

**Initial Independent Review of the Taiwan Open
Government National Action Plan 2021 – 2024**

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Introduction

This independent review of Taiwan’s Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2024 provides the baseline and evidence for a post implementation review in 2025. As requested by the Taiwan Government, and to enable international comparisons, it adapts the Open Government Partnership’s Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) methodology and process.¹ This review:

- evaluates the characteristics of the action plan and each commitment, and records implementation progress in 2021;
- assesses the co-creation of the action plan by the government and civil society groups, identifies promising commitments, their opportunities, challenges, and makes implementation recommendations; and
- offers overall recommendations to be considered when implementing the action plan and planning for the second action plan.

This review was prepared by Keitha Booth, Independent Contractor, New Zealand, and Associate Professor Mei Jen Hung, National Taiwan University, Taiwan (R.O.C.), for the National Development Council, Taiwan (R.O.C.). Interviews were conducted with seven civic groups.² It was peer-reviewed by Emeritus Professor John Wanna, Australian National University and Griffith University. The reviewers thank the Open Government Partnership for the online resources which enabled this adaptation of an IRM Action Plan review.

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¹ Open Government Partnership. Independent Reporting Mechanism. Action Plan Review. 2021.

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/independent-reporting-mechanism-action-plan-review/>

² Taiwan National Treasure Project, Transparency International Chinese Taipei, Open Culture Foundation, Doublethink Lab, Organization for Data-driven Application (Open Data Alliance), Taiwan Association for Human Rights, and one anonymous group.

Section I: Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2024 Overview

Civil society and the government worked together to develop Taiwan’s first open government national action plan and met co-creation minimum requirements. All 19 commitments in the plan introduce the concept of open government. Nine have substantial potential for long-term results. These cover environmental data disclosure, social inclusion of new immigrants, youth, anti-corruption, and financial transparency. 2021 implementation was mostly completed. Effective implementation and results require leadership and funding certainty, training and promotion of a culture of openness across central and local government, and a willingness by officials to collaborate with a broader range of civil society groups and regularly consider and respond to their suggestions.

Taiwan released its first open government national action plan in January 2021, following its declaration at the May 2019 Open Government Partnership (OGP) Summit in Ottawa, Canada, of its intention to draft an action plan. This initial review evaluates the design of this action plan and records implementation progress in 2021. Results will be analyzed in 2025 following completion of the plan.

For clarity, assessment and international comparison, the review rearranges the action plan’s commitment categories into open data re-use, personal data and identity protection, freedom of information, youth participation and civic education, public participation, gender and ethnic group inclusion, integrity policies, and financial transparency.

Since 2014, Taiwan’s civic community has actively advocated for Taiwan to participate in open government and join the OGP. It wants open government institutionalized in Taiwan and international open government standards implemented.³ After the government’s unsuccessful application in 2015 to join the OGP, civic groups promoting open government attended international conferences and continue to advocate for more government participation in open government. For its part, the government wants the power and strength of government and civil society to be balanced, with the government accountable to the general public,⁴ and, in July 2019, it invited civic groups, scholars, and experts to help plan the first national action plan.

SUMMARY

Action plan under review: 2021-2024
Number of commitments: 19

Commitment Detail:
 Commitments with an open government lens: 19 (100%)
 Promising commitments (substantial potential for results) 9 (47%)

Policy areas set out in the plan:
 Open data and freedom of information
 Public participation
 Gender/ethnic groups inclusion
 dialogue
 Integrity
 Anti-money laundering

Emerging policy areas:

- Youth participation and civics education
- Personal data and identity protection
- Financial transparency

Co-creation compliance Acted according to open government process

The process to develop the action plan met international requirements for open government participation and co-creation. Civic society representatives and government officials worked on the action plan between July 2019 and December 2020. Government proposed an initial set of 32 commitments and invited public consultation on 12 of these on the online policy platform⁵ and at multi-stakeholder forums. A new Executive Yuan Open Government National Action Plan Task Force⁶ and 13 ministers selected six of 46 online submissions received and finalized the action plan with civic groups and ministries. Six of the commitments proposed by civic groups were included in the final action plan.⁷ Transcripts of their meetings are publicly available on the SayIt Public Digital Innovation Space website.⁸

Civic groups interviewed for this review applauded the release of the action plan. Overall, they expressed moderate satisfaction with its content, were pleased that Task Force members and civil servants received some open government training and saw officials' open government understanding grow as the action plan was developed. They reported that civic groups' focus on commitments which would really work, and which had potential for promising results, provided a new perspective for many civil servants. Many want open government training to civil servants mandated or accelerated to maintain the momentum gained during the action plan creation.

This first national action plan was created by participants whose open government and public participation knowledge and experience ranged from very high to minimal. Wider ministerial engagement on the action plan would strengthen implementation and future action plans. Formally involving other civil group members with proven governance experience would complement the composition of the Task Force and increase support from civil society groups. Civil servants would benefit from ongoing training about public private participation, consultation, and co-creation in policy development and service delivery. Individual members of the Task Force need stronger roles in designing and overseeing each commitment at the department level. The civic community has an opportunity during implementation to accept the government's challenge to them to push for change if departments are unwilling, and to establish a tension between each to maintain Taiwan's open government momentum.⁹ Regular government and civic group meetings and publicity would demonstrate collaboration. To enable full implementation of the action plan by 2025, ongoing resourcing, funding, and collaboration with the public must be certain.

In line with OGP independent review methodology, the review assessed each commitment in the action plan for its potential for results. It considered the clarity of their objectives, foreseen change in the respective policy area compared with the status quo, the potential sustainability of the expected positive results, and feedback from stakeholders. It identified nine commitments with substantial potential for results. These cover environmental and citizen science data, social inclusion, youth participation, enhancing integrity, and financial transparency. Commitment 1-5 discloses more environmental information as open data, encourages citizen science data, and increases open government capability of public service partners. Commitment 3-2 seeks to empower new immigrants to participate in delivering public services. The Facilitate Youth Participation and Civics Education cluster (Commitments 2-2 and 2-5) encourages young people to learn about and engage in public affairs. The Integrity Policies cluster (Commitments 4-1, 4-2,

4-3) progresses political donation disclosure, improved scrutiny of Taiwan's government procurement integrity platforms, and a dedicated Whistleblower Protection Act. The Financial Transparency cluster (Commitments 5-1 and 5-2) cluster continues work to strengthen Taiwan's anti-money laundering environment.

The full list of commitments and assessment of each commitment's verifiability, open government lens, potential for results, and implementation progress in 2021 as publicly reported by the government in June 2022,¹⁰ is set out in **Annex 1** at the end of this review.

While each commitment has verifiable activities, some only continue well-established open government work programs or anticipate modest results. New work promoting greater public private participation, reporting publicly on progress, and monitoring and promoting all results would demonstrate strong determination to drive open government change in Taiwan.

In future action plans, drafters are encouraged to work with more outside groups to improve representativeness, for example, indigenous peoples, groups of different socio-economic status, and local governments. New policy areas to be considered could cover climate emissions reporting, extractive industries transparency,¹¹ and raising open government understanding and awareness at central and local government levels and by citizens.

Action plan implementation progress over 2021 was mostly on track, with evidence of dedicated implementation of all action plan commitments. Online progress to date includes the release of the 4th CEDAW report,¹² a Regional Revitalization Platform co-creation site,¹³ and approximately 1.5 million people downloading around 97.7 TB of data from the dataset platform at the National Center for High-Performance Computing.

At the governance level, there was some dissatisfaction with the Task Force's implementation style, with comment about a lack of support of and resources for civil society Task Force members which limits their ability to conduct analysis or connect with other groups to discuss the action plan. Overall, a top priority over the remaining implementation period is continuing work to expand the open government culture across the civil service. It is recommended that:

1. Government commitment leads focus on the real impacts of their open government commitments, rather than on their own key performance indicators.
2. Departments are open-minded and prepared to change original plans and commitments based on suggestions from outside groups.
3. Departments reward civil servants in charge of specific open government commitments for outstanding performance, and
4. Government sets up and delivers regular training and promotes a culture of openness for all central and local government civil servants.

