Data for Governance Alliance
African voices for African policy

Cape Town, South Africa
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News release

"Data cannot lie idle," political campaigns expert Glen Mpani tells Data for Governance Alliance gathering in Cape Town

The Afrobarometer-led and EU-funded project Data for Governance Alliance's second stakeholders training on governance, democracy, and human rights opened Monday in Cape Town, South Africa.

The week-long workshop brings together pan-African civil society organisations (CSOs) and participants from four African Union organs – the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), the Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC). Data for Governance Alliance partners and Charter Project Africa representatives are also attending.

The theme for this year's convening is "Enhancing governance, democracy, and human rights in Africa: Empowering pan-African civil society to effectively use data to enhance advocacy."

Standing in for Professor Eldred Masunungure, political campaigns expert Glen Mpani said in his keynote address: "Data cannot lie idle. In fact, we need to think of a way of having [Afrobarometer] data taught in primary school. If we are now teaching kids to code, why can't we teach kids an understanding of numbers and what they mean?"

Mpani's speech focused on the centrality of promoting data-driven approaches for evidence-based policy making on the continent. He also noted the essential role of political parties, saying, "Power lies in political parties. Political parties play a very central role in governance. They decide who governs us, and they shape policy. But unfortunately, we invest very little in them."

Reflecting on the crucial role of the African Union in conversations on governance, democracy, and human rights in Africa, Cheryl Hendricks, executive director of the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, told the gathering, "The AU should lead the difficult conversations about leadership, rule of law, and the future of participation in our changing world." Hendricks also featured in the line-up of speakers.

Thirty-five participants are taking part in this year's training. Following the meeting in Cape Town, the Data for Governance Alliance plans to convene in Accra for the next stakeholders' training before heading to Nairobi to close off this year's round of workshops.

Last year, 42 CSO representatives received practical training on accessing and using data and information tools during three regional workshops in Ghana, South Africa, and Kenya hosted by the Data for Governance Alliance.

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Describing the Data for Governance Alliance, Nyasha McBride Mpani, project coordinator for Southern Africa, said, "The Data for Governance Alliance project is a guiding light for informed and engaged African citizens. It plays a crucial role in closing gaps, empowering citizens in democracy and human rights, and promoting collaboration among citizens, CSOs, and AGP member institutions."

About Data for Governance Alliance

The Data for Governance Alliance is a four-year project that promotes data-based advocacy and engagement between pan-African civil society organisations (CSOs) and African Union organs. The project is led by Afrobarometer with partners including the Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), the Institute for Development Studies at the University of Nairobi, the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, and Laws.Africa. The project is funded by the European Union.

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DATA FOR GOVERNANCE ALLIANCE CONSORTIUM PARTNERS

Afrobarometer (AB) is a trusted source of high-quality data and analysis on the experiences, attitudes, and preferences of African citizens. With an unmatched track record of 350,000+ interviews in 42 countries, representing the views of 75% of the African population, AB is leading the charge to bridge the continent's data gap. AB data inform many global indices, such as the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators. The data are also used for country risk analyses and by credit rating and forecasting agencies such as the Economist Intelligence Unit. All AB data sets are publicly available on the website and may be analysed free of charge using AB's online data analysis tool.

The Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), based in Accra, Ghana, focuses on the promotion of democracy, good governance, and economic openness in Ghana and Africa through investments in research and advocacy, outreach, and strategic dialogues and engagements within and between government, private sector, and other key actors. CDD-Ghana is also an AB core partner.
Website: https://cddgh.org/

The **Institute for Development Studies (IDS),** based at the University of Nairobi in Kenya, is a multi-disciplinary research and training institute. Its focus is on promoting socio-economic and political development in East Africa through the application of research findings to development policies   and promoting dialogue across public, private, and non-

state actors. IDS is an AB core partner.
Website: https://ids.uonbi.ac.ke/university-nairobi.

The **Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR),** based in Cape Town, South Africa, is one of Africa's leading transitional-justice organisations. Born out of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, IJR uses inclusive and multi-stakeholder dialogue as a foundation to constructively engage on harmful legacies of the past. IJR is an AB core partner. Website:
https://www.ijr.org.za

Laws.Africa, based in South Africa, focuses on addressing Africa's deficiency on access to reliable legal material on human rights, the environment, commerce and technology. Laws.Africa develops legal technology solutions, digitises and publishes high-quality and accurate African government gazettes, updated legislation and case law to partners and audiences in Africa and the world. Website: https://laws.africa/.