



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: 05 June 2025

Time: 11:00-13:00

Venue: MS Teams

INTRODUCTION

1. The inaugural statutory meeting of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) South Africa Interim Steering Committee for 2025, was held via Microsoft Teams on 05 June 2025 via Microsoft (Teams). The meeting, coordinated by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), as the OGP Point of Contact in South Africa, convened state and non-state actors in accordance with the adopted 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. Ms Sheena Adams, Accountability Lab
- 2.1.2. Mr Lefa Maremagae, Corruption Watch
- 2.1.3. Ms Damaris Kiewiets, University of the Western Cape (UWC)
- 2.1.4. Dr Paul Plantinga, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)
- 2.1.5. Ms Zukiswa Kota, Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM)
- 2.1.6. Mr Sephiri Tlhomeli, National Treasury
- 2.1.7. Ms Xolile Mdluli, National Treasury
- 2.1.8. Ms Una Rautenbach, National Treasury
- 2.1.9. Mr Mpho Gaosiwe, National Treasury
- 2.1.10. Ms Kgomotso Matlala, National Treasury
- 2.1.11. Dr Patrick Sokhela, DPSA
- 2.1.12. Ms Gcino Mlaba, DPSA
- 2.1.13. Ms Nonkululeko Msibi, DPSA

3. Apologies

- 3.1.1. Ms Cecelia Kok, French Embassy
- 3.1.2. Ms Rakgadi Motseto, National Treasury
- 3.1.3. Ms Prudence Cele, National Treasury
- 3.1.4. Ms Tshenolo Tshoaedi-Buthelezi, Community Advice Offices South Africa (CAOSA)
- 3.1.5. Ms Gabriella Razzano, Open Up
- 3.1.6. Adv Gary Pienaar, HSRC
- 3.1.7. Mr Zaaid du Toit, Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution South Africa (C4IR) at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
- 3.1.8. Ms Kgothatso Semela, OGP Country Support Office – Africa & the Middle East
- 3.1.9. Mr Willie Vukela, Acting Director-General: DPSA

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- 4. The agenda was adopted with the following amendments:
 - 4.1. Correction of the date in the previous minutes date: the meeting was held on **22 November 2024** not 22 November 2025.
 - 4.2. Ms Kota to lead the update on the enhancement of the draft Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF)

ADOPTION OF MINUTES: 22 NOVEMBER 2024

- 5. An apology was noted for the delayed distribution of meeting minutes.
 - 5.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2024 were read out aloud and will be circulated to all members.
 - 5.2. The minutes were formally adopted, subject to minor clarifications on item 10.2 provided by the National Treasury.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 22 NOVEMBER 2024

- 6. **Commitment Two: Open Data Transparency in the Three Spheres of Government:**
 - 6.1. The meeting acknowledged the C4IR report on the successful adoption of the six Open Data principles by the CSIR and metropolitan municipalities.
 - 6.2. The OGP Interim Steering Committee Members were encouraged to support the rollout across both urban and rural municipalities.
- 7. **Open Government Challenge: Access to Justice**
 - 7.1. The University of the Western Cape (UWC) Law Clinic was confirmed as the lead institution, following a process of constructive engagement and a formal expression of interest.

- 7.2. Clarification was provided on the University of the Free State's (UFS) non-participation in the Challenge due to their lack of commitment, despite direct engagement and follow-up meetings. However, the UFS and other universities will be invited to participate in the 2025 Open Government Challenge.
- 7.3. CAOSA remains the lead civil society partner, with the Community Advice Offices, recognised as key stakeholders, as part of OGP Interim Steering Committee.
- 7.4. The Challenge documentation was updated to use the term "survivors" instead of "victims" to promote inclusive language.
- 7.5. Clarity was sought on the structure of the initiative – if it comprises two separate challenges or a single coordinated effort- and the roles of the UFS and UWC. The following context was provided:
 - 7.5.1. The UFS was initially considered to co-lead with CAOSA based on prior engagement and site visits. However no formal commitment was received and communication ceased with no explanation.
 - 7.5.2. Due to time constraints and the need for formal commitments, UWC was approached and accepted the lead role, submitting a signed letter of commitment.
 - 7.5.3. Upon Cabinet endorsement, 25 out of 26 university-based law clinics, including UFS, will contribute to National Action Plan on Access to Justice for Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups. The Interim Steering Committee will provide oversight.
 - 7.5.4. The initiative priorities access to justice for marginalised and vulnerable groups, with a focus on gender-based violence and femicide.

8. Integration with G20 Civil Society 20 (C20):

- 8.1. South Africa's G20 Presidency (December 2024 -November 2025), presents a strategic opportunity for civil society to lead an initiative under C20 framework. The OGP South Africa Open Government Challenge on Access to Justice was proposed as a potential flagship initiative, to be championed by the Interim Steering Committee and integrated into the G20 agenda.