Table 1. Summary of Recommendations

This table brings together the review’s recommendations for creating an open government culture at Task Force level and within government departments. See Section II for specific recommendations about implementing each commitment.

	Recommendations in Overview (see p4)	Recommendations in Section III (see p21-22)
Focus on results	Government commitment leads focus on commitment results (Rec 1)	Be transparent about open govt action plan and activities (Rec 1) Be open-minded when implementing the commitments (Rec 4) Learn from other countries (Rec 6)
Promote co-creation with civil society	Be open minded and listen to civic group’s advice (Rec 2)	Clarify the role of the Task Force and assistance for participation by NGOs (Rec 2)
Reward engagement by civil servants	Reward civil servants for outstanding performance (Rec 3)	Train and support civil servants in charge of open government activities (Rec 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen senior civil servants’ engagement in open government training and promotion Reward at all levels for outstanding performance
Promote a culture of openness across government	Deliver regular internal training and promote a culture of openness for all central and local government civil servants (Rec 4)	Train and support civil servants in charge of open government activities (Rec 3) Work with local governments to promote open government (Rec 5)

³Local Researcher’s interview with civil society on 17 June 2022.

⁴ Local Researcher’s interview with Minister Audrey Tang, 14 June 2022.

⁵ Taiwan Government. Public Policy Network Engagement Platform. <https://join.gov.tw/>

⁶ The Task Force has 25 members: Minister Audrey Tang, convener, Minister Kung and Dr. Peng, co-conveners; plus 11 government representatives and 11 scholars, experts, and non-governmental organizational representatives.

⁷ See list in Annex 2 of this report. See Appendix 3 of the meeting minutes of the first Task Force meeting.

⁸ SayIt platform. Taiwan Government Public Digital Innovation Space. <https://sayit.pdis.nat.gov.tw/>

⁹ Local Researcher’s interview with Minister Audrey Tang, 14 June 2022.

¹⁰ National Development Council. Performance of Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan in 2021.

https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/Content_List.aspx?n=0DA7FCB068C7ECF5

¹¹ Cabinet approves plan to overhaul mining law. Focus Taiwan. 19 May 2022.

<https://focustaiwan.tw/politics/202205190020>

¹² Taiwan Government. 4th National CEDAW report. June 2022. <https://gec.ey.gov.tw/en/D7DADA06318CA5F4>

¹³ Local creation portal. Taiwan Regional Revitalization Platform.

<https://www.twrr.ndc.gov.tw/board/wish/fountain>

Section II: Analysis of the Commitments in Taiwan's Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2024

This section examines in detail the commitments that the independent reviewers and stakeholders have identified as having the potential to realize the most promising results for open government in Taiwan and suggests additional work which could elevate the potential of the remaining commitments. It looks ahead to a final independent report in 2024/2025 which will contrast this early assessment with actual results following implementation of each commitment, including considering any open government policy areas not covered by this action plan which could be considered for future plans.

Key criteria used for selecting the promising commitments were the clarity of their objectives, foreseen change in the respective policy area compared with the status quo, the potential sustainability of the expected positive results, and feedback from stakeholders. The reviewers have rearranged action plan categories to align with international open government policy areas.

If fully implemented, nine promising commitments promoting integrated open environment and citizen science data, youth participation, civics education, new immigrant participation, anti-corruption, and financial transparency, as described in Table 1 below, could deliver significant open government results. These reforms have ambition to institutionalize citizen participation in government decision-making, co-design of policies and service delivery, and embed accountability mechanisms that build public trust in democratic government.

While the remaining commitments have verifiable activities and are connected to open government values, they appear, as written in the action plan, to mostly continue current work programs or to be less likely to deliver substantial change. During implementation there is an opportunity to add new work which could introduce long-lasting change to government practice.

The open data Commitments 1-1 and 1-2 continue to improve Taiwan's noteworthy Government Open Data Platform, established in 2012. Mechanisms will be set up for government, industry, and academic representatives to jointly prioritize government's high value open data, open data standards and processes will be strengthened, and case studies of open data re-use issued. A new high-performance computing environmental dataset platform will be set up and applications to use it accepted. Extra work could report on how actively the open data platforms are used, for example, by providing statistics showing the most used datasets, top agencies releasing datasets, etc. Added functionality could enable users to vote for new datasets and rate dataset quality. The new computing platform could assign a proportion of its computing resources for civil society access. Adding civil society representatives to the high value data work could establish long-term public participation in open data decision-making. They could help the government address Taiwan's ranking of 20th and score of 51/100 in the Global Data Barometer 2021 survey,¹⁴ and work to return it to its earlier higher global scores. Stakeholders also seek active cross-agency leadership to direct departments to proactively release unrestricted government datasets for re-

use, address public concerns about data quality, access, compliance, and governance, and reference the International Open Data Charter principles.¹⁵

Commitment 1-3 seeks to enhance the transparency of personal data processing. Its modest proposals include international research, seeking expert opinion, issuing guidelines, and reporting to the Executive Yuan on the completion of amendments to the draft Personal Data Protection Act. Including affected civil groups and industry partners in this work would demonstrate government's willingness to include citizens in policy design and could increase public trust in the draft Personal Data Protection Act.

Commitment 1-4 continues work encouraging government agencies to correctly apply the open principles of the Freedom of Government Information law to official information and open government data. Stakeholders would welcome the creation of a harmonized freedom of information regime which provides consistent management of unstructured information (records, documents, etc.) and structured data in Taiwan. This could be in the form of a single piece of legislation, as, for example, the United Kingdom Freedom of Information Act 2000¹⁶ or considering assigning oversight responsibility for the official information system and the open data system to one government agency. A single piece of legislation could clarify definitions and direct government departments to release official information and data proactively, with no or minimal charge. This change could realize very promising open government results and demonstrate that the government understands that the current dual approach is confusing for users seeking to access and re-use official information and open data.

Stakeholders suggest a new mandatory requirement for government agencies to give requesters helpful reasons for refusing their requests for official information rather than generic responses such as the information being for internal use only. Supplying this information would indicate a commitment to the open government value of information transparency and hold agencies publicly accountable for their decisions.

Commitment 2-1 continues a project to improve the current referendum process by launching an electronic system to improve the transparency of electronic joint signatures, protect personal data, and build public trust in online systems. Stakeholders seek more opportunity for civic groups to participate in the process of developing and testing the joint system. They are concerned that the system is being handed to contractors who may not consider public participation valuable in the development process. Successful implementation of this commitment is reliant on increased adoption of Citizen Digital Certificates. Stakeholders propose new joint work by the Ministry of Interior and the Central Election Commission to promote the benefits of these certificates and improve uptake. Demonstrating cross-government agility could be the catalyst which leads to greater public participation in referendums.

Commitment 2-3 continues work to promote regionalize revitalization in Taiwan by building a collaboration space on the Regional Revitalization Information Sharing Platform where people can share their experiences. Stakeholders suggest that inviting more residents and experts in the regions to lead this work would further demonstrate government willingness to work with and

represent local needs. Commitment 2-4 continues work to make it easier to form labor unions by reviewing legal provisions, simplifying administrative procedures, working with local governments, and publicly promoting the role of labor unions. This commitment’s modest ambition would be raised if it also engaged with employers and employer associations. A stakeholder also wants this work to cover the civil service for better protection of civil servants when performing their duties.¹⁷

The Gender-Inclusive Commitment 3-1 promotes public awareness of Taiwan’s commitment to the objectives of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It continues work to increase opportunities for citizens to participate in the writing, publication, and review of its national CEDAW report, and to monitor Taiwan’s target of one-third for the gender distribution of members in the committees of the Executive Yuan and directors of specified foundations. Further gains could be gained by adding new work to consider introducing mechanisms for addressing non-compliance with the Enforcement Act of CEDAW.

