



South Cotabato Open Government Partnership

# LOCAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

December 2023

Prepared by:

Special Projects Division  
Provincial Planning and Development Office

# THE COMMITMENT

Harnessing Youth Power in Integrating Open Government Values and Mechanisms to Respond to Local and Community-Interest Issues in the Province of South Cotabato

## BACKGROUND

The Province of South Cotabato is one of the cohort of commitment-holders at the sub-national level of the Open Government Partnership. The OGP is a multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.

In 2018, the province submitted its first action plan 2018-2020 with 5 commitments: Open Information (Socio-economic Profiles), Open Monitoring and Evaluation (Monitoring Results of PPMC), Open Contracting (Procurement Database), Open Mining Information (Mining & Quarrying Operations Database) & Open Legislation (Legislative Information Technology System). The said commitments focus on developing both online and offline channels to expand public access to government information, and to enable citizens to give feedback on government programs and services.

On August 30, 2021, the Province of South Cotabato submitted its second Open Government Action Plan for the period 2021-2022 thru OGP Local Online submission platform. The plan includes a commitment which is Harnessing Youth Power in Integrating Open Government Values and Mechanisms to Respond to Local and Community-Interest Issues in the Province of South Cotabato.

This endeavor sets sight in attaining a more efficient and effective public service by involving and hearing the voices of the youth sector as a key sector to expand engagement and outreach on Open Government initiatives.



# MILESTONE 1

## Open Government Youth Ambassador Program for the Youth of South Cotabato

- **Introduction to the Open Government Youth Ambassador Program**

### Goal

- Introduce participants to the program and to one another
- Go through initial program pitches and start working on teams
- Introduce the Open Government Partnership and open government values

### Output

- At least 50 ambassadors trained on open government values, processes, and best practices.

### Date

November 12, 2022

### Responsible Agency

Youth Alliance for FOI, Sangguniang Kabataan Federation of South Cotabato, Provincial Youth Development Office and Provincial Planning and Development Office

### Status

It was conducted last November 12, 2022, at Provincial Covered Court, Capitol Compound, Alunan Avenue, Koronadal City. It was facilitated by OGP South Cotabato lead implementing partner, the Youth Alliance for Freedom of Information, based in Manila City. It was headed by their Emeritus Convenor, John Nelvin Santos, and Yuri Lemana Convenor and Renzo Polangco, Education and Research Coordinator. The Local Youth Development Office and Provincial Planning and Development Office-Special Projects Divisions also co-facilitated the activity. The activity was participated by youths from various SK members in the province (Youth Ambassador).

# DOCUMENTATION



## INTRODUCTION TO THE OPEN GOVERNMENT YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 12, 2022



# MILESTONE 2

## Issue-based Freedom of Activations - in Collaboration with the Youth of South Cotabato and the People of the Province of South Cotabato

### Goal

Freedom of Information: Policies and Practices

- Introduce the concept of freedom of information
- Introduce FOI EO and other pending/current legislation
- Discuss how can participants advocate for FOI

Introduction to Open Contracting

- Introduce the concept of open contracting
- Discuss how participants get involved in public procurement and ensure transparency and accountability in public contracting

Introduction to Open Data

- Introduce participants to the concept of open data
- Discuss how participants can advocate for open data

### Output

- At least three issue-based activations tied to need for better access to government information facilitated.
- The issues to be focused here will be based on a shortlist created during the co-creation sessions.

