

Help improve the OGP's co-creation guidelines!

1 November 2016

Ground

of the Open Government Partnership is collaboration between government and civil society. This is reflected in the mentoring Committee and the requirement that country National Action Plans are developed in partnership between government and civil society.

The OGP's Criteria and Standards subcommittee agreed that the Support Unit and IRM should draft a new set of guidelines for OGP that would better reflect and encourage such a partnership.

The new co-creation guidelines, below, have been developed based on the comments and guidance of the Criteria and Standards subcommittee, as well as colleagues from the OGP Support Unit and IRM. They seek to improve the practice of co-creation in OGP.

Improving existing requirements more specific and easy to follow;

Introducing a focus on the quality of the consultation; and,

Providing guidance on the ongoing dialogue between government and civil society in all three phases of the OGP National Action Plan: development, implementation and monitoring.

Each guideline specifies a set of general basic requirements and, in line with OGP's philosophy of incentivizing best practice, each also has a set of best practice stretch 'requirements'. Countries will not be obliged to meet these best practice 'requirements', but they will be supported and encouraged to do so. Countries that meet the best practice guidelines will be awarded a star of co-creation (comparable to the starred commitments).

How to respond

Our co-creation guidelines will be out for public consultation for one month, from 7th October to 7th November. We invite you to help shape these guidelines by contributing your comments and suggestions.

There are a number of ways you can respond.

Respond online

Link to the guidelines with others via Medium: [ADD LINK TO MEDIUM POST]

- a general reflection - by commenting via the Response box at the bottom
- with another Response - by clicking the  next to it
- a specific (in-public) suggestion - by selecting the relevant text and clicking the speech-bubble
- a specific (in-private) suggestion - by selecting the relevant text and clicking the speech-bubble with a padlock (this will only be seen by you)
- a section you agree/disagree with - by selecting the relevant text and clicking the Twitter icon

Share your thoughts

Comments to this document and/or send us your thoughts via this email: consultation@opengovpartnership.org

Regional call

Regional calls will be held during October for Government Points of Contact and civil society members. Invitations to these calls will be sent to all current OGP email lists.

Guidelines

Participation is a core component of open government, and an essential element of developing an OGP National Action Plan. The OGP Articles of Association state that 'OGP participants commit to developing their country action plans through a multi stakeholder process, with the active engagement of civil society'. These co-creation guidelines are intended to support enhanced government and civil society collaboration at all stages.

These guidelines are based on evidence and experience built up over a number of decades across many country contexts of the essential components of participatory processes. Among other things, such processes demonstrate three qualities:

Impact - there must be the potential for the process to impact in a meaningful way on the decision making process.

Transparency - there must be clarity about the purpose, scope, timeline, decision making process, and feedback mechanism.

Integrity - the scope for the process to make a difference to the decision making process must be declared at the start, and decision makers must engage with an open mind.

These

processes are organised around four essential components of good engagement:

Provision of information: Government, in partnership with civil society, should ensure members of the public and wider civil society are provided with timely information about all aspects of the national OGP process - especially the key moments to provide inputs, discuss and monitor performance.

Channels and platforms for dialogue and co-creation: Government, in partnership with civil society, should facilitate inclusive ongoing collaboration through a variety of mechanisms, and a multi-stakeholder forum should be established to oversee and guide the national OGP process.

Documentation and feedback: Government, in partnership with civil society, should document and make publicly available all individual contributions received for the NAP development and monitoring processes, as well as provide feedback on how inputs were taken into account.

Moving participation/collaboration over time: Government, in partnership with civil society, should improve the quality of each cyclical OGP process, complying with more of the requirements outlined in the co-creation guidelines and moving from consult to collaboration (see [AP2-spectrum](#)).

It has a set of basic requirements and best practice steps that reflect international standards and guidance and the experience of other countries.

Provision of information: Government, in partnership with civil society, should ensure members of the public and wider civil society are provided with timely information about all aspects of the national OGP process - especially the key moments to provide inputs, discuss priorities and monitor performance.

Requirements

the OGP cycle...

The lead agency and point of contact for OGP is clearly identified and their contact details are publicly available.

