

Diversity.
Bottom-up energy.
Real impact.

**The state of open
contracting**

Open Contracting 2017
28-29 November, Amsterdam

One community. One goal. Transforming government contracting together.



Photos: Judith Quax

Government contracting is better, smarter and fairer when citizens and businesses are actively involved. Open contracting can improve lives everywhere. It is vital to modernizing government, fighting corruption, reforming markets and fostering business innovation and entrepreneurship.

So, on 28-29 November 2017, around 200 of the best and brightest innovators in this field from over 37 countries came together to share what's hot, what's not and how open data and user engagement can drive a transformation in public contracting.

In the last three years, open contracting has established itself as a key area of better, more responsive public governance. As Sanjay Pradhan, who leads the Open Government Partnership, told everyone at #OCGlobal17 in his opening keynote, open contracting is now one of the leading emerging norms of open government more generally. Some 16 countries are publishing to the Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) and, in total, more than 30 countries have committed to doing so.

At #OCGlobal17, representatives from government, civil society, business, media, academia, civic technologists and international institutions presented reform efforts, projects, platforms, lessons and impact among a vibrant field of practitioners who share a goal of revolutionizing government contracting.

“Because most of all, this is about the will. The will to make openness and trust the standard. That entails the biggest jump: from a closed to an open society.”

Edwin Huizing, HIVOS

Public procurement – long perceived as a dull, compliance-based exercise on which most public money is spent – is at the cutting edge of modernizing government. New, user-driven solutions are emerging, delivering results for the public sector, businesses and citizens. This report outlines the key discussion themes and lessons from the gathering.

People at its core

Making open contracting the norm for governments everywhere depends on the conviction, willpower, determination, and ingenuity of individuals to drive change and see it through. #OCGlobal17 reinforced that people are at the heart of this effort.

And there are others that the open contracting community must bring into the conversation: the direct beneficiaries of better contracting, journalists, who play such an important role in public accountability, and businesses, which can go from being passive actors to active cheerleaders for change.

Pioneering bottom-up initiatives are budding around the globe without international organizations acting as catalysts. Members of the international community now need to nurture these grassroots projects and help them scale.

Open contracting is advancing even in challenging contexts. However, political transitions threaten the sustainability of reforms; civic space is contested and shrinking; populist movements are putting efforts to build public trust in jeopardy and systemic corruption and unethical business practices – some illicit, but many lawful – hold back markets. Succeeding in this environment requires strength in numbers and working smarter.

Where civic space is shrinking, we must develop a proactive approach to discussions and policies ensuring safety for activists and civil society actors – protecting the protectors as well as civic space itself.



Sanjay Pradhan, CEO, Open Government Partnership

Open contracting is inextricably interwoven through Sanjay's personal and professional life. He recalled his father's lonely struggle against corruption as a government official responsible for building roads in India's poorest state, Bihar. His father stood in the way of the corrupt, so he was tempted with bribes (Sanjay and his brothers were too; a cart full of sweets left on their doorstep one day and swiftly sent back by their father). When the bribes failed, harassment, threats, and intimidation followed, and yet his father did not budge.

Contracting has continued to play a role later in Sanjay's life, while he was working for the World Bank (which joined forces with partners to form the Open Contracting Partnership) and at the Open Government Partnership. The OGP now has 3000 commitments and action plans to make governments more open and less corrupt. Open contracting is one of the most prominent and rapidly growing commitments: 23 countries and four subnational governments have embraced open contracting. This is very encouraging, Sanjay says, but it's just the start.

He's excited to see the open contracting movement shift from commitments to credible implementation. Three C's can propel open contracting into a global norm: 1. credible results; 2. coalitions to overcome corruption networks; and 3. courageous and committed leadership.

The real frontier for open contracting is to forge coalitions of courageous leaders – joining up the lonely warriors like Sanjay's father - so they find collective courage and strength to fight through the formidable odds. Sanjay called on the participants to build these coalitions – and unleash an inexorable movement to make open contracting a global norm.