### Date

November 22, 2022, February 11, 2023

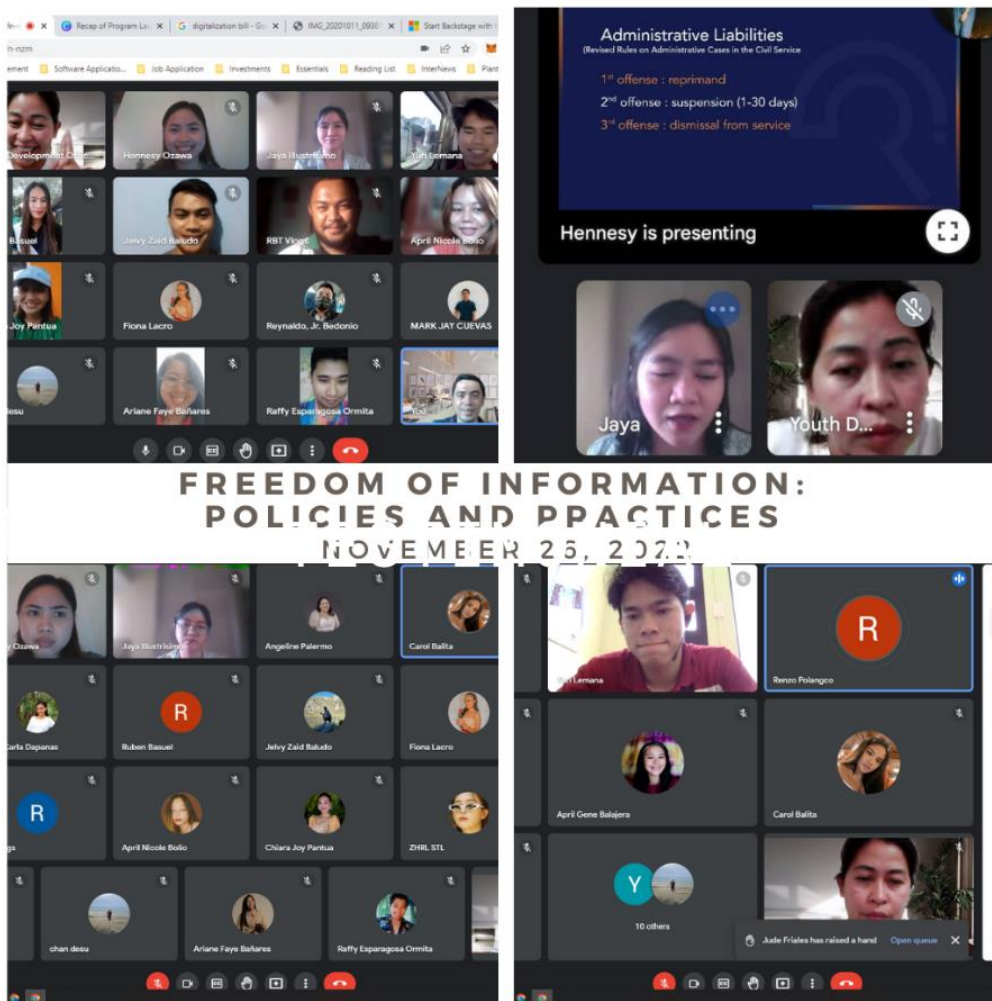
### Responsible Agency

Youth Alliance for FOI, Sangguniang Kabataan Federation of South Cotabato, Provincial Youth Development Office and Provincial Planning and Development Office

### Status

The activity was conducted last November 26, 2023 via online platform Google Meet. The Basics of FOI and its Practical Use -E.O. No. 2, s. of 2016 -Status on bills for the right to FOI -Using the FOI for nation-building was presented by Ms. Jaya Ilustrisimo, Training Specialist and Ms. Henessy Ozawa, FOI Engagement Officer from Freedom of Information -Project Management Office.

# DOCUMENTATION



# MILESTONE 3

## Focus Issues Citizen Participation Drives

- Ensuring Inclusion and Citizen Participation in Public Processes

### Goal

- Discuss the importance of public inclusion in government processes
- Unpack how participants can advocate for citizens to participate in the government's work and processes

### Output

- At least three success stories on improving citizen participation in Open Government-related initiatives and locally relevant issues were highlighted.

### Date

February 11, 2023

### Responsible Agency

Youth Alliance for FOI, Sangguniang Kabataan Federation of South Cotabato, Provincial Youth Development Office and Provincial Planning and Development Office

### Status

The Provincial Planning and Development Office together with the Local Youth Development Office and Youth Alliance for Freedom of Information facilitated the conduct of one of South Cotabato Open Government Partnership milestone activities, the **Advocating for Open, Inclusive, and Participatory Governance** session as part of the SC-OGP commitment to Harnessing Youth Power in Integrating Open Government Values and Mechanisms to Respond to Local and Community-Interest Issues in the Province of South Cotabato. It was conducted last February 11, 2023 and was actively participated by 75 youth leaders from various organizations/sectors in the province exceeding the original 67 participants.

The activity aimed to introduce youth leaders to open contracting, open data, and the importance of public inclusion in government processes. The session also unpacked how participants can advocate for citizens to participate in the government's work and processes.

