



**2018 REGIONAL YOUTH CONSULTATIONS ON THE THEME OF THE YEAR:
“WINNING THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION: A SUSTAINABLE PATH TO
AFRICA’S TRANSFORMATION”**

**THEME:
LEVERAGING YOUTH CAPACITIES FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST
CORRUPTION IN AFRICA**

CONCEPT NOTE

JULY – AUGUST 2018

A. Contextual Background

On July 11, 2003, the African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government adopted the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Africa (AUCPCC). The Convention which entered into force on August 5, 2006, signaled the political commitment of African leaders to fight and combat the cancerous scourge of corruption on the continent. To give effect to Article 22 of the Convention, the AU established in 2009, an Advisory Board on Corruption with a broad range of functions including to promote and encourage adoption and application of anti-corruption measures on the continent. These efforts are grounded in the commitment of African leaders as espoused in the Constitutive Act of the AU. The Act enjoins Member States to coordinate and intensify their cooperation, unity, cohesion and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa. The Act specifically calls for the protection and promotion of human and peoples' rights, consolidation of democratic governance and the rule of law, as well as the promotion of social justice to ensure balanced economic development.

Corruption, a global phenomenon, continues to be at the heart of governance deficits in Africa. Without a doubt, it is a daunting challenge to good governance, sustainable economic growth, peace, stability, and development in Africa¹. Corruption continues to negatively hamper efforts aimed at promoting democratic governance, socio-economic transformation, peace and security in AU Member States. According to the Report of the High-Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa, popularly known as the Mbeki Report, Africa loses over fifty (50) billion US dollars every year through illicit financial flows. This huge drain on the resources continues to negatively impact on developmental efforts of the continent. If sustainable efforts are not put in place to address this challenge among other elements of corruption, attaining the goals of Agenda 2063 - Africa's 50-year development blueprint - as well as the Global Sustainable Development Goals may be slow to achieve.

Corruption disproportionately affects people living in poverty and those whose voices are marginalized, the significant majority of whom are young people and women². Youth and women make up more than half of Africa's population, and they are both at the receiving end of the worst effects of corruption on developmental outcomes on the continent. Corruption exacerbates inequalities in society. Specifically, young people are impacted by corruption as experienced in the limited access to political, economic and social opportunities. The effects of these include a high rate of unemployment, limited access to public services, distrust in governance systems and frustrations which fuels radicalisation and forced migration through the Mediterranean Sea, amongst others. Without a doubt, turning the corner on sustainable prevention and fight against corruption requires a proactive and deliberate engagement of young people at all levels.

Given the above and as part of its efforts to prevent and fight corruption, the AU during its 30th Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in January 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia launched 2018 as the African Anti-Corruption year. This followed the declaration made at the 29th Assembly of the Heads of State and Government in January 2017 to dedicate the theme for 2018 to ***“Winning the fight against corruption: a sustainable path to Africa's transformation.”*** To further give political weight to this declaration, the AU Assembly designated H.E Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as the

¹ UNECA (2001), Combating Corruption, Improving Governance in Africa

<https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/combating-corruption-improving-governance-in-africa-2011-2016.pdf>

² African Union (2018) African Union Gender Pre-summit Concept Note

https://au.int/sites/default/files/newsevents/workingdocuments/33563-wd-final_pa

Champion for the theme of the year, in recognition of the efforts made by H.E Buhari in the fight against corruption.

Through various activities and initiatives within the context of the theme of the year, the AU aims to rally various segments of the African society including AU Organs, Institutions, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the Member States; Civil Society Organisations, as well as citizens - women and young people alike - to address the urgent need to fight against corruption and impunity on the continent as a sustainable path to a prosperous and peaceful Africa. The year is further expected to give impetus and girth to the commitment of African leaders to anchor the AU development agenda on the dreams, aspirations, energies, and capabilities of the African people. This will ensure the attainment of Agenda 2063 Aspirations, particularly Aspiration 3 which calls for *an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law*, as well as Aspiration 6 which calls for *an Africa where development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and with well care for children*.

