where's my data?

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

POLLICY

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who we are

Pollicy is a feminist collective of technologists, data scientists, creatives, and academics who refuse to accept the digital status quo. We work at the intersection of data, design, and technology to craft better life experiences and advocate for truly just societies. Grounded in Africa, we believe data and technology can liberate rather than oppress when wielded with care, creativity, and collective power.

Our research sparks conversations, our training transforms how communities engage with technology, and our storytelling cuts through digital noise to influence opinions and shape policy. By blending intellectual rigour with artistic expression, we've grown from upstart to trusted voice on data governance, digital rights, and feminist technology in Africa.

Make no mistake, our practice is anything but traditional. We breathe life into data through games, murals, animations, podcasts, and publications that challenge and delight. We meet people exactly where they are, whether in government offices or vibrant community street corners. We build shared understanding around ethical data use that centres those traditionally pushed to the margins. **(www.pollicy.org)**

our mission

To advance how data is conceptualised, used, and reproduced for the development of just societies.

our vision

The efficient, ethical, and equitable use of data by all.

Message from the

executive director

As I reflect on the past year, the question **"Where is My Data?"** is no longer rhetorical. It is urgent, political, and deeply personal to all of us. This reflection, which anchors Pollicy's 2024 annual report, emerges from the lived realities of millions of Africans and especially women and marginalized communities navigating opaque, unequal, and extractive digital systems. At Pollicy, we have moved beyond asking the question; we have committed to answering it collectively, intentionally, and through action.

2024 was a year of bold strides for us. Through our initiatives like the Afrofeminist Internet Scorecard, we deepened our understanding of the digital gender divide and equipped advocates with tools to hold institutions accountable. The launch of the Africa Data Governance Hub 2.0 marked a pivotal step toward shaping a continental vision for inclusive, rights-based data governance. These milestones were driven by the dynamic ecosystem we've nurtured: feminist technologists, local government leaders, media allies, and civil society partners united by a shared commitment to data and digital justice.

Our participation in platforms such as our flagship, public-facing event - DataFest Africa, our presence at the Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa, the Africa Internet Governance Forum, and global gatherings like the Internet Governance Forum, AWID Forum, and CSW69 amplified the call for feminist digital transformation. From spotlighting grassroots voices in the "Dear Tech Diary" series to empowering communities through ROSA, Pollicy's work centered those most affected by technological harms and too often excluded from decision-making spaces.

Critically, we have also challenged deeper questions: not just where data resides, but whose interests it serves, who benefits, and who bears the costs. Feminist data governance, we argue, is not a technical fix, it is a political act in service to our communities. It demands thinking more holistically as communities on what data means for us, what it can do for us, how to take back ownership of our data and to think about the future of data and its intersections with the everyday lives of Africans by influencing how data is collected, stored, and used. It inspires our belief that social change is most powerful when it is engaging, joyful and rooted in the lived realities of our communities, and so we continue to use games and artistic expressions to spark critical conversations about technology, identity, and power.

In 2025, we will continue to build on this momentum by deepening our solidarity with tech workers across Africa through the Fair Digital Kazi Manifesto. This critical initiative amplifies the shared concerns, data, and daily realities of digital platform workers, civil society actors, activists, and labour organisers. The manifesto directly responds to systemic challenges in Africa's digital work.

environment, framing policy, practice, and public discourse and calls on us to reimagine the future of work through advancing equitable and dignified labour in the platform economy.

I am really honoured to work with the team and our partners in shifting the use of data for public service delivery. I am excited to develop ideas, narratives, and resources that shift the power to counter neoliberal narratives at a time when we really need to shift the narrative that African people's data and well-being are an acceptable tradeoff for our freedoms and economic growth.

Looking ahead, my vision for Pollicy remains unwavering: a future where African communities can demand transparency, reclaim agency over their data, and co-create digital systems rooted in justice and joy. As we celebrate seven years of transformative work at Pollicy, we are energized by the road ahead and by the solidarity of partners and allies like you, whose partnership will make the next chapter even more impactful.

