



LOCATION

Santiago, Chile

DATE

December 6-7, 2018

PARTICIPANTS

More than 60 parliamentarians, parliamentary clerks and civil society representatives from 11 countries in Latin America



This activity is aligned with SDG 16

Co-Creation Meeting: Guide to Develop Open Parliament Action Plans

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In collaboration with the Congress of Chile, ParlAmericas hosted the **Co-Creation Meeting: Guide to Develop an Open Parliament Action Plan** which gathered the three main actors involved in this process: parliamentarians, parliamentary clerks and civil society representatives, to develop a clear and practical step by step guide that can be tailored to any national context and support the Open Parliament Action Plan process. A Working Document was developed by ParlAmericas, in collaboration with the Open Parliament e-Network, and was distributed to participants to guide the discussions in the meeting.

Welcoming remarks

The meeting opened with welcoming remarks by **Maya Fernández** (Chile), President of the Chamber of Deputies and ParlAmericas Board Member; **Carlos Montes** (Chile), President of the Senate; **Paulina Núñez** (Chile), Member of the Chamber of Deputies and President of the Bicameral Group on Transparency; Senator **Blanca Ovelar** (Paraguay), President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network; and **Marcela Ríos**, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP Chile.

“We now see that it is absolutely useful for us to have a guide that can support our work to develop effective plans with a flawless process, that put us on the right path and that most of all are legitimated by the broad participation of citizens. This is why we talk about co-creation.”



Senator **Blanca Ovelar** (Paraguay), President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network

“The current generation of parliamentarians is facing an important challenge: the lack of trust of citizens in State institutions. We are currently working to approve transparency and citizen participation policies to recover this trust and better inform our legislative work.”



Carlos Montes (Chile), President of the Senate

“The 2030 Agenda states that to advance on sustainable development issues, we need strong, transparent, inclusive and accountable institutions that fight corruption, a key obstacle for development.”



Marcela Ríos
Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP Chile

“Open parliament reforms contribute to our democratic systems as they can create spaces for citizens and civil society organizations to not only contribute to parliamentary work but also become our partners in the building of better societies where we all participate in decisions that have an impact on our lives.”



Maya Fernandez (Chile), President of the Chamber of Deputies and ParlAmericas' Board member

