

**Open Government Partnership  
Criteria and Standards Subcommittee Call Summary**

*Thursday, October 25, 2018*

*10:00 WASHINGTON / 15:00 ABUJA - EDINBURGH / 16:00 PRETORIA - ROME -  
ZAGREB / 17:00 DAR ES SALAAM*

**Attendees**

- Government of Croatia: Darija Marić
- Government of Italy: Stefano Pizzicannella
- Government of South Africa: Mesuli Macozoma
- Aidan Eyakuze, Twaweza
- Suneeta Kaimal / Marie Lintzer, Natural Resources Governance Institute (NRGI)
- Lucy McTernan, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)
- OGP Support Unit: Paul Maasen, Alonso Cerdan, Dennise Miranda, Jaime Mercado, Enrico Campos, Sophie Smyth (Lawyer/Legal Consultant)

**Call Summary**

**1. IRM Refresh**

In the July 2018 Steering Committee meeting, the SC endorsed the IRM Refresh and approved changes to the composition of the IEP. As a follow up of these decisions, the C&S will work with the IRM Director, in consultation with IEP members, to update the IRM Charter addenda as part of the Articles of Governance. The IRM Director will work with the C&S chairs in developing a timeline and outline of the revision process to be undertaken by C&S in 2019.

**2. Update on Values Check**

At its September call, the Support Unit presented to the C&S options to assess values check in countries that are not covered by V-Dem data, but that otherwise meet the core eligibility criteria. There are currently 15 countries that are not covered by V-Dem indicators, none of which are eligible, but some of which have shown interested in joining OGP (Antigua and Barbuda; Bahamas; Belize; Brunei Darussalam; Congo; Dominica; Grenada; Kiribati; Liechtenstein; Marshall Islands; Monaco; Samoa; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Tonga).

To address this situation, the SU presented a two-part proposal to C&S:

**1) AoG reform that gives C&S the authority to use a third-party indicator in the very unlikely case that a country is not covered by V-Dem**

The proposed language to be incorporated in the AoG addenda that outlines OGP Eligibility Criteria is the following:

*“In the exceptional case when a country passes the core eligibility criteria to join OGP, but Values Check indicators are not collected by V-Dem for such country, the C&S will perform an assessment of that country’s Values Check based on civic space indicators from a credible third-party database as determined by C&S.”*

**C&S Decision:** C&S endorsed the AoG reform presented by the Support Unit.

## **2) C&S internal decision on the third-party database to be used and the proposed threshold within the selected database**

**C&S Decision:** C&S agreed that the selection of the database and threshold to be used will be made by the subcommittee. However, before approving the use of Civicus and the proposed database and threshold, C&S requested that the SU prepares a protocol specifying the criteria for selecting a set which database will be used and what threshold. This protocol will be published online so the process is transparent.

## **3. Response Policy Case Update: Azerbaijan Report and Recommendation**

The Support Unit shared the early results it had received from third-party experts in the Azerbaijan RP case. These resources are being used as inputs for the assessment report the SU is preparing on the progress that the government of Azerbaijan has made on the [September 2017 updated set of recommendations](#). Early analysis indicates that Azerbaijan has not made systemic changes needed to meet the updated recommendations to improve the operating environment for CSOs.

**Decision:** C&S requested that together with the assessment report, the SU outlines three possible resolutions:

- 1) Extend Azerbaijan’s inactive status for 3-6 months on the condition that the Azeri government makes specific changes to address the constraints on its civic space.
- 2) Place Azerbaijan on “permanent suspension” until there is sufficient evidence and proof on the ground that the Azeri government has addressed their civic space challenges.
- 3) Withdrawal of Azerbaijan from OGP.

The SU will share the final assessment report along with the options requested ahead of the November 13 C&S call in order for C&S to reach a subcommittee-level consensus on the recommendation to be tabled for full SC approval.

## **4. Articles of Governance**

The SU presented the annotated version of the AOG containing the proposed final language of the AOG. The revised AoG will be presented to the full SC for approval at its December 5-6 meeting.

**Decision item:** *C&S fully endorsed the revised Articles of Governance and granted permission for the Support Unit to share the AoG with the other subcommittees for review and comment. C&S suggested that the Support Unit send out a brief memo to the SC explaining the different levels of changes noted in the annex.*