[Full remarks](#)

Overarching themes at #OCGlobal17



The conference program [was designed and facilitated](#) by the social enterprise Reboot after extensive consultation with conference participants. The event focused on interactive sessions on open contracting strategies, securing policy commitments, linking and analyzing open contracting data, building sustainable coalitions, institutionalizing open contracting in different political contexts, engaging citizens, conducting impactful investigations, and balancing openness and privacy. There was space for critical perspectives and skepticism too, with participants addressing the shortfalls, failures, and risks the open contracting community is facing.

The following overarching themes emerged in those discussions:

1) **Open contracting is not only about procurement.**

Ultimately, it is about better social policy and service delivery that make a difference to 'ordinary' citizens. As our approaches, thinking, and models mature, they are connecting more to broader conversations and reforms around governance, healthcare, education, access to information, business, and and financial secrecy.

Transparency doesn't lead to accountability without sustained participation across a broad spectrum of actors. Many who could benefit from open contracting are yet to be brought into the conversation. For e-procurement vendors, for example, open contracting may simply be a great, user-friendly technical solution to offer clients, or in the health sector, open contracting may support and complement efforts to improve access to medicine and better patient outcomes.



Maria Victoria Angulo, Secretary of Education, Bogota

When Maria Victoria Angulo became the education secretary of Bogota, she expected her main concerns to be curriculums, teachers, and textbooks. She did not expect public contracts would take her on the most difficult journey of her life so far. Rumours about price, delivery, and sourcing had long surrounded the school meals programme that feeds around one million pupils in Bogota's public schools. By joining up with the national procurement agency, the education secretariat reformed their procurement processes. They faced strong resistance from political opposition, a media smear campaign and litigation from existing vested interests. They used a combination of open data and public process reforms to investigate a suspected price fixing scheme and to improve the efficiency and quality of their school meals program, which was recognized as the best in Colombia with an award from the Ministry of Education. The number of suppliers rose from 12 to 51 and ultimately, the reforms ensured that Bogota's children get the nutritious food they need to learn and grow.

2) **The next wave of open contracting impact stories is emerging.**

The Secretary of Education of Bogota, Colombia, shared her story of improving the city's school food program through open contracting (see box). In Paraguay, citizens have shown how to use open contracting data to hold their leaders to account.

The importance of stories for building support for open contracting among various stakeholders was acknowledged. Data is the backbone of assembling evidence that open contracting works. The best success stories go beyond anecdotes to measurable impact indicators, such as government savings, greater efficiency in procurement processes, increased competition or improved implementation.

Turning data into quantifiable, persuasive results depends on increasing understanding of the technical side of open contracting and gathering better evidence of good practice across the entire contracting process. More training and capacity building is needed, especially for intermediaries, to demonstrate compelling examples and evidence of how OCDS data translates into real-world impact. Starting with a pilot, testing small and scaling up has been an effective strategy for converting data into meaningful outcomes.

3) **Open contracting goes far beyond opening data, to opening systems and processes behind public spending and into long-term change in power structures.**

Public procurement is a nexus of money, power and discretion in government. The status quo of established structures and networks can be challenging to open up. Open and structured data across the full contracting process has been a powerful tool to confront and break up these structures to increase competition and ensure better services for citizens when it is plugged into wider reforms and alliances.

The best strategies vary according to the context. These may include: confrontational (including litigation, especially when opposition forces are well-organized and well-resourced) versus collaborative encouragement, working with coalitions publicly versus behind the scenes, offering political versus technical support, or building pressure from many sides and levels (for example, advocating internationally and lobbying diplomatic missions, as well as empowering communities at the grassroots level).

Lasting change requires broad coalitions of support, so open contracting reforms have to go beyond exposing corruption to countering it; education should precede data to avoid creating further mistrust.

