

THE LIBERIA INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

Report of the 2nd Liberia Internet Governance Forum held on 21st of December 2021 at Ministry of Post and Telecommunication (Republic of Liberia)

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Report of the 2nd Liberia IGF| 2021



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Acknowledgement

On behalf of the entire Liberia Multistakeholder Group (MAG) and Steering Committee we would like to express my deepest appreciation to all our sponsors and partners. A special gratitude to Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (Minister and Staffs), WAICTNet (Liberia) & Partners for the support for the event . 2021 Liberia IGF,

All the partners who played an important role in spurring ideas and support to make 2020 Liberia IGF a success, your input cannot be ignored.

Furthermore, the Organizing/Steering Committee would also like to acknowledge with much appreciation the crucial role of the staff of WAICTANet, MAG Chair Mr. Nolan D. Kaine from the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication who worked tirelessly to coordinate all the activities of the day and the necessary materials to make the celebrations of the day joyous.

Special thanks go I have to appreciate the guidance given by other players in the industry as well as the panelists especially in the various presentations that improved the understanding of the internet governance and policy issues.

Big thanks to their comments and advice.

The outcomes of the country level IG meetings such as the Liberia IGF contributes to West Africa Internet Governance Forum (WAIGF) at regional and the Africa Internet Governance Forum (AIGF) at the continental level. Previously and locally to support policy development and national discussion on the state of affair when it comes to internet development issue in Liberia.

1.0 Introduction

The Internet Governance Forum is a multi – stakeholder forum for policy dialogue on issue of internet governance. The forum is held in an informal setting, free from binding negotiations. It brings together all stakeholders from government, private sector, technical community, academia and civil society to discuss internet governance issues on an equal footing through an open and inclusive process. The IGF was first held in 2012 and since then there has been no event of sort to date.

Liberia hosted the Liberia IGF in 2011. In all 50 participants attended the 2 events held with media, civil society, Technical, business/private and government and youth in attendance. This type of cooperative engagement is referred to as the multi-stakeholder model of internet Governance, which is one of the key futures for the internet's success. Debates and discussions of this year were around the main theme: *"Bridging the Digital Divide in Liberia "*.The Liberia Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is hosted in line with the global UN IGF, Africa IGF and West Africa IGF as partner, it will be an annual event to bring Liberians together from various stakeholder groups as equals, in discussions on public policy issues relating to the Internet.

This model is paramount to ensuring that the internet remains for economics and social development. The IGF is a unique platform for all stakeholders to openly exchange perspective and concerns on key issues that may affect the future of the internet for millions of Liberians. National Convener in Ministry of Post and Telecommunication , Liberia Telecommunication Authority , PRIDA focal point, and support from Mwantana a leading technical community member and AIIST as we as Academia group .

Liberia IGF in partnership with industry stakeholders to address Key Internet issues since 2012 but went dormant, this year 2020 Liberia IGF is a rebirth of this unique platform for Liberians.

Liberia's 2021 IGF was held on 21 December ,2021 and the outcomes will feed into the fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum which will be hosted online by the United Nation from 2-6 November 2020.

Forum Organization

Steering/Organizing Committee

The Liberia IGF 2021 Steering /Organizing committee for the 2021 event was steered by the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication (Projects Manager) Mr. Nolan D. Kaine, with representatives from LTA (Sangai Moliwulo), National Convener from Civil Society (Peterking Quaye), Media (Winnie-Sawah -Jimmy). The organization of the forum was the responsibility of the National Convener/Coordinator whose mission was to provide all necessary logistics equipment to the forum

Advisory /Scientific Committee

The Advisory /Scientific Committee was composed of representatives of the following structures: West Africa IGF Representative (Mary Uduma), LIBTELCO Rep.(Princess Zawu), LTA (Sangai Mowuloli) Representative (Regulator), West Africa ICT Action Network (Liberia) –Peterking Quaye. This committee was chaired by Mr. Nolan D. Kaine. The mission of this committee was to define scientific vision of the forum and to purpose program and panelists in order to achieve the objectives.

Methodology of work

The entire Liberia IGF, hosting process started with a call for theme selection through the Liberia IGF secretariat Email –through Google form .which was widely circulated, and the highest number was selected for the national theme. Then follow consultative meeting with stakeholders held at the ministry of Post and Telecommunication. A consultative meeting through group to selected topics was also sent out via email and stakeholder who responded to the email selection was used to form the topics for the forum for the year .

