

Summary of the Asia Pacific Regional OGP Meeting (7-8 September 2015)

Introduction. In the context of the upcoming OGP Global Summit in Mexico in late October, the Asia Pacific Regional Open Government Partnership (OGP) meeting took place in Manila during 7-8 September 2015. The meeting was sponsored by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and attended by participants from government and Civil Society Organizations from 13 countries.

The meeting's objectives were to:

- (a) Share progress on reforms in OGP member countries, including challenges and solutions for improving results to ensure that citizens benefit;
- (b) Exchange views on how to broaden and deepen the OGP Initiative in the region;
- (c) Present and obtain feedback on ADB's draft Action Plan for OGP engagement; and
- (d) Assist member countries to maximize benefits of upcoming Global OGP Summit.

In his welcome remarks Mr. Gambhir Bhatta, Technical Adviser (Governance), ADB noted that by 2025, there'll be only 2 low income countries in Asia and the Pacific - Afghanistan and Nepal and the rest will move up to middle income countries status. This will set the context for OGP growth as citizens have greater expectations from their government in a middle-income country. The adoption of the governance focused Sustainable Development Goal number 16 (SDG#16)-2015-2030 will also add to the demand for open government. In this context, knowledge sharing and peer learning events such as this meeting will help governments and CSO to map their way forward and operationalize OGP policies and programs.

In his welcome remarks Mr. Sugeng Bahagijo, OGP Steering Committee member noted while OGP has grown, the growth in Asia and Pacific has been relatively slow, the challenge is to broaden its base to get eligible countries (Nepal, Sri Lanka, PNG and Pakistan) and those that are yet to be eligible but bottom up demand is high (Cambodia & Malaysia).

The meeting discussed six substantive topics:

1. Progress of OGP – Overview and 3 country cases (Philippines, Georgia and Indonesia)
2. Broadening OGP initiative membership in the Region
3. Challenges and solutions to advancing OGP reforms in the Region
4. Improving civil society and government collaboration at country level
5. Making national action plans better
6. ADB's action plan to support OGP in Asia and Pacific

Highlights of the discussion are presented below. Electronic (soft) copies of presentations as well as a list of participants with their email addresses were distributed to all participants and are in the ADB/OGP files to supplement this summary.

SESSION 1: OVERVIEW OF THE OGP PROGRESS

OGP Secretariat provided an overview of OGP status and plans. It reported that so far 63 (out of 66) countries have prepared 102 National Action Plans (NAPs) covering over 2000 commitments. 24% of commitments recognized for their ambition, relevance & completion. 14 countries are working with civil society on new NAPs. Top 5 issue areas in NAPs are: Public Participation; Open Data; Budget Transparency; Public Service Delivery; and Access to Information. Current plans are to:

- Bring key Asian countries on board

- Broaden the base of reformers and issues and support government reformers to deliver
- Engage new civil society actors, strategically advocate and engage
- Bring in other actors from government (parliament, justice, accountability institutions)
- Respond to the threat of closing civic space
- Set up permanent dialogue mechanisms and keep improving the platform
- Maintain high-level political leadership and commitment to open government reform
- Connect to other core global agendas: Post 2015, Climate, Finance for Development
- Extend OGP to sub-national governance

Examples of potentially transformative commitments in NAPs were shared by representatives of three countries (Philippines, Georgia and Indonesia) and enabled the group to discuss success factors and challenges. A synopsis of presentations is presented below.

