

522 Avenue Clozel – Ganhi, Cotonou, BENIN | Telephone : +229 60523333

Thirteenth edition of the National Forum on Internet Governance in Benin (Benin IGF 2024)

FINAL STATEMENT

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Venue: EPITECH, Cotonou, Benin

We, participants of the 13th Benin Internet Governance Forum (2024 Benin IGF), in collaboration with all the stakeholders, formulate the following recommendations:

Recommendations to the Government

1. **Connectivity extension** : Accelerate the deployment of connectivity infrastructure, especially in rural areas and white zones, in order to guarantee an equitable access to the Internet nationwide.
2. **Reinforcement of Internet services transparency:** Intensify Internet Service Providers (ISP) regulations efforts in order to ensure that charges correspond to actual consumption
3. **.bj domain administration:** Delegate the country code top level domain ccTLD .bj to a non-for-profit organization, like an university, based on best practices adopted by other countries
4. **Internet Exchange Point (IXP):** Fully activate Benin's IXP to reduce bandwidth costs, improve connection quality and stimulate digital economy development
5. **Digital sovereignty and security:** Reinforce Benin's digital sovereignty in order to better protect infrastructure, secure data and mitigate cyberthreats while fostering local innovation
6. **Electrification for connectivity:** Continue and intensify electrification of rural areas to facilitate access to digital services to all citizens

Recommendations to Civil Societies

1. **Education and awareness:** Intensify sensitization on digital security and ethical use of technologies, mainly deep fakes, by promoting their use for educational purposes and countering abuse
2. **Digital education for young people:** Integrate digital legal education from an early age to prepare children for responsibilities in the digital environment
3. **Campaigns against deep fakes:** Run campaigns to raise awareness of the dangers of deep fakes and legal penalties, targeting young users particularly.

Recommendations to Technical Community

1. **Capacity building:** Train regularly cyber security professionals in new threats and emerging technologies to ensure a strong protection of information systems
2. **Enhanced collaboration:** Encourage collaboration between public and private actors for information sharing about cybersecurity risks and vulnerabilities
3. **Affordable access to solutions:** Develop local context-based technical solutions to make Internet access more affordable, particularly in disadvantaged areas

Recommendations to Academia

1. **Curriculum integration:** Include personal data protection and digital security courses in the curriculum of computer science and law schools
2. **Research and public policies:** Encourage research on data collection and protection challenges and get involved in the development of public policies on digital security

Recommendation to End-Users

Best practices adoption: Implement experts' advice to reinforce the security of accounts and participate actively in cyber security training offered by various organizations.

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Cotonou, November 09th, 2024