

Cocreating Jamaica's OGP National Action Plan

A civil society catalyst to protect Jamaica's OGP Participation

Prepared By



JAMAICANS FOR JUSTICE



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Proposal Overview

This proposal seeks to enable civil society to continue its catalytic support to the Government Of Jamaica to craft the country's first Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan (NAP). With the financial support requested from the IDB, a civil society OGP working group consisting of representatives from Jamaicans For Justice, the SlashRoots Foundation, Jamaica Environment Trust and the World Resources Institute in collaboration with the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology (MSET) will execute a targeted co-creation process to craft Jamaica's OGP National Action Plan ahead of the December 31st, 2019 deadline.

The proposed co-creation process will consist of a series of online and in-person participatory consultations anchored in three thematic areas:

- Open Government and Access To information;
- Access to Justice; and
- the Environment.

These themes were identified and selected in collaboration with civil society through a May 2019 OGP capacity building workshop and follow up August Civil Society virtual meeting.¹ The OGP working group will also support the GOJ's civil society and public outreach.

Background

In December 2016, Prime Minister Andrew Holness wrote a letter of intent to the Open Government Partnership Chair, French President, His Excellency, François Hollande, expressing Jamaica's interest in joining the Open Government Partnership (OGP). Prime Minister Holness stated that "the objectives of the OGP coincide very well with the Government of Jamaica's anti-corruption policy and strategies towards achieving greater transparency, accountability, public sector efficiency and the overall strengthening of governance."²

Despite taking this important official step, Jamaica has yet to craft its first **National Action Plan (NAP)** or begin the required consultations with civil society to inform the process. Jamaica has now failed to meet its obligation for two consecutive planning cycles (over 3 years), and is at risk of failing a third, after which Jamaica will become "inactive". **Jamaica must produce a National Action Plan by December 31st, 2019, or risk being removed from the Open Government Partnership.** The Ministry Of Finance and Public Service was appointed as Jamaica's OGP Focal Point with responsibility for overseeing the National Action Plan creation process.

Civil Society's Catalytic Support

In late 2018, the civil society organizations Jamaicans For Justice, the SlashRoots Foundation, Jamaica Environment Trust, the World Resources Institute and other individual

¹ A summary note documenting the outcomes of the workshop and minutes of the virtual meeting can be found at the OGP [Jamaica Document Repository](#).

² "Jamaica Letter Of Intent", December 2016.

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/LOI-Jamaica.jpg>

members of civil society began meeting to discuss how civil society could support the OGP process. The civil society working group held meetings with stakeholders within the Government of Jamaica who have responsibilities for Open Government related activities, multilateral partners who could support a NAP development by the GOJ, and met with representatives of the OGP Latin America Secretariat to build support for Jamaica's participation.

In May 2019, this group convened a workshop in Kingston, Jamaica to raise awareness among civil society about the OGP and hold discussions on how the OGP process could support open government initiatives in Jamaica. The workshop was attended by 16 civil society organisations and representatives from the Access to Information Unit and the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology (MSET). A critical outcome of the workshop was the engagement of the Ministry Of Science, Energy and Technology, who has agreed to join the OGP working group meetings and has expressed an interest to adopt the OGP portfolio responsibilities.

The OGP working group's support has also included the establishment of a OGP Document Repository and an OGP Jamaica website. Both are stipulated in the OGP Cocreation Guidelines as minimum requirements of the OGP process.³ The document repository includes meetings notes, workshop outcomes, and other resources detailing the ongoing co-creation activities. The OGP website is under-development and, when complete, will be used to publish updates and facilitate public contributions to OGP commitment proposals and the draft National Action plan. The working group is working alongside MSET to develop a terms of reference for the OGP Multistakeholder forum, .

Through the workshop discussions and subsequent meetings the working group have developed, in collaboration with MSET, a targeted co-creation plan to craft Jamaica's OGP National Action Plan ahead of the December 3st, 2019 deadline. The proposed co-creation process will consist of a series of online and in-person participatory consultations anchored in three thematic areas--Open Government and Access To information; Access to Justice; and the Environment. These themes were identified and selected in collaboration with civil society through a May 2019 OGP capacity building workshop and follow up August Civil Society virtual meeting.⁴

Jamaica has expressed the political intention both nationally and internationally to reform its legal and regulatory framework under these three themes but has been slow to implement reform. Since passing its Access to Information Act in 2002, Jamaica has been slow to implement the much needed amendments to the legislation proposed by a Parliamentary Committee in 2011 to modernise the law. There is also a correlation between the three themes. Jamaica has expressed its intention to sign the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and

³ Open Government Partnership Co-creation Standards.
<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation-co-creation-standards/>

⁴ A summary note documenting the outcomes of the workshop and minutes of the virtual meeting can be found at the OGP Jamaica Document Repository.

the Caribbean (the Escazu Agreement) which will require the country to raise its standards in these rights through changes to its legal and regulatory framework and capacity building.⁵

This proposed requests support from the Inter-American Development Plan to execute this plan in collaboration with MSET and broader civil society stakeholders.

OGP Co-creation Approach

The civil society working group proposes a co-creation process that consists of three overlapping workstreams.

- **Workstream One: OGP Commitment Ideation**

- a. Thematic Workshops: The working group will host three in-person OGP consultation workshops, each focused on a specific theme. A thematic area lead organization will be responsible for convening stakeholders from civil society, the private sector and the public to participate in a one-day OGP co-creation workshop.

The workshops will introduce stakeholders to the OGP and lead them through a series of activities to develop commitment ideas and establish priority sequencing. Subsequently, the focus area leads will refine the commitments, publish them on the OGP website, and then present them to the MSF. They will also be responsible for reporting back to the workshop participants on the outcomes of MSF discussions.

- b. Online Citizen Participation: The OGP website will play a central role in opening up the action plan development process and closing the feedback loop with actors who have contributed. In parallel to the thematic workshops, persons will be able to contribute ideas for open government commitments through the website. Moreover, all of the commitment ideas and proposals developed throughout the co-creation process will be published on the website, where users will be able to indicate their support, suggest changes, or provide feedback.

- **Workstream Two: Commitment & Action Plan Refinement**

The OGP commitment ideas and drafts produced in workstream one will be refined ahead of submission to the multi-stakeholder forum. The thematic leads will present the comments to the MSF where they will be evaluated for feasibility and alignment with GOJ strategic priorities. A draft NAP will be published for comment and feedback in October ahead of its presentation to the responsible Minister.

⁵ *Jamaica To Sign Important Regional Agreement on Access to Information and Environmental Justice*, Petchary's Blog, May 26, 2019, available at <https://petchary.wordpress.com/2019/05/26/jamaica-to-sign-important-regional-agreement-on-access-to-information-and-environmental-justice/>

- **Workstream Three: Government Ratification**

The draft National Action Plan will be presented to the responsible Minister. The working group will support the GOJ in its preparation of the NAP submission to the OGP Secretariat, inclusive of supporting co-creation documentation.

Supporting Activities

The working group will also host a monthly virtual meeting to provide an update to civil society and other members of the public who are interested in following the OGP co-creation process. Given the delays thus far, this meeting will play an important role in maintaining a tight feedback loop with stakeholders while also keeping them engaged. This first of these virtual meetings was held on August 20, 2019.

The working group will also execute a digital campaign using social media platforms to promote each co-creation activity, generate awareness around the public’s ability to comment on the action plan, and increase the diversity of participants engaged during the co-creation process. The campaign will include the use of social media ads, multimedia content (e.g video interviews with workshop participants discussing OGP and commitment proposals), and outreach to traditional media.

Activities & Timelines

The below table provides an overview of the timeline of project activities. The activity timelines may be adjusted based on recommendations from Government and civil society working group counterparts.

Activities	Project Week(s)
Workstream 1: OGP Commitment Ideation	Sept 15 - Oct 10
<u>Online Consultation</u>	
- Launch OGP Website	Sept 23
- Website Moderation	Ongoing
<u>Co-Creation Workshops</u>	
- Workshop Facilitation Design	Sept 23
- Stakeholder & Participation Outreach	Sept 25th
- Target Workshop Dates	Consultation 1: Oct 1st - 4th Consultation 2: Oct 14 - 18th Consultation 3: Oct 21 - 25th
	Ongoing*
- Refinement of Commitment Ideas	*Beginning with first consultation
Workstream 2: Commitment Ideation & Refinement	Sept 15 - Oct 10
<u>Commitment & Action Plan Refinement</u>	

	- Refinement of Commitment Ideas	Ongoing* <i>*Beginning with first consultation</i>
	- Develop of draft National Action plan	Oct 18th - Oct 31st
	- Publication of Draft NAP for public comment	November 1st
Workstream 3: Government Ratification		Nov 15 - Dec 31st
	- MSET Ministry National Action Plan Review	Nov 15
	- Presentation of NAP to Cabinet for approval	TBD
	- Submit of NAP to OGP	TBD
Supporting Activities		Nov 15 - Dec 31st
	OGP Digital Campaign	Launched Sept 18-20
	Civil Society Virtual Meetings	Meeting 2: Sept 26 Meeting 3: Oct 17 Meeting 4: Nov 14 Meeting 5: Dec 5

Collaborating Organizations & Roles

SlashRoots Foundation

The SlashRoots Foundation is a social impact organisation that uses the principles and practices of the digital age to create a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable Caribbean society. We work with governments, development organizations and civil society to improve the design and delivery of social services and development programmes, while helping them be more responsive to the communities they serve.

SlashRoots has been an active member of the global Open Government movement generally, as well as in OGP. Most recently we were engaged by Reboot to contribute to their innovative technical advisory to the OGP sub-national pilots, where we led the engagement with the Elgeyo Marakwet County in Kenya. SlashRoots also launched and convenes the Caribbean's first and largest Open Government and Open Data Conference, Developing the Caribbean, and has participated in multiple OGP Summits.

Project Role: Project Manager, Thematic Area Lead (Open Government and Access to Information)⁶

Jamaicans For Justice

Jamaicans for Justice (JFJ) is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-violent citizens' rights action organisation that advocates for good governance and improvements in state accountability and transparency. Through the works of our action group, we focus on bringing about

⁶ Open Government Focus area may be assigned to an alternate civil society of government partners.

fundamental change in Jamaica's judicial, economic, social and political systems in order to improve the present and future lives of all Jamaicans.

Project Role: Thematic Area Lead (Access to Justice)

Jamaica Environment Trust

Project Role: Thematic Lead (Environment)