Mr. Vino Lucero, Emeritus Convenor of Youth Alliance for Freedom of Information, discussed the Concept of Open Contracting and Open Data. Mr. Redempto S. Parafina, Component Lead of USAID's Cities for Enhanced Governance and Engagement (CHANGE) Project of the International City/Country Management Association (ICMA), shared his knowledge on Ensuring Inclusion and Citizen Participation in Public Processes.

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# MILESTONE 4

## Issue-Based Open Government Capacity-Building Activities - for the Youth and Community Leaders of South Cotabato

- Goal** Introduction to Project Planning and Implementation
- Discuss project planning processes
  - Provide tips on how to ensure smooth project implementation
  - Review and improve project proposals
  - Provide participants time to improve their proposals
  - Provide time for participants to consult with program mentors
- Mentoring Break
- Program Culmination and Project Presentations
- Acknowledge the efforts of participants during the program
  - Present end-of-program projects of the participants

- Output**
- At least three capacity-building activities related to locally relevant issues and Open Government values facilitated.

**Date** February 25, 2023, February 26, 2023 - March 10, 2023, March 11, 2023

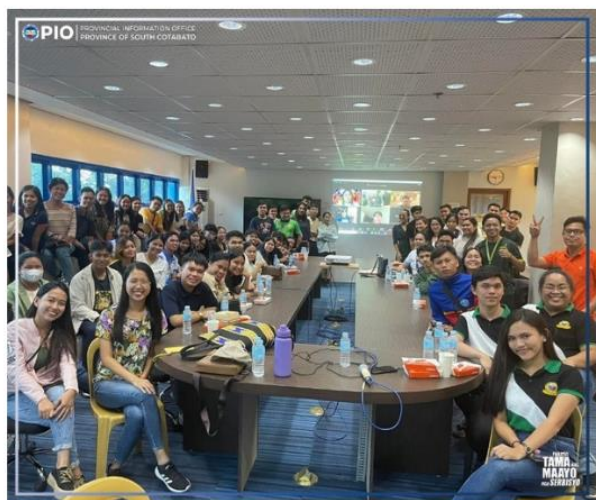
**Responsible Agency** Youth Alliance for FOI, Sangguniang Kabataan Federation of South Cotabato, Provincial Youth Development Office and Provincial Planning and Development Office

**Status** **Introduction to Project Planning and Implementation**

The Youth Ambassador Program: **Introduction to Project Planning and Implementation** was conducted on February 25, 2023. The activity aimed to capacitate the youth on project planning processes and provide tips on how to ensure smooth project implementation.

Mr. Yuri Lemana, Convenor of Youth Alliance for Freedom of Information, imparted his knowledge on the Basics of Project Planning and Implementation to the 75 youth leaders and representatives from different LGUs and Organizations in the Province of South Cotabato. The participants are expected to develop a project proposal on the OGP values of transparency, accountability, integrity, and citizen participation to address current issues and problems they encountered

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# MILESTONE 4

## Issue-Based Open Government Capacity-Building Activities - for the Youth and Community Leaders of South Cotabato

### Status Program Culmination and Project Presentations

March 11, 2023 was the **Culmination of the Youth Ambassadorship Program**. Seventy-five (75) youth leaders all over the Province successfully completed the said program. The highlight of the culmination was the presentation of the output of 5 groups which is the project proposals of youth projects and programs anchored on the OGP values of integrity, citizen participation, transparency, and accountability.

Panelists who commented on their project proposals were: Mr. Carlito Uy - Chairman of the SCIC, Mr. Yuri Lemana - Convenor of YAFOI, Ms. Carol Anne Balita - Asst. Convenor of YAFOI and Ms. Jobeelyn Baitus Corilla - Head of the Local Youth Development Office.

The event was an avenue for the youths - program ambassadors now, to showcase their proposals which reflect their desire to be the voice of their sector and community and their wanting to be actively involved in local governance as the future leaders in the province.

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# OTHER ACTIVITY

## CO-CREATION OF INNOVATION AND STRATEGIC PREPARATION FOR THE FORMULATION OF 6TH NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

Mr. Carlito Y. Uy, SCIC Chairperson presented the Learnings and Showcasing Strategies of South Cotabato Open Government Partnership during the CO-CREATION OF INNOVATION AND STRATEGIC PREPARATION FOR THE FORMULATION OF 6TH NATIONAL ACTION PLAN last July 4, 2023 at Greanleaf Hotel, General Santos City. This was participated by OGP Focal Personnel of DILG Regional Offices.



