ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP (OGP) ACTION PLAN

JANUARY 2017 – DECEMBER 2017

SUBMITTED

NOVEMBER 2016

I. Introduction to Elgeyo Marakwet

Elgeyo Marakwet County is one of the County Governments in Kenya created under the new two tier governance system created by the Constitution enacted in 2010. The County Government commenced its operations provided for in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution 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.

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 covers a total area of 3,029.9 KM^2 with the Highlands constituting 49% of the county area, while the Escarpment and the Kerio Valley zones occupy 11% and 40% respectively. According to National Population and Housing Census 2009, the county has a population of 370,712 with an average 2.7% per annum growth rate. Also, 52.7% of residents live below the poverty line, compared to the national average of 46%. However, at the county's escarpment and the valley areas, the poverty levels are as high as 67% of the population.

The creation of the County Government structure was based on principles of democracy, revenue reliability, gender equity, accountability and citizen participation stipulated in Kenya's 2010 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 and an informed 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 strategies including: enactment of the Public Participation Act 2012 which obligates all county government entities to subject policies, bills, plans and budgets to public hearings across wards and to incorporate public input and establishment of county communication platforms that allow citizens to give their opinions, ask questions and get feedback from the Government.

The county has put in place mechanisms that provide citizens with channels for accessing official government information including publication of governance interventions and project implementation progress reports, 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. Providing information to and getting feedback from citizens has helped the government l ensure that development initiatives can meet their needs, and that development progress improves the lives of all county citizens.

II. County Open Government Efforts to Date

Since its inauguration in March 2013, Elgeyo Marakwet County has been looking to adopt innovative approaches to good governance to inspire and fully operationalize the participatory and inclusive development practices that it had instituted through legislation. In early 2016, the county came across a call for expression of Interest for "Open Government Partnership (OGP) Pilot Program for Sub-National Government".

The county quickly recognized the alignment of OGP's key principles of transparency, accountability and citizen participation with many of the county's aspirations. The county therefore developed a proposal for consideration by the OGP's Steering Committee to operationalize their open government vision. After being subjected through a rigorous selection process and in spite of stiff global competition, the county was selected as one of the 15 subnational governments globally—and the only subnational government in Kenya—to be part of the pilot program.

The County was selected mainly on the strength of its on-going strategies to advance open government principles courtesy of the existing public participation mechanisms, established citizen feedback platforms and publication of necessary government information for ease of access by citizens. Despite this being Elgeyo Marakwet county government's first Action Plan, the government now seeks to deepen open government practices, and in close collaboration with civil society organizations, (CSOs), who were key partners in the development of this action plan.

The areas of interest prioritized in this first Action Plan include enhancing the transparency of government county budgeting processes; improving the transparency and accessibility of project contracting and implementation information; developing rapid responses channels to improve the accountability of public services; and strengthening the county's processes for public participation.

These plans are in addition to what the National Government agencies have envisaged for counties through Kenya's OGP National Action Plan (NAP) submitted in July 2016. Four of the eight commitments in the NAP have implications for county governments. Specifically, two require county governments to initiate new projects or activities to enhance transparency in the legislative processes (Commitment 3) and to improve citizen access to government budget information and more inclusive structures for public participation (Commitment 7). Additionally, two other national commitments require the participation of county governments.

III. Action Plan Development Process

After learning of its selection into the OGP subnational pilot program, in July 2016, Elgeyo Marakwet established a County OGP Steering Committee. The Committee was comprised of representatives from relevant government bodies and offices (e.g. Finance & Economic Planning, Public Participation) and from civil society (both the endorsing CSO and organizations that represented an array of citizens and interests, including youth, women, and the private sector). The Steering Committee began discussing which open government opportunities it should pursue through its OGP action plan.

In August, Elgeyo Marakwet began working with Reboot, a consulting and implementing organization with strong open government experience, to determine how it could use the OGP opportunity to support its development ambitions and improve the lives of its citizens.

On August 12, 2016, a day-long workshop of government staff and civil society representatives was held by the County government, facilitated by Reboot. Participants discussed Elgeyo Marakwet's interests in joining the OGP and shared ideas on the County's key interests for its OGP commitments.

The county then examining citizen needs that could be addressed through open government reforms, and government bodies and processes that could both drive and sustain these reforms.

In terms of citizen needs, the county conducted design research with citizens, consulted with civil society and community-based organizations, and surfaced needs through public meetings held in all 20 wards where citizen expressed their priorities for government investment, as part of the county's annual development planning (ADP) process. The timing of the ADP coincided with the OGP action plan development process, allowing the county to take advantage of the synergies in timing. This helped ensure the commitments respond to pressing citizen needs and priorities.

In terms of identifying supportive government bodies and processes, the county worked to map opportunities for and barriers to open government within the administration (both executive and legislative), to identify ways through which open government programming could be mainstreamed into current processes and longer-term priorities. The county also examined existing open government initiatives that could be strengthened or institutionalized, to deliver greater results for citizens. Identifying institutional mechanisms to support open government would help ensure the impact and sustainability of reforms being proposed.

Through this process, four areas emerged at the intersection of citizen needs and government capacities: i) more responsive public services, particularly for emergency citizen needs; ii) improved transparency on budgeting processes; iii) improved accountability of public agencies and private contractors for project implementation; and iv) stronger and clearer mechanisms for citizen

participation in development processes. These areas formed the basis of the commitments in this action plan.

Once the four commitment areas were identified, the county developed working teams for each, comprised of members of government and civil society with experience in each topic. To develop ambitious, impactful, and feasible commitments, the teams conducted in-depth interviews with citizens, community groups, and civil society to understand the types of outputs that would most benefit them.

