



**COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF ELGEYOMARAKWET
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

All correspondence to be
Addressed to: County Secretary

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Your Ref:

DATE: 29TH FEBRUARY 2016.

Our Ref: EMC/ADM/22/5

THE STEERING COMMITTEE
OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP (OGP)
SUBNATIONAL PILOT PROGRAM

**RE: APPLICATION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM FOR
SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS**

This is in response to your call for proposals for your new pilot program on Open Government Partnership (OGP) for sub national governments. Having pursued transparency and citizens' participation and involvement in development processes since March 2013 when devolved governance was operationalized, we have identified successes and good practices that need to be sustained and replicated. However, we have also encountered bottlenecks and challenges whose solutions inevitably require new partnerships with innovative approaches.

Consequently, and in line with your selection criteria, I hereby submit our proposal for our County (Sub national Government) for possible consideration as one of the ten sub national governments to be chosen for the pilot program. Our County Government meets the minimum population criteria and our National Government is a current OGP Participant.

Enclosed herewith is our expression of interest for the partnership as per the required submission criteria.

Sincerely,

H.E. ENG. ALEX T. GICHEM
GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR
ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY
P. O. Box 220 - 30700
ITEN

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM FOR SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS PROPOSAL SUBMISSION BY ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY GOVERNMENT AS A SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENT

a) Kenya's Governance Framework

One of the most significant changes in Kenya's new Constitution enacted in 2010 was the creation of a two tier governance system; a National Government and forty-seven County Governments whose functions are provided for in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution. The creation of the County Government structure as a subnational or devolved governance approach was based on principles of democracy, revenue reliability, gender equity, accountability and citizen participation. Article 174 of The Constitution highlights key objectives of devolved governance, among them, promoting social and economic development and the provision of proximate, easily accessible services; ensure equitable sharing of national and local resources throughout Kenya; facilitate the decentralization of state organs, their functions and services.

Elgeyo Marakwet County is one of the County Governments created under this system and whose mandate commenced immediately after Kenya's General Elections in March 2013 which resulted in the election of the County Governor as the political leader to deliver on the desired goals and aspirations of the residents of the county.

b) Elgeyo Marakwet County (Subnational Government) Profile

Elgeyo Marakwet County covers a total area of 3029.9 KM² with a population of 370,712 people (National Population and Housing Census, 2009). The inter-census population growth rate for the county is 2.7 percent per annum. Administratively, the county is divided into Sub-counties, Wards, Locations and Sub-locations. Politically, the county is divided into four Constituencies and twenty Wards.

The County Government Act, 2012 obligates counties to develop County Integrated Development Plans (CIDP) aligned to the objectives of devolution provided for in Chapter 11(174) (c) of The Constitution of Kenya which gives powers of self-governance to the people and enhances the participation of the people in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them. It provides a framework for identifying development priorities in all sectors. The CIDP was developed through an all-inclusive and participatory approach specifically through ward-level fora, county level, diaspora professionals' forums in Eldoret town and Nairobi city. In sustaining good practices out of these citizen involvement approaches, the county has cultivated a good public engagement platform through public fora and creation of feedback mechanisms.

c) Commitment to the open government principles

My Government commits to the Open Government Principles articulated in the Open Government Declaration as this builds on our own model of openness that we have been pursuing since assuming office in March 2013.

d) Commitments by The Governor (Political Leader) and Staff

Article 10 of the Constitution of Kenya prescribes national values and principles of governance towards commitment and dedication to efficient service delivery within the context of cooperation, collaborations and inclusive participation.

In line with the above provisions and in striving to deliver services in an open, participatory, efficient and effective manner, I **Eng. Alex Tolgos**, Governor Elgeyo Marakwet County, commit my Government in allocating time and required staff expertise in developing and implementing approaches and commitments contained in the Open Government Partnership pilot program.

My technical staff and I also commit to work closely with the Civil Society in promoting openness and complementary approaches in development processes and in developing relevant action plans and specific reform commitments towards open government.

e) Demonstration of track record for open government

Principles of transparency and an accountable, responsive government are embedded in the Constitution and the County Government Act which guide the operations of the county governments. Creating a more open government requires a sustained commitment by public officials and employees at all levels of government; it also requires an informed and engaged citizenry. Cognizant of the need for open governance; the county leadership has made various strides to making government operations more efficient through engagement of residents in development through the following strategies;

Participatory Policymaking

The Government has instituted the following citizen engagement measures: -

- The office of the governor has set Tuesdays as public consultations day so as to get the feedback and input of members of the public on service delivery thus giving the county an impetus for continued improvement.
- Establishment of county communication platforms that allow citizens to give their opinions, ask questions and get feedback from the Government. These platforms include the county websites (www.elgeyomarakwet.go.ke, www.emca.or.ke and www.elgeyomarakwetcpsb.org) and email addresses for all county entities. There are also social media platforms (Facebook: County government of Elgeyo Marakwet, Twitter: ElgeyoMarakwetC) that gives opportunities for communications and feedbacks
- The county government enacted Public Participation Act 2012 which obligates all county government entities to subject policies and bills to public hearings across wards and incorporate public input.
- Formulation and approval of County Government budgets through a participatory approach; the county subjects all budgetary processes to public hearings at the ward level.
- Establishment of county dialogue days between Government and the people to discuss progress of projects and service delivery. During these days all county entities report their progress and strategic intentions to the public while allowing them to field questions and give their suggestions.

