

Open Government Partnership New Zealand

National Action Plan 2018-2021

Progress report for: July – September 2020


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

	Current Milestones	Progress
1	<p>Extend existing Policy Methods Toolbox guidance on public participation (https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/our-programmes/policy-project/policy-methods-toolbox-0) to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) A design tool that will assist policy advisers to choose the appropriate level of engagement on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation for a specific policy issue(ii) Guidance, for each level of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, on the characteristics and enablers of effective public participation and good engagement practice(iii) Guidance on inclusive engagement approaches that include and reflect the diversity of those interested and affected by policies(iv) Principles and concepts of community engagement in policy development(v) Guidance on building government agencies' organisational capability and readiness for community engagement(vi) Guidance on different types of community engagement methods, and their appropriateness for each level on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation	

2	Develop and share recent case studies documenting New Zealand innovation success stories in public participation in the policy development process <i>Start/End dates: October 2018/October 2020</i>	
3	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 <i>Start/End dates: October 2018/December 2020</i>	
4	Widely disseminate the results of the above actions <i>Start/End dates: October 2020/December 2020</i>	

Progress key:	 some delays	 underway	 Completed

REVISION OF TIMELINE AND MILESTONES

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (along with other agencies responsible for commitments under New Zealand's third National Action Plan) asked to extend their deadlines under the term of the current National Action Plan into 2021.

The Policy Project also took the opportunity to reflect on what it has already learned during workshops and its engagement. With the extension of timeframe, it extended the scope of its original milestones. The revised set of milestones with timelines for delivery have been incorporated in the section above.

The new components added to the original milestone 1 to extend the existing Policy Methods Toolbox public participation guidance are:

- Principles and concepts of community engagement in policy making
- Guidance on building organisational capability and readiness for community engagement
- Guidance on selecting community engagement methods.

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING

In the period since the last report the Policy Project:

- Continued to work with our engagement consultant to finalise the decision tool for policy advisors to assist agencies to choose the appropriate engagement approach on the IPP2 Spectrum of Public Participation.
- Developed the other five community engagement resources for inclusion in the Policy Methods Toolbox (in line with revised milestones referred to above). We tested the engagement resources with our reference group and consulted with key government agencies undertaking or involved in community engagement.
- Developed draft web-page content, as the access point for the guidance resources (in regard to both community engagement, and DPMC involvement overall in OGP National Action Plans).

- Undertook further work on engagement case-studies for inclusion on the community engagement webpages.
- Began the write up of three surveys sent to a wide range of individuals and community representatives, engagement specialists and policy practitioners. These surveys seek information about participants' experience of and views about community engagement with government during policy development, including the people on the OGP email list held by PSC (who have previously been involved with developing the OGP 2018-2020 National Action Plan).
- Continued work on 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.

WHAT'S NEXT?

In the quarter ending 30 December 2020, we will:

- Finalise the draft online content for milestone 1, obtain approval for inclusion in the Policy Methods Toolbox, and arrange for the engagement resources to be uploaded to the website.
- Send copies of the finalised resources to the reference group and agencies who participated in shaping the resources.
- Finalise the write up of case studies and obtain approval to publish them to the website.
- Finalise the write up of projects identified under the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy as part of our work observing the engagement process and outcomes, document that work to contribute to the 'live' demonstration project milestone and arrange for its approval to be added to the Policy Project website.
- Produce further case studies that can be placed on the website for publication.
- Finalise the write up of the survey results used to help shape the guidance and publish on our website.

LINKS – EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS AND MILESTONES ACHIEVED

- The new community engagement pages <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/policy-project/policy-methods-toolbox/community-engagement>
- The new OGP page <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/policy-project/policy-community/open-government-partnership>