

# Independent Reporting Mechanism

IRM Guidelines for the  
Assessment of OGP's Minimum  
Requirements

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Open  
Government  
Partnership



Independent  
Reporting  
Mechanism

## IRM Guidelines for the Assessment of OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards' Minimum Requirements

The revised [OGP Participation and Co-creation Standards](#) include five standards regarding the expectation for government and civil society engagement during the OGP cycle. Each standard describes:

- its ambition: why the standard is important and what an ambitious application of the standard could look like,
- Its scope of application: at what point in the OGP action plan cycle the standard should be applied
- how it can be approached: ideas or good practices to support the application of the standard in a way that is flexible and can be adapted to different contexts, and
- the minimum requirements: clear and measurable minimum requirements that all OGP national members must meet under the standard.

Within the IRM's role as the accountability arm for OGP, the IRM will assess and report on countries' compliance with the minimum requirements for each standard. The IRM will also research and report back on how countries are working towards meeting the ambition of the standards, what practices they have used to apply the standards, strengths and challenges encountered in this process. However, these guidelines specifically outline how the IRM will assess and report on countries' compliance with the minimum requirements. They explain the key measures and evidence the IRM will consider to assess each minimum requirement.

To conduct the assessment, the IRM will take into consideration the following:

- According to the OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards, in order to be acting in accordance with OGP processes, all minimum requirements must be met at the appropriate moment in the action plan cycle, according to the scope of application of the standard. Therefore, from the IRM assessment, there are two possible determinations: either *'yes, the country meets the minimum requirement'* or *'no, the country fails to meet the minimum requirement.'*
- Governments are responsible for providing the necessary evidence to prove compliance with the minimum requirements. The IRM will conduct online desk research and review information available in country repositories and websites, as well as review documentation submitted by government and civil society stakeholders proactively or upon request. The IRM will also conduct interviews to collect views from different stakeholders involved in the OGP process. In the absence of documentation, the IRM will rely on these interviews to inform the assessment and complement findings.

The IRM will continue to include its findings on country compliance with the minimum requirements in respective country assessments. For more information about IRM products and processes, please visit the [OGP website](#) or the [IRM Process Pathway](#).

## Guidelines on IRM assessment of compliance with minimum requirements

The tables below explain what and how the IRM will assess each of the minimum requirements of all five standards. The first column lists the new OGP minimum requirements. The second column lists i) the key measures for the assessment of each minimum requirement and ii) the evidence that the IRM will require to determine whether a country met that key measure.

### Standard 1: Establishing a space for ongoing dialogue and collaboration between government, civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders

The scope of application of Standard 1 is throughout the OGP Process, therefore, the IRM will assess compliance with its minimum requirements once in the Action Plan Review and a second time in the Results Report.

Minimum requirements	What will the IRM assess?
<p>1.1 A space for ongoing dialogue with participation from both government and civil society members, and other non-governmental representatives as appropriate that meets regularly (at least every six months) is established. Its basic rules on participation are public.</p>	<p>The IRM will assess whether the country complied with the <b>three key measures</b> of the minimum requirement listed below throughout the action plan cycle. It will determine that the country is acting contrary to minimum requirement 1.1 if there is not sufficient evidence to prove compliance with all three measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Did a multistakeholder space for dialogue exist?</b> The IRM will assess whether a space existed for government and nongovernment stakeholders to participate in the OGP process during the development and implementation of the action plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM will search for evidence that demonstrates there is a space for multi stakeholder dialogue - whether in-person or virtual. Such evidence could include: an event calendar, meeting minutes and agendas, recordings, and pictures, invites and attendance lists, as well as supplementary documents and presentations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Did the space for dialogue meet at least every six months?</b> The IRM will assess whether stakeholders in the space for dialogue met at least every six months. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM will search for evidence that confirms the date of meetings. For example, meeting minutes or reports with time stamps, emails with meeting summaries clearly indicating what dates they were held, among other documents that provide information about the timing of the meetings.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Was the information on the space for dialogue publicly available?</b> At a minimum, the IRM will assess if</li> </ul>

	<p>there is publicly available information about its basic rules on participation. It could include a description of the space’s mandate, composition, or structure of the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM will search for public information with the basic rules for stakeholder participation in the space for dialogue. For example, it will search for the space’s current mandate, composition, and structure, (including MOUs, by-laws, directives, constitution documents, meeting minutes, decrees where a formal MSF body exists; where it does not, the IRM would search for information that indicates what is the space’s scope of work, who is part of the space and descriptions of how stakeholders can participate in the process).</li> </ul>
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**Standard 2: Providing open, accessible and timely information about activities and progress within a member’s participation in OGP.**

The scope of application of Standard 2 is throughout the OGP Process, therefore, the IRM will assess compliance with its minimum requirements once in the Action Plan Review and a second time in the Results Report.