Public contracting reforms are a change process. They need certain building blocks, including the rule of law. Citizens and communities must be able to access government-held information to make informed decisions and engage in public policies and decision making. Reforms need a conducive legal framework, and policies and practices such as robust freedom of information, freedom of expression and media, and freedom of assembly and association.

To effectively mitigate corruption in public contracting, open contracting needs to be complemented by open access to company registers, asset declarations, and

transparency about the beneficial ownership of companies, government budgets, and spending, as well as whistleblower protection. Without these connections, the impact of open contracting reforms will be much more limited.

- 4) **The private sector has a strong interest in leveling the playing field for doing business with government.** But the open contracting community still needs to develop better arguments and opportunities to engage them to play an active role in advocating for open contracting. We need to better understand and articulate the potential of open contracting for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by working closely with business networks such as the International Association for Contract and Commercial Management (IACCM). With incumbent government contractors, we must build on the Open Contracting Partnership's (OCP) efforts and engage in robust discussion to better navigate and balance legitimate commercial confidentiality with transparency.

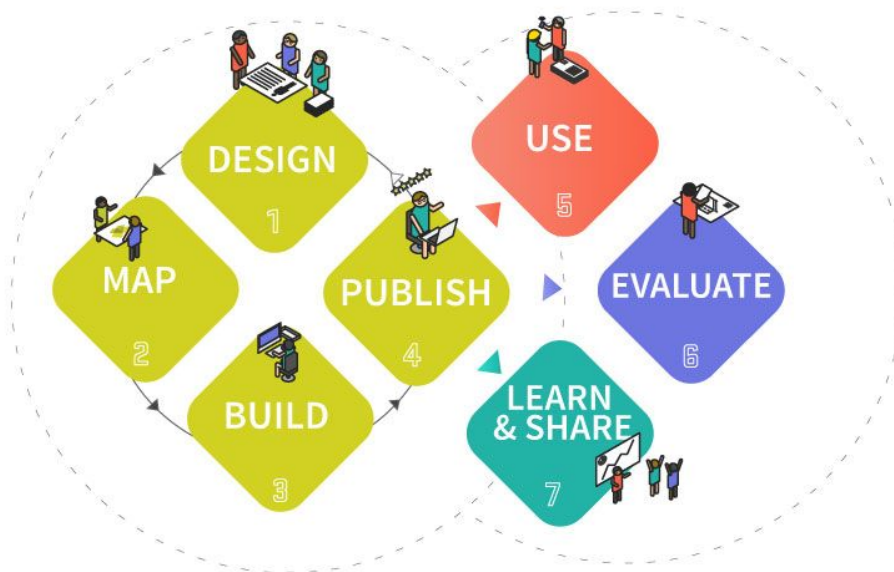
Commitments were made to bring more private sector leadership onboard with the open contracting agenda, and concrete plans to take action at the country level, with a pilot private sector project in Kenya, announced by The B Team. Working in collaboration with Invest in Africa, Hivos, the World Economic Forum, Safaricom and other partners, The B Team plans to mobilize private sector support for open contracting in Kenya, recruiting a group of companies to develop and promote leadership practices, like those of the [African Partner Pool](#) that enables easier and more transparent access to opportunities for SMEs. They will also work to bring private sector to contribute to the development of Kenya's OGP National Action Plan and involve Kenya company partners in the [long-term research project](#) on the concrete benefits of open contracting to governments and the private sector.

The Infrastructure Transparency Initiative, CoST, shared its experience of successfully engaging the private sector at a domestic level through its multi-stakeholder approach and the challenges of engaging the larger international players who can benefit from open contracting without necessarily participating.

At the global level, we will continue to take the ideas from this field into spaces where the private sector is already at work on related issues—such as e-procurement and the future of urban services in the long term. Business leaders, The B Team and a wide array of open contracting practitioners are expanding the conversation around deeper accountability and transformation of these systems to serve people better and deliver much more competitiveness and access for business.

