AFRICAN YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION PLATFORM

Engaging the youth in Africa through digital dialogue









EMPOWERING THE YOUTH AS ACTIVE STAKEHOLDERS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.



John Vianny Ayebare
Legal and Research Officer
United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI)

Africa stands as a uniquely dynamic continent defined by its overwhelming youthfulness. According to the African Union, over 400 millionA fricans are aged between 18 and 35. Indeed, 70% of sub-Saharan Africa's population is under the age of 30. Yet, despite being the largest demographicp illaro f our societies, young people have historically been treated as passive recipients of policyi n access to justice rather than active stakeholders in shaping it.

The global community has been alive to thisf act particularly the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The 14th Congress, through Paragraph 30 of the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention provided for empowering youth to become active agents of positive change in their communitiest o support crime prevention efforts, including by using social mediap latforms and applications and other digital tools to amplify their voice.

At the United Nations African Institutef or the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), we have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of actively engaging African youth through modernd igital channels. By launching the Africa Youth CrimeP revention Platform (AYCPP) X Spaces, we have reached over 3,700 peoplei nj ust three months. Various thematica reas including those on sexual crimes, xenophobia, mob justice, human trafficking, trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation, criminalization of drugs and rehabilitation of drug users, alcoholism, fraud and scams, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, and conjugal rights in prisons have been tackled.

Through these interactive spaces, very robust policyd iscussions and actionable suggestions have been proposed by the youth themselves. Briefly, the youth suggest that:

a. Higher institutions of learning across Africa are called upon to establish survivor-friendly protection mechanisms to prevent academic retaliation, stigma, and social ostracisation against those who speak out and report sexual offences.

b. Criminal justice systems across Africa should respond to sexual offences in higher education institutions expeditiously since witnesses, victims, and other important stakeholders may not stay at Universities for a long time due to time limitation of courses of study.

c. To combat xenophobia, African countries must streamline their immigration processes to address illegal migrants due to expiry and delayed renewal of their travel documents.

d. There must be enforcement of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to allow free movement of people and products to address xenophobia

e. Countries must protect all persons within their borders as per their respective constitutions.

f. To address mob justice, awareness and campaigns against mob violence should be done

g. Youth who are mainly the participants in mob justice should be engaged in gainful employment to ensure they are not idle and susceptible to mob violence

h. Scientific innovations (such as installation of CCTV cameras) should be undertaken so as to identify perpetrators of mob justice who are usually difficult to identify.

i. Increase public involvement in administration of justice such that there is trust in the system and there is no need for people to resort to mob justice.

j. On addressing human trafficking, the youth have recommended establishment of dedicated anti trafficking police units, cross border coordination of law enforcement agencies, training of police officers, quick response of missions in foreign countries in case a victim reports, and establishment of survivor rehabilitation programs.

k. On drugs in Africa, the youths recommend that countries should not just criminalise drugs, they should also focus on treating dependent users as individuals needing government-funded treatment in dedicated facilities to save state expenditure on prisons.

l. African Countries must also harmonise laws to ensure traffickers have nowhere to hide. They should adopt models and strategies that offer early warning signs before individuals are addicted to drugs.

m. On alcoholism, the youth call upon African countries to undertake policy reforms on advertisement of alcohol, usage age limit, and time restrictions to limit accessibility of alcohol.

n. Alcohol use disorder requires treatment of the victims and the governments must invest in rehabilitation of individuals with such a disorder.

o. However, the youth also highlighted that drinking responsibly is not harmful in itself but rather uncontrolled drinking which is usually responsible for crime. Regulation should encourage responsible drinking but not complete prohibition.

p. For the youth to actively participate in crime prevention, they advocated for youth-led peer mentorship, campus mental health and anti-drug campaigns, digital literacy to counter online misinformation, and active collaboration between student leadership, communities, and law enforcement authorities.

q. To respond to fraud and scams, the youth noted that the human factor remains the weakest link in security infrastructure and therefore, people must adopt the "Stop, Think, Verify, Protect, and Report" framework in cases where there are offers that are too good to be true.

r. On Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), the youths noted that there is an urgent need for age-appropriate, factual sexuality education, arguing that young people require accurate information to make safe decisions rather than being forced to choose between health access and fear of legal punishment.

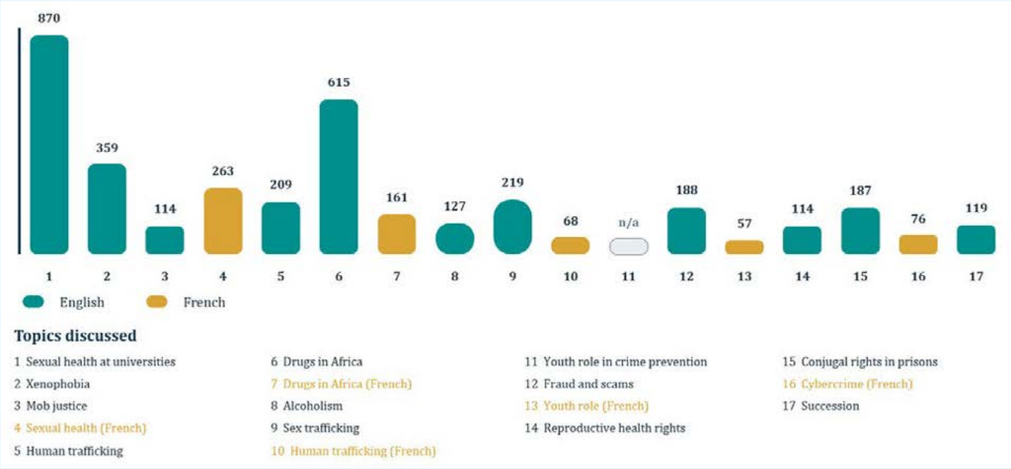
s. On conjugal rights in prisons, through a poll conducted on X, with over 115 responses, 75%of the respondents support the view that prisoners should be allowed conjugal rights, while some other youths argue that provision of such rights would undermine the essence of punishing the offenders.

t. On succession, the youth argue that desperation, ignorance, and poverty are the main drivers of succession related crimes such as threatening their parents for inheritance, forging wills, among others.

