Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Tunisia Transitional Results Report 2018–2020

This report was prepared in collaboration with Stephan Anguelov, Independent Researcher

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I. Introduction

The Open Government Partnership is a global partnership that brings together government reformers and civil society leaders to create action plans that make governments more inclusive, responsive, and accountable. Action plan commitments may build on existing efforts, identify new steps to complete ongoing reforms, or initiate an entirely new area. OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) monitors all action plans to ensure governments follow through on commitments. Civil society and government leaders use the evaluations to reflect on their progress and determine if efforts have impacted people's lives.

The IRM has partnered with Stephan Anguelov, an independent researcher, to carry out this evaluation. The IRM aims to inform ongoing dialogue around the development and implementation of future commitments. For a full description of the IRM's methodology, please visit https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/independent-reporting-mechanism.

This report covers the implementation of Tunisia's third action plan for 2018-2020. In 2021, the IRM will implement a new approach to its research process and the scope of its reporting on action plans, approved by the IRM Refresh.[1] The IRM adjusted its Implementation Reports for 2018-2020 action plans to fit the transition process to the new IRM products and enable the IRM to adjust its workflow in light of the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on OGP country processes.

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[1] For more information, see: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/process/accountability/about-the-irm/irm-refresh/

II. Action Plan Implementation

The IRM Transitional Results Report assesses the status of the action plan's commitments and the results from their implementation at the end of the action plan cycle. This report does not re-visit the assessments for "Verifiability," "Relevance" or "Potential Impact." The IRM assesses those three indicators in IRM Design Reports. For more details on each indicator, please see Annex I in this report.

2.1. General Highlights and Results

Tunisia strengthened access to information and open data through implementation of its third action plan, such as transport and water management data. Tunisia also made progress in the extractive industries and strengthening youth participation in government. Finally, the co-creation of eight municipal action plans has set in motion manifold open government gains across the country in the near future.

Seven out of the thirteen commitments saw substantial levels of completion during the action plan cycle. Of these, two commitments were completed in 2021 after the implementation period. This included commitment 4 on opening land transport station data and commitment 11 on implementing the OGP standards at the local level. The remaining six commitments were implemented to a limited extent. During the 2018-2020 implementation period, Tunisia achieved a similar level of completion and open government early results to the country's 2016-2018 action plan.

Most commitments with substantial progress focused on creating and publishing open data or establishing legal frameworks. Two important exceptions to this type are commitments 6 and 11. Commitment 6 to 'Enhancing transparency in the extractive industries sector' saw significant government-civil society engagement. Tunisia only needs to submit its application to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative for this commitment to be considered complete. Commitment 11 facilitated a more cooperative relationship between civil society and the government through dialogue and co-creation of municipal OGP action plans. As a result, local activists and officials in eight municipalities had co-created and adopted open government action plans by 2021.

Commitments that saw more modest progress generally entailed a strong public accountability element and close cooperation between civil society and government. Similar to the previous action plan, stakeholders reported that political instability and government reshuffles presented a challenge to the OGP process. COVID-19 also presented an obstacle. Some civil society actors also noted that the multi-stakeholder forum during the implementation was not sufficiently inclusive and did not actively invite new participants on specific OGP topics or work to raise OGP's profile.[2]

2.2. COVID 19 Pandemic impact on implementation

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[2] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, e-mail communication with IRM researcher, 16 April 2021, and Samia Zayani, President of Dynamique Tunisienne autour de l'eau 2017-2021

COVID-19 adversely affected the functioning of the administration of civil society and implementation of many commitments, especially those requiring traveling between regions and holding in-person consultations. These include commitment 11 on implementing the OGP standards at the local level and commitment 6 on enhancing transparency in the extractive industries sector. Restrictions on movement between regions in the country were put in place since January 2020 and were relaxed in June 2020 to be tightened again in October 2020. The multi-stakeholder forum assembled only three times in 2020, much less than in 2019 or 2018. Its meetings remained in-person which prompted some participants from civil society and government to miss the meetings.

2.3. Early results

The IRM acknowledges that results may not be visible within the two-year time frame of the action plan and that at least a substantial level of completion is required to assess early results. For the purpose of the Transitional Results Report, the IRM will use the "**Did it Open Government?**" (DIOG) indicator to highlight early results based on the changes to government practice in areas relevant to OGP values. Moving forward, new IRM Results Report will not continue using DIOG as an indicator.

Section 2.3 focuses on outcomes from the implementation of commitments that had an ambitious or strong design, per the IRM Design Report assessment or that may have lacked clarity and/or ambition but had successful implementation with "major" or "outstanding" changes to government practice.[3] Commitments considered for analysis in this section had at least a "substantial" level of implementation, as assessed by the IRM in Section 2.4.[4] While this section provides the analysis of the IRM's findings for the commitments that meet the criteria described above, Section 2.4 includes an overview of the level of completion for all the commitments in the action plan.

Commitment 2: Completion of the legal and regulatory framework to enhance the public data opening up	
Aim of the commitment	This commitment is a continuation of similar reforms in Tunisia's previous two action plans. While Tunisia adopted a 2011 decree on open data, it lacked the specificity needed to establish a regulatory framework for implementation.[5] Therefore, this commitment aimed to establish legal procedures for government open data resources and to further develop the public data inventory.[6] Milestones aim to issue a regulatory text for public data, continue the public data inventory project, offer training programs for public servants, and promote the reuse of the open public data.[7]
Did it open government? **Marginal**	The implementation of the commitment as a whole is substantial. Most of the milestones were completed after the end of the actions plan cycle – in early 2021. The first milestone provided for the adoption of a government decree on open data, a bylaw. The draft governmental decree on open data was

[3] IRM Design Reports identified strong commitments as "noteworthy commitments" if they were assessed as verifiable, relevant and "transformative" potential impact. If no commitments met the potential impact threshold, the IRM selected noteworthy commitments from the commitments with "moderate" potential impact. For the list of Tunisia's noteworthy commitments, see the Executive Summary of the 2018-2020 IRM Design Report: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/tunisia-design-report-2018-2020-for-public-comment/

[5] Tunisia's 2018-2020 IRM Design Report. Published for public comment April 2021, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/tunisia-design-report-2018-2020-for-public-comment/
[6] Tunisia's 2018-2020 IRM Design Report. Published for public comment April 2021, pg 21, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/tunisia-design-report-2018-2020-for-public-comment/
[7] Idem.

