

Open Government Partnership New Zealand

National Action Plan 2018-2020

Progress report for: Sep 2019 – Dec 2019

Commitment 5: Public participation in policy development




Lead agency: The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)

Objective: DPMC will assist the New Zealand public sector to develop a deeper and more consistent understanding of what good engagement with the public means (right across the International Association of Public Participation's spectrum of public participation).

Ambition: New Zealanders increasingly experience a timelier and collaborative approach to public participation when policies are developed, and consider their concerns, diversity of views, life experience, and time are valued in the policy process.

Improvements in public participation can result in better design of policy and services, and increase their legitimacy. Improving public participation requires an informed approach to applying public participation methods throughout the policy development process. Developing a deeper understanding of what good engagement looks like and providing guidance about best practice methods across government, will achieve a more consistent and coherent approach to public participation.

OGP values: Civic participation

Milestones		Progress
1	<p>Extend existing Policy Methods Toolbox public participation guidance to include a decision tool that will assist agencies and Ministers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Choose the appropriate engagement approach on the public participation spectrum when they tackle a specific policy or service design issueUnderstand the characteristics and enablers of effective public participation at whichever point on the spectrum they chooseEnsure that the engagement approaches selected appropriately include and reflect the diversity of those interested and affected by the policies. <p><i>Start/End dates: October 2018/March 2020</i></p>	
2	<p>Develop and share recent case studies documenting New Zealand innovation success stories in public participation in the policy development process</p> <p><i>Start/End dates: October 2018/March 2020</i></p>	
3	<p>Identify a 'live' policy issue in which to trial public engagement in policy development that is higher on the public participation spectrum than inform or consult, as a demonstration project</p> <p><i>Start/End dates: October 2018/March 2020</i></p>	

4	Widely disseminate the results of the above actions <i>Start/End dates: March 2020/June 2020</i>	N/A
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Progress key:  some delays  underway  Completed

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING

In the period since the last report until 31 December 2019, the Policy Project (the team within DPMC responsible for Commitment 5) has:

- Gathered information about the work of MYD and DOC on the Youth Action Plan and the Youth Voices Project under the Child and Youth Strategy as part of the 'live' demonstration project.
- Briefed the Minister for Children on the OGP work and 'live' demonstration project.
- Prepared and run a workshop in November with engagement consultant Anne Pattillo on the design of the engagement guidance for policy practitioners.
- Worked with Anne Pattillo to prepare an outline of potential content for the guidance and an initial draft for testing.
- Identified a group of advisers (within government and engagement/co-design experts) to assist with the development of the guidance, testing of content, and processes used for engagement with stakeholders and met with the advisers to discuss the approach to the guidance.
- Developed and tested with a reference group three draft surveys for civil society, engagement specialists and policy practitioners. These surveys seek information about participants' experience of and views about community engagement with government during policy development.
- Held meetings with agencies undertaking policy projects that will form the case studies to support the guidance.

HOW WE ARE INCLUDING DIVERSE VOICES

We are continuing discussions with engagement specialists to identify engagement approaches that will include diverse voices and will maximise public engagement within available resources.

HOW WE ARE KEEPING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES INFORMED

We are including diverse voices in the request for information from survey participants. We are ensuring that the context for the work is understood in the information we are sending with the survey. We explain how their contribution will support the intended outcome of a policy development process that reflects a wide range of diverse perspectives.

WHAT'S NEXT?

In the quarter ending 31 March 2020, we will focus on:

- Implementing the surveys of policy practitioners, civil society and engagement specialists, including the people on the OGP email list held by SSC (who have previously been involved with developing the OGP 2018-2020 National Action Plan).
- Continuing the work to conduct engagement with diverse communities and their representatives by:
 - Collecting and analysing the information from the surveys (which include diverse groups and their wider networks).
 - Where appropriate further input may be obtained as we follow up on survey results with particular organisations that are involved with diverse groups and represent them.
- Working with the engagement consultant Anne Pattillo to finalise the draft engagement guidance for policy practitioners.
- Testing the draft guidance and results of the surveys with the group of advisers to assist with the development of the guidance.
- Finalising the write up of projects identified under the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy as part of our work observing the engagement process and outcomes. Continuing to document that work to contribute to the 'live' demonstration project milestone.
- Finalising the write up of case studies that can be referenced in the guidance and then published online within the Policy Methods Toolbox.

LINKS – EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS AND MILESTONES ACHIEVED

Workshop agenda 22 November – Public Participation in policy making