MINUTES OF THE AFRICAN ALLIANCE FOR ACCESS TO DATA HELD ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2024 VIA ZOOM AT 12:00 PM SAST

MEMBERS PRESENT

S/No.	NAME
1.	Guy Berger
2.	Hlengiwe Dube
3.	Ivy Gikonyo
4.	Rosemary Okello-Orlale
5.	Angela Minayo
6.	Bulanda Nkhowani
7.	Churchill Otieno
8.	Gabriella Razanno
9.	Gilbert Sendugwa
10.	Kwami Ahiabenu
11.	Mukelani Dimba
12.	Zoe Titus
13.	Patrick Cole
14.	Richard Ngamita
15.	Vusumuzi Sifile
16.	Francis Crawley
17.	Izak Minnaar
18.	Alphonce Shiundu
19.	Viola Ochola
20.	Olanike Osho
21.	Liz Orembo
22.	Alette Schoon

23.	Laeed Zaglami
24.	Alfred Bulakali
25.	George Sarpong
2	Paul-Joel KamTchang

AGENDA

1. Preliminaries (Welcome and new participant introductions)
2. Approval of previous minutes
3. Report back on ACHPR and Rapporteur
4. Using the IDUAI statement – publicity programmes
5. Report back on action research into elections and data by PenPlusBytes and expectations from the Alliance members
6. Report back from subgroup on Data Literacy
7. Preview: Website
8. News from members, partners and upcoming events of interest to the Alliance
9. AOB

MIN 1/4/ NOV: PRELIMINARIES

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM. Hlengiwe then welcomed new members to introduce themselves. The three new members were Paul-Joel KamTchang (Adisi – Cameroun), Kwami Ahiabenu (PenPlusBytes) and George Sarpong (Ghana NMC).

MIN 2/4/NOV: APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as accurate.

MIN 3/4/NOV: Report back on ACHPR and Rapporteur Using the IDUAI statement – publicity programmes

Hlengiwe explained that the resolution on access to data, which was drafted by Alliance members, had been adopted by the African Commission. This was noted as a great achievement. The resolution is titled 'RESOLUTION ON PROMOTING AND HARNESSING DATA ACCESS AS A TOOL FOR ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE DIGITAL AGE. ACHPR/Res.620 (LXXXI) 2024'. She highlighted key sections including the action statements and invited comments.

Francis opined that 'to examine and develop appropriate normative standards to guide data collection' is what is most important to the Alliance and asked that members give some thought to it.

Rosemary asked that the issues of data storage and data accessibility in Africa also be given attention, explaining that these are often overlooked issues. She also asked that work be done to ensure that governments mainstream gender and data.

Guy congratulated members for all efforts employed towards the resolution's adoption and noted that it presented many opportunities for the Alliance in the coming year. He also noted that we should develop timelines for actioning the resolution and hoped that we could ask the special rapporteur to attend the next Alliance meeting. A possible activity by the Alliance is raising the issue at various African regional meetings during the year.

Hlengiwe explained the process of implementing activities under Commission resolutions using the examples of the resolution of AI and Human Rights. She also noted that usually, when civil society organisations push for the passing of resolutions, once adopted, it behooves them to support the Commission in the work that stems from the resolution, including sourcing for funding for studies and other activities. She mentioned the need for a strategic planning meeting to map out possible activities.

A few members asked what would be expected of them with the adoption of the resolution to which Hlengiwe responded by explaining that the Special Rapporteur would likely be willing to support any efforts of members that promote access to data in its various forms. The Special Rapporteur can lend a voice to members' activities as well. Guy also pointed out that the more concrete inputs the Alliance comes up with, the stronger the Special Rapporteur's case will be for a norm, be it a Commission statement or something stronger. He thus urged members to capitalise on this opportunity, translating the work into action in the various fields that members are in.

Izak, whilst congratulating all who participated in generating the resolution, raised some issues for consideration:

- Using the resolution follow up for possible reform of ATI laws on the continent as most do not have digital rights factored in. He suggested a campaign on this.

- The Alliance could engage with Article 19 working with worldwide expression Rapporteurs' on their annual joint statement for the World Press Freedom Day to incorporate Access to Data. Alfred noted that this is possible.

Liz also congratulated members for working towards the resolution and asked that the work in 2025 revolve around creating awareness regarding the resolution, including applying it to national contexts. Guy suggested having an online form for members to share ideas so that we share the same with the Special Rapporteur at the next meeting. Alfred suggested having a uniform message to be shared on members' platforms and Liz offered to draft one.

Hlengiwe further thanked members for their contributions to the UNESCO IDUAI statement which was presented in Accra. She explained that publicity initiatives are needed to support it. Guy highlighted different ways members could help to spread word. Guy offered to develop the online form and related materials to publicise the success of the statement.

MIN 4/4/NOV: Report back on action research into elections and data by PenPlusBytes and expectations from the Alliance members

Liz explained that RIA's findings on access to data around elections had been supported by members of the Alliance who agreed to interviews. The report should be out by end of November.

Kwami spoke about developing the initial work by the Alliance for an instrument / toolkit around data and elections. He explained that the research to inform access to data by different stakeholders was progressing well and explained that the final report will be ready in January.

MIN 6/4/NOV: Report from Subgroup on Data Literacy

Rosemary highlighted aspects of the research they were undertaking, explaining data literacy's importance to the Alliance. Comments were invited on the research: Data Literacy : Africa transformation drivers in a digital world and Data Literacy and its impact on media performance

MIN 7/4/NOV: Website Preview

Given the shortage of time, Guy encouraged people to look at the website and send comments so that we could have something optimum in time for a public launch.

MIN 8/4/NOV: News from partners, and upcoming events of interest to the Alliance

Time constraints inhibited discussion here.

MIN 9/4/NOV: A.O.B.

There was no A.O.B

MIN 9/5/NOV: ADJOURNMENT