

## **Dear Community, Partners, Friends,**

With everything going on in the world these days, we hope this email finds you safe, healthy and inspired in your efforts towards social change!

It's been a while since we last shared an update here, so we wanted to let you know about some upcoming opportunities, share some of our favorite highlights from last year, and introduce you to our growing team.

### **Some highlights to read in our newsletter:**

- **Decision Thinking** - Our approach to participatory decision making.
- **Policy Resources** - Launch of Benchmarking Report & launch of Feminist African Manifesto for Entrepreneurship (FAME).
- **Governance Vocabularies** - Conference update.
- **UNESCO citizen participation** - Conference update.
- **Transnational Winter/Summer School** - Call for participation in South Africa and Brazil.
- **Handbook on Decision Thinking** - Call for participation of trainers.
- **Platform: ecosystem.build** - Collaborative partner-driven platform to build stronger ecosystems.
- **Platform: African Union Citizen Engagement Platform** - Rollout planned.
- **Meet our new team members!**

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*If you'd like to discuss any of the topics covered here, explore collaborations, or just say "hi", please reach out at [community@i4policy.org](mailto:community@i4policy.org).*

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**Here are some of our team's favorite moments and accomplishments from 2023...**

***We refined an approach that has been guiding our work in participatory policy making for years, across Africa and around the world!***

## **Decision Thinking**

We call it **Decision Thinking**, and last year we developed it into a new and improved, pedagogically optimized and joyful, training program to share the wisdom and the love with others! Thanks to our collaboration with the [African European Digital Innovation Bridge Network](#), we've been able to document and develop the practice into educational materials for leaders. In the last 12 months, we've offered training programs around the world, from Brasilia, to Berlin, Cape Town, Kigali, Lisbon, Mexico City, New York, Rabat, and Victoria Falls. We trained the inspiring senior leadership of the new Ministry for Racial Equality in Brazil, hosted a lecture for the global Open Government Partnership team, and dozens more...



It's had a tremendous impact on our partners, and has been loved for being practical, accessible, productive and fun! Check out a [video](#) that one of our partners just posted on LinkedIn from a two-day training we offered last month in Cape Town. (Dancing the South African bus stop dance to Beyoncé is, of course, optional!).

We also published a [book chapter](#) to show how we applied the approach to support the participatory development of the Nigerian Startup Act.

***We massively scaled our resources and ability to support policy innovation for broad-based job creation and responsible entrepreneurship in Africa.***

## Policy Resources

We published an updated [Benchmarking Report on Small Business Acts and Startup Acts](#); we launched a free, massive open online course on [learn.ecosystem.build](https://learn.ecosystem.build) where we have already trained hundreds of policy-makers; we launched a policy-maker network with [Smart Africa](#) and the [Tony Blair Institute for Global Change](#) that meets regularly to share learnings; and, we organized and facilitated trainings and peer-learning workshops for 300+ policy-makers from more than 30 countries together with our partners at Smart Africa. We also hosted conversations with African women founders and stakeholders to unleash entrepreneurship's full potential on the continent, which culminated in the recent publication of the [Feminist African Manifesto for Entrepreneurship \(FAME\)](#). All of these resources (and more) are readily available on our <https://www.ecosystem.build/> platform.



**We are charting the future of governance by bringing plurality into the traditional vocabularies of democracy and public governance.**

## Governance Vocabularies Conference

*What if we could collectively build a governance vocabulary?*

This was the main focus of the 3-day Governance Vocabularies initiative held in Rabat, Morocco from 15-17 September 2023.

The conference was co-organised by:



**Innovation for Policy Foundation (i4Policy):** A pan-African charitable foundation focusing on inclusive decision-making processes.



**School of Collective Intelligence (SCI):** Part of UM6P's Business and Management Pole, devoted to the emerging field of collective intelligence.

## /// Participedia

**Participedia:** A global network that serves as a crowdsourcing platform for public participation and democratic innovations.

This event aimed at gathering governance innovation networks (e.g. Participedia, People Power etc.), practitioners, researchers and activists to discuss common definitions for the governance of the future.

### Rabat Declaration:

As a collective output of this conference, participants developed the draft *Rabat Declaration: Redefining the Future of Global Governance*.

