

# DEMOCRATISING TRANSFORMATION



## SPURRING LEARNING AT PLANETARY SCALE – Andreas Pavlou / Open Government Partnership

Open Government is underpinned by core principles which relate to transparency, citizen participation, and accountability. These three horizontal pillars go across all different types of thematic areas. For example, ensuring that citizens are able to participate more in decision making on a day to day basis, that they can access information held by the government like on the real owners of companies, and that their democratic freedoms are protected.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is an initiative connecting government and civil society to co-develop specific open government commitments that governments then implement. Commitments are put into practice in a way that is effective and tailored to the specific national context. It operates at the national level but also locally.

The OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) provides accountability over the process and commitments made. It looks at the quality of the commitments, how they were created and how they are implemented and what results come of them. The learnings and knowledge that we gather can then be shared and used at a local, national and global level.

We have seen commitments on participation that include mechanisms like citizen assemblies or citizen panels that engage citizens beyond the ballot box and where citizens are given an important place within the decision making process to take it forward. Some of the big long term issues like climate policy are issues which these participatory structures have been used successfully. Because they are able to look beyond that four or five year mandate that a

government has and can provide recommendations that are medium and long term and based on evidence, data and care for future generations.

Another example is applying international open data standards to ensure comparable, consistent and useful data across jurisdictions. They help to establish global norms, for example, to ensure that procurement information is open, transparent and publicly available or to understand who the real owners of companies are across jurisdictions. Beneficial ownership transparency information will be essential for international economic development, tackling money laundering and deterring financial crimes in an interdependent world in which we will need global solutions.

In addition, OGP runs a local program, where we specifically engage with sub-national entities. There is real value in engaging those different levels, because they provide different solutions and are much closer to citizens. At the local level, citizens can see a much more direct change in their lives, such as how services are delivered or decisions made locally.

We have seen emerging topics come to light. For example, ensuring that algorithms are transparent and accountable. These emerging issues can be explored by subgroups made up of government and civil society within the Open Government Partnership that come together, learn and research and look at them across countries and try to figure out how to address them together. It would be really interesting to be able to tell the future and use that knowledge to tackle these issues before they become problems.