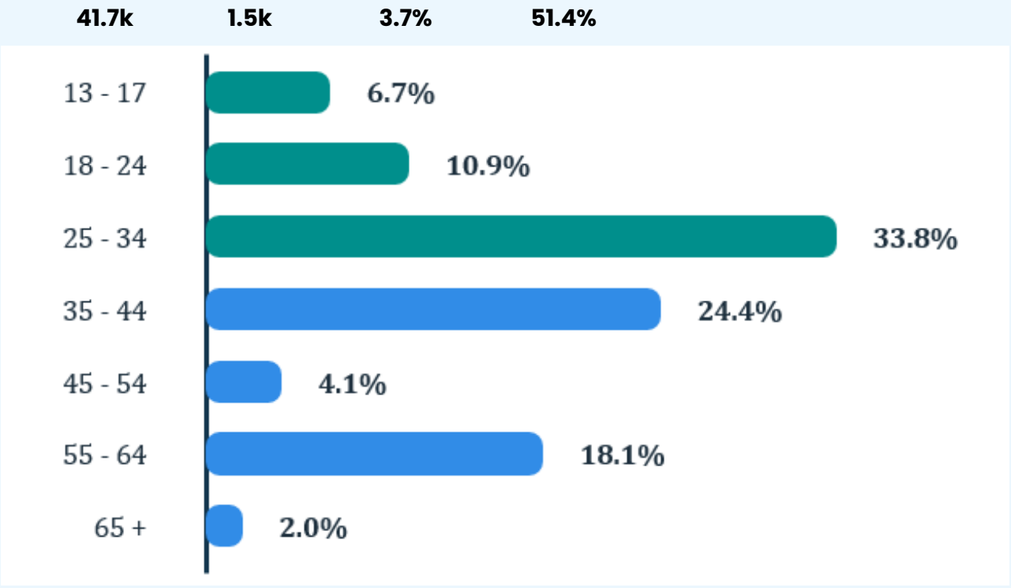
u. The youth also argue that most of the current laws on succession do not take into consideration the modern advancements such as digital assets and accounts.

> ***"At the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), we have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of actively engaging African youth through modern digital channels. By launching the Africa Youth Crime Prevention Platform (AYCPP) X Spaces, we have reached over 3,700 people in just three months. Various thematic areas including those on sexual crimes, xenophobia, mob justice, human trafficking, trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation, rights in prisons have been tackled.***

PERFORMANCE ACROSS THE FIRST SEVENTEEN SESSIONS



X PROVIDES THE CLEAREST YOUTH AUDIENCE SIGNAL



The age profile supports the programme's youth orientation. It describes the audience selected in the X account data and does not establish the age of every person who joined an individual Space.

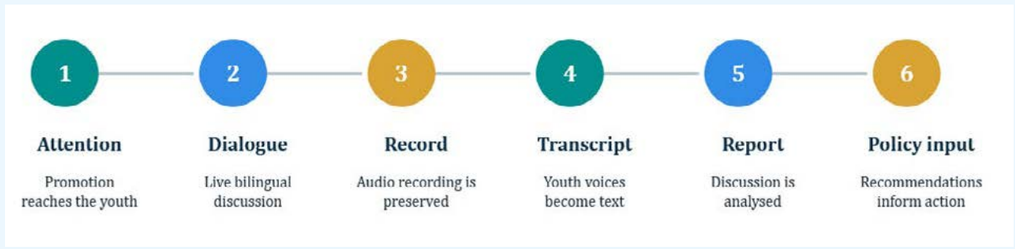
X GENERATES ATTENTION AND OTHER PLATFORMS EXTEND ITS VALUE

X	Convenes live dialogue		41.7K impressions and 400 new followers
LinkedIn	Extends professional visibility		4,413 impressions and 97 new followers
Website	Anchors reports and resources		1,915 sessions and 1,405 unique visitors
YouTube	Preserves video productions		334 Views and 16.6 watch hours
TikTok	Supports discovery		919 followers and 10.4K profile Likes

These measures describe different forms of attention. They should be read together as evidence of a connected digital system, not added into a single audience total.

FROM LIVE YOUTH DIALOGUE TO INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Each AYCPP discussion follows a practical route from public participation to material that UNAFRI can preserve and use.



This pathway connects youth engagement directly with UNAFRI's work in crime prevention and criminal justice. It also gives partners a clear point of entry: speakers can contribute expertise, institutions can share the sessions, and PNI members can use reports and recordings as reus-able knowledge resources.

The next stage is to document how people use the material after each event, including report downloads, repeat participation, referrals, training use and follow-up by institutions.

Sex at Universities: **Crime or Pleasure?**

On June 12, 2026, the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) launched the Africa Youth Crime Prevention Platform (AYCPP) with its inaugural session, *"Sex at Universities: Crime or Pleasure?"*. The dialogue convened legal experts, student leaders, and human rights advocates to explore the moral, legal, and safety dimensions surrounding sexual relationships on university campuses. The discussion was also live on Next Radio, a visual audio radio station which was very key in reaching more youth and other stakeholders for the launch.

Munanura Andrew Karokora, emphasized the vital legal boundary between consensual relationships and crime, clarifying that instances involving coercion, manipulation, or drink-spiking constitute clear criminal offenses. Addressing social peer pressure, he expressed concern over young female students being pressured against maintaining their virginity due to social expectations. Additionally, he stressed that sexual offenses require swift investigation and prosecution because eye-witness testimony fades quickly and students have limited time at universities, making immediate crime scene preservation and early forensic evidence collection essential for proving cases beyond a reasonable doubt.



Munanura Andrew Karokora,
Acting Director General,

United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI)

John Vianny Ayebare outlined the systemic and social barriers preventing students from reporting sexual offenses on campus. He highlighted three primary obstacles: unclear institutional guidelines stemming from a lack of transparent reporting protocols in many African universities, social stigma and media fear that cause survivors to fear public labeling and news or social media exposure, and institutional reluctance where universities handle allegations internally without proper law enforcement involvement to protect their reputations.



John Vianny Ayebare,
Legal and Research Officer

United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI)

Tumininu Oni shared insights on how dedicated state agencies can proactively combat sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) through campus outreach. She detailed how her agency conducts direct sensitization on consent, crime scene preservation, and reporting channels, while stressing the importance of training student champions on campus to act as direct liaisons between affected students and state-level case management resources.