And lastly, we'll keep finding stories of where business is leading or innovating, including in their supply chain and procurement, to bringing those examples into the conversation, both at the policy level and into our field.

- 5) **Increase quality, iterate implementation and stay credible.** Open contracting is an iterative process, which can be conceptualized across [seven repeat steps](#) to plan, publish open data, create impact, measure it and iterate.



People were at very different stages of the journey at #OCGlobal17 and there was a real hunger for tools and assistance. The OCP's new [use case research and guidance](#) takes some first steps toward better defining the path between data and outcomes. It was clear that the community felt we need to move beyond transparency for transparency's sake toward delivering real, tangible value from open contracting data.

Making quality data available depends on prioritizing and understanding user needs when designing systems for collecting and presenting data. Including context and metadata can increase comprehension of open contracting data.

At the regulatory level, disclosure, transparency in processes, and consultation should be enshrined in policies and legislation. Frequently changing and/or complex laws and policies that are difficult to interpret make it harder to create good technical systems for managing contracting processes.

Silos in government are a challenge both at the policy level and the technical level. If followed properly, the OCDS can facilitate inter-agency coordination and collaboration. Civil servants are citizens and users of data, too.

Data quality over quantity was a recurring theme. The open contracting community must do more to check and validate data that is being published by governments to avoid open contracting becoming mere open-washing. We can do more to refine the incentive structures that make sure efforts don't stop at getting a few documents online or partial, reactive disclosures, but broaden and deepen reforms so they enable effective use of that information. This includes completeness of data that is published along the contracting chain and a focus on planning and meeting specific user needs with regular and accurate data.

Some of the language around open contracting needs tidying up and tightening, especially across multiple languages (see [OCP's draft translation and localization principles and policy](#)) and as new actors less familiar with the public procurement process join open contracting.



Action points, next steps and new commitments to advance open contracting



The following tangible initiatives to advance open contracting were developed or announced at #OCGlobal17.

Broadening coalitions for change

- Argentina joined the Contracting 5. France will be the new Chair for the Contracting 5 during 2018.
- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is working with their government partners with a vision to expanding the Contracting 5 with new members in 2018 to foster best practice innovation and learning. A detailed collaborative workshop to develop the OCDS to implement end-to-end procurement tracking is also planned for early 2018.
- A collective action for tackling corruption in contracting, known as the [Clean Contracting Manifesto](#), has been launched by Transparency International, Hivos, CoST, Article 19 and the OCP.
- An informal coalition will push for greater transparency, accountability and efficiency in spending on infrastructure and services contracts for the Paris Summer Olympics in 2024, taking lessons learned from the London Olympics.
- In Latin America, an open contracting working group, hosted by the [Latin American Network for Government Procurement](#) in collaboration with ILDA, Hivos and the OCP and financed by the IDRC, will bring the region's public procurement agencies together.

Engaging the private sector

- The B Team, working in collaboration with Invest in Africa, Hivos, the World Economic Forum, Safaricom and other partners, plans to mobilize private sector support for open contracting in Kenya, recruiting a group of companies to develop and promote leadership practices, like those of the [African Partner Pool](#) that enables easier and more transparent access to opportunities for SMEs. They will also work to bring private sector to contribute to the development of Kenya's OGP National Action Plan and involve Kenya company partners in the [long term research project](#) on the concrete benefits of open contracting to governments and the private sector.
- [IACCM](#) has offered to provide free access to its contract management course to procurement agencies in countries working to improve their contracting systems. Some 10 countries had already signed up to participate by the end of the conference.

Resources, calls and challenges

- The European Commission has earmarked several million euros for the extension of procurement reporting to contract registers including support for the use of the OCDS in 2018 and 2019.
- Hivos will be announcing a call for investigative partnership grants to encourage collaboration between civil society and journalists.
- Hivos and the OCP will run a new round of innovation challenges in 2018 with a specific focus on countries and regions where data is not readily available.

