



OGP
LOCAL
Handbook

Open
Government
Partnership



Table of Contents

Preface	3
1. How to Join OGP Local	3
1.1. Eligibility Criteria	3
1.2 Application Process	4
2. Roles and Responsibilities in OGP Local	5
2.1 The OGP Local Government Point of Contact	5
2.2 Civil Society Organizations and other Non-Governmental Stakeholders	6
2.3 The Local Monitoring Body	7
2.4 The OGP Support Unit	7
3. Action Plan Cycle	8
3.1 Orientation Program and Initial Planning	8
3.2 The Action Plan	8
3.2.1 Format and Contents	9
3.2.1.1 The Local Open Government Strategic Vision	9
3.2.1.2 Commitments	10
3.2.1.3 Modifying Commitments	10
3.3 Co-Creation of the Action Plan	11
3.3.1 Requirements	11
3.3.2 Recommended Practice	12
3.4 Joint Action Plans	13
3.5 Monitoring, Reporting and Learning	14
3.5.1 Inception Assessment	15
3.5.2 End-of-Commitment Assessment	15
3.5.3 Final Learning Exercise	15
3.5.4 Commitment Progress Tracker	16
4. Inactivity and Acting Contrary to Process	17
4.1 Inactivity	17
4.2 Acting Contrary to Process	17
Annexes	18



Preface

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) brings together governments, citizens, civil society organizations, academia and the private sector to promote more transparent, accountable, responsive and inclusive governance. OGP achieves this vision by recognizing the key role that local governments play by being closer to the people they serve. Cities, states, regions, provinces, counties and other jurisdictions deliver crucial services that require effective and responsive local governments. That is why OGP seeks to support local open government champions to adopt innovative open government reforms. It is increasingly clear that collaboration, transparency, and citizen participation are fundamental pillars for any modern, responsive and agile government.

This handbook contains the rules for joining and participating in OGP Local. It applies to local jurisdictions that have been accepted to be a member of OGP Local. Jurisdictions not in OGP Local can participate in their national OGP process, which is regulated by the [OGP National Handbook](#) or apply for OGP Local when OGP launches a call for applications.

1. How to Join OGP Local

Any local jurisdiction from a current OGP member country in good standing can apply to join OGP Local. There is no population threshold, nor is there a limit to the number of local members from the same OGP country that can join OGP Local. In order to become a member, local jurisdictions must meet the eligibility criteria and submit a Letter of Support.

The calls for applications to join OGP Local will be announced by the OGP Support Unit on a periodic basis.

1.1 Eligibility Criteria

A minimum set of eligibility criteria is required to join OGP Local to ensure adequate conditions for developing and implementing an action plan.

The following presents the eligibility criteria for becoming an OGP Local member:

- Commitment of political leader(s) as evidenced in the Letter of Support (LOS) from the head of local government and commitment of the non-governmental stakeholder leader(s).
- Track record on open government or co-creation with non-governmental stakeholders in at least one open government reform or successful example of co-creation in the past three years. This can include participation in national open government initiatives.
- At least 16 months left in the term of the current [local government] administration to ensure it can participate and conclude the action plan process without interruptions.
- Demonstrable ambition of future directions of open government action in the jurisdiction and their alignment with OGP's strategic and thematic priorities, especially as it relates to engagement of citizens in shaping and overseeing policies and services.
- Existing capacity and resources for co-creation and implementation, including identified staff in government and identified civil society/non-government counterpart(s).
- Clarity on available mechanisms for co-creation and monitoring.
- Clarity of value proposition or benefit for the jurisdiction in joining OGP.
- Willingness to participate in peer learning and sharing experiences with other OGP Local members.



1.2 Application Process

The OGP Support Unit will announce periodic calls for new members to join OGP Local, at which time the details of the process and timelines will be published. During open calls for new members, a local government that meets eligibility criteria and wants to join OGP must submit a Letter of Support (LOS). This LOS should be three (3) pages maximum on the local government's letterhead, in English, supporting the application of their jurisdiction and committing to meeting OGP values and the above criteria. It must be signed by the head of the local government or a senior official with delegated authority, and at least one (1) non-governmental stakeholder¹ willing to support and be part of the OGP Local process.

The Letter of Support must address:

1. A commitment to meet the [OGP Values](#) and criteria as described above.
2. A clear description of the value proposition or benefit for the local jurisdiction in joining OGP Local.
3. Ambition of future directions of open government action, including priority thematic areas the local jurisdiction wishes to advance and their alignment with OGP's strategic and thematic priorities, especially as it relates to engagement of citizens in shaping and overseeing policies and services.
4. Capacity and resources for co-creation and implementation, including the identification of a responsible agency in government and the main non-governmental stakeholders supporting the application.
5. Track record on open government or co-creation with non-governmental stakeholders, highlighting at least one open government reform or successful example of public policy co-creation in the past three years.
6. Thematic policy areas where they can contribute good practices and lessons for other members of OGP Local.
7. Willingness to participate in peer learning and sharing experiences with other OGP Local members in their respective countries and thematic circles.
8. Details of how they can help spread the practice of open local government amongst other locals in their jurisdictions.

The Letters of Support will be assessed by the Support Unit based on the criteria outlined above. In addition, other factors will be considered to ensure a diverse cohort, such as regional balance, type of jurisdiction and population size, as well as different strengths to complement the overall objectives of OGP Local.

Specific guidance and examples will be provided by the Support Unit at the start of a call for new members.

Unsuccessful applicants will be invited to participate in the OGP Local community of practice, and will be connected to their country's OGP National coordination in order to explore further support, activities and learning opportunities.

¹ For the case of the application, the non-governmental stakeholder must have legal personality, e.g. a legally registered non-governmental organization or civil society organization.



2. Roles and Responsibilities in OGP Local

Being a member of OGP Local entails developing and implementing an action plan that is principally composed of a set of ambitious open government commitments. Each action plan must be co-created by government and non-governmental stakeholders, implemented, monitored and assessed. In addition, as part of the Partnership, government and stakeholders participate in peer exchanges and support activities nationally and internationally. The roles and responsibilities of the different actors during the action plan cycle is described below in more detail.

