



GOVERNMENT NEWS



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GOVCHAT MEETS WHATSAPP FOR BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY

- South Africa has launched the world's first citizen engagement platform that makes use of popular messenger WhatsApp.
- Speaking at the launch of the GovChat Community Engagement Platform in Cape Town on Tuesday, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) Deputy Minister Andries Nel explained that the platform is the world's first citizen engagement platform with inbuilt communication tools on WhatsApp.
- Nel said for the first time in the country's history, citizens will be able to access over 10 000 public representatives supporting over 30 000 public facilities and services in communities nationwide.
- "The collaborative effort makes the South African government the first in the world to create a digital communication tool where government becomes instantly accessible to over 16 million people," Nel said.
- Nel said in rural communities where connection may be slower, GovChat will be available through the Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) channel.
- To find out more, visit: <https://www.govchat.org.za/en/>.
- "This is very important because our Constitution provides in section 152 that the first objective of local government is to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities.
- The Local Government Structures Act requires, amongst others, that municipalities develop mechanisms to consult communities and community organisations in performing their functions and exercising their powers. In a local government context, these structures are known as ward committees.
- "Ward committees have been positioned as a critical structure through which public participation in local government is to be achieved and most importantly, form a link between ward councillors, the community and the municipality.
- Nel said it is important to allow citizens to create their own terms of engagement so long as these are harmonious and allow citizens' voices to be heard.
- For the full article kindly visit: <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/govchat-meets-whatsapp-better-service-delivery>



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