- *Bottom-up Budgeting (Philippines)*. Primary objective is to promote good governance among local governments by empowering citizens to participate in budgeting. Key processes include: (i) CSO assembly formation; (ii) joint decision making by elected CSO representatives (50%) and local government officials (50%); (iii) town level budgets integrated in national budget and approved by Congress; and (iv) citizens monitoring project implementation. Key impacts so far include: patron-client relations between national and local politicians have been broken; access to national budget is more equitable; change from 'passive' to active citizen relations with governments; and CSO government engagement has become more constructive. Within 3 years, the number of participating cities and municipalities has gone up from 595 to 1,590 and the amount of locally developed projects has increased from \$178 million to \$464 million.
- *Community Centers in Georgia*. Primary objective is to enable citizens to access many of the government services in one facility closer to where they live. It was an innovative response to the problem that citizens had to travel long distances and different locations to access these services. The solution was to create a space (Community Centers) for most sought after public and private sector services and civic engagement. 25 Centers are operational and house service providers from: Central government; Private companies (banking, telecommunications, instant payment machines and ATMs); Local Government (Trustee's Office, Front Office of the Municipality). The Centers also have computers, free internet/ conference room/ Video-conferencing equipment. Selection criteria of villages to have a community center include: size, proximity from big cities, level of civic engagement, and location to conflict affected areas. Private sector involvement is a high priority under the 3rd National Action Plan. Collaboration with Georgia's American Chamber of Commerce is being explored as they can potentially serve as a vital link to government, civil society and private sector.
- *Freedom of Information (FOI) Reform (Georgia)* was part of the commitment under the 1st NAP – and won recognition as one of the 7 finalist Bright Spots at the OGP Annual Summit in 2013. Issues currently faced include how the FOI law was implemented / translated into action and has started the process of elaboration and e-request of public information to the government. Currently working on the following: Definition of public information; Enlarge the circle of public agencies responsible for disclosing public information; High public interest test; Grounds for restriction/ regulations; Oversight Body

(Freedom of information Commissioner).

- PPID-Indonesia. Under Indonesia's FOI Law 14/2008, it is mandatory infrastructure for all government institutions to have: (i) PPID (Information and Documentation Management Office) – responsible for documenting, archiving and profiling public information; (ii) Standard Operating Procedures; and (iii) List of Public Information. Implementation of PPID was done over 2012-2014. So far around 50% of the 705 Public bodies have already established the PPID in their respective agencies (100% - ministerial level, 88% - provincial level, 48% -district government, 61% - city government, 33% - Central state agencies).
- National Complaint Handling System (LAPOR!)- Indonesia. Previously, complaint-handling mechanisms are established at individual agencies. Now, LAPOR!¹ serves as an online and smartphone platform that provides an integrated complaint handling services for the public at the national and sub-national level for all government institutions. LAPOR! has also served as a tool for participatory decision-making in gauging public approval/obtaining feedback (e.g. National Education Curriculum and Certified Teacher Payment) and on-site reporting disaster response (ex. Jakarta Floods). Currently it has 300,000 users, receives 800 reports / day covering 120 government institutions.
- Haji Information Services. Millions of Indonesians aspire to travel to Mecca every year but due to a quota of a maximum of 200,000 pilgrims a year, the queue list may last up to 7 years. Due to lack of transparency, persons on the list had no easy way to find out when their turn will come and corruption was suspected in the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Installation of an on-line registration and information system has curbed corruption and registered pilgrims are now able to monitor the process.

SESSION 2: BROADENING THE OGP INITIATIVE IN THE REGION: How to support countries to join OGP?

Purpose. Eleven (11) countries in Asia are eligible to join and several others have stated their intention to meet eligibility criteria. In this context, the meeting discussed 5 country cases to learn and share how eligible non-participating countries and non-eligible countries can be supported in joining OGP. Cases covered 2 eligible countries (Nepal and Papua New Guinea) and 3 countries not yet eligible (Myanmar, Malaysia, and Cambodia).

