Final Learning Exercise Summary Report

Villanueva Cortés, Honduras Action Plan 2025-2026

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Section I: Open Government in Context

The municipality of Villanueva, Cortés, developed its first Open Government Action Plan in a context of population growth and urban expansion, with high demand for public services, especially in solid waste management, access to information, and citizen participation. At the institutional level, the municipality promoted administrative modernization processes, strengthened transparency practices, and created new units and coordination spaces, generating favorable conditions to advance open government commitments with a participatory and multi-stakeholder approach.

From a socioeconomic perspective, one of the main factors affecting implementation was limited municipal revenue collection, which led to budget constraints and operational delays in some activities and procurements. Gaps were also identified in civic culture, regulatory compliance, and sustained citizen participation in social oversight spaces. These factors affected implementation timelines but were addressed through prioritization of strategic actions, optimization of available resources, rescheduling of activities, and strengthened community awareness and education campaigns.

In the political–institutional sphere, the plan was implemented with the support of local authorities and collaboration with social actors, community boards, the education sector, and civic organizations through assemblies, technical roundtables, and transparency fairs. This

openness to dialogue and collaboration helped sustain progress on the commitments despite financial and administrative limitations, and enabled the consolidation of initial practices in transparency, participation, and accountability that provide a foundation for future action plans.

Section II: Action Plan Co-Creation Process

The co-creation process of the first Action Plan represented a significant challenge for the municipality, as it was the first experience developing a plan under the Open Government approach, and there was limited prior knowledge of the methodology. Despite this, a key strength was the continuous support provided by OGP Local and the Secretariat of Transparency, which offered technical guidance at every stage of the process, enabling orderly progress in line with established guidelines.
One of the main challenges was conducting the co-creation process with civil society actors who had basic knowledge or limited formal education. Initially, many community boards focused their requests on specific needs such as road repairs, street lighting, or local assistance. However, through dialogue and collective reflection, the perspective broadened toward higher-impact issues, such as solid waste collection and treatment. This shift led to the formulation of a commitment with municipality-wide benefits and a positive impact on many families.

Another important challenge was keeping citizens consistently informed and engaged, while promoting consultation and accountability. From this effort emerged a second commitment focused on strengthening institutional communication through virtual platforms, facilitating access to information on municipal programs, benefits, and citizen participation mechanisms.

The process was marked by good attendance and active participation in the selection of the forum and committee, demonstrating citizen interest and enthusiasm in being part of a new way of governing. The municipality met the minimum co-creation requirements by issuing timely invitations through physical and digital channels, convening organized local groups, ensuring a democratic committee selection process, and incorporating civil society ideas and suggestions.

Finally, a notable good practice was the use of technical roundtables where each participant could present the municipality's main problems, enabling collective prioritization of the most impactful issues. Although all stakeholders contributed valuable ideas, the main challenge was moving from a focus on small, localized problems toward a shared understanding of structural issues affecting the entire population, thereby strengthening the quality of collaboration among stakeholders.

Recommendations for the Co-Creation Process

1. **Strengthen civil society capacities from the start of the process** by organizing simple and practical training sessions on Open Government, citizen rights, and the scope of

action plans, using clear language, local examples, and participatory activities that facilitate understanding and engagement of people with different educational backgrounds.

2. **Guide problem identification toward municipal impact approaches**, helping participants move from specific demands to structural issues through tools such as brainstorming, collective prioritization, and impact analysis, as was done in the technical working groups, which enabled the identification of broader commitments.
3. **Use continuous communication and follow-up mechanisms**, establishing permanent digital and in-person channels to inform about progress, benefits, and municipal programs, as well as periodic consultation and accountability spaces that keep citizens informed and engaged throughout the process.
4. **Expand and diversify the participation of key actors**, ensuring early and active inclusion of traditionally less-involved sectors, such as youth, women, micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MiPYMES), and rural communities, through targeted calls and partnerships with local organizations that facilitate their effective participation.
5. **Institutionalize co-creation best practices** by formalizing the use of technical working groups, participatory methodologies, and clear criteria for selecting commitments, so that these approaches are permanently integrated into future municipal planning processes and do not rely solely on individual initiatives.