Accountability and Integrity

Integrity and accountability are a prerequisite to and underpin public trust as a keystone of good governance. To this end, the County Government has instituted the following key accountability and integrity measures: -

- Introduction of Client Service Charters for county entities aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability in public service delivery. The Charters specify the services and goods that the clients are expected to receive, clients' rights and obligations and the feedback mechanisms available to enable the entities monitor and evaluate their performance.
- The county is in the process of establishing County Integrity & Ethics Committee and designating Integrity officers in all county entities to ensure adherence to ethical behavior and professional standards at work places. The committee will occasionally conduct impromptu integrity tests aimed at encouraging the observance of the County's Code of Ethics / Code of Conduct.

Budget and Fiscal Transparency

In line with the Constitution and the relevant legal instruments, the county has instituted the following budget and fiscal transparency measures:

- Establishment and operationalization of the County Budget & Economic Forum (CBEF) whose membership is drawn from amongst others; People Living with Disabilities, sectoral interest groups, professionals, Labour unions, Women organizations, civil society, youth and representation from other segments of the society. CBEF serves as the primary entity for ensuring public participation in public financial management. It is integral to the County government's strategy of improved accountability and public participation at the county level.
- Strengthening of the Internal Audit function; the county will appoint an audit committee in accordance with the financial management regulations so as to enhance adherence to fiscal policies and ensure discipline
- The county has rigorously implemented Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) to manage public expenditure in accordance with approved budgets.
- The county provides all pertinent financial information during budget making processes including the resource envelope, the county sectoral priorities, the costs of executing departmental mandates and the proposed ceilings to promote financial transparency to the public. In order to simplify the budget information, the county with the technical assistance of International Budget Partnerships (IBP) and Kerio Center civil society group is developing a succinct budget public presentation template.

Access to Information

The backbone of a transparent and accountable government is access to information by citizens and the non-state actors. Information promotes openness and accountability mechanisms, in lieu of this, the county has established mechanisms that provide citizens and public officials with channels for accessing official government information including publication of progress reports, publication of budget information and development plans through the official county newsletter, website, information desks at the sub counties and wards and through official pronouncement during open days.

f) Expression of interest in receiving support from OGP

Given the resource and capacity gaps experienced in the last three years in the delivery of service, the County has recognized the need for continued support through partnerships and collaborations. To this end, the county has instituted partner support mechanisms that eases the entry and sustained partner engagement.

Some of the most recent initiatives undertaken by the county government in collaboration with other development partners which attests to the county's commitment to open governance support include;

- i. Engagement with the World Bank on performance capacity matrix model geared towards enhancing efficient service delivery through capacity building on; Public finance management, progress tracking, Civic education and public participation.
- ii. Championing of social intelligence reporting by duty bearers and rights holders. This empowers the local communities together with government agencies to find local solutions to issues affecting communities.

The foregoing examples together with the already established collaborative framework and the county government's commitment to strengthening accountability to its people, calls for further engagement with supportive partners which will further entrench the intentions and aspirations of devolution and open governance. The County Government therefore expresses interest to be considered in the Open Government Partnership pilot program.

g) Experience of working with local civil society

The county continues to work with the civil society on transparency and accountability in its operations and is committed to sustain engagement with Civil Society Organizations as exemplified by the following current engagements.

- Engagement with International Budget Partnership (IBP) and Kerio Centre on budgetary accountability, public engagement in equitable resource allocation and fiscal discipline
- Partnership between the county and Kenya Water and Health Organization (KWAHO) on the human rights approach in improving access to clean water and safe environment
- Governance programme supported by GIZ which brings together the county government and Civil Society groups and the public on fiscal prudence, budgetary transparency and procurement openness in tendering, training of procurement and finance staff and suppliers and contractors on public procurement processes.
- The county engages Civil Society Organizations on reduction of harmful cultural practices and obstacles which include FGM, drug abuse, illicit brewing and early marriages.
- Engagement with IBP and Kerio Center in adopting inter-county budget processes best practices through relevant technocrats' practitioners caucus

h) Willingness to share experience and insights with peers

The county will lay a framework for sharing experiences relating to successes, bottlenecks and lessons learnt with similar entities through benchmarking initiatives and open door policy. In

addition, given that the county subscribes to an inter-county budget practitioners caucus, sharing experiences and consequently replicating best practices will be adopted.

i) Pursuance for formal mentorship role with another Subnational Government

Our county commits to pursue formal mentorship role with other Subnational Governments if we are successful in this application. As proof to this commitment, our county currently mentors itself with other County Governments in Kenya within the auspices of the North Rift Economic Bloc (NOREB) which brings together eight counties within the North Rift region of Kenya on leveraging on the economic potential and best governance practices.