The teams also consulted and held workshops with the relevant government bodies responsible for each area to secure their buy-in for the opportunity and to develop their ownership of the proposed workplan. The interactions were also a chance to ensure that proposed plans were feasible based on existing capacities and work processes within the relevant government bodies. The teams also examined current and past work that had been done in relevant areas, to ensure that lessons from previous initiatives were integrated into the development of the commitments and action plan. And beyond the technical and administrative bodies, county OGP working teams also consulted with leaders of the executive and legislative branches to ensure their buy-in and support.

Finally, for relevant commitments, the teams designed and prototyped tools, frameworks, and work processes that would support each commitment or set of reforms, and tested them with citizens, civil society, and relevant government officials, to get feedback on how to make them more useful and easy-to-use. The commitments were then refined to make them more impactful and feasible, and the final versions are included in this document.

IV. Elgeyo Marakwet OGP Commitments

Commitment 1:

Improve the effectiveness of citizen engagement in local governance, by identifying and scaling successful approaches to public participation

In Elgeyo Marakwet, more than 70% of the County's development budget is allocated directly through public participation exercises. Public participation, therefore, plays an important role at various level of Elgeyo Marakwet's County governance and decision-making processes. For the County's leadership, the integration of citizen "voice" into governance implies an engagement that moves beyond consultation to more direct influence over spending and policy decisions.

Since Elgeyo Marakwet's inception in 2013, the County government has expanded the role of public participation in local governance beyond the requirements defined in Kenya's Constitution through the development and adoption of county-level legislation such as the Equitable Development Act and Public Participation Act. However, despite the adoption of progressive legislature, the County is yet to establish formal guidelines that inform their execution and documentation. Not only has this led to significant variation in how public consultations are conducted by County representatives, it is also leading to suboptimal outcomes in the quality of deliberations held with the public and the resultant decision-making that take place.

These shortcomings, if not addressed, can have negative consequences on near and long-term development outcomes for the County. Given the County's experiences integrating public participation across a wide range of decision-making levels, Elgeyo Marakwet has an opportunity to develop a robust set of frameworks, guidelines, and templates to support effective public participation in local governance.

It is within this context that this commitment seeks to develop these guidelines and regulations through the establishment of a mechanism for institutionalizing successful public participation approaches. This will include a process to identify, test and incorporate unique and successful methods of engaging the citizens productively and representatively through targeted interventions and the enactment and operationalization of regulations and guidelines based on the lessons learned.

Commitment 1: Improve the effectiveness of citizen engagement in local governance, by identifying and scaling successful approaches to public participation

I. What is the commitment and why is it important?	
In order to improve the development outcomes and the effectiveness of citizen engagement, how can the County integrate and scale up successful approaches to public participation?	**Framing Question / Prompt**
To establish a mechanism for scaling up successful approaches to public participation in the County development and governance processes	**Main Objective** *What does this commitment seek to achieve? How will it advance transparency, participation, and/or accountability? Be concrete and specific.*
To create a mechanism to identify, test and incorporate successful approaches for public participation into County development and Governance processes	**Brief Description** *Briefly summarize how this commitment will achieve the objective stated above. (Up to 140 characters)*
A lack of proper guidelines for effective planning and implementation of public participation is leading to sub-optimal development outcomes for citizens and the County Government which they hold accountable For example, the current process for public participation, while successful in attracting significant numbers of citizens, has not achieved the desired diversity in participation among special interest groups, such as youth, women and disabled, or in geographic attendance with discussions dominated by those with the least distance to travel. Furthermore, the processes have not allowed for the integration of technical guidance into public deliberations	**Status Quo or Issue / Problem to be Addressed** *What is the issue or challenge that this commitment will address? Describe the barriers to open government that it will tackle.*
High ● *Public Participation guides the allocation of more than 70% of the County's development (capital) budget.* ● *Due to the impact that the public participation process has on the development direction of the County, its execution is highly contested by stakeholders across the County*	**Level of Ambition** *How ambitious is this commitment—limited, moderate, or high—in terms of expected change in government transparency, citizen participation, and/or public sector accountability? Explain why this level of ambition was selected, based on political, operational, resource, timeline, and other*

Government and the public sphere.	*considerations.*
Moderate ● *While the commitment impacts public participation processes that are highly contested, with potential implications for policy and legislature, the initial interventions to be prioritized in the OGP commitment were identified by multiple stakeholders across the County Government.* ● *Furthermore, the OGP Commitment activities will be implemented initially as a pilot in partner locations, with recommendations for County-wide adoption to be crafted based on findings.* ● *This scaled approach to engagement and implementation will allow the Steering Committee to better manage the resource and stakeholder dependencies that could negatively impact the implementation of the commitment.*	**Level of Feasibility** *How feasible is this commitment—limited, moderate, or high—in terms of implementation in the next 1 year? Consider political, operational, resource, timeline, and other considerations.*

II. How will this commitment be implemented?

Office of Public Participation	**Lead Implementing Agency** *Which government agency will be responsible for implementing this commitment?*
Name: RICHARD KILIMO **Title, Department: DEPUTY DIRICTOR, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** **Email**: kilimoruto@gmail.com **Phone**: +254723479057	**Responsible Person** *Who from the implementing agency is responsible for ensuring the successful implementation of this commitment?*
***This OGP Commitment focuses on public participation activities related to the County's Annual Budgeting Process. Pilot activities will include County-wide and ward specific interventions* Government: To support targeted interventions, review their results and and make recommendations for policy and legal amendments based on the outcomes. The stakeholders responsible include ● Directorate of Economic Planning ● Department of Finance ● Ward Administrators ● County Government Departments	**Other Actors Involved** *What additional partners and actors will be involved in commitment implementation? What will be their specific roles?* *Note which actors will have a formal partnership with the Lead Agency (e.g. in the form of a memorandum of understanding, contract, or other mechanism) and which will be informal collaborators.*

Civil Society: To support the execution of target interventions and participate in the development of public participation recommendations for consideration by the County Executive and Assembly. These CSOs includes-

● Kerio Center
● Network of Civil Society Organizations

International Partners:

● International Budget Partnership
● World Bank

Activities & Milestones

What activities will be implemented to make progress toward the commitment? For each activity, indicate: i) expected start / end date ii) responsible actor / partner iii) a verifiable and measurable milestone—to be completed by the activity end date—to demonstrate progress toward the commitment.