Minimum requirements	What will the IRM assess?
<p>2.1 A public OGP website dedicated to the members’ participation in OGP is maintained.</p>	<p>The IRM will assess whether the country complied with two key measures of the minimum requirement listed below throughout the action plan cycle. It will determine that the country is acting contrary to minimum requirement 2.1 if there is not sufficient evidence to prove compliance with all measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Is there an accessible OGP website?</b> The IRM will assess whether there is a publicly accessible online platform dedicated to OGP activities in the country and that it does not have any barriers to entry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM will search and test the link to confirm its existence and that it has no barriers to access, such as requiring a password to enter or registration.</li> <li>○ The IRM is agnostic as to which is the platform being used, as long as it is online and accessible without barriers to access.</li> <li>○ Barriers to access include platforms that require registration or passwords to enter (like</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>facebook or intranets that require registration of any kind).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Is the website maintained?</b> The IRM will assess if the website or page is maintained and at a minimum contains the country’s latest action plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM is agnostic as to who maintains or owns the website or page. To assess whether it is maintained, the IRM will review the content of the website, to confirm if it includes, at a minimum, the country’s latest action plan.</li> <li>○ In cases where there is more than one public OGP website or it is unclear who owns or maintains the website or page, the IRM will conduct interviews to determine, based on the shared understanding among the main stakeholders, which is the relevant OGP website dedicated to the country’s participation in OGP.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>2.2 A publicly available document repository on the OGP online site which provides access to documents related to the OGP process, including, at a minimum, information and evidence of the co-creation process and of the implementation of commitments is maintained and regularly updated (at least twice a year).</p>	<p>The IRM will assess whether the country complied with the three key measures of the minimum requirement listed below. The IRM will determine that a country is acting contrary to minimum requirement 2.2 if there is not sufficient evidence to prove compliance with all measures throughout the action plan cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Is there a repository available online?</b> The IRM will assess whether there is a publicly available repository linked to the OGP website/page. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: A publicly available link to the repository accessible through the OGP website. There are no barriers to access such as a password or requirement to register.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Is the repository up to date?</b> The IRM will assess if the repository is updated at least twice a year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The repository includes documentation relevant to the last six months. In addition, the IRM will also verify the frequency of updates through interviews and online tools.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Is the information available related to the OGP cocreation process and implementation of commitments?</b> The IRM will assess if the documents available address all phases of the action plan cycle including co-creation, implementation, and assessment of the action plan being reviewed.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: At a minimum, the repository should include at least one piece of evidence related to the co-creation process and at least one piece of evidence related to the implementation of at least one commitment.</li> <li>○ ‘Evidence’ is defined as the available facts that justify statements or propositions, proving they are true or valid. In other words, conclusive information that, on its own, compels the reader to come to a certain conclusion. It includes primary sources or direct links to objective information that accounts for the status of completion of activities, commitments or milestones.</li> </ul>
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### Standard 3: Providing inclusive and informed opportunities for public participation during co-creation of the action plan

The scope of application of Standard 3 is during the development of the action plan, therefore, the IRM will assess compliance with its minimum requirements in the Action Plan Review.

Minimum requirements	What will the IRM assess?
<p>3.1 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF publishes on the OGP website/webpage the co-creation timeline and overview of the opportunities for stakeholders to participate at least two weeks before the start of the action plan development process.</p>	<p>The IRM will assess whether the country complied with two key measures of the minimum requirement listed below. It will determine that the country is acting contrary to minimum requirement 3.1 if there is not sufficient evidence to prove compliance with all measures during the development of the action plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Was the relevant information available?</b> The IRM will assess whether the country published on their OGP online platform the co-creation timeline and the overview of opportunities for stakeholders to participate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM will search the country’s OGP online platform for documents with information on the OGP co-creation timeline and the opportunities that will be available for stakeholders to participate. For example, this includes a calendar of events, a list of opportunities to participate in the process, a summary of mechanisms that will be used, news articles and/or online publications inviting stakeholders or citizens to participate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>in the development of the action plan, among others. The IRM will assess whether the information was easily accessible to stakeholders, explaining clearly how and when they could participate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Was the information made available two weeks before the start of the action plan development process?</b> The IRM will assess if the relevant information was made available to stakeholders at least two weeks before the start of the development process.</li> </ul>
<p>3.2 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF conducts outreach activities with stakeholders to raise awareness of the OGP and opportunities to get involved in the development of the action plan.</p>	<p>The IRM will assess whether the country complied with one key measure of the minimum requirement listed below. It will determine that the country is acting contrary to minimum requirement 3.2 if there is not sufficient evidence to prove compliance with this measure during the development of the action plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Did the MSF or government conduct outreach activities with stakeholders to raise awareness of the OGP process?</b> The IRM will assess if at least one outreach activity was carried out to provide information on OGP and opportunities to get involved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evidence: The IRM will look for evidence that at least one outreach activity took place in addition to publishing the co-creation timeline and overview of opportunities on the country's OGP online platform. Outreach activities could take different forms such as public events, webinars, twitter threads, emails to a network of civil society stakeholders or within the multi-stakeholder forum, communications via whatsapp groups, radio campaigns, etc. The IRM will look for evidence such as meeting minutes, attendance list, invitations and/or content program or agenda, press releases, blogs, social media outreach, among others.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3.3 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF develops a mechanism to gather inputs from a range of stakeholders during an</p>	<p>The IRM will assess whether the country complied with two key measures of the minimum requirement listed below. It will determine that the country is acting contrary to minimum requirement 3.3 if there is not sufficient evidence to prove compliance with all measures during the development of the action plan.</p>

appropriate period of time for the chosen mechanism.

