



## **Draft Meeting Outcomes**

### **OGP South Africa Interim Steering Committee Meeting Revival of the OGP in South Africa in line with the APRM-OGP Complementarity**

**Date: 11 September 2025**

**Time: 11:00-13:00**

**Venue: MS Teams**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The second meeting of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) South Africa Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF) for 2025, was held via Microsoft Teams on 11 September 2025. This was the first meeting following the adoption of the MSF Terms of Reference (ToR) as a working document and the transition from an Interim Steering Committee to an MSF on 05 June 2025. The meeting was coordinated by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), as the OGP Point of Contact in South Africa and convened state and non-state actors in accordance with the National Roadmap on the Revival of the OGP South Africa, in line with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and OGP complementarity.

#### **ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

##### **2. Attendees**

- 2.1.1. Mr Nkululeko Conco, Corruption Watch
- 2.1.2. Mr Mbazima Maluleke, Corruption Watch
- 2.1.3. Mr Lefa Maremagae, Corruption Watch
- 2.1.4. Ms Damaris Kiewiets, University of the Western Cape (UWC)
- 2.1.5. Dr Paul Plantinga, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)
- 2.1.6. Ms Zukiswa Kota, Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM)
- 2.1.7. Ms Kgothatso Semela, OGP Country Support Office – Africa & the Middle East.
- 2.1.8. Ms Tshenolo Tshoaedi-Buthelezi, Community Advice Offices South Africa (CAOSA).
- 2.1.9. Mr Zwelibanzi Hlatshwayo ,CAOSA
- 2.1.10. Deputy Chief Justice Dunstan Mlambo, CAOSA.
- 2.1.11. Mr Sephiri Tlhomeli, National Treasury
- 2.1.12. Ms Xolile Mdluli, National Treasury
- 2.1.13. Ms Prudence Cele, National Treasury

- 2.1.14. Ms Rakgadi Motseto, National Treasury
- 2.1.15. Ms Una Rautenbach, National Treasury
- 2.1.16. Mr Mpho Gaosiwe, National Treasury
- 2.1.17. Ms Kgomotso Matlala, National Treasury
- 2.1.18. Mr Mkhululeko Hlatshwayo , National Treasury
- 2.1.19. Ms Nomfezeko Mayambela, National Treasury
- 2.1.20. Mr Bongani Mbonani, Department of Justice and Constitutional Development ( DoJ &CD)
- 2.1.21. Mr Zaid du Toit, Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution South Africa (C4IR) at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- 2.1.22. Ms Mikateko Sithole, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment
- 2.1.23. Dr Patrick Sokhela, DPSA
- 2.1.24. Ms Gcino Mlaba, DPSA
- 2.1.25. Ms Nonkululeko Msibi, DPSA

### **3. Apologies**

- 3.1.1. Ms Cecelia Kok, French Embassy
- 3.1.2. Ms Gabriella Razzano, Open Up
- 3.1.3. Ms Jeanette... DCDT
- 3.1.4. Adv Gary Pienaar, HSRC
- 3.1.5. Mr Willie Vukela, Acting Director-General: DPSA

### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

4. The agenda was adopted with the following addition:

4.1. CAOSA briefing.

### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES: 05 JUNE 2025**

5. The minutes of the previous meeting –05 June 2025- reviewed and adopted with corrections:

- 5.1. Clarification: Sections 71 refers to Municipal Finance not Public Finance.
- 5.2. An apology was noted for the delayed distribution of meeting minutes.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 05 JUNE 2015**

6. Incorporated into the agenda.

### **CAOSA BRIEFING –**

7. Three key items were presented:

7.1. **Engagement with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD)**

7.1.1. The meeting received a report from Mr Bheki Mbonani on engagement between the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD) and CAOSA, regarding the OGP) and the PLEJ Project, aimed at supporting and resourcing Community Advice Officers.

7.1.2. Key discussion points:

7.1.2.1. The need for a DG-to-DG (DoJ&CD and DPSA) to clarify roles and responsibilities.

7.1.2.2. Proposal for the DoJ& CJ to join the OGP South Africa MSF.

7.1.2.3. Follow-up actions by the DoJ&CD were paused due to new developments, including the DoJ&CD's potential participation in the global OGP structure.

