Formulas for the establishment of open government based on evaluation of performance and quality of results

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1. Introduction

This paper is an attempt to contribute to the debate about how to evaluate open government policies in the world. To this end, it presents an analysis of the state-of-art of current open government initiatives, their political and social dynamics and what are the common elements of open government. The study assesses best practice cases in open government in five countries. For these countries, the study analyses open government policy results; political, social, economic, bureaucratic or other obstacles to achievement of open government principles; main stakeholders involved; and keys for success. In order to answer the question about how open government impact could be measured, the document presents an analysis of the state-of-art of open government evaluation efforts from a theoretical and empirical perspective, including definitions, methods, scope, advantages and flaws. The study helps understand the link between sound open government policies and the improvement of transparency, accountability, and public trust. It finally proposes some recommendations about evaluation principles and guidelines for the establishment of a systematic and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanism for open government impact.

In order to approach these topics, this research uses three different ways to approach the study of open government: by its readiness, its implementation and its impact, as follows: (a) *Readiness studies* analyze the conditions in a country, city or sector, to see if initiatives are likely to be successful, at the same time as they seek out suitable areas and identify the challenges that may exist when implementing such policies; (b) *Implementation studies* investigate whether the conditions exist for the implementation of an open government policy, or whether open government already exists; and (c) *Impact studies* ask whether open government has led to any type of change, although, to date, there have been no rigorous large-scale studies of this nature, only case studies.

To this end, the study focuses on five case studies from different regions of the world that have demonstrated progress on open government. These countries are: Mexico, Costa Rica, Georgia, Indonesia and Kenya. These countries have been selected according to the following three criteria: regional coverage, high commitment to open government, and country income. The study includes two countries of the Americas because it is the most active region working on open government. 17 countries are members of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). Mexico is one of the founders and most active countries in OGP, while Costa Rica, a small country, has implemented sound open government policies not only restricted to OGP commitments, but spread to many other sectors and to the three

branches of the State. Two countries in Asia with very different backgrounds were selected; Indonesia, a traditional south-east Asia country, and Georgia, a country that is strategically located, between Europe and Asia. Both countries have been very active in open government actions in different ways. Indonesia is one of the founders of OGP and very active in sub-national open government policies; Georgia is the model to follow for developing countries for its advanced policies that also include the Parliament and the Judiciary. Kenya was selected among the few African countries that are committed to open government because of its active civil society, exemplary partnership between government and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and good results.

The collection of information includes document analysis referenced in the last section of this document as well as interviews with key stakeholders.

2. Open government principles and objectives

The concept of open government was used for the first time in Britain in the late 1970s. It was aimed at lessening the bureaucratic darkness and to open the public sector to the public. Its definition has changed over time. At first it was limited to the central administration; afterwards, it expanded to other spheres. Currently, it is positioned as an essential tool to improve government capacity and to modernize public administrations (Ramírez-Alujas, 2011).

Open government got its initial impulse from the sanction of Freedom of Information Laws in more than 90 countries and from the implementation of governmental initiatives aimed at increasing transparency and citizens´ participation in public affairs gained space in the political agenda (Ramírez-Alujas, 2011).

According to the OECD, the concept of open government evolved from a view of three relevant dimensions that aimed to generate a public administration transparent, accessible and receptive, with capacity of response and responsibility (OECD/INAP, 2006), to a platform to solve how the government works with society and the citizens to co-create public value (Ramírez Alujas and Dassen, 2012). According to the OECD open government has the following advantages: establishing greater trust in government, ensuring better outcomes at less cost, raising compliance levels, ensuring equity of access to public policy making, fostering innovation and new economic activity, and enhancing effectiveness (OECD, 2010).

An open government is one that "(...) Envisions a governing philosophy, a form of governance more transparent, participatory and collaborative between state and civil society" (Ozslak, 2013).

Public knowledge in open government grew after governments of USA and Brazil launched the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in September 2011. Brazil, Indonesia, Philippines, Mexico, Norway, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States are the founders of OGP,

an international initiative created to improve governments' transparency. The aim is to provide an international platform for domestic reforms that seek to make governments more open and more controlled by society. The organization, which acknowledges that citizens are increasingly demanding more transparency, effectiveness and accountability to their governments, adopted the Open Government Declaration that states the following basic principles: increase of information about governmental activities, support for civil participation, implementation of the highest standards of professional integrity throughout the administrations, and increase of access to new technologies for openness and accountability. Nowadays, more than 66 countries participate in the OGP, "representing a third of the world´s population" (OGP, 2015, p.7).

The OGP has been fundamental in the quick spread of open government initiatives around the world. OGP promoted a system by which countries present National Action Plans that include commitments on open government. With more than 66 countries, 100 of National Action Plans and 2000 country commitments, the OGP is the leading organization in the promotion of open government worldwide.

Many of the most prestigious international organizations such as the United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank have also supported and developed projects oriented to promote open government.

The World Bank launched the "Open Government Global Solutions Group" (GSG). It aims "to strengthen the Governance Global Practice´s [GGP] and the World Bank Group´s open government support to clients, thus accelerating progress on the Bank's twin goals." It also states that "acting now on open government is crucial because client demand for assistance in implementing related reforms is increasing. The GSG can play a key role in preparing the GGP to respond to these demands" (World Bank).

The GSG's specific objectives are: to develop an integrated approach to open government; to incorporate open government into the GGP's engagement strategy; to identify business models to effectively engage with clients and respond to their open government demands; to establish and strengthen collaboration with key stakeholders working on open government; and to socialize the open government agenda inside and outside of the Bank" (World Bank).[1]

The Inter-American Development Bank created the Open Government Network that includes high-level authorities from Latin American and Caribbean countries in charge of open government public policy. The objective of this Network is to promote a regional policy dialogue for designing and implementing initiatives that contribute to the advancement of Open Government (Inter-American Development Bank).

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[1] http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/governance/brief/open-government-global-solutions-group

The Open Government Network sets up a space for dialogue, knowledge exchange and collaboration among the countries of the region, where the main topics of the Open Government Agenda will be discussed. Some of these topics are: transparency; access to information; design, implementation and participatory monitoring of public policies; accountability and integrity in the management of public resources; new information and communication technologies; and other relevant topics in the Open Government Agenda" (Inter-American Development Bank).[2]

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) also contributed to the development of open government in the Latin American region. The document "*Plan de gobierno abierto: Una hoja de ruta para los gobiernos de la región*"[3] is a useful tool for the construction of open government national plans in countries of the region. This document sets steps that should be accomplished for the creation of a national action plan and recommendations for data openness.

