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News release

Afrobarometer lays foundation for 'next generation' of giving voice to African citizens

Moving from pioneering project to pan-African institution, the research network Afrobarometer will enter its third decade with a new structure emphasizing partnership, capacity building, and sustainability, Executive Director E. Gyimah-Boadi said Thursday.

The ambitious restructuring will provide firm footing for the independent network of about three dozen national partner organizations tracking and reporting attitudes of citizens across the continent on democracy, governance, the economy, and other topics, Gyimah-Boadi said.

Changes include Afrobarometer's recent formal registration as a non-profit corporation headquartered in Ghana and steps to strengthen governance, management oversight, strategic adaptability, resource mobilization, and African capacity-building programs over the coming year. The infrastructure will also enable Afrobarometer to make its wealth of data – an open-source global public good – more accessible, timely, and relevant to a wider range of users.

Long known as the world's leading provider of reliable data on public opinion in Africa, Afrobarometer has conducted more than 275,000 face-to-face interviews in 38 countries. In the process, it has nurtured a generation of African research scholars in data collection and analysis, communications, management, and leadership. Its eighth round of national surveys, to be launched in mid-2019, will cover at least 34 countries.

"We believe that African societies thrive when African voices count in public policy and development," said Gyimah-Boadi, who co-founded the network with colleagues Robert Mattes and Michael Bratton in 1999.

"Over the past 20 years, Afrobarometer has demonstrated that the views of ordinary citizens can indeed be heard and made to count. With these organizational changes, we're ready to pursue our pan-African potential as an essential tool for informed and successful development on the continent."

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