



## **TANZANIA TO REJOIN OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP (OGP) - SAYS PRESIDENT SAMIA**

The Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) would like to convey warmest congratulations to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania under the leadership of Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan for reconsidering rejoining the Open Government Partnership (OGP) as a platform to continue improving Democracy, Human Rights and Good Governance in the country for the benefit of this nation and great interest of the people. We also recognize and commend various efforts taken by government leaders including Ministers in guiding the government to rejoin the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

In December 2022, THRDC wrote an open letter advising our government on the importance of rejoining the OGP forum. Tanzania joined the OGP in 2011 and withdrew in 2017. It's our greatest pleasure to congratulate and thank the Government of Tanzania for its commitment to rejoin OGP as our President, H.E Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan confirmed when addressing the Democracy Summit on 29/03/202.

*“The United Republic of Tanzania will continue supporting democracy, human rights and good governance at home and abroad, and we are looking to the issue of returning to the Open Government Partnership (OGP) at the earliest opportunity.....Democracy can only thrive where human rights are respected, and rule of law is observed. Our government has then given high priority [to] the promotion of human rights in the country and restriction to the enjoyment of human rights have been removed.”* H.E Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan in Her remarks when addressing the Summit for Democracy 2023 on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

It is an indisputable fact that this commitment carries the essence and authenticity of our President's 4Rs ideology including *Rebuilding* and *Reforms*. *Reforms* to make changes where necessary pushing things forward and *Rebuilding* by looking at the existing challenges, working on them and moving forward in pushing our development agenda. We commend government initiatives towards positive changes in Tanzania. Good governance, rule of law and respect to human rights are the foundations of development for any country in the world. We as human rights defenders, our role is to promote human rights, condemn violations and advise the government in various matters for the best interest of the people. Rejoining the OGP is a step towards strengthening rule of law, respect for human rights and good governance.

The Government's intention to rejoin the OGP bring about a positive legal and institutional changes in Tanzania. The following are the benefits of joining OGP:

1. OGP is built on key pillars of good governance namely, transparency, citizen participation, accountability, integrity, technology and innovation which seem to be in line with the current direction of sixth phase government.
2. The Current Five Years Development Plan emphasizes on inclusivity and citizen participation in various development programs. OGP is a powerful tool for achieving national priorities for the best interest of Tanzanian, the government and Civil Society Organization.
3. At the country level, the OGP platform can serve as a readily available, country-owned mechanism to co-create concrete reforms that would form part of Tanzania's OGP Action Plan.
4. At the global level, OGP can help provide a regional and global stage to showcase and amplify Tanzania's open government efforts, and a forum to exchange experiences with other governments and civil society across Africa and beyond.
5. OGP creates a robust platform to develop and implement domestic reforms and open government policies. OGP provides a framework for concrete action on pressing public policy issues at national level. For example, OGP commitments can focus on; making public services more useful and effective; spurring economic growth through innovation and openness; fighting corruption; using technology to make government more open and responsive to citizens; and much more. This provides an opportunity to civil society organizations to advise and participate in implementation of national development plans.
6. OGP can provide the ideas, expertise, tools, and networks to help governments translate political will into concrete reform and implementable programs - without re-inventing by involving stakeholders including CSOs and human rights defenders.
7. OGP can also serve as a mechanism to consolidate and coordinate various good governance reforms across line ministries and agencies while collecting and communicating stories of how OGP commitments have led to reform across various sectors.
8. OGP helps to initiate dialogues for solving common problems in participating countries, moving public administrations towards a more open and participatory policy-making culture, and improved government services to the people.
9. OGP provides outstanding opportunities for exchange and sharing best practices. For instance, at the international level, OGP provides a global platform to connect, empower, acknowledge and support domestic reformers committed to transforming government and society through openness and inclusion. Peer exchange is an essential component of the OGP model, as it inspires reformers, provides a safe space for discussing common challenges, serves as a platform for joint problem solving, and strengthens the sense of community among reformers working to improve their respective public administrations.

10. OGP boosts international recognition and provides the opportunity to showcase Tanzania's reform successes through presentations made by the Government and CSOs. Added visibility brings an extra element of scrutiny and accountability, both from in-country civil society and peers.
11. OGP promotes social space and social groups to participate openly in various national development programs.

We believe, it's our role as human rights defenders of this country to accordingly advise the government on issue of public interest. CSOs and human rights defenders are the best allies of the government in advancing the culture of human rights, good governance and rule of law for sustainable development. THRDC calls its members and other CSOs in Tanzania to co- create strong OGP coordination platforms across all key thematic areas. THRDC also reminds its members to continue defending human rights observing the laws of the country and respecting adhering to Tanzanian norms, values and culture.

**Issues by,**  
**Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC)**  
**31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**