Key Milestone	Responsible Actor	End Date	Start Date	Activity
Convene First Meeting of Technical Working Group	*Department of Economic Planning*	*Feb 2017*	*Jan 2017*	*Establish Public Participation Technical Working Group*
Draft Public Participation Guidelines & Regulations	*Public Participation Technical Working Group*	*Jun 2017*	*Feb 2017*	*Technical Working Group to review develop draft Public Participation Guidelines to inform pilot intervention activities*
Community Priority List	*Ward Administrators*	*Sept 2017*	*July 2017*	*Identification of Community Priorities through Sub-Ward Engagement for the Annual Development Plan Public Participation Consultations*
Review Community Priority Lists by County Technical Departments to develop budgets & project proposals for Community Review	*Department of Economic Planning*	*Sept 2017*	*Jul 2017*	*Review of Community Priorities by County Technical Departments*

Revised Public Participation guidelines and recommendations. Recommendations developed for County Government	*Public Participation Technical Working Group*	*Dec 2017*	*Oct 2017*	*Review Public Participation Pilot Activities and revise guidelines and regulations based on results from pilot interventions*

III. What will change as a result of the commitment?	
The realization of this commitment will greatly benefit the citizens and government through the continuous improvement of citizen engagement processes	**Target Beneficiaries** *Who will benefit from the realization of this commitment, and how? Consider the range of stakeholders that may benefit: citizens, their representatives, civil society, government, and others.*
Guidelines and Regulations for Public Participation in the Annual Development Plan Process *More equitable representation by all regions and segments of the population in public participation processes*	**Target Outputs** *What are immediate artifacts or results (e.g. policies, products, services, tools, processes, etc) that will be produced from the activities above? Describe the tangible outputs that will result from this work.*
The participatory process of decision making will translate into: efficiency, equity, good governance and sustainability in the planning and management of the county affairs.	**Target Outcomes** *What are the medium-term results or effects that are expected from work on this commitment? Describe how Target Outcomes will impact the Target Beneficiaries described above.*
The implementation of this commitment will enable the county to adopt citizen participation best practices and document lessons learnt for continuous improvement.	**Forward Outlook** *Looking forward, describe how the County may wish to build upon this commitment to make greater progress toward open government.*

IV. How does the commitment contribute to OGP's mission and vision?	
Meaningful participation increases the citizenry's receptiveness of Government decision-making, improves citizens' knowledge and awareness of complex policy challenges, helps decision-makers to make better decisions that in turn improves the quality of public	**OGP Challenge Addressed by the Commitment** *Which of OGP's grand challenge(s) does the commitment address, and how?* *i) Improving public services*

services being provided by the government and enhance public integrity. Public participation is particularly important because a significant portion (more than 70%) of the County's development budget is influenced by public participation.	*ii) Increasing public integrity* *iii) More effectively managing public resources* *iv) Creating safer communities* *v) Increasing corporate accountability* *[Optional] Is the commitment doing anything particularly creative or innovative to address these challenges?*
Public participation engagement gives citizens a platform to access government information and express their view on the development programmes both at the sectoral level and ward level which are very crucial in county development. Citizens best understand their community needs and engaging them in the development process can help the County ensure its programmes and their implementation are relevant to the communities they are appointed to serve.	**OGP Relevance** *Briefly describe the way(s) in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of* *i) access to information* *ii) public accountability* *iii) civic participation* *iv) technology and innovation for openness and accountability*

Commitment 2:

Improve citizen awareness of and input into county spending decisions, by publishing and seeking citizen feedback on budget formulation

The 2010 Constitution and the Public Finance Management Act mandate that the County budget formulation process is transparent with citizen participation mandated at various phases of the annual activity. In striving to institutionalize the legal provisions into its governance processes, Elgeyo Marakwet County has implemented a variety of initiatives to improve the dissemination and accessibility of budget information to the public.

These initiatives have included public participation forums, the creation of physical and digital channels for submitting citizen memoranda submissions and the periodic publication of draft and approved budget documents for citizens. Furthermore, in executing many of these initiatives, the County has engaged non-state actors and civil society organizations to provide additional capacity to engage local stakeholders and translate the technical documentation for key audiences.

However, notwithstanding these initiatives, citizens' participation in the budget formulation process continues to be hindered by a variety of challenges. These challenges have ranged from citizen challenges understanding technical aspects of budget documents to the under- and over-budgeting of budget allocations for communicating projects. In either scenario, challenges such as these often lead to the non-achievement of the intended development interventions or creates an opportunities for wastage and corruption.

The County has identified a number of initiatives that it believes can improve citizen participation in the budget process to address the aforementioned challenges. These include the integration of relevant Sector Working Groups to provide technical guidance, the creation of updated projects reference costs guides, the preparation of simplified budget templates for citizens' pre-budget and post-preparation forums.

