

African Regional Forum on People-Centered Justice

“Advancing People-Centered Justice in Africa: Building Just Societies for All”

Session Concept Note

From Numbers to Needs: Using Data to Build People-Centered Justice in Africa

Date: 28 October 2025

Time: 11.00 – 12.15 GMT (UTC+0)

Location: Banjul, The Gambia

Venue: **Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara International Conference Center – Thematic Room.**
(alongside the 85th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights)

African Alliance 
FOR PEOPLE-CENTERED JUSTICE

Co-organizers:





Introduction

Every day, millions of Africans face pressing justice problems. These challenges range from common family disputes and land conflicts to the profound need for justice in the wake of mass atrocities and grave human rights violations. This interactive session moves beyond asking *why* we need better justice data to exploring *how* we can get it and use it effectively. The theme focuses on the practical side of building a data-driven culture for justice transformation. The session will bring together diverse experts from the frontlines of policy, legal practice, and civil society to showcase concrete examples of collecting and using **people-centered justice data**. The intended audience includes policymakers, judicial officers, representatives from national human rights institutions, and civil society organizations.

Background and Rationale

For decades, justice reform has been guided by institutional data: case backlogs, conviction rates, and the number of judges. While useful, this data fails to capture the most critical element: the experiences of ordinary people. This creates a **"justice gap"** where systems are designed and managed without a clear understanding of the population's most common and pressing legal needs, the paths they take to resolve them (their **"justice journeys"**), and whether they find the outcomes fair and effective. This session is needed to shift the paradigm from institution-centric metrics to **people-centered evidence**. It seeks to address the challenge of embedding data and evidence into justice policymaking across Africa. It builds on the growing momentum of the global SDG16+ movement and the work of the African Alliance for People-Centered Justice (AAPCJ) to foster a culture of informed decision-making that responds directly to the needs of citizens.

Session Objectives

The specific goals of this session are:

- To share concrete methodologies and best practices for collecting, analyzing, and utilizing people-centered justice data in various African contexts, from local legal aid to international criminal justice proceedings.
- To showcase innovative 'Gamechangers' and pioneering methodologies that are making data collection and application more efficient and impactful, especially in fragile contexts.
- To foster collaboration among government actors, civil society, and legal professionals to build a robust ecosystem for justice data.

- To influence policy by demonstrating how robust evidence can lead to more effective, transparent, and equitable justice systems that strengthen peace and societal resilience.

Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker(s)/Format
11:00 - 11:05	Setting the stage: Framing the challenge and introducing the people-centered data approach.	Moderator's Opening & "Big Picture Pitch". Ahmed Hamza Tijani Senior Programme Manager, Hiil
11:05 - 11:25	Round 1: The view from the ground: Exploring barriers and opportunities from policy, community, and legal perspectives.	Seynabou DIOUF, Lawyer and Project Manager at the AJS, the Association of Senegalese Jurists Hawa KAFANDO/KANAZUE, Director General of Studies and Sectoral Statistics (DGESE) at the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, responsible for Relations with Institutions (MJDHRI) in Burkina Faso Rodrigo Núñez, Senior Justice Sector Advisor, Hiil Ruth Ogbewekon Focal Point - Research and Publications, Pan-Africa Lawyers Union (PALU)
11:25 - 11:45	Round 2: From data to action: Sharing concrete examples of data-driven change and future-focused "Gamechangers."	Seynabou DIOUF, Lawyer and Project Manager at the AJS, the Association of Senegalese Jurists Hawa KAFANDO/KANAZUE, Director General of Studies and Sectoral Statistics (DGESE) at the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, responsible for Relations with Institutions (MJDHRI) in Burkina Faso. Rodrigo Núñez, Senior Justice Sector Advisor, Hiil Ruth Ogbewekon, Focal Point - Research and Publications, Pan-Africa Lawyers Union (PALU)
11:45 -	Audience conversation: Engaging the	Moderated Q&A with the audience.

12:05 audience on key themes like data privacy, trust, and implementation.

12:05 - **The final word and call to action:** All Speakers.

12:15 Summarizing key takeaways and issuing a final call to action.