The first event was the Media Forum on Liberia Internet Governance Forum. The forum took place in one main parts with High Level Session and Expert Panels for the main Liberia IGF was organized in 3 sessions but 2 was held in which we had panels. Each session was conducted in one phase: Presentation: Each speaker made his submission in a panel style /presentation in fifteen (15) minutes related to the theme of the session.

• Session Questions /Answers: Following the presentation, a session of questions / answers allows participants to ask questions to the speakers which served at the end of the session as recommendations for the Liberia IGF final report.

In a warm atmosphere, officials, experts, participants and organizers made suggestions for a new edition of the Liberia Internet governance forum, to contribute to the development of the Internet and the digital economy.

Participants

The forum was attended by approximately thirty (30) participants from all sectors, private, public sector and civil society (Internet Community).

Setting the Agenda Session/ Program

Peterking Quaye, National Convener/Coordinator, Republic of Liberia for - Liberia IGF

He welcomed participants to 2020 Liberia IGF. He requested participants to stand and observe a minute of silence in honour of the late Abdullai Kamara former focal point for Liberia national leaders Abdullai Kamara, who were all supporters of the industry and had passed on almost the same period. He stated that Liberia IGFs since 2012 it was held this edition is the re-launch of the event and will on the work of the work already done by former convener in the interest of Liberia. He also thanked the forum participants for making it to the event and promised to work with all for the event annually.

A roll call of the new MAG members were made and a special recognition to the efforts of all members to ensure the Liberia IGF get the NRI recognition to bring the number to 35 currently. The Liberia IGF forum, the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication for guiding stakeholders on how to engage the government and shape policy, He observed that multi-stakeholder's involvement was reflected in the participation and support of the Liberia IGFs. He summarized the events that constituted Liberia IGF. One major Telco company was in attendance to speak on the Mobile money transfer system from their end and to ensure consumer trust and best service. Peterking Quaye applauded all the panelists and appreciated Hon. Copper Kruah Snr. For his work on the efforts of his ministry on several projects and the LTA in regulating the sector so far.

Finally, he reminded participants that the program together with the concept note of the Liberia IGF was available on the Liberia IGF website https://liberiaigf.org.lr

Welcome Address by Mr. Sando Golakai , Director for Telecommunication Bureau at the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication

(Issues Explained)

Key Note Speaker –Minister of Minister for Post and Telecommunication , Hon. Cllr. Cooper W. Kruah Sr. proxy by

The keynote address was delivered by Minister of Post and Telecommunication acknowledged the journey of

(Comment and Speech to be inserted)

He was speaking on the topic "*Bridging the Digital Divide in Liberia*", he delved on efforts made by the government to set up infrastructure to support postal system in Liberia . As well as the level of infrastructure uplift to the industry .

He acknowledged the feedback from Liberia IGF discussions, which will influence the implementation of some of the national projects. These include cybersecurity, data protection and privacy, protection of countries critical infrastructure, internet freedom, securing government networks, shaping talented ICT students, supporting research and innovation, managing hate speech and fake news among other topics.

He further observed that 2021 Liberia IGF's areas of interest including internet sustainability, security, robustness, stability, data governance and digital inclusion are timely adding, "The Postal sector efforts in digital address system was key to national inclusion and bridging the digital divide in Liberia . In this same way it will ensure that people interest in using the postal system sustained and a progress toward digital address system in Liberia is achieved.

The Session# 1 Online Education in Liberia Challenges ,Solutions : discussions was also on (<u>Access & Connectivity</u>);Moderator Winnie-Sawah-Jimmy : discussions under this theme focused on the fundamental

One of the first duties of a national state is defending national security, which is the protection of its citizens, economy and institutions.

Sando Golakai

Karl Smith :Talked on his company role in setting up the University of Liberia despite was not acting or speaking officially his explanation was based on the fact that there was a strong need to ensure that online education in Liberia improve to ensure that students can have access to education easily. Online education took catered stage during the COVID period.

Session #2 : Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Issues in Liberia (National Cybersecurity Strategy, Cybercrime Law & Data Protection Law), *Moderator :* Sangai Moliwulo from Liberia Telecommunication Authority the moderated of the High Level Panel of the 2nd Liberia IGF, welcomed participants, and a round of introductions followed. She thanked the sponsors and partners of the 2nd Liberia IGF and the previous Liberia IGFs.

The Moderator set the pace on issues trending in the society on cybersecurity, Cyberbullying and issues of social engineering. Where political or public figure photos are used online without their consent and women photos that are used online without their concern. She explained that these will lead to prosecution if the Cybercrime Act is pass.

