

The State of Land Data in Africa: Fuelling Africa's Future

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SUMMARY

Access to land data is crucial for good land governance. It can support the development of transparent land administration systems, support informed decision making and empower society and individuals. Measuring the access to land data fills a critical gap in the land sector, as our society grows ever-more dependent on data for decision-making and problem-solving.

AGENDA 2063 represents Africa's ambitious roadmap for transforming the continent into a global powerhouse of the future, including the promotion of good governance, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Access to information is a fundamental right in and of itself as well as an enabling right, and is guaranteed by article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. The AU has adopted "soft law" measures such as the African Model Law on Access to Information to support access information under the African Charter. Agenda 2063 identified 20 high-level goals, including democratic governance, institutional reform, transparency, and participation. These goals (Goals 11, 12, and 13) together with Sustainable Development Goal 16, emphasises access to information as a fundamental right. These actions highlight the significant role and importance given to access to information in Africa's development, and continental governance as demonstrated by the high level commitments from continental leadership.

In order to build a "society, benefitting people and the planet" and to give effect to Africa's leading role in sustainable consumption and production, the Land Portal is advocating for more open access to information and developing a comprehensive indicator on the accessibility of land data (SOLIndex). The SOLIndex is another step in the slowly maturing links between open data and land administration. It complements global efforts to measure the state of land data and make land data more open.

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The paper will present and discuss the state of data in Africa and explore in detail the preliminary analysis of the SOLIndex, which will launch with a focus on African countries. It will focus on understanding the initiatives that are leading the way in implementing the African Union's agenda on access to information and;

1) Present results from the pilot State of Land Information Assessment (SOLIndex) conducted in 15 African countries; 2) Review the status and progress on the implementation of the AU legal framework for opening up access to data and information on the continent; 3) Identify key challenges and opportunities and lessons learned towards more equitable access to information; 4) The future potential and opportunities to bring the land data agenda to a global platform for policy and decision making.

This paper supports the objective of promoting evidence-based land policymaking and contributes towards deepening the commitment and capacity for land administration. Assessing the role of African countries as proponents of open land data can provide valuable insights and perspectives to global policy platforms on improving access to information for sustainable development.

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