As part of its contributions to the activities of the year, the African Governance Platform through its Secretariat will convene three (3) Regional Youth Consultations for West and Central Africa, North Africa as well as, East and Southern Africa. The Consultations will be held under the theme: *Leveraging Youth Capacities for the Fight Against Corruption in Africa*. The Consultations are premised on the realisation that beyond normative declarations and state-centric implementation efforts aimed at addressing corruption, putting in place a citizen-centered prevention strategy largely built around Africa's young people as major actors in the fight against corruption and impunity, is indeed one of the surest path to sustainable development in Africa.

B. RATIONALE

According to the 2006 African Youth Charter, youth or young people refer to every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. Within this context, Africa is home to over 1.2 billion people, over 60% of whom fall under the age of 25. Corruption is widening fault lines, causing setbacks in socio-economic and political development of the continent and tightening its grip on the full enjoyment of young people's rights and freedoms in Africa. More evidently, corruption continues to impoverish young people through widening social, political and economic inequalities. It deprives youth of opportunities to develop meaningful livelihoods and survival mechanisms. Corruption distorts the equitable distribution of social services such as health, water, sanitation, and education. It breeds unequal societies, renders vulnerable groups, including youth prone to human trafficking, irregular migration, recruitment into armed groups and militia as well as other forms of violent extremism.

The above situation has been exacerbated by the fact that corruption has become a norm and is now accepted among all segments of society, including youth. Although corruption in Africa takes different forms and shapes, it impedes full enjoyment of socio-economic rights, particularly for young people. For instance, Grand corruption in public procurement, on the one hand, can be particularly problematic as it results in loss of public money and a reduction of quality, sustainability and safety of public choices. While public procurement equals to approximately 15% of global GDP, corruption is estimated to account for 20 to 25% of procurement budgets worldwide. Petty corruption and bribery in access to public services, on

the other hand, is also a worrying trend as it directly targets the citizens, limiting their access to public goods or services and eroding public trust³.

To prevent and fight all forms of corruption in Africa, normative and institutional frameworks have been put into place at continental, regional and national levels. Specifically, at the continental level, normative frameworks have been adopted including AUCPCC and the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration, among others. These instruments stipulate what States should do to ensure good and transparent governance systems by preventing, detecting, punishing and eradicating corruption and related offences in public and private sector. Also, anti-corruption and Ombudsman institutions have been established and operationalised at continental, regional and national levels to oversee efforts to prevent and fight corruption in Africa. Nonetheless, the challenges of limited political will; interference in the work of anti-corruption institutions; the overt focus on state-led management of corruption and exclusion of key groups in the process, including youth continue to hamper the goal of a corrupt free Africa.

Of equal importance is the double-edged role of young people. While indeed many young people are at the receiving end of corruption, young people cannot be entirely absolved. In many cases, young people have also been perpetrators of corrupt acts in several forms. Notwithstanding this reality, young people have the potential and capacity to infuse new energies, innovative approaches and rally their peers as a formidable bulwark against corruption. Although often overlooked, youth are some of the most important agents of change in the fight against corruption, for they are key in reshaping norms and values. As such, building a groundswell of support for anti-corruption efforts will benefit immensely from a new socialisation that instills zero-tolerance for grand as well as petty corruption and practices from early ages. Furthermore, leveraging youth agency is another important dimension in the fight against corruption.

Over the years, several youth-led and focused initiatives have been established to champion accountability and transparency efforts across the continent. Most of these initiatives are premised on the need to address the trans-generational perpetuity of corruption in Africa. For instance, Accountability Lab with offices in Mali, Liberia, Nigeria amongst others, supports change-makers to develop and implement positive ideas for integrity in their communities, unleashing positive social and economic change. Through their Integrity Idol initiative, the organization identifies and celebrates honest government officials through a citizen-led campaign, to encourage positive role-modeling for anti-corruption in African public service. Other initiatives such as BudgIT (Nigeria), CODE (Nigeria), iWatch (Tunisia), Mzalendo (Kenya), and CLARION (Kenya) are implementing several initiatives aimed at encouraging transparency and accountability, galvanizing active citizenship and driving government-wide commitment to openness. Many of these organization are working with government institutions such as the parliament, security agencies, anti-corruption bodies amongst others, to further strengthen institutional efforts in this area.

