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News release

Afrobarometer connects early-career researchers with established scholars to build analytical capacity in Africa

Afrobarometer held its inaugural Emerging Scholars Workshop in November, bringing together early-career researchers and established scholars to enhance analytical skills and support the next generation of African researchers. This initiative aligns with Afrobarometer's objective of strengthening the continent's research ecosystem.

The workshop, held at the University of Pretoria's Future Africa campus, brought together 12 emerging scholars – half of them women – representing nine countries: Botswana, Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda. Participants presented research papers covering diverse topics, received feedback from their mentors and peers, and engaged in professional development sessions designed to propel their academic and professional growth.

According to Jason Owen, Afrobarometer capacity building manager (advanced track), the workshop is in line with Afrobarometer's commitment to providing professional development opportunities for young African researchers.

"The emerging scholars that attended the workshop received detailed comments on their research from a panel of experienced academic mentors and peers," he said. "The aim was to sharpen their analytical skills and to enable them to publish high-quality research using Afrobarometer data. We hope this type of workshop will foster a growing research and mentoring network that helps to build analytical capacity across Africa."

The workshop also facilitated networking and collaboration. Nicole Beardsworth, a lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand, highlighted the value of such gatherings. "PhD journeys can be isolating and lonely, but opportunities like the Afrobarometer Emerging Scholars Workshop provide a window for young scholars from around the continent to meet each other, find commonalities, forge collaborations, and create community," she said.

A section of participants also noted that the workshop provided them with a transformative platform to engage with established academics, gain constructive feedback, enhance research skills, and build professional networks critical for advancing their academic and career aspirations.

"I was attracted to this workshop because it provides a unique opportunity to engage with seasoned scholars, participate in sophisticated research discussions, and develop essential skills for my professional growth," said Mbiydzenyuy Courage Sevidzem from the University of Bamenda in Cameroon.

Over the past two and half decades, Afrobarometer has trained hundreds of young researchers, civil society activists, journalists, and parliamentarians through several capacity-building initiatives, including French- and English-language summer schools, thematic workshops, mentorships, university outreach initiatives, and staff development fellowships.

About Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer (AB) is a trusted source of high-quality data and analysis on what Africans are thinking. With an unmatched track record of 388,000+ interviews in 42 countries, representing the views of 80% of the African population, AB is leading the charge to bridge the continent's data gap. AB data inform many global indices, such as the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators. The data are also used for country risk analyses and by credit rating and forecasting agencies such as the Economist Intelligence Unit. All AB data sets are publicly available on the [website](#) and may be analysed free of charge using AB's [online data analysis tool](#).

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