

# Open Government and Gender Equality:

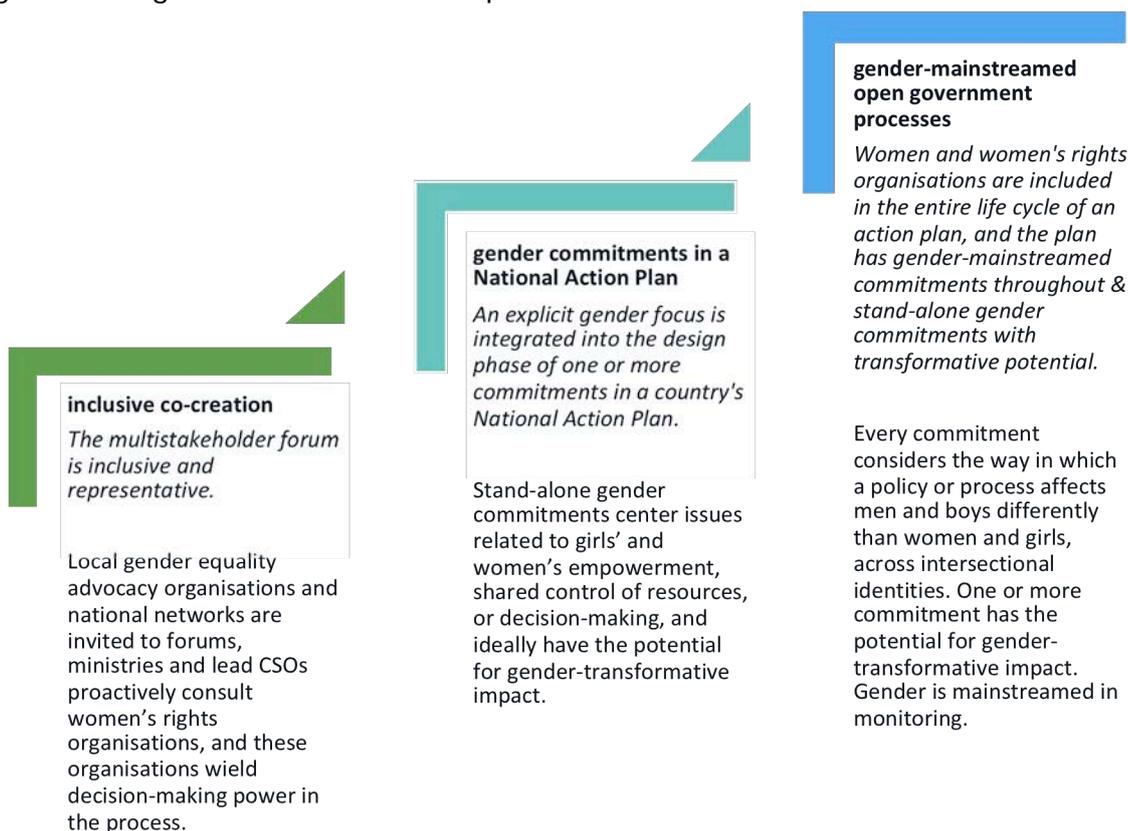
## Opportunities for engaging women's rights organisations

In 2019, Equal Measures 2030 (EM2030) undertook research, supported by the Open Government Partnership (OGP), to explore pathways for engagement between women's rights organisations (WROs) and open government processes in three OGP member states: Colombia, Indonesia, and Kenya. In collaboration with EM2030's network of national and regional partner organisations, focus groups and key informant interviews were held to map the barriers that women's organisations face in accessing open government processes and examine potential advocacy linkages and entry points for WROs.

The resulting research, building upon emerging conceptual frameworks and applied research in this space, lays out a new framework for learning across varying regional contexts and starting points; synthesizes findings across the three country case studies; and provides recommendations for next steps for governments, civil society actors, and the Open Government Partnership in scaling up potential opportunities for engagement between WROs and open government processes.

### Framework for analysis

The research was guided by a conceptual approach that breaks areas of inquiry about gender equality in the open government agenda into three elements, drawing on the framework of the Feminist Open Government Initiative (FOGO). The three elements roughly align to key stages of the life cycle of an open government National Action Plan—the mechanism through which OGP member governments focus on national open government priorities and ambitious reforms. The value of this framework for analysis is that it allows for the clearer definition of potential pathways for inclusive participation in different country contexts, as well as for identifying points where barriers may prevent inclusive co-creation or the integration of a gender focus into action plans:



## Key findings

EM2030's research validated prior findings that much can be done to improve WROs' involvement in OGP processes. Across the three country contexts evaluated, focus group participants identified barriers to inclusive co-creation, gender commitments in National Action Plans, and the full vision of gender-mainstreaming in open government processes—and began to iterate ideas for pathways around these barriers and areas for investment from OGP member states and the secretariat that could scale up efforts for inclusion. Insights from these countries at different stages of national action plan development highlight the value of knowledge-sharing across contexts about pathways for WROs' engagement, strategies for working in resource-poor environments, and the need for flexible tools to assess where countries are in terms of gender inclusion and improve WROs' involvement. Read the full research paper at [equalmeasures2030.org](http://equalmeasures2030.org).

### inclusive co-creation

In the three countries evaluated, all had at least symbolic moves made by governments to women's rights organisations around co-creation, but few women's rights organisations participated in multistakeholder forums or consultations

Barriers to inclusive co-creation include: time/resource constraints, lack of existing relationships between WROs and government officials, government transitions, poor dissemination of OGP materials into areas outside of capital cities, logistics of attending consultations in capitals, mechanisms to coordinate input among WROs

Most respondents had some familiarity with open government concepts but limited awareness of the details of national action plans

Resourcing was a common theme across all focus groups—meaningful engagement from WROs, requires time, expertise, and financial resources

### gender commitments in a National Action Plan

Commitments can generate in different ways in different countries: originating with civil society, in backchannels, or through a top-down approach by lead government ministries—better mapping how commitments generate and sharing good practices is critical to WROs' ability to introduce or monitor commitments

Participants suggested there are reasons to be cautious about over-emphasizing the importance of gender-sensitive commitments, or even stand-alone gender commitments, at the expense setting big goals around gender mainstreaming

In Colombia (unlike Indonesia or Kenya), there was a strong sense of regional context/familiarity with gender commitments in other countries—this could be an area of further research or could shape future OGP investments (e.g. regional best practice-sharing)

### gender-mainstreamed open government processes

No country evaluated is close to full gender mainstreaming, though participants in Kenya and Colombia felt it was feasible (given the strength of civil society/feminist movements)

Focus group participants had consensus on the need to increase a focus on, set goals, and clearly define gender mainstreaming in the open government agenda—this could feed into concrete target setting from OGP (e.g. x number of gender-sensitive commitments and y number of stand-alone commitments in 2 year or 5 year time horizon)

Participants agreed that a true feminist open government would have inclusive, representative co-creation and a gender lens applied to every commitment in an action plan—whether related to open data, participatory budgeting, infrastructure, natural resources, anti-corruption, or access to education and health services—plus stand-alone gender commitments

## About Us

Equal Measures 2030 is an independent civil society and private sector-led partnership that connects data and evidence with advocacy and action, helping to fuel progress towards gender equality.

The current partnership is a joint effort of leading regional and global organisations: the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CLADEM, Data2X, the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), KPMG International, ONE Campaign, Plan International, and Women Deliver.