Commitments 3-3 and 3-4 continue work to increase indigenous peoples’ participation in the community and international exchange. Stakeholders suggest that jointly implementing Commitment 3-3 with indigenous peoples and groups could stimulate their willingness to participate in delivering Taiwan’s public services, as would adding specific strategies, targets, and monitoring to complement the civic participation activities in the Hakka issues commitment (3-4).

Table 2. Promising commitments

This table lists the nine commitments that the independent reviewers and stakeholders have identified as having the potential to realize the most promising results for open government in Taiwan. Each is then discussed in detail either individually or in a related cluster or group.

<p>Information Disclosure relating to the Environment (Commitment 1-5). <i>This commitment seeks to disclose more environmental information, encourage citizen science data, and increase open government capability of public service partners.</i></p>
<p>Facilitate Youth Participation and Civics Education Cluster (Commitments 2-2, 2-5). <i>This cluster seeks to build on foundational work encouraging youth to participate regularly in policy development and actively contribute to public life.</i></p>
<p>Promote New Immigrant Public Participation and Development (Commitment 3-2). <i>This commitment seeks to empower new immigrants to be involved in public services by offering a range of training and civic participation opportunities.</i></p>
<p>Enhance Integrity Policies Cluster (Commitments 4-1, 4-2, 4-3). <i>This cluster seeks to further promote integrity and reduce corruption by strengthening political donation disclosure, improving Taiwan’s government procurement integrity platforms, and legislating a dedicated Whistleblower Protection Act.</i></p>
<p>Enhance Financial Transparency (Commitments 5-1 and 5-2). <i>This cluster seeks to ensure a more transparent, orderly, and healthy financial environment by promoting beneficial ownership transparency and closing any anti-money laundering loopholes in the religious foundations sector.</i></p>

Commitment 1-5 Information Disclosure relating to the Environment.

For a complete description of this commitment, see Commitment 1-5 in the [Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2024](#)

Context and objectives:

Under this commitment, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will establish an open environmental information platform that will integrate public and private offshore wind power sea areas data and information on solar photovoltaic environmental and social impact evaluation, and link to citizen science data. The new platform will meet Taiwan's open data guidelines, standards, and mechanisms and will offer re-usable open data for communities and researchers to use and add more value. An inventory of potential civil engagement projects will be drawn up and a minimum of seven implemented.¹⁸ The EPA seeks to improve the public service's understanding of open government processes, promote the right to publicly participate in environmental information collection, and make all offshore wind power sea area data more open, accessible, and re-usable. This work will enhance transparency and promote participation based on shared information. It looks ahead to greater public accountability about the impact of offshore wind power sea activities.

Potential for results: Substantial

Civil society groups support this participatory commitment and look forward to open, accessible public, private and citizen science data and information in one location and re-usable by all. They will be able to utilize the data to oversee and monitor what has been happening and potentially add more value to it.¹⁹ Easier access and more information disclosure could help dissolve conflicts as it will contain data collected before and after Taiwan's solar floating system was installed in fish farms. This work's open data governance framework could create efficiencies for environmental agencies and could be a model for more collaborative open data crowd-sourced data projects, including for other types of solar photovoltaic installations. Taiwan's application of the Open Geospatial Consortium's international standards²⁰ sets this work up for early results.

Implementation progress in 2021

This commitment completed its planned activities for 2021. An inventory of civic engagement and collaboration issues and information regarding offshore wind farms of various agencies was completed. It included over 10 issues regarding civic engagement, including the Green Living initiative, promotion of coastal cleanup projects and climate change literacy surveys. It identified four agencies responsible for providing sources of offshore wind farm data to the National Ocean Database. The planning, analysis, and design of the Environmental Information Disclosure and Integration Platform was completed.

Opportunities, challenges and recommendations during implementation

This participatory open data approach is in line with research carried out under the auspices of the International Science Council Committee on Data and the World Data System which reports that "Citizen science is an important vehicle for democratizing science and promoting the goal of

universal and equitable access to scientific data and information” and that data is a critical output of citizen science projects.²¹ There is an opportunity to consider its international results²² and apply its advice on how to manage the citizen science data lifecycle²³ to this commitment. A solar photovoltaic open data example in the United Kingdom,²⁴ and a survey of citizen science projects carried out by European environmental protection agencies and their partners in 2020 are also very timely for the EPA and civic groups to apply to any data quality, infrastructure, governance, documentation, and access challenges they experience.²⁵

The EPA and local civic groups also have an opportunity to work together. The EPA can introduce regular processes to listen to and respond to proposals and matters raised by the civic groups. Civic groups can demonstrate how they have collaborated successfully with government to deliver services or information. There is potential for this commitment to add a new milestone to draw up a right to participate institutional framework which empowers citizen science data, as heralded in the action plan.²⁶

As such, the independent reviewers recommend the following during implementation:

- **Provide open data training for civil servants and create more opportunities for civil servants to work with citizen scientists.** This could help the integration of government data with citizen science data.
- **Set up a reference group of civic groups with collaboration experience** to oversee this commitment, assess its results, support the Task Force, and propose further initiatives to disclose environmental data and information.
- **Invite data researchers to participate in finalizing the data inventory, setting up the co-operative projects and researching the results.** This could result in international case studies of Taiwan’s innovative citizen science data policy and open government activities.
- **Consider submitting articles for publication in the Open Citizen Science Data and Methods section of the Frontiers in Climate journal.**²⁷
- **Consider adding a new milestone to this commitment to draw up a right to participate institutional framework which empowers citizen science data, as heralded in the action plan.**

Facilitate Youth Participation and Civics Education Cluster.

For a complete description of this cluster, see Commitments 2-2 and 2-5 in the [Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2024](#).

Context and objectives:

A breakdown of Taiwan’s population of 23.3 million in February 2022²⁸ shows that around 12% are aged 15-24, 45% aged 25-54 and 16% aged 65 and over.²⁹ This cluster strengthens existing initiatives to facilitate more youth participation in government policy development and develops a new civic responsibility curriculum for educators to teach students to understand open government and participate actively in the community. This is in line with initiatives by other governments to attract youth to engage in government’s business and take on civic responsibility earlier as more of the population reaches retirement age.

Consistent with the open government value of transparency, this cluster enables information sharing between national youth advisory websites and introduces open data concepts in senior high schools and universities. Its work to encourage collaborative policy development and public private participation in the new civics curriculum supports the civic participation value. Through student engagement in school and community affairs, it looks ahead to achieving the open government public accountability value.

Potential for results: Substantial

In 2015, Taiwan launched the Online Public Policy Participation Platform as a permanent channel for the public to participate in public policy creation.³⁰ In December 2020, 7,000 proposals had been made on the ‘citizen’s proposal’ online service, 3,713 issues had been raised and about 1.6 million people had participated. Commitment 2-2 focuses on increasing youth participation. It aims to give young people opportunities to contribute to policy development and to standardize content about the work of central and youth advisory bodies.³¹ Let’s Talk Campaigns will be held and assessed each year, Youth Advisory platforms integrated, a collaborative process for future policy proposals developed, and baselines and indicators set for assessing impact in 2025. There is potential to apply this central government policy participation model at regional and local government levels. Through Commitment 2-5’s new curriculum, students and teachers will learn about civic responsibility. The proposed collaboration between teachers, the Civic and Society Resource Centre for high schools, the Consultation Groups Network for elementary and junior high schools and the commitment’s open government task force offers high potential for results.

