REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS AT THE GHANA IGF 2015

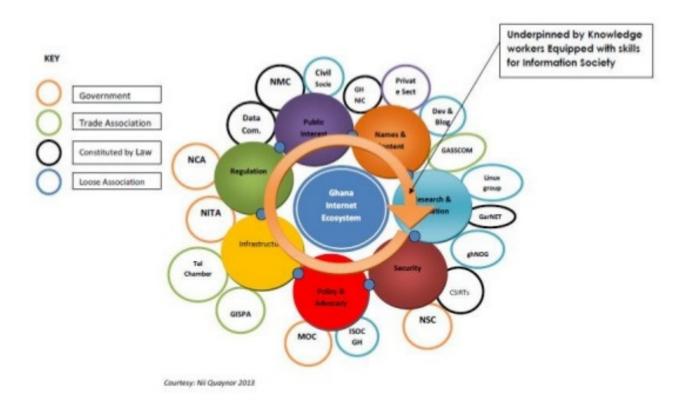*28 October, 2016*

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BACKGROUND

The 2015 Ghana Internet Governance Forum (Ghana IGF) was organized at the Kofi Annan Center of Excellence in IT in Accra, Ghana on the 28th October, 2015. The theme of the forum was "Ensuring Freedom, Security and Growth in our Digital World".

The Forum brought together stakeholders from the Internet Ecosystem to speak to issues pertaining to governance in Cyber security, affordability of the Internet, Internet safety, Critical Internet Infrastructure, creation of Local content and to discuss topics such as building a robust Research and Education Network for Accelerated Development.

Courtesy: Nii Quaynor 2013

OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

The Opening Ceremony was chaired by Mr. Issah Yahaya, Chief Director at the Ministry of Communications. He stated that it is imperative to heighten youth participation in Internet Governance for the reason that, the youth are the leaders of ICT today.

He noted that, the discussion and outcome of the 2015 Forum will be presented at the upcoming Brazil Convention and could also be included in the Ghana IT compendium. The Convener of the Forum, Prof. Nii Quaynor in his welcome address stressed the importance of the youth involvement in IG, and cautioned that the Internet Governance objectives should be well balanced to avoid skewing towards privacy, security ora particular element of the Internet.

Keynote

Mr. Issah Yahaya read the Keynote Address with the following highlights on behalf of the Minister of Communication, Dr. Edward Kofi Omane Boamah:

- The 2015 Ghana IGF is very timely as the UN General Assembly will review and implement the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in December 2015 during its 70th Session
- All stakeholders should be committed to building an inclusive and development-oriented Information Society to enable individuals create, utilize and share information and knowledge to achieve their full potential
- To work together to improve access to ICT infrastructure, to build capacity, increase confidence and security in the use of ICT and to encourage global cooperation among others
- Ghana has made significant strides in the area of ICT through mobile data penetration, submarine cable network, fibre cable rollouts to improve connectivity and so forth
- Commended the CERT-GH,Internet Society, NITA, NCA for supporting the Forum to find solutions to address challenges of the industry

Opening remarks by Key Stakeholders

Ghana IXP Director- Alex Sulzberger

- Showed appreciation of the presence of Internet in Ghana since 1995 and also mentioned that private people did well by introducing Internet in Ghana. He spoke about the work of GIXP and indicated that the organization offers valuable services to end-users

National Communication Authority Director General - William Tevie

- The role of NCA, licensing of companies and also introducing new frequencies to increase penetration of internet services
- The importance of the 2015 Forum to create a platform for exchange of ideas and to create awareness of the trends in the Internet ecosystem

National IT Agency Ag. Director General - George Atta-Boateng

- Government has equipped NITA tremendously to have effective engagements with IT professionals and to provide appropriate licenses and to exposed the citizenry to efficient use of the Internet.

AITI-KACE Director General - Dorothy Gordon

- Africa is a late comer in the Internet world and we are not having the benefits of the Internet. Internet is new gold, the data gold however, most people are not aware of what pertains in the Internet ecosystem.
- She urged all and sundry to have the momentum to spread the message from the Forum.

ISOC Ghana President - Marcus Adomey

- The Society engages stakeholders in quarterly interactions to discuss issues affecting the Internet and to explore ways to improve governance of the Internet.

Ghanaian Academic and Research Network Ag. CEO – Ben Eshun

- GarNET builds high speed network within the academic community for superior collaborations and innovations in research and other academic endeavors

SETTING THE AGENDA SESSION

Session Chair: Professor Nii Quaynor, Ghana IGF Convener
Panelist: Awo Aidam Amanyah, Kenneth Adu-Amanfoh, Albert Antwi-Bosiako, Eric Akumiah

The panel members of this session discussed the key issues in Ghana on Internet Governance with respect to the theme. The Chair made the following remarks:

The Forum is non-binding meaning it is not a decision making Forum but a platform for information and knowledge sharing as well as for exchange of ideas.

