



# WATER AND OPEN GOVERNMENT

## A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE WITHIN THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

**GOOD WATER GOVERNANCE REQUIRES AN OPEN GOVERNMENT** | Tackling today's water challenges, from expanding service delivery to cleaning up the world's waterways, will require more than improving infrastructure and stepping up investments. Governments and civil society must also address daunting political challenges such as fragmented resource management, corruption, and inadequate, unequal access to clean water that communities rely on for their lives and livelihoods. Adopting open government reforms can help governments strengthen their institutional capacity, facilitate coordination between stakeholders, and resolve information asymmetries to promote fairer, more reliable and more efficient water and sanitation service delivery.

Open government strategies and initiatives are built upon the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability, and stakeholder participation.

**WHY THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP** | Through the Open Government Partnership (OGP), governments and civil society co-create two-year action plans outlining steps, or commitments, across a broad range of issues. This model ensures that civil society organizations or direct citizen engagement have a role in shaping government policy.

Many countries have already developed innovative ideas focused on effective participation, transparency and accountability in policies and programs; open data; and financing for infrastructure development in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) service delivery. OGP includes 79 countries, with a growing number of local governments signing up to participate. OGP provides countries with:

- An expanded group of champions advocating for clean and accessible water for all by uniting open government and water sector actors;
- An inclusive multi-stakeholder forum for achieving nationally directed WASH public service delivery goals;
- Strengthened political support for ongoing or intended water reforms prioritized through formal government commitments;
- A participatory approach that builds trust between government and the public;
- Formal public monitoring and accountability through the Independent Reporting Mechanism, which tracks and reports progress;
- An opportunity to approach WASH as a basic human right and address many of the root causes of water inequality, including corruption, poor quality, uneven access, and limited public participation.



## A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ON WATER AND OPEN GOVERNMENT |

In 2017, Fundación Avina, the Open Government Partnership, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Water Integrity Network (WIN), and the World Resources Institute (WRI) formed a Community of Practice on Water and Open Government, or Water Open Government CoP. Bringing together water and open government experts from around the world, the forum facilitates knowledge sharing and the development of innovative, cross-sector approaches that leverage transparency, inclusive participation, and accountable decision-making to improve water and sanitation services.

The WASH CoP's aim is to strengthen linkages between water and open government reformers and mobilize actions that help realize the **human right to water and sanitation**.

With support from the OGP Multi-Donor Trust Fund, supported by the World Bank, the Water Open Government CoP goals for 2019-2021 include:

- Creating a help desk to work with interested governments on developing and implementing country specific commitments through OGP National Action Plans;
- Creating a knowledge and exchange mechanism to provide governments and civil society with technical information and expertise needed to create transformative water and sanitation commitments;
- Producing guidance materials to help water professionals understand the OGP process and the specific opportunities to advance water reforms;
- Organizing learning events that increase data sharing, technical expertise, good practices, and peer learning to boost the development and implementation of more ambitious commitments;
- Strengthening international and national coalitions that effectively use the OGP platform to push for water reforms.

**JOIN US** | This Community of Practice offers an exciting opportunity to create a bridge between open government and water sector silos and communities. We encourage civil society, multilateral institutions and government officials to join our Community of Practice and help us achieve clean and accessible water by:

- Bringing water sector experts into the OGP commitment process at the national or local level;
- Participating in the Water Open Government CoP webinars and events;
- Sharing water tools and resources with OGP actors;
- Developing commitment ideas and supporting implementation;
- Identifying opportunities for stronger engagement between water and open government actors.

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