2.1 The OGP Local Government Point of Contact

Through the application to OGP Local, Governments must identify the lead agency and senior government official for the OGP agenda with delegated authority from the head of the local government to oversee the government's participation in OGP and a public official responsible for coordinating the local government's day-to-day OGP activities. OGP refers to the person responsible for coordinating the government's participation in OGP Local as a **Local Government Point of Contact (POC)**. The role is crucial and multidimensional; points of contact are at the forefront of transparency, participation, and accountability efforts for an OGP participating government.

The OGP Local Point of Contact responsibilities and activities include:

- **Stakeholder engagement:** Engage non-governmental stakeholders on an ongoing basis. This engagement includes ensuring the participation of non-governmental stakeholders ([see section 2.2](#)) during the different stages of the action plan cycle, starting with the development of the action plan up to its final assessment ([see section 3.2](#)).
- **Government coordination:** Work with other government agencies involved in relevant issues that emerge during the co-creation and implementation process.
- **Liaise with the OGP Support Unit:** Liaise with the OGP Local team to access the support offers which includes: an orientation program, connecting to peers and mentors, knowledge brokering on themes and issues, identifying international best practices for potential local application, and facilitating the participation of local stakeholders in OGP regional and global events.
- **Facilitate monitoring, evaluation and learning:** Carry out the mandated online tracking of progress and collect, publish, and document evidence (documents, recordings, images) of meeting the minimum requirements described in [section 3.3.1](#) for assessment purposes.
- **Participate in peer exchange activities:** Participation includes either providing support to colleagues in peer jurisdictions, including connecting to the relevant stakeholder within the jurisdiction or requesting opportunities for collaboration and knowledge exchange with peer jurisdictions or partner organizations.
- **Strengthening national/local integration:** The point of contact will coordinate the dialogue with their counterparts at the national level, this will provide opportunities for support, mentorship, learning exercises and events.
- **Participate in global OGP events and relevant regional events:** This requires informing senior local government officials about OGP events and activities and facilitating their participation and encouraging high-level attendance at regional events and global summits. It also includes supporting the participation of non-governmental stakeholders from the local jurisdiction in OGP events.



2.2 Civil Society Organizations and other Non-Governmental Stakeholders

The participation of both government and non-governmental stakeholders is essential to the success of the OGP. That is why participating governments commit to develop and implement their action plans through a multi-stakeholder process, with the active engagement of citizens and non-governmental stakeholders.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are a key stakeholder of the OGP process at the national and local level. They contribute with the technical expertise, human resources, and convening capacity to effectively ensure the OGP principle of co-creation and participation is fulfilled. In addition to civil society organizations, OGP Local seeks to broaden the engagement of other non-governmental stakeholders to capitalize on the proximity of local governments to citizens and other non-governmental groups. Examples of non-governmental stakeholders include: community organizations/groups, citizen councils/groups, citizen-led social movements, local chambers of commerce, universities, media councils, youth councils/groups, etc.

Civil society and other non-governmental stakeholder's responsibilities and activities include:

- **Raising awareness of the OGP process:** CSOs and other non-governmental stakeholders can support the government's efforts of broadening the knowledge of the OGP process to ensure participation and monitoring from citizens and the private sector. This can include sharing information about the action plan and its results with citizens groups and the media.
- **Advocating for specific commitments:** CSOs and non-governmental stakeholders can help identify and frame the problems that can be addressed through the action plan and promote specific policy actions to address these problems.
- **Contributing to the contents of the action plan:** This activity includes prioritizing, selecting and supporting the drafting of commitments to be included in the action plan and endorsing the final plan. It also includes coordinating with other non-governmental stakeholders to make their participation more impactful and navigating competing priorities.
- **Supporting implementation of commitments:** Some commitments may assign specific roles and activities to non-governmental actors in their implementation. This can be agreed as part of the co-creation of the commitments and will result in the active participation of the non-governmental actors in implementing a specific milestone or activity within a commitment.
- **Monitoring implementation of commitments:** CSOs and non-governmental stakeholders play an important role in holding the government accountable for their action plan implementation. In order to achieve this, they can monitor progress in the implementation of milestones and commitments, assessing progress and using the lessons and results of such assessments to advance improvements in the OGP Local process.
- **National/local dialogue:** CSOs are expected to engage with their counterparts involved in national OGP exercises in order to provide opportunities for support, mentorship, learning exercises and events.
- **Participating in peer exchange activities:** Participation includes either providing support to colleagues in peer jurisdictions, including connecting to the relevant stakeholder within the jurisdiction or requesting opportunities for collaboration and knowledge exchange with peer jurisdictions or partner organizations.
- **Participating in global OGP events and relevant regional events.**

OGP Local places particular emphasis on members to seek opportunities for direct citizen engagement and inclusion of marginalized groups, in addition to collaboration with civil society and other partners.



2.3 The OGP Local Monitoring Body

Accountability and learning are two main tenets of participating in OGP Local. Both tenets seek to promote the ambitious implementation of open government reforms. For this reason, local jurisdictions will have to select a Monitoring Body, which will independently evaluate and assess the co-creation process and the results achieved from the implementation of the commitments. The [Independent Reporting Mechanism \(IRM\)](#) will provide guidance to local jurisdictions in their monitoring and reporting process.

The OGP Local Monitoring Body responsibilities and activities include:

- **Collecting evidence and assessing the co-creation process of the action plan:** The Monitoring Body will be tasked with completing an online inception report, which will provide an assessment of the degree and quality of the co-creation process of an action plan.
- **Collecting evidence and assessing the results of completed commitments:** The Monitoring Body must assess each commitment once it is fully implemented. In order to do this, the mechanism must gather the evidence necessary to answer the questions provided by OGP in an online form.
- **Leading on the Final Learning Exercise:** At the end of the action plan, the Monitoring Body is responsible for carrying out and documenting a reflection and learning exercise. This exercise seeks to discuss with the stakeholders of the action plan what went well and what could be improved for the next action plan as it relates to the co-creation process (from the inception report) and the implementation of the commitments (from the individual commitment assessments).