Tumininu Oni
Nigeria

Head of Case Management at Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA)

Rose Nabwire discussed the role of student governance in mediating disputes, raising awareness about boundaries, and providing peer-to-peer sexual health education. Acknowledging that relationships are a natural part of university life, she reinforced that prior consent is non-negotiable and emphasized that a clear "no" must be respected even within an ongoing relationship or after an invitation to a private space.



Rose Nabwire,
Uganda

28th Guild President of Makerere University Business School (MUBS)

Hon. Abbas Agaba addressed the dangerous power dynamics involving academic staff and students, cautioning against non-consensual exchanges of marks for sexual favors. He urged institutions to establish survivor-friendly protection mechanisms to prevent academic retaliation against those who speak out, aligning with the panel's broader recommendations to strictly enforce anti-sexual harassment policies, fund sexual health response mechanisms, collaborate with police forensic units during orientation, and promote student self-preservation alongside parental guidance.



Hon. Dr. Abbas Agaba,
Uganda

General Secretary - Afro Arab Youth Council (AAYC)

Xenophobia in Africa:
Hate, Fear, and the Future of Regional Unity

Xenophobia across the African continent remains a critical barrier to peace, development, and regional integration. In the second edition of the Africa Youth Crime Prevention Platform (AYCPP) X Spaces series, UNAFRI convened a panel of experts, lawyers, and civil society leaders to interrogate the root causes of xenophobic violence in Africa in general and South Africa in particular, and explore actionable solutions to foster unity.

Opening the panel, **Nothando Phuti**, representing Kopanang Africa against Xenophobia (KAAX), detailed how severe socio-economic challenges are currently weaponized against non-nationals in South Africa. Issues like high unemployment, poverty, corruption, and systemic inequality which stems from the unresolved legacies of apartheid, are increasingly blamed on foreign nationals. However, Phuti pointed out that this discrimination targets Black African migrants rather than all foreign residents. Critical structural failures in the government's immigration system such as administrative backlogs, prevent migrants from renewing their documentation, trapping them in irregular status. Reactive measures such as mass deportations do not address the push factors driving migration, instead, they push vulnerable groups into unsafe border crossings controlled by corrupt officials.



Ms. Nothando Phuti,
South Africa,

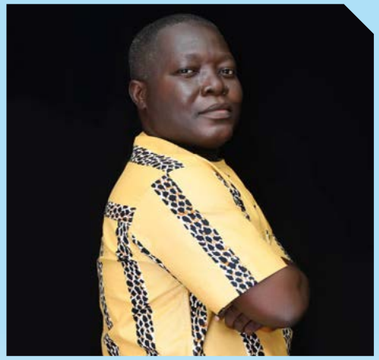
Migration scholar and social advocate at Kopanang Africa

Emuron Isaac addressed the factors driving young people to participate in xenophobic attacks. High youth unemployment, failing public infrastructure, and poor governance create extreme economic anxiety. Feeling unheard and unable to challenge governments directly, frustrated youths often redirect their anger toward foreign nationals living within their communities. Isaac emphasized that colonial borders artificially divide Africans who share a common heritage. From a legal standpoint, mechanisms already exist to protect non-nationals; for instance, the 1996 South African Constitution guarantees basic human rights, dignity, and security to everyone within its borders, regardless of citizenship. However, there is a gap in practical law enforcement which allows violence to persist unchecked. While continental frameworks like the African Union treaties and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) promote free movement, they largely remain unimplemented on paper. Real progress requires active enforcement, public sensitization, and a return to the core Pan-African values of *Ubuntu*.



Mr. Emuron Isaac,
Uganda
Lawyer and Member of Pan African Society

Psychologist **Dr. Adolf Awuku Bekoe** argued that current responses focus heavily on the "smoke" rather than the underlying "fire" driving hatred and fear. Xenophobia represents a manifestation of weak crime prevention, unaddressed prejudice, and a lack of public understanding regarding migration. He noted that no region can achieve sustainable development without the skills, labor, and trade that migrants bring. He highlighted that post-apartheid South Africa was long isolated from the rest of the continent, leaving its people with limited exposure to other African cultures. To overcome this, he called for deliberate intercultural exchange programs, high school exposure, and migration literacy campaigns. Addressing Ghana's decision to repatriate its citizens during past violent outbreaks, he defended the measure as a necessary immediate action to protect human lives, while stressing that long-term prevention requires multi-country collaboration, strict law enforcement, and addressing economic insecurity.



Dr. Adolf Awuku Bekoe,
Ghana
Clinical Psychologist and Migration Specialist, Head of Department of Psychology and Social Work at Methodist University, Ghana

Mob Justice in Africa: **Unpacking the Injustices Behind**

Mob justice across the African continent remains a critical barrier to peace, human rights, and the rule of law. In a 3rd edition of the Africa Youth Crime Prevention Platform (AYCPP) X Spaces series, the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) convened experts, police authorities, legal officers, and civil society leaders to interrogate the root causes of mob violence and explore actionable solutions.

Edgar Omondi Abuto framed *"mob justice"* as a complete form of injustice, extrajudicial killing, and vigilantism that is misleadingly labeled by the public as "instant justice". He observed that while it is most prevalent in impoverished suburban communities, the threat of mob violence increasingly affects motorists, high-profile officials, and political opponents during election seasons. Abuto identified major triggers, including low public trust in slow judicial systems, general social bitterness, and volatile incidents involving *boda-boda* (motorcycle) riders. He stressed that fear of witness retaliation, challenges in identifying individuals within large mobs, and a lack of state compensation for human victims perpetuate the cycle. To combat this, Abuto detailed RIACO's school-based clubs that educate young people on non-violence, legal awareness, and the harmful psychological impacts of bullying and mob culture.



