Global Gateway

African Union

D4D HUB

EU INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS
DIGITAL FOR DEVELOPMENT HUB



DATA GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

Building an African Digital Single Market

The Data Governance in Africa Initiative is a collaborative undertaking aimed at developing and implementing data governance frameworks across the African continent. Digital cooperation is central to this African Union (AU)-European Union (EU) strategic partnership, which serves as a key driver in working towards sustainable economic growth.

As affirmed during the 2022 EU-AU Summit, this partnership aims to unlock the potential of Africa's data economy within the strategic frameworks of the AU Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the AU Data Policy Framework.

The Data Governance in Africa Initiative supports this objective by promoting the harmonisation of data policies, fostering value creation through data-driven use cases and enabling investment in green and secure digital infrastructures. These efforts are contributing to the African Union's aspiration to building an inclusive African Digital Single Market.

Building a strong foundation for Africa's data economy

The initiative works with AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and key stakeholders from the public and private sectors to establish comprehensive data policies, drive innovation through data use cases and facilitate investment in green and secure digital infrastructure.

Key facts:

- Project duration: 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026
- Budget: 60 Million Euros
- Political partners: the AU, AU Member States and RECs
- Commissioning partners: EU, Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France and Germany
- On-the-ground presence: Implemented across Africa with staff in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and the five commissioning countries

Specific objectives (strategic pillars)

The Data Governance in Africa Initiative is built around three key specific objectives that collectively drive the vision of a harmonised, human-centric and development-oriented data ecosystem in Africa.

1. **Data Policies and Regulations** – Data policies that benefit the economy and society at large need to emerge from a broad multi-stakeholder dialogue that guides the policymaking process at continental, regional and national levels. This objective supports the development and revision of such coherent policies.

It addresses the skills and capacities needed by the public and private sectors to implement the AU Data Policy Framework across Africa. Through training and dialogues, stakeholders are brought into policy processes. This will create the foundations they require to unlock the potentials of the data economy.

2. **Data Use Cases** – Activities under this objective, which involve stakeholders from the private and public sectors, academia, non-profits and CSOs, supportthe development of sectoral data-driven use cases; digital social innovations; data challenges and hackathons; earth observation data labs; data-driven innovations on taxes and customs; data sharing agreements; and innovative regulatory instruments.

These activities support the creation of a conducive environment to increase the ability of national and regional actors to access, analyse, use and share data across Africa, maximising economic and social value from data, protecting citizen data rights and bringing these benefits to citizens and SMEs.

3. **Digital Infrastructures** – This objective facilitates investment in green and secure digital infrastructure in Africa, in line with the EU's Global Gateway Strategy. It offers tailored technical assistance to promising data centre and Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) projects, supporting them from early-stage design through to contract closure, thereby enhancing their bankability.

Additionally, it builds capacities of key stakeholders in digital infrastructure by offering guidelines and training on green data centres, finance for digital infrastructure, cyber security and connectivity. It fosters matchmaking opportunities between the African and European private sectors to encourage successful partnerships.

Our approach: a multifaceted strategy

The initiative employs a three-tiered approach that addresses challenges at policy, institutional and grassroots levels:

Macro level: supports the establishment of harmonised, human rights-based policies and regulations at continental, regional and national levels based on the AU Data Policy Framework	**Meso level:** involves helping project promoters structure projects to attract investment in green and secure digital infrastructures	**Micro level:** empowers individuals and organisations engaged in concrete digital social innovations, data use cases and investment projects with a commitment to inclusivity, gender transformation and sustainability

Key achievements

With the support of the Data Governance in Africa Initiative, significant progress has been made towards advancing an inclusive and sustainable data economy that benefits governments, businesses and communities across Africa:

Strengthening an enabling environment

- **5 continental and regional data policy frameworks developed:** Conceptual Framework for Continental AI Strategy, Guidelines on Integrating Data Governance into AfCFTA, African Digital Compact, EAC Data Governance Policy Framework and ECOWAS Supplementary Act on Personal Data Protection.
- **3 national strategies for data access, use and sharing supported:** National Data Strategy in Senegal and Ghana and AI Strategy and Roadmap in Senegal, the first of its kind in Africa.
- **11 national data policies being developed** in AU member states.

Leveraging data use and data sharing for value creation

- **9 data-driven use cases designed and developed with systematic multi-stakeholder involvement** across eight countries to promote data access and use for precision agriculture, tracking climate goals, health interventions and financial inclusion for marginalised groups.
- 1**6 digital social innovations supported** to scale their impact in women's health, agriculture, sustainable transport, environmental protection, digital inclusion, financial and employment services in and across 13 African countries.
- **20,000+ smallholder farmers, including women and marginalised communities, afforded increased access to finance** through an AI-based credit scoring model in Kenya
- **7 investor's pocket guides published**, providing insights on market, regulatory environment and investment opportunities in Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.
- **Data challenge defined** for a cross-border hackathon on deforestation in collaboration with Senegalese startups and the Ivorian Office of Technical Studies and Development (BNETD)
- **an eight-week data science training and hackathon organised in Côte d'Ivoire** for tax and customs administration personnel from six francophone countries: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, D. R. Congo, Guinea, Senegal and Togo

Fosteringinvestmentingreenandsecuredatainfrastructure

- **45 expressions of interest for DIF support received: 9 data centre** infrastructure projects receiving tailored assistance to develop into viable bankable proposals for financiers.
- **A Practitioner's Guidelines on Green Data Centres**, co-developed with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Bank.
- **4 regional and 23 country specific market briefs on data centre and digital infrastructure prepared** to inform project promoters, multilateral development banks and other investors about market challenges and opportunities in sub-Saharan Africa.
- **10+episodepodcastbroadcasted**, providing insights and fostering discussions on the preparation, development, energy sourcing, EU private sector involvement and finance mobilisation for digital infrastructure projects.

Developing capacities

- **1,400+ representatives from continental, regional and national policy makers, civil society and private sector trained** to govern, regulate, use data, innovative regulatory approaches and digital solutions as well as prepare bankable projects and design green data centres.

Contact: Programme Manager: Franz von Weizsäcker, datagovafrica@giz.de

Learn more and download the latest factsheet:

https://d4dhub.eu/initiatives/data-governance-in-africa