completed in the end of 2018.[8] An online public consultation and was organized for 20 days in March 2019 and a revised version of the draft decree was discussed with other public institutions in October 2019.[9] The government adopted the Decree No. 2021-3 on 6 January 2021 and promulgated it the same month.[10] The decree provides some enforcement mechanisms such as the mandatory adoption of an annual national action plan on open data by the Electronic Administration Unit (e-government unit) of the Presidency of the government of Tunisia, as well as the mandatory adoption of annual action plans by the individual public structures with the assistance and coordination by the e-government unit (article 4). The Decree also provides for the establishment of a consultative committee, comprising members from civil society and the private sector, to oversee and consult the work on and the implementation of the action plans on open data (Article 5). All public bodies have to appoint a responsible person for the activities on open data, including the establishment and maintenance of a data inventory (Article 6). Hence, all public bodies should establish a data inventory for the data that they produce or collect.[11]

The government carried out in 2018 the data inventories for six ministries and funds (Agriculture, Local Affairs and Environment, Industry, Culture, Transport, and Social Security Fund).[12] Two more ministries – of Defense and of Equipment, Housing and Infrastructure – carried out partial data inventories in 2019 and 2020 applying a new online-based methodology that all bodies will follow in the future.[13] The data inventories are not public and are internal documents for the respective bodies, however in the future some part of those inventories could be published through the online tool.[14] Ahmed Ben Taârit, Access to Information Program Director with the CSO I-Watch,[15] considers the effort on data inventories a good first step and useful for the public bodies to improve the organization of their archives. The effort is ambitious and delivering the set outcomes could be a challenge.[16]

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[8] Commitment 2 : Establish the legal and organizational framework to facilitate public data release, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1359

[9] Idem.

[10] Décret gouvernemental n° 2021-3 du 6 janvier 2021, relatif aux données publiques ouvertes, Journal Officiel de la République Tunisienne — 12 janvier 2021, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Government-Decree-Number-3-of-2021.pdf

[11] Rim Garnaoui, Director of the e-Government Unit in the Presidency of the Government of Tunisia, interview by IRM researcher, 16 April 2021.

[12] Idem.

[13] Idem.

[14] Rim Garnaoui and Sonia Gharbi, e-Government Unit in the Presidency of the Government of Tunisia, interview by IRM researcher, 22 April 2021.

[15] Ahmed Ben Taârit, Program Director of "Access to information" in I-Watch, interview by IRM researcher, 16 April 2021.

[16] Idem.

The government held six training sessions on open data for more than 150[17] public officials and civil servants in June 2019.[18] The E-government unit along with the Ministry of Public Service, Modernization of Administration and Public Policies and the World Bank, in early 2020, also held a national hackathon promoting the reuse of the open public data.[19] This Hackathon brought together 38 teams and more than 150 participants of different ages, from different regions.[20] Seven of the projects from the hackathon have been continued and will be fully developed in 2021.[21]

As a whole, commitment implementation advanced the state of access to information and civic participation by establishing legal guarantees for government provision of open data. It also facilitated civil society and private sector oversight and participation through the future committee. Additionally, the hackathon and trainings raised awareness and provided tools both for civil servants and citizens to publish and reuse public data sets. Despite this process, implementation of the decree, establishment of the consultative committee, and the ultimate impact on available open data remain to be determined. Hence, as of the writing of this report, the efforts towards opening government in the field of open data are positive, but so far marginal.

Commitment 8: Establish mechanisms contributing to applying integrity in the public sector and combating corruption

Aim of the commitment	This commitment aims to combat corruption in the public sector[22] and builds on several anticorruption reforms implemented in the last decade. In 2011, the government established the Authority for Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption (INLUCC) as a temporary body, which was reaffirmed in the 2014 constitution. However, the agency suffers of a lack of resources and staff.[23] In 2016 and 2017, Tunisia adopted a national anti-corruption strategy, empowering the National Anti-Corruption Authority to carry out its mandate, and passed the Whistleblower Protection Law.[24] In 2018, the Tunisian parliament passed

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[17] Idem.

[18] Commitment 2 : Establish the legal and organizational framework to facilitate public data release, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1359

[19] Idem.

[20] Organization of the National Hackthon on the open public data reuse #OpenGovDataHack2020, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1906

[21] Rim Garnaoui, ibid.

[22] Commitment 8: Consolidate integrity in public sector and corruption fight, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1338

[23] Emir Sfaxi, Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Tunisia Design Report 2018 –2020, page 37, pre-publication version.

[24] Emir Sfaxi, Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Tunisia Design Report 2018 –2020, page 37, pre-publication version.

	a law that requires politicians, the media, and NGOs to declare their assets to the Authority for Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption (INLUCC).[25] This commitment aimed to adopt government decrees to implement the whistleblower protection law and the assets and conflict of interest declarations law, as a first milestone. The second milestone aimed at replacing the anti-corruption authority by establishing a new constitutionally mandated anti-corruption authority.[26]
Did it open government? **Marginal**	The implementation of the commitment as a whole is limited. The government adopted two of the decrees envisioned in the first milestone in 2019.[27] The Presidency introduced a draft of the decree on determination of the asset declaration form, but it has not adopted the decree so far. The government and parliament did not implement the second milestone and have not established the new constitutional anticorruption authority so far. The government passed decrees to incentivize whistleblowers[28] and corruption reporting.[29] According to a Transparency International study, Tunisians trust that a citizen denouncing corruption could have an impact. Achref Aouadi from I-Watch believes this is in part due to government measures to protect whistleblowers.[30] However, there are limitations in the government's practical application of whistleblower protections. Therefore, these decrees currently represent a marginal change to anticorruption practices in Tunisia. Ahmed Ben Taârit, also from I-Watch,[31] states that reporting potential corruption anonymously online with the current anti-corruption authority is impossible. Another impediment is the practice of the authority to summon the whistleblowers to the authority's headquarters for questioning. This could discourage filing reports, since the whistleblower's anonymity could be jeopardized.[32] The Corruption Perception Index for Tunisia stagnated in 2018 and 2019, notwithstanding the efforts in denouncing corruption. I-

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[25] Idem.

[26] Idem.