Edgar Omondi Abuto
Kenya
Chief Executive Officer
Rights in Action Coalition (RIACO)

Nothando Phuti reinforced that mob action represents a severe breakdown of constitutional rights and the rule of law. Drawing from her work in South Africa, she explained how structural grievances such as massive youth unemployment, poverty, failing public services, and rampant corruption are weaponized by mobs against vulnerable, undocumented Black African migrants. Phuti detailed the tragic 2022 murder of Elvis Nyathi, who was rounded up and killed by a mob acting on unverified community rumors rather than criminal evidence. She highlighted a major legal victory won by Kopanang Africa in the High Court, which barred ordinary citizens from illegally conducting immigration status checks. To build long-term stability, Phuti called for improved police responsiveness, sustainable economic opportunities for youth, and a return to the continental value of *Ubuntu*.



Ms. Nothando Phuti,
South Africa,
Migration scholar and social advocate at Kopanang Africa

SSP Diana Nandawula rejected the term "mob justice," because there is no justice in it. Instead she defined it strictly as a criminal offense. She disclosed that Uganda recorded 950 deaths resulting from mob action in 2025 alone. Referencing the high-profile murder of national rugby player Sydney Gongodyo, she noted that law enforcement had successfully charged four suspects in court while pursuing others. Nandawula outlined the primary operational hurdles police face, including crowd congestion, witness intimidation, public hesitation to testify, and suspects fleeing after the crime. She emphasized that CCTV technology, police patrols, and community cooperation are essential to identifying perpetrators. Additionally, she warned against individuals intentionally inciting mobs under false pretenses to settle personal or land rivalries, and clarified that lawful self-defense must be strictly proven under the law.



SSP Diana Nandawula
Uganda
Senior Superintendent of Police and Deputy Spokesperson, Uganda Police Force

Human Trafficking: **The African Perspective**

Human trafficking across the African continent remains a critical barrier to human rights, youth safety, and regional development. In the 4th X Space of the Africa Youth Crime Prevention Platform (AYCPP) series hosted by the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), a panel of recruitment leaders, legal practitioners, civil society representatives, and survivor advocates was convened to interrogate the mechanics of human trafficking, legal gaps, and counter-trafficking strategies across Africa.

Kampire Fortunate defined human trafficking through its core elements of coercion, force, and abuse of power, distinguishing it from general migration. Drawing from direct interactions with victims in China and Southeast Asia (including Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos), she detailed common deception strategies: promises of unrealistically high-paying jobs, fake educational scholarships, and fake marriage proposals targeting vulnerable youth. She recounted a case of a migrant trapped in Laos's "Golden Triangle" cyber-scam hubs after her passport was confiscated, where she faced starvation, physical torture, and forced online scamming. Fortunate emphasized the need for travelers to conduct rigorous background research, maintain family contact, and called for African diplomatic missions to bridge communication gaps to protect stranded citizens.



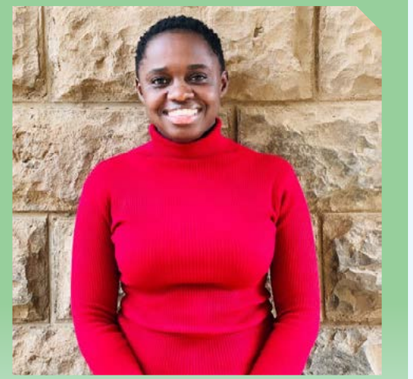
Kampire Fortunate
Ugandan living in Xiamen, China
Lawyer and Legal Practitioner

Asher Kajojo explained the formal processes governing legal labor externalization to ensure job seeker safety. He detailed the multi-step due diligence framework required in Uganda, where registered recruitment agencies must be vetted by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. He highlighted that job orders are verified on-site in destination countries (such as the UAE and Qatar) by Ugandan embassy officials who inspect prospective workplaces and accommodation facilities before approvals are granted. Kajojo urged job seekers to avoid unlicensed "scammers" and check that recruitment agencies hold valid, active government licenses.



Amanya Asher Kajojo
Uganda
Chief Executive Officer, Legit Recruitment Consultants

Mercy Otieno provided a comprehensive breakdown of human trafficking based on the UN Palermo Protocol, detailing the constituent elements: Acts, Means, and Exploitative Purposes (labor, sex, organ removal, and domestic servitude). She highlighted how internal trafficking impacts children through online sexual exploitation and forced begging. Pointing out the abuses within labor pipelines, Otieno revealed how unethical agencies issue short-term tourist visas or scholarship visas for labor roles, engage in contract substitution, or reroute workers to conflict zones or illegal scam compounds in Myanmar. She noted that while laws like Kenya's Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act exist, prosecutions remain low due to cross-border evidence gathering challenges, survivor trauma, lack of police training, and delays in passing harmonized regional laws like the East African Community Counter-Trafficking Bill.



Mercy Otieno
Kenya
Head of Programs at Awareness Against Human Trafficking (HAART Kenya)

Joy Kingsley presented the West African perspective, focusing on the African Survivor Coalition's work across 54 African countries to empower survivor leaders. She emphasized that judicial processes often re-traumatize survivors by requiring them to repeatedly recount traumatic experiences without court-provided psychosocial support. Kingsley highlighted critical systemic obstacles in Nigeria, including strict statutory limitation periods (e.g., 5–6 year windows to file claims), high costs, and a lack of pro bono lawyers outside major urban centers. She called on African governments to establish specialized anti-trafficking legal aid units, train law enforcement in trauma-informed victim identification, and adjust legal systems to accommodate the time required for survivor recovery.

Joy Kingsley
Participant
Nigeria
Director of Impact Strategy and Movement Building at Footprint to Freedom / African Survivor Coalition

Chippili outlined the counter-trafficking response in Southern Africa, noting Zambia's status as a source, transit, and destination country. He explained how government agencies execute the four P's (Protection, Prevention, Partnership, Prosecution) by maintaining dedicated safe shelters, training frontline protection officers, and providing healthcare and psychological trauma care to domestic and foreign survivors. Chippili stressed the necessity of long-term vocational rehabilitation and community reintegration programs for youth aged 18 to 37 to prevent re-trafficking, as well as diplomatic coordination with foreign consulates to guarantee safe repatriations.

Chippili
Participant
Zambia

Drugs in Africa: **Criminalisation vs Rehabilitation**

The issue of drug abuse across Africa represents a complex challenge involving both law enforcement and public health concerns. Hosted by John Vianny Ayebare under the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), the 5th Africa Youth Crime Prevention Platform (AYCPP) X Spaces session brought together security officers, legal experts, civil society organizers, and community advocates to evaluate law enforcement models, rehabilitation strategies, and legislative frameworks.