FEEDBACK ON DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 22 NOVEMBER 2024

9. Draft Open Government Challenge

- 9.1. The draft OGP Challenge is currently under Cabinet consideration.
- 9.2. It was presented to the relevant Cabinet Committee three weeks prior, which recommended elevating the strategic positioning, reflecting interest from both the President and Deputy President.

9.3. In response, the presentation was restructured to highlight key elements. No new content has been added but annexed materials (e.g. the Challenge template), were integrated into the main documentation for clarity.

9.4. The Cabinet Committee requested clarification on the UWC's role. It was confirmed that all university law clinics will participate, with UWC designated as the lead institution to ensure compliance with the OGP Open Government Challenge requirements. The initiatives will be implemented over a three-year period under the Interim Steering Committee, with the DPSA as the Point of Contact.

9.5. The Point of Contact (POC) will provide updates once Cabinet endorsement is secured.

10. Debrief on OGP Africa Regional meeting in Kenya.

10.1. The OGP Africa Regional Meeting was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 25-27 March 2025, following several postponements.

10.2. Key discussions focused on strengthening local government initiatives and sustaining open government efforts amid funding challenges in the Africa and MENA, particularly following the withdrawal of US funding.

10.3. Case studies from OGP local programmes were shared, offering valuable insights for South Africa as it prepares for local government elections in 2026 and considers expanding participatory processes.

10.4. South Africa's participation was limited, with no representation from the OGP South Africa POC at ministerial or official level. Future participation, including at the OGP Global Summit in Spain (October 2025) was strongly encouraged.

11. Leveraging the OGP CEO's visit to explore South Africa's contribution to the OGP Global Summit to be held in October 2025 in Spain.

11.1. Mr Aiden Eyakuze, the newly appointed OGP Chief Executive Officer (CEO), visited South Africa from 04-05 June 2025. His brief visit included engagements with Inkosi Buthelezi, Minister for the Public Service and Administration (MPSA) and OGP South Africa POC, representatives from the European Union (EU), government departments, Chapter 9 institutions and civil society organisations. These engagements complement the work of the DPSA and the OGP POC.

11.2. Mr Eyakuze has a distinguished background in civil society leadership and has served on both the OGP Steering Committee and Board.

11.3. The visit was seen as an opportunity to reflect on South Africa's role within the OGP, given its status as a founding member. It also presented a chance to elevate the country's OGP profile, reinvigorate national efforts and encourage broader engagement and visibility.

11.4. Minister Buthelezi, as the OGP POC at ministerial level, was scheduled to meet Mr Eyakuze for a courtesy engagement.

- 11.5. Members of the Interim Steering Committee who could attend the courtesy dinner, were invited to share questions or insights, with Mr Eyakuze noted as being approachable and open to dialogue.

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

12. Municipal Money

- 12.1. The Municipal Money Portal is currently out of contract, hindering maintenance and updates.
- 12.2. Plans are underway to integrate Municipal Money with the GoMuni Platform and automate data updates via data strings for sustainability.
- 12.3. A tender for data migration and updates would be advertised within the week, with a two-to-three-year contract envisioned. Post-migration, ongoing updates will note require a service provider.
- 12.4. Procurement delays were attributed to SITA requirements. The National Treasury legal unit is exploring exemption options, with outcomes pending.
- 12.5. Automation of data feeds from municipalities is planned to reduce manual updates.
- 12.6. It is envisaged that once the migration process is completed, the platform will operate independently of external of service providers.

13. Vuleka Mali

- 13.1. The platform experienced technical and procurement challenges during its migration to the National Treasury infrastructure, following the contract end with Open Up.
- 13.2. These challenges stemmed from limited internal ICT capacity and infrastructure readiness, resulting in reliance on external service providers.
- 13.3. Core functionalities were rebuilt using Python, eliminating third party tools dependencies.
- 13.4. Power BI was considered but not adopted due to licencing and filtering limitations.
- 13.5. The successful integration of ENE databases, infrastructure data and performance data from the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)'s system was noted.
- 13.6. Public entity functionality remains under testing and is being resolved.

14. Section 71 Public Finance Webinar

14.1. The meeting received a report on the Section 71 Public Finance Webinar, held in April 2025. As the National Treasury's first public engagement on municipal finance reporting, the event exceeded attendance expectations and demonstrated string public interest.

14.2. Key outcomes:

14.2.1. Civil Society organisations expressed interest in supporting public participation and financial literacy at community level.

14.2.2. Ratepayer Associations requested more targeted and localised sessions to enhance their role in municipal budget consultations.

14.2.3. Participants valued the guidance on accessing and interpreting S71 financial reports.

14.2.4. The webinar focused on public education, with future sessions to include analytical content.

14.2.5. Panellist were featured on media platforms post event, reflecting broader impact.

14.2.6. Webinar materials are available on the MSME website under "**Webinars**," which will host future sessions and resources.

14.2.7. Progress on the National Action Plan is on track- including resolution of public entity functionality and SSL certificate issues- indicating nearing completion of technical infrastructure nearing completion.