The United Nations, through its "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), have also provided a big contribution to open government. This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. The Goals and targets will stimulate action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet. In particular, SDG 16 is aimed at promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies. This goal includes many targets closely aligned with open government: promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all; substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms; develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels; ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels; ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms; among others.[4]

Relevant and ongoing open government initiatives have four core values in common:

1)   Access to information and transparency: these two concepts are closely linked. A government is transparent when it gives information "open, complete, timely, free and easy to access" (Ramírez Alujas and Dassen, 2012) of its activities (action plans, data sources, among others). Transparency has two aspects. One is the possibility of the public to request information. But it also implies the obligation of those organisms to give information on its own initiative. The last one is called – playing the Chileans law nomenclature- "active transparency" (Rajevic, 2012). Moreover, it is important that the data is in friendly formats in order to help comprehension and to facilitate reuse. Web portals are the instruments to

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[2] http://www.iadb.org/en/research-and-data/regional-policy-dialogue/open-government,8671.html
3 Naser, A. and Ramírez Alujas, Á. (2014). Plan de gobierno abierto Una hoja de ruta para los gobiernos de la región. Santiago   de   Chile: CEPAL. http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/36665/S2014229_es.pdf?sequence=1
[4] http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

achieve an open transparent government that publishes data in "open" license-free formats (Valenzuela, 2013).

2)   Accountability: it involves the responsibility of state administrators to provide explanations for their decisions. Accountability is an obligation that governments cannot give up and, therefore, is also the responsibility of the citizens to demand it. In this sense, Ozslak refers to the term "accountability" to discuss the duty to respond, without any pressure (Ozslak, 2013).

A sound accountability system narrows the gap between government officials and the citizenry. Accountability prevents governments from acting autonomously from voters´ preferences and from committing unlawful actions (horizontal accountability). There are two mechanisms for vertical accountability: one is the electoral process, a tool that the people have to reward or punish rulers´ behavior. The second is the so-called social accountability, in which citizens´ are responsible for denouncing wrongdoing by public officials, and, in turn, boost the performance of horizontal control agencies. (Jolías and Prince, 2013).

3)   Participation: it is aimed at opening channels for citizens´ inclusion in the public debate. Participation implies a transfer of some power from the authorities towards the citizenry. From this point of view, it becomes a civic duty to create public value by participating instead of being simple recipients of public policies (Ortiz de Zárate, 2010). Governments will cease to be the sole decision maker and executor, as we used to have, and go through more complementary roles, where citizens´ participation in solving problems increase (Subirats, 2012).

4)   Technology and innovation: according to the Independent Reporting Mechanism of the Open Government Partnership, the objective of technology and innovation initiatives should be to enhance public involvement in government. Some examples of actions to be accomplished in this area are: promoting new technologies that offer opportunities for information sharing, public participation, and collaboration; making more information public in ways that enable people to both understand what their governments do and influence decisions; working to reduce costs of using these technologies" (Independent Reporting Mechanism, 2015). Technology is a means that facilitates changes and helps transform the relationship between government and citizens. It also promotes a change of paradigm to ensure openness, transparency, participation and collaboration (Ramírez Alujas and Dassen, 2012).

3. Evaluation of performance

There are two main systematic tools or mechanisms to evaluate open government around the world. Each of these tools assesses more than 60 countries in a systematic and profound

way using different methodologies. They are the OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism and the World Justice Project Open Government Index.

The OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) is an initiative oriented to track the progress of open government commitments in the member countries of OGP. It produces biannual independent progress reports for all participating countries. "The progress reports assess governments on the development and implementation of OGP action plans, progress in fulfilling open government principles, and make technical recommendations for improvements. These reports are intended to stimulate dialogue and promote accountability between member governments and citizens."[5]

The methodology of these reports is based on a researcher or team of researchers that carries out consultative processes in order to review government progress in consultation with civil society. These researches are based on the annual self-assessment report that each country must publish after each year of the OGP implementation cycle. "Following the first self-assessment of a new National Action Plan, an independent progress report is written by a local governance expert from each participating country. Following a second self-assessment, the IRM produces a short close-out report assessing the completion of commitments. The IRM has produced 43 independent progress reports covering over 800 commitments to date."[6]

According to OGP "The goal of the IRM is to deliver credible, non-partisan description of the OGP process, results of commitments, and to provide technical recommendations based on the input of government, civil society, and the private sector. Each report is written in such a way as to aid in the design of the second action plan, identifying areas of accomplishment and key areas for improvement."

Although the IRM is a great tool to assess progress on open government, it has some shortcomings: (i) it only includes countries within OGP; (ii) it evaluates progress on OGP Action Plans commitments but no other OG policies implemented by countries; and (iii) it assesses implementation and results of these commitments but it does not evaluate their impact on democratic governance.

The Open Government Index (OGI) is an initiative developed by the World Justice Project (WJP). It is the first step to measure government openness based on the general public's experiences and perceptions worldwide. The Index presents aggregated scores and rankings as well as individual scores for each of the following dimensions of government openness: (a) publicized laws and government data, (b) right to information, (c) civic participation, and (d) complaints mechanisms for more than 100 countries.

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[5] RM description in OGP web site. Consulted on October, 26, 2015. Available at:

[6] OGP Brouchure, consulted on October, 26, 2015. Available at:
http://www.opengovpartnership.org/sites/default/files/attachments/leaflet_web.pdf

The OGI derives its results from two sources of information: "(1) a general population poll (GPP), conducted by leading local polling companies, using a representative sample of 1,000 respondents in the three largest cities per country; and (2) a qualified respondents' questionnaire (QRQ) consisting of close-ended questions completed by in-country practitioners and academics with expertise in civil and commercial law, criminal justice, labour law, and public health. Taken together, these two data sources provide up-to-date, firsthand information from a large number of people on their experiences with and perceptions of the openness of the government."[7]

The OGI is an innovative tool that for the first time, in 2015, tries to measure people´s opinion on OG. Nevertheless, for the purpose of assessing OG policies, this tool alone cannot show concrete impact of determined OG policies. The problem here is how to determine cause and effect: are OG policies having a positive impact on people´s opinion about OG, or people´s belief in OG promotes the adoption of OG policies? Is public opinion based on real and sustainable improvement in OG? The OGI is an excellent tool and a proxy for understanding OG impact, but it should be complemented with other evaluation mechanisms.

Measuring the impact of open government is not a simple task. The diversity of effects that open government policies may have makes it complicated to design a uniform methodology. Taking into consideration only open government data, Granickas considers that "There have been some attempts to grasp and measure the impact of OGD, but more often than not, finding an appropriate measuring stick to certain data initiatives meant having to deal with very challenging questions. This, of course, is due to the complexity of the issue. The direct and indirect impact of releasing and re-using data can take many forms and can occur at various stages. Certainly, discovering a measuring stick will not lead to 'one size fits all' situation, however it is important to not let go OGD impact management unchallenged" (Granickas, 2013).

Open Government initiatives usually include transparency and accountability actions. Therefore, the evaluation of this kind of initiatives is relevant to understand open government. According to McGee and Gaventa (2010), their initial "scan of the transparency and accountability literature to date revealed a large mass of very diverse literature, but almost no 'meta-literature' on issues of impact and effectiveness of TAIs [transparency and accountability initiatives]" (McGee and Gaventa, 2010).