[27] Commitment 8 : Consolidate integrity in public sector and corruption fight, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1338

[28] Government Decree No. 2019-1123, setting the conditions and procedures for granting incentives in the prevention of corruption, Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia, OGP Tunisia repository, 10 December 2019, in Arabic, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Decret2019_1124Arabe.pdf

[29] Government Decree No. 2019-1124, on the mechanisms, formulas and criteria for granting rewards to whistleblowers, Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia, OGP Tunisia repository, 10 December 2019, in Arabic, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Decret2019_1124Arabe.pdf

[30] Achref Aouadi, I-Watch, quoted in "18 %, taux de corruption en Tunisie, selon Transparency International", Marsad 1, 12 December 2019, https://www.observatoire-securite.tn/fr/2019/12/12/18-taux-de-corruption-en-tunisie-selon-transparency-international/

[31] Ahmed Ben Taârit, Program Director of "Access to information" in I-Watch, interview by IRM researcher, 16 April 2021.

[32] Idem.

	Watch attributes this stagnation mainly to a lack of political will and the passivity of the judiciary, including on cases involving politicians.[33] Since the adoption of the asset declaration law, civil society indicated that the anti-corruption authority's independence is at risk as it falls under the executive branch. In 2020, the outgoing Prime Minister fired the president of the anti-corruption authority,[34] a move that the press called "problematic in terms of ethics."[35] According to Ahmed Ben Taârit, this event demonstrates the importance of a constitutionally established anti-corruption authority independent from the executive.[36] Thus, while the passage of the decrees established important regulatory scaffolding, challenges to implementation of the decrees and contextual obstacles mean that this commitment has so far only resulted in marginal changes to government practice.

Commitment 11: Implement initiatives to apply the OGP at the local level	
Aim of the commitment	This commitment aimed to apply OGP at the local level. It complemented Tunisia's ongoing decentralization process and the country's first local elections which took place in May 2018.[37] It also builds on commitment 4 in Tunisia's previous action plan, which resulted in a guide on open government principles and best practices for the local level.[38] In the current iteration, the first milestone intended for representatives of 12 municipalities along with local residents to develop open government plans. The second entailed a communication plan that would disseminate information about the initiatives to be implemented.
Did it open government? **Major**	The commitment has been substantially implemented since eight municipal councils adopted eight local OGP action plans, however after the end of this action plan's cycle, in early 2021. According to government,[39] the delay was due to the COVID-19 crisis.

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[33] "Tunisie: I watch dénonce un indicateur de corruption alarmant", Réalités online, 23 January 2020, https://www.realites.com.tn/2020/01/tunisie-i-watch-denonce-un-indicateur-de-corruption-alarmant-2/

[34] Seif Soudani, « Le président de l'instance anti-corruption démis de ses fonctions », Le courrier de l'Atlas, 24 August 2020, https://www.lecourrierdelatlas.com/le-president-de-linstance-anti-corruption-demis-de-ses-fonctions/

[35] Idem.

[36] Ahmed Ben Taârit, ibid.

[37] Emir Sfaxi, Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Tunisia Design Report 2018 –2020, page 45, pre-publication version

[38] Commitment 4: Improve transparency and Openness of Local Governments, Action plan 2016-2018, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=750 see also Open Government Guide at the local level, "Mettre en place les principes du gouvernement ouvert", Expertise France, OpenCitiz et Etalab, Implemented commitments, OGP Tunisia repository, October 2018, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1451

[39] Rim Garnaoui, Director of the e-Government Unit in the Presidency of the Government of Tunisia, interview by IRM researcher, 16 April 2021.

The implementation of the commitment as a whole brought a major opening of government, specifically at the local level. Tunisia's OGP multistakeholder forum appointed a smaller committee from its members, comprised of an equal number[40] of CSOs[41] and government representatives. This committee devised the 10 criteria[42] to select municipalities. The criteria included: access to information and online transparency infrastructure, active publication of financial and public procurement documents, maintaining a complaint register and processing system, organizing open government trainings, and municipal council members' filing of asset declarations with the Anticorruption Authority, among others. This committee assessed 72 applications and chose initially 12 municipalities, which later came down to 10.[43] The chosen local administrations satisfied all the criteria and received trainings on open government by the government and other organizations.[44] As the criteria required, all participating local administrations had already made some steps in opening government, but the future OGP action plans were to be their first comprehensive strategic documents in this policy field, which prompted the need for specific trainings on open government.[45] In each municipality five CSOs were also engaged in the process.[46] As a result, eight municipalities submitted OGP local action plans drafted along with local civil society and with support and advice provided by the government.[47] Civil society and the municipalities organized a series of both online and in-person public consultations on the eight draft action plans and citizens' opinions were taken into account.[48] The action plans were adopted by the municipal council after a consultation with the central government in January 2021, thus completely implementing the first milestone after the end of the 2018-2020 OGP cycle.

Civil society organizations, with the help of the government and support from the World Bank's Multi-Donor Trust Fund, enacted a communication action plan to further disseminate information, during the process of sorting and selecting the 12 pilot municipalities and also

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[40] Aicha Karafi Hosni, President of the Association Tunisienne de Gouvernance Locale, interview by IRM researcher 28 April 2021.

[41] TACID network, Association Tunisienne de Gouvernance Locale, and OpenGov.tn, according to Khaled Sellami, Director General of the e-Government Unit in the Presidency of the Government of Tunisia, interview by IRM researcher, 7 April 2021

[42] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, e-mail communication with IRM researcher, 16 April 2021

[43] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, interview by IRM researcher 12 April 2021.

[44] Idem.

[45] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, interview by IRM researcher 12 April 2021 and e-mail correspondence 25 May 2021.

[46] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, e-mail communication with IRM researcher, 16 April 2021, ibid.

[47] Rim Garnaoui, ibid.

[48] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, e-mail communication with IRM researcher, 16 April 2021, ibid.

during the co-creation of the eight action plans.[49] This communication plan involved a social media campaign, three round tables, open doors information days in five universities, meeting with decisions makers on both national and local levels, OGP week events, and an online consultation.[50] These activities were carried out before the end of the action plan cycle, hence the second milestone is completed on schedule.

