

COMMEMORATION OF THE INAUGURAL AFRICA DATA PROTECTION DAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2026



'creating a level playing field'



Theme: "Protecting Data, Building Trust, Powering Africa's Digital Future"

The Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ), in its capacity as Zimbabwe's Data Protection Authority and Second Vice President of the Network of African Data Protection Authorities (NADPA), joins fellow members of the NADPA, African governments, private sector organisations, academia, civil society, and citizens across the continent in commemorating the inaugural Africa Data Protection Day.

This historic day marks the anniversary of the formation of the Network of African Data Protection Network (NADPA) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in 2016. Since its formation, the Network has grown to 34 members and continues to grow in its reach and influence on the continent and beyond. The formation of NADPA was a collective realisation that Africa needs to take a lead in protecting the data of their citizens as a way of enhancing their human rights to privacy and dignity. The African Data Protection Day also celebrates the achievements all NADPA members in advancing the data protection agenda on the continent. The day also serves as a collective commitment by African Data Protection Authorities to dedicate 21 September each year to raising awareness on privacy and personal data protection, promoting responsible data governance, and fostering trust in Africa's rapidly evolving digital economy.

POTRAZ reaffirms its commitment to safeguarding the fundamental right to privacy and ensuring that personal data is processed in accordance with the principles of lawfulness, fairness, transparency, accountability, and security as provided for under Zimbabwe's Cyber and Data Protection Act [Chapter 12:07].

The digital revolution continues to transform the way we live, work, communicate, learn, and conduct business. Emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, big data analytics, mobile applications, and digital financial services, are creating unprecedented opportunities for innovation and economic growth. However, these opportunities can only be fully realized where individuals and organisations have confidence that personal information is handled responsibly and protected from misuse.

The commemoration of Africa Data Protection Day serves as a reminder that privacy is not merely a legal obligation but a cornerstone of human dignity, trust, and sustainable digital transformation. Strong data protection frameworks enhance consumer confidence, facilitate secure digital transactions, strengthen cybersecurity, and support cross-border data flows that are essential for regional integration and economic prosperity.

On this auspicious occasion, POTRAZ calls upon:

- i. All Data Controllers to comply with and uphold the dictates of the Cyber & Data Protection Act [Chapter 12:07].
Public institutions to embed privacy considerations into their systems, processes, and service delivery mechanisms.
- ii. Private sector organisations to strengthen compliance programmes and adopt privacy-by-design and privacy-by-default approaches.
- iii. Technology innovators and developers to ensure that emerging technologies are developed with privacy and data protection as the foundation and deployed ethically and responsibly.
- iv. Educational institutions and researchers to advance knowledge, innovation, and awareness on data protection and digital rights.
- v. Civil society organisations to continue advocating for the protection of privacy and the promotion of digital literacy;
- vi. Every citizen to understand and exercise their data protection rights and take proactive measures to safeguard their personal information online and offline.

POTRAZ further recognizes the importance of continental cooperation in addressing emerging privacy challenges arising from increasing cross-border data flows, digital trade, artificial intelligence, and other technologies that transcend national boundaries. Zimbabwe remains committed to working closely with fellow African Data Protection Authorities and other stakeholders in promoting harmonized approaches to data protection and strengthening Africa's digital resilience. As we commemorate the inaugural Africa Data Protection Day, let us collectively embrace a culture of accountability, transparency, and respect for privacy. Let us build digital systems that put people first, foster innovation responsibly, and inspire trust among citizens and businesses alike.

Together, we can create a secure and trusted digital ecosystem that empowers individuals, promotes sustainable development, and advance Africa's safe and secure digital transformation agenda.

Happy Africa Data Protection Day!


DIRECTOR GENERAL