To further deepen meaningful youth engagement in the prevention and fight against corruption in Africa, the 2018 Regional Youth Consultations aims at providing a platform for engagement, interactions, and experience sharing amongst various stakeholders including youth-led and focused initiatives contributing to the prevention and fight against corruption. It is anticipated that the Consultations will provide a safe space for mutual learning, sharing of comparable

³ Carolina Rocha da Silva (2018), African Union Summit: fight against corruption at the centre stage, Mo Ibrahim Foundation Website, <http://mo.ibrahim.foundation/news/2018/2018-african-union-summit-fight-corruptio>

lessons and development of a practical strategy to enhance meaningful youth participation in the sustainable fight against corruption across the continent.

C. About the 2018 Regional Youth Consultations

The Consultations will be convened under the auspices of the African Governance Architecture (AGA) Youth Engagement Strategy (AGA-YES). They will focus on leveraging and reinforcing young people's insights, capacities, and initiatives for preventing and fighting corruption in Africa. The aim is to identify, support, strengthen and amplify youth perspectives on the sustainable fight against corruption. It will also provide a platform for capacity building for youth-oriented and - focused organisations/networks towards enhanced involvement in building a culture of personal integrity, transparency, and accountability in Africa; in addition to facilitating inter-regional exchanges and lessons learning.

D. Sub-Thematic Focus Areas

i. Corruption in Africa: Addressing a key driver of Governance Deficits

Under this sub-theme, discussions will focus on the state of corruption in Africa and its impact on democratic governance effectiveness and development outcomes on the continent. Discussions which will be in the form of a keynote address and opening remarks, which will provide a horizon scanning on the realities of corruption in various governance spaces and how collective efforts and action can help turn the tide. Presentations and discussions will also seek to highlight the role of youth in corruption, challenging them to take action as individuals as well as collectively as part of exercising their civic responsibilities.

ii. Assessment of Anti-Corruption Normative & Institutional Frameworks at Continental, Regional and National

This sub-theme will focus on assessing the effectiveness of anti-corruption normative and institutional frameworks at the continental, regional and national levels. Presentations and discussions will introduce participants to the various normative instruments and institutions, driving state and non – state anti-corruption efforts in Africa. Discussions will border on the adequacy, effectiveness and, appreciation of the value of the instruments by citizens, particularly youth. Furthermore, interventions will also dwell on various non-state efforts in the field of anti-corruption and how they support, interact and amplify state-led efforts and interventions. This sub-theme will thereafter provide policy recommendations that will support the effective implementation and operationalisation of the various instruments and institutions respectively.

iii. Leveraging Youth Capacities for the fight against Corruption: Lessons from the frontlines

Presentations and discussion on this sub-theme will focus on the role of young people in the fight against corruption in Africa. It will feature presentations from young people on the frontlines of the fight against corruption, highlighting and reiterating the impact they are making and the challenges they face. The presentations will highlight various intervention young people are implementing in the areas of prevention, mitigation, leveraging technology, encouraging open governance systems and, creating state and citizen's joint action for anti-corruption. Overall, the sub-theme will provide a snapshot into a best practice booklet which will be produced at the end of the consultations to share the lessons widely.

iv. ***Fostering collaborative action towards the fight against Corruption***

This sub-theme will address the need for broad-based, collaborative efforts and action in fighting corruption in Africa. Interventions will focus on the various role played by key stakeholders and how joint efforts can help increase the efficacy and impact on a large scale. Discussions will attempt to provide alternative narratives about state-led efforts through understanding the peculiar challenges of individual stakeholders and help to build trust in such efforts. It is envisaged that this sub-theme will help to foster more cordial relationship and strengthen partnerships amongst the various stakeholders including National Anti-Corruption Bodies, Security Agencies, Parliament amongst others, in the fight against corruption.

v. ***Training Programme on Anti-Corruption***

The training programme will provide a refresher for participants and also introduce them to emerging issues in the field of accountability and transparency globally and particularly in Africa. The training will focus on issues relating to trends in Anti-corruption efforts on the continent as well as practical tools that can be employed in the fight against corruption. In a Boot-camp style, participants will be encouraged to develop innovative ideas that can be adapted by governments and civil society organisations. Participants will be provided a certificate of attendance for the training as evidence of their additional knowledge on the topic.