Aicha Karafi Hosni, President of the CSO "Association Tunisienne de Gouvernance Locale" and participant in the design of the criteria and selection of the municipalities, explained that the process is an improvement in itself.[51] It brought local government and civil society to the same table, working together as partners instead of as adversaries like in the past.[52] However, Hatem Chakroun from the independent think-tank "Observatoire Tunisien de la Transition Démocratique" criticized the low levels of ambition and precision in the local action plans.[53] The eight action plans published on the OGP Tunisia government portal share mostly the same overall contents: improving access to information; developing open data; digitalizing services for citizens; developing a communication plan; and organizing trainings on open government for civil servants.[54] Chakroun indicated two commitments from the Gabès and Zriba's action plans focused on gathering and publishing geographical and natural resources data on the local level that he considers ambitious and having a high potential of opening government.[55] He also noted that the leading government agency was the E-Government Unit and not the Ministry of Local Affairs and the Environment, which would have been a more suitable institution for the commitment's goals. Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, a civil society actor[56] who took a major role in the design and implementation of the commitment, commented that Tunisians are very interested in the open government values of transparency and public participation which the commitment covered. Challenges in the implementation are related to the lack of specific financing[57] as well as the need of a stronger leadership on the local level and for the

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[49] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, interview by IRM researcher 12 April 2021, ibid.

[50] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, e-mail communication with IRM researcher, 16 April 2021, ibid.

[51] Aicha Karafi Hosni, President of the Association Tunisienne de Gouvernance Locale, ibid.

[52] Idem.

[53] Hatem Chakroun, "Observatoire Tunisien de la Transition Démocratique", interview by IRM researcher 28 April 2021.

[54] Final versions of the Open Government action plans at the Local Level, Activities and News, OGP Tunisia repository, texts in Arabic, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=2212

[55] Hatem Chakroun, "Observatoire Tunisien de la Transition Démocratique", interview by IRM researcher 28 April 2021 and e-mail correspondence 28 May 2021.

[56] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, interview by IRM researcher 12 April 2021, ibid.

[57] Aicha Karafi Hosni, President of the Association Tunisienne de Gouvernance Locale, ibid.

	government local and central to take further action in opening itself and raising the profile of OGP instead of relying on CSOs to act.[58] Tunisia's adoption and co-creation of eight local OGP action plans are a major step to open government in terms of transparency and public participation. Tunisia's Constitution (Article 139)[59] and the Local Government Code (Chapter one, Section 5)[60] provide for all municipalities to enact development programs based on open government principles. Both the central government[61] and civil society actors[62] see the OGP local action plans as an implementation of some of these legal obligations by the respective municipalities. Looking ahead, challenges include the need for strong ownership and leadership on part of local and central governments as well as implementing ambitious reforms that extend beyond the legal obligations already in place.

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[58] Idem.

[59] Tunisia's Constitution of 2014, constituteproject.org, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Tunisia_2014.pdf

[60] Code des collectivités locales, Portail des Collectivités Locales, Ministry of local and environmental affairs of the Republic of Tunisia, in French, http://www.collectiviteslocales.gov.tn/fr/code-des-collectivites-locales-2/

[61] Khaled Sellami, Director General of the e-Government Unit in the Presidency of the Government of Tunisia, interview by IRM researcher, 7 April 2021, ibid.

[62] Asma Cherifi, President founder of TACID Network, interview by IRM researcher 12 April 2021, ibid.

2.4. Commitment implementation

The table below includes an assessment of the level of completion for each commitment in the action plan.

Commitment	Completion: (no evidence available, not started, limited, substantial or complete)
1. Strengthen the right of access to information	**Substantial:** The Access to Information Authority (INAI) prepared and published a guide for public officials[63], as well as a short guide dedicated to citizens[64], which was drafted along with the civil society organization Article 19. The INAI did not establish a coordination working group with civil society. However, Ahmed Ben Taârit, Program Director of "Access to information" at I-Watch,[65] considers that the INAI is making significant efforts in collaborating with CSOs such as I-Watch[66] in working on common projects, concluding memoranda of understanding, etc. The implementation of the third milestone is limited, since the government organized two workshops for public institutions and CSOs on 27 March 2019 to present the survey that will be used to collect data for the drafting of the assessment report regarding the implementation of the goal 16.10.2 of SDGs on the promotion of the access to information in Tunisia.[67] In early 2021 the government,[68] working together the French public agency Expertise France, has also launched a call for applications for a consultant to organize and carry out the drafting of the assessment report regarding the implementation of the goal 16.10.2 of SDGs.[69] INAI in collaboration with the General Directorate of Reform, World Bank and Article 19 held seven training sessions on access to

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[63] "Guide for public officials", INAI, 28 March 2019, available in Arabic at the Open Government Partnership Tunisia Portal, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/guide-acces-information-structures-publiques.pdf

[64] "Guide dedicated to citizens", INAI, OECD, Article 19, available in Arabic at the Open Government Partnership Tunisia Portal, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/wp-content/uploads/2019/29/ATI_CSO_Guide_FINAL_Web_Arabic_GR.pdf

[65] Ahmed Ben Taârit, Program Director of "Access to information" in I-Watch, interview by IRM researcher, 16 April 2021.

[66] I WATCH Organization, https://www.iwatch.tn/

[67] Commitment 1 : Strengthen the right of access to information, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1362

[68] Rim Garnaoui, Director of the e-Government Unit in the Presidency of the Government of Tunisia, interview by IRM researcher, 16 April 2021.

[69] Call for applications for a consultant to organize and carry out the drafting of the assessment report regarding the implementation of the goal 16.10.2 of SDGs, Terms of reference, PAGOF, https://www.pagof.fr/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/tdr-activite-b1-1.5-appui-a-linai_vfinale.pdf

	information between September 2018 and May 2019[70] for around 200 officials[71] of access to information from different institutions. The National Agency for Computer Security substantially completed the fifth milestone by drafting and proposing the national common referential for the classification of administrative data. The draft decree adopting the classification is introduced in the Presidency of the government, but the Presidency has not adopted it so far.[72]
2. Completion of the legal and regulatory framework to enhance the public data opening up	**Substantial:** For details regarding the implementation and early results of this commitment see section 2.3.
3. Strengthen access to geographic information	**Substantial:** The National Mapping and Remote Sensing Centre developed some of the infrastructure of the portal for access to geographic information and databases, however the portal is not ready and is not online.[73] According to the government, compilation of the databases of topographic data and flat photos started in 2019[74] and was carried out to a significant extent by the end of 2020,[75] and thus implementation is substantial. However, implementation of the fourth milestone on establishing the initial part of the addresses database is limited.[76]
4. Standardize identifiers and nomenclatures of the land transport stations and disseminate the relevant public data in an open format	**Substantial:** According to a government official,[77] the inventory of stations on the regular and non-regular transport means has been established, the identifiers and nomenclatures of land transport stations were unified in a common nomenclature, and the database on land transport stations established. The database was published on the Ministry of Transport open data portal in April 2021, after the end of the 2018-2020 action plan cycle.[78]

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[70] Commitment 1, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1362 , ibid.