7.1.2.4. The next steps getting an update on DoJ&CD readiness to engage with the DPSA.

7.1.3. Action points:

7.1.3.1. DoJ&CD and the DPSA engagement, upon getting an update on DoJ&CD readiness to engage.

7.1.3.2. The DoJ&CD to draft a letter requesting a DG-to-DG meeting (currently on hold).

7.1.3.3. Determine DoJ&CD's contribution to funding and supporting Community Advice Officers through the PLEJ Project.

## **7.2. Helen Derbyshire Civil Society Fund Grant**

7.2.1. The meeting noted that South Africa was successfully awarded the Helen Derbyshire Civil Society Fund Grant (HDCSF), one of only two countries in Africa to receive this funding. The other successful country being Sierra Leone.

7.2.2. USD20,000 (±R350,000) for a 12-month project to strengthen OGP processes in South Africa.

7.2.3. Focus areas are:

7.2.3.1. The appointment of a dedicated OGP Project Lead at CAOSA.

7.2.3.2. To convene Justice Sector Leaders for engagement with the Minister and stakeholders

7.2.3.3. To host community engagement sessions to position Community Advice Offices as information hubs and solicit community input.

7.2.3.4. To draft Justice themed Commitments for the next OGP South Africa National Action Plan (NAP)

7.2.4. The envisaged outputs are:

7.2.4.1. A Justice Working Group.

7.2.4.2. Community consultations.

7.2.4.3. Ministerial review and adoption of commitment.

## **7.3. CAOSA leadership transition**

- 7.3.1. The meeting noted Ms Tshenolo Tshoadi-Buthelezi, would be stepping down from her role as Executive Director: CAOSA.
- 7.3.2. A transition committee has been appointed to manage the change, and the recruitment of a successor is underway.
- 7.3.3. The President of CAOSA, Mr Hlatshwayo .would henceforth, join the OGP South Africa MSF, alongside the ED for continuity.

#### **7.4. Deputy Chief Justice Mlambo's remarks**

- 7.4.1. Emphasised the importance of sustained OGP engagement and government leadership.
- 7.4.2. Highlighted Access to Justice challenges for marginalised communities.
- 7.4.3. Stressed the role of Community Advice Offices for grassroots justice i.e. UIF claims, compensation and estate disputes.
- 7.4.4. Called for:
  - 7.4.4.1. Government support to strengthen Community Advice Offices and to ensure sustainability.
  - 7.4.4.2. Leveraging of government infrastructure-at local, provincial and national levels- for accommodation of Community Advice Offices.
  - 7.4.4.3. Collaboration across all levels of government under OGP Principles,
  - 7.4.4.4. Reaffirmed personal commitment to CAOSA despite new judicial responsibilities.

#### **8. OGP Global Summit (06-10 October 2025 in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain).**

- 8.1. Ms Kgothatso Semela, OGP Lead for Africa and the Middle East, provided an update on preparations for the OGP Global Summit scheduled for 06-10 October 2025 in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain. She outlined the agenda, including the-thematic sessions, ministerial meetings and panels on digital rights. An approximate 3,500 delegates were expected globally.
- 8.2. Invitations extended to South Africa included the:
  - 8.2.1. Minister for the Public Service and Administration (MPSA), Inkosi EM Buthelezi.
  - 8.2.2. Minister for Justice and Constitutional Development, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi.
  - 8.2.3. Deputy Chief Justice, Justice Dunstan Mlambo.
  - 8.2.4. Public Protector, Adv Gcaleka.
  - 8.2.5. Civil Society representatives.
- 8.3. The Summit presented an opportunity for South Africa to showcase leadership and commitment in the OGP.
- 8.4. The Champion for OGP role to be played by DCJ Mlambo was highlighted, following consultation visit by OGP CEO, noting:
  - 8.4.1. Historical involvement with the OGP.

8.4.2. The dual role as Chair of CAOSA and a respected judicial leader.

8.4.3. Agreement to function as a key OGP Champion for South Africa.

8.5. DCJ Mlambo's Champion role will include:

8.5.1. Participation in the High-Level Panel on Open Justice at the Global Summit

8.5.2. Mobilisation of high-level civil society actors and ensuring visibility.

8.5.3. Providing guidance and elevating OGP reforms.

8.6. The meeting was advised the deadline for late registrations would close on 15 September 2025. The MSF was urged to prioritise visa applications which require a 15-working days turnaround.

8.7. The meeting noted that the participation goal for the OGP was to ensure strategic representation, with emphasis on government-civil society collaboration rather than large numbers.