A national cybersecurity strategy (NCSS) is a plan of actions designed to improve the security and resilience of national infrastructures and services. It is a high-level top-down approach to cybersecurity that establishes a range of national objectives and priorities that should be achieved in a specific timeframe.

Key point in the discussion was on the NCSS and major issues of cybercrime in Liberia Panelists:

James Gardeo : said cybercrime was also a major issues in Liberia , he cited issues of online social engineering activities was not restricted and audio-visual materials are used to scammed innocent people and rendering them vulnerable . People who also appear online and pretend to be who they are not , citizens can protect themselves using special applications on their handset .

Karl Smith (Mwantana Technology) was also of the view that efforts of government was key in ensuring that the NCSS is completed and passed to ensure that the internet or online activities are guided and citizen are protected against crime.

Sando Golakai : Victor Jarwolo :

The forum speakers threw light on some of the ways to tackle the ethical challenges posed by cybersecurity in national security and, in particular, the security of critical infrastructures. The critical infrastructures of Liberia were also discussed as well as cyber resources that are fundamental to the minimum functioning of a society and its economy. Key to this was reliable ICT networks and their services, which are critical infrastructures, and how are crucial is in Liberia to ensure public welfare, economic stability, law enforcement and defense operations. Societies increasingly depend on public ICT networks and their services. The stability, safety and resiliency of the cyberspace is a national security issue, as the vulnerabilities of the cyberspace can be exploited to impair or destroy the critical infrastructures of a state, which highly rely on ICT networks and services.

Cybersecurity measures at the national level .The help to raise awareness about cybersecurity values, and to stimulate idea generation and discussion regarding values of cybersecurity in the national security domain .

Event Funding		
Source		Amount \$
WAICTANet - Partners		2,600.00
	Total	2,600.00
Event Expense		
ltem		Amount \$ USD
Press & Media Coverage : Media Relations IGF Feature Article		150.00 50.00
Catering Service/Food for Participants		1,200.00
Speakers Transportation		200.00
Event Marketing : -Social Media Ad buying -Marketing Material -Event Website (Hosting & Mgt)		100.00 250.00 250.00
Event Coverage : Video Coverage Photography		150.00 100.00
Water(Press Event & IGF Event)		100.00
	Total	2,600.00

Recommendations and Way Forward

Cybersecurity & Cybercrime issues (NCSS, Cybercrime Act, Data Protection)

- a) The private sector should engage the government on proposed legislations or amendments for creating a conducive business environment. The following recommendations were made on data governance, cyber-security, and digital inclusion. The recommendations are listed under each theme as shown below;
- b) Stakeholders and especially civil society should endeavour to keep the government in check due to their tendency to over-regulate.
- c) The national parliament should consolidate their legislative efforts on passage of the NCSS soon .
- d) Level of work between the LTA and Ministry of Post and Telecommunication was also ssen as bureaucratic due to the low coordinator with key stakeholders in passing laws
- e) There was call for data protection law to put in place a data protection regime in the country to protect citizens' privacy rights, encourage
- f) iv. There is a need for education of users on their rights to determine their digital identity and the importance of data protection.
- g) Stakeholders should not fear technology and its regulation but should focus on ways to harness the potential uses of data for a positive impact on people's lives.
- h) cybersecurity industry players should educate themselves on information safety, while organizations needed to integrate end-to-end cybersecurity policy and collaborate in cybersecurity efforts. The government to find a way of enhancing critical infrastructure and cybersecurity development in Liberia as well legislation and promoting trade.

Action Plan for achieving Cybersecurity, With the rapid rate at which technology is advancing Liberia's current ICT infrastructure needs to be rebuilt and improved to make it compatible with modern standards. In addition to rebuilding the system to meet modern standards and increased capacity to deal with cybercrime issues, there is a need for increased training in technical and legal human capacity to provide expertise in dealing with cybercrime.

Government Technical assistance for trained Liberians in cyber-attack prevention and remedy is highly desired. It is hoped that at the end of this conference, we will benefit from the knowledge and experience from other members on the effective operations on their laws on cyber security and acquire the knowledge to contribute to ensuring the formulation and implementation in Liberia of legislation that will be in harmony with regional cyber security legislation.

Stakeholders should be innovative in responding to society's needs ranging from digital skills training of young people to specific products that are aimed at reducing the digital inclusion gap. Policy makers and industry practices should not leave anyone behind while bridging the digital divide especially for vulnerable and minority groups. For example, stakeholders should push for affordability of assistive technologies for students.