In "Measuring the impact of the Open Government Partnership in Member States using an implementation size model" the aim of Rafael Valenzuela, J. Ignacio Criado and Edgar Ruvalcaba (Valenzuela, Criado and Ruvalcaba, 2015) is to identify the contribution of OGP in member countries. This methodology divides OGP Action Plans that were properly

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[7] World Justice Project Methodology. Consulted on October, 26, 2015, available at: http://worldjusticeproject.org/open-government-index/methodology

implemented from those that were not specific enough or that were not completed. They combined this assessment with the level of impact according to the change obtained. This model also includes the following aspects: "a) That the action has been co-created or designed between government and civil society; b) That the action is evaluated by the IRM in reports as an implemented action; c) That the action that was implemented has had a potential transformation impact in line with the parameters of IRM" (Valenzuela, Criado and Ruvalcaba, 2015, p.2). The model considers the following sizes of implementation in each action: "nano, micro, meso and macro levels. The size of the action potential is defined as the capacity to transform the environment of government, as its rules (macro level), organization forms (meso level), improving public programs that were operational (micro level), or generate dialogues between actors (nano level), from the involvement of civil society" (Valenzuela, Criado and Ruvalcaba, 2015, page 2). The study concludes that the initiatives that have contributed the most to change were mostly in the meso level of implementation. Additionally, the authors conclude that "the contribution of the OGP in the Americas´ governments is notable, given that 65.6% of high potential impact actions, according to the IRM, belong to the meso and macro level of implementation in our ISM tipology" (Valenzuela, Criado and, Ruvalcaba, 2015, p.4). The authors believe that this methodology could be improved and the results refined (Valenzuela, Criado and Ruvalcaba, 2015). Although this model would be promising to understand concrete change, it relies on the dataset provided by OGP and therefore, non-OGP countries cannot be assessed.

The study "How can Open Government Partnership members bridge the "Commitment-Indicator" Gap for greater Return on Investment?" also addresses the issue of open government policies impact by using OGP datasets. It states that the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) and reports of OGP members faced an obstacle: the difficulty of connecting the results of OGP action plans to concrete impacts in government and in society. The authors believe that "international governance and socio-economic development indicators could underpin a concrete framework, for governments to track the impact of their OG activities over time" (Ojo, 2015). The study states that even though open government initiatives had a good reception among citizens, the international community and the international organizations, they failed at showing increased efficiency in government; "mal-alignment of commitments with actual governance and societal challenges as depicted by relevant indicators would increase the risk of little or no "perceived" improvements by citizens and other stakeholders that rely on international benchmarks to measure progress" (Ojo, 2015, p.1). As a way to overcome this, the authors propose to develop a framework that includes international governance and socio-economic development indicators that facilitate measuring the impact of commitments. They recommend aligning the efforts in what they call "the five Grand Challenge areas" in order to facilitate the indicators and have a better measure of improvements. The study unveils "gaps between the adopted commitments for the different grand challenges and the perceived areas of weakness or improvement for countries". It promotes the adoption of a

"balanced OG Program or Action Plan" understood as one "where there is a proportionate allocation of efforts to the different grand challenge areas" (Ojo, 2015, p.3). Finally, the study summarizes the five grand challenge and their indicators (see table 1).

TABLE 1: MAPPING OF INDICATORS TO GRAND CHALLENGE AREAS

Grand Challenge	Related Indices	Relevant Indicators
GC1 - Public Service	UNEGOV, GCR	Online Service (UNEGOV), Efficiency (GCR), Innovation (WEF), Government Effectiveness (GCI)
GC2 - Public Integrity	WGI, ODB, CPI	Corruption perception (CPI), Accountability (ODB), Voice and Accountability (GCI), Civil-Right-to-Information (ODB)
GC3 - Public Resource	GCI, ODB, GCR	Accountability (ODB), Basic Requirements – Institutions (GCR), Control-of-Corruption (GCI)
GC4 - Safer Community	WGI, ODB	Political Stability (GCI), ODB (Crime Stats)
GC5 - Corporate Accountability	WGI, ODB	Accountability (ODB), Regulatory Quality (CPI)

Afterwards, the study identifies three steps to define the gaps. The first one is the creation of profiles of every country focused on the grand challenge areas. The second is an assessment of global shortfalls in the five grand challenges areas. And finally, determine the gaps comparing the OGP commitments and the international shortfalls of the step before.

The authors found that "countries are currently strongest in the public service area and the weakest in both public resource management and corporate accountability" (Ojo, 2015, p. 4). In addition, they classify the countries based on the strength in grand challenge areas (see table 2). Secondly, they analyzed the balance of OGP´s programs in terms of committed efforts and corresponding shortfalls. Their conclusion was that "over 80% of countries show a deficit in the three remaining GC areas – public resource management, safer communities and corporate accountability. Overall, all countries show gaps in some GC areas. About 28% of countries have no gaps in three or four areas while 52% of countries are without gaps in two GC areas" (Ojo, 2015, p. 4).

Very Strong	Reasonably Strong	Fair	Weak	Very Weak
New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom, Chile, Australia, United States, Canada, Finland, Norway, Netherlands	Israel, South Korea, Denmark, France, Italy, Czech Republic, Estonia, Spain, Ireland, Uruguay	Colombia, Turkey, Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, Greece, South Africa, Hungary, Slovakia, Ghana, Peru, Malta, Latvia and Lithuania	Kenya, Philippines, Jordan, Georgia, Tunisia, Argentina, Ukraine, Cape Verde, Mongolia, Serbia, Dominican Republic, Albania, Macedonia, Armenia, Trinidad and Tobago, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Croatia, Indonesia, Panama, El Salvador, Romania	Liberia, Sierra Leone, Malawi. Tanzania, Azerbaijan, Maldives, Paraguay, Guatemala, Honduras, Bosnia and Herzegovina

And, lastly, there is a need to "strengthen the review and evaluation process, a self-assessment OG [open government] performance framework with an integrated set of indicators covering all five grand challenge areas should be developed to complement the current Independent Reporting Mechanism" (Ojo, 2015, p. 7).

Daniel Berliner focused his study on why some commitments are more likely to be completed than others. He uses a hierarchical model in order to make a statistical analysis of the commitment-level and the country-level factors. Furthermore, these models have two main features. On one side, "they take into account the grouped nature of the data, avoiding the standard regression assumption that observations are independent of each other". On the other, hierarchical models let focus in effects at different levels of analysis and interactions. This method models a "commitment completion across 782 commitments in 33 countries, as a function of each commitment's potential impact, newness, specificity, relevance, and values. This model also allows for each country's data points to have their own unique intercept term, with these so-called "random effects" modeled as drawn from a normal distribution. These country random effects represent, in effect, the remaining country-level variation in completion rates after taking into account the aforementioned commitment-level variables. As such, these country random effects give us an adjusted measure of countries' progress" (Berliner, 2015, págs. 3-4). One result is that commitments with a huge impact are less probable to be completed. Berliner called that effect as "The Impact Gap" (Berliner, 2015, p. 6). This gap is "mitigated in countries with a larger OGP civil

society network" (Berliner, 2015, p. 9). Moreover, he established that the access to information is the one more likely to be completed.

"The result that more specific commitments are more probable to be completed can be read in an "optimistic or pessimistic way". The first one implies that countries follow their commitments. Pessimistically, it may mean that "the progress made by countries is coming in the form of "bite-sized" commitments that might be less meaningful in practice than others". (Berliner, 2015, p. 6). Nevertheless, that effect is obtained only in the "middle-income and wealthier countries" (Berliner, 2015, p. 7).

When the author adds a country-level factor analysis the results vary; in countries with more "Democratic Institutions [commitments] are more likely to be completed, as are commitments made in countries with higher values on Transparency International`s Corruption Perception Index- that is, with less corruption" (Berliner, 2015, p. 6). In sum, he concludes that "it is in countries that are already more open and have better governance where OGP commitments are most likely to be completed" (Berliner, 2015, p. 6). The author also shows "how a commitment-level relationship between two variables – such as the Potential Impact of a commitment and its likelihood of actual Completion- varies from country to country depending on features of the national context" (Berliner, 2015, p. 6). In conclusion, he ensures that the relationship between those factors is more positive in countries with a larger Civil Society Network.

In summary, main findings of this study are that commitments with high potential impact and newness are less likely to be completed; but those very specific and related to access to information are more likely to be achieved. Those countries with democratic institutions and lower rates of corruption are more likely to accomplish their commitments.

The open data movement has been very active in providing guidance on how to measure progress. Granickas considered that a correct evaluation of open government data policy should follow these recommendations: a) Evaluation of open government must be generated in "a multi-stakeholder conversation to better manage possible impacts and also maximize the benefits of OGD [open government data] release and re-use"; b) "Government should pay more attention to creating feedback mechanisms between policy implementers, data providers and data-re-users"; c) "Finding a balance between demand and supply requires mechanisms of shaping demand from data re-users and also demonstration of data inventory that governments possess"; and d) "Lastly, open data policies require regular monitoring. Authorities should be able to see what society sectors are affected by open data initiatives, so that they can improve their data provision and re-use efforts" (Granickas, 2013)

Carlos Iglesias analyzes the meaning of measurement of open data; "Measuring open data may involve the assessment and ranking of Open Government Data initiatives; Quantitative metrics of outcomes and impacts; Qualitative judgments on performance; case studies

about use and results; technical analysis of datasets; public views on Government use of data among others" (Iglesias, 2015). Moreover, Alejandro Ponce (Ponce, 2015) asserts that measuring is essential to understand and improve these systems. In that way, The World Justice Project (WJP) developed an Open Government Index (WJP, 2015). The Index presents aggregated scores and rankings as well as individual scores for each of the following dimensions of government openness: (a) publicized laws and government data, (b) right to information, (c) civic participation, and (d) complaint mechanisms" (WJP, 2015). This effort to measure is based on the experiences of the general public and perceptions worldwide.

Most measures related to access to information are based on the analysis of existing laws. Karin Gavelin, Simon Burall and Richard Wilson (Gavelin, Burall and Wilson, 2009) propose a new set of indicators to measure open government initiatives beside the classic ones related to the existence of laws or the perception of the public about institutions. These indicators are the following: a) Indicators related to law on access to information and documents: the law presumes proactive publication of information; the implementation of the law meets citizens' demand for information; the law ensures equal access to information and documents for all citizens; and complaints/appeals mechanisms available to meet the needs of citizens; b) Indicators related to Ombudsman/Information Commissioner Institutions: the Ombudsman/Information Commissioner is independent of the Executive; the Ombudsman/Information Commissioner's findings are acted upon; the Ombudsman/Information Commissioner provides equal access to its reports and services for all citizens; c) Indicators related to Supreme Audit Institutions: the Supreme Audit Institution is independent of the Executive; the Supreme Audit Institution's findings are acted upon; and d) Indicators related to consultation policies: public bodies are required to consult with citizens or other stakeholders in decision making."

4. Impact of open government on, transparency, accountability and public trust

McGee and Gaventa analyzed methods for measuring transparency and accountability impact on "five sectors or areas: service delivery, budget processes; freedom of information; natural resource governance; and aid transparency." They summarize key findings for each sector and outline the range of initiatives in the field and the evidence of impact. The conclusions of this report are oriented to analyze the quality of the evidence presented and what can be learned from it. For example, they found that Extractive Industry Transparency Initiatives (EITI) can contribute to the public's capacity to analyze fiscal policy in countries which previously lacked transparency; or that freedom of information can contribute to improved government decision-making, public understanding, enhance public participation, and increase trust (McGee and Gaventa, 2010).

These authors also take into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of different methods that can be used to assess the effectiveness of transparency and accountability measures. This tool is particularly useful as it divides different methods and describes for

what kind of analysis they are good or less good for. For example, they found that stakeholders interviews are good at capturing positioned view points of differently-placed stakeholders in multi-stakeholders initiatives and also good at easily combining with direct verification or observation methods, but they are very time-intensive and generate copious qualitative data.

In the United States, due to the lack of OGD´s (Open Government Directive) evaluative metrics, "OpenTheGovernment.org partners and other allies in the openness community met with the interagency Open Government Working Group (…) to discuss how plans should be evaluated". First, they organized three categories: i) leadership, governance and culture change; ii) Transparency and iii) Participation and collaboration. Second, they recruited volunteers with experience to participate in an assessment audit of plans. "The evaluation was not a compliance audit but, rather, the scoring system used was intended to evaluate the strength of each agency´s overall plan in meeting the requirements of the OGD." Moreover, they use a measure that could yield comparative information between federal agencies. "This requirement meant that the underlying scale items needed to sum to produce ordinal scale data – that is a scale that reveals at least a rank order tied to an underlying variable" (Bertot, McDermott, and Smith, 2012).

In the article "Assessing Government Transparency: An Interpretative Framework", Meijer, Hart and Worthy (2015) conclude that: "1. Transparency assessment can never be reduced to simple metrics and box-ticking exercises as it requires explicit incorporation and comparison of distinct political and administrative value sets; 2. The complexity argument does not mean that transparency cannot be evaluated. There is a need for an instrument that helps stakeholders to engage in a structured debate about the question to what extent different forms of transparency result in desirable outcomes. That means the different normative claims need to be structured and/or interpreted in terms of underlying value sets pertinent to the assessment of government transparency; 3. Articulating these value sets and inducing stakeholders and evaluators to systematically engage in more structured discursive argumentation offers a conceptually rich yet methodically parsimonious way of identifying areas of consensus and disagreement in the way stakeholders judge the performance of existing and new transparency mechanisms in and around government." Kosack and Fung (2014) consider that the next stage of transparency and accountability research "will seek to establish the configurations and conditions under which transparency improves governance outcomes" In the article "Does Transparency Improve Governance?" They reconsidered the growing body of experimental literature on the impact of transparency and accountability interventions through a rubric of five ideal-typical "worlds". These authors' research aims to clarify "the pathways by which transparency might lead to improved public services. It combines three schemas: the action cycle by which information triggers individual or collective action; the short and long routes of accountability; and the incentives and disposition of politicians, policy makers, and front-line providers to improve public services. The first schema —the transparency action cycle— addresses the

effectiveness of various designs for transparency by focusing attention on who might use the information made available through a disclosure initiative, how they would act on that information, and what reaction their actions would elicit from governments or service providers. The latter two schemas focus on various political and market contexts of transparency, which create various obstacles that a transparency intervention must overcome in order to lead to reform: collective action dilemmas, the resistance of front-line staff and political officials, and slippage induced by long chains of implementation and accountability" (Kosack and Fung, 2014).