Stakeholders rate this cluster as innovative. They applaud the proposals to build on the ‘very flexible’ Let’s Talk Campaign platform, track what happens to policy proposals submitted by young people, and to incorporate open data principles into public schools’ existing practices. They commend the Youth Development Administration’s willingness to welcome new ideas and encourage participation. Civic groups report that the Let’s Talk Discussions are of high quality and that they have already observed young civil servants showing strong interest in discussing and designing courses about open government for the civic curriculum.³²

Implementation progress in 2021

This cluster did not complete its planned activities for 2021. The report evaluating the Let’s Talk campaign is now due in June 2022. Progress on work by public and private sectors to review the existing curricula in high schools and elementary schools and compile analysis reports was limited to analyzing the inventory of upper secondary education courses and open government skills training for teachers in upper secondary education.

Opportunities, challenges and recommendations during implementation

To fully achieve this cluster’s ambition to attract over 1,000 young people each year to attend the policy discussions and to develop a compelling civics curriculum, Taiwan’s current young leaders could be invited to participate. They could draw up the method for selecting the Let’s Talk topics. Through their support, leadership, and connections, they would introduce new participants and other youth-related participatory platforms or channels. There is an opportunity

to attract young people of different socio-economic backgrounds and genders to ensure balanced representation and strengthen open government's equity ambition. While discussions will use many participation methods, including online, the training needs and costs of online participation need to be considered. Equipment and software implications for people of different situations may limit involvement by young people in rural areas or of low socio-economic status.

As such, the independent reviewers recommend the following during implementation:

- **Work with cluster youth leaders** to agree a procedure for selecting the Let's Talk Campaign topics.
- **Invite young people of different socio-economic backgrounds and genders to participate and develop young leaders' capability** to connect with people of different age/gender/socio-economic status.
- **Invite people of different ages to provide feedback** on the discussions and create opportunities for dialogue between them.
- **Set up a reference group of youth leaders in other areas** to advise on implementation, assess the results of each commitment and support the Task Forces.
- **Develop mechanisms and training for deliberative democracy delivery online and address participation issues for young people in rural areas or of low economic status or disadvantage.**

Commitment 3-2 Promote New Immigrant Public Participation and Development.

For a complete description of this commitment, see Commitment 3-2 in the [Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2024](#).

Context and objectives:

In 2020 Taiwan's population included over one million migrants, including many foreign professionals, students, and migrant workers, and over 560,000 who moved to Taiwan through marriage.³³ Since 2012, the government has delivered programs to care for, counsel and empower new immigrants to adapt to and participate in Taiwanese society and expand Southeast Asian culture in Taiwan. This commitment supports the open government civic participation value by seeking participation with non-governmental organizations to strengthen new immigrants' engagement in public affairs and promote social inclusion in Taiwan. It builds on the "New Southbound Policy" policy set up during Tsai Ing-wen's two terms of presidency and seeks to offer lecturer multicultural training to new immigrants, coaching for tour guide examinations, vocational and special employment courses, and interpretation, language teaching and Chinese language remedial teaching opportunities.

Potential for results: Substantial

The variety of opportunities shows substantial potential for results, particularly in career development. Several departments offer training courses, including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of Interior. An example is the program at the National Immigration Agency, Ministry of Interior, which helps new immigrants become

lecturers of cultural diversity. Any new immigrant aged over 20 with a high school diploma is eligible. Experienced immigrants serve as lecturers and mentors in these programs to help other new immigrants.

Publicity across multiple channels is likely to reach many new immigrants and encourage community organizations to submit proposals. Examples are the Ministry of Culture's website, the Living Art Center at northern, central, and southern Taiwan, LINE groups of new immigrants, new immigrant and Hakka radio stations, and Videoland TV network. Through its brochures and workshops disseminating information about the New Immigrant Development Fund, the National Immigration Agency seeks to attract funding applications from agencies at central and local levels, non-government organizations and new immigrant groups.

Implementation progress in 2021

This commitment completed its planned activities for 2021. Collaborative work by government and civic groups on this commitment is already evident. The New Immigrant Development Fund's website shows that its 2021/2022 Fund Committee has nine representatives from central government, three from local governments, ten experts, and seven new immigrant representatives. In 2021, 227 of the 320 applications were approved (23 projects from central government valued at 200 million TWD, 126 projects of about 131 million TWD from local governments, and 78 projects of about 34 million TWD from civic groups). The total amount granted was about 365 million TWD. The government advises that the difference in the number of applications approved is due generally to a smaller number of national and regional programs receiving a larger allocation of funds per project and a larger number of civic programs receiving a smaller allocation of funds per project.

Opportunities, challenges and recommendations during implementation

The training programs, rich resources and online publicity should help new immigrants develop their careers, build their own way of life in Taiwan, and exercise their political rights. Their immediate challenges are how to prepare applications to governments for new immigrant funding and on other matters such as naturalization. Their ongoing challenge is to continue to participate in all aspects of life in the community as they become long-term residents. Commitment 2-2's work to encourage youth participation in government policy development could be a model for these immigrants.

Issues for long-term immigrants were documented in a recent report sponsored by the New Immigrant Development Fund which described several difficulties experienced by immigrants when interacting with the government.³⁴ It reported that some first-level civil servants don't understand their language and culture and cannot provide the help they need. It emphasized the need for the National Immigration Agency to work with local governments to get in touch with the real situations being experienced by immigrants. Compared to central or local government agencies, a smaller proportion of the Fund was allocated to immigrants' civic groups. This indicates the limited outreach to or ability of civic groups to apply for the Fund.

As such, the independent reviewers recommend the following during implementation:

- **Provide more assistance/training for applying for the New Immigrant Development Fund.** This will help new immigrants write good proposals to address concerns identified in 2018.³⁵
- **Set up a reference group of new immigrants** to oversee this commitment, assess its results, support the Task Force, and propose new initiatives for long-term immigrants.
- **Invite young new immigrants of different socio-economic backgrounds and genders to participate** in this commitment.
- **Provide more assistance for immigrants to exercise their political rights** such as the right to vote.
- **Provide more naturalization application assistance for immigrants**, by engaging with them to understand current issues, including different requirements depending on the country of origin.
- **Engage with immigrants who have been in Taiwan for a longer period** to discuss career opportunities, local education requirements and understand unemployment and related health issues.
- **Provide immigrants with resources and assistance to form their own civic groups** and work with these immigrant civic groups to promote their rights and full participation in Taiwanese society.
- **Apply Commitment 2-2's model to encourage new immigrants to participate in government policy development.**

Enhance Integrity Policies cluster [Commitments 4-1, 4-2, 4-3]

For a complete description of this cluster, see Commitments 4-1, 4-2, 4-3 in the [Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2024](#).

Context and objectives:

Since 2000 Taiwan has been actively developing and implementing integrity policies to eliminate “corruption and conveyance of unjust interests”.³⁶ Key measures introduced are the 2000 (amended 2018) Recusal of Public Servants due to Conflict Act, the 2004 Political Donations Act, the 2009 National Integrity Building Action Plan,³⁷ the 2015 Implement United Nations Convention against Corruption Act, activities relating to the first United Nations Convention against Corruption national report in 2018 and, in 2016, the creation of an anti-corruption platform for major infrastructure works classifications.

The results of this work are evident. Taiwan’s score in Transparency International’s 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index has risen from 61/100 in 2012 to 68/100 in 2021. It is now ranked 25th.³⁸ Transparency International's Defense & Security Program 2020 Government Defense Integrity Index ranked Taiwan 6th globally. The 2021 TRACE Bribery Risk Matrix scored Taiwan 15th in the world, and first in Asia.³⁹ Taiwan’s path towards gaining public trust in government was praised by the Brookings Institute in 2020.⁴⁰ Taiwan’s open procurement data scored a high 82/100 in the 2021 Global Data Barometer, against a global average of 47.⁴¹ While its overall score for political integrity was only 48/100, this was high when compared with the global average of 25/100.