# OTHER ACTIVITY

## 2023 OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP GLOBAL SUMMIT

In the 2023 OGP Global Summit in Tallinn, Estonia, Gov. Reynaldo S. Tamayo, Jr. was part of the High-Level Roundtable Discussion on Making Democracies Stronger through Openness held last September 7, 2023 participated by ministers and civil society leaders from different countries including Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman of Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and our Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP) Chairperson. As National Chairman of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP), I discussed about open government initiatives at the local level including South Cotabato's open monitoring and evaluation mechanism through the creation of our provincial project monitoring system.



# KEY TAKE AWAYS

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The information that was discussed during the seminar is very helpful to us especially as a member of NDMU SEAS and as an Architecture student. In my personal thoughts, the open data and open contracting really caught my attention as it portrays transparency, strategic approaches and to have a better service to the public that I can use as a future builder.

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**-KENNY JAY ANDALES CENAS**  
NDMU SEAS CLUB



# KEY TAKE AWAYS

“

For me naman po, as an Organization that focuses on education and the welfare of the students. Open Data is one of the topic that I'm most interested in. Kasw nga po, as of today's generation nahirapan talaga ang mga students na kumuha ng basis when it comes to research studies.

And by this, I can share my ideas to them and can contribute help in any way I can.

Also, thankful man ko kay gi address kanina yung kakulangan ng educational facilities and buildings. Kasi very true po talaga yun, visible kaayo nga naga suffer ang mga students

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**-ALITHEA JAMICA M. BARANDA**  
SUPREME STUDENT GOVERNMENT  
NORALA NATIONAL HIGHSCHOOL





# KEY TAKE AWAYS

“

I learned that being one of the Ambassadors/ambassadors is that I'm given a responsibility to speak out my concerns as well as the concerns of my fellow youth. I'm in an arena of different fields of purpose, and these purposes are the passages where we can create something that is beneficial not just for us, but for those youth of South Cotabato who also needs the effort and attention of our local government.

I would go as far as to say that the words we've heard have vital impacts now on how are we going to perceive things logically and holistically. The series of thought that have been discussed were lessons that will truly help us to make progress towards our specific goal. Further, I'm able to apply those teachings through actively pursuing it in a particular profession of my life.

By all means, as a representative of SOX Writers Collective, where we advocate reading to the youth, we are hoping that OGP will foster good relationship to our organization. In view of the fact that, we can have more connections and opportunities, we can also have a wider scope where we can publicly recommend our views, notably OGP will help us stand up for our rights.

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**-JESSA MAE MALAYON MAGBANUA**  
SOX WRITERS COLLECTIVE

# KEY TAKE AWAYS

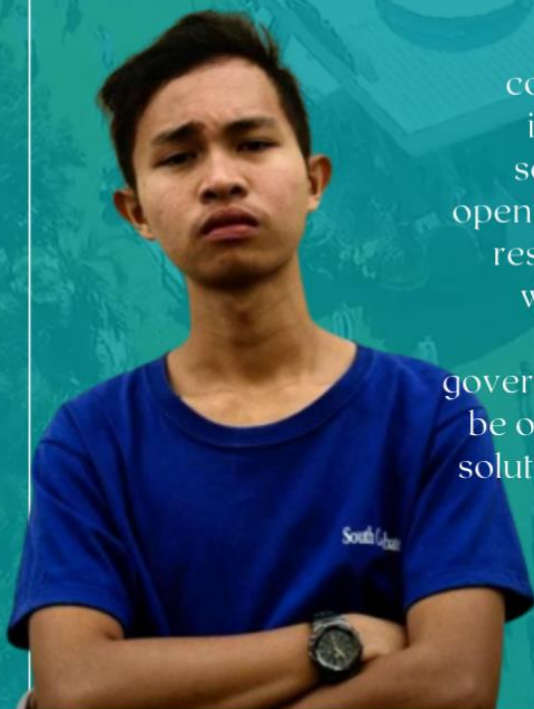
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To be honest, I was thinking lately about how would I use the said seminar in developing an initiative to really make my fellow youth get involved in the works pertaining to societal concerns. Anyway, the seminar went well. Though some terms and topics were novel for most of us, yet we're being given a foundation to understand the processes happening in the government. As concerned youths of our community, perhaps one way to apply the thoughts on the OGP is to share it with our colleagues in order for them to also have the idea of involving their selves in the works in society. The good thing about this OGP is its openness to ideas from us, young people. Some research studies made by the students, which were often overlooked by some institutions, could offer open possibilities to reinforce government procurements. This would probably be one of the most practical ways to contribute solutions or interventions to community-related

issues

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**-JOEY STEVE L. SUBA**  
STUDENT



