

Towards an Inclusive Digital Transition: Case Studies of the Open Internet in Africa

08 June 2024, 16:00-18:30

Digital Transformation Center, Kigali, Rwanda

Workshop and cocktail reception organised by the European Union and the Global Initiative on the Future of the Internet (GIFI), in cooperation with GIZ and ICANN.

Background

The importance of an open, global Internet and human-centred digital transition as drivers of development are well documented. Open Internet connectivity is recognised as a promoter of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the goals of the African Union's 'Agenda 2063: The Africa we want.' The African Union Declaration on Internet Governance and the Declaration for the Future of the Internet also embrace this logic and provide fertile ground for new and strengthened digital partnerships between Europe and Africa.

However, putting enabling policy and regulation into practice is not always straightforward. Competing ideas and closed technical, economic and social approaches to internet policy pose challenges to improving key indicators of development, by reducing affordable access, connectivity, human rights and trust in the digital ecosystem. In order to create an enabling environment for an inclusive and human-centred digital transition, governments and stakeholders will need to work together on common approaches to key challenges, and learn from each other's best practices.

In the margins of the ICANN Public Forum in Kigali, the European Union, the Global Initiative on the Future of the Internet, and the German Ministry for Digital and Transport, invite members of the Governmental Advisory Committee and other key stakeholders to a discussion on accelerating the inclusive digital transition. As part of the event, the organisers will share and discuss [four reports](#) that feature case studies of the Open Internet in Africa:

- [The Kenya Model of Open Internet Governance](#)
- [The Burundi Model of Open Internet Skills and Competences](#)
- [The Senegal model of Open Internet technical infrastructure](#)
- [The South Africa Model of Open Internet Enabling Policy and Regulation](#)

The event will facilitate an exchange between governments and stakeholders on approaches to key domains of Internet policy and consider several questions.

1. **What are the key challenges to implementing Open Internet approaches in specific national and regional contexts?**
2. **What opportunities and best practices can be scaled up and utilised to accelerate open and inclusive approaches to the digital transition?**
3. **How can governments cooperate with the wider stakeholder community to facilitate more inclusive and effective digital development outcomes?**
4. **How can ICANN and GAC help shape the future of the human-centred internet?**

Agenda

- 16:00 – 16:20
- Introductory Remarks**
- H.E Volker Wissing**, *Federal Minister for Digital and Transport, Republic of Germany*
- Pierre Dandjinou**, *VP Stakeholder Engagement Africa, ICANN*
- 16:20 – 16:35
- The Open Internet as Cornerstone of Digitalisation: Presentation of Four African Case Studies**
- Wim Degezelle**; *Internet Governance Expert, Promotion and Development of the Open Internet in Africa (Funded by the European Union)*
- 16:35 – 17:00
- Initial Reactions from GAC representatives & Key Stakeholders**
Moderated by Nils Berglund, project lead, Global Initiative for the Future of the Internet (Funded by the European Union)
- 17:00 – 17:30
- Breakout Groups**
- Group 1: Open Internet Governance**
Moderated by Rosalind Kennybirch, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, United Kingdom
- Group 2: Open Internet Skills and Competencies**
Moderated by Eleanor Sarpong, Deputy Director & Policy lead, Alliance for Affordable Internet
- Group 3: Open Internet Technical Infrastructure**
Moderated by Wim Degezelle, Independent Internet Governance Expert
- Group 4: Open Internet-enabling policy and regulation.**
Moderated by Anriette Esterhuysen, Senior advisor on global and regional internet governance, Association for Progressive Communications
- 17:30 – 17:50
- Reporting from Breakout Groups**
- 17:50 – 18:00
- Closing Remarks**
- Pearse O'Donohue**, *Director for the Future Networks Directorate of DG CONNECT, European Commission*
- 18:00 – 18:30
- Reception**