8.8. Emphasis was placed on the strategic alignment of the OGP- to position it as an instrument for reform and for implementation of APRM recommendations, in line with the Cabinet-level mandates.

## 9. OGP South Africa Platform Development

9.1. The meeting noted progress on engagement with internal ICT Directorate regarding improvements to the OGP South Africa website or development of a shared platform for stakeholder contributions.

9.2. Six key issues were discussed with ICT:

9.2.1. *Feasibility*: Technical and operational requirements for enabling direct contributions from non-governmental stakeholders.

9.2.2. *Functionality*: enhancements to make the platform user- friendly, accessible and regularly updated.

9.2.3. *Integration*: Linking with open-source tools e.g. Open Data ZA Toolkit on GitBook, for sustainability and interoperability.

9.2.4. *Security and Governance*: Measures to manage multi-stakeholder contributions while maintaining data integrity and interoperability.

9.2.5. *Implementation*: Realistic timelines, resource implications( financial and human) and required support from OGP South Africa,

9.2.6. *Alternatives*: Viable ICT solutions if proposed platform upgrade is not feasible. f

9.3. A formal response from ICT is pending; the MSF will be updated accordingly.

## 10. Open Government Challenge

10.1. The focus of the Challenge is "**Improved access to justice for marginalised groups,**" aligned with the GBV & Femicide National Strategic Plan.

10.2. Launch planned for 28 October 2025 as part South Africa's G20 Presidency legacy projects, in the form of a colloquium and pledge signing.

10.3. Key stakeholders

10.3.1. The DoJ&CD

10.3.2. Legal Aid Board

10.3.3. University Law Clinics (UWC as lead)

10.3.4. Civil Society Organisations.

10.4. Next steps:

10.4.1. Challenge template to be submitted to the OGP Secretariat by the DPSA.

10.4.2. The DPSA to organise the colloquium and pledge signing during the launch.

## **UPDATE ON SOUTH AFRICA'S COMMITMENT ONE: TRANSFORMATIVE FISCAL TRANSPARENCY**

### **11. Vuleka Mali**

11.1. Migration from external hosting to internal government infrastructure completed.

11.2. Progress made but further improvement required to enhance data quality and functionality.

11.3. Challenges:

11.3.1. Compatibility issues between government systems and externally developed solutions.

11.3.2. Delays in updates and development due to migration.

11.3.3. Site downtime and dependency on government ICT services.

11.4. Next steps are to improve functionality and consult stakeholders.

11.5. Lessons learned are that digital innovation projects need succession planning beyond contract terms and better compatibility considerations.

11.6. Co-creation reflection is that collaboration must go beyond meetings and discussions. Active support and resource sharing are essential to achieve transformative transparency.

### **12. Municipal Money**

12.1. The success of the Section 71 Public Finance Webinar, the first public -facing webinar, held on 15 April 2025, with a recorded attendance of 492), sparked additional sessions on conditional grants; budgets and spending transparency.

12.2. Insights from the webinar will inform the next webinar after Q4 2024/25 data publication.

12.3. The Municipal Money platform is currently out of contract for updates; procurement for a new three-year support and upgrade contract is in the final stages.

12.4. Planned enhancements:

12.4.1. Improved functionality and user experience.

12.4.2. Integration of spatial /GIS elements

12.4.3. Automated data updates to reduce lag and human error.

12.5. Outreach and awareness:

12.5.1. Promoted Municipal Money platform and Local Government database at conferences and summits using interactive exhibitions.

12.5.2. The next exhibition was scheduled to take place in October 2025 in Durban.

Co-creation reflection:

12.5.3. Noted the strong collaboration between the National Treasury, GTAC and PARI.

12.5.4. Expanded engagement with civil society through webinars and conferences.

12.5.5. Next steps include leveraging citizen feedback for future improvements.

## **UPDATE ON SOUTH AFRICA'S COMMITMENT TWO: OPEN DATA TRANSPARENCY ACROSS THE THREE SPHERES OF GOVERNMENT**

13. The meeting noted the following:

13.1. Municipalities are increasingly interested in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data-driven solutions.

13.2. The current focus of the C4IR includes innovative technologies such as AI, machine learning, data analytics, digital learning.