In Solidarity,

Irene Mwendwa,
Executive Director, Pollicy

our engagements at a glance

Dear Tech Diary Series

We marked a significant milestone with the launch of our ‘Dear Tech Diary’ series under the **VOTE: Women** Cohort II initiative in Senegal, Uganda and Tanzania. We ran a series of engaging write-shops as a dedicated initiative to bring to the forefront the remarkable efforts of female local government representatives across the three countries in East and West Africa. During these storytelling engagements focused on civic engagement and digital transformation, women leaders shared their transformative journeys, unfolding how digital platforms have become powerful tools for social change in their communities, while complementing their work and supporting them to overcome barriers in politics.

Our Future of Work Program Took Off!

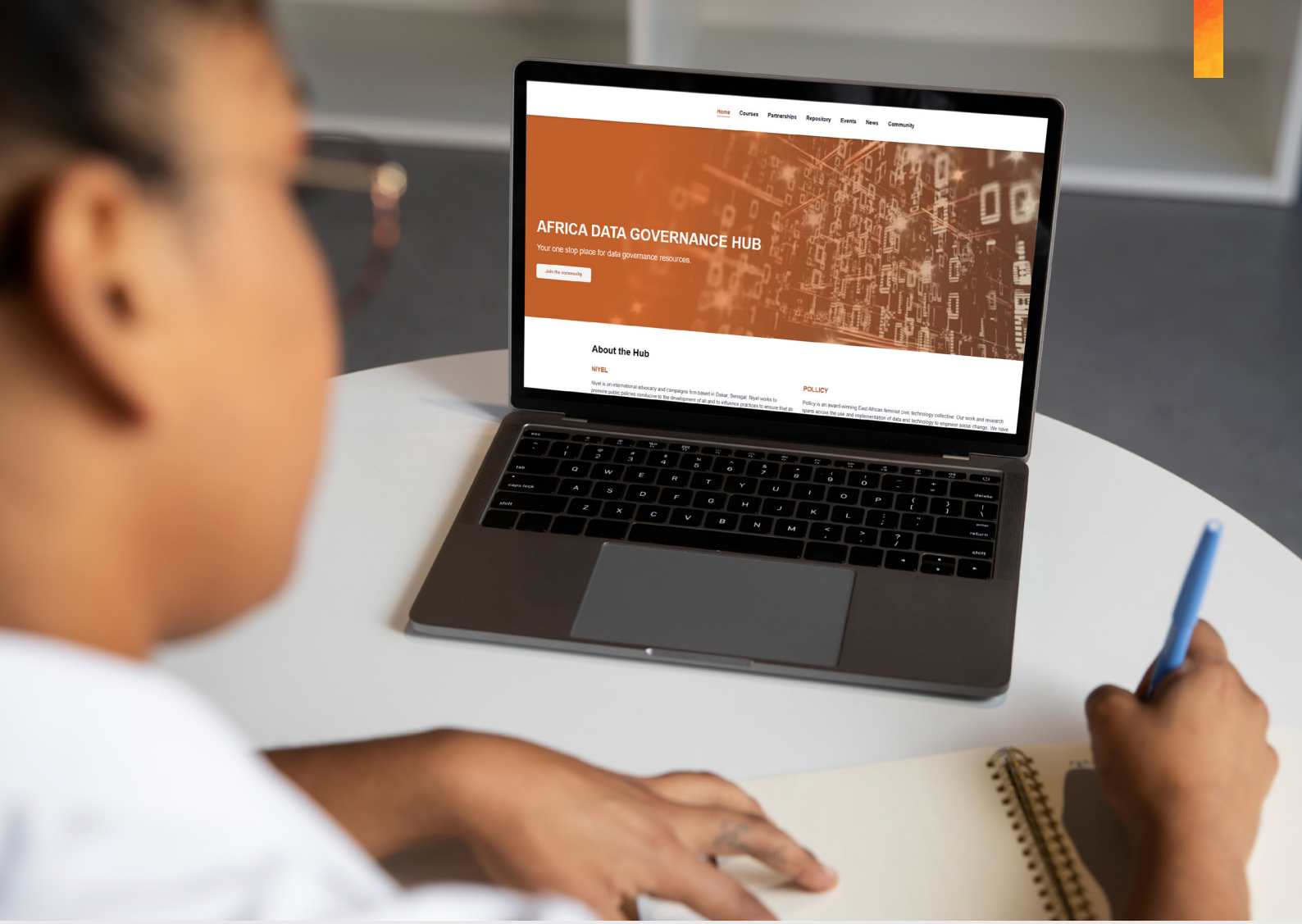
Since 2021, Pollicy in collaboration with in-country partners within seven African countries has been implementing the Future of Work project to build a critical mass of African women and champion a feminist internet, digital resilience, and online safety through media engagement and the shaping policy and legal frameworks. With digital resilience at the center, the Future of Work Program has made great progress, expanding its footprint and reaching primarily women in media and secondarily women leaders, activists, educators, technologists, creatives, and community organizers in all their different capacities, using data and inventive interventions.

