy 2024-2030](#).

Area 5. Political integrity and standards in public life

The topic of ethics standards in the political system has garnered [strong interest](#) from civil society, particularly during the co-creation of the fifth NAP. The UK government has taken steps since the 2024 general election to improve ethics and standards in public life. For example, the government has published a [new Ministerial Code](#), with independent advisers able to initiate investigations and a monthly register of gifts and hospitality. It has also published [new rules on ministerial severance](#) and launched a [new Ethics and Integrity Commission](#). However, the UK government has yet to implement some commitments, such as passing an elections bill that would tighten regulation of political donations. Moreover, in October 2025, Transparency International (TI) UK [assessed](#) that the government has implemented only two of the twenty-eight recommendations by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) from 2021.

In the seventh NAP, the UK government could focus on implementing the remaining CSPL recommendations. For example, TI UK noted in its assessment that no progress has been made on CSPL recommendations to broaden the remit of the lobbying register and tighten the business appointment rules. Possible OGP commitments could include

requiring lobbyists to disclose the ultimate person paying for, or benefitting from, their lobbying and broadening the definition of an official meeting for reporting purposes to include more informal communications.

The UK government could also consider aligning future requirements and regulations with the [Standards for Integrity in Political Finance](#) published by Transparency International in 2024 and [OGP recommendations](#) on how members can counter covert foreign political finance. Building on its previous success with beneficial ownership reform, the UK government could publish the beneficial ownership declaration of political donors or facilitate a link to this information in the Companies House register from the report entry on the Electoral Commission's database.

Area 6. Freedom of information

During the fifth NAP, the Information Rights User Group was established to improve public authorities' [compliance with the Freedom of Information \(FOI\) Act](#). The user group includes civil society representatives, media representatives, the National Association of Data Protection and FOI Officers, academic and think tanks, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and senior members from the Cabinet Office. However, the UK did not include a commitment on FOI in the sixth NAP.

For the seventh NAP, civil society and the ICO could reinvigorate the FOI user group and explore potential commitments on the topic. This could entail fulfilling the government's [manifesto](#) commitment to extend FOI requirements to private contractors. The UK government could also explore ways of shifting from reactive to proactive disclosure, possibly by joining OGP's new [Proactive Disclosure Coalition](#) (led by the Netherlands and the OECD).

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