



COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF ELGEYO MARAKWET

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SELECTION OUTCOME

PRESS RELEASE

APRIL 2016

The County Government Act, 2012 along with the Public Financial Management Act, 2012 provides for preparation of County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) which must be aligned to the Vision 2030 and Medium Term Plans. In compliance with these legal provisions, the county government in 2013 prepared its first CIDP (2013-2017) to provide a framework for coordinated development and synergized development partnerships and collaborations.

The financial cost of implementing development priorities agreed and contained in the CIDP amounts to Kshs. 7.5 billion annually, meaning that the county has an aggregate deficit of Kshs. 6.3 billion annually given that our county development vote is allocated an annual average allocation of Kshs 1.2 billion from the national government transfers and local revenue. This deficit was intentioned to be financed externally through grants, partnerships and collaborations. To actualize these external financing avenues, we as a county initiated an ambitious strategy of reaching out to potential partners as well as strengthening our governance related operations for efficiency and effectiveness in development processes. Although governance related financing are not physical in nature, its ultimate effect leads to reduction of costs and increases operational efficiency in provision of services and intended development interventions.

Consequently, our county has been looking for innovative approaches to good governance which would eventually lead to a more participatory and inclusive development process. Out of these efforts, early this year our county came across a call for expression of Interest for “Open Government Partnership (OGP) Pilot Program” which promotes transparency, accountability and citizens’ participation in development process through a set of agreed commitments over a period of time. Subsequently, we developed a proposal for consideration by the OGP’s Steering Committee. After being subjected through a rigorous selection process, I am very delighted today to report that in spite of stiff global competition, our county was selected as one of the 15 subnational

governments globally to be part of the prestigious pilot program chosen from a strong pool of over 40 applicants. The stiff competition meant that our county was the only subnational (County/Local) Government selected for this program in Kenya.

This program will further open up the already existing development partnership framework in addition to providing a platform for sharing of experiences on best service delivery practices while entrenching openness, accountability and responsiveness to our citizenry as a requisite for more significant partner engagements in all spheres of county development. In addition, the commitments and appraisal processes contained in this program will serve as proof of our county's willingness to adhere to best governance practices and thus attract more partnerships for development.

OGP is currently a 69 country partnership aiming to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. Being part of the subnational government pilot program will mean our county needs to work with civil society organizations to develop specific commitments to open government, which we will be held accountable for by OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM). Our county will also become part of a broader network of subnational governments, civil society organizations, academics, and others, who are passionate about improving the culture of government and see OGP as a route to do this.

Our selection as part of this pilot program is testament to our commitment to open governance since assuming office in March 2013. However, since then we have also recognized that we have so much more to do. We were therefore excited to apply for this pilot program opportunity because OGP has been a place for open government reform and innovation over the last four years and it is clear that subnational governments have so much to contribute to this network of reformers within a peer review framework. I will use this opportunity to challenge ourselves to be as ambitious and open as possible, and I believe we will benefit from the knowledge and expertise that OGP can offer. I look forward to the next few months, as we begin the process of developing specific commitments and inviting people to participate and share ideas.

Thank you and may God bless our county always.

H.E Eng. Alex Tolgos
Governor, Elgeyo Marakwet County