The OGP Local Monitoring Body plays a key role in the local jurisdiction action plan process as it provides lessons, accountability and legitimacy to the process. For this reason, it must be a trusted and independent actor. Local monitoring bodies must, at a minimum, use the forms provided by OGP Local to conduct their reporting and are highly encouraged to use the guidance materials provided by OGP Local and the IRM to conduct their work.

2.4 The OGP Support Unit

The OGP Support Unit was created to provide guidance and support to governments and non-governmental stakeholders on how to most effectively participate in OGP. The Support Unit aims to ensure that high-quality direction and information is available to OGP stakeholders, whether directly, through institutional partners, or through peer-to-peer engagement. The OGP Local Team will be the main point of contact for the OGP Support Unit for all OGP Local members.

Specific OGP Support Unit activities in OGP Local will include:

- An online structured orientation and ongoing learning program with specific modules for government and non-governmental stakeholders. Content will be tailored based on the needs of the different stakeholder groups.
- A formal mentorship program, inviting current members of OGP Local and other local open government experts to serve as mentors.
- Thematic and issue-based learning circles.
- Access to information on assistance available through peers, practitioners, and partners.
- Featuring open government achievements through OGP's communication channels and incentive programs.
- Knowledge products on open local government, including those crowdsourced from the open government community.
- "Office Hours" with the Support Unit to identify and provide support on the action plan process or thematic knowledge exchange opportunities.



3. Action Plan Cycle

The OGP Local process is based on an action plan that is composed of a summary of the local jurisdiction's open government strategic vision and a collection of co-created commitments. The action plan cycle must align with the term limits of the local government in office. After the end of an action plan, the member can co-create and submit a new action plan to OGP.

The action plan cycle includes: the **orientation program** (for new members) and the **initial planning and joint development with non-governmental stakeholders of the Open Government Strategic Vision** for the action plan period; the **development and implementation of commitments through a process of co-creation**; and the **monitoring, assessment, and reporting of progress**.

3.1 Orientation Program and Initial Planning

Upon joining OGP Local, government and non-governmental stakeholder representatives will undergo an orientation program that will introduce them to the rules and requirements, get them familiarized with good practices and innovations in open government, and begin their strategic planning process. During this period, members should identify how they will use the OGP action plan process to deliver on their strategic, longer-term open government goals and identify the key stakeholders to engage before commencing public consultation activities.

The online orientation program must be completed by new OGP Local members as they begin the action plan co-creation process. Access to the online orientation platform will be provided to each government and non-government participants upon joining OGP Local.

The orientation will prepare government and non-government participants to successfully develop or refine an open government strategic vision for the action plan period and their commitments. It will also introduce thematic modules to support the co-creation of innovative and ambitious commitments. In addition, a mentoring scheme and personal support will be made available during the orientation program.

3.2 The Action Plan

An action plan is at the core of an OGP Local member's participation in OGP. It is composed of a summary of the Local Open Government Strategic Vision plus the collection of commitments that seek to institutionalize this strategic vision in the jurisdiction. The action plan must be the product of a co-creation process in which government and non-governmental stakeholders jointly work on the strategic vision and accompanying commitments to foster transparency, accountability, and public participation practices during the action plan period.

The action plan's key elements are as follows:

- **Action plan period:** Action plans must align with the term of the local government in office. That is, it starts when the jurisdiction joins OGP Local and must end at least two (2) months before the end of the term of the current administration. This must be clearly indicated at the time of submission of the action plan. For jurisdictions without elections, the action plan period can correspond to the period of the existing government's medium-term strategy or the jurisdiction can select a period between one to four years.



- **Components:** The action plan is composed of:
 - A summary of the Local Open Government Strategic Vision, which outlines the long-term vision and principles for opening government and the objectives the jurisdiction plans to achieve during the action plan period. In addition, it must describe the mechanisms for engaging non-governmental stakeholders during the action plan period as well as the independent Monitoring Body. The Local Open Government Strategic Vision can be newly developed or be a revision of the existing one.
 - The first five commitments which are concrete, measurable actions that seek to implement the Local Open Government Strategic Vision. All commitments must be developed through a process of co-creation and evaluated by the Monitoring Body once they are fully implemented.
- **Number of commitments:** Action plans in OGP Local can have up to five commitments for single jurisdictions or up to 12 commitments for joint action plans¹ at any moment in time. Once a commitment is completely implemented it must be assessed and a new commitment can be co-created and included in the action plan as long as it can be fully implemented within the remaining action plan period.
- **Language:** Action plans must be submitted to the OGP Support Unit in English in order to ensure that people from local jurisdictions across borders can learn about the open government reforms.

Once the action plan has been concluded, OGP Local members will have up to four (4) months between the end of one action plan and submission of the next. During this period the member must co-create the new Local Open Government Strategic Vision and initial commitments.

3.2.1 Format and Contents

The action plan will be submitted electronically through an online form. It will be composed of two parts: i) a Local Open Government Strategic Vision and ii) the individual commitments. At this time a government can submit an updated Letter of Support.

3.2.1.1 The Local Open Government Strategic Vision

This section of the action plan will lay out the strategic vision that will guide the actions of the jurisdiction throughout the action plan period. It should be based on policy principles, seek to achieve long-term outcomes and identify medium-term outputs.

The Local Open Government Strategic Vision “requires an inclusive process to ensure the “buy-in” from key actors both within and outside government. In order to ensure such support, all relevant stakeholders, particularly citizens and CSOs, must participate in the development or improvement of the Local Open Government Strategic Vision². Accordingly, the strategic vision must describe its development or refinement process - including the degree and results of public participation - and how the OGP Local member is organized to ensure continuous engagement with non-governmental stakeholders for the development and implementation of the commitments. Lastly, it must also include overall information on the activities that will be carried out during this period to monitor and publicize progress, including the designated Monitoring Body.

¹ A joint action plan is one where two or up to four jurisdictions members of OGP Local form a coalition to develop and implement an action plan.