If you would like to engage with this document, we are currently hosting the draft Rabat Declaration on the African Union Citizen Engagement Platform (CEP) website, a consultation tool:

<https://citizenengagement.nepad.org/document/12/handbook>

*To learn more about the new rollout of the African Union Citizen Engagement Platform, scroll down to the end of our newsletter!*



## **We developed new methods for transnational citizen participation to support UNESCO's global consultation process on the development of guidelines for regulating Digital Platforms**

### **UNESCO citizen participation**



We supported UNESCO in optimizing audience engagement with more than 5,000 people from 134 countries in order to draft the [Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms](#). As well as supporting consultation at their [Internet for Trust \(i4T\)](#) conference in Paris, we developed a decentralized, distributed and deliberative consultation methodology to expand inclusion in the engagement. This process involved incorporating more than 10,000 contributions across 58 consultations and an 18-month period.

The Decentralized Deliberative Consultation Methodology has engaged more than 1,600 individuals from 70 countries (with 54% participation from African nations) to provide feedback on [UNESCO's Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms](#).

The guidelines aim to regulate digital platforms and mitigate online harm through peace, dialogue and understanding in the digital sphere.

This type of consultative engagement is the [first of its kind in the United Nations](#) and was described as “unprecedented” in [The Guardian](#).

You can read a summary of the guidelines by the World Economic Forum [here](#).

In the year ahead, we're excited to share and get you involved with...

## **A transnational winter/summer school that we're launching with incredible partners to explore the potential for [Transnational Democratic Innovation](#).**

### **Transnational Winter/Summer School**

**Join us from 10-15 June 2024.** We'll be offering our Decision Thinking training and sharing about work, alongside incredible practitioners and diplomats, philosophers and thinkers who are expanding possibilities in planetary governance. The School will be held at the University of Western Cape (South Africa), Memorial University (Canada), and the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Brazil) and is being organized in collaboration with Participedia, Democracy International, Missions Publiques, and the Coady Institute.



There is still some limited space available in the Brazil and South African campuses, so please sign up soon if you're able to join us!

<https://participedia.net/participediaschool>



**/// Participedia School**  
**TRANSNATIONAL  
 DEMOCRATIC  
 INNOVATIONS**

**DECENTRALIZED | JUNE 10-15, 2024**  
 SOUTH AFRICA, BRAZIL, CANADA

Join leading experts and practitioners to explore, learn and deepen the potential for transnational governance and citizen participation. This accredited five-day summer/winter school is organized for diplomats, practitioners and students across three locations: the University of Western Cape, Memorial University, and the Federal University of Minas Gerais.

**PARTICIPEDIA.NET/PARTICIPEDIASCHOOL**



***We're finalizing a Handbook on Decision Thinking to equip policy-makers and citizens with the know-how to improve public decision-making, and will launch a certification program for trainers of the method.***

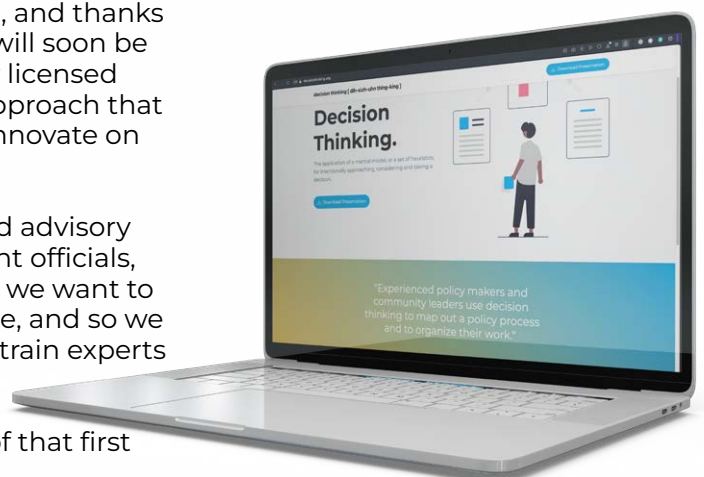
## Handbook on Decision Thinking

Together with partners across Europe and Africa, and thanks to funding from the European Commission, we will soon be sharing an array of openly accessible and openly licensed materials about Decision Thinking, the ADDIS approach that we use, as well as new tools to find and further innovate on participatory policy-making methods.

We will continue offering training workshops and advisory services (as we share about above) to government officials, community leaders, students, and partners. But, we want to make this amazing training even more accessible, and so we will also be launching a certification program to train experts interested in offering the training themselves.

Let us know, if you're interested in being a part of that first "training of trainers" cohort! Email us:

[community@i4policy.org](mailto:community@i4policy.org)



***We are scaling our policy education to accelerate equitable and responsible entrepreneurship through a collaborative ecosystem.build platform***

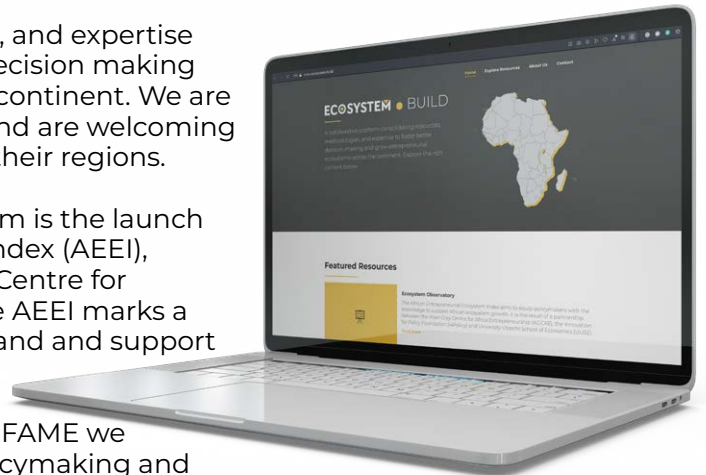
**Platform: <https://ecosystem.build>**

The platform consolidates resources, methodologies, and expertise from leading institutions to foster better informed decision making and develop entrepreneurial ecosystems across the continent. We are continuously updating and refreshing the content and are welcoming any partners that are building better ecosystems in their regions.

An example of the collaborative nature of the platform is the launch of the first-ever African Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Index (AEEI), together with Utrecht University and the Allan Grey Centre for African Entrepreneurship (ACGAE). The launch of the AEEI marks a significant milestone in our efforts to better understand and support entrepreneurship on the continent.

Also, be sure to read about our FAME work. Through FAME we support conversations at the nexus of feminism, policymaking and entrepreneurship. You will find our policy brief to support policymakers mainstreaming gender into entrepreneurship policies. It outlines the foundations of gender-inclusive entrepreneurship and innovation policies in Africa, based on the lived experiences of African women.

Check out the AEEI, FAME and many more interesting products on <https://ecosystem.build>.



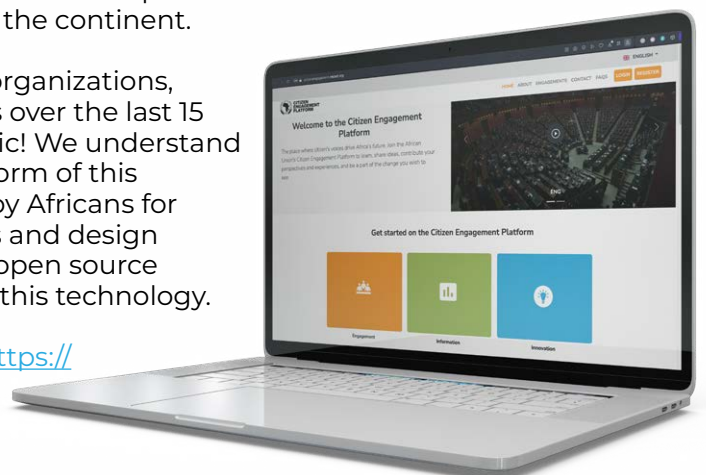
***In the next months, the African Union Development Agency will launch the first-ever pan-African digital citizen engagement platform***

**African Union Citizen Engagement Platform (CEP) for Africa**

For the past two years, with funding from the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), we have been building a digital engagement platform for the African Union, regional economic communities, and national governments to inform, involve and empower citizens across the continent. The platform could massively open up access to public information and deepen citizen engagement across the continent.

We have been testing the platform with several AU organizations, national governments and civil society organizations over the last 15 months, and the platform is almost ready to go public! We understand that this is the first African digital engagement platform of this magnitude that has been developed and deployed by Africans for Africans. The CEP has many context specific features and design considerations, and we hope to develop this into an open source community in the months ahead to share and grow this technology.

Check out the Citizen Engagement Platform here: <https://citizenengagement.nepad.org/>



## Say hello to our growing team!

Meet our brilliant new colleagues, who infuse our growing Foundation with new expertise, perspectives and heartfull energy!



### **Belinda Baah**

**Senior Manager, Policy Advisory, Ghana**

[LinkedIn profile](#)

As an economist, analyst, researcher, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) expert for over a decade, Belinda has supported a number of organisations to improve access and usage of their key services, particularly for marginalised groups.

As a Senior Manager at i4Policy, Belinda has trained Tanzanian and Zanzibar policymakers and ecosystem stakeholders in entrepreneurship and innovation policy development. She led the development of the African Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Index with the Allan Grey Centre for Africa Entrepreneurship (AGCAE) at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, and Utrecht University, Netherlands, to help policymakers govern the African entrepreneurial ecosystem. Belinda also leads the Foundation's feminist innovation policy (FAME!) work to help policymakers create inclusive, radical, and equitable policies for African women founders.

Belinda is most excited to build on the Foundation's work in 2024 and help policymakers make concrete, measurable improvements to assist African entrepreneurship ecosystems. Small changes matter to her, even incremental ones. Small modifications can add up to large transformations.



### **Sebastián Calderón**

**Manager, Governance R&D, Colombia**

[LinkedIn Profile](#)

Sebastián Calderón is a Colombian lawyer and historian from Universidad de los Andes. He is a peace process advocate and nine-year international government consultant specializing in citizen engagement. His expertise lies in public participation, specializing in deliberation and democratic innovation networks, advocacy, and civic technologies. Additionally, he is deeply involved in research on peacebuilding, deliberative democracy, and political advocacy. Co-founding the Extituto de Política Abierta, Sebastian has played a pivotal role in advancing democracy in Colombia and Latin America, and as a member of the Latin American Political Innovation Network.

Sebastian joined i4Policy as a Manager in the Governance R&D team to lead global programs. He is passionate about fostering citizen participation in addressing global challenges and shaping global governance and decision-making processes!



## Mike Perry

Director, Finance and Operations, UK

[Linkedin Profile](#)

Mike is a compassionate Chartered Management Accountant who aspires to contribute to a better world. He lived and worked in the UK, Senegal, Liberia, Zambia, and Rwanda before settling in Uganda. Over the years, he has worked in organizations that supported health, land rights, peacebuilding, market systems development, and broader development and disaster relief programmes.

Mike joined i4Policy in July 2023 and is thrilled about the possibility of collective action and decision-making to transform society and improve lives in Africa and around the world. Mike manages the foundation's finances, administration, and daily operations and is excited to build up the tools and processes that will support our growing team.



## Aniya Hamilton - Associate, Governance R&D, US

[Linkedin Profile](#)

Aniya spent three years as a U.S. Peace Corps Community Health Volunteer and then an education entrepreneur in Togo, West Africa, to empower and elevate underrepresented populations. She recently completed a Master's in International Development at SciencesPo, focused on Global Health and Project Management, during which time she worked as a researcher at i4Policy.

Aniya has joined the Foundation full time in the Governance R&D team to work on increasing access to participatory approaches. She is supporting a number of projects from our support to UNESCO, to the transnational summer school, and the Decision Thinking Handbook where she is leading our effort to link online repositories of participatory innovations. Aniya is looking forward to learning and growing with her coworkers and clients, and imagining new methods of public policy co-creation.



## Ben Ochang - Lead Software Engineer, Governance R&D, Kenya

[Linkedin Profile](#)

Ben is a full-stack software developer, blending expertise in a number of frameworks to craft digital masterpieces. With over 8 years of experience in web application development, he excels in collaborative environments across various projects. Ben prioritizes clean software architecture, security protocols, and user-centric experiences, alongside cloud infrastructure management.

At i4Policy, Ben is working on the Citizen Engagement Platform (CEP), to engage citizens in policy development across the African continent. Simultaneously, he is developing our [ecosystem.build](#) platform, and will be launching the decision thinking site at the end of April. Ben's ultimate goal is to revolutionize Africa through innovative civic tech!





## **Louise Rasador**

**Research Manager, Brazil**

[Linkedin Profile](#)

Louise is an expert at fostering collaboration and participation in complex situations. She led regional offices, managed teams, and facilitated several agreements in compensation programs for environmental disasters. She led intricate corporate mediation cases involving hundreds of parties through strategic design and implementation of innovative mediation processes. She recently promoted stakeholder engagement, dialogue, and collaboration in London place-based projects. She has a Master in Business and Management from Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV) and a Master of Laws from the London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE).

As a Research Manager at i4Policy, Louise is working on the Decision Thinking Handbook, and particularly on the development of guides to make citizen participation more accessible and effective. She is excited to promote inclusive decision-making through innovative and participatory approaches.

**The future is co-created!**

<https://www.i4policy.org/>

Email us: [community@i4policy.org](mailto:community@i4policy.org)