



# Open Government Partnership Independent Reporting Mechanism

## Results Report: Ireland 2021-2023 Comments Received

### Comments Received from Victoria Ronke Gbafah, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (26 April 2024)

#### Introduction

Having reviewed the IRM report, DPENDR would like to reiterate the following points;

- A definition of early results and significant early results should be given up front to assist the reader's understanding. The timeframe of the plan also should be clearly stated upfront particularly as the plan ran mid-year to mid-year (31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 – 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023). The finalised National Action Plan was made available to the public (May 2022).
- All commitments were designed with accompanied milestones. Please see NAP3 (pgs:15-50) - [72cc35e8-f890-41fb-995f-388b2348a148.pdf](https://www.gov.ie/publication/72cc35e8-f890-41fb-995f-388b2348a148) (www.gov.ie) It has been acknowledged by OGP that the action plan had a high level of implementation, with four of the five commitments fully or substantially completed.
- The review of the strategic planning committees is part of a subset of actions listed under commitment 5. There were five actions listed under this commitment of which four have been completed. In our view, this would be considered as Commitment 5 being substantially completed.
- On 29th November 2021) Minister of State, Ossian Smyth opened the Round Table working meeting - gov - Open Government Round Table multi-stakeholder forum activity (www.gov.ie) demonstrating high level political support.
- Updates on commitments under the Third Open Government's Partnership National Action Plan 2021-2023 were given and spoken to by commitment holder at the majority of RT meetings. RT members were welcomed to question the updates as a means of holding the government departments to account and did so. Not all details of the discussions during the meeting are captured in the minutes however the meetings were an important mechanism for monitoring. This was a key component of our agenda. See meeting minutes - <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5a21f-open-government-round-table-multi-stakeholder-forum-activity-ongoing/>
- Since Section II is called implementation and early results, we suggest that in addition to highlighting one commitment which has early results there would be an

overview/reference to the fact that the other commitments were also implemented. Also it should be clarified here why this commitment (Commitment 3: Review of the operation of the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 Implementing Agency) was selected as being the one to demonstrate early results.

- The OGP Round Table's focus changed as the process went from co-creation, to implementation and review of NAP3 and NAP4. The members met on average every six weeks during 2023 with the co-chairs and Secretariat meeting in between each of the Round Table meetings on a regular basis. Convening the Round Table and its regular meetings was intended to build trust and good working relationships as well as well as advancing the work.
- Government Officials on the Round Table are all at Principal Officer (PO) level (Heads of Units), which is a high-level government representative in the Irish civil service. Furthermore, these PO's are directly responsible for the commitment areas within their Department.
- The review process was an open and collaborative one, taking in the views of a wide range of stakeholders with well over three thousand responses including the customer satisfaction survey results. Given the wide-ranging and complex nature of the issues that arose, including in the extensive consultation responses, a great deal of further detailed analysis was required to inform appropriate recommendations for improvements and this led to a longer timeline than initially anticipated.
- The Civic Forum is attended by representatives of both civic society organisations and public bodies from central and local government. It is a forum for dialogue on relevant matters between these and it is not designed to be a decision-making structure, or a substitute for sector-specific fora that do exist across several government policy domains. At the 2023 Civic Forum there were six case studies presented of joint policy working between the Community and Voluntary sector and government bodies – it is within structures such as these that strategic planning and policy design decisions are made, not at the national Civic Forum. Seventy representatives from all strands of the community and voluntary sector were invited to the 2023 event. (Invite list supplied to OGP). This list evidences that these invitees are not the 'usual suspects' as implied in the feedback. Representatives the three groups referenced above by OGP; LGBTQ+ communities, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities were invited to the Civic Forum.