Guidance, methodologies, tools, and offers for support

- [CoST](#) with the OCP will develop a specific infrastructure profile of the OCDS based on their existing guidance.
- Development Gateway, Hivos, The B Team, DIGIWHIST, and the OCP launched a [research agenda](#) to gather better evidence for data-driven advocacy with governments and businesses.
- The World Bank, with the support of a number of development organizations, is launching a new methodology for assessing procurement systems. The methodology will be applied through 19 mapping exercises of national procurement systems.
- [OpenOpps](#) – which publishes data in OCDS on more than 116,000 contracting opportunities in 154 countries, gathered from over 300 publishers – has offered to help countries to transform their data to the OCDS.

Latest publishers of open contracting data

- Nepal is [now publishing open contracting data](#) for the first time.
- Paraguay has fully integrated its [spending data](#) with its existing OCDS data.
- Colombia's fiscal transparency portal [began publishing data on local and regional contracts](#) in addition to national-level contracts.
- [DIGIWHIST](#) is working on publishing contracting data from the EU into the OCDS.

Highlights from sector deep dives and the Design Lab



Design Lab: Emerging ideas and initiatives

On the second day of the conference, participants gathered in intensive co-working sessions, the Design Lab, to explore and form nascent ideas and concepts into potential initiatives that tackle the challenges faced by the open contracting movement.

These solutions, partnerships and new ways of working include:

1. **Private Sector Pilot In Kenya** – A regional pilot to engage the private sector in influencing policy reform, as well as sharing and developing leadership examples of how open contracting is driving efficiency, innovation and competition. Key features of the approach include a) transforming contracts from Africa Partner Pool into OCDS and analyzing increasing benefits of openness, b) bringing private sector into Kenya's OGP National Action Plan, and c) developing case studies of leading companies and executives driving leading contracting standards, new approaches and results.
2. **Open Contracting "Incentivator"** – Using the slogan, "open contracting data opens doors," the incentivator aims to increase civil servant interest and capacity in

open contracting by showing the potential benefits of smart open contracting data use to middle management decision-makers in the public sector. Key features include a technological solution that takes contracting data from the relevant agency, converts it to OCDS, calculates relevant indicators for that agency and visualizes the results.

3. **“Ask Me About Open Contracting”** – A campaign seeking to address mistrust towards public procurement officials, in which advocates for open contracting within government agencies wear badges that make them easy to recognize and approach to answer questions about public procurement.
4. **Understanding Problems to Build Coalitions** – An approach to forming broad coalitions for change that starts with an assessment of communities needs – listening to them, understanding their problems – and then determining whether better contracting is a part of the solution.
5. **“Hello Good Buy\$”** – Creates coalitions between government and civil society by engaging central and local public administrators in open labs to build common solutions and tools that meet the needs of the local context.
6. **Linking Open Contracting** – An initiative that draws on experiences of linking up budget and contracting data in Mexico. A unique identifier is added to national budget lines, which then carries over to contracting data to make it easier to track planning and spending on procurement.
7. **The Linker** – Addresses disconnected data across the various stages of the procurement process by creating a unique ID process. Key steps include 1) forming a multi-stakeholder group with government, civil society and private sector representatives; 2) establishing a process for creating the unique identifier; 3) implementing the identifier into the existing government systems; 4) integrating the systems using the identifier; 5) issuing IDs for historical data.
8. **Community Labs** – Citizen community labs that seek to address challenges in sharing information on public infrastructure projects and gaining feedback in remote areas by exploring alternative communication channels, from face-to-face meetings to text message campaigns.
9. **Open Contracting Love Box** – A box of brief stories, information and templates targeted at business using peer-to-peer storytelling to increase awareness and acceptance of open contracting.
10. **Fellowships for Journalists** – A network of journalists and experts on open contracting to improve the quality of investigations into public contracts.
11. **Political Mapping** – Map stakeholders, explore incentives and barriers for open contracting, produce evidence and seize windows of opportunities to integrate politics/political economy into the design and implementation of open contracting change processes.
12. **E-Pro-Curement** – A free self-certification tool for e-procurement vendors to evaluate the requirements for making an OCDS-friendly platform.
13. **2024 Paris Olympics** – An informal coalition to promote open contracting around the Games, drawing on previous experiences in London and Beijing. It seeks to produce insights from data, monitor performance and build trust between the event organizers and the public.

14. **Global Meetings** – Use global events like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund Meetings as an opportunity to engage governments who are not currently involved in open contracting, and to interconnect public procurement data across borders; for example, through a Forum of Finance Ministers with policy experts and investors.
15. **Food4Thought Alliance** – An initiative to improve service delivery, in this case by tackling poor nutrition in school meals, by working with sector NGOs, local governments, students and international partners to collect data, monitor and provide independent, real-time evaluation of school meal programs in a bottom-up manner.
16. **Community Consultation in Mega-Infrastructure Projects** – Develops new feedback mechanisms to minimize the impact of mega-infrastructure projects on marginalized communities.
17. **Contracting Data Use Pilot** – A collaboration with Hivos and School of Data to follow up on research about how civil society organizations use data around contracting and corruption.

Of these ideas, three-quarters are already being moved forward. Interested in joining? See which conveners are supporting which concept below.

The B Team: 1, 9, 10, 14

CoST: 8, 9

Contracting 5: 4, 13

Hivos: 8, 9, 10, 15, 17

OCDS community: 6, 7

OCP: 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16

Summary takeaways from sector deep dives

Notable energy emerged at the meeting around these initiatives:

1. Extractives Industries

There is significant interest in extractives, but more thinking is needed to adapt the open contracting approach to the sector. Examples of good practices at different stages of the contracting process exist in different countries, but there are no examples across the whole process. Managing public expectations of services delivered to citizens is very important to the successful implementation of extractive projects. A modular approach to transparency might provide a better strategy to get through the different stages, given the size and complexity of the contracts.

Challenges remain. Disclosure does not necessarily lead to transparency as accessible and timely data are not always available to public. This prevents citizens from engaging in

meaningful conversations assessing the benefits/drawbacks and progress of projects. When governments rush contract processes, civil society is left with very little time to review and gather feedback. Frequent changes to mining laws hinder efforts to open up contracting processes; for example, Indonesian mining laws changed nine times in a year.

2. Construction and Infrastructure

Infrastructure is key for economic growth, drives investment decisions and affects international rankings and indicators. Corruption in infrastructure construction is stubbornly high, accounting for an estimated 10-30 percent of lost value. The sector is undergoing major changes, including an increase in Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), a greater reliance on new technologies, data and feedback to inform decision-making, and five-year budgets.

New opportunities are emerging as a result: there is a clearer alignment of shared interest in improved performance and greater interest in multi-stakeholder partnerships such as Public Private Community Partnerships (PPCPs) and CoST. But degrees of strategic thinking and engagement vary significantly between countries, and old forms of contracts are no longer fit for purpose. Open contracting can play a role in capitalizing on shared interests in speeding up delivery, developing more appropriate contracting arrangements, as well as monitoring the implementation of PPPs by bringing together the documents and data about these complex projects using the OCDS (see [Extending the OCDS for PPPs](#)). The World Bank Disclosure Framework for PPPs enhanced with the OCDS and CoST Infrastructure Data Standard is currently being tested in Honduras.

3. Health/pharmaceuticals

The healthcare and pharmaceutical industry suffers from a lack of competition, with large pharmaceutical companies and patent monopolies dominating the sector. Generic medicines are only available in some regions. Key actors are operating in silos: often coordination between the finance ministry and health ministry is poor, and health sector donors do not see open contracting as a priority. Finally, resistance is strong from large commercial interest groups.