Section III: Action Plan Commitments

The implementation of the commitments demonstrated substantial to full compliance, with the achievement of most planned milestones and the generation of both institutional and operational results. Among the most notable advances were, on one hand, the strengthening of solid waste management through the creation of the UGIRRSS, the expansion of service coverage, the elimination of illegal dumps, and environmental education processes; and on the other hand, the redesign of the municipal website, the activation of the Open Government module, the creation of the official WhatsApp channel, and the participatory development of the Citizen Manual and usage protocols. Together, these outputs established a technical, technological, and institutional foundation for transparency and the improvement of public services.

As a result, access to information, public communication, and citizen interaction improved significantly. Web sections, direct contact mechanisms, and dissemination campaigns on plans, budgets, projects, collection routes, and environmental regulations were expanded. Likewise, in-person accountability and dialogue spaces were strengthened through assemblies, technical working groups, community sessions, and Open Government and transparency fairs, which increased the availability, usefulness, and practical value of public information for citizen decision-making.

The main challenges affecting implementation were internal and common to both commitments: financial limitations due to low municipal revenue, administrative delays, and

slow information delivery by certain departments, as well as low initial participation from some citizen sectors and a weak culture of regulatory compliance. These barriers impacted the timing and scope of some activities but were mitigated through rescheduling, prioritizing critical actions, optimizing resources, increasing interdepartmental coordination, and awareness and training campaigns.

In terms of design, the commitments were appropriately formulated in relation to the identified public problems and combined technological tools, participatory processes, and institutional instruments, allowing for adjustments during implementation without losing strategic focus. Overall, the plan achieved the desired results in transparency, participation, access to information, and accountability, and incorporated cross-cutting approaches such as children's rights and environmental co-responsibility. Thus, the action plan directly contributed to the municipal Open Government's strategic vision and established sustainable capacities, channels, and practices for its further development in the next cycle.

Recommendations for Commitment 1

- Continue and scale Commitment 1 in the next action plan, consolidating the digital tools created (website, Open Government module, WhatsApp channel, and Citizen Manual) and expanding them with new functionalities, including project-tracking dashboards, downloadable open data, and periodic progress reports, to increase citizen use and impact.
- Incorporate clear follow-up and sustainability requirements, defining responsible parties by department, content update schedules, usage indicators (visits, requests, responses), and quarterly public reports to ensure that transparency and participation channels remain active and useful.
- Strengthen financial and operational planning from the design stage, including cost estimates, funding sources, and realistic timelines, as well as internal agreements for information flow between departments, to reduce delays caused by late payments or delayed delivery of technical inputs.
- Deepen the participatory and co-creation component, moving from consultation to more direct collaboration: permanent citizen follow-up committees, pilot testing with users of the digital tools, and continuous feedback mechanisms that inform adjustments to commitments during implementation.
- Increase the ambition and impact of future commitments by integrating outcome-based goals (not just outputs), for example: measurable improvements in response times to requests, increased citizen participation, and greater traceability of budgets and projects. Additionally, align commitments with municipal strategic priorities and OGP challenges to maximize their reach.

Recommendations for Commitment 2

- **Continue and scale the commitment in the next action plan**, incorporating a second phase focused on final waste disposal, recycling, and valorization, with more ambitious and measurable targets (coverage, reduction of illegal dumps, source

separation), ensuring integration with the Open Government agenda and citizen oversight.

- **Strengthen the financial and sustainability components by linking the commitment to strategies for improved revenue collection, tax culture, and co-financing schemes or partnerships with the private sector and donors** to reduce the risk of delays due to budget limitations.
- **Institutionalize permanent participation and citizen oversight mechanisms** by creating or consolidating community waste and environmental monitoring committees, with clear roles, regular access to information, and digital channels (website and WhatsApp) for reporting, complaints, and public tracking of indicators.
- **Improve the monitoring and evaluation system** by defining clear output and outcome indicators, public progress dashboards, quarterly reports, and responsible parties for each milestone to ensure traceability, continuous learning, and accountability in solid waste management.
- **Deepen the education and behavior change strategy** by expanding programs such as Environmental Guardians, ordinance compliance campaigns, and community training, integrating a rights-based approach, incentivizing good practices, and coordinating with schools and local boards to achieve sustained impact.

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