AFRALO NEWSLETTER

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The latest news from the African At-Large Regional Organization (AFRALO)

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Chair's Remarks
Hadia Elminiawi

Warm greetings to all AFRALO members

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the latest edition of AFRALO newsletter.

As I embark on my journey as AFRALO Chair, I want to thank Seun Ojedeji for his dedicated and wise leadership over the past four years. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of all former AFRALO leaders, who have laid a strong foundation, enabling me and future leaders to build upon their achievements and valuable insights.

As we celebrate another milestone in the ongoing journey of ALAC and ICANN; with ICANN commemorating its 25th anniversary and ALAC along with the At-Large community celebrating their 20th anniversary during ICANN78 meeting held in Hamburg, Germany, last month, I warmly invite all of you to actively participate in the RALO activities and the work that lie ahead of us.

I take this opportunity to highlight some key current events:
Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG) has announced the call for proposals for Universal

Acceptance (UA) Day 2024. This is a call for proposals for the second annual UA Day to be held on 28 March 2024. If you are interested in organizing a UA Day event, please complete and submit the UA Day Event Proposal Form by 15 December.

This year, we are eagerly anticipating the submission of an AFRALO regional proposal, a google document will be set to draft the proposal. If you would like to take part in the AFRALO proposal kindly email me, Raymond Mamattah or Abdulkarim Oloyede.

During the recent AFRALO call, I introduced new leadership groups. The first is the "Leadership Council of Experts," designed for current and previous AFRALO leaders. Its primary objective is to maintain the active involvement of former leaders and capitalize on their wealth of experience and knowledge. The second group is the "AFRALO Emerging Leaders Committee," specifically intended for alumni of ICANN fellows and next gen programs. This committee aims to keep African fellows and next gen participants involved with the RALO and provide them opportunities for professional development. So, stay tuned for forthcoming announcements concerning both groups.

On behalf of AFRALO membership, I express gratitude to departing board members Avri Doria and Matthew Shears for their dedication and outstanding contribution. I also extend a warm welcome to our new board members Chris Buckridge, selected by the GNSO and our African board member Catherine Adeya, selected by the Nominating Committee.

We look forward to collaborating with each of you, whether as valued members of our community or in your roles as board members. Furthermore, we look forward to our continued work with León Sánchez, the At-Large Community selected board member and extend our heartfelt thanks to him for his exemplary leadership over the past years.
Finally, I invite you all to continue your support and enthusiasm for the AFRALO newsletter.

Welcome to our latest issue!

Hadia Elminiawi

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About AFRALO

African Regional At-Large Organization
… *Engaging Africa for Development*
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AFRALO is the home of the individual Internet user community for the African region. It provides news, key resources and interactive information sharing tools for individuals and end-user groups in the African region who are interested in ICANN and in shaping the future of the Internet.

AFRALO aims to:
- Strengthen users' participation in ICANN decision-making structures.
- Help ensure that its members will actively encourage more direct participation by end users.
- Build Internet policy making capacity in the region.
- Reach out to Internet users on the issues in the scope of ICANN.
- Represent users' interests and define public interest aspects of Internet governance with specific focus on the areas of **privacy, transparency, and accountability.**
- Strengthening consumer protection in ICANN policies
- Identify social impacts of technical infrastructure design.
- Take cultural diversity into account when formulating technical standards (e.g. IDN implementation)

AFRALO currently consist of **74 ALSes** located in 32 countries and territories, as well as **16 Individual members** and 3 Observers.

To learn more about the ongoing work of AFRALO, you are welcome to check out the AFRALO **workspace**.

Regional GSE Update
Pierre DANDJINOU,
Vice President, Stakeholder Engagement – Africa

African Projects Lineup

The Global Stakeholder Engagement team for Africa organized and hosted the Africa Space at ICANN 78 on 23 October 2023 between 16:30-17:30 in Hamburg, Germany.

This session sought to provide an update on the implementation of the Coalition for Digital Africa Program with about 40 attendees in person and virtual. Welcome remarks were made by Pierre Dandjinou, VP Global Stakeholder Engagement, Africa, Adiel Akplogan, VP technical Engagement, and Patrick Jones, Vice President, Global Stakeholder Engagement.

Coalition for Digital Africa updates

The Coalition is an alliance of global and regional organizations united in their commitment to expand access to the Internet in Africa and support the

development of Africa's digital economy. Conceived by ICANN, the Coalition works to build robust and secure Internet infrastructure to bring more Africans online.

Direct presentation by partners

Association of African Universities - Universal Acceptance and Email Address Internationalization (EAI) Readiness in Academic Institutions Project

Presentation on Universal Acceptance and Email Address Internationalization (EAI) Readiness in Academic Institutions Project delivered by Ms Nodumo Dhlamini & Mr Abdul M. Sulemana, Association of African Universities (AAU). This project aims to increase the number of higher education institutions in Africa that are UA-ready to at least 200 by June 2025.

In evaluating UA Readiness of AAU Member Universities, the project assessed 421 universities' full compliance, email compliance and website compliance. It was observed that 54 universities were fully compliant, 88 universities have email compliance and 227 universities have website compliance.

It was agreed that ICANN and AAU pursue their collaboration in a view to have the majorities of the AAU members UA ready before the end of the project

Internet Society - Internet Exchange Point (IXP) project

Jean Baptiste Millogo, Director, Internet Technology and Development at the Internet Society shared an update on the Internet Exchange Point (IXP) project. An Internet Exchange Point (IXP) is a physical location where internet infrastructure companies like Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) connect with each other. IXPs create shorter, more direct routes for Internet traffic, making Internet access faster, cheaper, and more reliable.

ISOC is fulfilling the IXP initiative of the Coalition for Digital Africa to build five IXPs between 2023 and 2025 and shared recent activities in Benin and Malawi related to the project

For Benin, the initiative seeks to strengthen the Benin Internet Exchange (BeninIX) through improvements to technical infrastructure, capacity building workshops on efficient internet traffic exchange and a comprehensive business plan to ensure long-term viability. For Malawi, the focus is on strengthening the Malawi ISP Association through installation and commission of a second Internet Exchange Point in Lilongwe.

Updates on other projects:

IMRS Infrastructure in Africa

The project seeks to increase the security, resiliency and speed of the Internet in Africa by installing ICANN Managed Root Server (IMRS) infrastructure. Announcement of the second IMRS installation deployed in Cairo, Egypt in October 2023 was made.

2023 Africa Market DNS Study

Under this project, ICANN has commissioned an in-depth study of the African DNS landscape aimed at creating a comprehensive picture of the industry. ICANN selected PowerSoft Africa to conduct the study with a draft document expected at the end of November 2023. The Public Comment period is targeted for December/January and final report due in March 2024.

DNS Security Extensions (DNSSEC) roadshows

Aimed at increasing DNS Security Extensions (DNSSEC) adoption and deployment in 15 countries in Africa through awareness building and capacity development. In 2023, the partners delivered workshops ("Deployathons") in Botswana and Burkina Faso. Applications for ccTLDs to host roadshows have been received, are currently being reviewed and selected ccTLDs will be announced in November.

Capacity Development for ccTLD Registries

Keen on enhancing the capacity of ten (10) ccTLD registries to support the growth of the digital economy in their countries, the project was announced with the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition initiated by the ITU in June 2022. The partners identified targeted ccTLDs: Angola, Benin, Burundi, Comoros, Gambia, Madagascar, Niger, Republic of Congo, Togo, and Zimbabwe. A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted, and capacity development activities planned from December 2023 - June 2024.

Expanding TLD Performance Monitoring

ICANN deployed two new monitoring probe nodes for ICANN Service Level Agreement Monitoring (SLAM) systems in Africa seeking to enhance the SLAM probe network. The two probe nodes were deployed in June (Lagos, Nigeria and Cairo, Egypt), in addition to the existing probe node located in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The session was concluded with an interactive question and answer session from attendees covering a call for increased corporate social responsibility for the youth, local community and At Large Structures contribution, and a call to action for increased collaboration on (underlying) infrastructural development.

The session's presentation can be accessed here.

Connect with the Coalition for Digital Africa www.coalitionfordigitalafrica.africa

X/Twitter: https://twitter.com/codigiaf

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/coalition-for-digital-africa/

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/codigiaf/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CoDigiAf

Special Tribute To Late Olevie Kouami

By Remmy Nweke

Dateline was Friday, October 20, 2023, barely 21 hours to the commencement of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN78) Annual General Meeting (AGM) slated for Hamburg, Germany, between 21st and 26th October, the membership of the African At-Large Regional Organisation (AFRALO) got the shocking news that co-chair of the AFRALO Newsletter team, Ayaovi Olévié Agbenyo KOUAMI, was dead.

Born in Sokode,Togo on September 10, 1959, Olevie attended high school at the Lyceum Moderne de Sokodé and the University Paris XIII in Villetaneuse for post high-school education, and died, barely a month and some nine days after marking his 64th birthday.

However, breaking the sad news was the immediate past AFRALO chairman, Mr. Seun Ojedeji who himself just arrived in the city of Hamburg to behold the shock of the death of Olivier Kouami from a heart attack.

Olivie, Ojedeji said, was an active leader within AFRALO and the internet governance community. He also was very involved in the open source community under the aegis of Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa (FOSSFA) which was where "I first got to meet and work with him over 15 years ago. My condolences to his family and the entire Africa internet community."