CSP Anietie defined drug abuse as the harmful use of psychoactive substances leading to dependence, health damage, or social dysfunction, noting that 34% of drug abusers in Africa are under 25. He argued that 85% of crimes in Nigeria and broader Africa are drug-initiated, justifying criminalisation to preserve social order, protect public health, and deter supply. He highlighted Nigeria's Police Campaign Against Cultism and Other Vices (POCACOV) initiative for nationwide youth outreach, the "Unplugged" school-based substance use prevention program in Nigeria (which achieved a 13% reduction in cannabis risk), and suggested Africa study global models like the UK Early Warning System, Colombia's crop substitution, Iran's methadone programs, the Netherlands' regulated coffee shops, and Canada's supervised injection sites.



CSP Anietie Okokon Intedu,
Nigeria
Nigeria Police Force

ACP Godwin Tumugumye advocated for a balanced two-pronged strategy: criminalising high-level drug traffickers, manufacturers, suppliers, and large-scale cultivators, while routing end-user victims to government-supported rehabilitation programs in partnership with the Ministry of Health and National Drug Authority. He detailed key operational hurdles faced by law enforcement, including porous borders, lack of detection equipment at transit hubs, limited officer training, drug cartels bribing personnel, and manpower shortages. He also noted strict security protocols enforcing the safe escort of legally licensed medicinal crop cultivations to export points.



ACP Godwin Tumugumye,
Uganda
Head of Narcotics Department, Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) at Uganda Police Force

Barrister Amaka Ekwalor explained how NDLEA differentiates illicit drugs without medical utility (such as cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine) from controlled prescription drugs (such as Tramadol, Lexotan), which require licenses, seaport monitoring, and poison book logging. She grounded NDLEA's authority in domestic legislation and ratified UN conventions. Amaka called for treating dependent users as individuals needing government-funded treatment in dedicated facilities to save state expenditure on prisons, while urging African nations to harmonise laws to ensure traffickers have nowhere to hide.



Barrister Amaka Cordelia Ekwalor,
Nigeria
Deputy Zonal Commander Advocacy and Engagement, at National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Enugu Zone

Ambassador Christiana Togba emphasized that drug addiction is a chronic brain disease and a public health crisis rather than purely a criminal matter. While supporting non-bailable criminal statutes for high-level traffickers under Liberia's Controlled Drugs and Substances Act of 2023, she argued that end-users are victims requiring treatment, counseling, and reintegration to avoid lifelong stigmatisation. She highlighted community outreach in high-risk "hot zones" and praised UNODC-backed initiatives like the Strong Families Programme to build family communication and prevent youth substance abuse at the grassroot level.



Ambassador Christiana Maka Togba
Liberia
Founder and Executive Director of Girls Against Drug Liberia

Dan Katende presented data on high-risk populations, noting the 2024 Global State of Harm Reduction report identified 9,500 people injecting drugs in Kampala and Mbale, with a 17% HIV prevalence rate. He advocated replacing punitive measures with a public health model using "arrest and refer" pipelines to direct users to Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) programs (such as those at Butabika National Referral Hospital). Katende called for repealing harsh clauses within Uganda's Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Act, expanding domestic funding for treatment, decentralising services to rural areas, and conducting nationwide size-estimate research.



Dan Katende
Uganda
Research and Documentation Manager at Uganda Harm Reduction Network (UHRN)

Alcoholism: **From the Bar to Behind Bars**

Alcohol misuse and its intersection with crime, public health, and social stability represent a significant challenge across the African continent. The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), on its 6th X Space on the Africa Youth Crime Prevention Platform brought together policy experts, law enforcement officials, academics, student leaders, and community advocates to examine alcohol policy, regulatory frameworks, public safety, and rehabilitation mechanisms.

Margaret Nassanga defined alcohol as a psychoactive, mood-altering, WHO Group 1 carcinogen, detailing how alcohol misuse progresses through four stages: experimentation, regular use, risky/harmful use, and dependence (alcoholism/Alcohol Use Disorder). Highlighting WHO data attributing 2.6 million annual deaths to alcohol globally, she pointed out that Uganda has ranked highest in alcohol consumption in Africa while relying on outdated laws like the Enguli Act of the 1960s. She advocated for urgent national policy reforms, strict enforcement of sales age limits, restricted operating hours, and family- and community-level prevention strategies to mitigate the high financial and social costs of addiction.



Margaret Nassanga
Uganda
Coordinator at Uganda Alcohol Policy Alliance (UAPA)

Amos Warui detailed NACADA's three-pronged strategy to combat alcohol abuse: demand reduction through public education, supply suppression using regulatory laws, and industry oversight. He explained how NACADA collaborates with the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) to enforce safety standards and fight counterfeit or methanol-laced illicit alcohol, while working alongside tax and anti-counterfeit authorities. Warui highlighted key Kenyan measures—such as limiting media alcohol adverts timing, restricting outlets near schools (300m radius) and residential areas, proposing to raise the legal drinking age from 18 to 21 based on brain development science, and establishing affordable, community-based rehabilitation centers.



Amos Warui
Kenya
Deputy Head of Compliance at National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA)

Dr. Carel van Wyk outlined the role of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) as a voluntary, self-supporting fellowship utilizing 36 core principles (12 Steps, 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts) to guide individuals toward physical, mental, and spiritual sobriety. He explained the medical and psychological roots of Alcohol Use Disorder, noting how genetic predisposition, tolerance, and severe withdrawal drive compulsive drinking. Dr. van Wyk detailed how alcohol impairs the prefrontal cortex—leading to violent outbursts, economic compulsion crime to fund dependence, and illegal manufacturing syndicates—while emphasizing that AA maintains open access for anyone possessing a genuine desire to stop drinking.



Dr. Carel van Wyk
South Africa
Class A Trustee / Lecturer & Social Worker at Alcoholics Anonymous South Africa / University of the Free State

Simamkele Young-Asani addressed the impact of alcohol on youth development and academic performance, noting how easily accessible alcohol undermines future leaders. He proposed strict, innovative purchasing controls—such as prohibiting cash sales for alcohol and introducing personalized tracking cards that restrict daily purchasing limits and verify legal age. Pointing to incidents like youth deaths in illegal tavern settings and drink-driving offenses, he called for banning alcohol advertising directed at young people, prohibiting tavern parking facilities to deter drink-driving, and prioritizing continental focus over harmful consumption habits.



