**Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group**

**(DRAFT)**

**Fiscal Openness Accelerator project – Fiscal Transparency and Public Participation**

**IBP/GIFT Public Participation Pilot Project**

January 2020

These terms of reference will govern the organization and operation of the Advisory Group that will be integrated in each participant country, as part of the Public Participation Pilot Project funded by the US Department of State and OGP Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

**1. Integration of the Advisory Group (AG).**

The Advisory Group is composed of representatives of the Ministry of Finance (or equivalent) and representatives of Civil Society Organizations who work on issues related to budget analysis, public expenditure, income and taxes, public participation, accountability in the use of public resources, monitoring of public services, strengthening of civil society, and related issues. The AG will consist of a group made up of five to ten people, including at least two government representatives and three civil society representatives. The number of participants may be greater, but a relatively. IBP / GIFT will draw on their extensive network of civil society partners in the participant countries to make recommendations to the Ministries of Finance about civil society representatives that could be considered for membership. Inclusiveness and diversity are strongly advised for the integration of the AG.

**2. Objective of the Advisory Group.**

The Advisory Group will have the role of providing the Ministry of Finance (or equivalent) with feedback and recommendations on the selection, design and implementation of the participation mechanism to be adopted in each country.

**3. Functions of the Advisory Group.**

The Advisory Group will fulfil at least the following functions:

* Meet as frequently as needed, in-person and/or in remote meetings;
* Submit proposals and formulate recommendations, comments and suggestions;
* Create working groups to follow up on decisions and actions;
* Keep minutes of the meetings and decisions;
* Define additional functions as decided by the AG and,
* Maintain communication with IBP/GIFT, via the GIFT Network Director.

**4. Functions of government representatives:**

* Call for the meetings;
* Inform the Ministry of Finance about the recommendations, proposals and feedback from the AG;
* Provide information, explanations, documented responses and informed feedback to the members of the AG;
* Promote timely, objective, respectful and direct communication and coordination with the members of the AG.

**5. Functions of Civil Society Representatives in the Advisory Group.**

* Serve as a liaison between other civil society organizations interested in the public participation process in the budget process in their country;
* Carry the voice of CSOs that are interested in the project;
* Encourage timely, objective, respectful and direct communication and coordination with the members of the AG.

**6. Deadlines and Processes.**

The call to meetings of the AG will be made at least one week in advance, sending at the same time the proposed draft agenda. At the beginning of each meeting, a member of the AG will be appointed to formulate the corresponding minutes. After the meeting, once a first draft of the minutes has been sent to the rest of the members, the members of the AG will have five days to comment on them. If no comments are received within the indicated period, the minutes will be understood as approved. The approved minutes must be published on the portal established for such purpose.

**7. Requirements to Session.** For a meeting to be valid, there must be a quorum with the presence (physical or virtual, by remote means) of at least one government representative and two representatives of civil society.

**8. Decisions.** As a general rule, the AG will make its decisions by consensus.

**9. Observers.** The AG members can invite representatives of the civil society organizations, governments and international organizations who could contribute with relevant experience, as well as specialists. All guests will have the right to speak.