There is a national OGP website (or OGP webpage on a government website) where information on all aspects of the national OGP process is proactively published.

Developing the plan...

The government proactively communicates, via the national OGP website/webpage and other channels, the process for the development of the NAP, including a timeline of key stages and deadlines.

The government publishes information and documents in plain language that is understandable to the majority of the population.

The government proactively communicates, via the national OGP website/webpage and other channels, opportunities to be involved in the development of the NAP (e.g. details of meetings, events, written consultations, feedback mechanisms) with adequate notice (i.e. at least 4 weeks in advance)

The government provides adequate background information (e.g. about open government, the OGP, the scope of the NAP, and the development process), to participants, via the national OGP website/webpage and at meetings/events, prior to consultation and during the process so that they can participate in an informed manner.

The government publishes, via the national OGP website/webpage, regular (i.e. at least every month) progress updates on the

development of the NAP, including notes of events, drafts of commitments, and other relevant information.
Government proactively communicates to civil society, via the national OGP website/webpage and other channels (e.g. at meetings/events), the decision making process for agreeing commitments and finalising the NAP.

Implementing and monitoring the plan...

Government publishes via the national OGP website/webpage regular reports (i.e. at least every six months) on the progress of commitments, including progress against milestones, reasons for any delays, next steps.

The OGP cycle...

A multi-stakeholder forum (see section 2) communicates its remit, membership and governance on the national OGP website/webpage. The multi-stakeholder forum proactively communicates its activities and decisions to wider government and civil society stakeholders in a regular fashion.

Implementing the plan...

Government uses a range of digital channels commonly used by citizens and civil society (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc) for awareness raising and dissemination of progress updates.

Government officials attend meetings and events, organised by civil society or third parties, to raise awareness of open government, the benefits and opportunities to get involved.

Implementing and monitoring the plan...

A multi-stakeholder forum oversees the publication of regular joint government-civil society updates on the progress of commitments in addition to government self-assessment reports.

Government publishes a dashboard on the national OGP website/webpage that provides up to date information on the status of all commitments in an accessible and easy-to-understand format for an average citizen.

Channels and platforms for dialogue and co-creation: Government, in partnership with civil society, should facilitate inclusive ongoing dialogue and collaboration through a variety of mechanisms, and a multi-stakeholder forum should be established to oversee and guide the national OGP process.

ments

the OGP cycle...

A multi-stakeholder forum - a group of government and civil society representatives that has a clear remit, membership and governance - meets on a regular basis (i.e. at least every quarter) - is formed.

The remit, membership and governance of the multi-stakeholder forum are jointly agreed by government and civil society.

The multi-stakeholder forum includes high-level representatives with decision making authority from government.

The multi-stakeholder forum guides and monitors the national OGP process.

Civil society is free to self-organise, including deciding its representatives on the multi-stakeholder forum.

Developing the plan...

Government decision makers convene the members of the national multi-stakeholder forum to design the NAP development process (number of events, location, format)

Government, guided by the multi-stakeholder forum, provides open and accessible opportunities to any interested members of the public and civil society to participate in the development of the NAP.

Government uses multiple channels to engage the public and civil society in developing the NAP, including online and in-person events.

Government holds at least two open meetings and a public consultation of at least six weeks for any interested parties to propose or comment on commitments.

Government members of the multi-stakeholder forum discuss with their civil society counterparts the government's priorities for commitments and the political feasibility of adopting civil society priorities and proposed commitments.

Government members of the multi-stakeholder forum discuss with their civil society counterparts the selection of commitments to be included in the NAP, take on board their comments and state clearly their reasoning behind decisions.

Government publishes a draft NAP, via the OGP website/webpage and other channels (e.g. social media), for public comment over a four-week period.

menting and monitoring the plan...

multi-stakeholder forum monitors and deliberates on how to improve the implementation of the NAP.

Government decision makers submit self-assessment report to the national multi-stakeholder forum for comments and feedback on the content of the report.

Government holds at least two open meetings with civil society (one per year) on implementation of the NAP and holds at least a one-week public consultation on its self-assessment.

Government shares the link to the IRM report with other government institutions and stakeholders to encourage input during the public comment phase.

