

ALLIANCE



# PATHFINDER COUNTRY ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

The Alliance 8.7 Accountability Framework (AF) aims at strengthening the accountability around the Alliance 8.7 pathfinder country mechanism to ensure its effectiveness and credibility. It helps provide guidance on what it means to be a Pathfinder Country (PFC) and the expectations and responsibilities that come with it.

## WHO ARE PATHFINDER COUNTRIES?

Pathfinder countries are those that commit to going further and faster to achieve the objectives of Target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals. They are committed to accelerating efforts and willing to try new approaches from which others can learn to support Target 8.7's urgent deadlines. PFCs have committed to do more, and the pathfinder status is open to any ILO member state, regardless of development level. Only governments can apply to become a PFC, **whole-of-government** approach and through a **mutli-stakeholder** consultation, with **social dialogue** as its cornerstone.

## WHY DO WE NEED PATHFINDER COUNTRIES?

UN member states set an ambitious agenda in adopting SDG Target 8.7, which calls for ending child labour in all its forms by 2025 and eradicating forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking by 2030.

Despite progress made over the last two decades, Target 8.7 will not be met at the current pace of action. It requires urgent efforts to accelerate action and a number of countries have indicated they are ready to do much more. By highlighting the commitment of these countries and helping them to succeed, Alliance 8.7 can spur other countries to act.

## WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AN ACTIVE PATHFINDER COUNTRY?

Participation in Alliance 8.7 as a pathfinder country is an opportunity to:

- Gain development and economic benefits that come from reduced child labour, forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking
- Harness new resources and engagement through demonstrated willingness to act. This may include support from the GCG and others to link PFCs to resource mobilization efforts
- Leverage reputational benefits, including with global business actors that come from implementing applicable international standards and being a leader in the field.
- Coordinate technical support and assistance between all partners operating in a PFC

- Showcase progress and successful interventions (e.g., Alliance 8.7 website, high-level events, others)
- Benefit from access to knowledge and expertise (e.g., Pathfinder Countries Thematic Dialogue series, peer to peer learning events, Pathfinder Countries Annual Workshop)
- Serve as a catalyst and model for other countries to accelerate progress worldwide.

## HOW TO BECOME A PATHFINDER COUNTRY AND WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

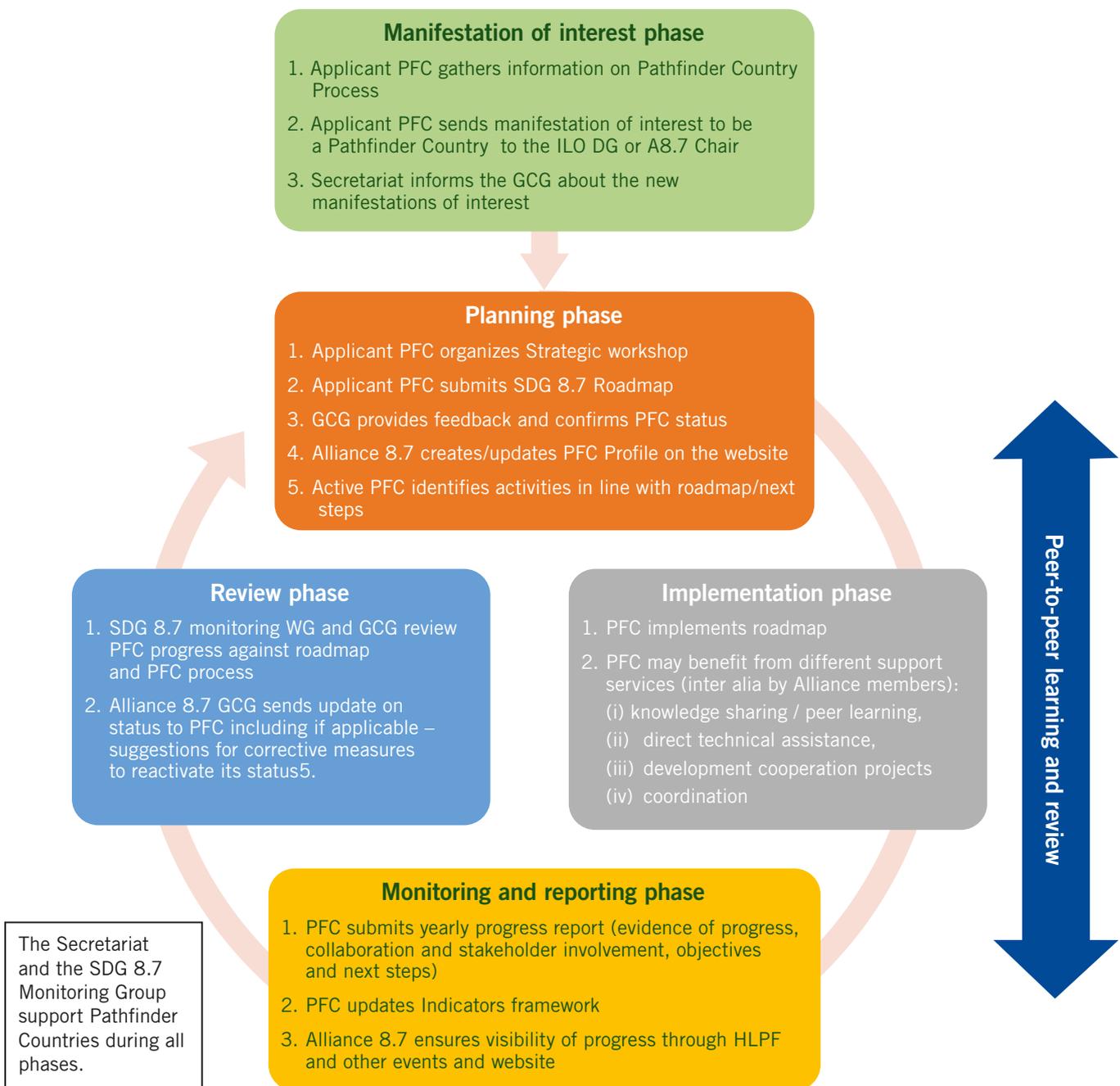
As presented in the figure below, the Process is divided in different phases. All countries start as Applicants in the Manifestation of Interest Phase. To become a PFC, countries need to fulfil the criteria outlined below. From there, countries become active Pathfinder Countries after approval by the by the Global Coordinating Group (GCG) of the Alliance 8.7. Active PFCs enter a cycle (PFC cycle) starting with the Planning phase, followed by the Implementation Phase, the Monitoring and Reporting Phase and the Review phase. All phases should involve social dialogue with the most representative employers and workers organizations at the national level, and consultation with other relevant stakeholders including civil society organizations.