Commitment 2: Improve citizen awareness of and input into county spending decisions, by publishing and seeking citizen feedback on budget formulation	
I. What is the commitment and why is it important?	
How can the county support more informed citizenry through improved access and usage of information throughout budget management processes?	**Framing Question / Prompt**
To enhance financial management accountability and citizen participation in budget management processes by simplifying and disseminating budget related documents for prompt feedback and citizen oversight	**Main Objective** *What does this commitment seek to achieve? How will it advance transparency, participation, and/or accountability? Be concrete and specific.*
By enabling citizens to engage and give quality and appropriate feedback on budget making by designing, developing, and publishing simplified and succinct templates that are easily understood and accessible while institutionalizing sector interest forums with citizen representation	**Brief Description** *Briefly summarize how this commitment will achieve the objective stated above. (Up to 140 characters)*
Since its inauguration in March 2013, Elgeyo Marakwet county has adhered to the publication timelines and citizen consultation requirements defined in County and National laws and regulations. However, these practices have led to complex and voluminous budget documents which citizens have found difficult to interpret. These technical barriers are further complicated by the limited integration of technical expertise into the budget formulation process to support citizen deliberations.	**Status Quo or Issue / Problem to be Addressed** *What is the issue or challenge that this commitment will address? Describe the barriers to open government that it will tackle.*
High The citizen goodwill already exist because of the institutionalization of the Equitable Development Act, 2015 (EDA) in the budget making and implementation processes Sector Working Groups for budget preparation processes is provided for in the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 (PFM) but has never been activated. As a result, this Law offers a springing board for the commitment implementation. Existing dissemination channels for notice at the Ward level are already operating in some wards There are contestations by both the County Executive and County Assembly for the appointment of citizens for Ward Development committees	**Level of Ambition** *How ambitious is this commitment—limited, moderate, or high—in terms of expected change in government transparency, citizen participation, and/or public sector accountability? Explain why this level of ambition was selected, based on political, operational, resource, timeline, and other considerations.*

High As the county has already institutionalized stakeholder participation in the budget preparation process, the key challenges within this commitment are related to the operationalization of the proposed initiatives.	**Level of Feasibility** *How feasible is this commitment—limited, moderate, or high—in terms of implementation in the next 1 year? Consider political, operational, resource, timeline, and other considerations.*

II. How will this commitment be implemented?

Economic Planning Directorate	**Lead Implementing Agency** *Which government agency will be responsible for implementing this commitment?*
Name: John Maritim **Title, Department: Director Economic Planning** **Email**: jomaritim@gmail.com **Phone**: +254722425863	**Responsible Person** *Who from the implementing agency is responsible for ensuring the successful implementation of this commitment?*
Government: Improvement of budget preparation, inclusivity, dissemination and feedback processes for informed budgets decision making Civil Society: Creation of accessible platforms for engagement with the government on budgetary decisions	**Other Actors Involved** *What additional partners and actors will be involved in commitment implementation? What will be their specific roles?* *Note which actors will have a formal partnership with the Lead Agency (e.g. in the form of an memorandum of understanding, contract, or other mechanism) and which will be informal collaborators*

Activities & Milestones
What activities will be implemented to make progress toward the commitment? For each activity, indicate:
i) expected start / end date ii) responsible actor / partner iii) a verifiable and measurable milestone—to be completed by the activity end date—to demonstrate progress toward the commitment.

Key Milestone	Responsible Actor	End Date	Start Date	Activity
Functional Sector Working Groups	Economic Planning Directorate	Oct 2017	Jun 2017	Constitute a Sector Working Groups SWG) to be engaging all relevant stakeholders in the budgetary process to improve budget management processes
Developed Projects cost reference list	Director Public Works	Dec 2017	Jan 2017	Prepare an updated Projects cost Reference list to guide citizens when prioritizing projects
Simplified budget templates	Economic Planning Department	Jun 2017	Feb 2017	Design and prepare simplified budget templates for citizens pre-budget and post-preparation forums
Simplified Budget	Director Budget	Dec 2017	Jan	Disseminate simplified budget

				2017	documents using the website, emails, notice boards and public forums
Templates					

III. What will change as a result of the commitment?

Government: Department of Finance, Directorate of Public Works. To facilitate the preparation of budget related documents and technical design documents including projects reference costs respectively. **Civil Society:** Kerio Center and County CSO's Network. To create awareness on the budget process and disseminate budget related documents to the public through the CSOs network and channels **Members of the public:** Participate in public budgetary processes exercises and offer feedback for improving public delivery services **International Partners:** International Budget Partnership (IBP). To guide on the best practices and emerging approaches in budgetary processes	**Target Beneficiaries** *Who will benefit from the realization of this commitment, and how? Consider the range of stakeholders that may benefit: citizens, their representatives, civil society, government, and others.*
▪ Simplified budget documents ▪ Accessible budget documents at the lowest administrative level ▪ Constituted Sector Working Groups	**Target Outputs** *What are immediate artifacts or results (e.g. policies, products, services, tools, processes, etc) that will be produced from the activities above? Describe the tangible outputs that will result from this work.*
▪ Increased citizen participation in budget management processes because of the increased confidence ▪ Establishment of a citizen feedback culture to be demanding responsibility from the government ▪ Institutionalization of budget decisions in governance and administrative chores	**Target Outcomes** *What are the medium-term results or effects that are expected from work on this commitment? Describe how Target Outcomes will impact the Target Beneficiaries described above.* *For citizens, describe how this commitment will affect their lives. For other beneficiaries, describe how the outcomes will affect their ability to improve citizen well-being and/or advance open government.*
Building on the outcomes of the Commitment activities, the County Government will seek to build on this commitment by including it in the county Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and in the Citizen Service Delivery Charters	**Forward Outlook** *Looking forward, describe how the County may wish to build upon this commitment to make greater progress toward open government. Beyond the 1 year OGP pilot, how can the County leverage the expected outcomes for further impact?*