² OECD (2016), Open Government: The Global Context and the Way Forward, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264268104-en>.



A successful Local Open Government Strategic Vision should provide a whole-of-government perspective to open government and focus on significant open government priorities and ambitious reforms that are relevant to the OGP values of transparency, public accountability, public participation, and technology and innovation:

- **Transparency:** Government-held information (including on activities and decisions) is open, comprehensive, timely, freely available to the public, and meets basic open data standards (e.g. raw data, machine readability) where formats allow.
- **Public accountability:** Rules, regulations, and mechanisms in place call upon government actors to justify their actions, act upon criticisms or requirements made of them, and accept responsibility for failure to perform with respect to laws or commitments.
- **Public participation and inclusion:** Governments seek to mobilize citizens to engage in public debate, provide input, and make contributions that lead to more responsive, innovative and effective governance.
- **Technology and innovation:** Governments embrace the importance of providing citizens with open access to technology, the role of new technologies in driving innovation, and the many benefits of increasing its capacity. Technology and innovation cannot be a stand-alone principle but must support the previous three principles.

The strategic vision and related commitments must be an ambitious reform agenda that stretches the government beyond its current state of practice, significantly improving the status quo by strengthening transparency, accountability, and public participation in government. Through their action plan, participating governments may choose to initiate a new open government strategic vision and initiatives or improve upon an existing vision and ongoing reforms. In either case, OGP Local members should demonstrate clear improvement from the current state of practice.

A template of the Local Open Government Strategic Vision section of the action plan is available in [Annex 1](#).

3.2.1.2 Commitments

This section of the action plan will lay out the strategic vision that will guide the actions of the jurisdiction throughout the action plan. This section of the action plan is composed of a detailed description of the open government commitments. These commitments are the concrete short-term initiatives to achieve the medium-term outcomes identified in the Local Open Government Strategic Vision.

Each commitment must clearly identify the problem that it seeks to address, expected result of the commitment, milestones and implementation dates, available resources and the responsible organizations for the implementation of the commitment.

The plan must contain specific, time-bound, and measurable commitments that are:

- **Relevant:** Participating governments should ensure that each commitment included in the action plan is clearly advancing one or more of the open government values of transparency, accountability, participation and inclusion, and technology and innovation.
- **Specific:** The commitment precisely describes the problem it is trying to solve, the activities it comprises, and the expected outcomes.
- **Verifiable:** In order to ensure accountability of commitment implementation, it is necessary that a commitment can be demonstrated to be completed. This means that the Monitoring Body and citizens are able to check the status of the commitment. Commitments will be assessed whether they are verifiable.



- **Answerable:** The commitment clearly specifies the main agency responsible for implementation, the coordinating or supporting agencies where relevant, and if necessary, other civil society, multilateral, or private sector partners who have a role in implementing the commitment.
- **Time-bound:** The commitment clearly states the date when it will be completed, as well as dates for milestones, benchmarks, and other potential deadlines.

Commitments should have a minimum duration of one calendar year, but they can also span the entire action plan period. Once a commitment is completely implemented it must be assessed by the Monitoring Body, and a new commitment can be co-created and included in the action plan as long as it can be fully implemented during the action plan period.

A template of the commitments is available in [Annex 2](#).

3.2.1.3 Modifying Commitments

Any changes to a commitment must be consulted and approved with the non-governmental stakeholders involved in the co-creation process. This can include removing the commitment, modifying its timeline or changing the milestones. Any changes, including the process for arriving at the decision, must be documented.

Changes can be made within six months after the submission of the commitment.

In the case an OGP Local member wants to make a change to an existing commitment, this must be communicated to the OGP Local Team.

3.3 Co-Creation of the Action Plan

Public participation is a core component of open government and an essential element of the OGP cycle. The [OGP Articles of Governance](#) outline that OGP participants commit to developing their action plans through a multi-stakeholder co-creation process. Both the Local Open Government Strategic Vision and each individual commitment must be co-created with the active engagement of citizens and civil society.

3.3.1 Requirements

In order to promote a high level of public influence during development and implementation of the action plan, governments must have a **space or structure for iterative dialogue and co-creation**. This space facilitates an inclusive and ongoing dialogue during the development of the commitments and their implementation. The space can already exist or be created.

In order to ensure that the required level of participation is achieved, the following minimum requirements will be assessed:

- **Forum:** The local government, with the support of non-governmental stakeholders, must have a space for participation in the development of and the review of the action plan.
- **Regularity:** The local government, with the support of non-governmental stakeholders, must hold at least one meeting with civil society and non-governmental stakeholders during the co-creation of the action plan and two meetings per year on implementation of the action plan.
- **Multi-stakeholder:** The local government, with the support of non-governmental stakeholders, must include both governmental and non-governmental representatives in the space for co-creation.
- **Endorsement:** Non-governmental stakeholders must endorse the final action plan. The government must submit, as part of the action plan, the list of names of the non-governmental stakeholders who endorse the final action plan.



Examples of participation spaces include recurring meetings and online and offline discussion forums. The spaces can be set up new for the purposes of co-creation or the process can be incorporated into existing institutionalized participatory mechanisms, like town hall meetings or local citizen councils¹. Another, advanced best practice is to set up a permanent dedicated multi-stakeholder forum. ([See Annex 3](#) for more information on multi-stakeholder forums.)

The Support Unit will assess these four requirements based on the evidence provided by the reports from the Monitoring Body.