[71] Rim Garnaoui, ibid.

[72] Idem.

[73] Idem.

[74] Commitment 3 : Enhance access to geographic information, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1356

[75] Rim Garnaoui, ibid.

[76] Idem.

[77] Idem.

[78] Référentiel National d'arrêt, Ministry of Transport, http://data.transport.tn/dataset/referentiel-national-d-arret

| 5. Improve water resource governance | **Limited:**

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries completed the first milestone by holding a meeting at the Ministry of Agriculture organized by a civil society organization[79] with relevant civil society actors on 17 April 2019 to discuss the future publication of datasets related to water.[80] According to the organizer Samia Zayani, President of "Dynamique Tunisienne autour de l'eau" 2017-2021, the meeting was productive but stakeholders' voices were not sufficiently represented and the process was not fully participatory.[81] The Ministry published multiple datasets in three categories on water[82] on its open data portal - http://www.agridata.tn/. Samia Zayani[83] explained that the published datasets provide information useful for the administration, since different departments have not internally shared certain data in the past. Two datasets are useful for civil society, one on local groups of water distributers[84] and the one on the quality of water. This dataset was published but is not currently available on the portal. The IRM researcher could not verify the existence of an electronic platform to report violations regarding water management and its interconnectivity with the mobile application "SOS eau" (or "Water is gold"), nor the publication of the monthly reports on drilling incidents or illegal connections by the Ministry. Samia Zayani[85] explained that the e-platform, which involved a service center to coordinate the work on violations reports with civil society and different administrations, was launched as a pilot project for the region of Gafsa and functioned for a while, but was discontinued. According to government[86] and civil society[87] the mobile application "SOS eau" (renamed to "Water is gold"[88]) has a functioning beta version but the interconnectivity with the e-platform is not established and the mobile application is not available for users with all its |

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[79] Dynamique Tunisienne autour de l'eau, Samia Zayani, President of Dynamique Tunisienne autour de l'eau 2017-2021, interview by IRM researcher 24 April 2021.

[80] Commitment 5 : Improving water resources governance, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1350

[81] Samia Zayani, President of Dynamique Tunisienne autour de l'eau 2017-2021, ibid.

[82] http://www.agridata.tn/ seems to be of restricted access for certain locations such as Bulgaria, the IRM researcher had to use a virtual private network (VPN) providing an IP address in North Africa in order to access the Portal.

[83] Samia Zayani, President of Dynamique Tunisienne autour de l'eau 2017-2021, ibid.

[84] Liste des GDA eau potable, http://www.agridata.tn/dataset/liste-des-gda-eau-potable

[85] Samia Zayani, President of Dynamique Tunisienne autour de l'eau 2017-2021, ibid.

[86] Rim Garnaoui, ibid.

[87] Samia Zayani, President of Dynamique Tunisienne autour de l'eau 2017-2021, ibid.

[88] A link to "Water is gold" is published at agridata.tn , but it was not operational on 13 May 2021 when checked by the IRM researcher, the link is https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.giz.goutte

	intended functionalities. The Ministry did not publish monthly reports on drilling incidents or illegal connections, but according to the civil society actor[89] publishes most of that information in its annual reports. Hence, the level of implementation of the second milestone is limited. Rim Garnaoui of the Government of Tunisia,[90] stated that the government is finalizing a policy to rationalize distribution and consumption of water, but nothing has been published, so far.
6. Enhancing transparency in the extractive industries sector	**Substantial:** The Ministry of Industry and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises organized a national dialogue on energy and mines on 30 May 2019 followed by a Ministerial Council dated on 7 June 2019 on the dialogue outcomes.[91] The National Anti-Corruption Authority and members of parliament were responsible for the organization of elections between 25 civil society organizations who elected five representatives, including from producing regions of Tunisia, to the Extractive industries transparency initiative (EITI) multi-stakeholder group.[92] The group also includes seven representatives of government institutions. One of those representatives is from the Ministry of Finance. According to Wissem Heni, Tunisia Country Manager for the Natural Resource Governance Institute,[93] this participation is also the implementation of milestone five as it guarantees the improved communication between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Industry. The multi-stakeholder group also set its internal rules and drafted a work plan, which it discussed publicly with more than 150 CSOs and private companies on multiple events throughout Tunisia's oil producing regions in 2020.[94] The Natural Resource Governance Institute drafted and published an analysis of the governance system of hydrocarbons and mining sectors in August 2020.[95] The Ministry of Industry and civil society actors completed the sixth milestone by holding a training session for the multi-stakeholder group representatives

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[89] Idem.

[90] Rim Garnaoui, ibid.

[91] Commitment 6 : Enhancing transparency in the extractive industries sector by joining the EITI initiative, Follow up Plan Implementation, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1347

[92] Wissem Heni, Tunisia Country Manager for the Natural Resource Governance Institute, an international civil society organization, interview by IRM researcher, 14 April 2021.

[93] Idem.

[94] Idem.

