

UK Pre-Multi-Stakeholder Forum

Read-out for publication

Wednesday 14th December 2022

Aim of the meeting

The aim of the meeting is to briefly take stock of progress on the current National Action Plan, discuss the challenges and opportunities in the future, and agree the way forward for the operation of the UK's MSF.

Attendees

There were a total of 32 attendees, of which 22 were government representatives and 10 from civil society. There were a further 13 apologies received, 8 governmental and 5 civil society.

New UK government minister and point-of-contact for OGP

Minister Alex Burghart MP is the new Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office.

The new Open Data and Transparency Lead at the Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO) is Dr. Matt Donnelly. Matt's role includes Open Government, Open Data and Transparency in a broader sense, as well as the specific mechanism of the Open Government Partnership which sits within this wider remit.

Matt offered some initial reflections on the role since assuming the post at the beginning of October:

- It has been a pleasure to engage with civil society and government colleagues, and honest discussions have helped to highlight both positive progress and concerns
- Some NAP5 commitments appear to be progressing very strongly, others are being picked up by new governmental leads in a positive manner
- Positive progress appears to be being made on progressing the Open Government agenda, both inside and outside of NAP commitments
- There is an opportunity to widen the scope of Open Government related progress in future if we can create the right conditions and structures to enable this, and learn from the experiences of previous NAP co-creation
- There is a challenge for both the UK government and UK OGN to improve coordination and representation to make the process more effective.

UK Status in OGP

A recent meeting of the OGP Criteria & Standards committee decided not to recommend that the UK be made inactive, although the UK remains under procedural review. For reference, recent communications from OGP, UK OGN and the relevant minister are:

2nd August 2022 - [Letter from OGP to Minister Wheeler](#)

25th August 2022 - [UK OGN article](#)

1st September 2022 - [Letter from Minister Wheeler to OGP](#)

19th October 2022 - [UK Civil Society letter to OGP](#)

29th November 2022 - [Letter from Minister Burghart to OGP](#)

1st December 2022 - [Minutes from OGP Criteria & Standards meeting](#)

A formal resolution is being drafted by the OGP Criteria & Standards committee which will be sent to the OGP Steering Committee. A response to the minister's letter is expected from OGP in the near future. In addition to the recent formal communications, recent positive steps were noted.

Commitment updates

Commitment 1: Open contracting

Substantial progress has been made on primary legislation, having passed the Lords and now with the Commons, whilst secondary legislation is being developed. A steering group meeting planned for September has been postponed, but this is important to support further implementation and development of tools and their uptake.

Commitment 2: Open justice

Good progress is being made across all commitments, including improved data collection and access, ALPHA service for [publishing judgements](#), a BETA service for the [Court and Tribunal Hearing Service](#), and exceeding commitment on [remote access to hearings](#) to include in-person hearings. This progress was contrasted by civil society against concern about the reality in the courts. A follow-up meeting with a steering group is needed to review current progress and future aspirations.

Commitment 3: Algorithmic transparency and accountability

The first version of [Algorithmic Transparency Reporting Standard](#) (ATRS) was published in November 2021. It has since been developed and iterated following feedback. The Standard was developed collaboratively by working with civil society groups and external experts. It is also informed by a public engagement study run by the [Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation](#) (CDEI) and [Britain Thinks](#). Feedback has been incorporated into a second version, as well as a set of accompanying guidance, both of which are available on [GitHub](#) for the public and civil society to comment on. The latest version has received endorsement from the [Data Standards Authority](#) (DSA), and an ATRS repository is being developed. Legislative aspects were not included in the Data Reform Bill, as the ATRS needs to mature before being included.

Commitment 4: Health

Substantial progress is being made across these commitments along with the broader data strategy for health and care, [Data Saves Lives](#). This includes focus groups, public engagement, data standards, and the creation of a National Data Advisory Group to enable the feedback of comment and challenge, as committed to in the data strategy. A [draft standards and interoperability strategy](#) has been published and there is now work on compliance and monitoring, moving towards mandatory standards and the further development of a BETA [standards directory](#). For clinical trials of investigational medicinal products and combined trials of an investigational medicinal product and an investigational medical device, [automatic registration](#) of studies on the [ISRCTN registry](#) has started. These trials are automatically registered unless a deferral has been agreed or where the study will be registered on [ClinicalTrials.gov](#). Work is progressing on metrics regarding sponsor performance. More work is needed to promote these efforts amongst health charities.

Commitment 5: Anti-corruption and international illicit finance

Implementation is ongoing and good progress is being made, with further civil society engagement planned in the near future on strategy development. The implications of the recent Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) judgement on public beneficial ownership registers in the EU is also being examined, regarding the wider international approach to beneficial ownership.

Commitment 6: Aid transparency

This is a new commitment added in August 2022. Implementation is on-track, with plans to exceed milestones in some areas. Quarterly civil society meetings are in-progress, a government community of practice on aid transparency is in operation.

Commitment 7: Diversity and inclusion

This is a new commitment added in August 2022. CDDO is engaging with Civil Service HR in the Cabinet Office and UK OGN representatives to shape how this commitment is pursued. The start of a D&I working group is the next step in this process.

Commitment 8: Freedom of Information

This is a new commitment added in August 2022. A Freedom of Information user rights group is being formed, with Terms of Reference going through final agreement, and the group will progress from there to agree further milestones for NAP5 and input into NAP6 co-creation.

Local Transparency

CDDO is engaging with DLUHC and local government representatives to discuss how to progress this commitment with the aim of convening a working group of partners in 2023.

Public Standards

Although no specific commitment was made in NAP5, CDDO have been in touch with the relevant contact in the Cabinet Office Propriety and Ethics Teams ahead of preparation for NAP6. This is at a very early stage as effort in advance of this Pre-MSF meeting has been focused on existing commitments

Looking to the future

A review of the coming year is covered:

- Immediate focus is on NAP5 implementation and monitoring up to the end of 2023;
- The next MSF will be on Wednesday 18th January 2023 - this will be a non-ministerial meeting co-chaired by Kevin Keith (UK OGN) and Sue Bateman (CDDO);
- Provisional dates for the MSFs during the rest of 2023 have been set, subject to ministerial availability;
- We also need to prepare for NAP6 development from April 2023 onwards, with a due date of the end of 2023. See the [OGP Action Plan Cycle webpage](#) for more details.
- We need to have the capacity and structures in place to drive this agenda forward both in government and civil society;
- We need to make the most of existing civil society engagement and networks, tying those networks into OGP processes and MSFs rather than creating temporary and bespoke working groups. This approach should help to facilitate diverse representation during NAP6 co-creation;
- The UK will receive a Co-Creation Brief in Q1 2023 from the IRM with advice and recommendations both on how to improve the co-creation process and commitment themes that have strong potential. For more information see the [OGP IRM Co-creation Brief webpage](#).