

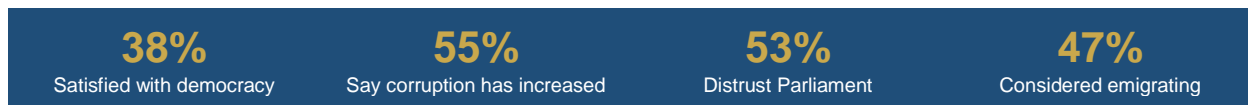
AFRICAN VOICES FOR AFRICAN POLICY

A Declaration from Civil Society, AU Institutions, and Governance Partners | D4GA Continental Convening 2026

PREAMBLE

We, the civil society organisations, African Union (AU) institutions, governance practitioners, and partners convened at the Data for Governance Alliance (D4GA) Continental Convening in Accra, Ghana (20-24 April 2026), adopt this communiqué. Drawing on Afrobarometer Round 10 data from 38 countries and five years of programme experience, we reaffirm our commitment to data-driven, citizen-centred governance across the continent. We thank the European Union (EU), the German Federal Ministry (BMZ/GIZ), and the African Union for their sustained partnership.

THE DATA SPEAK: AFRICAN GOVERNANCE SNAPSHOT



Source: Afrobarometer Round 10, 2024/2025 | 38 African countries | 53,000+ respondents | 65% of citizens still prefer democracy

1. Democracy and Accountability

Bridging the gap between democratic aspiration and democratic delivery

Democratic satisfaction has fallen by 8 percentage points since 2011. Only 38% of citizens are satisfied with how democracy works, even as 65% continue to prefer it. Trust in parliaments has declined by 15 points since 2014, trust in courts by 8 points. The only institution to gain trust over this period is the military – a serious warning sign.

WE COMMIT TO:

- Post-election accountability tracking in D4GA partner countries, sustaining CSO engagement beyond Election Day.
- Supporting the AU Advisory Board on Corruption to develop model asset-declaration laws and anti-corruption frameworks.
- Partnering with the AU APRM to integrate citizen perception data into country review processes.

WE CALL UPON AU MEMBER STATES TO:

- Ensure independence of electoral commissions, judiciaries, and anti-corruption bodies from executive interference.
- Allocate at least 0.5% of national budgets to accountability institutions, shielded from executive appropriation.

Current evidence from across Africa shows that most accountability bodies operate with allocations below 0.2% of national budgets, and even those amounts are routinely withheld or reduced mid-year. The proposed 0.5% floor represents a meaningful but achievable step-change, not an arbitrary figure.

2. Data as a Public Good and Access to Legal and Policy Information

From data production to evidence-based policy – closing the access gap

Data drive outcomes when they reach decision makers. Afrobarometer findings have informed policies in a number of countries, including Ghana, Senegal, Namibia, and The Gambia. A handful of African countries provide world-class access to legal information and justice data. At the same time, more than 90% of African countries fail to provide free, authoritative access to their own legislation, court judgments, and official gazettes – undermining the rule of law, justice reforms, and development agendas, including implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Ghana has pioneered the publication of magistrate court judgments, making 90% of legal interactions of ordinary Ghanaians publicly visible for the first time – allowing near-real-time insights into the administration of justice. This is a model other member states can follow.

WE COMMIT TO:

- Data literacy training for 65 CSO staff across 40 AU member states through D4GA Phase 2 programming.
- Supporting 25 jurisdictions to publish authoritative, machine-readable, openly licensed legal information by 2028, including magistrate court judgments in at least five countries.

- Establishing an evidence-to-policy fast-track programme delivering data-informed policy briefs within 60 days of data release.

WE CALL UPON:

- The AU Commission to formally integrate Afrobarometer data into the Africa Governance Report and APRM reviews.
- AU member states to keep primary legal content – legislation, judgments, and gazettes – free and openly accessible and to implement policies and programmes to facilitate digitisation in the sector, following Ghana and Tanzania's models.

3. Civil Society, Youth, Gender, and Media Freedom

Inclusive governance requires structured participation, not token representation

Almost half (45%) of African citizens have considered emigrating, primarily due to a lack of economic opportunity – a governance failure expressed through migration. Barriers to civic participation are particularly high for youth (65% of Africa's population) and women. Civic space is shrinking in multiple country contexts, and more than half of African countries lack effective right-to-information legislation.

WE COMMIT TO:

- Negotiating a formalised CSO-AU engagement protocol with at least five AU organs by January 2027.
- Expanding the AU Policy Engagement MOOC to French, Portuguese, and Arabic, targeting 5,000 learners by 2027.
- Producing gender-disaggregated governance data and supporting women's CSO engagement with AU human-rights organs.
- Training investigative journalists through Media Foundation for Western Africa NGID Fellowship and D4GA partner networks.

WE CALL UPON:

- AU member states to provide youth with substantive governance participation – not merely symbolic inclusion.
- All AU member states to enact and enforce right-to-information legislation and reverse the trend of shrinking civic space.

4. The Case for D4GA Phase 2 (2026-2030)

Building on five years of demonstrated impact

Phase 1 helped produce Afrobarometer Round 10 data across 38 African countries, built the AfricanLII legal platform, established formal MOUs with AU organs, and created a functional CSO-AU engagement ecosystem. Phase 2 must scale what works – not expand into areas without foundation.

PHASE 2 PRIORITY AREAS:

- Deepen CSO-AU structural engagement: formalised protocols with five core AU organs and quarterly accountability reports.
- Expand open legal information coverage toward full AU member state access, aligned with AfCFTA and APRM needs.
- Multilingual expansion of advocacy tools and the AU Policy Engagement MOOC.
- Youth data fellowships and gender-disaggregated governance analysis as core programme components.

WE CALL UPON INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS (EU, BMZ/GIZ):

- Fund Phase 2 as a long-term governance and data infrastructure investment, not a short project cycle.
- Align funding timelines with continental governance reform horizons and AU Agenda 2063.
- Embed D4GA evidence in EU-AU human-rights dialogues; promote, implement, and evaluate AfCFTA and all bilateral governance assessments.

"We leave Accra more resolved than when we arrived. Africa's governance crisis is not inevitable – it is measurable, traceable, and actionable. The data show us where the gaps are. The citizens show us what they aspire to and what they are denied. We choose to write Africa's governance future with evidence, with solidarity, and with an uncompromising commitment to the Africa that African citizens deserve." – Adopted unanimously

| D4GA Continental Convening 2026 | Accra, Ghana | 24 April 2026

African voices for African policy