A more confrontational approach to open contracting advocacy in this context may be appropriate, balanced against collaboration with (unusual) allies, such as the ministry for economic development, ombudsman's associations, healthcare professionals and patent associations. The open contracting community should consider supporting litigation seeking to invalidate patents and balance intellectual property rights with human rights better. Research focusing on the effectiveness, not only price, of generic medicines in comparison to brands should be explored.



Yaroslav Zelinskyi, All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS

In Ukraine, corruption is still a huge problem. It is perhaps more visible in healthcare than any other sector. Ukrainians are quite literally born into corruption, as women are expected to pay bribes to doctors during childbirth. Corruption in healthcare contracts for service delivery and infrastructure do much more harm than disease itself. After the Maidan revolution, reformers joined the government and pushed to transform procurement. Organizations like All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS realized supporting these reformers was the only way to fight the endemic corruption that was crippling the healthcare sector. Yaroslav believes ProZorro has been the most effective instrument to respond to corrupt individuals. Now Ukrainians can see the money and what type of drugs are being purchased, and they can actually have an influence. ProZorro also helped to create a vibrant community of civil society watchdogs. It is forging a new community to track healthcare, with monitors coming from all over Ukraine, even the disputed territories. Transparency and accountability are now the new norm. The reduction in corruption and increased transparency is leading to increased access to life-saving drugs which translates into more lives saved.

[Powerpoint slides](#)

4. Procurement/E-procurement

Open contracting offers governments an effective procurement performance monitoring approach that solves communication, integration and legacy problems. The OCDS is a great middleware tool for expanding or replacing a procurement system without killing the legacy system. E-procurement solutions should be matched with the local market and needs/capacity of contracting entities. There are six big business decisions to consider: 1) acquisition of the system – buy, own, rent?; 2) coverage – how much procurement is going electronic?; 3) integration with e-government – how much do they have and how much can they integrate? 4) who will manage it? 5) who will pay for future developments? 6) Is a single or multi-platform approach best – considerations include whether the system is centralized or decentralized, the value of contracts and number of contracting entities.

Evaluating these six factors can help to address some of the common challenges faced when setting up a new e-procurement system, including determining which parts of the procurement cycle should be covered, and which entity should lead the implementation. Donors can foster open contracting by promoting OCDS as an integral part of e-procurement from the outset and using it in their own systems.

Participants' feedback

We like to be data-driven in everything we do and we know how precious everyone's time is, so we asked participants how useful they thought the conference was. We saw great feedback about the agenda, content and structure of the event. Our final survey analysis shows that 50% of attendees said that the event exceeded or greatly exceeded their expectations; another 44% said that their expectations were met.

Why did it work? Many participants commented on the great energy, fresh insights, and inspiring conversations at #OCGlobal17. They found the participatory format engaging and productive, as it provided ample opportunities for connecting with peers and digging deep into the issues. From the post-event survey, participants' reflections on #OCGlobal17 in their own words:

- "Right people, right conversations."
- "This conference gathered like-minded people in small groups to tackle well-identified challenges. And that worked! The participants had to be active all the time, and the outcome gave them the innovation to hold the pace for two days!"
- "Sharp sessions that built iteratively towards well-articulated and participant-defined goals."
- "Very interactive, learned a lot, and you managed to get a very diverse group of people still working together and largely speaking the same language."
- "My expectations were high and were exceeded. I learnt so much, was so impressed by the diversity and experience of participants, and made really crucial connections."

Participants said the three most valuable sessions were: Tricky Scenarios (4.17 out of 5.0), Deep Dives (4.06/5.0), and Design Lab (4.06/5). Many mentioned how beneficial it was to have in-depth, face-to-face conversations with others, and wanted even more opportunities to have these types of interactions in the future. The Mapping the Ecosystem session was seen as having less value (3.66/5.0) and several participants said some of the group plenary sessions felt rushed.