Simamkele Yonag Xani
South Africa
Law Student, Entrepreneur, and Student Leader at University of South Africa (UNISA)

Samuel Obaci presented a counter-perspective on alcohol regulation, asserting that alcohol consumed in moderation acts as a legitimate social tool promoting human connection. Citing historical and religious references, he argued that existing regulations—such as prohibiting sales to minors under 18—are sufficient, and warned that overly restrictive measures like card systems infringe on individual rights. Obaci stressed the need to distinguish between responsible drinking and alcohol abuse, emphasizing that irresponsible personal behavior—rather than alcohol itself—is what leads to crime, and called for individual accountability to preserve the economic benefits of the alcohol industry.



Samuel Obaci
Uganda
Education Leader and Consultant

Sex Express: **Behind Trafficking in Persons for Sex Exploitation in Africa**

Trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation remains a rampant challenge across Africa, driven by socioeconomic vulnerabilities, digital recruitment tactics, and weak cross-border enforcement. On the 7th session, the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), the X Space brought together regional researchers, civil society leaders, and protection practitioners to analyze sex trafficking dynamics, existing legal protocols, and survival support mechanisms.

Dr. Joha I. Braimah contextualized sex trafficking within the UN Palermo Protocol's three constituent elements: the act, the means, and the purpose (noting that for children under 18, proof of means is not required due to incapacity to consent). He explained how regional free movement protocols (such as ECOWAS and SADC) and porous borders are exploited by traffickers, while cautioning that new framework like the AU Free Movement Protocol must proactively address these risks. Dr. Braimah highlighted the shift toward organized crime and digital recruitment via platforms like TikTok and pyramid schemes (e.g., QNET), urging nations to focus on effective institutional coordination, referral pathways, and cross-border police collaboration over simply enacting stiffer, un-enforced laws.



Joha I. Braimah, PhD
Ghana
Executive Director Migration and Rights Lab

Catherine Simiyu outlined Okoa Sasa's protection and prevention work at the Kenyan coast—a primary source, transit, and destination zone for human trafficking due to tourism and youth vulnerability. She detailed the operational steps for international rescues, which rely on global referral networks, law enforcement, and Interpol, followed by survivor repatriation and trauma-informed care. Simiyu highlighted operational hurdles, including victim identification challenges caused by fear and grooming, differing international legal systems, and stakeholder coordination gaps, while calling on African youth to take radical action to report suspected trafficking.



Catherine Simiyu
Kenya
Program Manager at Okoa Sasa Rescue Center

Dorcus Kabahinda Maloba clarified the distinction between non-commercialized sexual abuse and commercial sex trafficking, framing sex trafficking as an organized, highly fluid enterprise. Citing Uganda DPP estimates that approximately 850 youth leave the country monthly into sex trafficking scenarios, she outlined actionable safety checklists and emergency contact pathways, including internal affairs hotlines, police child protection units, diplomatic missions, the Department of Diaspora Affairs, Interpol, and IOM. Maloba urged families to preserve digital evidence, report missing persons immediately, and push for rigorous implementation of cross-border anti-trafficking frameworks.



Dorcus Kabahinda Maloba
Uganda
Executive Director at Chadash Global Center

Lucky Mbewe presented Malawi's context as a source, transit, and destination country for human trafficking, noting that child trafficking frequently begins under the guise of child labor in rural communities. He outlined CYECE's initiatives in rural sensitizations, duty-bearer engagement, law enforcement training, and victim repatriation. Mbewe emphasized that while strong legal statutes exist, implementation is frequently undermined by high-level corruption and rich perpetrators, calling for unified regional law enforcement, legislative alignment across neighboring transit nations (e.g., Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania), and institutional resource investment.



Lucky Mbewe
Malawi
Executive Director at Center for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (CYECE)

The Role of the Youth in Crime Prevention in Africa

Youth constitute the overwhelming majority of the African population, yet traditional criminal justice systems often sideline them as passive subjects rather than active partners in crime prevention. The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), hosted the 8th X Space of the Africa Youth Crime Prevention Platform X Spaces which brought together student guild leaders, civil society advocates, and legal experts to analyze youth vulnerabilities, socio-economic drivers of crime, and practical youth-led prevention mechanisms.

Isma Walakira defined youth as young individuals transitioning from childhood into adulthood, emphasizing that crime prevention begins with opportunity rather than policing. He identified unemployment, poverty, drug abuse, peer pressure, and political manipulation as primary drivers forcing young people into criminal decisions. Walakira advocated for youth-led peer mentorship, campus mental health and anti-drug campaigns, digital literacy to counter online misinformation, and active collaboration between student leadership, communities, and law enforcement authorities.



Isma Walakira
Uganda
29th Guild President of Makerere University Business School (MUBS)

Amb. Victoria Mbanasor highlighted systemic breakdowns in Nigeria where unemployment and poverty have driven youth toward extrajudicial violence, such as *"jungle justice"* and mob attacks. She emphasized that youths must be recognized as primary civic partners rather than mere perpetrators, aligning with UN Security Council Resolution 2250 and the African Youth Charter. Mbanasor detailed VAV Africa's work in rural community outreach, preventive human rights education ("Catch Them Young"), legal support for survivors of gender-based violence, and policy advocacy to strengthen justice institutions.



Amb. Victoria Mbanasor
Nigeria
Founder and Operations Lead at Voices Against Violence Africa (VAV Africa)

Gad Rutabingwa presented Rwanda's approach to empowering youth as key partners in national security and crime prevention, highlighting civic training initiatives (such as *Itorero*) that foster patriotism and military-police-civic cooperation. He discussed leveraging technology and social media for early warning information sharing with police. Additionally, Rutabingwa pointed out key operational hurdles on campus and in communities, including youth fear of reporting crimes due to potential misinterpretation or local institutional corruption.



