Some Key Learnings from events About Our 2019 Program Themes

1. **Theme: Promoting the impact of open data initiatives**
   *The State of Open Data: Histories and Horizons* (5.20.19) was a book launch event that explored the last decade of open data across many disciplines, such as journalism and humanitarian aid, via a world cafe event. The book features 60 authors who explored how open data has had impact in 7 different regions of the world in the last decade on a variety of sectors. One of the key takeaways is that while data can reduce information asymmetries, it is unlikely to address power asymmetries on its own.

2. **Exploring innovations in anti-corruption work**
   *Democracy Beyond the Ballot Box: Highlights from OGP's Global Report* (10/10/19) was a panel and roundtable event that highlighted trends across the Open Government Partnership network of 75+ countries coming from OGP’s first-ever global report. The report found two areas of growing, innovative work to fight corruption: open contracting and beneficial ownership. These reforms can help address illicit financial flows and corruption in public procurement, especially campaigns when they focus on solving a clear problem, improving the quality of data related to it, and engage citizens in public oversight. We also witnessed a major achievement for the long-standing work of beneficial ownership advocates here in the US, when the House of Representatives has passed a [landmark bipartisan bill](#) in October to put an end to corruption and crime enabled by anonymous companies.

3. **Defending democracy and protecting civic space**
   *Democracy Dialogue:Tactics to Protect Civic Space in Russia, U.S. and Beyond* (7.22.19) was a roundtable that compared tangible approaches of response to civic space challenges mainly in the United States, Russia, as well as India. Smear campaigns, digital threats, and physical violence are common tools used by repressive governments -- including backsliding democracies -- against pro-democratic civil society groups. Some practical resistance tactics that citizen groups can use include: creating networks, raising awareness, and involving the private sector, better civic education, public reporting of incidents, and promoting media literacy.

4. **Strengthening local opengov service delivery**
   *Stopping As Success: Transitioning to Locally Led Development* (11.7.19) was a BBL that gave insight into a [USAID-funded initiative](#), which for the past three years promoted locally-led development with practical guidance on how to transition projects from international to local NGOs. Initiatives can unlock incentives to enable service delivery to be conducted at the local level, but it is critical to first establish viable tools and mutual trust. Financial sustainability and innovative funding models for local NGOs that deliver various services, such as healthcare and education, are the cornerstone of future success -- along with international NGOs “leading from behind” in a new era of development.