The discussion revealed that reasons for not joining were varied and country specific. **Papua New Guinea (PNG)** is eligible and the government has signaled the OGP support unit that they will join officially during the OGP Global Summit in Mexico. Challenges faced include: (1) how to transfer the foreign policy to the domestic reforms? From Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to domestic level, and (2) how to do the inter-ministerial coordination? **Nepal** is in transition (from monarchy to republic) and in the process of writing a new Constitution. OGP is not priority as there are no compelling incentives to join OGP. While CSO champions for OGP exist, a government champion (individual or Ministry) has not yet emerged. CSOs need help to make a compelling case of what is in it for the government. As the new constitution calls for respecting people's voices and participation and this may be an opportune time to push for the OGP. **Malaysia** seems to lack basic foundation and motivation for OGP as only one government in place since its independence. This has caused the perpetuation of laws that impinged on the

¹ Lapor means report in Indonesia.

principles of Open Government. Malaysia is not eligible because there is no FOI law or asset declaration laws for public officials. Likewise, civil society is not flourishing with very few NGOs working on transparency and anti-corruption initiatives. **Cambodia**. Crushing blow on the NGOs with the Government passing of the NGO Law out of fear of NGOs fostering opposition. It is far from meeting eligibility criteria. **Myanmar** is very far from the eligibility criteria but government has made a commitment to become an OGP member in 2016. It has established OGP task force and working group but without civil society participation as CSOs have a lot of concerns / don't trust government.

Discussion among participants resulted in a number of suggestions to advance eligibility and membership.

- Consolidate civil society forces to engage the government (find champions in executive branch)
- Support from countries in the region who have had experiences in moving forward OGP reform
- Advocate a business case that OGP fosters an investment friendly environment
- Research the 4 eligibility criteria to document where country is right now and how to get there
- Making an argument that OGP improves country image
- Identifying champions/leaders from neighboring countries who can help to influence leaders
- Link people from the local level to national level to identify the services that can be delivered and improved as a result of government and people interacting together in OGP format
- Emphasize citizen engagement angle may help. Many governments may be anti-civil society organizations per se but they are not anti-people.
- Set up Advisory Group (CSO, government, and private sector) for prioritization and tasking
- Have an information platform (online or offline updates) to inform people down to the local level
- Advocate for the open government as part of SDGs commitments/action plans
- Government may already be doing things that are elements of the OGP but are unaware of OGP link
- Consolidate CSOs working on OGP components (budget transparency, freedom of information, accountability etc.) and push the government to opt-in for OGP.

OGP staff made a presentation on arguments to use for advocating OGP Reforms.

- *What's in it for governments?*
 - Platform to showcase reform and political intent to implement reform
 - Platform to mobilize multiple actors both domestically and internationally
 - Opportunity to caucus with other country governments
 - Forum to engage in open and action-oriented peer-to-peer learning
 - Opportunity to engage citizens in dialogue and broad base support
 - OGP members become part of a global network of countries
- *What's in it for civil society*
 - Getting a seat at the table
 - Amplify your message
 - Mobilize for your campaign
 - Building coalitions across issues, countries, regions etc.

- *What's in it for governments?*

- Leverage opportunity to lead advocacy efforts for membership
- Mobilize, coordinate and strategize with CSOs with issue expertise
- Lay the ground to shape the first NAP with priority issues
- Understand how the platform can be used for advocacy “wins”
- Use OGP toolkits and resources
- Learn from peers in participating countries + share lessons/tactics with others campaigning for membership

SESSION 3: ADVANCING THE OPEN GOVERNMENT REFORM AGENDA: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Purpose: Share ideas and country experiences with the objective to identify potential solutions to four of the major challenges to advancing open government reforms in the region. By the end of this session participants are expected to have:

- ✓ Identified the challenges and opportunities for institutionalizing open government reforms, supporting national reformers, strengthening accountability mechanisms and leveraging OGP to support governance related elements of Sustainable Development Goals.
- ✓ Understood how countries in the region are tackling these issues and identified opportunities for peer exchange and further lesson sharing.
- ✓ Identified how the OGP platform can be used to address some of the challenges and what needs to be done to improve the platform's ability to deliver success.

Major challenges and solutions: Breakout group discussions.