The project spans across Uganda, where we're partnering with Media Focus on Africa (MFA), Tanzania with Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), Kenya with the Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK), Cameroon with Protege QV, Democratic Republic of Congo with Union Congolaise des Femmes des Médias (UCOFEM), Senegal with Africtivites, and Mozambique with Observatorio Mulheres. These in-country engagements were critical in giving them the tools and skills they needed to navigate the digital world safely and effectively. We also continue to conduct training to equip and provide these women with practical guidance against technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

Launch of the Afrofeminist Internet Scorecard

Between June and December 2024, Pollicy together with Media Focus on Africa, Tanzania Media Women's Association, The Association of Media Women in Kenya, Protege QV, Union Congolaise des Femmes des Médias (UCOFEM), Senegal, with Africtivites launched the Afrofeminist Internet Scorecard, a multi-country research tool that assessed the digital landscapes of seven African countries, including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Cameroon, Mozambique, Senegal, and the Democratic Republic of Congo through a gender lens. Officially launched at DataFest Africa 2024 and subsequently, in the different countries, the scorecard highlighted the progress and challenges related to achieving an equitable internet in each of the seven countries. Across the seven different national digital landscapes, it was commonly found that women face a wider gender digital divide, increasing online abuses amidst weakly enforced laws that are not gender specific and responsive in nature.

The findings and recommendations as per the scorecard informed the establishment of multi-sectoral Communities of Practice (CoPs) within the seven African countries where individuals and organizations are earnestly working towards achieving an equitable internet and digital justice through interventions ranging from short-term creative and digital media, key stakeholder engagements, training, media campaigns to product development.



Africa Data Governance Knowledge Hub 2.0 Launch

We took a major step toward advancing digital rights and data governance across the continent with the revamp of the Africa Data Governance Knowledge Hub. The hub was born out of the urgent need for inclusive, transparent, and data-informed policies that protect the rights of African citizens while fostering innovation and development. It is an online platform and community designed to foster and support collaboration among data governance actors and the sharing of data governance resources in Africa. The goal is to create a truly valuable community for data governance actors and establish the Hub as the go-to place that integrates online and offline engagements to enhance community involvement and participation.

At its core, the African Data Governance Hub is designed to be a dynamic, evolving and centralized resource for research, collaboration, and advocacy on data governance, bringing together civil society organizations, researchers, policymakers, and digital rights advocates to shape the future of data governance in Africa. Through this platform, we are working to bridge the gap between policy and practice, ensuring that Africans have a say in how their data is collected, used, and protected.

our events at a glance

DataFest Africa 2024

The 5th Edition of DataFest Africa 2024 took place in Nairobi, Kenya, in partnership with the Aga Khan University. The event attracted an attendance of close to 1,000 participants, both physically and virtually, bringing together thought leaders, tech innovators, policymakers, and enthusiasts from across the continent to explore the intersection of data, technology, and societal impact. We dived deep into our theme, “Opportunities for All: Harnessing Data and Technology for Africa’s Transformation,” and the sessions were nothing short of engaging and transformative.