The Alliance 8.7 members and partners stand ready to provide support to Pathfinder countries, for example through technical assistance and exchange of experiences with other countries.

## WHY DO WE NEED AN ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK?

The overarching goal of this Accountability Framework (AF) is to strengthen the status and integrity of the Pathfinder Country community by establishing clear standards and expectations for coordination with partners, to make tangible changes on the ground. This document was drafted and led by the SDG 8.7 Monitoring Working Group based on an initiative of one of its members, namely Free the Slaves. It also integrates comments by Pathfinder Countries, GCG and revisions by the Alliance 8.7 Secretariat and the ILO for submission to the Workshop that will take place in December 2022.

The Secretariat and the SDG 8.7 Monitoring WG are available to support the Pathfinder Countries in administering all phases of the Accountability Framework. However, support for the implementation of the accountability framework (and PFC Roadmaps) may be provided by all partners.



## Manifestation of interest phase

During this phase applicant pathfinder countries explore what it means to be a pathfinder country, what implications would be for them and start working on the deliverables required to be part of pathfinder country community.

**Applicant Pathfinder Country gathers information on the Alliance 8.7 and the Pathfinder Country community:** The purpose here is for the applicant country to develop an understanding of the goals of the Pathfinder country community (such as accelerating progress, sharing knowledge, fostering innovation, scaling up), the procedural processes, obtaining all the necessary information pertaining to the Alliance 8.7 as a whole (background, goals, process, advantages, structure, etc.), and start a dialogue and consultations with relevant stakeholders in the country. The

Secretariat can facilitate exchanges with existing Pathfinder Countries to have first-hand information on what it means to be Pathfinder Country.

**The applicant Pathfinder Country sends an official request to become a Pathfinder Country to the ILO Director General:** In order to launch the process officially, the Pathfinder Country applicant through a responsible government minister is expected to send a manifestation of interest addressed to the Director General of the ILO or the Chair of the Alliance. In this letter, the applicant country should nominate a focal point as well as a deputy focal point to lead the Pathfinder Country process and for all communications with the Alliance 8.7. The Alliance 8.7 Secretariat informs the Global Coordination Group (GCG) of the applicant country's expression of interest.