[95] Wissem Heni and Amir Shafaie, "Code des hydrocarbures Tunisien : Adaptation du processus d'octroi des permis aux bonnes pratiques internationales", Natural Resource Governance Institute, August 2020, in French, https://resourcegovernance.org/sites/default/files/documents/tunisia_contracting_final.pdf

	during September 2019.[96] The Ministry and the multi-stakeholder group also implemented substantially the crucial fourth milestone by establishing a draft of the request to join the EITI initiative. However, the Ministry has not completed and submitted the request to join the international initiative so far.[97] While progress was made, changes in ministry leadership and private sector lobbying have since inhibited further EITI advancement in Tunisia.
7. Applying the Principles of Open Contracting in the hydrocarbons field	**Limited:** The implementation of the crucial and ambitious reform of the Hydrocarbon Code to include open contracting principles was limited and thus defines the same level of completion for the entire commitment. In June 2019, after a national dialogue on energy and mines, the government prioritized revision of the Hydrocarbon Code.[98] However, after the change of governments in early 2020, the new government has not picked up the effort to reform the law, as of the writing of this report.[99] The Ministry of Industry and two civil society organizations[100] launched online the e-platform Resources.tn. According to Wissem Heni, Tunisia Country Manager for the Natural Resource Governance Institute and one of the two partnering organizations,[101] the e-platform is so far underdeveloped, it lacks information of the companies by extracting field, it does not publish all the information on the contracting progress, as well as the criteria for the selection of extracting companies, etc. Hence, the implementation of the second milestone is not full, but substantial. The third milestone was completed by the publication in August 2020 of a study drafted by civil society.[102]
8. Establish mechanisms contributing to	**Limited:** For details regarding the implementation and early results of this commitment see section 2.3.

[96] Commitment 6 : Enhancing transparency in the extractive industries sector by joining the EITI initiative, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1347 , ibid.

[97] Wissem Heni, ibid.

[98] « Tunisie: Mesures et dispositions adoptées par le Conseil ministériel consacré à l'énergie et aux mines », Tunisie numérique, 08 June 2019, in French, https://www.tunisienumerique.com/tunisie-mesures-et-dispositions-adoptees-par-le-conseil-ministeriel-consacre-a-lenergie-et-aux-mines

[99] Wissem Heni, ibid.

[100] I Watch organization and the Natural Resources Governance Institute, https://www.iwatch.tn/ and https://resourcegovernance.org/our-work/country/tunisia

[101] Wissem Heni, Tunisia Country Manager for the Natural Resource Governance Institute, an international civil society organization, interview by IRM researcher, 14 April 2021, ibid.

[102] Wissem Heni and Amir Shafaie, "Code des hydrocarbures Tunisien : Adaptation du processus d'octroi des permis aux bonnes pratiques internationales", Natural Resource Governance Institute, August 2020, in French, https://resourcegovernance.org/sites/default/files/documents/tunisia_contracting_final.pdf

applying integrity in the public sector and combating corruption	
9. Applying a participatory approach in the State Budget drafting process	**Limited:** The IRM researcher could not establish whether the work of the joint committee for financial transparency created at the Ministry of Finance has been reactivated. The Ministry's website contains minutes of meetings of the joint committee up to 2016.[103] Hence, there is no evidence available for the implementation of the first milestone. In turn, even though the other two milestones saw significant progress, the overall level of completion is noted as limited. The Court of Auditors published the audit report of the state budget for 2017 in June 2019[104] and the audit report for the state budget for 2018.[105] The Parliament and President of the Republic adopted and published in early 2019 Organic Law No. 2019-15, related to the Organic Law of the State Budget.[106]
10. Developing new mechanism to promote interaction with the youth and enable them to pursue dialogue about public policies	**Substantial:** The Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs developed the terms of reference for the development of the e-platform,[107] launched a call for tenders to choose the consultancy office that will draft the project, stages and schedule for implementing the e-platform for youth. The government also organized elections and established five pilot youth councils in the municipalities of Ibn Khaldoun, Testour, Ben Guerdane, Kasserine and the Kef.[108] According to Fedia Gasmi of the Tunisian Institute for Democracy & Development, the five councils were chosen to represent five different regions of Tunisia with different problems.[109] Young people showed enthusiasm and interest for the youth councils and many voted in their elections, e.g. 800 votes were cast in Ben Guerdane alone.[110] The elected youth councils had the same

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[103] Commission mixte pour la transparence financière, http://www.finances.gov.tn/fr/commission-mixte-pour-la-transparence-financiere
[104] 2017 Audit report, Court of audit,
http://www.courdescomptes.nat.tn/upload/loi%20reglement/reglement2017/reglement2017.pdf
[105] 2018 Audit report, Court of audit,
http://www.courdescomptes.nat.tn/Ar/%D8%A5%D8%B5%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA_59_3_0_0_0_0000_0000_eeeee-eee-eeeeeee-eeeeee-eeee-2018_59
[106] Organic Law No. 2019-15 of 13 February 2019, related to the Organic Law of the State Budget,
http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Loi2019_15Arabe.pdf
[107] Fedia Gasmi, Tunisian Institute for Democracy & Development, e-mail correspondence with the IRM researcher, 19 April 2021.
[108] Commitment 10 : Enhance youth participation in public life, OGP Tunisia repository,
http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1332
[109] Fedia Gasmi, Tunisian Institute for Democracy & Development, interview by IRM researcher, 13 April 2021.
[110] Idem.

	number of members as the local municipal councils.[111] They independently developed their internal rules, thus the Youth Council of Kef organized itself as a shadow council of the Kef municipality.[112] The others took the roles of independent consultative bodies.[113] All the councils had high ambitions and started working with the municipalities on common policies. However, after the end of the action plan cycle, the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs stopped actively supporting the pilot youth councils and some of them also interrupted their activities.[114] Out of the five, the Youth councils of Kef and Testour the one previously created of El Omran are still functioning.
11. Implement initiatives to apply the OGP at the local level	**Substantial:** For details regarding the implementation and early results of this commitment see section 2.3.
12. Approximate administrative services through putting them online	**Limited:** According to the OGP Tunisia repository,[115] the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries selected an organization to develop the mobile application "m-Agri" that enables citizens to remotely obtain services in the agricultural sector.[116] The organization identified the model and design for the application's development. The IRM researcher could not verify the existence of the beta version of the application, since the published link does not lead to it.[117] The Ministry of State Property and Land Affairs (Land Property Register) developed several online administrative services available through the Land Property Register website, such as: view the titles online, view the land operations online, copies of titles, certificates of ownership and non-ownership, certificate of inquiry, certificates of reference of acts.[118] The Ministry of the National Defense developed an e-service to follow-up the postponement and exemption of military duty situations. According to the Tunisia OGP repository, the Ministry launched the e-service and it is available at