Among the many highlights of DataFest Africa 2024, five key initiatives stood out:

1. Launch of the Afro-Feminist Data Museum

The Afro-Feminist Data Museum was a game-changing addition to DataFest Africa 2024, offering a one-of-a-kind experience that reimagined how data may be utilized to convey African women's contributions and experiences. The museum, a data artistry project by women for women in Africa, integrates art, technology, and storytelling. ZAWADI, a mixed-media artwork that employed augmented reality to highlight African women's contributions to digital spaces, was one of the most notable installations.

2. Launch of the Afrofeminist Internet Scorecard and Internet Awards

Another key highlight of DataFest Africa 2024 was the launch of the Afrofeminist Internet Scorecard and Awards - a bold step towards addressing the gender digital divide and ensuring fair representation of women in the evolving digital economy. The scorecard, a product of our Future of Work Project, was designed to evaluate the progress and challenges related to achieving an Afrofeminist internet in the seven countries where stakeholders' consultations took place.

3. Wellness Hub

Through its first-ever Wellness Hub, DataFest Africa 2024 also gave mental health top priority amidst the heavy discussions on AI, technology, data, and policy. The hub was created to address the often-overlooked issue of digital burnout and event exhaustion by allowing participants to pause and refuel at the Wellness Hub throughout the three-day event.

4. Fairing Digital Kazi Convening

Alongside DataFest Africa 2024, Pollicy and the Digital Justice Lab convened key stakeholders from Kenya and Uganda, including government bodies, civil society, platform workers, international organizations, and researchers, to unpack the complexities of the digital economy. The convening deepened collective understanding of exploitative data and labor practices in platform work and strengthened cross-sector capacity to address these challenges. Platform workers gained knowledge to advocate for fair wages and protections, CSOs were equipped to push for data and labor rights, and policymakers received research-backed recommendations to guide more inclusive digital governance. This engagement laid the groundwork for continued advocacy for the rights and recognition of platform workers across Africa.

5. Data Governance Master Class

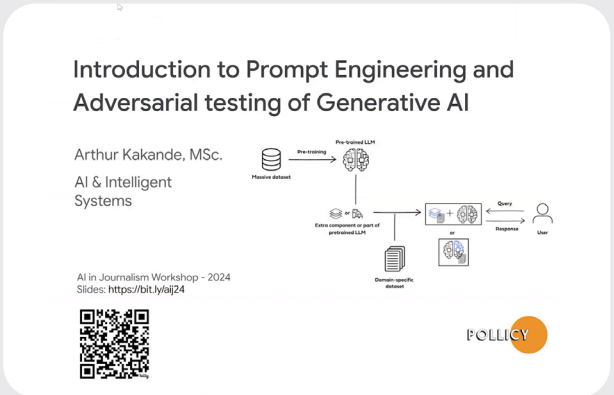
Pollicy and Niyel co-facilitated a Data Governance Master Class in partnership with the Africa Data Governance Hub Advisory Council. The session brought together experts, policymakers, civil society, and academia to explore Africa's evolving data governance landscape. Discussions focused on continental and regional frameworks like the AU Data Policy Framework, ethical and inclusive governance practices, and sector-specific challenges. The Masterclass offered practical recommendations such as aligning national policies with global standards, investing in infrastructure and training, promoting ethical data use, ensuring meaningful inclusion, and concluded with a call to center community needs, safeguard rights, and build a more equitable data future for Africa.

Pollicy At 7

2024 marked Pollicy's 7th anniversary, and we couldn't have asked for a better backdrop than DataFest Africa 2024 to celebrate our journey. The Pollicy at 7 celebrations were woven into the fabric of the event, reminding us of how far we've come and the impact we've made together with communities and partners. From our humble beginnings to becoming a leading voice in the tech and data space in Africa, this milestone was a moment to reflect and recharge for the future.

AI and Journalism Master Class

In response to the growing impact of artificial intelligence on the media industry, Pollicy and the Pan Africa Center for AI Ethics co-designed and led a week-long hands-on online workshop on Data Journalism: Striking the Balance Between Automation and Human Oversight. The workshop brought together over 50 journalists, editors, researchers, and media strategists from across Africa to explore the ethical and technical intersections of AI and journalism. Participants gained practical skills in prompt engineering, adversarial testing, and AI-assisted reporting, while also reflecting on gender, bias, and regulatory gaps in AI systems. The sessions emphasized the need to center African perspectives in shaping AI tools for more inclusive and ethical journalism.



Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa

Pollicy was present during the 11th edition of the Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa (FIFAAfrica) that took place in Dakar, Senegal. During the forum, Pollicy hosted a pre-event, “Strengthening Communities of Practice for Digital Resilience of Women in Francophone Africa,” highlighting strategies to overcome digital challenges in Francophone Africa, such as limited technology access and digital literacy gaps, with a focus on empowering women through local capacity building and knowledge sharing.

We were also engaged in a panel discussion about Rapid Response Assistance for Tech-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV), introducing ROSA, a new platform supporting women in politics who face online violence. The session explored how ROSA provides resources, escalates reports to social media platforms, and offers emergency funding for survivors.

AWID Forum 2024

Pollicy was at the Association for Women's Rights in Development Forum - AWID Forum 2024 held in Bangkok, Thailand, and hosted an interactive session on 'The Future of Feminist Tech Funding'. This session brought together 50 grantmakers, feminist tech leaders, and advocates who explored innovative funding practices that transform, sustain, and strengthen digital rights and feminist tech communities, particularly in the Global South. At the session, we launched our 8 Principles of Feminist Tech Funding and shared impactful strategies for deepening donor engagement.

69th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69)

During the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), Pollicy joined a participatory learning exchange hosted by key partners such as UN Women, the Colmena Fund, and Apolitical Foundation under the theme of building lasting change. The session convened influential leaders from the women's political leadership ecosystem to exchange insights on driving transformative change amidst global challenges. Additionally, Pollicy contributed to a high-level dialogue on technology's impact on democratic participation, emphasizing the need for gender-responsive digital governance.

our research

In 2024, our research agenda remained firmly rooted in advancing inclusive, feminist, and citizen-centred approaches to technology and data governance. Across multiple studies, we examined critical intersections of digital governance, gender, data ecosystems, and online safety, with a particular focus on the lived experiences of communities in Africa. From in-depth analyses of Kenya's digital governance frameworks and the pervasive challenge of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, to continental reviews of data governance and the role of gender data in national planning, our work continues to generate evidence that informs policy, empowers communities, and challenges systemic inequities. Below is a snapshot of the research published this year.

"Digitising Kenya: An assessment of the citizen centricity of Kenya's digital governance" Report.

This research report puts forth an in-depth investigation and analysis that was conducted in 2024, seeking to understand how digital governance is approached in Kenya with regard to inclusion.

Access the full report here

The **"Rethinking Digitisation"** toolkit is designed for stakeholders shaping and implementing digital governance in Kenya.

Informed by the Digitising Kenya Report, it is meant to guide and prompt the thinking that goes into the design of policies and other solutions with the goal of placing the Kenyan at the heart and not periphery.

The toolkit can be accessed here

The **"Afrofeminist Internet Scorecard"** is a comprehensive tool designed to evaluate the progress and challenges related to achieving an equitable internet in the seven countries of our Future of Work Project: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Cameroon, Senegal, Mozambique and DRC.

Driven by feminist principles, it is targeted at promoting an inclusive, safe, and equitable digital environment.

Download the report **here**

The **"Dada Disinfo: Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) Report,"** in collaboration with Nendo, outlines the pervasive issue of TFGBV in Kenya's vibrant but volatile social media ecosystem.

The report draws on extensive research to shed light on the manifestations, perpetrators, and impacts of TFGBV.

Access the full report **here**

The **"Perpetrator Personas for TFGBV Against Content Creators in Kenya"** brief was developed as part of the Social Media Analytics Pilot project conducted in partnership with Nendo, with funding support from USAID.

The goal of this project was to generate robust evidence, insights, and strategies for women navigating cyber abuse and technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV).

Download the brief **here**

The **"Gender Data in Evolving Data Ecosystems"** report delves into the often-overlooked aspect of gender data within the public sector, revealing a significant gap in its collection and utilization across Ghana, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, and Zambia.

