

# Meeting Notes

**Meeting:** Open Government Partnership EAP meeting

**Date:** Wednesday 28 June 2023

**Time:** 10.30am - 12.00 pm

**Attendees:**

**EAP members:** Suzanne Snively, Farib Sos, Simon Wright, Rachel Roberts and Sarah Colcord

**Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission officials (TKM):** Hugo Vitalis, Deputy Commissioner, Integrity Ethics & Standards, Dean Rosson, OGP team manager, Christine Lloyd, Tula Garry and Cathy Adank

**Apologies:** Sean Audain

**Topics for discussion**

1. The first part of the meeting included updates on:

**Community Engagement Tool**

- a. The progress of commitment one of the Fourth National Action Plan, the community engagement tool. Commission officials recently met with Kāpuia, to discuss the proposed implementation of the community engagement tool in the public service. Officials noted that the Kāpuia governance model accepted that there may be disagreement amongst members on some issues and feedback provided and consensus was not an overriding goal;

**MSF Options**

- b. The progress of officials' research into international MSF models was discussed. TKM has now received the results of a survey of 17 members of OGP. Analysis is still underway, but some initial trends were noted:
  - i. All MSFs considered include government and civil society members. Some also include members of government from outside the executive (e.g. legislative branch, local government or judiciary).
  - ii. For most participants (13), the MSF had more government than civil society members.
  - iii. None of the countries who responded to the survey directly paid their MSF members, but 5 reimbursed for costs.
  - iv. The majority of countries had MSFs that were advisory rather than able to direct government.
  - v. Diversity of expertise was noted as a key strength (for both civil society and government members), as was keenness to collaborate and work to a common goal. A weakness was resourcing and engaging civil society.
- c. Options for a new MSF were discussed, with EAP noting that:

- i. it was important, in looking at options for a new MSF, to research and consider potential models that currently exist in New Zealand and that operate well in the New Zealand context. A new MSF ought to have a significant enablement function; existing governance models that devolve decision-making included, for example:
  - a) New Zealand Search and Rescue, which has an agency as chair and providing the secretariat function for member NGOs;
  - b) models used for Treaty settlements;
  - c) the examples cited in the Local Government Review, which referred to a number of very good governance models;

### **Promoting OGP**

- b. The upcoming report NAP4 back event was discussed in the context of growing the public's awareness of OGP. EAP noted that there was good scope for greater promotion of OGP, including through establishing a programme of events. This could involve communicating about our work, for example, the research work being undertaken on international MSF models. There was scope to work or partner with other entities, including, for example, IPANZ, the Auckland Co-Design Lab,. There were also good examples of entities work that could be highlighted. For example, the Productivity Commission's consultation work on its *Fair Chance for All* Report.

It was hard to draw together a crowd. A strategic approach to engagement might involve looking at what events are already taking place and being included in these. For example, the 2000 industry associations that have annual conferences and are often looking for guest speakers. Other avenues for outreach and promotion included churches and religious and ongoing education groups. For example, the University of the Third Age, which has weekly events in Wellington.

An additional consideration is whether the phrase "open government" needs to be re-framed, so that is focused (and understood) as being about people and community and co-governance rather than simply government.

### **OGP in New Zealand 2013 – 2023 and forwards**

- 2. It was hard to draw together a crowd. A strategic approach to engagement might involve looking at what events are already taking place and being included in these. For example, the 2000 industry associations that have annual conferences and are often looking for guest speakers. Other avenues for outreach and promotion included churches and religious and ongoing education groups. For example, the University of the Third Age, which has weekly events in Wellington. OGP as a member of the Open Government Partnership In 2013, against a background of a rapidly-changing context and extraordinary events that have marked this decade in New Zealand. New Zealand's first three, incremental larger, OGP Action Plans and evolving processes were discussed.

EAP noted that New Zealand is a very ethnically diverse country able to use its many and considerable strengths in shaping a new MSF and MSF processes.

The challenging events of the last 10 years also saw positive actions, including resources flowing more freely from the centre, MSD's use of "connectors", and government and communities working together on issues, modelling what open government is about.

New Zealand should not overlook its own successes. There was the risk that the great initiatives in the last 10 years in response to the extraordinary event would be forgotten about and overlooked as people and government businesses returned to “normal”.

Public engagement on OGP needed to use the language of discussion and avoid dialogue that was disputatious. The real economic and social challenges in society currently put people under increasing pressure, potentially adding to reduced social cohesion.

EAP members considered that New Zealand would be better placed to do less commitments in the Fifth National Action Plan but to do them better. The MSF had the potential to be a source of creativity.

#### **Thank you to EAP members**

3. Deputy Commissioner, Hugo Vitalis, thanked EAP members for their support and service. Hugo noted the critical role that EAP members had played in bringing their diverse expertise and skills in advising on the OGP work. Also, in being a critical friend, holding government to account. The OGP team was especially appreciative of EAP’s input into the recent discussion on the options for a new MSF.