# KEY TAKE AWAYS

“

The OGP seminar was a great opportunity for us and especially for me. As a Future Educator and as a Kabugwason scholar, that would be a great help for us to broaden our minds and to become a role models to younger generations. About the discussion earlier, Open data caught my attention, especially as a student who is currently conducting a thesis. That was really great for us.

”

**-ANGELIKA FAYE D. SUNIO**  
KABUGWASON SCHOLAR



# KEY TAKE AWAYS

“

As a Kabugwason scholar, it was a good opportunity for us to broaden our minds that we shouldn't just focus on our studies in life, but we should also explore our society, from our surroundings, government to be specific. Though the pressure is high, we must admit that having knowledge about the said seminar earlier was indeed a need and not a want. Also, it will serve us as our base to have deeper knowledge about our government and I think having that knowledge will be relevant enough to share with our fellow youth to be more observant and have the courage to ask since our government pertains to having transparency which is the most important of all and I think the hardest to attain since there are things that are not easy to be disclosed. Also, as a student who is currently making a feasibility study; that information and data are a big help to us to have reliable sources. Above all, we should promote inclusivity always in all ways and it was a good seminar.

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**-RISHYL AZUCENA REPUPONIO**  
KABUGWASON SCHOLAR



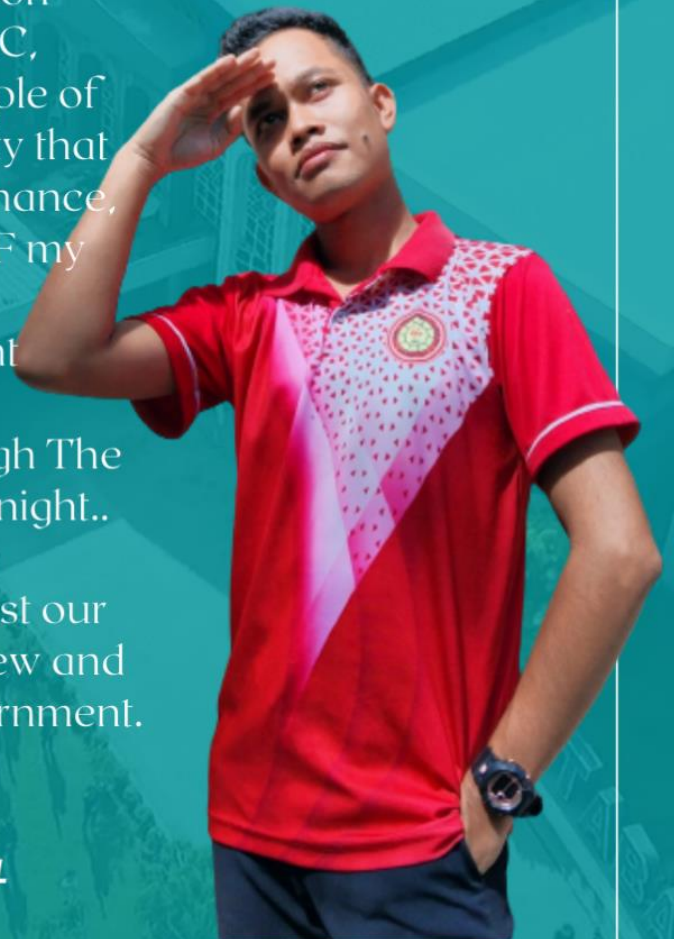
# KEY TAKE AWAYS

“

As for the knowledge I have acquired kanina sa Seminar that I could or I can disseminate the information about the OPEN DATA TOPIC, which is the citizen or the people of my barangay, and Municipality that they can participate in Governance. And As a SK TREASURER OF my Beloved brgy. I could impart something about Procurement Process of our LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT Through The Local Budget. Thats All for tonight.. Thank you sa pag hiwat sang Seminar because it could boost our knowledge onto something new and valuable aspects of our Government.

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**-ELDRICKAVE SILVA VILLAREAL**  
KABUGWASON SCHOLAR



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