



## Press Release

---

### Open Government Workshop

The Government Citizen Interaction Centre (GCIC) in partnership with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung convened a workshop on the theme, "Building capacity to enhance efficiency of Government - Citizen Interaction".

The workshop primarily aimed at discussing how to harness "Open Government" for delivering equitable development outcomes. The Dialogue which was held at Mestil Hotel on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019 was graced by the Minister in Charge of General Duties, Hon. Mary Karoro Okurut.

During his opening remarks, the Head of GCIC – Mr. Awel Uwihanganye highlighted that GCIC's strategic focus on Open government is about increasing access to information and data. "At GCIC we seek to leverage existing and meaningful opportunities for dialogue and collaboration between government and the public".

The workshop comes at a time when the Government of Uganda is re-invigorating citizen engagement in monitoring of public services, to deliver services to its citizens, and enable a more vibrant citizen-government engagement.

Hon. Okurut remarked that the significance of GCIC's Open Government Initiative is that it gives citizens access to public information. This provides citizens with opportunities to participate in the proceedings of their government which in turn promotes accountability, transparency and efficiency of government services.

The Minister of General Duties also noted keenly that an open government is better positioned to effectively manage and allocate public resources. Already, Gov't agencies such as National Medical Stores have strived to publish medical deliveries in all major Newspapers. Citizens can be able to track the transit of government drugs and hold medical officers accountable.

A collaborative engagement between citizens, the private sector and government through unlocking access to information and accountability is one way of achieving increased democratic governance and accountability.

During his keynote address, Mathias Kamp - the Country Director for KAS Uganda and South Sudan, thanked the Ministry of ICT and GCIC for being committed strategic partners in driving Uganda's Open Government Agenda.

Kamp stated that for over 2 decades, KAS Uganda & South Sudan has been a commendable partner with the Ministry of ICT. In light of this partnership, he said that KAS Uganda has mainly focused on civic education of citizens to foster open governance and improve service delivery.

"KAS Uganda has also been at the forefront of promoting open dialogue on democracy, the rule of law and economic development as a foundation for building an engaged citizenry in Uganda", he emphasized.

In championing a sound and engaged democracy, Kamp takes the view that democracy is beyond elections and must embed citizens actively through participation and decision making processes.

"Democracy is about the day to day interactions between the citizens and their leaders. Its about consistent engagement to meet overall expectations and aspirations of the people. Democracy is about openness and transparency, being able hold government institutions accountable."

"We must highlight the aspect of learning, Governments should be open to learning from the views and input of citizens. This actively fosters a well functioning Government that works for the people", added Kamp.

With the view of ensuring active participation in government provision of services, a more open access to information, services, and robust participation in decision-making processes, GCIC seeks to primarily leverage its digital communication capabilities to ensure authentic and user-friendly platforms that enable appropriate and timely citizen-government engagement.

This ensures that information and feedback reaches the beneficiaries in a timely manner.

The workshop delivered on these primary outputs:

- (1) It improved the ability of MDAs to deploy digital and social media solutions that increase access to innovative solutions for more citizen-government interactions;
- (2) It equipped the general public with capabilities to utilize open data digital platforms to engage with, and obtain services from government agencies;
- (3) It conceptualized avenues and channels available to government to enable open data platforms to provide open access to information and documentation for use in research, media use, and general access by citizens

**For more information contact**

Email: [info@gcic.go.ug](mailto:info@gcic.go.ug)

900 Toll Free

Manager GCIC – Duncan Abigaba - 0779 218528

ICT House, Plot 10/12 Parliamentary Ave.

P.O.Box 7817, Kampala – Uganda