**The Secretariat sends a response letter inviting the country to start consultations and the organization of a strategic planning workshop in a whole-of-government approach, among all concerned stakeholders, including relevant government organizations, social partners, civil society organizations and business representatives.** The outcome of this workshop is a roadmap that includes national priorities for achieving SDG target 8.7. The applicant Pathfinder Country plans a timeframe for consultations and development of the roadmap and informs the Alliance 8.7 Secretariat accordingly.

**The applicant Pathfinder Country identifies key stakeholders (which may include a mapping) and existing coordination mechanisms in the country or considers creating new (e.g., committees, task force, roundtables, country coordination group):** The country identifies relevant stakeholders and their engagement and coordination mechanisms including, among others, government representatives, worker and employer organizations, UN agencies including ILO, survivors and survivor networks, CSOs, private sector actors, academia development partners. During this process, a mapping of Alliance 8.7 partners can be done to engage partners and show their interest and commitment to supporting Pathfinder Countries.

Where available, it is expected to coordinate with or use existing national committees or boards that work on the issue (e.g., national child labour, forced labour and human trafficking committees). It is expected that the country has at least one coordination body as they are considered key for organising the strategic planning workshop and for monitoring the implementation of the roadmap. These coordination bodies should also be consulted during the reporting cycle by providing input particularly regarding the stakeholder engagement.

**Together with relevant stakeholders, the applicant Pathfinder Country initiates a situational mapping on the status of SDG 8.7 in the country:** The initial information gathering involves a review of the existing research on Child Labour (CL)/ Forced Labour (FL) / Human Trafficking (HT), of the legal and policy framework (legislation, policies such as operating procedures, referral mechanisms and interventions with a bearing on CL/FL/HT), and gaps in these areas. Existing sources of information

## Planning Phase

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In this phase the country develops a roadmap as a result of the strategic planning workshop and takes the necessary steps for implementation. Active Pathfinder Countries (see page 8f) that already have a roadmap can update and review their roadmaps.

**Applicant Pathfinder Country organises the Strategic Planning Workshop(s):** To obtain Pathfinder Country status, the applicant country is expected to organise at least one strategic planning workshop. The strategic workshop(s) is/are a means of consultation and coordination. Depending on the country circumstances, it can be organized as a single event or in several meetings / workshops. These consultations should include all relevant stakeholders identified in the previous phase.

The Workshop should take into consideration existing institutional set ups such as task forces and existing projects and programs as well as existing National Action Plans in the realm of SDG 8.7, namely, child labour, forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking. It should also be linked to existing regional and domestic initiatives where a process to reach SDG 8.7 already exists. Importantly, the workshop includes an inventory or stock taking phase where the applicant country assesses its current status and efforts in respect to target 8.7. It is also an opportunity to promote the ratification and working towards the full and effective implementation of recognized international human rights standards and obligations, including applicable international labour standards.

This is a critical moment in the Pathfinder Country process as it establishes the buy-in of all stakeholders involved in the process. The main deliverable of the strategic workshop(s) is the Pathfinder Country's Roadmap.

There may be cases where PFC candidate countries already have National Action Plans on Child Labour and/or Forced Labour. A PFC candidate may organize a review of these plans to determine if they are sufficient to meet the requirements of an Alliance 8.7 Roadmap (e.g., cover both forced and child labour, establish clear benchmarks and indicators aligned with the PFC indicator framework) and make any adjustments necessary. They may choose to submit these plans for consideration of the GCG in lieu of creating a new Roadmap.

**Applicant Pathfinder Country submits its Roadmap:** The Roadmap presents the priority areas for intervention based on the areas identified during the Strategic Planning Workshop(s) under the scope of SDG Target 8.7, namely, child labour, forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking. It develops the actions to be undertaken to reach the priorities, highlighting the immediate next steps to be implemented for the current year. The roadmap should also identify areas where technical support is needed for achievement of priorities and provide a preliminary timeline for implementation. The roadmap ideally includes also benchmarks and indicators (linked to the PFC indicator

framework) and a budget, including confirmation on resources that have already been secured (human and financial) and gaps with any information on steps to ensure roadmap activities are fully funded.

**Applicant Pathfinder Country is invited to submit and present the main priorities of their roadmap and the consultation process to build the roadmap to the GCG during one of its regular meetings:** The GCG provides feedback and suggestions (e.g., linking it to the findings of the Committee of Experts (CEACR) reports and the implementation of the Durban Call to Action). It is expected that the applicant PFC will respond to the suggestions by the GCG and if applicable addresses the points raised.

**If the applicant fulfils all requirements, the GCG grants pathfinder country status and the applicant country becomes a Pathfinder Country.** PFC status is granted if the GCG agrees by consensus to do so. Consequently, the Alliance 8.7 Secretariat creates a country profile on the website. If all conditions are not met, the Alliance will dialogue with the country to provide the necessary support to accelerate progress.