14. Progress and milestones

14.1. Dialogues initiated and ongoing engagements at municipal, district and provincial levels.

14.2. The endorsement of the Open Data Principles achieved in several municipalities: others in progress e.g. Makhanda, Sarah Baarman, Buffalo City.

14.3. The National Agenda still to be finalised.

14.4.

14.5. Active engagement with municipalities including eThekweni, Cape Winelands, Garden Route and metros such as Mangaung.

14.6. Partnerships established with Open Cities Lab, ODI Institute (United Kingdom) and NGOs for technical support and citizen engagement.

15. Challenges:

15.1. Implementation gap: Policies exist but the practical adoption is slow.

15.2. Resistance to changing traditional data practices,

15.3. Data hoarding and reluctance to share openly.

16. Key lessons:

- 16.1. Use cases drive adoption: Municipalities embrace Open Data Principles faster when solutions address real pain points e.g. safety, service delivery.
- 16.2. NGOs are critical for citizen outreach.
- 16.3. Collaboration with the DPSA and DCoG is essential for governance alignment.
- 16.4. Monitoring the recently finalised Data and Cloud Policy for compliance and integration is important.

16.5. Next steps:

- 16.5.1. To continue implementation workshops with municipalities.
- 16.5.2. Support use cases for safety and service delivery.
- 16.5.3. Integrate Generative AI and advance analytics into municipal data strategies.

## DISCUSSIONS

- 17. The meeting noted the OGP is refining the OGP Action Framework to make it more flexible, user-friendly and inclusive, balancing standards with practical usability and broader participation.
- 18. The MSF members were encouraged to submit written feedback to the DPSA, following reviewing the Action Framework by answering the following questions:
  - 18.1. What are the challenges about the framework?
  - 18.2. What works well?
  - 18.3. Any additional comments or suggestions
- 19. Concern was expressed regarding coherence and coordination among actors involved in the Open Government Challenge on Access to Justice.
- 20. It was suggested that there was a need for the OGP Secretariat (DPSA) play a streamlined, facilitative role to ensure alignment among:
  - 20.1. Deputy Chief Justice, as OGP Champion
  - 20.2. DoJ &CD
  - 20.3. Deputy Minister of the DPSA – who has expressed an interest.
  - 20.4. CAOSA , with its grant funded Justice Sector mobilisation project.
  - 20.5. Law Clinics in the respective Universities.
- 21. Emphasis was places on strategic collaboration among these actors, given the Challenge’s status as a G20 South Africa Legacy Project.
- 22. A request that the DPSA share with the MSF, the instrument or template that frames the Challenge, as submitted and approved by Cabinet.

23. In response to the issues raised on the Open Government Challenge, the DPSA advised that the core template submitted to Cabinet remain unchanged, with the following key adjustments:
  - 23.1. Definition: Broadened to align with the Department of Social Development's definition of implementation.
  - 23.2. Actors: Inclusion of additional stakeholders (the Legal Aid Board, Forestry, Fisheries and Environment and Cooperative Governance) in line with the APRM complementarity.
  - 23.3. Strategic alignment to ensure the Challenge supports the National Strategic Plan on Gender Based Violence and Femicide.
24. Secondary focus areas for the OGP challenge:
  - 24.1. Access to information.
  - 24.2. Climate and environment.
  - 24.3. Gender and inclusion.

## **SUMMARY AND WAY FORWARD**

25. DPSA to update the MSF on progress regarding the OGP South Africa platform following a formal response from internal ICT.
26. MSF members encouraged to submit written feedback on the OGP Action Framework through the DPSA by 25 September 2025.
27. The importance of the involvement of all actors in joint planning and coherence before the Challenge launch was highlighted.
28. The Open Government Justice Challenge on Access to Justice launch is strategically aligned with South Africa's G20 Presidency Legacy projects. The DPSA hosts the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG).
29. The DPSA to share template of the Challenge submitted and approved by Cabinet.
30. The launch planned between 15-21 October 2025, ahead of G20 Ministerial and Presidential meetings in November 2025. Confirmation from the Minister on the proposed dates was awaited. The MSF would be kept informed. The Deputy Chief Justice's Champion role in the OGP, would leverage for visibility and stakeholder engagement.
31. The meeting was unable to exhaust the adopted agenda. The DPSA to consult with the Co-Chair to schedule a Special MSF meeting within three weeks (early October 2025), to finalise outstanding items.
32. Meeting adjourned with a commitment to revive OGP processes and strengthen collaboration.