That wasn't the only constructive feedback we received. The agenda could have been simpler, the signage larger and the directions clearer. Additionally, the venue, while beautiful, was often loud, making it difficult to hear people speaking during breakout sessions. We also received several suggestions to provide more information about the content and speakers prior to the event, so that participants could better prepare. From the post-event survey, participants' suggestions for future events, in their own words:

- “Having a diagram/framework of the open contracting chain, to allow participants to situate themselves and their interests. Ensure glossary/definitions are clear at onset.”
- “Find a way of documenting the feedback. The relevant detail tends to get lost in the discussions. Some of these topics can be shared further for a think tank approach.”
- “More days, with less hours every day.”
- “More private sector participation.”
- “Having more ‘meet and greet’ of everyone up front would make it more productive for someone like myself who did not know many people in the community.”

Facilitated by ReBoot, the meeting's primary objectives were crafted based on participant feedback collected over the summer, and the pre- and post-surveys aimed to measure whether or not we met those objectives. Each of these statements saw marked increases, as the table below shows.

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Pre-Survey</i>	<i>Post-Survey</i>	<i>Change</i>
I have a clear understanding of how open contracting is creating impact.	3.54	3.99	+12.7%
I have a clear understanding of the gaps and challenges facing open contracting.	3.3	4.04	+22.4%
I have a clear understanding of the solutions needed to address these gaps and challenges.	2.99	3.57	+19.4%
I know what the open contracting field is working towards for the next 5 years.	2.61	3.42	+31.0%
I know what I (or my organization) needs to do to contribute towards achieving progress in open contracting.	3.59	4.13	+15.0%
I have strong relationships within the open contracting community.	3.27	3.86	+18.0%
I believe that open contracting will become the “new norm” within the next 5 years.	3.59	3.88	+8.0%

The diversity, commitment and knowledge of the people were among the highlights of this conference. We are excited about the countless new connections and relationships that were formed and are more energized than ever to achieve our goals with you!

All of us collectively are the heart of open contracting, and we can't wait to see how we can power the field forwards together.

Annex

1. Ecosystem mapping

CELEBRATING THE OPEN CONTRACTING 2017 COMMUNITY

FIND YOUR TRIBE. UNDERSTAND EVERYONE'S UNIQUE ROLE. EXPAND THE NETWORK.

By Experience

- Newbie**: "I am relatively new to this space, and have lots of questions and ideas. Excited to dive in!"
- Seasoned**: "I have been doing open contracting for a while, and have some hard-won lessons to share..."
- Pioneer**: "I've been around the Open Contracting block a few times. And oh, the stories I could tell..."

By Role

- Government**
 - Group A: Policy-setting and Oversight Bodies
 - Group B: Implementation Agencies
- Private Sector**
 - Group C: Norm-setting Bodies
 - Group D: Government Contractors and Consultants
- International Civil Society**
 - Group E: Advocacy Organizations
 - Group F: Implementation Organizations
- National Civil Society**
 - Group G: Advocacy Organizations
 - Group H: Implementation Organizations
 - Group I: Investigative and Public Scrutiny Bodies
- Other Key Partners**
 - Group J: Funders
 - Group K: Critical Voices (e.g. Academia, Media)

OPEN CONTRACTING 2017

Developing the Enabling Environment
Making Quality Data Available
Using Data to Drive Change
Ensuring Accountability

REBOOT

2. Overview of sessions and key outputs

Please review the [complete agenda](#) with details of speakers and the [plenary slides](#) for the results of the report back.

3. Participants

From activists to data geeks, entrepreneurs, government reformers, and investigative journalists, a diverse group of 200 forward-thinking individuals from the public, private, and civil society sectors attended. A full list of participants is available [here](#). **Please note that some participants may have opted out of being included in this list.**