This cluster further strengthens Taiwan's objective to fully implement anti-corruption policies, enforce anti-corruption measures, and prevent and eradicate corruption. Disclosure of political donations, continued transparency and innovation on procurement integrity and whistleblowing legislation align with open government values of transparency, civic participation, and public accountability.

Potential for results: Substantial

Civic groups consider that this cluster has substantial potential. They look forward to positive results at the 2022 election from Commitment 4-1's update of the political donations information system. They support the revision of the Political Donations Act 2018 to disclose transaction information of candidates and their related parties and to impose fines for non-disclosure of information. The revision of the Act will implement findings from the 2006 UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) conference⁴² and meet the 2020 amendments to Taiwan's Criteria for the Verification of Political Donations.

In 2016, civil society promoted initial work to develop a procurement integrity platform to address concerns about construction project corruption and issues of information asymmetry in the tendering process. It supports Commitment 4-2's proposal to ensure efficient and high-quality public construction works, eliminate improper external interference in the procurement process and enable public servants to perform their duties in a safe and secure manner.⁴³ This commitment is an action of the Executive Yuan's National Action Plan on Building a Clean Government which seeks transparent measures about public rights and interests and improved transparency on the review process and accessibility of public supervision.⁴⁴ By connecting, publicizing, and promoting the over 30 individual government procurement integrity platforms through one portal website, the government seeks to demonstrate to all stakeholders that it treats corruption and potential bribery seriously. It also seeks to achieve more efficient tendering processes for businesses. Stakeholders support this innovative approach and see high potential for long-term change.⁴⁵ They are pleased that, while local governments are not required to establish platforms for projects above a certain contract price, some are choosing to do so.

Commitment 4-3's intent to legislate a Whistleblower Protection Act seeks to reverse a long-standing negative perception of whistleblowers,⁴⁶ combat wrongdoing by the government and private companies, and legislate for identity confidentiality, work rights protection, personal safety, liability release and compensations for damages or injury. While some laws and regulations in Taiwan have whistleblower protection clauses, there is no overall protection for them. New legislation would conform with Resolution No 78 and 80 of the 2017 Presidential Office National Conference on Judicial Reform⁴⁷ and the UN Declaration on Corruption.

Implementation progress in 2021

This commitment completed its planned activities for 2021. Good progress was made on the updated political donations information system in 2021. The government reports that the updated system is now accessible and easy to use, with income and expenditure information provided online in pdf and csv formats.⁴⁸ The Ministry of Interior's report on regulating and

implementing campaign fund transparency regulations has been sent to all non-governmental members for comments.

Opportunities, challenges and recommendations during implementation

Revision of each of these laws seems to be challenging, with slow progress to date. A revised draft⁴⁹ of the Political Donations Act was submitted to the Executive Yuan for review on 30 June 2020, two review meetings held, and a consultation meeting is planned for August 2022. Civic groups being consulted support including potential candidates' own money and assets used for elections and wish to discuss including party primary elections. The initial draft of the Whistleblower legislation, submitted to the Legislative Yuan in May 2019, was discontinued by the re-election of legislators in 2020. A new version submitted in January 2022 is with the Executive Yuan. This ongoing delay is of concern to civic groups. Over this time, the Ministry of Justice has continued to solicit input from citizens and non-governmental groups on the online public participation platform and at consultation meetings. A website (in Chinese and English) provides information about the progress of the Act.⁵⁰ A potential international model for consideration is New Zealand's new Protected Disclosures (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022 which applies across both the public and private sectors.⁵¹

While civic groups report that higher-level government officials strongly support the procurement integrity platforms, they observe that some lower-level officials see it as red tape which increases their workload. They emphasize the need to continue to train civil servants about the purpose of integrity platforms. They also want more user-friendly platforms which would attract wider public usage and understanding. They note inconsistent information posted on the platforms. For example, some only publish reports from government, while others publish the opinions and suggestions made by the potential bidder/contractors.⁵²

As such, the independent reviewers recommend the following during implementation:

- **Add new work with non-governmental organizations to ensure the integrity platforms and new portal are user-friendly.**
- **Build a model for all integrity platforms** to display the most important pieces of information.
- **Conduct more outreach activities to make the integrity platforms known** to potential bidders and citizens.
- **Develop a training program explaining the purpose and benefits of integrity platforms** for all levels of the civil service.
- **Provide resources to establish integrity platforms and reward civil servants' hard work** maintaining the platforms.
- **Set up a reference group of business and civil society groups** to assess and monitor the results of each commitment in this cluster and support the Task Forces.

Enhance Financial Transparency Cluster [Commitments 5-1, 5-2]

For a complete description of this cluster, see Commitments 5-1, 5-2 in the [Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2024](#).

Context and objectives:

This cluster continues active efforts to promote financial transparency in Taiwan and meet the recommendations of the Asia/Pacific Group (AGP) on Money Laundering.⁵³ Taiwan passed the Money-Laundering Control Act in 1996, established the Anti-Money Laundering Office in 2017, in response to the third round of evaluations made by the AGP, and has implemented extensive money-laundering laws and regulations since then. Commitment 5-1 seeks greater transparency of corporate information and public accountability through wider use of existing company registers to “prevent shell corporations’ abnormal real estate transactions”,⁵⁴ requiring more information disclosures about charitable trusts to reduce criminal money-laundering activities, and the establishment of a beneficial ownership register as recommended by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendation 24.⁵⁵ This work is in line with the updated European Union Anti-Money Laundering: Beneficial Ownership of Trusts Regulations 2021.⁵⁶ As at this stage Article 75 of Taiwan’s 2019 Foundations Act excludes religious foundations from the provisions of the Act, commitment 5-2 introduces a range of other mechanisms to eliminate laundering money through religious foundations. Its collaborative work with national religious organizations to promote financial transparency meets the open government value of civic participation.

Potential for results: Substantial

These activities build on detailed work over recent years. The 2019 Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering (AGP) report on Taiwan recorded good legal and regulatory progress on money-laundering since 2017 and recommended that Taiwan now prioritizes deeper implementation of money laundering risk management and provides further risk-based guidance on beneficial ownership.⁵⁷ Taiwan’s AGP member country reporting deadlines of 1 October 2021, 2023, and 2025⁵⁸ are relevant for this cluster as are Taiwan’s Global Data Barometer 2021 results. Taiwan scored an impressive 92/100 for its companies registers but 0/100 for beneficial ownership, beneficial ownership frameworks and due diligence uses of data, resulting in an overall score of 30/100, just above the global average of 26.⁵⁹ There is an opportunity to apply its company registry experience to establishing a beneficial ownership register and improving trusts’ information. This should reduce criminal money laundering activities and look ahead to better international scores.

As the company registers already meet open data standards, the government could move quickly to improve search functionality and better transaction security. The Ministry of Justice reports that its work with the Money Laundering Office is underway. As it is mandatory to release information about trustees and beneficiaries of charitable trusts, and penalties exist for violations of this requirement in the Trust Law, the potential for early results is high.

The preliminary supervisory work with religious foundations will establish a baseline for future work following the enactment of separate legislation to address potential anti-money laundering loopholes within religious foundations.

Implementation progress in 2021

This commitment substantially completed its planned activities for 2021. The government reports that the Trust Association set up a "Charitable Trust Section" for quarterly updates on charitable trusts and the draft amendment of the Trust Law was passed by the Executive Yuan on April 22, 2021 and is still awaiting review by the Judiciary and Organic Laws Committee of the Legislative Yuan. As at October 31, 2021, there were 269,628,788 searches on Findbiz, and 112,000 searches by designated users of the Company Transparency Platform who also organized 554 anti-money laundering training courses for 31,635 participants. The 2021 subsidy plan for processing and improving the financial system of religious foundations and temples in 2021 was formulated, the financial audit of 197 national religious foundations completed, and the 2021 sharing and training sessions completed.

