

## **IRM Quality Assurance Framework**

### **Summary of Session 6: Quality and consistency of assessing the minimum requirements of the OGP Participation and Co-creation Standards**

**July 23, 2025**

#### **In attendance**

- **IEP members:** Maha Jweied, Rocio Moreno, and Snježana Bokulić
- **IRM Staff:** Andreas Pavlou, Matthew Tramonti, and Mia Katan

#### **Summary**

The International Experts Panel (IEP) oversees the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) to safeguard its independence and to ensure consistent application of the IRM methodology and quality research standards in its products. In 2023, the IEP approved the Quality Assurance Framework, an essential tool for ensuring that the IRM assessments meet the highest standards of quality, due diligence, research, and controls to safeguard its objectivity, independence, and credibility.

The IEP held the sixth quality assurance session on July 23, 2025. During the 1.5-hour session, the IEP examined the quality and consistency of the IRM's assessments of the minimum requirements of OGP's Participation and Co-creation Standards. The IEP reviewed sample assessments of the compliance with the minimum requirements in six Action Plan Reviews (APRs) and six Results Reports (RRs). The IRM organized the samples in two groups: 1) reports where all the minimum requirements were assessed as met and 2) reports where at least one minimum requirement was assessed as not met. IRM staff considered regional diversity while selecting the samples from Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the Eastern Partnership.

#### **Discussion**

The IEP found that the IRM's assessments of the compliance with the minimum requirements and its guidance to researchers and staff were generally consistent. In cases where at least one of the minimum requirements was assessed as not met, the IEP found the justifications for these findings to be clear. They also found the tables in the APRs and RRs for the minimum requirements to be easy to follow. However, the IEP noted it was not always clear if the assessment of minimum requirement 1.1 was focusing on a formal space for dialogue or the quality of the dialogue. They also noted that some RRs included analytical information on co-creation processes that was not mentioned in the APRs because the APRs mostly focused on compliance with the minimum requirements.

The IEP considered the evidence in the reports to justify the IRM's findings as generally sufficient. However, they thought that the justification for a particular finding should be corroborated with evidence from multiple opinions and sources, rather than relying on a single non-governmental source. They also highlighted some instances where the IRM cited the information in the action plans as evidence, rather than original sources. The IEP mentioned that the IRM should provide

enough evidence (as available) for readers to independently corroborate the assessments, such as the dates and links to readouts for meetings of the multi-stakeholder forum.

The IEP noted some variations in the optional section in the APRs in Annex 2 under the table of the minimum requirements. Some provided recommendations, such as improving the next co-creation process, for maintaining dialogue with stakeholders during the implementation period, or for organizing the midterm refresh process for four-year action plans. Others included a summary of the country's co-creation process, or additional details that expanded on the information in the minimum requirements table.

### **Action points for improving the recommendations of assessments of minimum requirements**

- The IRM should avoid citing the action plans themselves as evidence when corroborating the information in them. For example, if an action plan states that a certain number of consultations took place, the IRM should cite the links to readouts for these meetings, rather than the action plan.
- When citing civil society interviews to support findings, the IRM should aim to cite multiple civil society opinions, where possible, not just one opinion.
- For minimum requirement 1.1 (space for dialogue), the IRM's guidance could clarify how to assess formal and informal bodies. This assessment should focus on the main oversight body for the OGP process, not just the dialogue that happens during co-creation and implementation.
- The IRM should use the optional section of the APRs to provide additional context for the co-creation process beyond the information in the minimum requirements table. For example, if a country was assessed as not meeting one or more of the minimum requirements during its co-creation process, this section could focus on the steps to meet these requirements for the next action plan. When assessing four-year action plans, the optional section could be used to inform the stakeholders about the rules for the midterm refresh process.

### **Moving forward**

The IRM will adopt the IEP's suggestions from this QA session in its guidance and training to researchers and external reviewers. IRM staff will also take these action points into account when reviewing and editing APRs and RRs. The IRM will explain to the IEP what changes it has implemented to its guidance and methodology for assessing the minimum requirements in APRs and RRs based on the recommendations from this QA session. The IEP will monitor the integration of recommendations.