Group #1 Broadening and deepening open government: Institutionalizing reforms at the national and sub-national level: Questions discussed were: how can new actors be engaged in advancing open government (more line ministries, parliamentarians, more sector-based CSOs, private sector, etc.)? How can open government successes at sub-national levels (provincial, district, municipal) be replicated and scaled up? To what extent can the OGP platform be used toward this end? Key takeaways reported back to plenary were: CSOs were successful in Nepal to push a good governance agenda under the reconstruction and recovery efforts of the country. “Follow the money” approach using the right to information and open data was possible in Georgia due to strong legislative and implementation agenda at the local level. Dialogue and collaboration through convergence model and capacity building and networking worked in the Philippines.

Group #2 Supporting national reformers: Strengthening national reformers' capability to implement open government reforms and incentivizing actors to deliver: Questions discussed were : What is needed for government reformers to make open government commitments more ambitious and relevant? What bottlenecks exist, and how could they be addressed to enable government reformers to improve the implementation of commitments? How could government reformers be further incentivized to advance open government reforms? What are the opportunities for peer learning and exchange? Group report to the plenary indicated following ideas/challenges for supporting national reformers:

- Expand lessons learned from the country/ national level to the global context

- Identify the right people at government and CSO and establish the relationship with the right people at the high-level and mid-level
- Identify appropriate incentives - DATA is key to convince and establish how it works. Placing the correct incentives ('carrots') in the program design (e.g. bottoms up budgeting)
- Find the link of OGP to national development agenda and government priorities
- Identify and address other bottlenecks – capacity, legislation, funding
- Support learning by sharing lessons learned.

Group #3 Strengthening accountability mechanisms. Questions for discussion were? How well the existing accountability mechanisms for open government reforms are working and how can they be bolstered? How do we ensure results for reform programs? How can the engagement with accountability institutions (ombudsmen, information commissions, audit institutions) be deepened and what role can they play? Is participation in OGP improving accountability at the country level? How can OGP IRM findings be used to ensure greater accountability? Group report to the plenary highlighted the following points:

- Recognize that accountability is broad and has many types: political accountability, financial accountability, managerial accountability, citizenry / community accountability and as such have varied mechanisms
- Foundational elements of accountability = Freedom of Information (needs to be enacted/ advocated for). Other conditions: Free & independent press/ media; Protection for whistleblowers; Education & awareness regarding the FOI; Open data (citizens should be able to interpret, analyze and use); Skill set / capacities.
- Accountability institutions needs to be independent

Group #4 Opportunities and challenges for OGP as SDG planning and follow-up processes are launched. The Group started out by noting that there is significant overlap between objectives, targets and processes associated with OGP and Sustainable Development Goal #16. This creates both challenges and opportunities for OGP. Group discussions highlighted the following questions and hoped that the discussions at the OGP Global Summit will address them.

- Should or could both OGP and SDG #16 agendas co-exist in a country? Should there be only one action program for overlapping areas or completely separate action plans? Separate programs could lead to competition for scarce human and financial resources to advocate, implement and monitor reforms. However, if one action program is desired, what are the ways and means for doing this?
- What can OGP activists do to ensure that SDG#16 agenda and targets are not marginalized at the country level in the crowded field of 17 SDGs and 169 targets? How can civil society partners in OGP countries become champions of SDG #16?
- How can OGP and SDG activists come together on a common platform? Working groups on open government, including both OGP and SDG activists, may be a workable solution, but how can these be integrated into multi-stakeholder SDG dialogue and monitoring mechanisms?
- What impact will SDG #16 have on member commitments to OGP? Will SDG #16 encourage or discourage eligible OGP candidates to join OGP? How can incentives for joining OGP be strengthened by SDG #16?
- How can OGP contribute to the crafting of ambitious SDG #16 actions and targets? Can the OGP commitment rating system be applied to SDG #16 targets to allow for cross-country comparisons and peer learning?