IV. How does the commitment contribute to OGP's mission and vision?	
Delivery of public services in an efficient and effective manner is dependent on acceptable and inclusive resource allocation processes of which this commitment seeks to champion. The accessibility of budgets through participation and feedback mechanisms opens up governance processes and thus leads to public integrity. Corporate accountability is enhanced by this commitment because of it opens up governance processes	**OGP Challenge Addressed by the Commitment** *Which of OGP's grand challenge(s) does the commitment address, and how?* *i) Improving public services* *ii) Increasing public integrity* *iii) More effectively managing public resources* *iv) Creating safer communities* *v) Increasing corporate accountability* *[Optional] Is the commitment doing anything particularly creative or innovative to address these challenges?*
Accessible and simplified budgets are essential to holding governments accountable for the effective use of public resources. Transparent disclosure of timely, accurate and understandable fiscal information to citizens empowers them to oversee how resources are managed and increases the likelihood that resources will be used efficiently. If budgets are simple and accessible to the public and to legislative scrutiny, there is less room for deviation from policy decisions and reversal of budget allocations. Simple and accessible budgets are also a powerful disincentive for officials to misappropriate funds, reducing the likelihood of corruption	**OGP Relevance** *Briefly describe the way(s) in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of* *i) access to information* *ii) public accountability* *iii) civic participation* *iv) technology and innovation for openness and accountability*

Commitment 3:

Improve the transparency & accountability of public projects in priority sectors, by publishing project contracting and implementation information

Elgeyo Marakwet's enactment of the Public Participation Act 2014 and Equitable Development Act, 2015 institutionalized public involvement in decision making and fair distribution of resources among smaller administrative units, and has created an appetite among citizens to demand that other key areas of governance—specifically, including contracting processes—also support citizen monitoring and participation While the County seeks to continue empowering and engaging citizens and civil society in development processes—as evidenced through its establishment of citizen voice platforms such as the County Budget Economic Forum and Community Project Management Committees—a lack of access to relevant information constrains the ability of these actors to execute their mandates.

The County therefore seeks to open up key pieces of information to increase public sector transparency, improve government effectiveness and enhance the quality of citizen participation. Government, civil society, and citizens have identified unmet information needs that prevent these outcomes from being realized. These needs ranged from contract information for public projects to Quarterly Budget Implementation Reports. In most cases, these documents are already produced by government, but are not publicly published or accessible.

To enable informed public discourse and productive engagement with the public, Elgeyo Marakwet seeks to embrace open contracting progressively. Specifically, it seeks to publish and make easily accessible project procurement and implementation documents that can help citizens better understand and monitor the County's development spending. These include; Bills of Quantities, tender advertisement documents, bids submission, analysis and award documents, contract documents, progress technical documents, completion certificates and hand-over documents .

The government has already designed and prepared some of these documents whose importance in decision making processes cannot be underestimated, but whose lack of publishing may allow corrupt practices in projects management to go unchecked. Strengthening access to necessary information increases contracting disclosures, leads to a common access point for all information requests, and establishes common open data standards amongst the responsible officials. By fragmenting and publishing data the government is builds foundations for open data that would spur informed decision making for government, citizens other development actors. The county seeks to begin this process in road spending, a priority identified by citizens and civil society. Once the county has defined and implemented a successful process through its OGP action plan implementation, it will seek to expand to other priority sectors.

Together with enacted legislation, these reforms will help empower ordinary citizens to be more informed about and participate in critical governance decisions in the County.

Commitment 3: Improve the transparency & accountability of public projects in priority sectors, by publishing project contracting and implementation information	
I. What is the commitment and why is it important?	
As a citizen, how can I help ensure that public funds are being spent, and that funded projects are being executed, in ways that respect the public interest?	**Framing Question / Prompt**
To ensure the that County infrastructure spending is fiscally responsible and responsive to citizen needs, by empowering greater citizen monitoring of such spending.	**Main Objective** *What does this commitment seek to achieve? How will it advance transparency, participation, and/or accountability? Be concrete and specific.*
The government seeks to make public and easily accessible relevant project design and management information related to roads, with a focus on those relating to the project identification, contracting and implementation monitoring processes. It will also seek to standardize project design and reporting documents across County departments to facilitate more robust analysis by both the government and the public.	**Brief Description** *Briefly summarize how this commitment will achieve the objective stated above. (Up to 140 characters)*
Legislations to create resource allocation frameworks, public participation mechanisms and institutional delivery units have been enacted with the overall goal of instituting openness and accountability in our governance process. These have helped advance equity in resources allocation and institutional accountability in project management. However, this progress has not been supported by appropriate informational tools, processes and systems useful for citizen analysis and feedback on projects design, contracting and implementation. Armed with these tools, citizens (and civil society actors) can help track projects implementation progress and report unethical resources management practices.	**Status Quo or Issue / Problem to be Addressed** *What is the issue or challenge that this commitment will address? Describe the barriers to open government that it will tackle.*
High If successful, it can help prevent mismanagement and corrupt practices in the County's capital projects. These are significant corners of both government and citizens—the latter raise such practices as a key grievance in public participation fora. Successful implementation would set a precedent both in the County and nationally, paving the way for future open government reforms.	**Level of Ambition** *How ambitious is this commitment—limited, moderate, or high—in terms of expected change in government transparency, citizen participation, and/or public sector accountability? Explain why this level of ambition was selected, based on political, operational, resource, timeline, and other considerations.*

Moderate The County has all the necessary information to implement this commitment, and supportive legislation in place. . That said, there are several factors that may impact its successful implementation: ● The imposed legal and policy timelines for the required documents, as well as potential operational challenges within relevant institutional bodies ● The achievement of this is dependent on the continued political goodwill especially given that 2017 is an election year in Kenya	**Level of Feasibility** *How feasible is this commitment—limited, moderate, or high—in terms of implementation in the next 1 year? Consider political, operational, resource, timeline, and other considerations.*