This rubric "directs attention to three critical questions: Who is supposed to use the information made available by the intervention? Why will they care about that information? And, perhaps most critically, what can they do with that information, through either individual or collective action? On this third question, the rubric highlights two features of Transparency and accountability interventions. The first is the level of governance at which actions are taken in response to the increased availability of information. The second feature concerns the sociopolitical dynamics of reform that transparency can catalyze: individual exit, collaboration, or contestation" (Kosack and Fung, 2014).

There are also many studies that using different methodologies assess results and impact of open government policies in a particular country.[8]

The cases of Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Costa Rica and Georgia illustrate how open government policies operate in the field. This research includes five case studies of countries that have implemented open government policies in an attempt to shed light to the proposed research questions: which were the most important open government policy results; political, social, economic, bureaucratic or other obstacles to achievement of open government principles; main stakeholders involved; and keys for success, among others. We have conducted an extensive analysis of these policies using different sources (literature review, reports and interviews with stakeholders).

Indonesia[9] is a lower middle income country in Southeast Asian country. According to Transparency International it is in the 107th place out of a total of 175 countries surveyed, with a score of 34/100 on the Perception of Corruption Index. In this same Index, Indonesia used to be among the worst countries, ranking 137 out of 159 analyzed countries ten years ago. In the WJP Open Government Index, Indonesia scored 0.58/1 and ranked 32/102.

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[8] Some country case studies worth reviewing are: Dyson, J. (2013). Advances in open justice in England and Wales. Hong Kong: Master of the Rolls. Gainer, M. (2015). Transforming the Courts: judicial sector reforms in Kenya, 2011-2015. USA: Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University and Gainer, M. (2015). A Blueprint for Transparency: Integrity Pacts for Public Works, El Salvador, 2009 – 2014. USA: Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University.

[9] The sources for the case study are the following: the IRM report on Indonesia, for the years 2013-2014 and 2014 - 2015, the Open Government Index for 2015, Indonesia Self-Assessment Report Open Government Indonesia: a new era of government openness, the World Bank, www.worldbank.org, Global Integrity Report 2013, Transparency International Indonesia Chapter and an interview with prominent civil society member.

Indonesia was one of the founding members of OGP. Since 2012 Indonesia presented three action plans for the periods, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, including more than 40 commitments in total.

Through a political reform in 1998, the Indonesian government has responded to a massive demand for transparency, accountability, and better government. Institutions started to gradually expand the information available to the public and a Public Information Disclosure Law was enacted in 2008. (Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM), 2015). At that time, Indonesia had a vibrant civil society that through a coalition of 32 CSOs pushed for an access to information law. After eight years of CSOs' intense activity, the Parliament finally presented a draft law proposed by CSOs. The FOIA law was enacted in 2010. The entrance of Indonesia to OGP in 2011, paved the way for implementing this law and for approving other transparency laws such as the Public Service law, the Assets Disclosure law and the Financial Disclosure law.

In 2012, the government launched Open Government Indonesia (OGI), an organization in charge of leading and coordinating the implementation of Indonesia's commitments on the national and sub-national level. OGI's core team also oversees the development of the national action plan. This team is integrated by several representatives of ministries/agencies and CSOs. (Open Government Indonesia, 2013)

Under the title "Unleashing Public Participation – Nourishing the Essence of Openness" Indonesia pledged to increase public participation through these strategies: "Deepening OGI commitments to sub national-city level, Broadening the scope of engagement to youth and private sector, Measuring success at the local level, and Enlarging OGP foothold in the Asia Pacific region" (Indonesia's Open Government Partnership Chairmanship 2014, 2014).

The CSOs coalition is still active; it shifted from focusing on access to information in general to pushing for more information related to infrastructure. The coalition has created the Freedom of Information Network that has representatives almost all over the country. The coalition heavily works on raising public awareness on the importance of access to information; currently, more than 80% of the requests for access to information are submitted by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). When the government releases data that directly affect people's lives, such as data on education, citizens use this information accurately. Therefore, the coalition pushes for the release of information that can have a concrete impact on citizens.

Indonesia is currently on its third Action Plan cycle at OGP. According to the IRM report for the years 2011-2013, Indonesia made 12 commitments in its first action plan. By the time this report was published, 5 commitments were completed and 7 were in progress; from these only 6 were on schedule according to the action plan presented. Taking into account the core values of open government, 11 commitments were on access to information, 4 on Civic Participation, 3 on accountability and 6 on technology and innovation. According to

civil society voices, there was not co-creation in the first action plan. Although CSOs participated in the process, the government disregarded most of CSOs suggestions.

Indonesia included 19 commitments in its second action plan. With reference to the OGP values, 15 were on access to public information, 8 on civic participation, 4 on public accountability, and 9 on technology and innovation. For its second action plan Indonesia divided the commitments into four themes that had to be improved. They were: i) Strengthen open governance infrastructure to support better public services; ii) Improve quality of openness in basic public services; iii) Accelerate open and good governance practices in corruption-prone areas; and iv) Improve quality of openness in common public interest areas. Some of the commitments that had been awarded with stars by the IRM[10] are the following ones: a) Promoting transparency, accountability and public participation on government s poverty reduction programs; b) Promoting transparency, accountability and public participation in the public area services that indicated high risk on corruption; and c) Promoting transparency and accountability on procurement activities of government institutions. According to civil society representatives, even though the process for designing the Action Plan was better than the previous one, the relevant Ministries still disregarded some commitments made by the civil society. For the third action plan, the process was more strategically designed: CSOs and the government agreed upon a framework, priorities, working groups and a timeline.

As a way to strengthen its commitment to openness, in late 2014, the Government of Indonesia launched the Portal Data Indonesia (http://data.id). The government hopes this initiative will encourage more data transparency in the country. The Portal was developed in response to public demand for easily accessible official government data. Twenty three institutions, including two regional governments, publish approximately 700 datasets, with topics ranging from the economy, to education, energy, healthcare, and procurement.

Kenya[11] is a lower middle income East African country. According to Transparency International it is in 145th place out of a total of 175 countries surveyed, with a score of 25/100 on TI Perception of Corruption Index. This figure has slightly improved during the last ten years (144/159 in 2005). In the Open Government Index, Kenya scored 0.46/1 and ranked 79/102. In December 2011, Kenya joined the OGP. Since then, Kenya presented one action plan for the period 2012-2013 with 9 commitments. Besides OGP Kenya publishes information on the "Kenya Open Data Portal" where there are 754 data sets with information regarding agriculture, education, energy and environment, among others.

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[10] The IRM grants stars to commitments that fulfill the following requirements: a) being clearly relevant to OGP values; b) being assessed as having transformative potential impact; and c) being assessed as either seeing significant progress or being complete.

[11] The sources for the case study are the following: Gainer, M. (2015) *Transforming the Courts: judicial sector reforms in Kenya, 2011-2015*, Open Government Index, the IRM report on Kenya for the years 2012-2013, the World Bank, , the Open Government Index developed by the World Justice Project, reports on governance by Africog.org, and an interview with prominent civil society member.

Kenya's new Constitution approved in 2010 paved the way for openness policies by recognizing the right of access to information. Even though the Parliament is still working on an access to information law, open data law and privacy law, since the new Constitution was passed, there was a strong orientation at the Ministerial level to implement open government policies. In particular, the open data movement was very strong in the country.