Gad Rutabingwa
Rwanda
Guild President at the University of Lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK)

Fraud and Scams: **Inside the Minds of Modern Financial Masterminds**

In this digital era, fraud and scams have become prevalent in Africa. In the 9th X Space, the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) brought together experts to discuss the causes, effects, and way forward for Africa.

Erick Kwena analyzed how fraudsters capitalize on high youth unemployment, social normalization of deviance, and psychological manipulation (triggering panic, urgency, and excitement). Highlighting data from NCRC, he cited that 84.8% of surveyed Kenyans experienced technology-related crimes in a 12-month period, with 50.1% of cybercrime offenders being youth. Kwena detailed modern scam tactics—such as AI-driven phishing, fake documentation, unsolicited pump-and-dump investment groups, and shifting communications to private channels like WhatsApp or Telegram. He advocated for harmonizing cross-border legal frameworks (such as the AU Malabo Convention and the UN Convention against Cybercrime), enhancing KYC protocols, and building public-private partnerships to share real-time threat intelligence.



Erick Kwena
Kenya
Research Analyst at National Crime Research Centre (NCRC), Kenya

Aggrey Nkuyahaga addressed how digital transformation in banking—where over 90% of transactions occur on digital platforms—expands attack surfaces and third-party risks across integrated telecom and payment ecosystems. Citing Interpol data, he noted a 3,000% increase in suspected scam notifications in some African countries and highlighted that phishing accounted for roughly 35% of detected cyber incidents. Nkuyahaga illustrated common schemes targeting everyday consumers, including fraudulent account suspension alerts, fake mobile wallet refund calls, and malicious instant loan apps that extract sensitive phone data. He emphasized that the human factor remains the weakest link in security infrastructure and urged the public to adopt the *"Stop, Think, Verify, Protect, and Report"* framework while calling on regulators to enforce standard best practices across all financial technology operators.



Aggrey Nkuyahaga
Uganda
Chief Information Security Officer at Housing Finance Bank, Uganda

Godfrey Mpandikizi was invited to participate as a panelist to offer legal and human rights insights. his work involves identification of scams for prevention of human trafficking in Tanzania and addressing issues caused by human trafficking in the country.



Godfrey Mpandikizi
Tanzania
Executive Director at Tanzania Human Trafficking and Legal Initiatives

Bedroom Politics: **Analysing African Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights**

The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) hosted the 10th X Space and brought together the youth and experts to discuss Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and the associated offences. The discussion examined the tensions between legal restrictions, public health outcomes, bodily autonomy, and criminal justice systems across Africa.

Lester Lozani Phiri defined sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) through international frameworks like the 1994 ICPD Cairo Programme of Action, WHO guidelines, and the 2018 Guttmacher-Lancet Commission, framing SRHR as essential to human rights, gender equality, and sustainable development. He highlighted Zambia's legislative progress, such as the Gender Equity and Equality Act of 2015 and the Children's Code Act of 2022, which introduced child-friendly justice systems, diversion alternatives, and specialized courts for youth. However, Phiri noted ongoing operational challenges, including persistent teen pregnancy rates (27–29%) and legal contradictions between the constitutional age of majority (18) and the Penal Code's age of consent (16).



Lester Lozani Phiri
Zambia
Director of Programmes at Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia (PPAZ)

Stacie Njoki Mwangi outlined the dual role of criminal justice systems as both protective mechanisms against violence (e.g., rape, FGM, trafficking) and potential barriers when legal frameworks criminalize personal reproductive choices. Examining Kenya's landscape, she highlighted the tension between Article 26 of the Constitution—which permits abortion under specific circumstances—and outdated provisions in the Penal Code that continue to criminalize it, leading to judicial uncertainty. Mwangi warned that legal ambiguity and fear of prosecution drive vulnerable young people away from essential healthcare facilities and police reporting, creating harmful *"shadow areas"* of unreported abuses.



Stacie Njoki Mwangi
Kenya
Founder of Ubuntu Nexus

Ankunda Trassyleen addressed how legal restrictions, combined with deep-rooted cultural stigma, severely limit bodily autonomy and create barriers to healthcare access for young people. She emphasized that punitive laws fail to change human behavior; instead, criminalizing aspects like abortion, sex work, or comprehensive sexuality education simply leads to unsafe medical procedures, higher HIV/STI vulnerabilities, and widespread misinformation.
Trassyleen criticized archaic, patriarchal legal frameworks passed by male-dominated parliaments that disproportionately target marginalized youth, advocating instead for rights-based, youth-friendly healthcare systems.



Ankunda Trassyleen
Uganda
Lawyer and Youth Ambassador at the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

Ronald Omara discussed the practical hurdles facing non-governmental organizations delivering adolescent SRHR communication and services. Drawing from 32 years of organizational experience, he noted that justice and legal systems frequently fail to protect young people, leaving survivors without adequate post-trauma or post-abortion care due to legal restrictions and institutional biases. Omara stressed the urgent need for age-appropriate, factual sexuality education, arguing that young people require accurate information to make safe decisions rather than being forced to choose between health access and fear of legal punishment.



Ronald Omara
Uganda
Communications Manager at Straight Talk Foundation Uganda

Conjugal Rights in Prisons: **Examining Basic Rights in Rehabilitation of Offenders in Africa**

The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) hosted the 11th X Space session titled which brought together human rights officers, prison administrators, advocacy foundation heads, and an ex-inmate to debate whether conjugal rights should be extended to incarcerated individuals across African prison systems.

Monica Macy Namonde clarified that prisoners retain basic human rights—such as dignity, freedom from cruel treatment, the right to health, and life—even though their liberty is restricted. She noted that while constitutions protect the family unit, African courts (such as in South Africa) do not interpret this as an absolute mandate for conjugal rights. From a rights perspective, she recognized arguments for family preservation, but cited practical obstacles including severe overcrowding, resource limitations, security concerns, and restrictive legal frameworks.



Monica Macy Namonde
Malawi
Lawyer and Civil and Political Rights Officer at the Malawi Human Rights Commission

Frank Baine provided an operational perspective from the Uganda Prisons Service, stating that current laws do not permit conjugal rights. He outlined major systemic challenges to implementation:

- Severe overcrowding (holding over 82,000 inmates in facilities built for 24,000) makes dedicated conjugal spaces impossible.
- High rates of sexually transmitted infections upon entry risk constant reinfection.
- Paternity disputes, financial burdens on families, and potential increase in infants born in prison.
- Low visitation rates overall, making justice system speedy and fair trial access far higher priorities than conjugal privileges.