E. Goal and Objectives

i. **Goal**

The overall goal of the Regional Youth Consultations is to provide a collaborative, open and inclusive space to leverage and foster meaningful participation of young people in the fight against corruption in Africa.

ii. **Objectives**

Specifically, the regional youth consultations will:

- a. Provide a platform for intergenerational reflections on the scourge of corruption in Africa and its various manifestations as governance deficit;
- b. Understand corruption as a militating factor for meaningful youth engagement and development;
- c. Improve the understanding and appreciation of continental, regional and national frameworks and institutions on anti-corruption;
- d. Assess and document the contributions of young people to the prevention and fight against corruption through individual activism and collection efforts;
- e. Strengthen the capacity of young people in the prevention and fight against corruption including forming effective alliances with various national, regional and continental actors;
- f. Identify concrete strategies and innovative initiatives at national, regional and continental levels for meaningful youth engagement in the sustainable prevention and fight against corruption;

F. Expected Outcomes

From the discussions at Regional Youth Consultations, the following outcomes are envisaged:

- i. Actionable recommendations on meaningful youth engagement in the prevention and fight against corruption to:
 - a. enhance individual programming of AU Advisory Board on Corruption and other AU Organs and RECs working on corruption, transparency and accountability issues;
 - b. enhance efforts towards meaningful youth engagement in prevention efforts by African Governance Platform Members and at national levels through National Anti-Corruption Bodies and Ombudsman agencies;
- ii. Enhanced capacity of youth-led or focused organisations and networks to develop innovative solutions and strengthen existing efforts at deepening accountability and transparency;
- iii. Documentation of youth-led and youth-focused Anti-Corruption initiatives on the continent through sharing of best practices;
- iv. Facilitate the establishment of an African Youth Community of Practice on Anti-Corruption to support national, regional and continental institutions; and,
- v. Development of a best practice booklet on successful youth-led and youth-focused anti-corruption initiatives in Africa.
- vi. Development of training guide on youth participation in anti-corruption efforts in Africa
- vii. Publish a policy brief on youth and corruption in Africa: Perspectives from the Regional Consultations.

G. Methodology and Timelines

The regional youth consultations will be conducted using a mix of methodologies including plenary presentations, intergenerational panel discussions, capacity building and skills training amongst others. The consultations will be designed to empower individual participants to share their insights, reflect and engage in deliberations and constructively come up with ideas and strategies for leveraging youth capacities for the fight against corruption. Specifically, the consultation will be structured as follows:

- i. Opening Speeches including Keynote Address on the theme with an emphasis on regional dynamics;
- ii. Moderated Intergenerational Panel focusing on regional trends, challenges, and prospects;
- iii. Capacity Development Sessions focusing on the following specific training areas:
 - a. **General Overview of Corruption:** Introducing/refreshing participants to the understanding of corruption and providing an overview of corruption in Africa. The focus will be on the forms and typologies of corruption in Africa, its manifestation in terms of governance deficits, the challenges of combating corruption and the prospects for the future. The session will end with a presentation on anti-corruption frameworks and instruments at the disposal of participants to aid their programming and actions;
 - b. **Youth and Anti-Corruption in Africa** session will provide insights into the roles young people can play in the fight against corruption. Emphasis will be on leveraging youth agency for addressing socio-economic and political consequences of corruption through their individual activism and collective action

as citizens. The session will also share real-life examples of anti-corruption efforts, highlighting the challenges and opportunities;

- c. **Working with Stakeholders:** This session will focus on building broad-based partnership for the fight against corruption. In doing this, the session will introduce participants to basic stakeholder mapping for anti-corruption efforts, developing an action plan and working with stakeholders to achieve the goal. Examples of effective partnerships for fighting corruption will also be shared with participants;
 - d. **Innovative and Practical Tools for combating corruption:** This session will introduce participants to new and emerging cutting-edge tools alongside tried and tested older practices that can be employed for individual activism and collective efforts towards fighting corruption in Africa. Practical and simulation exercises will be employed to demonstrate the use of these tools in real life.
- iv. **Africa Talks DGTrends** – Each Regional Consultation will host an edition of the AfricaTalks DGTrends, as an open platform for showcasing good practices and initiatives as well as knowledge sharing with regards to preventing and combating corruption in Africa.