For the development of its first action plan the government established a web and mobile phone-based channel for citizen engagement and interaction. Once the national action plan was adopted in March 2012, Civil Society Organizations and other stakeholders organized an open government symposium on the implementation of the action plan. To promote public participation in the process, government and CSOs agreed to set different tools and platforms for engagement and feedback. Some examples of these tools are explained in the IRM report: the government shared the implementation status of the commitments through an OGP-CSO listserve.

According to this report, Kenya made 9 commitments in its first action plan. By the time the report was published none of the commitments were totally completed, although 2 were substantially completed; 2 were limited and 5 had not been started. Kenya divided its commitments into four themes that had to be improved: i) improving transparency in electoral processes; ii) promoting public participation; iii) improving transparency in the judiciary; and iv) open budgets. Related to the core values of open government, 6 commitments were on access to information, 6 on civic participation, 6 on accountability and 6 on technology and innovation.

The IRM starred the following commitments: a) Improving service delivery by both National and Devolved Government; b) Promote transparency and accountability in the management of elections by making available voter register constituency and boundary information in electronic format; and c) Promote transparency in administration of justice by public vetting of judges and integrating new technologies within the judiciary to improve expediency in judgments.

The most important achievements on open government policies in Kenya are the digitalization of records, in particular judicial and land ones, to provide citizens with information useful to them in formats they can understand and reuse. The Ministry of Communications´ decision of designing and publishing visualizations related to budget expenditure was another key landmark in the process.

The implementation of open government in the judiciary was a big accomplishment, too. Maya Gainer analyzed the transformation that the Judiciary experienced after the 2010 Constitutional reform. The reform was focused on "people-centered delivery of justice, organizational culture and professionalism of staff, adequate infrastructure and resources, and information technology as an enabler for justice" (Gainer, Transforming the Courts: judicial sector reforms in Kenya, 2011-2015, 2015, p. 6). Moreover, the office was

restructured and specialized staff was hired. The judiciary "also created new administrative departments (…) and formed issue-specific committees led by judges to further develop how specific components of the transformation framework (…)."

According to civil society representatives, in 2013, a new Ministerial administration delayed the open data and public participation process. This is perceived as a move backwards in the process of open government. They also reported that the second action plan process has not been as participatory as the previous one. The key to success for the 2010 and 2011 openness process were two factors: a strong leadership at ministerial level that promoted open data and open government policies, and a high and active participation of civil society organizations that pushed for reform.

Mexico[12] is an upper middle income Latin American country. According to TI Perception of Corruption Index, it is in 103th place out of a total of 175 countries surveyed, with a score of 34/100 on the Perception of Corruption Index. Despite the efforts on open government undertakings over the past three years, perception of corruption has dramatically increased in the country (65/159 in 2005). In the Open Government Index, Mexico scored 0.56/1 and ranked 46/102. Mexico is one of the founding countries of the OGP, and has already submitted two action plans: the first one for the period 2012-2013 and the second one for 2013-2014 with 26 commitments.

Before joining the OGP, Mexico already had a legal and institutional enabling environment for open government. The country has passed two key laws: the Federal Law on Transparency and the Access to Public Governmental Information. These laws regulate the right of every person to access to public information and several measures on transparency that the government should observe. The Federal Institute for Access to Public Information and Data Protection Office was created to be in charge of implementing the transparency and access to information law that was a model agency for all Latin American countries.

Mexico submitted its first action plan to OGP divided into two phases. The first one lacked civil society participation and included only a few civil society recommendations. A second version of the action plan was made in closer collaboration with civil society through the Tripartite Technical Secretariat (STT). The STT coordinated OGP efforts and was led by the Ministry of Public Administration, the Federal Institute for Access to Information, and a coalition of civil society organizations. According to the IRM report, this plan featured a wider set of commitments, each with a unique co-governance structure between civil society and government. Mexico presented a second action plan that was the result of two complementary processes: first, the organization of nine thematic working groups, with participation of civil servants, CSOs and academics; and, second, the generation of proposals from the federal government agencies.

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[12] The sources for the case study are the following: the IRM report on Mexico for the years 2013-2014 and the World Bank, www.ogphub.org.

According to the IRM report for the years 2011-2013, Mexico made 37 commitments in its first action plan. By the time that report was published 20 commitments were completed and 14 were in progress, 2 had not been started and 1 was unclear. In relation with open government core values, 34 commitments were on access to information, 8 on civic participation, 20 on accountability and 24 on technology and innovation.

In the second action plan Mexico presented 26 commitments. By the time the IRM published its report, 6 commitments were completed, 13 were substantially completed and 7 were limitedly completed. In reference to the OGP values, 24 were on access to public information, 8 on civic participation, 3 on public accountability and 16 on technology and innovation.

In its second action plan Mexico divided the commitments into nine themes: i) Competitiveness and Economic Growth; ii) Justice and Security; iii) Social and Economic Policy; iv) Budgetary and Fiscal Transparency; v) Infrastructure and Public Works; vi) Digital Agenda; vii) Energy and Extractive Industries; viii) Environmental Policy; and ix) Public challenges.

Some of Mexico's most important commitments are: a) Make available tools, events, and online platforms to create communities of programmers, developers, and civil society members to encourage innovation; b) Boost the number of firms that make public information about their corporate governance and economic, social, and environmental effects; and c) Synergize existing platforms connecting national communities with other bodies of the Federal Administration to proactively promote the right to access information and personal data protection.

Costa Rica[13] is middle income country in Central America. According to Transparency International, it is in 41th place out of a total of 175 countries surveyed, with a score of 53/100 on the TI Perception of Corruption Index. In the Open Government Index, Costa Rica scored 0.68/1 and ranked 19/102. Costa Rica joined OGP in January 2012. Costa Rica created a National Commission for Open Government (*Comisión Nacional de Gobierno Abierto*) integrated by members of the executive branch, civil society organizations and the business sector. The country publishes public information regularly in its Open Data Portal. (http://datosabiertos.gob.go.cr/home)

Costa Rica submitted two action plans to OGP; the first one, for the years 2013-2014, included 23 commitments and the second one, for 2015-2017, has 18 commitments. The first action plan was developed by the government with no civil society participation. The

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[13] The sources for the case study are the following: the IRM report on Costa Rica 2013-2014, Transparency International, the Open government Index by the World Justice Project, http://presidencia.go.cr/gobiernoabiertocr/ and two interviews, one with a government representative and the second with a prominent civil society member.

Digital Government Secretary (*Secretaría Técnica de Gobierno Digital - STGD*) had the task of complying with Costa Rica's OGP commitments. According to IRM first and only report on Costa Rica, the civil society faced important challenges in organizing and participating in the development and implementation of the first action plan. During 2013, an inter-institutional and multi-sector working group was created. However, when it began their work, the first action plan had already been presented.

According to the IRM report, 4 commitments were completed, 6 were substantially completed and 13 were limitedly completed. Related to OGP core values, 14 commitments were on access to information, 9 on civic participation, 3 on accountability, and 3 on technology and innovation.

Costa Rica categorized its commitments into eleven themes to be improved. They were: i) Internal Government Management; ii) Electronic Platforms and Websites; iii) Citizen Participation through Digital Platforms; iv) Services for Citizens through Electronic Means; v) Open Data; vi) Promote Awareness of Open Government Values; vii) Promote Awareness of Open Government Values; viii) Digital Government for Private Sector Procedures; ix) National System of Service Audits; x) Draft Law of Access to Public Information; and xi) Access to Information and Civic Participation on Environmental Topics.

The IRM granted stars to the following commitments: a) Develop the platform 'I propose' for the presentation of draft laws, and strengthen and promote participatory mechanisms in the judiciary; b) Implement a single platform to give further transparency and efficiency to the process; and c) Carry out a variety of activities to promote open government to institutions, the citizenry, and public opinion.

In its first action plan Costa Rica included some commitments for the judicial branch such as granting a better access to public information and citizen participation mechanism (commitment 3.2.8) and improving data openness (commitment 2.6) in the Judicial Branch. Costa Rica Also developed a Strategic Plan for the Judicial Branch 2013-2018. Among the actions proposed in this Strategic Plan there are: promoting participation of justice service users, implementing actions that allow improving the administration of justice by improving communication and collaboration with citizenship, among other proposals.

Costa Rica is currently developing a national strategy for open government for the three branches of the State and for sub-national levels that will exceed its commitments to OGP. Government and CSOs together are analyzing the implementation of an independent evaluation mechanism for its second Action Plan and for open government policies in general.

Georgia[14] is a lower middle income European country. According to Transparency International it is in 50th place out of a total of 175 countries surveyed, with a score of 52/100 on the TI Perception of Corruption Index. In the Open Government Index, Georgia scored 0.61/1 and ranked 29/102. Georgia joined OGP in October 2011. Since then, the country submitted two action plans for the years 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 including 40 commitments. Georgia has an extensive access to information policy. The country publishes governmental information on different areas.

In 2012, two important laws were promoted: the open meetings and open records acts. These acts were a huge step in order to promote open government. The aim of them is to "allow citizens and the press to observe the function of State and local governmental agencies- their goal is to end closed door governance" (Office of Attorney General, 2012, pág. 1). The law establishes that all its provisions should always be interpreted in favor of the openness. Secondly, the act establishes sanctions in cases of violation.   Furthermore, the open records law define public record as "all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, computer based or generated information, data, data fields or similar material prepared and maintained or received by an agency or by a private person or entity in the performance of a service or function for or on behalf of an agency or when such documents have been transferred to a private person or entity by an agency for storage or future governmental use" (Office of Attorney General, 2012, p. 8).

According to the IRM report, Georgia presented 12 commitments for the years 2012-2013. By the time the IRM report was published, 3 commitments were completed, 3 were substantially completed, 4 were limitedly completed and 4 had not been started. According to open government core values, 11 commitments were on access to information, 3 on civic participation, 2 on accountability, and 2 on technology and innovation.

Georgia divided its commitments into four themes that had to be improved. They are: i) Public Service of The Future; ii) Easily Accessible and Better Healthcare; iii) Be Informed and Advance Your Country; iv) Innovation For Efficient Spending.

Some of the commitments that had been awarded stars by the IRM are the following ones: a) Platform for Participation in the Legislative Process: Engage citizens in the legislative process; b) "NGO Forum" to support and monitor Georgia's implementation of OGP commitments; and c) Easily Accessible and Better Healthcare: Improve healthcare infrastructure and create an online database with healthcare services information.

According to the Ministry of Justice, the key for success in Georgia was the close partnership between government and civil society. This was possible due to a strong leadership and political will and the existence of a vibrant civil society. Both sides consider the co-creation

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[14] The sources for the case study are the following: the IRM report on Georgia for the years 2012-2013, Transparency International, the World Justice Project Open Government Index and an interview with a government official.

process as exemplary. This collaboration was institutionalized in the civil society forum in charge of monitoring the process. For the second action plan, this forum made an extensive consultation process across the country to define priority sectors of intervention.

The government, with the intervention of civil society, has a unique and formalized Monitoring Tool that consists of three steps; first, every agency that have committed open government policies evaluated itself according to a pre-established framework; second, CSOs evaluate agencies self-assessments; and third, the Ministry of Justice analyzes both assessments and produces its own evaluation.

A comparative chart that presents some answers to the research questions for each country can be found in Annex I.

As a general finding of these five case studies, the research shows that there are no comprehensive tools to assess the impact of open government policies on public trust in institutions. After analyzing a variety of internationally recognized indices and indicators for these five countries, we selected two indices to assess whether there has been some improvement on perception of corruption after implementing open government. These indices are: Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index[15] and World Bank Control of Corruption Index[16]. We retrieved the scores for these countries in 2005 (baseline) and in 2014, and compared the results.

Indices	Indonesia		Kenya		Georgia		Costa Rica		Mexico	
TI Corruption Perceptions Index	2005	2014	2005	2014	2005	2014	2005	2014	2005	2014
	137/159	107/175	144/159	145/175	130/159	50/175	51/159	47/175	65/159	103/175
World Bank Control of Corruption	2005	2014	2005	2014	2005	2014	2005	2014	2005	2014
	20,5	34,1	17,1	16,3	47,3	75,5	66,8	75,0	48,8	26,4

The results show that Indonesia and Kenya, poor performers in the 2005 measurement, show either none or minor improvements in the scores for 2014. Costa Rica that was a better performer in 2005 shows some improvement but not a significant one. Therefore, for theses three countries, the variation is not significant as to estimate that open government policies have had any impact. On the other hand, Georgia and Mexico's scores varied

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[15] "The Corruption Perceptions Index ranks countries and territories based on how corrupt their public sector is perceived to be. A country or territory's score indicates the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). A country or territory's rank indicates its position relative to the other countries and territories in the index." Available at http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results

[16] "Control of Corruption captures perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests. Percentile rank indicates the country's rank among all countries covered by the aggregate indicator, with 0 corresponding to lowest rank, and 100 to highest rank" Available at http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=Worldwide-Governance-Indicators

significantly. While Georgia had a great improvement in both indices, Mexico has moved backwards in the rankings.

5. Conclusions

This research extensively analyzes the state of the art related to open government initiatives and evaluation of transparency and accountability initiatives and open government policies. Measuring results of open government is still in the early stages. While the implementation of OGP commitments is systematically assessed by the OGP IRM, this tool shows a partial picture. OGP includes only around 66 countries, and open government policies that are not included in National Actions Plans are out of the scope of the IRM. The literature review and the case studies suggest that there are many open government policies, in particular at the sub-national levels and in the Parliaments and Judiciaries that are not included in these plans.

The analysis of country commitments shows that most of them are focused on transparency (119 out of 166 commitments) and the use of technology and innovation to promote a greater access to public information (99 out of 166 commitments). The core values of accountability and participation are present on a lesser degree (72 and 42 out of 166 commitments respectively). There is still an unclear correlation between transparency and accountability. What we know now is that more transparency does not necessarily lead to more accountable governments. Leadership and a vibrant civil society are needed to use access to information to monitor and control governments. Civic participation and collaboration in the decision-making process seem to be the right combination to use transparency for achieving more open governments.

