Africa Forum on Sandboxes for Data Inaugural Workshop: Building Cross-Border Sandboxes

The Datasphere Initiative's Africa Forum on Sandboxes for Data convenes leaders in government, industry, academia, civil society, and the technical community, to harness local perspectives and create trusted data-sharing solutions to address cross-border challenges in health, finance, sustainability, and AI.

Sandboxes are collaborative environments that test innovative technologies and data practices against regulatory frameworks, or experiment with new uses, capabilities, and means of governing data. While the use of sandboxes has been spreading in Africa, capacity building, sharing of good practices, and active testing are still needed in order to meet its full potential to address data issues across the continent. Cross-border sandboxes help us resolve certain data challenges that cannot be sufficiently addressed within national borders. Among other things, they make the vision of an interconnected continent a reality, and promote the AfCTA's ambition of a single digital market.

In this workshop, participants will receive a brief primer on digital integration on the continent and the role cross-border sandboxes can play in advancing it. They will hear perspectives from local partners, and evaluate examples of certain data governance issues that transcend borders. Then, participants will organize into breakout groups for a simulation exercise, in which each group will employ a six-step process, outlined in the Sandboxes for Data report, to build a cross-border sandbox aimed at addressing a pre-assigned data governance issue. At the end of the workshop, each group will present their findings and offer their reflections.

Agenda

2pm - 2.20pm **Introduction to Cross-Border Sandboxes**
The Datasphere Initiative will welcome attendees and provide background on the concept of cross-border sandboxes and the data governance and sharing challenges that exist both on the continent and across the world. The moderator will then introduce a process for initiating and administering cross-border sandboxes and highlight key considerations within the process.

- Justin Bryant , Global Sandboxes Forum Lead, Datasphere Initiative

2.20pm - 2.35pm **The Potential of Sandboxes for Africa**
Panelists will share their views on current data-sharing policy and technical approaches across the region and share their expectations on how the Africa Forum on Sandboxes for Data can help connect efforts and support innovative approaches.

- Freda Yawson, Innovation & Digital Policy Senior Manager, Africa Center for Economic Transformation
- Famba Godwin, Secretary General, African Parliamentary Network on Internet Governance
- Beatrice (Bea) Okech, Advocacy & Campaigns Manager, Transform Health

2.35pm - 3:10pm **Breakout Groups**
Participants will be organized into groups and given a scenario that turns on creating a model for trusted data governance and sharing. Using the six-step process outlined in the presentation, the groups will build sandboxes to address the given scenarios.

3.10pm - 3.30pm **Sandbox Presentations and Exchange**
Each group will present the results of their sandbox to the group and reflect on the exercise.