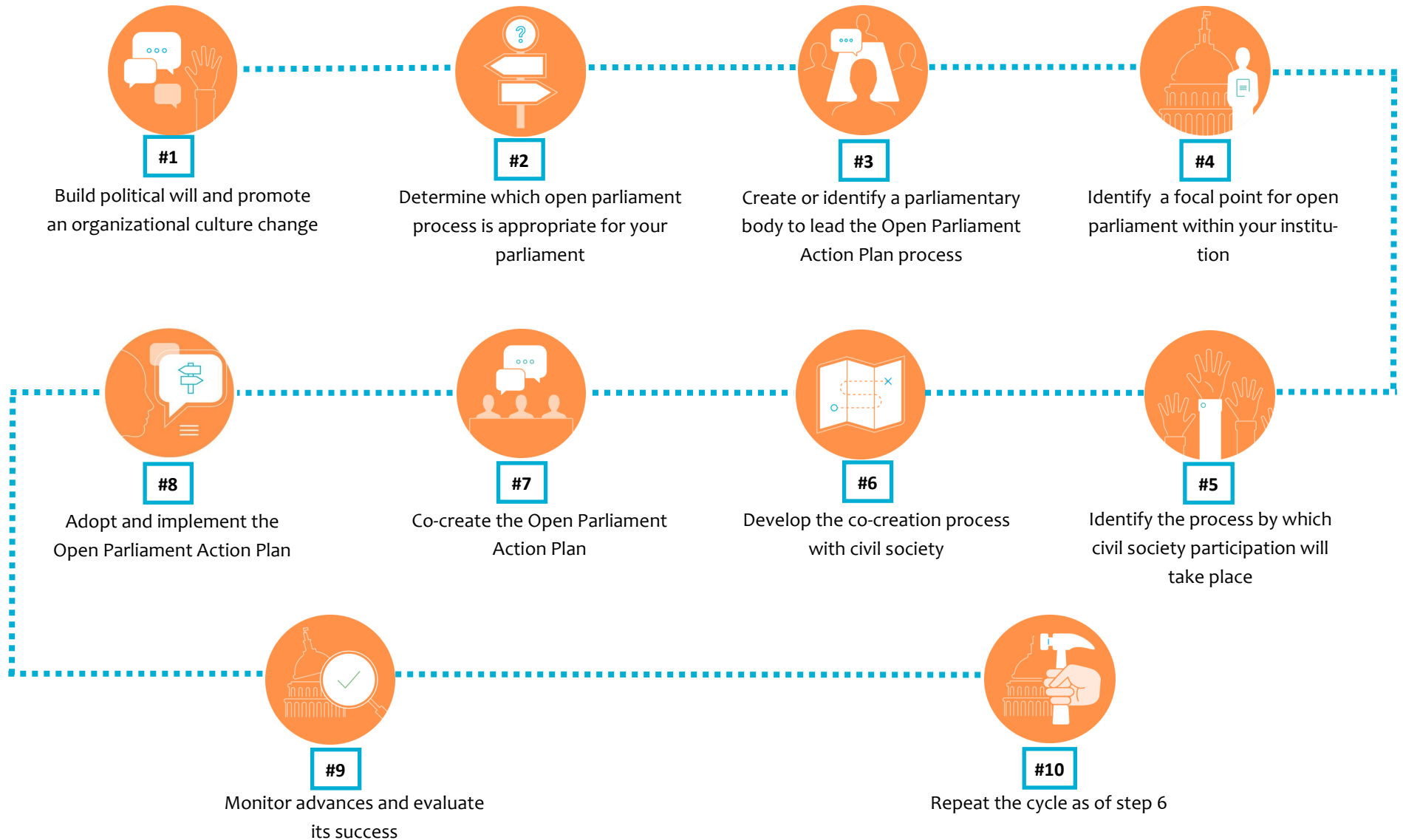


“All of us undertake efforts to develop our Open Parliament Action Plans but having a guide with clear norms for these processes is vital.”



Member of the Chamber of Deputies **Paulina Núñez**, President of the Bicameral Group on Transparency

Overview of the process to develop an open parliament action plan



Session 1: Formulating Open Parliament Action Plans

The first session provided an overview of the process to formulate an Open Parliament Action Plan, considering the roles and the importance of collaboration between parliamentarians, parliamentary clerks and civil society representatives, as indicated in the meeting's Working Document. It was facilitated by **Francisco Sánchez**, Advisor on Anticorruption and Integrity Systems of UNDP Chile, and included round-table work which addressed each of the formulation stages of an Open Parliament Action Plan, to identify good practices, challenges and solutions that can be applied throughout these stages of the process.

Legislators, parliamentary clerks and civil society representatives exchanged ideas and shared their experiences as they engaged in a dialogue at their tables. The group discussed strategies, actions and actors for each phase of the Open Parliament Action Plan cycle, while following the guidance of a moderator. Through a report back session following these discussions, Member of the Legislative Assembly **Wagner Jiménez** (Costa Rica) stated that it is essential to involve a broader scope of civil society organizations in these processes so as to include contributions from social organizations, academia and the media in both co-creation processes and action plan implementation. On the other hand, **Ángel Ramírez**, Executive Director of GuateCambia highlighted the importance of establishing or designating a parliamentary body for the institutionalization of these plans and ensure their sustainability over time, as well as defining clear rules in co-creation processes that enable an inclusive and balanced participation of all relevant actors. Finally, **Marcela Rodríguez**, advisor in the Colombian Senate, emphasized the need to decentralize co-creation processes so citizens from other regions can participate and contribute. All contributions made during these discussions will be included in the Guide to Develop an Open Parliament Action Plan.



Session 2: Beyond Open Parliament Action Plans: Transformative Actions and Expansion of Open Parliament Reforms to Other Thematic Areas

This session discussed the application of open parliament principles in other thematic areas, to explore how such initiatives can help demonstrate the impact of open parliament reforms. Moderated by **Paulina Núñez** (Chile), President of the Bicameral Group on Transparency, panelists included **Norman Quijano** (El Salvador), President of the Legislative Assembly ([presentation](#) in Spanish) who presented on new measures undertaken by the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador during the evaluation of candidates for the Supreme Court of Justice. **María Inés Solís** (Costa Rica), Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly and ParlAmericas Board Member ([presentation](#) in Spanish) discussed the Legislative Assembly's two previous Open Parliament Action Plans, open

parliament commitments in its current Open Government National Action Plan and the Convention for an Open State adopted by all branches of the Costa Rican government. **Paulo Henrique Araújo** (Brazil), Director of LabHacker, Chamber of Deputies ([presentation](#) in Spanish) discussed efforts being undertaken by the Chamber of Deputies of Brazil to disseminate an open parliament culture in local legislatures. **Mercedes de Los Santos**, Coordinator of Participation in Government Institutions, Fundación Directorio Legislativo ([presentation](#) in Spanish) discussed the process undertaken by the Congress of Argentina to ensure an extensive, fair and balanced debate on abortion reform in Argentina.

“The Framework Agreement to Promote an Open State was signed in March 2017 between the branches of the Republic (of Costa Rica). The idea is that all the branches can work along the same lines. We believe that we will not achieve anything if we have policies for an open parliament or judiciary if the rest of the government doesn't also have the same policies to ensure transparency in all the work being undertaken.”

María Inés Solís Quiros
(Costa Rica), Vice-President
of the Legislative Assembly
and ParlAmericas Board
Member



Session 3: Leveraging Resources to Consolidate Open Parliaments

This session explored opportunities for collaboration among the actors involved in Open Parliament Action Plans to maximize its impacts. It was facilitated by **Margarita Stolbizer** (Argentina), Former Member of the Chamber of Deputies and President of the Asociación Civil Bajo la Lupa, who invited participants to work with their peers to identify their strengths and areas where other actors could provide support in order to explore strategies for a more effective collaboration.