The following comments was attributed to the speakers on the panel:

Awo Aidam Amenyah, Executive Director of J-Initiative:
- Children safety within the Cyberspace is a collective response
- There is the need for engagement and research to address issues about some websites advertising unwholesome content to children, cyber bullying and sexual abuse
- Importance of counselling sessions for abused children

Kenneth Adu-Amafoh, Head of IT, NCA:

- The Internet is open for most activities such as business, freedom of speech, education etc
- The Internet is not regulated therefore it is imperative to ensure its security for accessibility and safety
- It is the responsibility of government, civil society organizations and all stakeholders to be vigilant about fraudsters and malicious activities on the Internet.

Albert Antwi-Bosiako, Founder and CEO, eCrime Bureau:

- Cyber criminality has taken an advanced form by moving from psychological inducements to technical applications of the use of viruses and other advanced schemes and that call for building collaborative capacity to deal with cybercrime to ensure cyber security

Mr. Eric Akumiah, Head,CERT-GH:

- There are various networks coming together for malicious activities as cyber fraud has become very lucrative venture. However, with collective efforts and collaborative mechanisms between government and the private sector there will be solutions for attaining safe cyber space

YOUTH IGF SESSION

Session Chair: *James Billy Dega, President National Society of Black Engineers*
Panelist: *Wisdom Donkor , Linux Club, James Adzamli, ISOC Ghana, Dora Mawutor, Media Foundation for West Africa, Caucus President, KNUST ISOC Ghana*

The youth IGF created a platform for the youth to deliberate on how the youth could participate effectively in Internet Governance (IG).

Yaovi Atohoun of ICANN made a presentation on Africa DNS Entrepreneurship Program and highlighted the following:

- High Level overview of ICANN including establishment, management and operation of ICANN
- The 2 main objectives that ICANN seeks to achieve are; to transform the DNS and Internet Industry in Africa and to promote awareness and meaningful participation in ICANN.
- DNS Entrepreneurship program and the ICANN Fellowship program
- There are incubation centres for the youth and there is the ICANN Next Generation program for the youth to actively participate in the ICANN community.

Discussant and participants in the session agreed that there was need to engage more of the youth especially basic and second cycle pupils and students in future IGFs. Dorothy It was also agreed that there should be gender balance in future IGF and other IT-related meetings. There was a call to find avenues to enhance women participation in issues regarding the Internet.

CYBER SECURITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CYBERCRIME SESSION

Session Chair: Pro. Nii Quaynor, Ghana IGF Convener

Panelist: Kenneth Adu-Amanfoh -NCA, Albert Antwi-Bosiako -eCrime, Kwabena Adu Boahene-Nat Security, Eric Akumiah CERT-GH

In this session the panel members made presentations that can be summarized as follows:

- There are existing policies, Acts, and laws within the cyber space which could warrant blacklisting of IPs of cyber criminals and fraudsters
- The policies border on effective governance, legislative and regulatory framework, research and development towards self-reliance, capacity building, cyber security technology framework among others
- To make our laws more resilient to avoid ambiguity in order to have clarity of the legal procedures to deal with culprits as cybercrimes are becoming more sophiscated
- Need to hasten implementation of the cyber security processes and build capacity to avert foreign infiltration
- There are daily changes in the Internet ecosystem therefore timelines are key with regards to e-laws
- All are affected by what happens elsewhere. It is a global village, there is the need for dialogue and collaborations

AFFORDABLE INTERNET SESSION

Session Chair: *Dorothy Gordon, DG, AITI-KACE*
Panelist: *Estelle Akrofi-Sowah, GOOGLE Ghana, Kwaku Ofosu-Adarkwa A4AI Ghana*

The following presentations were made:

Kwaku Ofosu-Adarkwa, Country Coordinator, A4AI

- Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI), an Initiative of the Web Foundation, was inaugurated in 2014 for advocacy through multi-stakeholder consultation to champion Internet affordability.
- Many people do not see the need to invest in the Internet. There is an affordable wholesale network for broadband connection for activities such as video conferencing and research work
- Businesses are conducted online in rural China and that should be replicated in Ghana
- Online payments are hampered to a large extent there must be improvement in online monetary transactions.