**An active Pathfinder Country (see page 8f) identifies activities in line with their roadmap priorities as well as next steps identified during the last reporting cycle.** An active Pathfinder Country has furthermore the chance to update their roadmap during this phase. During this phase, the Alliance 8.7 Secretariat updates the country profile on the website.

## **Implementation phase**

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While countries build upon their hitherto engagements and continue implementing throughout all phases, the implementation phase officially commences after the GCG grants the PFC status. During this phase, Pathfinder Countries focus on the implementation of the roadmap. Pathfinder Countries may benefit from the support from other Pathfinder Countries, Alliance members, the SDG Monitoring Working Group and other stakeholders; however, implementation is the main responsibility of the Pathfinder Country itself.

In some cases, Alliance 8.7 partners may be able to provide the following support to Pathfinder Countries :

- I. Knowledge sharing / peer learning;
- II. Direct technical assistance;
- III. Development cooperation projects;
- IV. Coordination

## **Monitoring and Reporting phase**

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Monitoring and Reporting is an integral part of the PFC process. All Pathfinder Countries are expected to take part of in the annual Pathfinder Country reporting cycle. Every year, the Pathfinder Country submits an annual progress report and updates the

indicator framework. The Alliance 8.7 Secretariat ensures that the reporting duties for Pathfinder Countries are manageable, and the SDG 8.7 Monitoring Working Group stands ready in case support is needed.

Pathfinder Country takes part in the annual monitoring and reporting cycle coordinated by the SDG 8.7 Monitoring Working Group:

- In consultations with relevant stakeholders through the coordination mechanism in place (e.g., country task force/ 8.7 coordination committee), PFC submits the annual progress report and updates the PFC Indicator Framework following the dedicated template created for this purpose and by the deadline (currently by end of April). The report allows PFCs to report progress against their roadmap objectives, highlight obstacles in implementation, and if applicable express interest in learning about experiences of other countries in specific areas that could potentially be facilitated by the Secretariat.
- The SDG 8.7 Monitoring Group reviews the progress reports and indicator frameworks and provides feedback. The Pathfinder Country is then asked to revise and finalize the reports.
- Alliance 8.7 ensures visibility of progress through the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) annual side event of the Alliance 8.7, as well as through other events and the Alliance 8.7 website. Final Reports and indicator frameworks are uploaded on the Alliance 8.7 website to showcase progress and commitment of Pathfinder Countries.

## Review phase

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SDG 8.7 Monitoring WG and GCG review PFC progress against the roadmap and their activities as an active PFC in the past 12 months. To this end, the SDG 8.7 Monitoring Working Group under the leadership of the GCG can form a specific sub-group that has the task of reviewing the progress reports and reports back to the GCG.

The SDG 8.7 Monitoring Working Group pays particular attention to the evidence of progress provided by the Pathfinder Country as well as the level of stakeholder involvement in the implementation and the monitoring and reporting processes. Both areas are critical to determining how progress has been made and what has really worked, and to making the PFC process truly inclusive.

**Evidence of progress:** This includes formal evaluation processes such as surveys, case studies, focus group discussions and interviews but also information types of evidence such as anecdotal evidence or information from third parties.

The SDG 8.7 Monitoring Working Group provides guidance to the PFCs on how to improve the evidence of progress and stakeholder involvement.

**Stakeholder involvement:** Stakeholder involvement is key to reach SDG 8.7. Pathfinder Countries are encouraged to collaborate closely with different stakeholders both domestically (such as ministries, employers, workers, employers, NGOs, survivors) and internationally (such as IOs, regional initiatives, other countries).

#### **Review Process Details:**

After each reporting cycle, the SDG 8.7 Monitoring Group reports to the GCG. Each Pathfinder Country receives a yearly update on its status by the Alliance 8.7 GCG. To be considered as 'Active', Pathfinder countries are expected to follow through on their commitments and present evidence of progress on their roadmaps as a Pathfinder Country. This also includes being an active part of the Pathfinder Country community and fulfilling their monitoring and reporting requirements.

The following items or a combination thereof are considered as indications of insufficient or no progress:

- PFC did not submit any progress report for two consecutive years
- PFC did not address SDG 8.7 Monitoring Working Group comments in the progress report (i.e., no finalized report) for two consecutive years
- PFC did not submit or update the PFC indicator framework for two consecutive years
- PFC did not provide evidence of progress against the roadmap for two consecutive years
- PFC did not provide proof of collaborative efforts to reach priorities for two consecutive years

The SDG 8.7 Monitoring Working Group flags any critical indication of little or no progress to the GCG to start a dialogue with some of the PFCs to understand if support/technical assistance is needed and to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and sharing of experiences.

