

## Civil Society Steering Committee (CS SC)

Bi-Monthly Call | 11 June 2026

8:00–9:30 ET

### Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:** Anabel Cruz, Blair Glencorse, Katerina Hadzi-Miceva Evans, Maira Martini, Steph Muchai, Laura Neuman, Doug Rutzen, Barbara Schreiner, OGP Support Unit (SU) [Aidan Eyakuze, Paul Maassen, Jaime Mercado, Rowan Sockwell]

**Apologies:** Natalia Carfi, Zuki Kota, Cielo Magno

#### 1. Mobilizing the Steering Committee through the Incoming Co-Chairs (40 min)

- a. The CS SC recapped its [April 16 discussion](#) of the cohort recommendations paper, which outlines a range of strategic, operational, and relational issues shaping how the SC operates.

Members agreed to prioritize action-oriented suggestions stemming from the paper, including a proposal to set up a mentor system to help orient new CS SC members. New members will be paired with mentors on the CS SC to help them better understand OGP's governance structures, operating procedures, and items that come before the SC.

- b. **Next steps:** 1. The CS SC co-chairs will pair new CS SC members with mentors from the group. 2. The SU will continue to move forward on agreed action items from the paper, e.g. systematizing document-sharing with the CS SC and synergizing operations between the OGP Board of Directors and SC.
- c. **Incoming Co-Chair Priorities:** Incoming Civil Society Co-Chair, Laura Neuman, presented her (and the Government of the United Kingdom's) emerging priorities for their co-chair year beginning on October 1, 2026. Their co-chair agenda will support OGP's Strategy and build on the Government of Brazil and Steph Muchai's current co-chair agenda. The Incoming chairs will also prioritize strengthening the Partnership during their tenure, including reviewing governance structures to ensure they remain fit for purpose, advancing the strategic leadership of the SC, and further mobilizing Ministries of Foreign Affairs in OGP.
- d. CS SC members provided feedback on the emerging priorities, and particularly on the framing of thematic areas in the co-chair agenda:
  - i. Members suggested including civic space as a stand-alone issue in the agenda with concrete action items, rather than having it in the chapeaux as a foundational element. Additionally, members emphasized that civic space should be framed separately from public participation.
  - ii. Members suggested a framing of combatting "democratic backsliding," rather than building "trust in democracy."

- iii. Members encouraged embedding the co-chair priorities in other ways/structures beyond just the co-chair agenda in order to ensure maximum impact.
- iv. **Next steps:** 1. Laura will further consult CS SC members on their suggestions via circular. 2. Laura and the Government of the United Kingdom will further develop their priorities and co-chair agenda, and will present their emerging plans on the upcoming full SC June 23 call.

## 2. Co-Chair Selection (25 min) [decisional]

- a. **Context:** Building on OGP's 15th anniversary in 2026, strong SC leadership will be critical to guide externally focused years centered on high-level political engagement and global visibility in '27 and '28. The new incoming Civil Society Co-Chair will play a central role in driving progress from OGP@15, and laying the groundwork for OGP's next strategy, alongside Laura as the new Lead Chair for 2026-27, and the government co-chairs in the Leadership Troika.
- b. **Discussion:** The CS SC discussed a proposed approach for the selection of the next Civil Society Incoming Co-Chair based on the agreed process from the 2025 cycle. Members discussed the roles and responsibilities, desired qualifications, and time and resources for the role.
- c. **Decision and Next Steps:** The CS SC agreed on the approach and timeline for the selection of the next Civil Society Incoming Co-Chair: CS SC candidates may self-nominate by **sending a letter of interest to the CS chairs and SU by September 4**, outlining their vision for OGP leadership. In September, the CS SC will meet to select the next Incoming Co-Chair by consensus.

## 3. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Engagement (20 min)

- a. OGP is launching an MFA initiative to create a light-touch, voluntary, peer-based space designed to extend OGP's value-add into diplomatic and multilateral spaces. The initiative will consist of quarterly updates complemented by two virtual briefings in 2026. CS SC members with experience engaging MFAs in other fora are invited to participate.
- b. Members discussed how they can leverage their connections to activate MFA participation in the new initiative. Members also shared recommendations for how the SU can best engage MFAs through briefings and newsletters:
  - i. It is critical to differentiate areas of interest between OGP Government points of contact and MFAs; a focus on multilateralism, transnational issues, and development cooperation will be more meaningful to MFA liaisons than purely domestic issues.
  - ii. OGP's MFA initiative should engage a broad ideological coalition and should tap into existing partnerships. Regional OGP leaders, such as the SC co-chairs, may be able to activate their peer MFAs to participate.
- c. **Next steps:** 1. The SU will include all CS SC members in the MFA Initiative newsletter. 2. The SU will invite the CS SC to the first MFA call, taking place in early September.

4. **AOB - 5 mins**

- a. CS SC members shared upcoming events they plan to attend, including the Hamberg Sustainability Forum (June 29-30).