In those countries in which a strong partnership between government and civil society was present, open government policies flourished. These partnerships are the central social dynamics for successful cases. The number and diversity of CSOs, their regional reach, technical capacity, and international connections and support determine the level of power of civil society and the capacity to negotiate with the government to achieve stronger open government commitments. It is also true that the existence of strong CSOs alone does not guarantee open government policies. Political leadership and a willingness to open up governments are also important. Those countries that have been more successful in open government had both a vibrant civil society and a government that was committed to openness. In order to ensure sustainability, the participation process should be institutionalized. Countries like Mexico and Georgia that have well established committees for participation are less likely to have a drawback in the process.

The analysis of open government initiatives in the world shows some common elements. The first open government policies that are usually implemented in the majority of countries are those related to access to information and FOIA laws. The strongest impulse for open government seemed to be the access to information movement. This does not

mean that access to information and open government should be assimilated. Open government seems to build upon the openness that the access to information movement carried out, and goes beyond by promoting accountability and public participation. The quick spread of technology and innovation in public administrations that took place over the last 10 years was another key factor for the promotion of open government. In particular, the open data movement gained many adepts not only among civil society but in governments. An evidence of this is the impressive amount of public portals that flourished during the last 5 years.

There are a wide set of best practices on open government in the world. Strong and long-lasting partnerships between government and civil society seem to be a key for success. High levels of public participation are also needed. Participation should not be promoted only by providing more information. Successful cases are those in which civil society participation is promoted to a higher degree; in those cases where there were actual co-creation of open government policies and collaboration in the decision-making process, the results are more tangible and sustainable. In many cases, regular citizens are still out of the open government movement and are not using information to improve their lives. The analysis shows that citizens´ engagement in public policies requires some training. It also shows that when the government discloses information that people need (e.g., educational information), people take advantage of it. Governments should also provide information in ways that people can understand it. The role of data intermediaries that translate complex datasets into practical visualizations also promotes people engagement.

Transparency should not be only restricted to providing information on government policy results. A transparent decision-making process is also needed to promote open government. Only participation in the decision-making process and in the evaluation of policies can lead to more accountable governments.

As said, political will and civic participation are the two most important conditions for success. In countries lacking any of them, open government is more difficult to implement and to be sustainable over time. Open government is not an easy path to follow. There are many conservative forces, corrupt interests and cultural features that are opposed to open government. Even in some countries with high commitment to open government, a change in political winds can make the whole open government movement go backwards. Strong institutions and government and civil society open government champions are the key to success in these situations. The role of international organizations in supporting open government processes is particularly important in difficult times.

For all these reasons, open government results and impact on governance and on the improvement of people´s lives should be systematically evaluated. One difficulty to assess open government is that open government models vary from country to country. Therefore, evaluation tools should be flexible enough to adjust to country priorities. Implementation of open government commitments within the OGP framework is currently comprehensively

evaluated by OGP IRM. People´s perception on access to information, transparency and participation is also assessed by the Open Government Index. But a more systematic evaluation framework of mid and long-term impact of open government policies is needed.

We now have some guidance on how this framework should look like; it should evaluate country contexts to assess the likelihood of open government policies to arise; the willingness of governments and the strength of civil society (in particular in countries that are not currently implementing open government policies and are not members of OGP). The framework should assess general policies related to the core values of open government: transparency and access to information, accountability, civic participation and technology and innovation. It has to evaluate the strength of open government institutions as well. And it also has to include an evaluation by sector. It has been shown that open government policies on targeted sectors are more likely to demonstrate results. Therefore, an analysis of these sectors or challenges as they are called by some authors should be included in an evaluation framework.

In order to achieve a systematic and global evaluation tool, policy guidance at the international level is needed. To ensure a uniform methodology and tool application and comparability of the results, a global or intergovernmental organization should coordinate evaluation efforts. These are some initial steps to follow:

- Create a formal mechanism for monitoring and evaluating open government policies.
- Set up a group of experts to advise on the process.
- Develop a best practices guide for accountable public institutions.
- Develop a uniform methodology to assess open government results that complement existing ones.
- Create a framework to support CSOs in weak environments.
- Concentrate efforts on the spheres of public resource management, safer communities and corporate accountability.
- Promote the exchange of information in countries with similar contexts in order to spread best practices (countries need to know the impact of their inaction).

The effective implementation of open government policies will help comply with some of the mandates of the 2030 Agenda adopted by the United Nations in September, 2015. In particular, measuring impact of access to information, transparency, civic participation and accountability will help achieve many of the targets included in the Sustainable Development Goal 16.

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Annex I: Comparative Country Chart on Open Government (OG)

	Costa Rica	Georgia	Indonesia	Kenya	Mexico
Current OG initiatives	OGP National OG Plans	OGP Other OG policies	OGP OG policies at sub-national level	OGP	OGP Other OG policies
Political and social dynamics leading to OG initiatives	Strong political will and partnership with civil society	Strong political will and partnership with civil society	Strong political will and partnership with civil society	Strong political will and partnership with civil society	Strong political will and partnership with civil society
Number of Total OGP Commitments	23	40	31	9	63
OG core values addressed	Access to Public Information: 9 Civic Participation: 3 Civic Accountability: 8 Technology and Innovation: 19	Access to Public Information: 23 Civic Participation: 13 Civic Accountability: 15 Technology and Innovation: 20	Access to Public Information: 22 Civic Participation: 11 Civic Accountability: 10 Technology and Innovation: 19	Access to Public Information: 5 Civic Participation: 6 Civic Accountability: 5 Technology and Innovation: 6	Access to Public Information: 60 Civic Participation: 14 Civic Accountability: 34 Technology and Innovation: 35
Specific areas and sectors targeted	Service Delivery: 13 Natural Resource Governance: 1 Budget Processes: 1 Freedom of Information: 9 Aid Transparency: 6	Service Delivery: 24 Natural Resource Governance: 0 Budget Processes: 2 Freedom of Information: 18 Aid Transparency: 15	Service Delivery: 12 Natural Resource Governance: 5 Budget Processes: 5 Freedom of Information: 22 Aid Transparency: 22	Service Delivery: 2 Natural Resource Governance: 0 Budget Processes: 2 Freedom of Information: 4 Aid Transparency: 9	Service Delivery: 11 Natural Resource Governance: 9 Budget Processes: 6 Freedom of Information: 60 Aid Transparency: 41
Branches of the State involved	Executive: 23 Legislative: 2 Judiciary: 2	Executive: 36 Legislative: 2 Judiciary: 4	Executive: 29 Legislative: 1 Judiciary: 1	Executive: 8 Legislative: 0 Judiciary: 1	Executive: 60 Legislative: 3 Judiciary: 4
Are there M&E systems in place?	IRM Independent M&E to be adopted	IRM Government and civil society M&E in place	IRM N/A	IRM Report by WB*	IRM Independent report*
Keys for success	Leadership CSOs activism	Leadership CSOs activism	Leadership CSOs activism	Leadership CSOs activism International Aid	Leadership CSOs activism
International organizations involved	OGP OECD	OGP	OGP	OGP WB	OGP

* The author was not able to get these reports although interviewees confirmed they existed.