



## **RAISING THE AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL INTERNET GOVERNANCE**

PRIDA project supported, so far, 29 Schools of Internet Governance in 19 African countries

While Internet connectivity generated innovative new services, capabilities and unprecedented forms of sharing and cooperation, it also created new forms of crime, abuse, surveillance and social conflict. Internet governance is the process whereby cyberspace participants resolve conflicts over these problems and develop a workable order.

**What is “internet governance”?** It’s the set of rules, policies, standards and practices that coordinate and shape global cyberspace. The Internet is a vast network of independently-managed networks, woven together by globally standardized data communication protocols (primarily, [Internet Protocol](#), [TCP](#), [UDP](#), [DNS](#) and [BGP](#)). The common adoption and use of these protocols unified the world of information and communications. Millions of digital devices and massive amounts of data, software applications, and electronic services became compatible and interoperable. The Internet created a new environment, a complex and dynamic “cyberspace.”

**Why “Governance”?** Because many issues in cyberspace cannot be handled by the traditional national institutions. Internet Governance requires transnational cooperation amongst standards developers, network operators, online service providers, users, governments and international organizations if it is to solve problems while retaining the openness and interoperability of cyberspace.

### **What are the African major Internet Governance concerns?**

The Eleventh Annual Meeting of the Africa Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF) hosted by the Government of Malawi in July 2022 brought up 4 major topics of concern:

1. Affordable and meaningful access
2. Cybersecurity, privacy, and personal data protection
3. Digital skills & human capacity development
4. Digital infrastructure

**Are African internet governance concerns currently addressed?** Not enough. The lack of specialised technical expertise to carry out important governance functions, such as providing valuable technical and policy information, training and capacity development; and evidence-based research on Internet along with different African national priorities often resulted in the lack of regional Internet policy coordination and a limited ability to move forward an African agenda at the global level.

### **What’s PRIDA role to raise the African voice?**

PRIDA is contributing to streamlining National, Regional and Continental IG processes for a common progressive African position - supported by Capacity Building and awareness creation.

PRIDA has the following strategic objectives:

- To increase the number of countries having multi-stakeholder processes on IG through the establishment of national IG Fora
- To streamline and coordinate IG processes at national, regional, and continental levels and improve synergies and feedback mechanism across
- To capacitate various Internet stakeholders' groups from governments, civil society, private sector, and the technical community on IG matters
- To improve the quality of decisions made by policy makers and Diplomats on IG issues through technical support services before and during International meetings where decisions are taken.

### What are PRIDA's results so far?

In 2020 PRIDA launched the Schools for Internet Governance (SIG), aimed at supporting the 23 countries in Africa who had not held an Internet Governance Forum. Despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, to date PRIDA has carried out 29 SIGs across 19 countries (Botswana, Cape Verde, Central Africa Republic, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Lesotho, Guinea Conakry, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, Seychelles, Somalia, Uganda, Togo). The SIG e-learning course are conducted online through a dedicated Digital Platform (based on Moodle modules, hosted by GFA, the PRIDA consulting consortium) being developed under PRIDA which hosts the Capacity Building content. Each SIG is attended by 20-80 participants from each country, representing all the stakeholders - (public, private, academia, technical community, and media). Online learning in IG covers the foundation phase topics including definition of IG, the IG process, actors, and issues. In addition, the training includes the IGF toolkit which builds the capacity of the target countries on how to set up the IGF processes nationally, regional, and continental processes. During the IGF, critical and topical IG issues at the country level are discussed, with panellists drawn from within the countries with the support of national IGF focal points; national and regional IGF conveners. The SIGs are facilitated with active support from local experts, national IGF conveners, the national PRIDA focal points and PRIDA trainers. This guarantees sustainability and ensures that the discussions address local policy challenges and how they apply to the local context. After the training, participants form a group of trainees who would benefit from other PRIDA trainings (online/offline based on the prevailing circumstances) in the future. This will diversify capacities available and add new voices to the IG dialogue in Africa.

### SIG results at the IGF 2022

So far, PRIDA has supported 8 countries in their very first national internet governance fora, 16 countries in their first school of internet governance, 3 existing national schools of internet governance, and one regional (West Africa) school of internet governance.

During the 2020 and 2021 Global IGF, PRIDA organised workshops on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in the digital space. PRIDA work will be highlighted at the **Africa Union Open Forum** scheduled for the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 between 13.50 to 14.50 (GMT +3) More details [here](#)

### What's next?

PRIDA will continue working with the remain 7 countries out of the 23 to support them organise their SIGs and possibly IGF by June 2023. In addition, support will be given any of the 55 African Union member states upon request.

### **PRIDA BOILER PLATE**

The PRIDA (Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa) programme aims to promote universally accessible and affordable broadband across the continent, unlocking the benefits of internet-based services for all. PRIDA aims to enable the African continent to benefit fully from digitalisation and build the capacity of African Union (AU) Member States in the internet, governance space. The programme is a joint initiative of the AU, the EU and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Funded by the European Commission, it is implemented by the African Union and ITU

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