II. How will this commitment be implemented?	

Procurement Directorate	**Lead Implementing Agency** *Which government agency will be responsible for implementing this commitment?*
Name: Mr. Robert Chelagat Title: Director Procurement Email: robertchelagat@yahoo.com Phone: +254720259227	**Responsible Person** *Who from the implementing agency is responsible for ensuring the successful implementation of this commitment?*
Government: Directorate of ICT, Directorate of Communications for publishing in our communication platforms and content framing and editing respectively. Director of Economic Planning will coordinate progress reporting **Civil Society:** CSOs Network and Kerio Center for disseminating and networking on information and content **Private Sector:** Kenya National Chamber of Commerce to institute communications and feedback platform for business community and publishing of report documents at their level as investors **International Partners:** International Budget Partnership (IBP) for replication of best practice in the design and processes of budgets formulation and implementation **Other:**	**Other Actors Involved** *What additional partners and actors will be involved in commitment implementation? What will be their specific roles?* *Note which actors will have a formal partnership with the Lead Agency (e.g. in the form of an memorandum of understanding, contract, or other mechanism) and which will be informal collaborators.*

Activities & Milestones *What activities will be implemented to make progress toward the commitment? For each activity, indicate:* *i) expected start / end date ii) responsible actor / partner iii) a verifiable and measurable milestone—to be completed by the activity end date—to demonstrate progress toward the commitment.*

Key Milestone	Responsible Actor	End Date	Start Date	Activity
Standardized templates for project contracting and implementation (e.g. process reports)	Director Procurement	February 2017	January 2017	Develop standardized templates for project contracting and implementation monitoring, focusing on infrastructure/road projects
Pre-qualification templates and permits developed	Director Procurement	April 2017	January 2017	Publish list of prequalified suppliers/ contractors for development projects
List of awarded contracts published	Director Procurement	December 2017	March 2017	Publish awarded contracts list with their respective bill of quantities (ongoing)
Published projects implementation supervisory reports	Individual departmental Chief Officers	December 2017	March 2017	Publish project supervisory reports for projects awarded for 2016/17 Financial Year (ongoing)
Quarterly reports and annual reports published	Chief Officer Finance and Economic Planning	December 2017	March 2017	Publish project technical implementation status reports (ongoing)
Monitoring and Evaluation System developed and implemented	Director Economic Planning	December 2017	June 2017	Develop, install and operationalize a projects' monitoring and evaluation software

III. What will change as a result of the commitment?

Government: Better ways of improving service delivery through feedback and enhanced ownership in the project implementation process. Enhances ease of doing business environment while giving confidence to potential investors to partner with government in development process Citizens: Will get value for their money since they will have the opportunity to monitor and provide input in the entire implementation process	**Target Beneficiaries** *Who will benefit from the realization of this commitment, and how? Consider the range of stakeholders that may benefit: citizens, their representatives, civil society, government, and others.*

Civil society: Will be able to constructively critique the government from an informed point of view	
● Published BOQs and Contract documents ● Standardized project reporting templates ● Constantly updated projects implementation reports ● Designed and operationalised projects monitoring and evaluation system	**Target Outputs** *What are immediate artifacts or results (e.g. policies, products, services, tools, processes, etc) that will be produced from the activities above? Describe the tangible outputs that will result from this work.*
● Institutionalization of progressive open contracting processes ● Attainment of value for money in all public resources expenditure ● Reduced conflicts on project management processes between the government, the public, suppliers and contractors and civil society organizations	**Target Outcomes** *What are the medium-term results or effects that are expected from work on this commitment? Describe how Target Outcomes will impact the Target Beneficiaries described above.* *For citizens, describe how this commitment will affect their lives. For other beneficiaries, describe how the outcomes will affect their ability to improve citizen well-being and/or advance open government.*
By institutionalization of open data and information with contracting and progress information in government officers' Performance Contracts signed every year and departmental Service Delivery Charters	**Forward Outlook** *Looking forward, describe how the County may wish to build upon this commitment to make greater progress toward open government. Beyond the 1 year OGP pilot, how can the County leverage the expected outcomes for further impact?*
IV. How does the commitment contribute to OGP's mission and vision?	
● More effectively managing public resources; since the information users can monitor the quality of works and services being offered compared to the actual intended works and services ● Increasing corporate accountability; by providing and publishing information relating to projects management, it would be easy to identify any corrupt practice that may come about in the governance process	**OGP Challenge Addressed by the Commitment** *Which of OGP's grand challenge(s) does the commitment address, and how?* *i) Improving public services* *ii) Increasing public integrity* *iii) More effectively managing public resources* *iv) Creating safer communities* *v) Increasing corporate accountability* *[Optional] Is the commitment doing anything particularly creative or innovative to address these challenges?*
● Open contracting, disclosure and engagement throughout the entire procurement cycle, publishing of progress reports and a citizens feedback platform offers a springboard for an open government platform	**OGP Relevance** *Briefly describe the way(s) in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of* *i) access to information* *ii) public accountability* *iii) civic participation* *iv) technology and innovation for openness and*

	accountability
● This commitment will strive to ensure that crucial information needed by the different stakeholders are made available to them. This will lead to the various stakeholders having an informed engagement with the government which is vital for better service delivery and enhanced accountability by the government	

Commitment 4:

Improve the accountability of public services in priority sectors, by developing channels for real-time citizen engagement and rapid government response

Access to public information is essential in a society governed by the rule of law. Informed by this, the **Access to Information Act was** was enacted 2015 with provisions which allows for *"transparency in the government, to enable citizens access and use of information to hold their governments accountable."* This Act will add impetus and legitimize the already initiated good governance practices in communication and feedback.

