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**КЫРГЫЗСКАЯ РЕСПУБЛИКА
МЭРИЯ ГОРОДА БИШКЕК**

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На № _____ от _____

To: OGP Support Unit

1. Based on the recent events related to COVID-19 pandemic Bishkek Mayor Office realized significance of OGP principles in forming open and accountable local government. Existing gap in collaboration between civil society and LSGs, which showed its negative consequences during COVID-19 pandemic, must be bridged immediately. According to results of NAP implementation in Kyrgyzstan, we observe positive outcomes of interaction between state bodies and civil society.

We want to introduce this practice on local level based on the experience of civil society, our government and OGP Support Unit in order to increase transparency, accountability of Mayor Office and civic engagement. According to National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyz Republic, 1 million 53 thousand people live in Bishkek, which means 16,2% population of Kyrgyzstan is directly affected by decision and municipal services of Bishkek Mayor Office. But Bishkek plays a bigger role because many people live in Bishkek without being registered as habitats and some people arrive in capital every day to work or study.

Budget of Bishkek Mayor Office is the biggest among all local governments of Kyrgyzstan. The living conditions and public services received by more than 16.2% of the country's population depend on how effectively and transparently this budget is used. Bishkek should serve as an indicator for other LSGs of what developed city can become when it interacts with civil society and involves them in the decision-making process.

Therefore, the Mayor's Office of Bishkek, together with the Development Policy Institute (hereinafter DPI), will make efforts to make a qualitative leap in the development of civic engagement in the decision-making process within the framework of OGP Local. Bishkek is a rapidly growing metropolis, where the mayor's office is not able to form a sufficient number of public spaces that form the urban culture. It is necessary to give citizens the opportunity to implement their own projects with the funding of the mayor's office and co-financing by community. Also, within the framework of the OGP, Bishkek will provide citizens with the opportunity to participate in monitoring and improving the quality of municipal services and the operation of municipal enterprises - utility providers, using digital technologies. In order to achieve the above-mentioned task, an electronic platform for the "single account of a citizen" is being developed for processing complaints and proposals from citizens and promptly responding to them online. The purpose of the introduced "Bishkek-312" mobile application is to automate the submission of applications and appeals to the municipality services on the problems encountered and the receiving of services provided by the municipality in digital format. Further,

this application allows receiving notification on submitted applications and news. At the moment, work is underway to refine and test this application program.

2. Bishkek plans to extensively use the partnership with the Union of Local Self-Governments (hereinafter Union of LSG) and the Portal of Best Practice, which is now being created by the efforts of the Union of LSG, DPI and the State Agency for Local Self-Government and Inter-Ethnic Relations under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. Through the Portal, the mayor's office and the Union of LSG, with the participation of the DPI, will organize exchange of experience, training and consultations for other cities and large rural municipalities.

3. Bishkek is ready to share its experience in creating a platform for discussing the prospects for the development of a megalopolis - holding an Urban Forum with the participation of a wide range of interested NGOs and groups of citizens. The Forum discussed a wide range of issues - from the conservation of green spaces to spatial planning; many practical seminars and workshops helped citizens and city services exchange experiences, development approaches and develop joint projects. Bishkek is also ready to share its experience in the field of digitalization. By the end of 2020, Bishkek plans to digitize about 36 municipal services. Bishkek is also ready to share its experience of cooperation with the non-profit organization "ArCha Initiative" on the creation of an information platform for accounting for green spaces in Bishkek. This will increase the plant fund and maintain the ecological balance. The platform will display data on green spaces on an electronic map of Bishkek, which will allow the residents to take part in the conservation and development of green spaces.

4. Bishkek wants to create more opportunities for citizens to implement their initiatives by prioritizing investment projects and taking into account the needs of citizens. Bishkek has experience in providing grants to the local community, and this practice needs to be scaled up. There also could be arranged the process of selecting renovation projects online - when people vote, for example, for investment projects of the mayor's office in the field of organizing public spaces. The second area is public monitoring of services - here work can be done with municipal service providers to organize joint monitoring and evaluation with citizens. But it is important that the mayor's office stays as a customer of this monitoring. The third point is the online civil budget of Bishkek. There is a website of the Ministry of Finance where all municipalities of the Kyrgyz Republic publish their summaries of budgets. The mayor's office can create its own website (or a section on the existing website) with the disclosure of budget information in a more detailed form, for example, a regularly updated map of investment and renovation projects of the city. Also, here you can arrange a vote of citizens for the most necessary, from their point of view, projects. It is also likely that a mobile application will be developed and launched for feedback from citizens to the mayor's office or voting for projects or monitoring services of municipal providers. More detailed plans in this direction will be determined within the framework of the OGP Plan, which will be developed with the broad participation of NGOs, in particular, Development Policy Institute, "City Initiatives" and others.