- How can implementers address twin challenges of finding champions among politicians and civil servants and financial resources for OGP/SDG #16? Can good practices in gaining political and financial support be identified in MDG/SDG and OGP experiences?
- Can OGP innovations such as national planning guidelines, consultation guidance, rating and tagging of commitments and Independent Review Mechanism be carried into SDG planning and monitoring frameworks?
- How can the OGP peer learning be expanded to include non-member countries? Successes and failures in implementing the commitments offer a tremendous resource for all UN member countries but such an expansion would call for major investment and outreach. Is OGP willing and able to do so?

SESSION 4: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS: IMPROVING CIVIL SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT COLLABORATION

Purpose: Learn how OGP-member countries have used Permanent Consultation Forums to strengthen multi-stakeholder engagement and to promote innovation and accountability throughout the 2-year National Action Plan cycle in line with OGP core values.

Improving Civil Society and Government Collaboration: Highlights of Breakout group discussions. Participants formed breakout groups and discussed the following questions: what challenges have you faced when working with different stakeholders throughout the 2-year National Action Plan Cycle? Has participation in OGP made a meaningful impact on government-civil society engagement? A representative from Georgia made a 10-minute presentation on their Consultation Forum to get the discussions started. *Key Takeaways from the break out groups were:*

- Political buy-in and integration of CSOs plays a very important role
- Demand of CSOs results in a good action plan
- Good practice of permanent consultation forum needs replication
- It is interesting to note that Georgia's OGP processes are housed under the Ministry of Justice which tend to be conservative
- Very impressive to see the inclusiveness of CSOs is embraced by the government in Georgia. This has resulted in multi-stakeholder ownership of OGP
- Democratic transitions that have happened in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Georgia have contributed to the OGP success. These contexts may be different in other countries.
- Key factor for success in Georgia: Government must be demanding from CSOs, but in turn, CSOs should be more demanding from their government in a cooperative mode

The session helped the participants:

- Identified how Permanent Consultation Forums can help build a true multi-stakeholder partnership and foster innovation in Action Plan Commitments.
- Become acquainted with country-cases where Permanent Multi-Stakeholder Consultation Forums have been successfully implemented.
- Identified how national process in their countries can be improved for fostering stronger partnerships between government and civil society

SESSION 5: MAKING OPEN GOVERNMENT REFORMS MATTER: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES IN THE NATIONAL ACTION PLANS (NAPs)

Purpose: The session objectives were to: gain an understanding of the lessons learnt from NAP 1 development; identify opportunities for peer-exchange; and become familiar with the tools and resources available for NAP development.

Lightning talks on the NAPs (10 minutes each): Speakers from 7 countries made presentations on the process followed for NAP development, 1-2 key new reforms undertaken, lessons learnt, key challenges/gaps, and where they would benefit from peer-exchanges. The countries were: Armenia; Mongolia; New Zealand; Philippines; Indonesia; Georgia and South Korea. Their individual presentations are on file and are not summarize here.

Highlights of presentations

- Successes:
 - *Civil society- government relations have improved in countries where NAP processes have been implemented.* This was highlighted by the following examples: Advisory groups in New Zealand; CSO led action plan in the Philippines; broader and wider CSO involvement in the Indonesia. OGP Steering Committee and grass roots consultations in the Philippines; Armenia and Georgia presentations.
 - *Transformative reforms are under way in several countries:* Bottom –up budgeting in the Philippines; Strengthening of local government capacity through introduction of community centers in Georgia; National Complaints Handling system in Indonesia; Open Data initiatives in New Zealand; Law on local government transparency and accountability (Glass Law) in Mongolia; In Armenia, successes highlighted were ensuring transparency of asset and income declarations of high-ranking officials and online broadcasting of the State Procurement Appeals Board sessions. Implementation of Open Data ACT in South Korea has launched many E-government innovations such as e-people website, SOS public relief services.
- Challenges:
 - Building ownership and champions; In Indonesia, ownership among public bodies and CSOs was low and leaders understanding of and capacity to use OGP platform effectively was low ; Philippines reported that sustaining and expanding the civil society participation is a challenge; Georgia faces the challenge of increasing private sector involvement and number of agencies responsible for the NAP.
 - *Building permanent and effective CSO-government dialogue.* Indonesia reported challenges in collaboration among CSOs and enhancing quality and scheduling of consultations; In New Zealand is consultation infrastructure lacking so a proactive approach to working with civil society is a challenge; Cooperation with CSOs in Mongolia was reported to be weak especially at the local level; In Korea, the CSO engagement has expanded but there are many areas of concern such as: weak participation of CSOs in OGP, disclosure of citizen national IDs when using government websites, and very broad defamation laws that intimidate and discourage CSOs.