3.3.2 Recommended Practice

Throughout its ten years of experience, OGP has identified the following best practices to ensure adequate engagement of civil society, citizens and other stakeholders throughout the OGP process. Accordingly, it is recommended that the government, with support from the non-governmental stakeholders, adopt the following practices throughout the action plan cycle:

- **Process transparency:** Governments should maintain a Local OGP website or webpage on a government website where information on all aspects of the OGP Local process is proactively published. [See Annex 4](#) for further information recommendations on the Local OGP website and repository.
- **Documentation in advance:** The government, with the support of non-governmental stakeholders, should share information about OGP Local to stakeholders in advance to facilitate informed and prepared participation in all stages of the process.
- **Awareness-raising:** The government, with the support of non-governmental stakeholders, should conduct outreach and awareness-raising activities with relevant stakeholders to inform them of the OGP Local process.
- **Inclusiveness:** The government, with support of non-governmental stakeholders, should ensure that all interested members of the public can make inputs into the action plan and observe or have access to decision-making documentation.
- **Communication channels:** The government, with the support of non-governmental stakeholders, should engage in direct communication with stakeholders to respond to action plan process questions, particularly during times of intense OGP activity.
- **Record keeping:** The government with the support of non-governmental stakeholders, should document, collect, and publish information on the process, documents and results of the OGP Local action plan.
- **Feedback:** The government should proactively communicate and report back on its decisions, activities, and results to wider government and civil society stakeholders. This includes how the government provided feedback during the co-creation process, including a summary of major categories and/or themes proposed for inclusion, amendment or rejection. In addition the government should provide a response to feedback submitted during the assessment of commitments.
- **Collaborate:** The government and non-governmental stakeholder should hold an ongoing iterative dialogue where the public contributes to identifying priorities, setting the agenda and developing the commitments.

¹ Local citizen councils are spaces where citizens - represented by local residents, civil society or community-based organizations, academics and the private sector - come together with municipal authorities to discuss and make decisions about governance issues and local development decisions.



These practices reflect the often difficult realities of making open government reforms work. Past successful reform models make clear that transformative and sustainable change require the efforts of coalitions made up of different sectors and groups, including senior and junior government officials, national and local CSOs, residents, legislators, academics, and the media.

3.4 Joint Action Plans

A joint action plan is one where two to four member jurisdictions from the same country form a coalition to develop and implement an action plan. The purpose of such a coalition is to benefit from working together. For example jurisdictions may want to form a coalition to:

- tackle problems through similar thematic commitments;
- promote policy coordination between jurisdictions; or
- share non-governmental stakeholders and resources.

Coalitions must follow these additional guidelines:

- The jurisdictions in the coalition must submit one (1) action plan containing the commitments for all coalition jurisdictions.
- In case the term of the administrations is different between jurisdictions, the action plan must coincide with the longer of the two terms and each jurisdiction must complete their commitments within two (2) months before the end of their term.
- The action plan can have at one point in time up to ten (10) individual commitments for coalitions of two (2) jurisdictions or up to 12 commitments for coalitions of three or four jurisdictions. The jurisdictions in the coalition can decide how the commitments are distributed between them.
- The commitments in the plan can be separate or joint. Separate commitments apply only to one jurisdiction, while joint commitments must be implemented by all jurisdictions in the coalition.
- Both jurisdictions must select only one (1) Monitoring Body to carry out the assessment for the action plan and its commitments.
- Jurisdictions can have a joint co-creation process or a separate process. It is up to the jurisdictions to decide.
- Jurisdictions must agree on one (1) point of contact for coordination purposes with the OGP Support Unit.

The governance of the coalition must be defined by the coalition partners themselves. For all effects and purposes, the OGP Support Unit considers all jurisdictions as equal partners within the coalition.

Joint action plans are valid for one (1) action plan period. At the end of the action plan period, jurisdictions can decide to continue as a coalition or as independent members within OGP Local.



3.5 Monitoring, Reporting and Learning

Monitoring and reporting are key parts of the action plan cycle. They provide an accountability mechanism, can be used to extract learnings, and promote the timely implementation of commitments. At the time of submission of the action plan, OGP Local members will be asked to identify a **Monitoring Body that will carry out an independent assessment** of their action plan. OGP Local and the IRM will provide guidance for the Monitoring Body to follow in order to fulfill its role.

The Monitoring Body may be a third party such as an independent oversight agency, a built-in accountability mechanism in their OGP platform (e.g. a working group within their defined co-creation space) or any other independent party that is suitable for the local context (e.g. a research or academic institution). It is responsible for carrying out three types of activities: an inception assessment, an end-of-commitment assessment for each finalized commitment, and a final learning exercise. The mechanism must be endorsed by the local non-governmental stakeholders taking part in the OGP process.

For OGP Local members interested in working with peers or international independent researchers to monitor their plans, the OGP Local Team can facilitate connections to a trained pool of IRM researchers or peer members. OGP Local members are responsible for ensuring that resources are available for the monitoring body to carry out its role.

To minimize the burden on OGP Local members, the selected monitoring body must file reports electronically on an online platform provided by OGP Local. Following IRM practice, the monitoring body must invite both government and non-government actors to provide comments during the monitoring process in order to ensure that views and contributions from stakeholders are considered. The burden of proof falls on the OGP Local member to provide evidence for any claims of activities carried out. ([See Annex 5](#) for greater detail of what constitutes evidence for OGP purposes.) The OGP Local member will ensure resources are available to the monitoring body to carry out its mandate.

In addition, the government will have to keep track of their progress on a quarterly basis by providing an update on the implementation of commitments to an online tracker.

The Role of OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) in OGP Local

The [Independent Reporting Mechanism \(IRM\)](#) will provide guidance to OGP Local and local jurisdictions in their monitoring and reporting process through the following:

- Developing guidelines and reporting tools for local jurisdictions. This includes providing guidance on minimum reporting standards, principles and scope of the reporting. It may also include IRM input of the adequacy of the monitoring body proposed by the local jurisdiction or a response to how the monitoring body adopts and implements reporting standards.
- Participate and facilitate training or capacity building workshops with local jurisdictions to set up their local monitoring body, as needed. The IRM will reflect and comment on how the guidance is being used by local stakeholders, which will be published on the OGP website.
- Once every two years, the IRM will produce analysis of the overall performance of OGP Local on specific themes or co-creation to provide deeper insights into the performance of OGP Local.