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[111] Idem.
[112] Idem.
[113] Idem.
[114] Idem.
[115] Commitment 12: Approximate administrative services through putting them online, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1326
[116] Emir Sfaxi, Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Tunisia Design Report 2018 –2020, page 49, pre-publication version.
[117] Commitment 12: Approximate administrative services through putting them online, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1326, ibid.
[118] Land Property Register website, in Arabic, http://www.cpf.gov.tn/cpfsite/Arabe/index.php

	http://www.services.defense.tn/TAJNID/ . The text in the Tunisia repository was published in May 2021 and IRM researcher could not establish the launch date and functionalities of the e-service.
	The Ministry of Cultural Affairs started working on the development of an e-platform to monitor the support costs granted in the cultural field.[119] However, the results of their work have not been published. The winning team of a hackathon is currently developing a parallel project on opening data on subsidies to civil society in the cultural sector. The product could be integrated with the future platform.[120]
13. Facilitate access to services provided by the civil service	**Limited:** This commitment aimed to increase transparency in government hiring and develop civil service employees' capacity to provide services.[121] According to the government, the General Authority for Civil Service at the Presidency of the Government drafted and adopted the template for job descriptions and selected the pilot ministries that will adopt the job description sheets for six professional categories.[122] The General Authority for Civil Service implemented the second milestone to a limited extent. It organized two workshops on 14 and 15 January 2019 with the presence of training managers at the ministries to identify data related to training and to define the tools of production of these data periodically.[123] The General Authority also established the electronic platform for annual training plans of ministries at the end of August 2019.[124] The e-platform[125] is open to all ministries to create, develop, schedule and carry out trainings. The platform is not public and only the ministries and their trainees have access to it. The IRM researcher could not find statistical data on the training of public officials so far.

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[119] Commitment 12 : Approximate administrative services through putting them online, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1326, ibid.
[120] Rim Garnaoui and Sonia Gharbi, e-Government Unit in the Presidency of the Government of Tunisia, interview by IRM researcher, 22 April 2021, ibid.
[121] Emir Sfaxi, Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Tunisia Design Report 2018 –2020, page 52, pre-publication version.
[122] Rim Garnaoui and Sonia Gharbi, e-Government Unit in the Presidency of the Government of Tunisia, interview by IRM researcher, 22 April 2021, ibid.
[123] Commitment 13 : Facilitate access to services provided by the civil service, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=1319
[124] Idem, see also The e-platform for training in public administration, Implemented commitments, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?p=2208
[125] The e-platform for training in public administration, http://www.plans-formation.gov.tn/formation.php

III. Multi-stakeholder Process

3.1 Multi-stakeholder process throughout action plan implementation

In 2017, OGP adopted the OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards intended to support participation and co-creation by civil society at all stages of the OGP cycle. All OGP-participating countries are expected to meet these standards. The standards aim to raise ambition and quality of participation during development, implementation, and review of OGP action plans.

OGP's Articles of Governance also establish participation and co-creation requirements a country or entity must meet in their action plan development and implementation to act according to the OGP process. Tunisia **did not act** contrary to OGP process.[126]

Please see Annex I for an overview of Tunisia's performance implementing the Co-Creation and Participation Standards throughout the action plan implementation.

Table [3.2]: Level of Public Influence
The IRM has adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) "Spectrum of Participation" to apply it to OGP.[127] In the spirit of OGP, most countries should aspire to "collaborate."

Level of public influence		During development of action plan	During implementation of action plan
Empower	The government handed decision-making power to members of the public.		
Collaborate	There was iterative dialogue AND the public helped set the agenda.		
Involve	The government gave feedback on how public inputs were considered.	✔	✔
Consult	The public could give inputs.		
Inform	The government provided the public with information on the action plan.		
No Consultation	No consultation		

Overall, Tunisia's implementation process achieved an 'involve' level of public participation. Steering Committee meeting minutes indicate that the government and civil society met

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[126] Acting Contrary to Process - Country did not meet (1) "involve" during the development or "inform" during implementation of the action plan, or (2) the government fails to collect, publish and document a repository on the national OGP website/webpage in line with IRM guidance.
[127] "IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum," IAP2, 2014.
https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/Spectrum_8.5x11_Print.pdf

during the implementation period to share updates on commitment progress.[128] However, the COVID-19 crisis presented an added challenge and resulted in fewer Steering Committee meetings and lower attendance by civil society.

However, particular commitments saw a highly collaborative implementation approach that could be replicated across the whole of OGP processes in the future. Civil society members took the initiative to organize meetings and activities regarding their respective commitments, such as commitment 5 on improving water governance, commitment 6 on extractive industries transparency, and commitment 10 on establishing youth councils (for details regarding the implementation of these commitments see section 2.4).

Collaborative efforts were also seen in implementation of commitment 11 on OGP at the local level. The government handed decision-making power to an ad hoc joint committee of CSOs and government representatives to devise the rules of implementation and to carry out the assessment and designation of municipalities to develop OGP local action plans (for details regarding the implementation and early results of this commitment see section 2.3). The collaborative approach applied in commitments 5, 6, 10, and 11 represent positive developments in Tunisia's OGP processes. The IRM recommends that the Steering Committee seek to replicate this high level of CSO engagement across the entirety of OGP processes. To achieve 'collaborate' in future action plans, the Steering Committee should pay particular attention to ensuring that government responses to CSO feedback on implementation is documented.

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[128] Republic of Tunisia. OGP Website. "Meeting Minutes," http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?cat=51

3.2 Overview of Tunisia's performance throughout action plan implementation

Key:
Green= Meets standard
Yellow= In progress (steps have been taken to meet this standard, but standard is not met)
Red= No evidence of action

Multi-stakeholder Forum	During Development	During Implementation
1a. Forum established: There is a forum to oversee the OGP process and the government publishes its minutes.[129]	Green	Green
1b. Regularity: The forum met at least every quarter and more often every month till the end of 2019, in person. In 2020, the forum had three meetings – in January, June and September.[130]	Green	Green
1c. Collaborative mandate development: Members of the forum jointly developed its remit, membership and governance structure,[131] which did not change during the implementation.[132]	Green	Green
1d. Mandate public: Information on the forum's remit, membership and governance structure is available on the http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn	Green	Green
2a. Multi-stakeholder: The forum includes both governmental and non-government representatives.[133]	Green	Green
2b. Parity: The forum included an even balance of governmental and non-governmental representatives at the outset of the action plan.[134] During implementation, the meetings usually included more representatives of government institutions due to the diverse	Green	Yellow