To start this session, the facilitator invited legislators, civil society representatives and parliamentary clerks to sit with their peers and identify the strengths and resources they contribute to the process as well as where the other two stakeholders play a critical role. **One representative from each stakeholder group presented the results of each discussion.**

CIVIL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES	PARLIAMENTARY CLERKS	LEGISLATORS
On behalf of civil society representatives, María Fernanda Avendaño , Executive Director of ACESSA highlighted their technical knowledge, legitimacy and flexibility to form networks with other sectors of society as strengths that can drive action plans and get more citizens and citizens involved in these processes. She noted that civil society organizations persevere through elections cycles, which can support the sustainability of action plans. She also emphasized the importance of involving journalists specialized in legislative work in action plan processes which could help to communications efforts around these efforts.	On the other hand, Leny Palma , Director of the Citizen Participation Office of the Congress of Peru expressed that although the parliamentary administration has access to human resources, infrastructure and technical capacity to implement these plans, it would be helpful to establish multidisciplinary teams that have the skills to communicate about these efforts in a simple and inclusive language. In this regard, she stressed that the personnel involved in these plans should be permanent staff rather than political appointees, to ensure the sustainability of the process. She also emphasized the importance of involving the highest legislative and administrative authorities in the parliament, as well as the heads of the various administrative departments. She concluded by mentioning that the plans require human and financial resources which are keys for their effective implementation.	Finally, Member of the Chamber of Deputies Javier Macaya (Chile), Vice-President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network highlighted that the parliaments represented at the meeting have and continue to undertake serious efforts to advance this cause through the adoption of legislation, the development of technological platforms and the establishment of parliamentary bodies to promote more open parliaments. He also mentioned that, although parliamentarians have full access to the media, this also poses a risk and that it is necessary to identify spokespersons with communication expertise when sharing information on the subject.

Session 4: Implementing, monitoring and evaluating Open Parliament Action Plans

This session discussed the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Open Parliament Action Plans. It was facilitated by **Luis Rojas** (Chile), Deputy Secretary General of the Chamber of Deputies and **María Liz Sosa** (Paraguay), Director General of Legislative Strengthening of the Senate, presented the experiences from their respective parliaments and guided round-table work where participants identified the main challenges they have or anticipate facing in the implementation of open parliament initiatives along with possible solutions.



Session 5: Promoting Participation and Inclusion of Traditionally Marginalized Groups in Open Parliament Action Plans

This final session focused on how the participation and inclusion of traditionally marginalized groups, including women and indigenous people, can be mainstreamed in Open Parliament Action Plans. It was moderated by **Alejandra Aramayo** (Peru), Member of Congress and featured panelists **Natalia Castillo** (Chile), Member of the Chamber of Deputies ([presentation](#) in Spanish) who presented the Chamber's new sexual harassment policy, and **César Solórzano** (Ecuador), Member of the National Assembly ([presentation](#) in Spanish) who discussed initiatives adopted by the Assembly to enable the participation of indigenous peoples in the legislative process. Following these presentations, participants discussed additional ideas for commitments that promote gender equality or inclusion that could be included in action plans, as well as ways through which the impact of current commitments on women and marginalized groups could be measured.



Closing remarks

The meeting closed with remarks by Senator **Blanca Ovelar** (Paraguay), President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network, and **Luis Rojas** (Chile), Deputy Secretary General of the Chamber of Deputies who thanked participants for their contributions throughout the two days and reminded them that their input will be integrated into an updated version of the working draft of the *Guide to Develop Open Parliament Action Plans*. An electronic version of this updated draft will be circulated in the coming months for further feedback.



This meeting was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Congress of Chile and the Canadian Government through Global Affairs Canada.



ACTION POINTS:

During the discussion that occurred during the co-creation meetings, the **following action points were highlighted:**

1. Encourage the participation of both citizens representing civil society organizations as well as those without any affiliations in the co-creation processes for Open Parliament Action Plans.
2. Establish channels of communication to disseminate information on Open Parliament Action Plans and initiatives, with clear and inclusive language.
3. Foster and strengthen collaboration between civil society organizations and parliamentary clerks in the region.
4. Involve the media throughout the Open Parliament Action Plan process, especially journalists specializing in covering parliamentary topics.
5. Foster collaboration between parliamentarians, parliamentary clerks, and civil society organizations to identify standards for legislative openness and make sure that such measures are responsive to citizens' needs.
6. Promote the establishment of an institutional body within the parliament that allows for the participation of legislators, parliamentary clerks, and civil society representatives to engage in the co-creation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of an Open Parliament Action Plan.



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*ParlAmericas mainstreams **GENDER EQUALITY** by advocating for women's political empowerment and the application of a gender lens in legislative work*



*ParlAmericas fosters **OPEN PARLIMENTS** by advancing the principles of transparency, accountability, citizen participation, ethics and probity*



*ParlAmericas promotes policies and legislative measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of **CLIMATE CHANGE***



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