



## **Re-writing the African narrative, one core value at a time**

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Archbishop Desmond Tutu has been voted Africa's most reputable and ethical individual, while Gift of the Givers and Botswana were recognized as the most admired organisation and country on the continent. These are just some of the top-level results from the research conducted by Reputation Matters for African Public Relations Association (APRA) on African ethics and reputation. According to president of APRA, Yomi Badejo-Okusanya, "Many lessons have been learnt from the research and great opportunities present themselves to take ethics and reputation of African countries to the next level."

The results of the survey were presented at the APRA's 30th annual conference in Gaborone, Botswana on Wednesday, 09 May 2018. "We need to start celebrating Africa as Africans, and to take the narrative back, leaders need to walk the talk and talk the walk if there is any chance for development and economic growth," added Badejo-Okusanya.

APRA assists in setting standards, creating and enabling a professional environment for accurate perception, goodwill and understanding of necessary and effective PR practices. Valuable insights were gained from the almost 120 respondents who mostly identified as CEO's and senior executives in the communication, PR and marketing industry. These insights will be used to support the partnership between APRA and the African Union (AU) to assist them in building a prosperous image and reputation that is authentic to Africa. Of the 12 countries represented in the survey, 71% of respondents reside in South Africa with Ghana, Nigeria, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Namibia and Angola also being represented.

The research highlights revealed that respondents scored 89% for ethics and reputation management on a personal level. Organisations received 84% for ethics and 85% for reputation management, while African countries received 35% for ethics and 34% for reputation management which illustrates big opportunities for growth. The average percentages confirmed and correlated with Reputation Matters' unique measuring tool, the Repudometer which calculates ethics and reputation across ten business dimensions.

The AU theme for 2018 is "Combatting corruption – a sustainable path to Africa's transformation". This resonates well with the data on country level where respondents indicated that the meaning of ethics mainly refers to anti-corruption in government. Respondents sighted Botswana as setting the example as the most reputable and ethical country in Africa. The research proved overwhelmingly that ethics and reputation are interwoven and one cannot exist without the other. Respondents felt that behaviour and core values such as honesty, transparency and credibility are the most important elements of a reputation. On an organisational level, respondents felt that their brand's reputation is actively managed, communicated and prioritised by their leaders. Organisations should focus on getting the internal building blocks in place before engaging in external communication.

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What can we do to re-write the narrative as per the conference theme – ‘Re-PResent Africa’? “The first steps to Re-PResenting a positive African narrative is to go back to the basics and get the internal narrative right. We need to make sure that core values are in place and reflected in daily behaviour. This will then be authentic to our communication initiatives,” says Regine le Roux, Managing Director of Reputation Matters. “As public relations and communication professionals, we should strive for a code of ethics which resonates with the real and positive story we’re here to tell about Africa to the world.”

If you want to participate in our annual APRA research, or interested in how your organisation measures up, please contact [info@afpra.org](mailto:info@afpra.org) or [research@reputationmatters.co.za](mailto:research@reputationmatters.co.za)

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