The report sheds light on the challenges faced by women and girls, emphasizing the crucial role gender data plays in fostering equitable national planning and decision-making.

The full report can be accessed **here**

Our report, **"Unlocking the Power in Gender Data,"** sheds light on the imbalances within data ecosystems. It specifically analyzes data governance through an Afro-feminist lens with the aim of making a case for and putting into view gender data, while working towards more equitable data ecosystems.

Access report **here**

Our report, "**Data Science for Empowerment,"** highlights the factors that encourage greater participation of data professionals, particularly women and girls and other marginalized individuals, in data science professions.

The findings identify barriers and structural obstacles that limit access to training in data professions for these groups.

Access the report **here**

This report underscores the critical importance of effective data governance in maximizing data value, mitigating risks, and reducing management costs.

Focused on the economic and labor sector in Uganda, the study aimed to explore public and private stakeholders' understanding of data governance policies and practices in Uganda.

Download the full report here

The **"Towards Data Governance in Africa"** report is a comprehensive desk review that delves into the state of data governance in Africa, spotlighting key aspects such as policy frameworks, regional collaborations, and capacity building.

It emphasizes the crucial role of capacity building in nurturing skills essential for successful data management and ethics.

The full report can be accessed here

creative is our second name

The secret is out as to why our Annual Report is titled Where is my Data?

We created a card game from scratch. In a digital landscape where 5.3 billion people are online, with 200 million joining yearly, what resources exist to educate both new and existing users about digital safety and data privacy? As an advocate for clear and relatable communication on data privacy, we created the game knowing that it is a wonderful tool for distilling complex topics into accessible and engaging experiences. Games have a unique ability to dismantle barriers that often come in the way of meaningful conversation and discussion.

Institutional Development

Board

Pollicy is lucky to have an active board. Our Board Members meet twice a year to review updates, discuss challenges, and stay on the same wavelength. Key areas we have covered in the last year include:

- Change management and handover at Pollicy: research and programming, regulatory compliance in East Africa
- Dynamic strategic planning at Pollicy
- Key Community Events and Products
- The Impact of Changing Geopolitics on Sustainable Financing of Digital Projects
- How to Transition to a New Board at Pollicy

New Staff at Pollicy

In 2024, Pollicy expanded, bringing on more staff members to ensure our work is moving across borders. Wanjiku Gathua was appointed as the Director of Finance, HR, and Operations, Cate Kamatu was appointed as the Director of Communications, Johnson Jjemba was appointed as the MEALK Manager, Brenda Namata joined as the Programs Coordinator for Strategic Gender Initiatives, Wanjiku Maina was recruited as the Communications Assistant, and Rashid Kisejjere was appointed as a Data Assistant.

Wanjiku Gathua

Director of Finance, HR and Operations

Cate Kamatu

Director of Communications

Johnson Jjemba

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Learning and Knowledge Manager

Brenda Namata

Programs Coordinator, Strategic Gender Initiatives and Advocacy

Wanjiku Maina

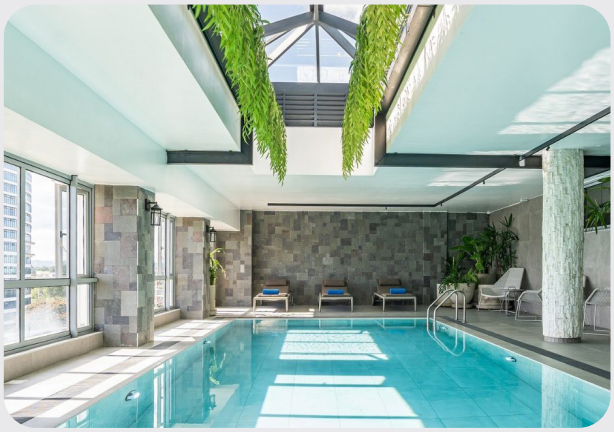
Communications Assistant

Rashid Kisejjere

Data Assistant

Staff Retreat and Mental Health Week

In July, Pollicy had a staff retreat in Nairobi, Kenya that included all staff members and fellows. For a remote working organization and to all the new staff, the retreat served as an opportunity for the new team to integrate into the workplace culture, providing an equal footing and inclusive environment where they can thrive and socialize. Following the retreat, the organization slowed down operations for a week to allow the team to enjoy time off to focus on their mental well-being and rest. Since 2021, Pollicy has used this initiative to foster a healthy working environment, prevent burnout, reduce work-related stress, and promote a work-life balance