Elgeyo Marakwet County has put in place several media platforms to ensure that information about government plans and activities is disseminated to the citizens, and that citizens have channels to provide feedback to government. The county publishes the 'Elgeyo Marakwet Bulletin' quarterly to disseminate governance and development interventions' information to the public to facilitate their oversight and feedback participation.

Further, the County has championed the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and WhatsApp to facilitate timely sharing of information and getting feedback from the public. These practices, however, largely remain informal. For example, citizen's feedback is currently collected sporadically through various unofficial channels. While the government endeavours to respond to all substantive issues raised through these channels, there are no institutionalized processes to surface, coordinate around, and respond to citizen concerns; as such, responses are ad hoc.

The county aims streamline citizen feedback, particularly pertaining to improving services, by organizing around these pre-existing, but informal, communication channels. Creation of an official channel and internal protocol to collect, filter, and relay citizen feedback to key departments is critical towards enhancing the responsiveness and accountability in public service delivery.

Collecting and responding to service feedback is important for both citizens and government. When government effectively responds to citizens' feedback and requests it not only leads to improved services, but increases citizen confidence and trust in government.

As the County improves its ability to surface and monitor service feedback, it will increasingly be able to save time and resources as citizens will be able to offer real-time feedback on how services are actually being delivered. Formalizing these requests will also help the County understand true citizen needs and will build an evidence based record of the needs of citizens. This record can be used to better understand citizens and will be able to inform future project and program design.

COMMITMENT 4: Improve the accountability of public services in priority sectors, by developing channels for real-time citizen engagement and rapid government response	
I. What is the commitment and why is it important?	
When a bridge collapses how can the government identify and rapidly get the information essential for repairs? When a citizen sees their roads being poorly graveled who can they tell to correct the issue before the road is finished?	**Framing Question / Prompt**
To enhance transparency and accountability by creating a feasible and responsive communication channel that empowers citizens and government to engage in a productive dialogue focused on improving service delivery. To achieve this main objective the County plans to: ● Concentrate citizen feedback to alleviate current internal coordination burdens and streamline responsiveness of government. ● Create a channel to send citizens an official, accurate and organized response from government. ● Develop a record of successful response which can be used to communicate and motivate government staff and the citizens they serve—reinforcing the use of technology to increase accountability in service delivery.	**Main Objective** *What does this commitment seek to achieve? How will it advance transparency, participation, and/or accountability? Be concrete and specific.*
To institutionalize previously informal communications channels to collect, filter, and relay citizen feedback to key County departments to improve service delivery.	**Brief Description** *Briefly summarize how this commitment will achieve the objective stated above. (Up to 140 characters)*
Citizen feedback is currently collected sporadically through various informal channels, but there are no institutionalized processes to surface, coordinate around, and respond to citizen concerns. This leads to inconsistency in response and creates a perception of distrust, suspicion, and government indifference.	**Status Quo or Issue / Problem to be Addressed** *What is the issue or challenge that this commitment will address? Describe the barriers to open government that it will tackle.*
This commitment makes substantial progress towards highly ambitious goals such as: ● Getting responsive and specific feedback that can improve services ● Increase trust between the public officials and the community, creating co-ownership in the governance process. ● The public will have a sense of belonging and trust in their county	**Level of Ambition** *How ambitious is this commitment—limited, moderate, or high—in terms of expected change in government transparency, citizen participation, and/or public sector accountability? Explain why this level of ambition was selected, based on political, operational, resource, timeline, and other considerations.*

government.	
● To draw diverse views from a greater citizenry contributing to the public debate on issues and decision-making	
● To ensure decisions made by the County Government are inclusive and ultimately legitimate.	
Though highly ambitious this commitment is feasible based on the following factors: ● The Official Secrets Act was repealed to pave way for the Access to Information Act that provides an ideal avenue to implement this commitment. ● Building processes around an already prominent forms of communication used by citizens and government, such as WhatsApp, and will increase likelihood of collection and compliance. ● Existence of similar government initiatives; newly established complaints and integrity committees	**Level of Feasibility** *How feasible is this commitment—limited, moderate, or high—in terms of implementation in the next 1 year? Consider political, operational, resource, timeline, and other considerations.*

II. How will this commitment be implemented?	
Communications Directorates	**Lead Implementing Agency** *Which government agency will be responsible for implementing this commitment?*
Name: Vincent Bartoo **Title, Department:** Communications Director **Email**:vinbarts@gmail.com **Phone**:+254721601304	**Responsible Person** *Who from the implementing agency is responsible for ensuring the successful implementation of this commitment?*
GOVERNMENT: **Communications Department** WIll be in charge of monitoring feedback channels and keeping track of initiated and completed service feedback**.** *Responsibilities include:* ● Monitor Service Feedback WhatsApp groups daily; ● Assign incoming requests with a reference number and log them into the Service Log; ● Conduct frequent evaluations of stakeholder satisfaction to guide process iterations. **Sub-county and Ward Admins**	**Other Actors Involved** *What additional partners and actors will be involved in commitment implementation? What will be their specific roles?* *Note which actors will have a formal partnership with the Lead Agency (e.g. in the form of an memorandum of understanding, contract, or other mechanism) and which will be informal collaborators.*

As the government officials closest to citizens, these Admins will play a large role in collecting and monitoring feedback for the county in a format that is accurate, organized and actionable. They will also serve as the main contact to help filter feedback to the county, by helping to resolve public concerns that need not be escalated to the County Headquarters.