14.2.8. The final webinar report will be submitted to the OGP South Africa POC for distribution to the Interim Steering Committee.

14.2.9. The meeting welcomes the high attendance and engagement, noting positive feedback from civil society and ratepayer groups.

14.2.10. The National Treasury plans to host more localised and thematic webinars.

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

15. No report submitted- apology on absence noted.

PROGRESS WITH THE OGP SOUTH AFRICA MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM (MSF) TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

16. The updated draft MSF ToR were presented and reviewed.

17. Key features highlighted:

- 17.1. Inclusive membership(government, civil society, academia, private sector).
- 17.2. Clear governance, decision-making and participation guidelines.
- 17.3. Emphasis on transparency, collaboration and sustainability.

EXPLORING G20 LINKS TO BOLSTER OGP ACTION

18. South Africa's G20 Presidency was identified as a strategic opportunity to align civil society-led initiatives with OGP objectives.

DISCUSSIONS

19. The OGP South Africa Revival process, was identified as presenting an opportunity to renew national commitment to the Partnership. This would be contingent on identifying and empowering dedicated champions committed to the principles of the OGP.
20. Engagement challenges were noted, in particular the lack of clarity on national level POCs, which hinders the documentation of local OGP initiatives e.g. the Western Cape's inclusive governance efforts.
21. A shared platform for documenting and showcasing OGP activities was recommended, with suggestions to enhance the existing OGP South Africa platform to allow contributions from non-governmental actors within the Interim Steering Committee.
22. The capturing of institutional knowledge was highlighted as a need to avoid a repetition of past mistakes and strengthen future initiatives.
23. The Interim Steering Committee was proposed as a strategic space for coordination and strategy development that is inclusive and responsive to all actors.
24. MSF ToR discussion emphasised:
 - 24.1. Inclusive stakeholder representation.
 - 24.2. Clear governance, decision making and participation guidelines.
 - 24.3. The need to focus on transparency, collaboration and sustainability.
25. The OGP South Africa Platform:
 - 25.1. The meeting received a report the OGP South Africa website was migrated to the DPSA government website due to security concerns.
 - 25.2. Concern was raised about the platform's functionality and inclusivity.
 - 25.3. Broader access and improved were highlighted as priorities.
26. Concern was raised about SITA's capacity to support participatory platforms like Vulekamali.
27. The National Treasury provided the following clarification and perspectives on the Vulekamali and Municipal Money/ GoMuni platforms:

- 27.1. Limited alternatives for hosting exist, exemptions from the SITA Act are possible but slow and uncertain.
 - 27.2. SITA has acknowledged its limitations in supporting complex ICT needs.
 - 27.3. The National Treasury ICT is building internal infrastructure to reduce reliance on cloud hosting.
 - 27.4. Vulekamali is not hosted by SITA but relies on it for its domain registration, IP address mapping and SSL Certification- an area currently facing challenges.
28. G20 Civil Society (C20) integration-South Africa's presidency was reaffirmed as an opportunity for civil society leadership in OGP initiatives under.

RECOMMENDATIONS

29. That the OGP South Africa establish a functional, easy to maintain, practical and inclusive digital platform to facilitate documentation, collaboration and visibility. Alternative hosting options that are more agile and accessible should be explored.
30. The development of a stakeholder engagement framework to clarify roles and responsibilities across government and civil society.
31. To capture lessons learned and institutional memory, consideration to be given to the initiation of a knowledge management process.
32. Promote interim coordination mechanisms within the Interim Steering Committee to support ongoing planning and implementation.
33. DPSA ICT and SITA to be consulted for improvements to the OGP website's functionality and accessibility.

SUMMARY AND WAY FORWARD

34. Adoption of the draft OGP South Africa MSF Terms of Reference (ToR)

- 34.1. The Interim Steering Committee adopted the updated ToR for the MSF as a working document, open and subject to refinement.

35. Transition from OGP SA Interim Steering Committee to OGP SA Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF):

- 35.1. The adoption of the ToR will empower the MSF to begin fulfilling its mandate in guiding OGP-related activities, while providing space for incremental refinement of the document. Consequently, the Interim Steering Committee will formally transition into the OGP South Africa MSF of 05 June 2025, marking a significant step in institutionalising the multi-stakeholder governance framework.
- 35.2. Membership would be expanded to include broader stakeholders.

35.3. The ToR would remain open and subject to refinement.

35.4. The MSF would operate under the adopted ToR until the end of the current OGP South Africa National Action Plan (NAP 2023-2026).

36. OGP South Africa Platform development

36.1. The DPSA, as the OGP POC- at official level- will engage its ICT Directorate and SITA to enhance accessibility and functionality of the OGP platform. Feedback on proposed solutions will be presented at the next meeting.

36.2. Alternative technological solutions, including the OpenDataZA toolkit, currently hosted on a free Gitbook platform (<https://opendataza.gitbook.io/toolkit>.), will be explored to support consistent updates and improve the visibility of OGP initiatives across South Africa.