3.5.1 Inception Assessment

The Inception Assessment seeks to provide an appraisal of the co-creation process as well as the quality of the design of the commitments at their inception. This assessment must be finalized within two months of the submission of the action plan. Specifically, the Inception Assessment will evaluate the following elements:

1. Assessing the degree of compliance with co-creation requirements and recommendations focusing on the following criteria:
 - a. spaces and platforms for iterative dialogue and co-creation ([See section 3.3.1](#) for a detailed explanation of minimum requirements.)
 - b. dissemination of information ([See section 3.3.2](#) for a detailed explanation of recommended practices.)
2. Assessing the characteristics of the initial five commitments according to the following criteria:
 - a. relevance to the OGP values of transparency, accountability, and public participation
 - b. verifiability of the commitments and
 - c. potential impact of the commitments

3.5.2 End-of-Commitment Assessment

The End-of-Commitment Assessment will appraise the results of each individual commitment at the time it is fully implemented or at the end of the action plan, whichever comes first. This short evaluation of the outcomes of the commitment must be submitted on an online platform. The End-of-Commitment Assessment must be submitted one (1) month after the implementation of a commitment. Specifically, the assessment will evaluate:

- the level of completion and
- the early results and outcomes from the commitment's implementation.

3.5.3 Final Learning Exercise

The Final Learning Exercise is intended to extract and analyze lessons once the action plan has reached the stated end date. The report will analyze the information within the Inception and End-of-Commitment Assessments. The Final Learning Exercise must capture the successes and areas of improvement of the action plan as a whole – from co-creation to final implementation. It is intended to go beyond assessing the completion of activities and elicit a meaningful reflection about the changes and results enabled by the reforms and the co-creation process. It may also look at the reasons for lack of progress for reforms that have not proceeded as planned and describe a way forward to overcome identified challenges.

The Final Learning Exercise and a report summarizing the lessons from the exercise and steps forward must be carried out and submitted online two (2) months after the end of the action plan.



3.5.4 Commitment Progress Tracker

In addition to e-filing the assessment reports aforementioned, the Local POC will be required to provide quarterly public updates on the progress of their commitments through an online tracker on the OGP Local site.

Figure 1 - Monitoring and Reporting Instances

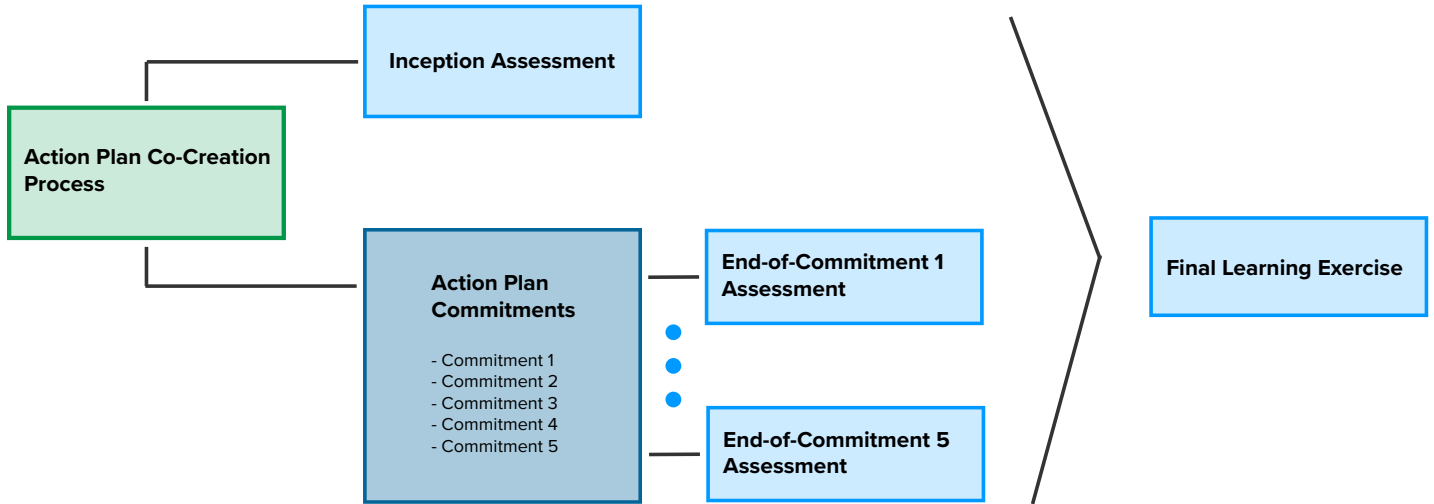


Figure 2 - Local Action Plan Cycle and Calendar (Three-year action plan example)

	Year 1												Year 2												Year 3														
Activity	←-----Period of the Government Administration ----->																																						
	Join OGP Local or ↓ Start of a new government term																																						
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D			
Orientation (new members)	█																																						
Local Open Gov Strategic Vision co-creation & 5 initial commitments	█																																						
Inception Report				█																																			
Commitment 1 implementation				█																																			
End-of-commitment 1 assessment																█																							
Commitment 2 implementation				█																																			
End-of-commitment 2 assessment																												█											
Commitment 3 implementation																█																							
End-of-commitment 3 assessment																																		█					
Final Learning Exercise																																		█					



4. Inactivity and Acting Contrary to Process

4.1 Inactivity

During an action plan period, participating governments must be working on developing an action plan or co-creating and implementing commitments, otherwise they will be considered **inactive**. The status of inactive will be applied to an OGP Local member if:

1. an action plan is not submitted by new members by the stated deadline by the Support Unit and no extension has been requested [and granted];
2. no action plan is submitted by existing members within four months of the end of the previous plan;
3. the online tracker shows no progress in any of the commitments in two consecutive quarters; or
4. the online tracker is not updated in two consecutive quarters.

In addition, there are numerous occurrences that can cause delays in the co-creation and implementation of an action plan, including political transitions and unforeseeable events. Given the multiple challenges that can arise from these events, OGP Local members can request to be voluntarily placed as inactive without detriment to their membership.

It is highly recommended that the local government discusses with the non-governmental stakeholders and with an OGP Local Team representative in cases of voluntary inactivity. Non-governmental stakeholders can play a crucial role during unforeseen events and political transitions, as they can maintain momentum.