In Liberia, internet governance discussions should be devolved to all the 16 Counties to create open and inclusive forums to discuss and shape the internet policy.

Challenges

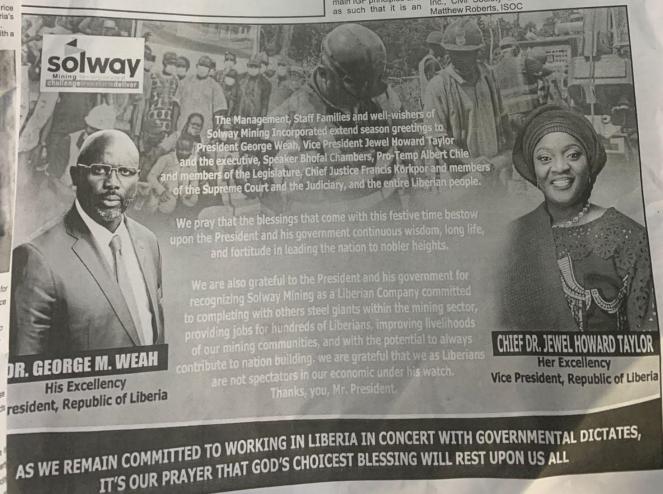
The main challenge with organization of the event was approvals for dates and programs by the Steering committee. Funds were also not available from any source in coming. The 2021 , we run 3 sessions and two plenaries. There was a mix-up in the printed program which was corrected and everything went smooth.

The overrun of time also affected proceedings. Future IGF will ensure that time is properly kept and sessions changes are done effectively. Following from the last year event to make the next event time available on time and also internet access for remote participation.

Photos & Press Clippings

Some photos and press clipping are attached under Appendix C. Video clip of the event will be made available on the IGF website and Facebook and other social media pages .





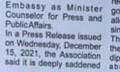
Vol.30 No. 227 Thursday, December 16, 2021 'S EM Der a lia conc S ! ...As Lawmakers Intervene

By Bill W. Cooper

The Association of Liberian Journalists in the Americas (ALJA) says it is shocked and dismayed over reports that a seven-year-old was sexually abused by two teenagers on the premises of the Liberian Embassy in Abuja, Nigeria.

The incident, which Embassy as Minister reportedly occurred nearly eight months ago, was PublicAffairs. eight months ago, was recently brought to the public's attention by the father of the survivor, Nat Bayjay, who works at the

The



by the reported incident and said it is heart wrenching that since the reported abuse, the seven year-old girl and her parents are yet to get legal redress from the Liberian government while the two alleged perpetrators have since returned to Monrovia. The Association quoting the girl's father, a Liberian



dependent as saving that the abugant area reportedly idents Wan riculture Stakeho Several farmers are calling

for an audit of institutions and organizations managing the agriculture sector in Liberia.

The farmers say there is lack of transparency and accountability in the management and operation of farmer cooperatives, non-governmental organizations and even banking institutions

connected to agribusiness

"Cooperatives are not sincere and fair to us. Even bincere and fair to us. Even loans sourced from the banks come not only with high interestrates, but also with assets like land as a curity, making it extremely difficult for us to upgrade our activities. There is no trickle There is no trickle-down

effect of the millions of US dollars support that is pumped into the sector by donors," they said. The farmers stressed the need to stamp out

L\$40.00

The farmers were speaking on Cont of on page 10 **Citizens' Decry Implicatio** ArcelorMittal Closure In

All C Grups have begun coming on the side of the largest foreign investor in Liberia, ArcelorMittal Liberia which has invested over \$1.7 billion in the country over the past 15 years. According to them, AML created 1,700 direct jobs, 97 percent which are occupied by Liberians; Arcelofikital also operates a Vocational Training Center and provides two-year residential certificate training in mechanical and Contrid on page 10

Cont'd on page 10





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Liberia's Internet Governance Forum Libera will this year join the rest of the world in hosting the local version of the internet GovernanceForum. The Libera IGF facilitates e control understore and address taks and challeng that Liberia face. The annual meeting provide delegates with an opportuni discuss, exchange informatic and share good practices in the lechnology sector with eac The local theme to the year of "Bridging the digital divide in "Bridging the digital divide in Liberia" and the Libria Internet Governance Forum (IGP) in Noted in lice with the global LN IGP, Afrua IGP and West Africa IGP as particle. It is an annual event to bring Librians from the NCT soctor is multi-statemolder groups an equate to discuss teams on public policy relating to teams for the teams and teams and teams and the teams and tea ing of how to SHARE A SMILE