- *More pro-active communications using mass media.* Georgia reported that the public relations campaign could be more effective.
 - *Translating commitments into outcomes and outputs* was a key challenge in New Zealand. In Armenia some of the commitments were not funded.
 - *Funding for CSOs to play a substantive role in OGP processes and content-* Civil society participation in the Philippines, Indonesia and Mongolia was being constrained by lack of funding for capacity building and sustained CSO participation in OGP.
- Peer- support areas:
 - *More peer learning: Government-to-Government; regional level and among CSOs.*
 - *Funding for knowledge sharing and learning*
 - *Identifying champions and building leadership.*
 - *Learn how to disseminate success*

The session ended with a presentation on tools and resources available for NAP development.

1. *What does a good OGP action plan look like?*
 - Ambitious –should stretch the government beyond its current state of practice and significantly improve the status quo (new areas of reform, accelerating the pace to find new and more ambitious milestones)
 - Responsive – participatory process and rigorous consultation with civil society and different agencies within government to ensure buy-in from implementing agencies
 - Relevant- addresses the issues of transparency, accountability, public participation and where possible, leverage technology
2. *What do good commitments look like? SMART.*
 - **S**pecific – describe problems they are trying to solve, activities and outcomes
 - **M**easurable – broken into clear and measurable milestones to assess progress easily
 - **A**nswerable – ownership of the commitments is well-defined (implementing agency responsible, who are the coordinating agencies)
 - **R**elevant – aligned with the accountability and transparency principles of Open Government
 - **T**ime-bound – clear deadlines by when certain milestones will be achieved. Definite milestone for 1-2 year periods
3. *Tools and Resources for NAP Development Process*
 - Working groups
 - Peer exchange opportunities
 - Opportunities for brokering technical assistance
 - Multilaterals such as ADB, OECD, UNDP, WB that can help in technical assistance
 - Track progress from the data generated in learnings from action planning cycles
 - Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) reports

- OGP explorer - database which provides progress on the commitments by the 66 countries
- Webinars on open government (OGP website)
- Case studies and research on what works and what doesn't
- Guidance notes on consultation
- OGP calendar
- Action plan guidance note (template and best practices for developing commitments)
- Open Government Guide

SESSION 6: ADVANCING OPEN GOVERNMENT IN ASIA: ADB'S ACTION PLAN

Purpose of the session was to provide participants information on ADB's rationale and areas of focus in supporting OGP and gather feedback from participants. To start the conversation, ADB staff explained that ADB action plan is two-fold: (1) to serve as a tool / mechanism to advance internal advocacy on Open Government as part of ADB's governance and anti-corruption strategies; and (2) obtain feedback on how ADB can further support OGP community. ADB became a partner of OGP as OGP goals and activities are consistent with the ADB's Second Governance and Anti-Corruption Action Plan (GACAP II). They further explained that the overall aim of GACAPII is to improve ADB's performance in helping strengthen national governance systems and in reducing vulnerability to corruption in ADB investments. It has four results areas:

- KRA 1: Improve identification and management of governance, institutional, and corruption risks in CPSs, midterm reviews of CPSs, and annual country portfolio review missions (CPRM)
- KRA 2: Strengthen governance and anticorruption components in project and project design
- KRA 3: Strengthen program and project administration and portfolio management; and
- KRA 4: Improve organizational structure, human resources, and access to expertise.