In case a member is conferred the inactive status, the participating government will receive a letter from the Support Unit noting this occurrence. The status of active member will be conferred back once the OGP Local member begins the co-creation process or progresses in the implementation of commitments as evidenced in corresponding online tracker and assessment reports. The status of every OGP Local member will be displayed on the [OGP Local webpage](#).

4.2 Acting Contrary to Process

OGP Local members' participation will be considered acting contrary to process and placed in **probation**, if it fails to:

- resume activities after six consecutive months of conference of inactivity status;
- show evidence of engagement with non-governmental stakeholders in the co-creation and implementation of the action plan as described by the requirements in [section 3.3.1](#).

In the case of a voluntary request of inactivity due to unavoidable circumstances, OGP Local members can extend inactivity beyond six months and will not be acting contrary to process.

The participating government will receive a letter from the Support Unit if they are placed on probation. OGP Local members in probation can continue with their activities; however, they must rectify any unmet requirement within four months of conference of probation status.

Active status can be regained immediately upon meeting requirements. If after four months the member has not met the requirements their membership will be revoked. The status of every OGP Local member will be displayed on the OGP Local webpage. Additionally, if egregious civic space violations are reported by local civil society or non-governmental stakeholders, concerns may be raised in a letter to the OGP Support Unit's Local team. The course of action will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Annexes

Annex 1 - Template of the Open Government Strategic Vision for E-Filing

This section of the action plan lays out the strategic vision that will guide the actions of the jurisdiction throughout the action plan period. It should be based on policy principles, seek to achieve long-term outcomes and identify medium-term outputs. Below is the template with the fields of information to be completed to draft this section of the action plan.

A. Date submitted

B. Duration

B.1. End of term of the current administration

B.2. End of the action plan period (Two months before the end of the government term)

C. Foreword

The foreword can be written jointly or separately by government and civil society representatives or a multi-stakeholder forum. This should include the ambition for this plan and how they plan to work together in implementation and monitoring.

D. Upload the introduction letter by the head of the jurisdiction, if available.

E. Open Government Challenges, Opportunities and Strategic Vision

This subsection details the Open Government Strategic Vision in your local area that should guide the commitments for the action plan period:

E.1. What is the long-term vision for open government in your context and jurisdiction?

E.2. What are the achievements in open government to date (for example, recent open government reforms)?

E.3. What are the current challenges/areas for improvement in open government that the jurisdiction wishes to tackle?

E.4. What are the medium-term open government goals that the government wants to achieve?

E.5. How does this action plan contribute to achieve the Open Government Strategic Vision?

E.6. How does the open government strategic vision contribute to the accomplishment of the current administration's overall policy goals?

F. Engagement and Coordination in the Open Government Strategic Vision and OGP Action Plan

F.1. What are the lead institutions responsible for the implementation of the OGP action plan?

F.2. What kind of institutional arrangements are in place to coordinate between government agencies and departments to implement the OGP action plan?

F.3. What kind of spaces have you used or created to enable the collaboration between government and civil society in the co-creation and implementation of this action plan? Mention both offline and online spaces.

F.4. What measures did you take to ensure diversity of representation (including vulnerable or marginalized populations) in these spaces?

F.5. Who participated in these spaces? Mention the type of different groups that participated in the co-creation process (for example public sector agencies, civil society, and community organizations).

F.6. How many groups participated in these space?

F.7. How many meetings were held in the co-creation process?

F.8. How will government and non-governmental stakeholders continue to collaborate through the implementation of the action plan?

G. Monitoring of the OGP Action Plan

G.1. What is the Independent Monitoring Body you have identified for this plan? Please describe and include contact details.

G.2. What types of activities will you have in place to discuss progress on commitments with stakeholders?

G.3. How will you regularly check in on progress with implementing agencies?

G.4. How will you share the results of your monitoring efforts with the public?

H. Endorsement from Non-Governmental Stakeholders

List the non-governmental stakeholders who participated in the co-creation process and endorse this action plan.

I. Upload the full Open Government Strategy, if available, or other relevant documents.

Annex 2 - Template of Commitment for E-Filing

The main section of the action plan is composed of a detailed description of the open government commitments. These commitments are the concrete short-term initiatives to achieve the medium-term outcomes identified in the Local Open Government Strategic Vision. Below is the template with the fields of information to be completed for each commitment.

Commitment Header and Contacts

1. Commitment Number

2. Commitment Title

Describe the specific action that the commitment will achieve, distinguishing commitment from other commitments in the plan. Example: "Create beneficial ownership register" or "Publish judicial data" or "Improve compliance with RTI law"

3. Timeframe

Commitment Start Date

Commitment End Date

4. Leading implementing government agency

Name of Organization	Branch of Government	Name of Contact	Title	Email	Role in Implementation

5. Leading implementing non-governmental stakeholder, if applicable

Name of Organization	Name of Contact	Title	Email	Role in Implementation

6. Other stakeholders involved in the implementation of this commitment

(e.g. Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, Community Groups, Private Sector, or Working Groups)

Name of Organization	Name of Contact	Title	Email	Role in Implementation

Commitment Description

7. Problem

Describe the economic, social, political, or environmental problem identified that this commitment seeks to resolve. (e.g. 'Mis-allocation of welfare funds' is more helpful than 'lacking a website'.)

8. Status quo

Describe the current state of the policy issue at the beginning of an action plan. (e.g.: 26% of judicial corruption complaints are not processed currently.)

9. Action

What is the commitment? Describe what the commitment entails, its expected results, and overall objective.

10. How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?

What are the expected outputs and outcomes once the commitment has been implemented?

11. What long-term goal as identified in your Open Government Strategic Vision does this commitment relate to?

12. Primary Policy Area

Please indicate the most relevant policy or practice for this commitment. Select up to two policy areas from the following list: Fiscal Openness; Conflict of Interest; Asset Disclosure; Audits & Controls; Whistleblower Protection; Open Contracting; Public Procurement; Beneficial Ownership; Civic Space; Open Data; Right to Information; Elections & Political Finance; Lobbying; Legislative Openness; Inclusion; Digital Governance; Pandemic Response; Safety Nets and Economic Inclusion; Tax; Stimulus and Economic Recovery; Regulatory Governance; Social Accountability.