- **Was there a mechanism in place to gather inputs from a range of stakeholders?** The IRM will assess if at least one mechanism was developed to collect inputs from a range of stakeholders.
  - Evidence: The IRM will review documentation and evidence of the mechanism used to gather input from stakeholders, for example, online consultation platforms, programs or agendas of in-person meetings, any documentation of the input received, etc. The IRM will search for evidence that verifies if the mechanism was designed to collect inputs from governmental stakeholders (e.g. government institutions, local governments or other branches of government) and non-governmental stakeholders (e.g. organized civil society, private sector, citizens, experts, academia). For example, the IRM will look at who had access to the mechanism, if there were specific invitations for particular groups, if the mechanism was designed to collect input from a specific sector, group/actors or the general public, etc.
- **Was the mechanism in place for an appropriate period of time?** The IRM will assess whether the mechanism was available for collecting input for an appropriate period of time.
  - Evidence: The IRM will search for documentation to identify the type of the mechanism put in place and will search for evidence that accounts to the length of time it was used for gathering input (reports on online or virtual consultation processes, meeting agendas or program overview of sessions to gather input, .
  - To assess if the period of time was appropriate for the chosen mechanism, the IRM will: first, conduct research on the existing participatory practices in the country as a primary source of evidence; second, conduct research on international best practices as reference; and third, collect feedback from stakeholders to complement findings.



**Standard 4: Providing a reasoned response and ensuring ongoing dialogue between government and civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders as appropriate during co-creation of the action plan.**

The scope of application of Standard 4 is during the development of the action plan, therefore, the IRM will assess compliance with its minimum requirements in the Action Plan Review.

Minimum requirements	What will the IRM assess?
<p>4.1 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, documents and reports back, or publishes written feedback to stakeholders on how their contributions were considered during the development of the action plan.</p>	<p>The IRM will assess whether the country complied with two key measures of the minimum requirement listed below. It will determine that the country is acting contrary to minimum requirement 4.1 if there is not sufficient evidence to prove compliance with all measures during the development of the action plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Were contributions from stakeholders documented?</b> The IRM will assess if there is documentation of stakeholder contributions or input related to development of the action plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM will search for documentation, such as a report, publication, blog, press release or other forms of communication to stakeholders that outlines the feedback stakeholders offered during development of the action plan. Stakeholder feedback would include proposals to add, change, or remove policy areas, commitments, or milestones in the action plan. Feedback could also include stakeholders’ comments on the ambition, scope, relevance, and specificity of commitments.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Did the MSF or government provide a reasoned response to stakeholders and did it happen during the development of the action plan?</b> The IRM will assess if the MSF or government reported back or published written feedback to stakeholders on how their contributions were considered. The IRM will also consider the timing in which the reasoned response was provided to assess if the minimum requirement was met. The reasoned response should be provided anytime before the action plan is published or sent to the OGP Support Unit for publication. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM will look for documentation that includes the MSF or government’s response to stakeholder</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>feedback, in particular how the feedback informed development of the action plan. For example, information on which stakeholder suggestions were adopted and why and which suggestions were not adopted and why. If the evidence is not published online, the IRM will seek evidence in the form of emails, meeting minutes, presentations, interviews, etc. that confirm that there was a response to stakeholder feedback provided during the development of the action plan.</p>
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**Standard 5: Providing inclusive and informed opportunities for ongoing dialogue and collaboration during implementation and monitoring of the action plan.**

The scope of application of Standard 5 is during the implementation of the action plan, therefore, the IRM will assess compliance with its minimum requirements in the Results Report.

Minimum requirements	What will the IRM assess?
<p>5.1 The MSF where established, or the government where there is no MSF, holds (at least) two meetings every year with civil society to present results on the implementation of the action plan and collect comments.</p>	<p>The IRM will assess whether the country complied with two key measures of the minimum requirement listed below. It will determine that the country is acting contrary to minimum requirement 5.1 if there is not sufficient evidence to prove compliance with all measures during the implementation of the action plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Did the government hold meetings with civil society stakeholders or the MSF meet during the implementation of the action plan?</b> The IRM will assess if the government held at least two meetings each year and included members of the civil society or if the MSF held two meetings each year . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evidence: The IRM will check the country’s OGP website, repository and evidence submitted proactively or upon request for meeting minutes, agendas, attendance lists, invitation emails to confirm if the meetings (e.g. MSF meetings) were held and if civil society was included.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Were results on the implementation of the action plan presented and the opportunity made for civil society to comment?</b> The IRM will assess if during each meeting information on the progress of commitment implementation was provided and if</li> </ul>

	<p>civil society was given the opportunity to provide comments on implementation progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Evidence: The IRM will search for documentation on the content of the meetings or mechanisms put in place to present results and collect contributions from civil society including associated presentations, recordings, pictures, reports, or a summary of comments received from civil society.</li></ul>
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