ADB staff then presented two examples of applying OGP Principles in ADB operations: *Community Monitoring in Construction of School Building and Grievance Redress Mechanism*. Presentations are on file and provide details. The presentation was followed by three group discussions and the highlights of the discussion were as follows:

- *Group 1 - Construction Monitoring*
 - There are already in-country experiences with regards to construction monitoring and there are challenges e.g. Will the government be supportive? Are CSOs capable? How to ensure the representation of civil society? Are ADB processes ready to work with civil society?
 - Training of community monitors will require some engineering background and are ordinary citizens ready to take on that kind of work? (Although there are many experiences on this)
 - Sanctions: What to do with the reports/ findings if there are no corresponding sanctions. Involve Ombudsman / audit institution / Independent commissions
 - Sustainability: Human Resources. While it might be voluntary, social accountability practices have cost implications - how much is the cost of 'low cost'/'cheap'
 - How can media be a proactive player?
 - The use of appropriate technology (Open platform/ social media, geo-tagging)

- Monitoring should not be about the implementation per se but more of the over all processes involved (planning, budgeting, procurement, implementation and warranty side) - entire picture
- *Group 2 - Grievance Redress Mechanism*
 - For the system to work and ensure sustainability, Redress mechanism should not be just project-based and utilize national systems, where possible
 - Mapping of risks must be understood from the beginning and not just when the problem is there
 - From the beginning, common understanding of what to do with the complaints and not merely reactive
 - GRM Mandate, timeline and processes should be clear from the beginning to be effective
 - PHI experience on GRM - there was reduction of losses in money by 40%
- *Group 3 – Mainstreaming OGP in ADB operations*
 - ADB safeguards (categories A, B, C) for Indigenous Peoples, Resettlement, Social and Environment
 - Look at 3rd party systems on what it can add value to project monitoring
 - Public Communications Policy - published online (key persons, disbursements, projections, and project related information)
 - Need to have funds to engage civil society (economic argument and investment returns)
 - Suggestion for Philippines, Georgia and Indonesia CSOs to come together and forge a letter for ADB to make a case to invest more on civil society engagement
 - Requests to have a community billboard in every project so that communities can have the information in the local vernacular
 - Requests for more thematic conversations at the community level (ADB's outreach to civil society are sometimes cautious of raising of expectation as most of the projects are attached to a project / loan support)

CLOSING SESSION

OGP staff provided participants information on the upcoming 2015 Global OGP Summit in Mexico. This helped the participants gained an understanding of what to expect from the 2015 OGP Global Summit and identify ways in which to maximize participation/ outcomes for the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Kelly Bird, Co-Chair of the Governance Thematic Group at the Asian Development Bank delivered the closing remarks. Highlights were:

- Event has provided inspiring stories of how OGP is changing citizens' lives for the better and touched on the importance of expanding membership in Open government partnership.
- OGP initiatives created an environment for informed public participation in policy making
- Transformative OGP initiatives presented at the meeting showed how public service problems can be addressed by systematic and effective partnership between citizen and government collaboration.
- Two day gathering has been an excellent platform for sharing information and practice and highlighting the benefits to the community that will inspire governments and other stakeholders to participate in the OGP
- Hopefully we will see more governments and civil society sign up in these initiatives.

- Benefits of joining the OGP will be becoming more important as most countries in Asia will become middle-income countries or upper middle-income countries by 2025.
- SDG 16 presents a specific governance focus and complements OGP.
- Expect ADB to continue working with the OGP community as ADB has strong work on promoting good governance in the developing member countries. ADB will help through facilitation of meetings and exchanges, knowledge products, technical assistance and lending programs.

Paul Massen, OGP Support Unit closed the meeting and mentioned following takeaways:

- Support for furthering the OGP
- Support towards expanding the OGP membership
- ADB and other multilateral support
- Countries supporting each other (everybody can take part, can share and can learn)
- OGP support unit to provide support countries

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