13. Primary Sector

Please indicate the most relevant primary sector for this commitment. Select up to two sectors from the following list: Private Sector; Media and Telecommunications; Education; Health & Nutrition; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene; Infrastructure & Transport; Extractive Industries; Environment & Climate; Land & Spatial Planning; Science & Technology; Public Services (general); Justice; Legislature; Cross-sectoral; Security and Public Safety.

14. What OGP value is this commitment relevant to?

Select from the following list: Transparency; Public Participation and Inclusion; Public Accountability; Technology/innovation for transparency; Technology/innovation for public participation; Technology/innovation for accountability

15. What resources are needed to achieve this commitment?

Please include budget, staff, time, and contributions of civil society and other organizations and any other resources required.

16. Are the resources needed to achieve this commitment already secured?

17. Milestones

Add lines as necessary.

Milestone #	Describe the Output	Start Date	End Date	Responsible Agency	Contact Person
		DD/MM/YYYY	DD/MM/YYYY		

18. Additional Information [Optional]

Use this optional space to provide other useful information, for example:

- Links to other government programs
- Links to the national development plan or other sectoral or local plans
- Link to the Sustainable Development Goals
- Gender perspective analysis

Annex 3 - Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF)

A Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF) is a standing consultative body that assists during the action plan cycle in this process, although it is not required for participation, it has been shown to be a successful mechanism for participation in the OGP process.

For OGP Local members, a MSF is not a requirement; however, it is recommended if there are no other multi-stakeholder participatory spaces available to carry out the OGP Local process.

While the structure of every MSF will vary to reflect local contexts and demands, all MSFs are responsible for assisting in the development and oversight of the OGP process to ensure that it is open and inclusive of all stakeholders.

MSFs must also:

- comprise representation from both government and non-governmental stakeholders; and
- meet regularly.

OGP Local members must be able to determine whether they will establish a specific MSF for OGP or whether they will use existing spaces for multi-stakeholder dialogue in their contexts. Regardless of the space chosen, OGP Local members will need to inform the OGP Support Unit of the details.

OGP Local members are encouraged to ensure that these spaces are diverse and inclusive.

For more information about MSFs and some practical examples, see section 5 of the [OGP Participation and Co-creation Toolkit](#).

Annex 4 - Local OGP Website and Repository

The Local OGP website or webpage is recommended for OGP Local members to proactively disseminate information on all aspects of the OGP process and as a repository of information. The website or webpage should be visible, accessible and searchable.

At its most basic version, the website or webpage should contain:

- Information about the lead agency and point of contact for OGP, including contact details.
- Information about the action plan co-creation process including a timeline of key stages and deadlines; opportunities to be involved; and the decision making process for agreeing on commitments and finalizing the NAP. Adequate and timely notice about participation opportunities (e.g. details of meetings, events, written consultation and feedback mechanisms) must be proactively disclosed through the site as well as other relevant media, such as radio, SMS or other suitable communication medium suitable to the local context.
- Regular updates on the progress of the development of the action plan including notes of events, draft commitments and an overview of public and non-governmental stakeholders' contributions to the action plan development and the government response.
- Regular updates on the progress on the implementation of commitments, including progress against milestones, reasons for delays and next steps.
- A feature to allow the public to comment on progress updates.

In addition, the website or webpage can contain a repository where information and evidence related to the action plan (including process and implementation) is publicly stored, organized, updated, and disseminated. It is meant to be a transparent and easy way for the Monitoring Body and other interested stakeholders to access up-to-date evidence related to a participating government's OGP activities. This could be a series of electronic folders, including at least one per commitment and one for the action plan development process. To enhance accessibility, the folder can be complemented with a spreadsheet that tracks the commitments and the completion evidence available or, as several OGP participants have done, an online tracking dashboard.

The website or webpage and repository should be updated regularly. For information relating to the co-creation process, it is recommended that updates be updated at least monthly. It is suggested to include timestamps on the repositories that indicate when it was last updated.

In addition to setting up the online repository, participating governments may wish to develop a communications strategy where all agencies and other relevant stakeholders share updates on the content, and encourage commentary and interaction on it.

Annex 5 - Evidence

Evidence is defined as “the available facts that justify statements or propositions, proving they are true or valid.” It includes primary sources or direct links to objective information that accounts for the status of completion of activities, commitments, or milestones. It does not include secondary source materials, for example claims that describe activities without providing proof of the activity itself.

The following list provides examples of evidence to account for the development and implementation of the action plan:

- Plans for public consultations on the development of the action plan
 - Timelines, public invitations, interdepartmental invitations
- Evidence of the multi-stakeholder participation space:
 - Terms of Reference or constituting documents for the participation space
 - Minutes/memos of decisions to set up working groups
 - Composition of the group, listing organizations and individuals included
- Evidence of public consultation and multi-stakeholder forums
 - Advertising or notice for public consultation
 - Invitations sent out
 - Multi-stakeholder forum meeting agendas and/or minutes
 - List of participants who attended (affiliations are sufficient in case names cannot be disclosed due to privacy considerations)
 - Written proposals submitted by CSOs or other members of public
 - Documents, reports and plans that are relevant to establish commitment baseline and government objectives
 - Outputs of consultations (proposals, minutes, pictures, memos etc.)
 - Feedback on how public inputs or proposals have been considered
- Documentation for implementation of commitments:
 - Draft of laws and status of legislative process on issue areas relevant to commitments
 - Records of decision making, new regulations or administrative orders
 - Evidence of commissioning research, procurement or consultancy terms of reference, calls for proposals
 - Evidence of technical documents relating to databases, information technology etc.
 - Strategy documents, concept papers and work plans produced in the process or as a result of commitments
 - Monitoring and evaluation material (inter-governmental or third party monitoring reports etc.)
 - Evidence of budget decisions, financial and HR resource allocations
 - External/third-party analysis of documents (CSO shadow reports, independent tracking of commitment progress)
 - Audit reports
 - Photos, videos and multimedia as evidence of progress on commitments, events held
 - User statistics (if relevant)