Opportunities, challenges and recommendations during implementation

To achieve its goal of beneficial ownership transparency and excellent financial management by religious foundations, this initiative can leverage government's experience working with businesses to establish Taiwan's online company registers. Non-technical language is needed at the training sessions and in documentation. Patient and sustained work with stakeholders describing the benefits from financial transparency could lower their resistance to disclosing financial information. Plans to publicly disclose religious groups that do not comply will require strong leadership. During the design of this commitment, participants recommended collaboration with local governments to promote financial transparency of local religious foundations and temples not registered with the government which could be being used for money-laundering. They also noted that the lack of transparency about anonymous donations needs to be addressed.⁶⁰

There is an opportunity to apply this cluster's collaborative, participatory and transparent approach to combating money-laundering to other current and future efforts to improve financial transparency in Taiwan.

As such, the independent reviewers recommend the following during implementation:

- **Develop a training program explaining the purpose and benefits of anti-money-laundering programs** to public servants.
- **Work with users to prepare and deliver anti-money laundering training sessions and documentation** for stakeholders.
- **Prepare and release a report about financial transparency of religious foundations as a whole, without identifying individual foundations or the names of individual donors.** If the report shows progress on improving financial transparency, this will give citizens more information and build trust in these foundations.
- **Work closely with local governments to promote financial transparency** of local religious foundations and temples.
- **Set up a reference group of business and civil society groups** to assess and monitor the results of each commitment in this cluster and support the Task Forces.

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- ¹⁴ Global Data Barometer 2021. Released May 2022. <https://globaldatabarometer.org/country/taiwan/>. Note that the global average score was 34/100 and the top score 68/100. Taiwan's score for climate data was 26/100.
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- ¹⁶ United Kingdom, Freedom of Information Act 2000. Section 11a. Release of datasets for re-use. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/11A>
- ¹⁷ This comment was submitted by Jesse C. H. Yang during this review's Public Comment stage.
- ¹⁸ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p30. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan
- ¹⁹ Feedback from international open data expert, Pia Andrews, 29 July 2022.
- ²⁰ Open Geospatial Consortium. <https://www.ogc.org/>
- ²¹ The critical importance of citizen science data. *Frontiers in Climate*. March 2021. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fclim.2021.650760/full>; <https://doi.org/10.3389/fclim.2021.650760>
- ²² Still in need of norms: the state of the data in citizen science. *Citizen Science: Theory and Practice*, 5(1), p.18. <http://doi.org/10.5334/cstp.303>
- ²³ Open Citizen science data and methods. *Frontiers in Climate*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/13843/open-citizen-science-data-and-methods#articles>.
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- ²⁵ Citizen science and environmental protection agencies: engaging citizens to address key environmental challenges. *Frontiers in Climate*. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fclim.2020.600998>
- ²⁶ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p30. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan.
- ²⁷ Open citizen science data and methods. <https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/13843/open-citizen-science-data-and-methods#articles>
- ²⁸ Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Taiwan
- ²⁹ Index Mundi. https://www.indexmundi.com/taiwan/age_structure.html
- ³⁰ National Development Council, Public Policy Participation Platform. <https://join.gov.tw>
- ³¹ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p38. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan
- ³² Local researcher interviews on 6, 10 and 17 June 2022.
- ³³ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p60. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan
- ³⁴ The research on the feasibility of legislation of new immigrants' identity and rights protection, funded by the New Immigrant Development Fund, 2019. See: <https://www.immigration.gov.tw/media/54262/%E5%88%B6%E5%AE%9A%E6%96%B0%E4%BD%8F%E6%B0%91%E8%BA%AB%E5%88%86%E5%8F%8A%E6%AC%8A%E7%9B%8A%E4%BF%9D%E9%9A%9C%E5%B0%88%E6%B3%95%E5%8F%AF%E8%A1%8C%E6%80%A7%E4%B9%8B%E7%A0%94%E7%A9%B6-1081f308.pdf>.
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- ³⁶ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p8. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan
- ³⁷ Taiwan National Integrity Building Action Plan. <https://www.aac.moj.gov.tw/5791/5793/5809/5813/Lpsimplelist>.

- ³⁸ Transparency International. Corruptions Perception Index 2021. <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2021/index/twn>. Note that the 2021 global average for the last ten years has been 43.
- ³⁹ 2021 TRACE Bribery Risk Matrix. <https://traceinternational.blob.core.windows.net/uploads/MatrixFiles/2021/Reports/Taiwan%20-%20TRACE%20Matrix%202021.pdf?sv=2018-03-28&sr=b&sig=Pigo7RGgb9hIqnqRWuTuMset%2FKVAa4n6POSQ909zXQY%3D&st=2022-10-05T20%3A56%3A31Z&se=2022-10-05T21%3A02%3A31Z&sp=r>.
- ⁴⁰ Brookings Institute. Taiwan's unlikely path to trust provides lessons for the US. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/09/15/taiwans-unlikely-path-to-public-trust-provides-lessons-for-the-us/>
- ⁴¹ Global Data Barometer 2021. <https://globaldatabarometer.org/country/taiwan/>
- ⁴² Report of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption on its first session, held in Amman from 10 to 14 December 2006. https://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/convention_corruption/cosp/session1/V0659563e.pdf
- ⁴³ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p75. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan
- ⁴⁴ Ministry of Justice. Building a Clean Taiwan. <https://www.moj.gov.tw/Public/Files/201003/03815184069.pdf>
- ⁴⁵ Local researcher interview with civil group, 8 June 2022.
- ⁴⁶ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p80. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan
- ⁴⁷ Ministry of Justice. Briefing of Judicial Reform. <https://www.moj.gov.tw/2832/2833/2844/2845/24802/>
- ⁴⁸ Political Donation Website by the Control Yuan: <https://ardata.cy.gov.tw/home>
- ⁴⁹ Draft Political Donations Act. <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0020049>
- ⁵⁰ Ministry of Justice. Whistleblower protection. <https://www.aac.moj.gov.tw/5791/5793/5871/841151/>
- ⁵¹ NZ. Protected Disclosures (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022. <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2022/0020/latest/LMS301283.html>
- ⁵² Access to individual integrity platforms can be found at <https://www.aac.moj.gov.tw/>
- ⁵³ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p9-10. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan
- ⁵⁴ Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan, p82. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/nc_8455_34533#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20is%20scheduled,report%20to%20the%20Executive%20Yuan
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- ⁵⁶ European Union (Anti-Money Laundering: Beneficial Ownership of Trusts) Regulations 2021. <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2021/si/194/made/en/print>. Note this is the Irish regulation.
- ⁵⁷ Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering. (AGP) Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures Chinese Taipei Mutual Evaluation Report. October 2019. Section 37 (h). Priority actions. <http://www.apgml.org/includes/handlers/get-document.ashx?d=17b44799-0e1d-4701-90a1-79584101bb9e>
- ⁵⁸ APG Third Round Mutual Evaluation Procedures 2021, released 27 July 2021.
- ⁵⁹ Global Data Barometer 2021. Taiwan. <https://globaldatabarometer.org/country/taiwan/>
- ⁶⁰ The meeting minutes of commitment 5-2, 24 November 2020. Available at <https://ws.ndc.gov.tw/Download.ashx?u=LzAwMS9hZG1pbmlzdHJhdG9yLzEwL2NrZmlsZS81Mzk1OWYyOC01OWE5LTQ5NTktOTNkNC1iNDk0Y2I3OWJjMzcucGRm&n=MDIt5pyD6K2w57SA6YyELnBkZg%3D%3D&icon=.pdf>

Section III: Overall Recommendations

This section offers recommendations for the government to consider as it continues to implement its 2021-2024 action plan and looks ahead to preparing to work with civic groups to co-create its second action plan. These recommendations are drawn from interviews with government and civil society stakeholders during the preparation of this review.

1. Be transparent about open government action plan and activities

Establishing regular and multiple channels to release information about open government action plan activities and progress is an important step toward meaningful participation and trust-building with citizens. As well as publishing relevant information about the action plan, meetings, and meeting minutes on the National Development Council's website, more active, ambitious and regular promotion across all social media platforms during implementation in 2022-2024 could address a lack of interest in participation by citizens and improve communication between government and civil society. Social media communication to date has been restricted to publicity in 2021 when the action plan was released. By promoting progress, government's high commitment to open government could also be more widely appreciated.

During the process of designing and implementing its open government action plan, government should be as open and transparent as possible. Interest in participation and trust in government lowers if government decisions follow internal standards and procedures which are not shared with citizens and NGOs. Similarly, being open and genuine about the difficulties that occur during the process of implementing the action plan promotes honest, meaningful, and effective communication between government and civil society.

2. Clarify Task Force and departmental team roles and assistance for participation from NGOs

The government could work with a wider range of stakeholders to clarify the different roles of the Task Force at the Executive Yuan and department levels and how these two different levels could run more effectively. While the Task Force at the Executive Yuan has more power, resource and visibility, commitment teams at the department level are more flexible in how they collaborate with stakeholders and are more focused on specific policy issues. This allows for meaningful communication and the co-creation of policy solutions with interested parties. While teams have operational guidelines, there is much variation in how they run at this level. NDC could build a model (from advanced notice of meetings to outreach and feedback) or identify good practices to help them run open government requirements consistently and allow joint decision making.

How government responds to feedback from the Task Force and departmental teams and incorporates it into existing practices is of great importance in terms of winning trust and encouraging continued participation by stakeholders. The Executive Yuan and departments should develop formal procedures to track how feedback is acted on and provide explanations of why some feedback is not acted on.

The government could also consider devoting more resources to help NGOs participate in open government activities as only a limited number of NGOs are familiar with the concept and activities of open government. Government could resource the NGOs with experience of running open government training to provide training to other NGOs. More resources could also be provided to the NGOs' representatives in the open government Task Force.

3. Train and support civil servants in charge of open government activities

Strengthen open government training and promotion for senior civil servants. Ongoing training, resources, and support from supervisors for civil servants who oversee open government activities is critical for their successful implementation. Resistance may occur due to lack of ability or sufficient time and resources to implement them internally within their department. Strong political will from top political leaders at the Executive Yuan and heads at participating departments is the key. Civil servants also need assistance to develop confidence to leave their comfort zone and interact with outside groups. Open government training is needed for all civil servants promoted from junior to senior rank. Senior civil servants could be encouraged to develop and share their ideas and experiences of applying open government in their own department. Rewarding civil servants at all levels for outstanding performance in promoting open government both within government and in the community is recommended.

4. Be open-minded when implementing the commitments

Instead of continuing to implement existing policies or programs, politicians and civil servants could think about what can be added or changed when they apply open government principles to existing policy decision-making or implementation. They could use different approaches to identify stakeholders and invite new groups or organizations to participate in decision-making. Needs that have been ignored can be discovered and new solutions to old problems may be developed because of participation by new stakeholders. The government can also actively give citizens real-time data and information about policy implementation for designing new commitments to improve the quality of government services or reduce the risk of corruption.

5. Work with local governments to promote open government

Local governments are closer to the people they serve and have better access to and interaction with local communities. They need to be equipped with more resources to adapt the open government model developed by the Executive Yuan and participating departments in their own local contexts.

6. Learn from other countries

Whenever the government faces difficulties implementing open government, it would help to look at what other countries have done. The government of Taiwan can learn from good practices on identifying stakeholder groups, increasing citizens' uptake and support for government open government activities, and institutionalizing open government into existing structures and practices. Adaptation of good practices from other countries to Taiwan's context relies on feedback from NGOs and citizens.

Section IV: Initial Review Methodology, based on the OGP's IRM Indicators

This initial review of the characteristics, strengths and challenges of the action plan aims to inform a stronger implementation process for the action plan. It highlights the strongest and most promising commitments by assessing each commitment against key open government indicators: potential for results, priority for country stakeholders and national open government priorities. To determine these strongest and most promising reforms or commitments, and to enable international comparisons, the independent reviewers have applied the OGP's IRM's filtering and clustering process as follows:

Step 1: determine what is reviewable and what is not based on the verifiability of the commitment as written in the action plan.

Step 2: determine if the commitment has an open government lens. Is it relevant to open government values?

Step 3: Commitments that are verifiable and have an open government lens are reviewed to identify if certain commitment needs to be clustered. Commitments that have a common policy objective or commitments that contribute to the same reform or policy issue are clustered and its "potential for results" reviewed as a whole. The clustering process follows the steps below:

- a) Determine overarching themes. They may be as stated in the action plan or if the action plan is not already grouped by themes, they reference OGP thematic tagging.
- b) Review objectives of commitments to identify commitments that address the same policy issue or contribute to the same broader policy or government reform.
- c) Organize commitments by clusters as needed. Commitments may already be organized in the Action Plan under specific policy or government reforms or may be standalone and therefore not clustered.

Step 4: assess the potential for results of the cluster or standalone commitment.

The internal filtering process and data for individual commitments is set out in Annex I below. During the internal review process the independent reviewers verified the accuracy of findings and collected further input through peer review, interviews, validation with country-stakeholders, and sign-off by an international peer reviewer. Three key indicators were used:

I. Verifiability

- "Yes": Specific enough to review. As written in the action plan the objectives stated and actions proposed are sufficiently clear and include objectively verifiable activities to assess implementation.
- "No": Not specific enough to review. As written in the action plan the objectives stated and proposed actions lack clarity and do not include explicit verifiable activities to assess implementation.

Commitments that are not verifiable will be considered "not reviewable", and further assessment will not be carried out.

2. Does it have an open government lens? (Relevant)

This indicator determines if the commitment relates to open government values of transparency, civic participation or public accountability by responding to the guiding questions below. Based on a close reading of the commitment text, the reviewers have determined whether the commitment has an open government lens:

- **Yes/No:** Does the commitment set out to make a policy area, institutions or decision-making process more transparent, participatory or accountable to the public?

For each commitment the following questions are asked, using the OGP's open government values which are publicly available on the OGP's website:⁶¹

- **Transparency:** Will the government disclose more information, improve the legal or institutional frameworks to guarantee the right to information, improve the quality of the information disclosed to the public, or improve the transparency of government decision-making processes or institutions?
- **Civic Participation:** Will government create or improve opportunities, processes or mechanisms for the public to inform or influence decisions? Will the government create, enable or improve participatory mechanisms for minorities or under-represented groups? Will the government enable a legal environment to guarantee freedoms of assembly, association and peaceful protest?
- **Public Accountability:** Will the government create or improve opportunities to hold officials answerable for their actions? Will the government enable a legal, policy or institutional frameworks to foster accountability of public officials?

3. Potential for results

The review sets out the expected results and potential that can be verified following implementation. It contrasts how a commitment is expressed in the action plan with the state of play in its policy area, using the following scale:

- **Unclear:** the commitment is aimed at continuing ongoing practices in line with existing legislation, requirements, or policies without indication of the added value or enhanced open government approach in contrast with existing practice.
- **Modest:** a positive but standalone initiative or changes to process, practice, or policies. Commitments that do not generate binding or institutionalized changes across government or institutions that govern a policy area. For example, tools like websites, or data release, training, pilot projects.
- **Substantial:** a possible game changer to the rules of the game (or the creation of new ones), practices, policies or institutions that govern a policy area, public sector and/or relationship between citizens and state. The commitment generates binding and institutionalized changes across government.