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[129] Multi-stakeholder forum, Meeting minutes, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?cat=51
[130] Idem.
[131] Emir Sfaxi, Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Tunisia Design Report 2018 –2020, page 59, pre-publication version.
[132] Khaled Sellami, ibid.
[133] Multi-stakeholder forum, Meeting minutes, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?cat=51
[134] Emir Sfaxi, Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM): Tunisia Design Report 2018 –2020, page 59, pre-publication version.

responsible bodies for implementation. Not all CSO representatives attended regularly.[135]	Green	Yellow
2c. Transparent selection: The selection process remained the same from the co-creation period.	Yellow	Yellow
2d. High-level government representation: The forum includes representatives for high-level officials with little decision-making authority from government per se.	Yellow	Yellow
3a. Openness: The forum accepts inputs and representation on the action plan process from any civil society or other stakeholders outside the forum.	Green	Green
3b. Remote participation: There were opportunities for remote participation in at least some meetings and events.	Green	Green
3c. Minutes: The OGP forum proactively communicates and reports back on its decisions, activities and results to wider government and civil society stakeholders by publishing its meeting minutes.	Green	Green

Key:
Green= Meets standard
Yellow= In progress (steps have been taken to meet this standard, but standard is not met)
Red= No evidence of action

Action Plan Implementation	
4a. Process transparency: There is a national OGP website/webpage with regular updates (i.e. at least every six months) on the progress of commitments, including progress against milestones - http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn	Green
4b. Communication channels: The website has a feature to allow the public to comment on action plan progress updates under each commitment.[136]	Green
4c. Engagement with civil society: All the meetings that the government holds included civil society representatives, held more than once per year.	Green

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[135] Multi-stakeholder forum, Meeting minutes, OGP Tunisia repository, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/en/?cat=51
[136] See for example Commitment 1: Strengthen the right of access to information, OGP Tunisia repository, French version, http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn/fr/index.php/2019/03/13/engagement-1-renforcer-le-droit-dacces-a-linformation/

4d. Cooperation with the IRM: The government shares the link to the IRM report with other government institutions and stakeholders to encourage input during the public comment phase.	TBD
4.e MSF engagement: The multi-stakeholder forum monitors the implementation of the NAP and deliberates on how to improve it without modifying commitments.	Green
4.f MSF engagement with self-assessment report: The self-assessment report is currently being prepared by the government and has not been communicated to the national multi-stakeholder at the time of writing this report.	Yellow
4.g. Repository: The government documented, collected, and published a repository on the domestic OGP website in line with IRM guidance - http://www.ogptunisie.gov.tn	Green

IV. Methodology and Sources

Research for the IRM reports is carried out by national researchers. All IRM reports undergo a process of quality control led by IRM staff to ensure that the highest standards of research and due diligence have been applied.

The International Experts Panel (IEP) of the IRM oversees the quality control of each report. The IEP is composed of experts in transparency, participation, accountability, and social science research methods.

Current membership of the International Experts Panel is

- César Cruz-Rubio
- Mary Francoli
- Brendan Halloran
- Jeff Lovitt
- Juanita Olaya

This review process, including the procedure for incorporating comments received, is outlined in greater detail in Section III of the Procedures Manual[137] and in Tunisia's Design Report 2018-2020.

About the IRM

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) assesses development and implementation of national action plans to foster dialogue among stakeholders and improve accountability.

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[137] IRM Procedures Manual, V.3: https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual

Annex I. IRM Indicators

The indicators and method used in the IRM research can be found in the IRM Procedures Manual.[138] A summary of key indicators the IRM assesses is below:

- **Verifiability:**
  - o Not specific enough to verify: As written in the commitment, do the objectives stated and actions proposed lack sufficient clarity and specificity for their completion to be objectively verified through a subsequent assessment process?
  - o Specific enough to verify: As written in the commitment, are the objectives stated and actions proposed sufficiently clear and specific to allow for their completion to be objectively verified through a subsequent assessment process?
- **Relevance:** This variable evaluates the commitment's relevance to OGP values. Based on a close reading of the commitment text as stated in the action plan, the guiding questions to determine the relevance are:
  - o Access to Information: Will the government disclose more information or improve the quality of the information disclosed to the public?
  - o Civic Participation: Will the government create or improve opportunities or capabilities for the public to inform or influence decisions or policies?
  - o Public Accountability: Will the government create or improve public facing opportunities to hold officials answerable for their actions?
- **Potential impact:** This variable assesses the *potential impact* of the commitment, if completed as written. The IRM researcher uses the text from the action plan to:
  - o Identify the social, economic, political, or environmental problem;
  - o Establish the status quo at the outset of the action plan; and
  - o Assess the degree to which the commitment, if implemented, would impact performance and tackle the problem.
- **Completion:** This variable assesses the commitment's implementation and progress. This variable is assessed at the end of the action plan cycle, in the *IRM Implementation Report.*
- **Did It Open Government?:** This variable attempts to move beyond measuring outputs and deliverables to looking at how the government practice, in areas relevant to OGP values, has changed as a result of the commitment's implementation. This variable is assessed at the end of the action plan cycle, in the IRM Implementation Report.

Results oriented commitments?
A potentially starred commitment has more potential to be ambitious and to be implemented. A good commitment design is one that clearly describes the:

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[138] "IRM Procedures Manual," OGP, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-procedures-manual

1. **Problem:** What is the economic, social, political, or environmental problem? Rather than describing an administrative issue or tool (e.g., 'Misallocation of welfare funds' is more helpful than 'lacking a website.').
2. **Status quo:** What is the status quo of the policy issue at the beginning of an action plan (e.g., "26 percent of judicial corruption complaints are not processed currently.")?
3. **Change:** Rather than stating intermediary outputs, what is the targeted behavior change that is expected from the commitment's implementation (e.g., "Doubling response rates to information requests" is a stronger goal than "publishing a protocol for response.")?

Starred commitments

One measure, the "starred commitment" (✪), deserves further explanation due to its particular interest to readers and usefulness for encouraging a race to the top among OGP-participating countries/entities. To receive a star, a commitment must meet several criteria:

- The commitment's design should be **Verifiable**, **Relevant** to OGP values, and have **Transformative** potential impact. As assessed in the Design Report.
- The commitment's implementation must be assessed by IRM Implementation Report as **Substantial** or **Complete.**

This variable is assessed at the end of the action plan cycle, in the IRM Implementation Report.