Responsibilities include:

- Listen to citizen needs through multiple channels;
- Collect the necessary information for departments to fulfill requests;
- Formalize citizen needs into official Service Feedback requests;
- Post Service Feedback requests into the correct department's Service Feedback WhatsApp Group;

Department Directors

To monitor and oversee that feedback is incorporated into their respective department's service delivery. This can be achieved through appointment of **Feedback Coordinators** whose responsibility is to ensure that feedback provided by citizens is acknowledged and processed by providing accurate information originating from concerned departments

Responsibilities include:

- Coordinate & update with Ward Admin through department's Service Feedback Group;
- Work with department to proactively surface and implement solutions;
- Guide request to satisfactory completion

CIVIL SOCIETY:

CSO Network: An organization that works closely with many CSO's throughout Elgeyo Marakwet County. To provide information that they may come across during their independent engagement with the public that will prompt service delivery improvement.

PRIVATE SECTOR:

The media: To aid in dissemination of information/responses by the County Government to the wider public on varied issues.

International Partners: To aid in expertise exchange and where possible resource support.

Activities & Milestones

What activities will be implemented to make progress toward the commitment? For each activity, indicate: i) expected start / end date ii) responsible actor / partner iii) a verifiable and measurable milestone—to be completed by the activity end date—to demonstrate progress toward the commitment.

Key Milestone	Responsible Actor	End Date	Start Date	Activity
Milestone One: Build Internal Buy-in	Communications Department	Feb 2017	Jan 2017	Designate actors from each department as Feedback coordinators.
	Feedback Coordinators + Communications Department	Feb 2017	Jan 2017	Form Feedback Committee to improve how we surface and coordinate around service feedback.
	Communications Department	Feb 2017	Jan 2017	Engage current initiatives with similar goals. For example, the Integrity and Complaint Committees can become partners in the collaboration.
Milestone Two: Institutionalize a Feasible Feedback Mechanism	Communications Department	Jan 2017	Nov 2016	Continue designing and iterating internal protocols for using WhatsApp to surface and coordinate service feedback.
	Feedback Committee	May 2017	May 2017	Pilot feedback mechanisms and processes with select Wards
	Communications Department	June 2017	June 2017	Refine based on lessons learned
	Communications Department		Aug	Define a roll-out

		Aug 2017	2017	strategy to expand processes to all Wards
Milestone Three: Create Effective Channels to Engage Citizens	Feedback Committee	April 2017	Jan 2017	Leverage non-government actors to promote effective citizen feedback
	Ward Admins	April 2017	Jan 2017	Identity Ward-based Feedback Champions to spread the word
	CSO Network	April 2017	Jan 2017	Engage CSOs and Citizen Oversight Forums at different Ward levels.

III. What will change as a result of the commitment?

Internal protocols and policies to guide county government's use of WhatsApp in information sharing, citizen feedback collection, and department dissemination. **Internal Service Feedback Tracker** to be used by government stakeholders to track citizen feedback status. **Service Request & Priority Framework** to guide Ward Admins in assessing and prioritising citizen feedback in order to pass along to County Headquarters. **Citizen Feedback Protocol** to guide citizens in framing feedback for government to easily respond to.	**Target Outputs** *What are immediate artifacts or results (e.g. policies, products, services, tools, processes, etc) that will be produced from the activities above? Describe the tangible outputs that will result from this work.*

For citizens: ● A place to go to dispel rumors/ misinformation. ● Seeing feedback used to improve services will lead to increased trust and confidence in government. ● An informed citizenry able to make informed choices. **For government:** ● Build a better understanding of citizen needs to inform project and programmes formulation and implementation. ● Constructive place for feedback will lead to less complaints ● Save time and resources as citizens offer real-time feedback on service delivery implementation.	**Target Outcomes** *What are the medium-term results or effects that are expected from work on this commitment? Describe how Target Outcomes will impact the Target Beneficiaries described above.* *For citizens, describe how this commitment will affect their lives. For other beneficiaries, describe how the outcomes will affect their ability to improve citizen well-being and/or advance open government.*
Create an external facing Service Feedback Tracker to live on Elgeyo Marakwet website so citizens can track where their feedback is within the government. Use data collected to analyze and improve government response time in improving service delivery. Create communications materials of "success stories" to continue to build trust between citizens and their government.	**Forward Outlook** *Looking forward, describe how the County may wish to build upon this commitment to make greater progress toward open government. Beyond the 1 year OGP pilot, how can the County leverage the expected outcomes for further impact?*
IV. How does the commitment contribute to OGP's mission and vision?	
This commitment is improving public services and increasing public integrity in an innovative way by applying a commonly used technology to facilitate citizen engagement—allowing the county to "do more with less" to deliver on their promises of robust dialogue with citizens quickly and efficiently. Building upon emergent, but informal communication behaviors, the County will be providing information tailored to channels citizens are currently using to engage with government. By using technology that is already widely used and accepted by both citizens and government, the county can focus on incrementally refining the processes surrounding feedback collection, rather than focusing on building out a new platform, that may or may not work to collect citizen feedback.	**OGP Challenge Addressed by the Commitment** *Which of OGP's grand challenge(s) does the commitment address, and how?* *i) Improving public services* *ii) Increasing public integrity* *iii) More effectively managing public resources* *iv) Creating safer communities* *v) Increasing corporate accountability* *[Optional] Is the commitment doing anything particularly creative or innovative to address these challenges?*
● The proposed institutionalization of WhatsApp Messaging platform as a rapid response citizen engagement channel within the commitment provides an innovative example of how the	**OGP Relevance** *Briefly describe the way(s) in which this commitment is relevant to further advancing OGP values of*

OGP principles can be localized to a particular context based on citizen needs. ● The proposed WhatsApp protocol will enable the government officials closest to citizens, Ward Admins, to surface feedback that is accurate, organized, and actionable leading to more effective citizen participation and government accountability. ● Dissemination of public information of what the county government does through technology to allow the citizens to influence decisions and conduct effective public participation.	*i) access to information* *ii) public accountability* *iii) civic participation* *iv) technology and innovation for openness and accountability*