H. Policy Linkages

- i. ***Annual High-Level Dialogue on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance in Africa***

To further facilitate the intergenerational policy exchange and dialogue within the context of the 2018 theme of the year, outcomes of the Regional Consultations will be discussed at the 2018 *High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance: Trends, Challenges, and Prospects*. The HLD will provide opportunities for broader exchange on policy issues, practice challenges and prospects for strengthened anti-corruption efforts in Africa. Through the participation of young people on various panels and the official presentation of the Regional Consultation report, it is envisaged that the HLD will adopt the recommendations for further presentation at the January 2019 Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

- ii. **Report of the Champion to the AU Assembly on the 2018 Theme of the Year**

The final recommendations from the Regional Consultations will also be presented to President Muhammadu Buhari and will form part of his report to the 2019 January Assembly of Head of States Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This will ensure that specific recommendations by young people will form part of the declaration of the Summit and provide impetus to the various anti-corruption efforts including work of many young people, youth organization, and networks.

I. Dates and Venues

In line with the principle and spirit of the AGA Platform, the 2018 Regional Youth Consultations will be convened in close collaboration with the AU Advisory Board on Corruption as well as with civil society partners. In this vein, the consultations will be held as follows:

REGIONAL YOUTH CONSULTATIONS	TIMELINES	VENUE
North Africa West Africa & Central Africa Southern Africa and East Africa	11 – 13 July 2018 25 – 27 July 2018 8 – 10 August 2018	Tunis Dakar Gaborone
2018 High-Level Dialogue on Democracy, Elections, and Governance	November 2018	TBD

J. Documentation

The documentation for the youth regional consultations will be shared electronically, while more information and updates will be available on the African Union website www.au.int under the Department of Political Affairs portal and the AGA website www.aga-platform.org. Conversations can also be followed on Twitter @AUC_DPA / @AGA_Platform and through the #DGTrends and #AfricaAgainstCorruption.

An online campaign will be instituted to encourage conversations on the theme of the consultations. This campaign will be heralded by a series of Tweetchats aimed at amplifying the role of young people in the fight against corruption.

K. Participants

Participants for the regional youth consultations will be identified through an open call that will be administered through an online application system. This process will be complimented with a purposive selection of participants through the AGA Secretariat database and recommendations from key stakeholders, including Members of the African Governance Platform.

The consultations will target young people with a track record of activism, work, and experience in the area of transparency and accountability. The selection will specifically be based on the following criteria:

- i. Youth-led and oriented organisations implementing activities that are related to anti-corruption, transparency, and accountability, open governance systems as well as Freedom & Access to information programmes and activities in the Member States at all levels taking into consideration the diversity of young;
- ii. AU Member States, including Representatives of National Anti-Corruption Agencies, Parliaments, Security Institutions as well as the Judiciary amongst others;
- iii. Selected think tanks and academic research institutions with experience in promoting youth participation in anti-corruption initiatives;
- iv. Selected media practitioners; and
- v. Representatives of the African Governance Platform Members;
- vi. Host Governments;
- vii. International and African-based Organisations; and
- viii. Development Partners

L. Partnership and Management

The Annual Regional Youth Consultation is an initiative of the African Governance Platform convened by the AGA Secretariat based at the Department of Political Affairs. The 2018 Regional Youth Consultations will be convened in collaboration with the AU Advisory Board on Corruption and the AUC Department of Political Affairs (Governance Unit) as members of the African Governance Platform with support from Development Partners.

M. Working Languages

Meetings will be conducted in either English, Arabic, French or Portuguese, depending on location. Online and physical publications will be available in English and French.

N. Contact Details of the Coordinating Team

For further inquiries, please contact:

- i. Amb. Salah Hammad, Ag. Head AGA Secretariat: HammadS@africa-union.org
- ii. Mr. Ibraheem Sanusi, Governance Expert/Citizens Engagement Lead, AGA Secretariat: sanusii@africa-union.org