4. Implementation Progress in 2021

Progress in 2021 is based on the government's implementation progress report released in June 2022.⁶² It uses the following scale:

- Not started
- Limited
- Substantial
- 2021 milestones completed

⁶¹ OGP Open government values. <https://ogp.org.nz/open-government-partnership/#:~:text=To%20participate%20in%20the%20Open,public%20officials%2C%20and%20citizen%20engagement>

⁶² National Development Council. Performance of Taiwan Open Government National Action Plan in 2021. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/Content_List.aspx?n=0DA7FCB068C7ECF5

Annex I: Commitment by Commitment Data

<p>Commitment 1-1: Completing Government Open Data and Data Sharing Mechanism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Expand Public Re-use of Open Government Data (commitments 1-1,1-2 and 1-5) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: Substantial
<p>Commitment 1-2: Establishing an Open Dataset Platform for Value-added use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Expand Public Re-use of Open Government Data Cluster (commitments 1-1,1-2 and 1-5) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 1-3: Strengthen Digital Privacy and Personal Data Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Protect Personal Data and Identity Cluster: (commitments 1-3 and 2-1) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 1-4: Information Access in the Freedom of Government Information Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Promote Freedom of Information Cluster (commitment 1-4) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 1-5: Information Disclosure Relating to the Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Expand Public Re-use of Open Government Data Cluster (commitments 1-1, 1-2 and 1-5) ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 2-1: National Referendum Electronic Joint Signatures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Protect Personal Data and Identity Cluster (commitments 1-3 and 2-1) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: Limited

<p>Commitment 2-2: Youth Policy Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Facilitate Youth Participation and Civics Education Cluster (commitments 2-2 and 2-5) ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: Substantial
<p>Commitment 2-3: Establish a Regional Revitalization Interactive Platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Expand Public Participation Mechanism Cluster (commitments 2-3 and 2-4) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 2-4: Facilitate the formation of Labor Unions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Expand Public Participation Mechanism Cluster (commitments 2-3 and 2-4) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 2-5: Open Government in the Civic Curriculum, and Empower Teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Facilitate Youth Participation and Civics Education Cluster (commitments 2-2 and 2-5) ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: Limited
<p>Commitment 3-1: Promote Gender-Inclusive Dialogue and Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Increase Gender and Ethnic Group Inclusive Dialogue Cluster (commitments 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: Substantial
<p>Commitment 3-2: Promote New Immigrant Public Participation and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Increase Gender and Ethnic Group Inclusive Dialogue Cluster (commitments 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4) ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 3-3: Indigenous Peoples' Cross-Domain Participation and International Linkage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Increase Gender and Ethnic Group Inclusive Dialogue Cluster (commitments 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: Substantial
<p>Commitment 3-4: Promote Public Participation on Hakka Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Increase Gender and Ethnic Group Inclusive Dialogue Cluster (commitments 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4) ● Potential for results: Modest ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 4-1: Enhance Political Donation Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Enhance Integrity Policies (commitments 4-1, 4-2, 4-3) Cluster ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 4-2: Establish and Improve the Government Procurement Integrity Platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Enhance Integrity Policies (commitments 4-1, 4-2, 4-3) Cluster ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 4-3: Legislation of the Whistleblower Protection Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Enhance Integrity Policies (commitments 4-1, 4-2, 4-3) Cluster ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: Substantial
<p>Commitment 5-1: Beneficial Ownership Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Enhance Financial Transparency Cluster (commitments 5-1 and 5-2) ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed
<p>Commitment 5-2: Financial Transparency of Religious Groups to Close AML Loopholes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● In: Enhance Financial Transparency Cluster (commitments 5-1, 5-2) ● Potential for results: Substantial ● Progress in 2021: 2021 milestones completed

Annex 2: Action Plan Creation

This initial review assesses the creation of the action plan against the minimum requirements⁶³ of the updated OGP Participation & Co-Creation Standards that came into force 1 January 2022.⁶⁴ This enables international comparisons. An assessment following the implementation of the action plan will look for evidence that Taiwan's level of compliance has risen from meeting minimum compliance to indicating strong open government participation and co-creation leadership by the Task Force and other departmental teams.

Table 2. Compliance with international minimum requirements

Minimum requirement	Met during co-creation
<p>1.1 Space for dialogue: The Open Government National Action Plan Task Force was formed in August 2020. About half of the members are scholars and experts, or civic group representatives. It has met six times between October 28, 2020, and April 29, 2022. The Task Force rules are publicly available on National Development Council (NDC) website.⁶⁵</p>	Yes
<p>2.1 OGP website: see the NDC's website The NDC's open government public website contains the action plan, the 2021 progress report, a list of Task Force members, the Task Force rules, and minutes of all six Task Force meetings to date.⁶⁶</p>	Yes
<p>2.2 Repository: The national action plan was published on NDC's website. Transcripts of Task Force meetings are publicly available on the SayIt online platform.⁶⁷ Information about the co-creation and implementation process is on the website and the platform.</p>	Yes
<p>3.1 Advanced notice: The schedule for creating the action plan was published two weeks ahead of the first meeting.⁶⁸ During action plan finalization, departments in charge of each commitment held their own stakeholder meetings which provided more opportunities for a broader range of civic groups to participate. There was inconsistent notice of meetings.</p>	Yes
<p>3.2 Outreach: The draft national action plan was posted on the online policy participation platform for the public to comment and propose new commitments. The government consulted with and invited civic groups to join Task Force and stakeholder meetings at department level.</p>	Yes
<p>3.3 Feedback mechanism: The draft action plan was posted on the online participation platform from 21 February 2020 to 6 March 2020 to gather inputs. Of the proposals submitted through the online participation platform, six were incorporated into existing commitments, six were added to the action plan as new commitments and eight were considered to be part of ongoing government policies or more appropriate to be initiated by civic groups.⁶⁹ Civic groups in the Task Force could comment and provide feedback on each commitment during Task Force meetings. Their suggestions are included in a checklist monitored by NDC. Departments in charge had to respond and report their progress on how the suggestions were implemented in the following meetings.</p>	Yes
<p>4.1 Reasoned response:</p>	Yes

<p>Feedbacks and suggestions from stakeholders were documented in the transcripts of the Task Force meetings publicly available on the Sayit online platform. NDC oversaw how the suggestions were implemented by the departments in charge. Departments' responses were also documented in the transcripts and PowerPoint presentations available on the NDC's website. Proposals submitted through the online platform were documented in the first meeting minute. The government explained how or why some proposals were incorporated into existing commitments or formed as new commitments while some were not considered to be included in this action plan.</p>	
<p>5.1 Open implementation: At each Task Force meeting, departments in charge of each commitment reported the progress made on each commitment and heard feedbacks from civic groups in the Task Force. However, some civic group members did not see that the information provided was sufficient to show the progress indicated.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

⁶³ IRM Guidelines for the Assessment of Minimum Requirements:

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/irm-guidelines-for-the-assessment-of-minimum-requirements/>

⁶⁴ 2021 OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation-co-creation-standards/>

⁶⁵ National Development Council. Website. https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/Content_List.aspx?n=ODA7FCB068C7ECF5

⁶⁶ National Development Council. Open Government National Action Plan.

https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/Content_List.aspx?n=ODA7FCB068C7ECF5

⁶⁷ Taiwan. Public Digital Innovation Space. <https://sayit.pdis.nat.gov.tw/>

⁶⁸ National Development Council Opens Government Information Website

https://www.ndc.gov.tw/nc_8456_33712

⁶⁹ See Appendix 3 of the meeting minutes of the first Task Force meeting. The six new commitments are Commitment 1-3: strengthen digital privacy and personal data protection, Commitment 1-4: Enhancing information access in the Freedom of Government Information Law, Commitment 2-4: Facilitate the formation of labor unions, Commitment 2-5: Include the concept of open government into the civic curriculum and teaching, and empower teachers, Commitment 4-3: Legislation of the Whistleblower Protection Act and Commitment 5-2: Policies on financial transparency of religious groups to close AML loopholes.