5. Since 2014, the Bishkek Mayor's Office, annually publishes the Citizens Budget in the public domain together with the DPI, which contains a brief and simple statement of the main budget indicators. This approach allows to create conditions for the open formation and execution of the budget of the city of Bishkek by involving citizens in local self-government and the budget process. The Mayor's Office supports innovative platforms for interaction with NGOs, such as the Urban Forum.

6. The Mayor's Office of Bishkek has the administrative capacity to implement projects under the Open Government. There is the Department of Economics and Investments, which is the key body of cooperation of the mayor's office with the international donor community and public organizations. Currently, the acting head of this Department is Usualiev Mirat Emilievich. In addition, a municipal enterprise "Center for Digital Technologies" has been created, which is working to digitize the work of the mayor's office. To fulfill the commitments within the framework of the OGP Local initiative, Bishkek mayor office and the following organizations are ready to cooperate:

- 1) DPI has an extensive experience in promoting transparency of public finance management on various levels. DPI was the leading organization to lobby for Kyrgyz legislation to make it obligatory for local budgets to be open and for local governments to conduct public budget hearings. This requirement was included into a new Budget Code of Kyrgyzstan
 - 2) "Urban Initiatives" is the NGO based in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. PF "Urban Initiatives" conducts research on urban environment, organizes seminars and discussions on the topics of urban development, supports civic initiatives and municipal entities in projects that upgrade public spaces and quality of life in their cities.
 - 3) Soros Foundation Kyrgyzstan is a national foundation of the Open Society Foundations network. Soros Foundation Kyrgyzstan is committed to supporting civic initiatives in the fields of government accountability, human rights, equitable health care, access to education, civic tech, and information democracy, urban activism, and media freedom. Soros Foundation Kyrgyzstan is committed to provide technical and financial support to civic initiatives in the frames of the OGP Local action plan and partner with Bishkek City Hall to advance principles of transparency, accountability and civic participation in municipal governance.
 - 4) The main activity of the PF "Archa Initiative" is the organization of measures to preserve, expand and improve the quality of green areas in Kyrgyzstan, including botanical gardens, parks, squares and other green areas. Within the framework of the "Green Bishkek" Program, the fund, in cooperation with the mayor's office of Bishkek, municipal enterprises and public organizations, implements projects for greening urban areas, improving the skills of municipal employees in the care of green spaces, preserving parks and squares; publishes publications on urban landscaping.
7. This will increase the involvement of the population at the municipal level and strengthen civil control over the activities of the mayor's office and municipal enterprises, improve the interaction of citizens with the city authorities. Joining OGP local will give the City Hall the opportunity to learn from other OGP local members and help shape a new culture of urban governance in the spirit of OGP. Such a culture will be created through the application of OGP best practices, which will increase the level of urban governance, since the citizens' expectations regarding the city hall services will be much higher in the future. Joining OGP local also imposes obligations on the mayor's office and international attention means that the Bishkek authorities could incur reputational costs if they fail. Effective budget allocation and transparency in management decisions will help improve the city's infrastructure and also attract foreign investment.
- In turn, the developed action plan will help implement ambitious reforms that will increase transparency, accountability and citizen participation.
8. To implement the OGP Local Plan, the Local City Hall will create a Supervisory Board with the participation of NGOs and the involved departments of the City Hall. The Mayor's Office will organize a transparent and understandable process of how NGOs can join this work. For organization of the work of the council, the experience of the Open Government at the national level will be used, so that all interested groups of citizens and NGOs would have a chance to participate in the formation and implementation of the OGP Local Plan
9. The City Hall declares that it is fully ready to participate in mutual learning and exchange of experience both within the cohort and with other local residents in their countries, as well as thematically correspond to other potential members of the cohort.

Mayor



Surakmatov A.