



17TH WEST AFRICAN INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM (WAIGF)

Host Country: Nigeria | Format: On-site

19-20 May 2025

Draft Agenda and Work Program for West Africa School on Internet Governance

Day 0: 18 May 2025	
19:30 pm - 20:00 pm	<div></div> <div>Arrival in Abuja night dinner Casual dress. If you brought a small item (such as a local craft) from home as part of our exchange of gifts, please bring it. There will be about 15 people. Coordinated by: Muriel Alapini</div>
Day 1: 19 May 2025	
08:00 am - 09:30 am	<div>Hall 1</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opening remarks and Agenda: <i>Emmanuel Vitus</i>• Getting to know one another, overview of the school, ground rules, communications orientation (30 min), <i>Muriel Alapini, Emmanuel Vitus, Mme Mary Uduma, Marie SENE</i></div>
9:30 am - 10:00 am	Tea break

<p>10:00 am - 12:30 pm</p>	<div data-bbox="533 245 1930 300" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Hall 1</p> </div> <div data-bbox="546 341 1621 373" data-label="Section-Header"> <p><u>Session 1</u> : AI in Action: Understanding the Technology, Governance, and Global Stakes</p> </div> <div data-bbox="546 413 1211 445" data-label="Text"> <p>Format: Presentation followed by interactive discussion.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="546 485 633 517" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Scope:</p> </div> <div data-bbox="546 557 1917 836" data-label="Text"> <p>Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer a futuristic concept; it is already reshaping the way we live, work and govern. From smart assistants to autonomous weapons, AI brings both promise and peril. In this session, we will explore what AI really is, how it works and why it matters for governments, businesses and civil society. Drawing from DiploFoundation's AI Lab research, we will examine the socio-economic impact of AI, its implications for human rights, peace and security, and the global governance challenges it raises. Participants will walk away with a clearer understanding of the opportunities and risks of AI and the frameworks emerging to guide its responsible use. This session is ideal for policymakers, diplomats, advocates and curious minds navigating the fast-evolving digital landscape.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="546 909 672 941" data-label="Section-Header"> <p><u>Speakers:</u></p> </div> <div data-bbox="546 948 990 979" data-label="Text"> <p><i>Ms Sorina Teleanu, DiploFoundation</i></p> </div>
<p>12:30 pm - 13: 30pm</p>	<p>Lunch</p>

13:30 pm - 15:00 pm	<p><u>Session 2: Inside ECOWAS: Understanding the Policy-Making Process</u></p> <p>Format: Presentation</p> <p>Scope: How are digital policies conceived, negotiated and adopted within ECOWAS? This session offers an insider’s look at the policy-making process within the Economic Community of West African States. We will explore the institutional structure of ECOWAS, the role of key organs such as the Commission and the Council of Ministers, and how member states and regional stakeholders contribute to shaping regional frameworks. Participants will gain practical insights into how digital, trade, and governance-related policies are developed, from early-stage consultations to final adoption, and how civil society, the private sector and technical experts can effectively engage in the process. A must-attend for anyone working on or influencing regional policy in West Africa.</p> <p><u>Coordinator:</u> <i>Folake Olagunju, Program Officer Internet & Cybersecurity, ECOWAS</i></p>	
15:00 pm - 16:30 pm	<p>Session 3: Good Practices on AI Strategies in West Africa: Leadership, Implementation and Global Perspectives</p> <p>Format: Presentation followed by interactive discussion</p> <p>Scope: As artificial intelligence becomes a global priority, West African countries are crafting strategies that reflect their own development goals, societal values and technological ambitions. This session will highlight some of the most promising practices in the region, showcasing the leaders driving these efforts, the policies being implemented and the international frameworks that guide them. We will also explore the Wakanda vision as an aspirational lens, a symbol of a self-reliant, inclusive and ethically grounded AI ecosystem rooted in African realities. From policy labs to pilot projects, join us to discover how West Africa is shaping its digital future and what the world can learn from it.</p> <p><u>Speaker:</u> <i>Emmanuel Vitus</i></p>	
16:30 pm - 17:00 pm	Coffee Break	

