PARTICIPATION AS A HUMAN RIGHT
OVERVIEW

PURPOSE OF THIS WORKSHOP IS TO INTRODUCE SEVERAL ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW THAT SUPPORTS PARTICIPATION AS A HUMAN RIGHT THAT SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGE AND RESPECTED.
KEY CONCEPTS

**PARTICIPATION** ~ THE ACTION OF TAKING PART IN SOMETHING OR THE STATE OF BEING RELATED TO A LARGER WHOLE

**HUMAN RIGHTS** – RIGHTS THAT ONE HAS BY VIRTUE OF BEING A HUMAN BEING

**ENGAGEMENT** – AN ARRANGEMENT TO DO SOMETHING
PARTICIPATION AS A HUMAN RIGHT
HUMAN RIGHTS

CIVIL AND POLITICAL

• Area a class of rights that protect an individual or group’s freedom from infringement by governments, social organizational and private individuals. They ensure one’s ability to participate in the civil and political life of the society and state without discrimination or repression. Right to equality before the law; freedom of association, or freedom of assembly.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

• Economic social and cultural rights are a class of socio-economic human rights including the right to education, right to housing, the right to a safe environment; the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to health and the right to science and culture.
THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

**UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS**: ADOPTED IN 1948. ARTICLES 1: ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE BORN FREE AND EQUAL IN DIGNITY AND RIGHTS.

ARTICLE 21: EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO TAKE PART IN THE GOVERNMENT OF HIS/HER COUNTRY; EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO EQUAL ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICE AND THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE SHALL BE THE BASIS OF THE AUTHORITY OF GOVERNMENT.
THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

• INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS:

• 169 COUNTRIES ARE PARTY TO THE COVENANT. ARTICLE 25 GUARANTEES THE RIGHT OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, ONE TO TAKE PART IN THE CONDUCT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO VOTE AND TO BE ELECTED AT GENUINE PERIODIC ELECTIONS AND HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICE POSITIONS.
THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.

GUARANTEES THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CULTURAL LIFE OF A COUNTRY AND AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING, AMONG OTHER THINGS.
THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: ARTICLE 7: STATE PARTIES SHOULD TAKE ALL APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE OF THE COUNTRY; TO VOTE IN ALL ELECTIONS AND PUBLIC REFERENDA; TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FORMULATION OF GOVERNMENT POLICY.. TO HOLD PUBLIC OFFICE AND TO PARTICIPATE IN NGOS AND ASSOCIATIONS CONCERNED WITH THE PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE OF THE COUNTRY.
AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES RIGHTS: STATES WHICH HAVE RATIFIED: 53

ARTICLE 13: “EVERY CITIZEN SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE FREELY IN THE GOVERNMENT OF HIS COUNTRY, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH FREELY CHOSEN REPRESENTATIVES…”
AFRICAN CHARTER ON DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND GOVERNANCE: ARTICLE 31, CALLS ON STATE PARTIES TO "PROMOTE PARTICIPATION OF SOCIAL GROUPS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, INCLUDING THE YOUTH."
THE AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

AFRICAN YOUTH CHARTER: Adopted in 2006, provides the continental framework for the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of the youth, and the obligations of member states to ensure the realization of the Charter’s priorities at all levels. Of particular importance is Article 11. It provides for the right of every young African to participate in all spheres of society, is assured. State parties are obliged to facilitate the creation or strengthening of platforms for youth participation in decision-making processes at local, national, regional and continental levels.
AGA AND THE RIGHT OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
AGA’S YES AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

- The YES was drafted and validated at four regional consultations within a three months period, before it was formally approved at the July 2016 Heads of State Meeting. The YES theory of change envisages that by implementing four targeted outcomes focused on creating increased youth awareness of AU-shared values on democratic governance, and by enhancing the capacity of youth to engage with AU organs, institutions and regional economic communities (REC’s), it will grow its engagement in democratic governance processes. The strategy further aims to develop youth-specific knowledge on democratic governance trends, and create platforms for dialogue and the sharing of comparable lessons on youth specific trends, challenges and prospects for improved governance and democracy.
OBSTACLES TO EQUAL POLITICAL AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION EXISTS IN MANY COUNTRIES

WHAT ARE SOME OBSTACLES IN YOUR COUNTRY?
WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO PROTECT THE RIGHT OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION