PRESS RELEASE

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Africa’s Voices Leadership Transition
Citizen engagement and governance reform champion takes over from Founding Executive Director

Nairobi, Kenya 19th December, 2019 - Nairobi-based non-profit Africa’s Voices Foundation has announced a transition in its leadership. The outgoing Executive Director Dr. Sharath Srinivasan, a renowned governance and human rights academic, is moving on to other duties at Cambridge University, where the inspiration for Africa's Voices began. Coming in at a time of expansion and growth is Samuel Kimeu, a distinguished leader with a background in citizen engagement, anti-corruption, and governance reform in Africa. His role will be to drive growth and expansion during a moment of great potential to achieve the organisation's mission: to transform the way citizen voices are listened to and acted upon in decisions that affect their lives.

Africa’s Voices curates engaging discussions through interactive media and digital channels, enabling citizens, especially those most marginalised, to have their voices heard by decision-makers. They use innovative research and data analysis techniques to deliver robust, timely and actionable social evidence which strengthens the impact of development, humanitarian, and governance actors.

Samuel Kimeu will join Africa’s Voices from Transparency International-Kenya where he has been Executive Director for nearly a decade.

According to Kimeu, “I will use my background in citizen engagement and governance reform to drive Africa’s Voices’ vision to place citizen voice right at the heart of better governance. Respect for human rights and the law has always been central to my work and I intend to bring this same approach to Africa’s Voices. I look forward to working with our partners to refine their impact by using powerful and novel tools to stimulate inclusive dialogue and gather opinions from marginalized communities. Africa’s Voices’ unique methods produce citizen-led insights which certainly open up a whole new world of potential which is beneficial for development. My vision is to place these methods at the disposal of decision-makers across the African continent within a couple of years”.

Five years since it spun out of the University of Cambridge as an independent entity, Africa’s Voices is on a bold growth trajectory: an Africa-based and African-led organization, supporting partners such as UNICEF, the World Bank, the Mastercard Foundation, UNDP, the Somalia Stability Fund, Oxfam, the European Union, and UN OCHA to listen to the voices of the citizens they serve and be more accountable to them. By turning citizen voice into evidence that drives better decision-making, Africa’s Voices has over the past years amplified the voices of over 400,000 citizens in Somalia, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, and...
Cape Verde on priorities ranging from public health, education and agriculture to local governance, tax justice and humanitarian programming.

From Cambridge, Dr. Srinivasan will work closely with the incoming Executive Director in early 2020 to orient him to Africa’s Voices’s projects and partnerships. Dr. Srinivasan and Cambridge colleagues have created a technical advisory group to ensure Africa's Voices continues to benefit from high level input from experts in technical innovation.

Commenting on the transition Dr. Srinivasan said, “I am very proud of where Africa’s Voices is today. Five years since we launched, and with a diverse and exciting portfolio of work, we are getting ever closer to achieving our mission to make citizen voice central to the continent’s transformation. Samuel Kimeu is an inspiring leader for steering Africa’s Voices boldly in this new chapter.”

Africa’s Voices’ Chair and co-founder, Simon Cairns commented “Dr Srinivasan has done a remarkable job in establishing that the evidence-based insights Africa's Voices can provide to decision-makers are of significant contribution to their accountability to the people they serve. I am confident that Samuel Kimeu has the experience and ability to lead a fine team to extend the role Africa’s Voices can play in so many areas of social endeavour”.

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Samuel Kimeu - short bio
Samuel Kimeu has been the Executive Director of Transparency International Kenya since 2010. He previously served as a Governance Specialist at the Embassy of Finland in Nairobi and the Executive Director of the Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists. He has also taught law at the Kenyatta University School of Law in Nairobi-Kenya. He is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya and a member of both the Law Society of Kenya and the East African Law Society. He holds a Master of Laws degree in International Human Rights Law from the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, USA. He received his Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Nairobi.

Mr. Kimeu is currently serving as an elected member of The African Union Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC) since August 2019 and The Board of Transparency International since October 2017.