

Implementation of the Integrated Partnership Risk & Oversight Plan Status Report to the 22nd System Council Meeting

Issued: 21 May 2025

Purpose

This status report on the implementation of the Integrated Partnership Risk & Oversight Plan (ROP) is provided in accordance with the system Council's request at its June 2024 meeting for *"the Integrated Partnership Board (once appointed) to report on progress of the implementation of the [] Plan by the System as a whole and by individual Centers by the end of September 2024 and at each of its System Council meetings starting in December 2024."*

An update was presented to the System Council meeting in December 2024, and following a request from Funders, an interim status report was also issued to the System Council on 17 April 2025.

This report continues the format of that interim update, indicating the status, process and next steps for key deliverables, grouped by each assurance area. It also indicates the status of approvals for each item by each Center Board, IPB and the System Council.

Overall message

The ICI Committee delivered on its commitment to present all deliverables due for approval during the Q2 meetings. This represented a substantial package of Terms of Reference and policy documents, that are the culmination of collaborative work by staff and leadership across the Centers and System Organization and dialogue with the IPB-AFRC and Center AFRC Chairs to resolve some complex, technical matters.

Decision-making processes on one item – the Ethics & Business Conduct Escalation Framework – was paused and is undergoing further review at the date of issue of this document, following feedback received from the AOC. An update on the finalization of that document will be provided during the meeting session.

At the date of issue of this document, decision-making is ongoing during Center AFRC and Board meetings as part of the Q2 meetings cycle. The status of some approvals is therefore expected to change between the issue of this document and the date of the System Council's 22nd meeting – and an update will be provided during the meeting session.

Status of key deliverables by assurance area – at 21 May 2025

Details of deliverables extracted from the Analytical Framework (part of the approved ROP) – focusing on those due in Q1/Q2 2025

Assurance area	Deliverable	Status	Next steps	Approver(s)	Timing of approval(s)
Risk & Internal Controls (IC)	TOR for the Function	DELIVERED – APPROVALS IN PROGRESS		Center Boards and IPB through their AFRCs	Q2 2025 meetings (May/June)
Risk & Internal Controls	Recruitment of the Risk & Internal Controls Executive	HIRING PROCESS UNDERWAY Application deadline closed; search firm retained and interviewing candidates	Review of longlists by hiring panels; shortlisting and interviews during May-June	EMD on recommendation of hiring panel	End-Q2 2025
Risk & Internal Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Management & IC Framework Risk Management & IC Policy Risk Appetite Statement/Model 	DELIVERED – APPROVALS IN PROGRESS Approved by the IPB on the recommendation of the IPB-AFRC.		<p>Risk Management & IC Framework – by Center Boards, IPB and SC</p> <p>Risk Management & IC Policy – by Center Boards and IPB</p> <p>Risk Appetite Statement/Model – by IPB and SC; approval of Center-own appetite aligned to that of the Partnership</p>	Q2 2025 meetings (May/June)

Assurance area	Deliverable	Status	Next steps	Approver(s)	Timing of approval(s)
External Audit	Revised FG-3 (financial guideline 3) on external audits	DELIVERED – APPROVALS IN PROGRESS		Center Boards and IPB through their AFRCs	Q2 2025 meetings (May/June)
External Audit	Template letter of engagement for auditors	DELIVERED – APPROVALS IN PROGRESS		Center Boards and IPB through their AFRCs	Q2 2025 meetings (May/June)

Assurance area	Deliverable	Status	Next steps	Approver(s)	Timing of approval(s)
Internal Audit	TOR for the Function	DELIVERED – APPROVALS IN PROGRESS		Center Boards and IPB through their AFRCs	Q2 2025 meetings (May/June)
Internal Audit	Recruitment of the Internal Audit Executive	HIRING PROCESS UNDERWAY Application deadline closed; search firm retained and interviewing candidates	Review of longlists by hiring panels; shortlisting and interviews during May-June	IPB-AFRC on recommendation of hiring panel	End-Q2 2025

Assurance area	Deliverable	Status	Next steps	Approver(s)	Timing of approval(s)
Ethics & Business Conduct	TOR for the Function	DELIVERED – APPROVALS IN PROGRESS		Center Boards and IPB through their AFRCs	Q2 2025 meetings (May/June)
Ethics & Business Conduct	Recruitment of the EBC Executive	HIRING PROCESS UNDERWAY Application deadline closed; search firm retained and interviewing candidates	Review of longlists by hiring panels; shortlisting and interviews during May-June	IPB-AFRC on recommendation of hiring panel	End-Q2 2025
Ethics & Business Conduct	Revisions to 4 key Ethics Policies	DELIVERED – APPROVALS IN PROGRESS	Subject to approvals, to take effect on approval of the Escalation Framework (see below)	Center Boards; IPB; System Council	Q2 2025 meetings (May/June)
Ethics & Business Conduct	Escalation Framework	DELIVERED – UNDERGOING REVISION Delivered on schedule and recommended by IPB-AFRC however the AOC's feedback was that the document was not acceptable in current form and feedback had not been adequately addressed.	Discussion among AFRC Chairs held on Monday 19 May on how to address AOC comments At date of issue, revised draft shared with AOC and submitted for approval as soon as possible.	Center Boards; IPB; System Council	As soon as possible – anticipated late-June 2025

	TOR - Risk & Internal Controls Function	Risk Management & IC Framework	Risk Management & IC Policy	Risk Appetite Statement/ Model	Revised FG-3 (external audit guidelines)	Template Letter of Engagement for auditors	TOR – Internal Audit Function	TOR – EBC Function	4 Ethics Policies	EBC Escalation Framework	
System Council	N/A – approval by IPB/Centers	On SC22 agenda	N/A – approval by IPB/Centers	On SC22 agenda	N/A – approval by IPB/Centers	N/A – approval by IPB/Centers	N/A – approval by IPB/Centers	N/A – approval by IPB/Centers	On SC22 agenda	See document for status details	
IPB-AFRC	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Endorsed	Approved	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended		
IPB	Concurred	Concurred	Approved	Concurred	Approval authority with IPB-AFRC	Approval authority with IPB-AFRC	Approved	Approved	Approved		
AfricaRice	All documents submitted to Center AFRCs and Boards for decision making during meetings that are ongoing at the date of issue of this document or will take place in the coming few weeks. A status update on approvals already made by the time the SC meetings on 4-5 June 2025 will be provided during the meeting.										
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