Frank Baine
Uganda
Senior Commissioner of Prisons, and Uganda Prisons Spokesperson.

Oluyemi Orija advocated for a rights-based approach, arguing that imprisonment only revokes the right to liberty, not other fundamental rights. She stressed that a significant proportion of African prison populations (up to 70% in Nigeria) consists of pre-trial detainees who remain legally innocent. Orija maintained that if human rights are recognized by law, the state must implement them regardless of how few inmates benefit or the operational costs involved.



Oluyemi Orija,
Nigeria
Executive Director, Headfort Foundation for Justice, Nigeria

Drawing from 24 years of personal experience in prison (including 14 years on death row), Shadrack Magara argued against implementing conjugal rights in the current African context. He emphasized that psychological survival in prison requires suppressing sexual thoughts. Magara highlighted severe practical, cultural, and psychological barriers:

- Invasive searching procedures and lack of privacy cause humiliation for visiting spouses.
- Conjugal visits touch only a tiny fraction (2–3%) of inmates, as most lack visitors or basic support.
- Intermittent sexual access causes emotional trauma, unmet expectations, and psychological disruption for both the inmate and spouse.

He said that priority should be placed on general family visitation, basic healthcare, and reintegration rather than conjugal access.



Shadrack Magara
Uganda
Founding Director PACEM Havens Foundation, Uganda



The battle of Graveyards: **An Analysis of Crimes Arising from Inheritance and Succession in Africa**

On the 12th X Space session under the topic: *The Battle of Graveyards: Analysing Crimes Arising from Inheritance and Succession in Africa,* The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders brought together legal scholars, advocates, and administrators to examine how inheritance disputes drive criminality across African nations.

Janet Mkomera Kamoto outlined Malawi's traditional matrilineal and patrilineal frameworks alongside the statutory *Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act* (DEWIPA). She explained that while DEWIPA protects children with a 50% share in intestacy, it fails to address modern youth priorities like digital assets and online businesses. Kamoto emphasized that systemic delays in obtaining legal documentation breed impatience among youth, leading to intermeddling and property-grabbing crimes, which are exacerbated by limited legal literacy and language barriers in rural areas.



Janet Mkomera Kamoto
Malawi
Principal Legal Aid Advocate at Malawi Legal Aid Bureau

Kuloba Wesaka differentiated succession from inheritance and highlighted how statutory laws clash with customary practices. He noted that while children over 18 generally have no automatic property entitlement during a parent's lifetime, Uganda's 2022 succession law amendment extended protection for school-going youth aged 18 to 25. He detailed Uganda's statutory intestacy distribution—20% to the surviving spouse, 75% to lineal descendants, 1% to the customary heir, and 4% to dependent relatives—while highlighting common crimes like will forgery, intermeddling, spousal eviction, and bad actors fraudulently declaring living people dead to claim estates.



Kuloba Wesaka Henry
Uganda
Assistant Administrator General in the Office of the Administrator General, Uganda

Prince Mphuthi focused on the socio-economic and psychological drivers of inheritance crimes, arguing that high youth unemployment and economic desperation cause young people to view parental property as an immediate entitlement. This mindset triggers a sequence of coercion, document forgery, property usurpation, and physical violence. To combat this, Mphuthi called for a unified national strategy involving courts, law enforcement, traditional leaders, and civil society to digitalize estate administration, protect vulnerable heirs, and strictly prosecute estate fraud as a criminal offense rather than relying on civil remedies.



Prince Mphuthi
South Africa
Pupil Advocate, South Africa



Davison Kanokanga presented case studies illustrating how gaps and rigidities in Zimbabwe's legal system spur crime. He pointed out that Zimbabwe does not strictly require a death certificate to register an estate, enabling fraudulent declarations of death. He highlighted how strict execution rules lead to the technical invalidation of wills, and shared a case where a deceased husband's home passed entirely to his childless second wife's family, rendering his original children homeless and driving them to violence.



Davison Kanokanga
Zimbabwe
Founder and Managing Partner at Kanokanga & Partners



FROM REACH TO LEARNING AND POLICY USE

The initial phase establishes a weekly bilingual channel, a youth-oriented audience, participation from speakers across twelve African countries and a documentation process that preserves recommendations. The next phase should strengthen continental participation and show how the knowledge is used.

Priorities for the next phase

- Broaden speakers and promotion through Member States, PNI institutes, universities and youth networks.
- Publish concise bilingual session reports and make recordings, transcripts and reports easy to find.
- Track repeat attendance, report use, learning and follow-up actions rather than reach alone.
- Connect strong recommendations to UNAFRI research, training and policy engagements.

Planned conversations

Number	Date	Topic
13	11/9/2026	The Realities of Rape and its social connotations in Africa.
14	18/9/2026	Violence on Streets: Inside the Criminal Gangs and urban safety in Africa
15	25/9/2026	The Scourge of Cyber Crimes in Africa.
16	2/10/2026	Children in conflict with the law: Behind the psychology of juvenile delinquency and its effect in adulthood
17	9/10/2026	Access to Justice in Africa: An evaluation of the justice sector in Africa
18	16/10/2026	African perspective on prison population and the struggle to rehabilitate offenders.
19	23/10/2026	Women Behind Bars: The tales of female prisoners in Africa's rehabilitation strategy.
20	30/10/2026	At the Barrel: Examining the Impact of Conflicts on Crimes in Africa.
21	6/11/2026	Idle and Disorderly: The Cost of Unemployment and Crimes in Africa
22	13/11/2026	An Analysis of Alternative Justice Mechanisms in the Criminal Justice System in Africa
23	20/11/2026	In Love and in Crime: Marriages and Crimes in Africa.
24	27/11/2026	Spying on You: Data Safety and Criminal Responsibility in Modern Africa
25	4/12/2026	By Order of Death: An evaluation of the practicability of the death sentence in Africa
26	11/12/2026	Welcome to Nowhere: African Perspective on Reintegration of Offenders into Society
27	18/12/2026	The Godly Touch: The Role of Religion in Crime Prevention in Africa.