2024 Pollicy Fellows: Innovators Extraordinaire

Our fellowship program, designed to introduce young professionals to the world of civic technology, hit its seventh year. Through this program, Pollicy provides a platform for budding innovators to apply their skills in creating data-driven solutions that address some of society's most pressing challenges. Spanning from Cameroon, Kenya and Kenya, 2024 brought to us 5 fellows who worked on phenomenal projects; Ebassa Agrephine Gwladys, Gertrude Mbaseege, Lilian Mulandi, Rashid Kisejjere and Wanjiku Maina who worked on an internal communications project.

Wanjiku Maina
Kenya

Rashid Kisejjere
Uganda

Lilian Mulandi
Kenya

Ebassa Agrephine Gwladys
Cameroon

Getrude Mbaseege
Uganda

Policy Submissions

As per our 'Where is My Data' theme, in 2024, we asked questions and gave recommendations through consultations, drafting submission and contributed to shaping the development of key policy frameworks in key issues including; Draft Kenya Cyber Security Strategy Call for Comments, UN, South Korea, FEMTECH guidelines paper, Open Letter to the AU Heads of State and Government on the endorsed Continental AI Strategy and the Global and African Digital Compact, Statement on Gender in the WSIS+20 Review Process and Considering Technology Facilitated Gender-Based Violence as an Offense in Uganda's 2024 Sexual Offences Bill.

Our Strategic Plan 2024-2027 continues to guide our approach even in the difficult financial times by aligning our priorities with our fundraising and resilience strategy.

The Year Ahead

As we look ahead to 2025, we're keen to keep an eye on partnerships and collaborations and work through the global challenges by reimagining financial resilience. We envision a world where people know where their data is or know to ask the right question: Where Is Your Data?

From the efforts undertaken with in-country partners in 2024 through the establishment of the CoPs and the impactful work being undertaken, Pollicy and partners are working towards the first-ever African Feminist Internet Awards to recognise and celebrate the individuals, communities of practice, and organizations that are making significant contributions to promoting an equitable internet.

Accordingly, Pollicy shall continue to conduct evidence-based research and in particular through its new project, 'Updating Gender Dynamics: How Digital Spaces Foster Empowering, Gender-Transformative Employment Policies and Women's Mobilisation in Kenya' that starts in May 2025. This project will investigate the transformative role of digital spaces in shaping inclusive employment policies and enabling the mobilisation of women for social, economic, and political empowerment in Kenya.

We aim to work on a project dubbed Inclusive and Harmonised African Digital and Data Policies. Promoting Gender Equality in Data Governance and Policymaking towards Domestication of AU Data Policy Framework. In response to the African Union's adoption of the AU Data Policy Framework (AU DPF) in 2022, this project seeks to address the limited implementation strategies and institutional capacities for inclusive data governance in Africa.

We are also embarking on a project under the Colmena Fund that seeks to ensure we tackle barriers that women in politics face and support their pioneering journeys as they transform the lives of everyday people.

We are cognizant of the changing priorities of the donor landscape as an organization. As such Pollicy's commitment is to ensure the organization's resilience and maintain our connection to the communities we serve.