17:00 pm - 17:30 pm	<p>Practicum session - Orientation: Introduction to the 2025 WASIG Practicum, Teams, and Themes</p> <p><u>Coordinators:</u> <i>Emmanuel Vitus, Internet Society Nigeria, Paradigm Initiative, ICANN</i></p>
18:00 pm - 18:30 pm	End of Day 1
Day 2: 20th May 2025	
08:00 am - 9:00 am	<div> <div>Hall 1</div> <div> <p>Session 4: High-Level Dialogue: West Africa’s Voice in Global Digital Governance</p> <p>This one-hour session will set the stage for the full-day practicum by providing strategic context and inspiration. Speakers will engage participants in a forward-looking dialogue on the place of West Africa in global digital cooperation efforts. Key themes will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evolution of Africa’s participation in WSIS and its implications for WSIS+20 • The significance of the Global Digital Compact and how West African institutions can shape its substance and implementation • Opportunities and risks for multistakeholder governance in the region, 20 years after NetMundial <p>Speakers will also reflect on their personal trajectories in policy engagement, offering practical advice to emerging leaders. This session aims to empower fellows to approach the practicum with a sharpened understanding of the stakes, narratives, and strategic levers available to the region.</p> <p><u>Coordinators:</u> <i>Emmanuel Vitus, Internet Society Nigeria, Paradigm Initiative, ICANN,</i></p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> <i>Dr. Jimson Olufuye and Prof. A.K. Oloyede</i></p> </div> </div>

09:00 am - 11:00 am	<p>Session 5: How ICANN Policy Works: A Beginner’s Guide to Internet Governance</p> <p>Scope:</p> <p>This session is designed to introduce participants to the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and its unique approach to policy development. ICANN plays a critical role in ensuring the stable and secure operation of the Internet’s Domain Name System (DNS). Its core mission includes coordinating the global allocation of domain names and IP addresses, which are essential resources for the functioning of the Internet.</p> <p>The session will unpack ICANN’s multistakeholder governance model, which brings together representatives from governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical community, and end users to develop policies through open, transparent, and consensus-driven processes. Participants will learn how this model works in practice, from the formation of working groups to the adoption of global policies affecting domain names and registries.</p> <p>Particular attention will be given to how African stakeholders can engage in ICANN’s policy-making processes and why their participation is essential for ensuring that global Internet policies reflect regional priorities. By the end of the session, participants will have a clear understanding of ICANN’s structure, the steps involved in its policy development process, and the pathways available for individuals and institutions in West Africa to contribute meaningfully to Internet governance at the global level.</p> <p><u>Coordinator:</u> <i>Yaovi Atohun, Director, Stakeholder Engagement & Operations -Africa · ICANN</i></p>	
11:00 am - 11:30 am	Tea Break	
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	<p>Practicum session: Drafting Policy Recommendations & Structuring Deliverables</p> <p><u>Coordinators:</u> <i>Emmanuel Vitus, Internet Society Nigeria, Paradigm Initiative, ICANN</i></p>	
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	<p>Lunch Break & Idea Exchange Wall (visual teaser from each team)</p> <p><u>Coordinators:</u> <i>Emmanuel Vitus, Internet Society Nigeria, Paradigm Initiative, ICANN</i></p>	
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	<p>Finalising Presentations, Visuals and Rehearsals</p> <p><u>Coordinators:</u> <i>Emmanuel Vitus, Internet Society Nigeria, Paradigm Initiative, ICANN</i></p>	

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	<p>Presentations to the Jury (10 mins + 5 mins Q&A per team)</p> <p><u>Coordinators:</u> <i>Emmanuel Vitus, Internet Society Nigeria, Paradigm Initiative, ICANN</i></p>
4:00 pm - 5pm	<p>Closing Ceremony: Closing Ceremony and Orientation for WAIGF 2025: Jury Feedback, Awards Presentation, Fellows' Reflections, and Official Closure of the West Africa School on Internet Governance</p> <p><u>Coordinators:</u> <i>Emmanuel Vitus, Mary Uduma, Muriel Alapini</i></p>