



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Media Innovation to Support Citizens Engagement on Public Procurement Issues

Nairobi, Monday 22 July 2019 - The Nation Media Group (NMG) has today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on the establishment of an Open Contracting (O.C) portal that will provide open data on public procurement data to the public. The O.C portal will enable visibility for media story linkages, data backed storytelling, access to information for research, and support the shelf life of procurement related stories after the first period of first publication. This portal will also be the premier resource tool for journalists across Kenya to access critical information on public procurement supporting the timely and informed reporting of stories in this area. The portal will be hosted by the Nation Media Group, developed in collaboration with Hivos East Africa and the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA-Kenya).

Speaking during the MoU signing for the collaboration on this initiative, NMG's Chief Executive Officer, Stephen Gitagama, lauded the new partnership as a move that will enhance its role as a public watchdog. "This partnership will entrench the Group's mission of positively transforming society by promoting transparency and accountability in public resource management." Through the initiative, the Group will be able to put spotlight on dark areas and enable citizens to interrogate government decisions on public procurement and the accrued value.

Hivos East Africa's Regional Director, Mendi Njonjo pledged continued support for the partnership as a move for enabling citizen engagement in demanding for transparency and accountability in public procurement. "One of our major goals as an institution that advocates for the adoption of open contracting is to see that citizens are well informed about the use of public funds in procurement, and that citizens receive the critical goods and services they need in a timely and efficient way" she said.

"That the Government of Kenya (GoK) spends a lot of money raised through taxes is not news to Kenyans. Our view is that we need to complete the circle of understanding by making information on process and

amounts spent into prominent view. Through scrutiny and disclosure, we expect that the deliberate infractions of procurement law will be evident and to expose to Kenyans that we must demand for all public officers to be better stewards of the public treasure”, says Kwame Owino, CEO – IEA Kenya.

According to statistics from the Uwezo Fund, public procurement deals in Kenya for the supply of essential goods and services to citizens in all counties are estimated to be worth Kshs. 1.6 trillion. Essentially, efficient public procurement is often the best indicator of socio-economic transformation, particularly for marginalised groups being Women, Youth and Persons with Disability.

****ENDS****

About Hivos

Hivos is an international organisation incorporated in Kenya that seeks new solutions to national and regional issues affecting transparency, equality, abuse of power and sustainable use of resources. Hivos in its Open Contracting Programme seeks to improve public procurement and public contracting through the use of open data for proactive disclosure of data for the entire contracting cycle of all public contracts, improved public participation and use of contracting data; and supported public accountability and redress by government agencies acting on public feedback.

About NMG

Nation Media Group PLC is an independent multi-media organisation which operates print, broadcast and digital media outlets in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania. Nation Media Group (NMG) is a pan-East African media house established in 1959, and is the second largest publicly listed multimedia company in Africa. It was founded by His Highness, The Aga Khan, with the commitment to champion independent African voices, diversity, freedom of expression, democracy for emerging democratic Africa, and to be a strong advocate for free market economies.

It has operations in print, broadcast and digital media, which attract and serve unparalleled audiences in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda as well as globally. It publishes the *Daily Nation* and *Taija Leo* newspaper brands in Kenya, *The East African* regional newspaper, the *Daily Monitor* in Uganda, and the *Mwananchi*, *The Citizen* and *Mwanaspoti* newspapers in Dar es Salaam and a raft of e-papers and other on-line content assets. Also in its stable are *NTV Kenya*, and *NTV* and *Spark* television stations as well as *KFM* and *Dembe* radios in Uganda. It also owns the *Nation FM* radio in Kenya among other brands in the region.

About IEA-Kenya

The Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA-Kenya) is a think-tank that provides a platform for informed discussions in order to influence public policy in Kenya. We seek to promote pluralism of ideas through open, active and informed debate on public policy issues. We undertake research and conduct public education on key economic and topical issues in public affairs in Kenya and the region, and utilize the outcomes of the research for policy dialogue and to influence policy making.

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