The IGP serves to tring people to get her from various stakeholder groups as equals, in discussions on public policy issues relating to the internet. Cont'd on page 10

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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA

MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR BUYING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2021 L\$140.9733 /US\$1 L\$142.6130US\$1 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2021 L3 190,31733 /033 / L3142,0130033 These are controllow roles based on results of daily surveys of foreign and honorovia and honorovia and the state of Liberta. These rates are collected on results banks, parallel market and libertaed fores bureaux. The rates are commercial banks, parallel market and libertaed fores daily surveys and foreign and and by the Central Bank of Liberta. Next by the Central Bank of Liberta.



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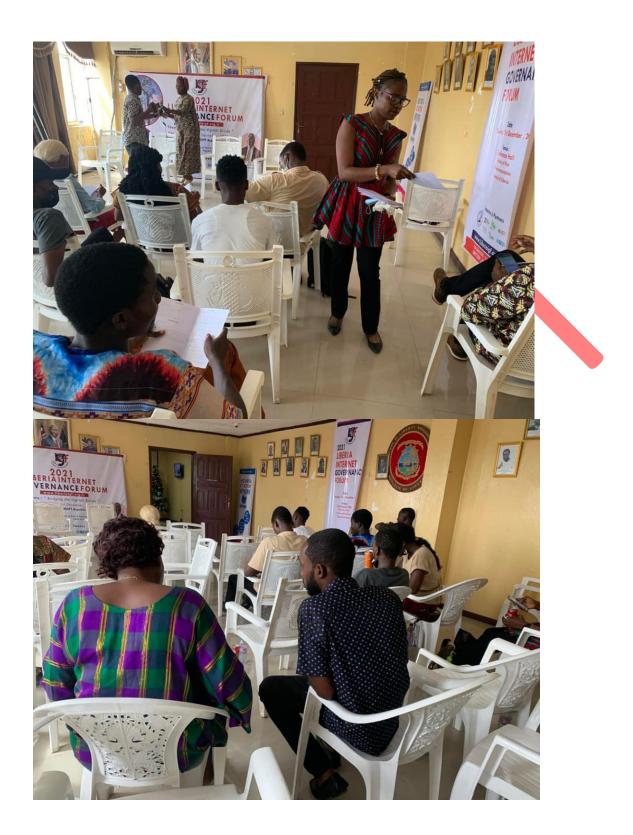




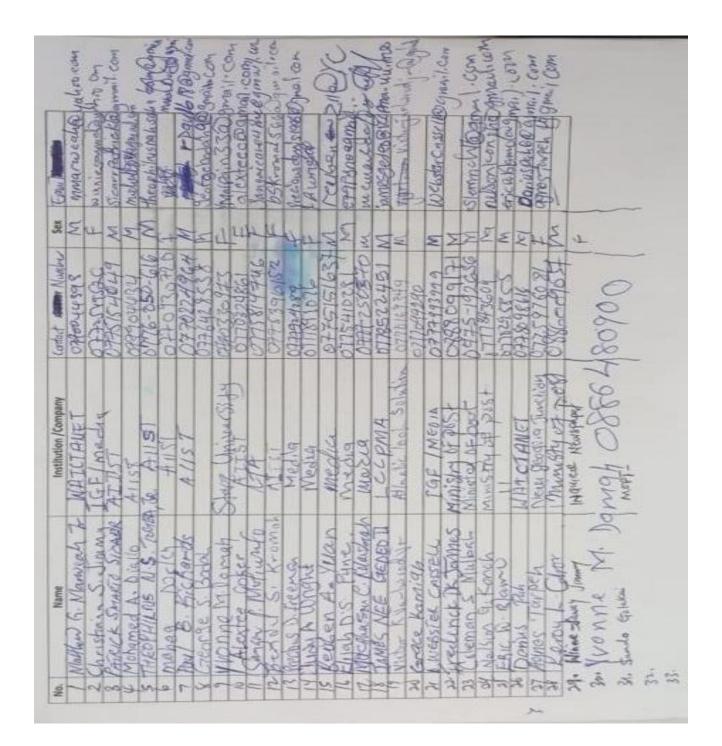












Stakeholder Group Representation

(To be inserted)

Liberia IGF 2021: Supporter & Partners

(To be inserted)

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