#### **Process in case there is insufficient or no progress of a specific pathfinder country**

**Dialogues** – The GCG is ready to support and hold dialogues with countries that have not shown progress. These dialogues can address one or both of the following issues:

1. Compliance with PFC process that includes the strategic planning workshop with a multi-stakeholder and a whole of government approach, the development of a roadmap, submission of progress reports and updated indicator framework.
2. Progress against the roadmap priorities and towards achieving SDG target 8.7. The dialogue on progress does not serve as a monitoring system, but as a discussion on how partners and PFCs can improve coordination for support, guidance and exchange. In addition, the progress dialogue can help to identify progress that has not yet been reported.

In these dialogues, special circumstances (e.g., political, economic, humanitarian) shall be taken into consideration.

The dialogues provide guidance on the way forward, i.e., whether a country needs for example support to advance with its commitments or needs to adjust its roadmap.

When relevant the Alliance 8.7 GCG offers collaboration and assistance to identify and address the challenges the PFC is facing to fulfill its commitments. For this purpose, the GCG may establish a special sub-group, similar to the sub-group for reviewing the reports, responsible for steering the support mechanism and providing the requested support. The Alliance will work closely with these countries to provide support including facilitating peer-to-peer learning and knowledge/experience sharing until the country is ready to reactivate the process.

If the pathfinder country's progress is considered insufficient and the process of Dialogues and assistance from the Alliance does not lead to a positive result, the GCG informs the country that it acquires the status of an inactive pathfinder country.

Benefits of being a pathfinder country listed in the introduction (p.1) are put on hold for inactive PFCs until the country reactivates the process.

#### **Process to reactivate PFC status**

A PFC can reactivate its PFC status at any time by communicating to the Secretariat and presenting evidence of corrective measures being planned or taken and that the normal obligations that PFC have are upheld, including:

- I. submission of progress report
- II. submission or update of indicator framework
- III. evidence of progress against the roadmap
- IV. proof of collaborative efforts to reach priorities

## PATHFINDER COUNTRY STATUSES

There are three different statuses for a Pathfinder Country: 1) Applicant Pathfinder Country, 2) Active Pathfinder Country and 3) Inactive Pathfinder Country.

**1. Applicant Pathfinder countries** are those that are in the manifestation of interest phase, where they explore what it means to become a PFC, an official manifestation of interest is submitted and the first steps towards becoming a PFC are undertaken (see manifestation of interest phase).

**2. Active Pathfinder countries** demonstrate commitment to implement meaningful efforts, undertake innovative actions, and share good practices to accelerate progress in tackling Target 8.7. Pathfinder countries commit to taking :

- Adopting, implementing or enhancing national action plans or policies, including strengthened legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, covering the topics enshrined in Target 8.7, as relevant: forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour. National action plans or policies should be adopted/implemented in consultations with social partners at country level as per the principles of social dialogue and the standards on forced and child labour;
- Translating public commitments into concrete actions;
- Providing support needed to facilitate accelerated action in another country;
- Being an active part of the Pathfinder Country community and take part in the yearly reporting activities; and
- Promoting the ratification and working towards the full and effective implementation of recognized international human rights standards and obligations, including applicable international labour standards.

Examples of achievements of pathfinder countries to date are:

- **Fiji:** Development of a Paperless Labour Inspection application to strengthen the capacity and efficiency of Fiji's Labour inspectorate to carry out and follow up on inspections for the detection of Forced Labour (see here)
- **Madagascar:** The National Human Trafficking Database System is operational and reports every 6 months to SADC (see here)
- **Netherlands:** Establishment of Interdepartmental Working Group on the Elimination of Child Labour (see here)
- **Nepal:** Establishment of own Alliance 8.7 Secretariat at the Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security (see here)
- **Chile and Peru:** Ratification of Protocol 29 of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930

**3. Inactive Pathfinder countries** are countries that were considered inactive by the GCG (see review phase). The Alliance 8.7 stands ready to support countries that are inactive in order to reactivate the Pathfinder Country status by providing technical assistance or facilitating exchange of experiences with other countries. Access to the benefits mentioned above provided by the Alliance 8.7 are put on hold while a country is Inactive. If a country decides to reactivate its Pathfinder Country status, it needs to inform the GCG on its intention by sending a letter to the Chair of the Alliance. In this letter, the country should inform changes in the roadmap if any.