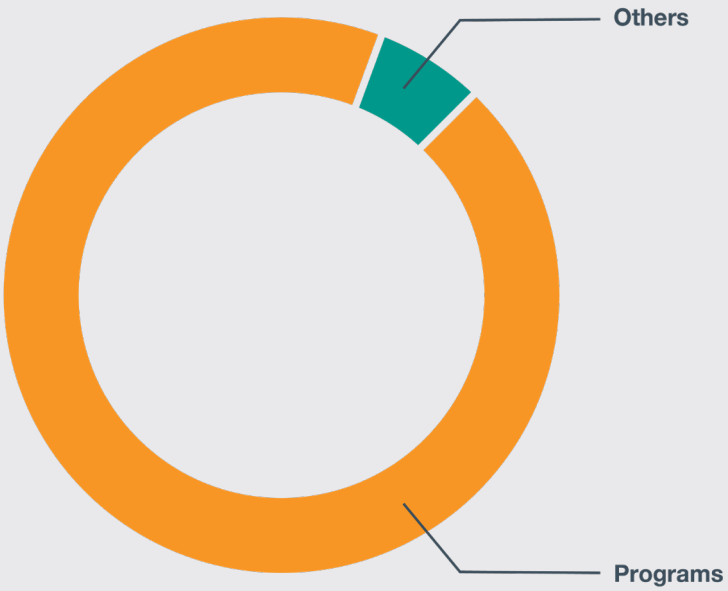
financial overview

Income Analysis

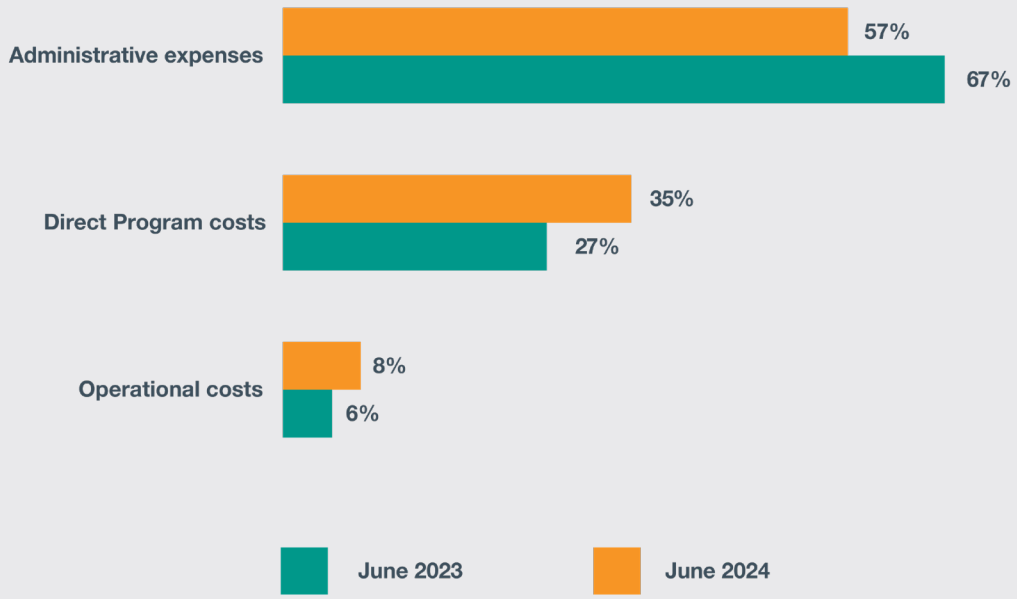
Programs

Africa Data Governance Knowledge Hub	453,434,097
Amnesty International Kenya	14,453,909
Civil Rights Defenders	132,173,444
DAI Global LLC	160,488,938
Digital Justice Lab	86,654,774
FORD 2 Grant	117,849,512
FORD UGX	223,282,534
Hewlett 2	484,548,240
Hewlett GOS	51,787,348
Hewlitt OE	87,441,856
HIVOS VOICE 2	15,008,295
HorizonT3000 Austrian Organisation	50,418,464
MOZILLA FOUNDATION	18,045,362
National Endowment for Democracy	178,562,915
NDI OVAW-P	127,053,527
Numun Fund USD	29,837,208
Open Government Partnership (OGP)	**55,851,235**
Open Society Foundation Africa	**938,100,828**
VOICE	**116,435,092**
Programs	**3,341,427,578**
Other Sources	**65,897,718**
TOTAL	**3,407,325,296**

Income Analysis



Expenditure Analysis



our 2024 partners

cheers to future collaborations

Are you part of an or foundation with fun research ideas, or do you want to support our work on everything from ethical tech to data governance to digital rights? Let's collaborate! Reach out to us via this **form** to explore partnership opportunities.