Open Government, Agriculture and Nutrition

GODAN and the Open Government Partnership

Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition
From greater transparency of land deals affecting rural livelihoods, to data on food safety and nutrition that is accessible to urban consumers on their smart-phones, open data can play a vital role in empowering citizens.

Open Government Partnerships (OGP) governments spend more than $1.2 trillion a year on the agriculture sector. We all rely upon complex global supply chains of agricultural inputs and food production for our daily diets: supply chains that are regulated by hundreds of government agencies around the world. As the Sustainable Development Goals outline, there are many challenges ahead if all countries across the world are to deliver sustainable agriculture and food security; feeding a growing global population.

Addressing these challenges demands data. Good quality and timely data on health and nutrition are vital to planning and implementing interventions to meet the SDGs. Transparent data on land deals, subsidies and payments is vital if the use of public resources is to be effectively scrutinised. And with better interoperable data, government, private sector and civil society groups can come together to develop innovative approaches to strengthen governance of supply chains, and to ensure consumers have access to the information they need to make good decisions.
GODAN, the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition initiative, was launched at the 2013 OGP Global Summit in London, and brings together stakeholders from all sectors to collaborate on making agriculture and nutrition data available, and using it to solve long-standing global problems.

We invite all OGP participants to:

- Include agriculture and nutrition related commitments in your countries next OGP National Action Plan;
- Join GODAN and be part of global collaborations sharing and using open data on agriculture and nutrition to support open government;
- Contribute to building a library of commitments;
- Respond to our Call to Action to assist the GODAN partnership in identifying and filling critical data gaps in agriculture and nutrition required to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2.


**Developing commitments**

Given the central role of agriculture and nutrition in many citizens lives, it is only natural that OGP Action Plans should include key commitments in this area. The OpenGovGuide includes a number of key commitments that countries can already draw upon for an agriculture and nutrition focus in their National Action Plan such as:

- Making existing land tenure and landholding registries public;
- Disclosing contracts signed with extractive companies - including for agricultural land deals;
- Publishing data on commercial fishing licences, catch quotas and subsidies paid to the fisheries sector.
There are many other areas for further action. Through engaging with the GODAN network we invite you to help us shape new commitment ideas.

For example:

**Building National Information Infrastructures**
- Ensure public access to weather data, trade data, mapping data, registries of agricultural inputs, and other key datasets;
- Use open data to monitor the implementation of key food security, agriculture and nutrition plans, and implementation of the SDGs.

**Open Data on Agricultural Subsidies**
- Adopt common open data standards for publication of information on agricultural and fisheries subsidy payments.

**Open Nutrition Data**
- Release government held food product information as open data, and work with private sector partners to increase the open availability of private-sector product data;
- Develop and publish a national open food safety database and publish machine-readable data about food safety incidents, including details of companies and products involved.

**Deeper Collaboration**
- Join GODAN and participate in a working group to increase access to, and use of relevant data.
Getting inspired:
Examples and opportunities for action

Improving the Transparency of Land Ownership
A number of OGP Action Plans have included commitments to better management and disclosure of land registration. For example Tanzania 2014/16 Action Plan commits to publication of “demarcated areas for large scale agricultural investment (farming and livestock keeping)” through an “easily searchable land ownership database online”, and Brazil’s 2013/14 commitment to “integrate information related to the identification, certification, and destination of public lands” was highlighted by the IRM as a transformative commitment.

Across the world, civil society projects like LandMatrix.org are using data on land deals to promote greater transparency and accountability of large scale agricultural investments and development projects. As a data collection and visualisation tool, it is a powerful platform to conduct analysis and monitor land use over time.

An Open Infrastructure for Innovation
In Mexico, smallholder farmers can access weather insurance, underwritten by the state insurance company AGROASEMEX, along with other private providers. By bringing together weather data, crop data and insurance payout data, and working with researchers at Harvard University, the Coordination of National Digital Strategy and the Ministry of Agriculture (CEDN-Harvard) were able to identify better thresholds for triggering payouts, as well as visualising the data to communicate the research results and the basis for policy change.

Source: Government of Mexico (CEDN-Harvard)
Subsidies in Need of Standards
Billions of dollars are spent every year in agricultural subsidies, yet analysis has shown that the biggest benefits often go to large scale agriculture, over smaller scale farmers. In Europe, the FarmSubsidy.org website, running since 2005 has gathered and analysed data on subsidy payments from national governments. But this journalist-led effort struggles to provide an updated and public picture of subsidies due to the ongoing absence of a common data standard and open data publication, and instead faces high costs to scrape scattered datasets from each European country.

A collaboration of OGP countries to develop common open data standards for disclosing subsidies in agriculture, forestry and fisheries could greatly contribute to more accountable and effective use of vital subsidy funds.

Collaboration Across Sectors
As part of their second National Action Plan the United States committed to work through GODAN on supporting collaboration around agriculture and nutrition data at a national and global level stating that “this initiative will support public and private global efforts to make agriculture and nutrition data more available and easier to access”. Ministries from the Netherlands, United States, United Kingdom and Kenya are amongst some of the existing OGP members also working through GODAN.
Sources and links

Brazil: Independent Reporting Mechanism: Brazil Progress Report 2013-14
www.opengovpartnership.org/es/files/brasilrelat%C3%B3rio2013-14finalpdf/download

Tanzania Open Government Partnership (OGP) Second National Action Plan


Open Data & Agriculture - Panel at International Open Data Conference
http://opendatacon.org/webcast/recording-data-agriculture/

The World Bank Data - Agriculture and Rural Development - 2012 data

OpenGovGuide
www.opengovguide.com

FarmSubsidy.org
http://farmsubsidy.openspending.org/

Land Matrix
www.landmatrix.org/
More about GODAN

Statement of purpose
‘The Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN) initiative seeks to support global efforts to make agricultural and nutritionally relevant data available, accessible, and usable for unrestricted use worldwide. The initiative focuses on building high-level policy and public and private institutional support for open data. The initiative encourages collaboration and cooperation among existing agriculture and open data activities, without duplication, and brings together all stakeholders to solve long-standing global problems.’

Read the full statement of purpose at 
http://www.godan.info/about/statement-of-purpose/

Information on joining
GODAN’s strength is in the diversity and expertise of its partners in moving forward the open data agenda in food and agriculture and we welcome enquiries from those interested in joining us, so do get in touch or view more details on what being a partner means in practice: Becoming a GODAN partner:
http://www.godan.info/partners/become-a-godan-partner/

All our partners agree with the principles in the GODAN Statement of Purpose and plan to take a proactive role in promoting open data in the agriculture and nutrition sector. There is no cost involved in joining. We do hope that, if you decide to become a partner, you will encourage collaboration with others in the sector to build high-level policy support and that you will help to recruit new GODAN partners.