OPEN AND SAFE INTERNET SESSION

Session Chair: Albert Antwi-Bosiako, eCrime Bureau
Panelist: Kenneth Adu-Amanfoh, NCA, Awo Aidam Amenyah, J-Initiative, Kwabena Adu Boahene, National Security, Dora Mawutor Media Foundation for West Africa

The discussion focused on the following**:**

- Need to own and secure data
- Openness of Internet involves freedom of expression as we have in the physical world
- Flow of information is crucial
- Transparency is key
- Protection of privacy and confidentiality
- Access of Internet by all
- Openness is one of the principles of internet governance so there must be proper governance to manage three risks namely content or contact risk, consumer risk and security related risks
- Restrictions on children's photos
- Children prohibited from going to some obscene sites
- Children to be taught to know how to protect themselves in the Cyberspace
- Need for digital literacy as what we put on the Internet will remain even if the information is deleted

CRITICAL INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES SESSION

Chair: Papa Arkhurst, Director IT Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Panelist: Eric Akumiah, NITA, Alex Sulzberger, GIXP, Archie Hesse, GhiPPs

A presentation on Critical Internet Infrastructure was made by Eric Akumiah, NITA:
- explained that the Internet runs on domain name, registry, IP Numbers resources, and exchange points and the registry manages the domain
- The need to adopt number system and migration plan for IPv6 as well as capacity building for Network operators.
- Like Ivory Coast, the registry project is working to have a copy of the root server in Ghana

Alex Sulzberger, GIXP
- The exchange points to be connected to the West African countries as a platform to enhance internet traffic

Archie Hesse, Ghana Inter Payment Platform (GhiPP)
- GHIPS is an arm of the central bank and is putting infrastructure together to connect all the banks electronically and to create an ecosystem for the use of an e-card called white card which is locally made to support businesses
- There is authentication of a white card holder to secure online transaction

BUILDING A ROBUST REN FOR ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT SESSION

Chair: Dr. Narteh Siaw Sappor, Board Member, Ghana Post
Panelist: Ben Eshun, Ag. CEO, GARNET, Dr. Godfred Frimpong, STEPPRI, CSIR

- Ghana Open Data Initiative is open to the public to empower citizens and for the government to improve on public services through e-services
- To bring stakeholders together for dialogue to forestall fibre theft and to address various concerns
- The need to have efficient and effective infrastructure and network to improve bandwidth to enhance research and development.
- Ghana REN creates avenues for research and development
- To ensure security, key loggers should be used
- Promotes linkages for knowledge sharing

CREATING LOCAL CONTENT SESSION

Chair: Dr. Narteh Siaw Sappor Board Member, Ghana Post
Panelist: Estelle Akrofi-Sowah, Google Ghana, Veronica Boateng NITA, Wisdom Donkor, GODI

- Government has established eservices.gov.gh as a portal to offer the opportunity to know about government services
- It offer relevant links and reduces bureaucracies involved in acquiring national documents for example passport, tax payments, marriage registration and others
- Opportunity to track applications to determine status
- Empowering the youth to use phones to develop simple apps for development

CLOSING SESSION

In his closing remarks, the Convener, Prof. Nii Quaynor reiterated that, the Forum is not for decision making purposes but to develop a community for dialogue to build capacity to safeguard Internet Governance and Cyber security.

He noted that, working groups will be electronically advertised for participants of the Forum to continue the engagement for the advancement of Internet Governance and security.

COMMUNIQUE FROM GHANA IGF 2015

At the end of the Forum participants agreed that the following concerns and recommendations could be incorporated into future IGF.

- Digital literacy should be heightened since the Internet is used by all, everyone should be involved in the creation of awareness and knowledge sharing
- Need to employ avenues to have more women to participate in IT
- Parents and guardians should be trained to teach the youth and children to positively use the Internet
- Caution should be exercised to avoid skewing towards one element of Internet Governance
- Government and all stakeholders must establish policies to ensure children safety within the Cyberspace
- All stakeholders should be watchdog in detecting malicious activities on the Internet and effective cooperation and collaboration to keep our cyberspace safe.
- The media should help to sensitize the public on issues pertaining to the Internet
- Government should facilitate program for updating citizens on cyber security
- Research, collaborations and partnerships should be encouraged by government facilitating the setting up of the GarNET.
- There should be clarity of policies and e-laws to avoid ambiguity in the fight against cybercrime
- Need for disaster recovery plan, measures, backups and safeguards to mitigate natural disasters and malicious attacks
- Online payments should be enhanced to make it secure and safe
- Need to empower those in the academic community through a Robust Research & Education Network (REN) for accelerated development
- Ghana needs to replicate what is done in rural China by helping the rural folk in Ghana to use the Internet
- Ghana needs to speed up the implementation of the the root server project to enhance Internet

- Children and the youth should be encouraged to develop simple apps of economic significance
- National Data Centre to provide service to all citizens and business who require its use
- Ghana to host ICANN Africa Road Show and DNS Entrepreneurship program in 2016