

Open Government Partnership

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20 December 2022

Alex Burghart MP
Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office
Government of the United Kingdom

Dear Minister Burghart,

As Chief Executive Officer of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), I would like to warmly congratulate you on your appointment as Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office, responsible for overseeing the United Kingdom's participation in OGP. This includes spearheading the United Kingdom's OGP National Action Plan (NAP), and driving the UK's leadership on open government internationally, not least through the UK's membership of the OGP Steering Committee.

As a founding member of OGP's Steering Committee, the UK Government has played an important international role in shaping OGP's strategic direction, providing peer support, and leading by example. Perhaps most notably the UK was one of the first countries in the world to implement a public Beneficial Ownership Register for companies in 2016 through its second and third OGP National Action Plans, after the Prime Minister announced the reform at the London OGP Summit in 2013. The UK is also the co-convenor of OGP's Beneficial Ownership Leadership Group.

Thank you for your letter of 29 November, reaffirming the UK Government's commitment to OGP and highlighting both recent and intended future measures to strengthen the UK's OGP process and address concerns raised by UK civil society. I would like to acknowledge and warmly welcome the positive engagement and progress in recent months, including by your predecessor Heather Wheeler MP and Cabinet Office officials. Steps such as the adoption of three additional NAP commitments in late August, following dialogue with civil society, and forward planning for regular meetings of the UK's Multi-Stakeholder Forum are particularly welcome.

Your letter was shared with members of the Criteria & Standards Sub-Committee and considered during their deliberations on the UK's OGP status at their meeting on 1 December. Following their meeting, the Criteria & Standards Sub-Committee have adopted the attached resolution in relation to the UK's OGP status.

The Support Unit remains at your team's disposal to provide the necessary support to further strengthen the UK's OGP process, successfully implement your 2021-2023 NAP and plan for the upcoming co-creation of the UK's sixth NAP with civil society, which is due for publication by the end of 2023.

Yours sincerely,



Sanjay Pradhan
Chief Executive Officer

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**Resolution of the Criteria & Standards Subcommittee
regarding the Participation Status of the United Kingdom in OGP
December 20, 2022**

The Criteria & Standards Subcommittee welcomes the United Kingdom's participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and recognizes the five action plans it has co-created since co-founding the OGP in 2011.

Furthermore, the C&S Subcommittee welcomes the commitment to open government and participation in the Partnership, and the efforts made by UK government and civil society actors to deliver the commitments in the UK's 2021-23 OGP Action Plan outlined in the [letter](#)¹ from Alex Burghart MP, Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office, dated November 29, 2022.

In February 2021, the UK was placed under Procedural Review due to acting contrary to process for two consecutive action plan cycles (failing to deliver its 2018-20 Action Plan on time; and failure to meet the minimum co-creation requirements in its 2019-21 Action Plan). In addition, the UK has failed to meet the minimum requirements in the co-creation of its 2021-23 Action Plan.

Considering that the government of the UK has now acted contrary to the OGP process for three consecutive action plan cycles as outlined above, and striving to maintain a consistent and fair approach to enforcing OGP requirements asked of all participating countries, **the Criteria & Standards Subcommittee hereby resolves to maintain the UK under Procedural Review** until the IRM concludes that it has met the minimum requirements in the implementation of the 2021-23 Action Plan, as assessed in the Results Report to be published within four months after completing implementation (Q1 2024). Furthermore, to prevent being recommended for inactivity to the full Steering Committee, the C&S Subcommittee asks the UK government to provide evidence of meeting the minimum requirements during implementation of the 2021-23 Action Plan by 30 June 2023.² Failure to do so would result in the C&S subcommittee automatically recommending the full Steering Committee to place the UK under inactive status.

The Subcommittee expresses its concern over the situation at hand and respectfully calls on the UK government, a founding member of OGP and current Steering Committee member, to strive to lead by example in its domestic OGP process (e.g., by going beyond the minimum requirements in the new Participation & Co-Creation Standards). The C&S Subcommittee stands ready to provide all the necessary support to resolve this situation as soon as possible.

Ends

¹ Letter from Alex Burghart MP, Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office to the OGP CEO (November 29, 2022):

https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/United-Kingdom_Update-Process-Response-to-Contrary-to-Process-Letter_20221129.pdf

² Under the 2017 version of the [Participation and Co-creation Standards](#) by which the UK will be assessed, in order to meet the minimum requirements the UK has to meet the International Association for Public Participation "inform" during implementation of the NAP as assessed by the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) and collect, publish and document a repository on the national OGP website/webpage in line with IRM guidance.