Government sends a high level representative (i.e. minister or senior official) responsible for the OGP to the launch of the IRM report and responds to the findings and comments or questions from other participants.

the OGP cycle...

multi-stakeholder forum is jointly chaired by government and civil society, and includes a variety of government and non-government actors that bring in a diverse range of views

multi-stakeholder forum acts in a decision making capacity, with key decisions regarding the process and content of NAPs made jointly by its government and civil society members.

National multi-stakeholder forum has an explicit aim to bring in additional government and non-government actors into the OGP process.

planning the plan...

National multi-stakeholder forum jointly designs and agrees the NAP development process (e.g. number of events, location, format) though government retains ultimate responsibility for the quality of the process.

National multi-stakeholder forum coordinates multiple face-to-face outreach and engagement events around the country, which are open and accessible to any interested members of the public and civil society to attend (e.g., at suitable times and locations).

National multi-stakeholder forum holds an open call for ideas for commitments, publicised via the national OGP website or webpage and other channels (e.g. social media and traditional media), which are assessed by the multi-stakeholder forum through an open and transparent process.

Government and civil society, via the multi-stakeholder forum, jointly agree the commitments to be included in the NAP.

Government and civil society form working groups on each draft commitment to co-create it through a process of open dialogue and consultation.

Implementing and monitoring the plan...

Working groups are formed for implementing and monitoring each commitment, which include the government commitment lead, other relevant government actors, civil society organisations identified through an open call, and any other relevant stakeholders.

Government proactively organizes frequent (i.e. at least quarterly) meetings of each working group, who produce regular (i.e. at least annual) jointly agreed progress updates on the implementation of the commitment. These updates should form the basis for the government self-assessment report.

Government holds at least a four-week public consultation on its self-assessment and proactively disseminates and promotes the public comment period through multiple channels (e.g. mailing lists of participants during NAP development and the national OGP website/webpage).

Government provides members of civil society, through the national multi-stakeholder forum or otherwise, with regular (i.e. at least annual) opportunities to meet with the politically responsible member of government to review progress, the government self-assessment and IRM reports.

Documentation and feedback: Government, in partnership with civil society, should document and make publicly available all individual contributions received for the NAP development and monitoring processes, as well as provide feedback on how inputs were taken into account.

Commitments

the OGP cycle...

Government collects and submits to the IRM researcher evidence of its compliance with the criteria set out in this guidance.

Government responds to any questions about the NAP process, commitments or implementation from the public or civil society in a timely fashion (i.e. within 20 working days), and makes such correspondence available to the IRM researcher for review.

Government collects and publishes a document repository on the national OGP website/webpage, which provides a historical record and access to all documents related to the national OGP process, including (but not limited to) consultation documents, National Action Plans, government self-assessments, IRM reports and supporting documentation of commitment implementation (e.g. links to databases, minutes of meetings, publications).

ping the plan...

Government publishes all written contributions (e.g. consultation responses) to the NAP development on the national OGP website/webpage.

Government publishes an overview of public and civil society contributions, and the government's response, on the national OGP website/webpage.

menting and monitoring the plan...

Government publishes a summary of all individual written inputs and comments received for the government's self-assessment on national OGP website/webpage

ping the plan...

Multi-stakeholder forum publishes, via the national OGP website/webpage, its reasoning behind the selection of commitments in the plan, including justifications for issue areas not included.

menting and monitoring the plan...

Government publishes all individual written inputs and comments received for the government's self-assessment on the national OGP website/webpage.

Moving participation/collaboration over time: Government, in partnership with civil society, should improve the quality of each cycle of the national OGP process, complying with more of the requirements outlined in these guidelines and moving from consult to collaborate (on the [IAP2-spectrum](#)).

OGP cycle...

National OGP process complies with a greater proportion of the requirements outlined in these guidelines.

m - An international standard that defines five levels of public participation: 1) Inform, 2) Consult, 3) Involve, 4) Collaborate, 5) Empowers greater decision making power to participants than the one before.

older Forum - A group of government and civil society representatives, with a clear remit, membership and governance, that meet to oversee the OGP process. See the OGP handbook on 'Designing and Managing an OGP Multistakeholder Forum.'