Earlier same morning of Friday, October 20th, I woke up with nostalgia of calling him up for us to discuss how to produce the next newsletter since the deadline has exceeded and our target of having the newsletter produced for the ICANN78 was not achieved only to check my mobile devices and beheld the news on AFRALO members Whatsapp group, then emails upon emails originating from various groups where we had been working together before now.

From AFRALO mailing list to Afri-Discuss, At-Large, down to the mailing lists of the Non-Profit Organization Concerns (NPOC), Non-Commercial Users Constituency among others. The news was the same, accompanied

soon with an avalanche of condolences from members of various groups and bodies where Olivie had played his part both in good and ugly times of history of these interest groups with aim to unite.

Personally, I could remember meeting him for the first time at a FOSSFA workshop in Accra, Ghana, about 2010, where I emerged the first-ever African Deutsche Welle-FOSSFA Reporter of the year. And ever since, we have met severally on a number of industry occasions on the frontline of Internet Governance for Development (IG4D) promotions on the continent.

For this year alone, we met at the AFRALO's General Assembly (GA23) held between July 24 and 25, 2023 on the sidelines of the ICANN-hosted African Engagement Forum (AEF) in Accra-Ghana. In fact, during the welcome cocktail, Olivie was the first to recognize and welcome me after I checked in and we began to chat away before he reminded me to go and register for my tag, and of course, we have taken drinks already.

On return, we continued our chat, he wasted no time to take me to meet my latest friend Raïhanath Gbadamassi who emerged interim ALAC member among others, he thought I should meet, and we moved on to discuss issues of our AFRALO Newsletter. Most part of the GA23, we sat together during lunch to brainstorm on how to better contributions and output the newsletter, especially after our presentation at GA23 and he always brought his Rastafarian perspective to general issues of live and on the continent.

And barely two weeks later, I returned to Accra-Ghana for the African Peering and Interconnection Forum (AfPIF23) and behold Olevie strolls in with his unique Rastafarian attire and once he saw me, he came over and after pleasantries, we cannot but think of AFRALO Newsletter. He was of course lamenting the fact that so much work to be done without incentive as well as lack in filing in reports by At-Large Structures (ALSes). I promised to send out a reminder by the following week with hope everyone who took part in the GA23 must have settled down on return to their base.

However on the last day of the AfPIF23 gala night, when I took to the floor to dance to a popular Nigerian song from the DJ, unknown to me, Olevie took out time to make a video as I led other participants to dance round the open space, of course including himself as a lover of music. He later sent me the video afterwards and that was our personal last chat outside editorial contributions from our Francophones which he forwarded to our Newsletter leadership group a few days earlier, from the emails, so we can keep a tap on them.

With the death of Olevie, we are considering adding an e-health column in the AFRALO Newsletter to his loving memory.

Originally from Togo, Olevie worked across Francophone West Africa and especially in Dakar, Senegal, but died at the age of 64 years on October 19, 2023. He was the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Institute of ICT for Development (INTIC4DEV), O and K IT Solutions LLC GIDA-OKTETS where he focused on ICT for development promotion, capacity building, Internet Governance concerns. He was ERP software editor and thus an Information Technology (IT) services provider based in Togo. He traverses the continent.

Olevie's ICANN working group interests cuts across policy and implementation, Non-PDP Data Metrics and Policy Making Working Group, Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Discussion group, Next-Generation gTLD Registration Directory Services to Replace Whois Policy Development Process Working Group (RDS-PDP-WG), CCWG-WS2 Diversity Subgroup, Cross-Community Working Group (CCWG) on Accountability Work Stream 2 (WS2), and ws2-guidelines to name but a few.

We, at the AFRALO Newsletter team, the AFRALO and African Internet community shall miss Olevie and his friendly path.

May his soul rest in perfect peace, and may God comfort his family, Amen.

Adieu Olevie!

Remmy Nweke, Esq.

Chair, AFRALO Newsletter Team

Editor, AFRALO Newsletter

ALAC Policy Updates

- [ALAC Closed Generics Advice to the Board](#)
- [ccNSO   Proposed Policy for a Specific ccTLD Related Review Mechanism](#)
- [ccNSO   PDP4 Initial Report on the (de-) selection of IDNccTLDs](#)
- [GNSO Guidance Process Applicant Support Guidance Recommendation Initial   Report](#)

ICANN Updates

- [ICANN Announces NextGen@ICANN79 Participants](#)
- [ICANN Org Increases Functionality of Label Generation Rules Toolset](#)
- [ICANN80 Fellowship Application Round Now Open](#)
- [ICANN Announces Recipients of the ICANN79 Fellowship](#)
- [ICANN Publishes FY24 Q1 Management Financial Results](#)
- [ICANN Community Excellence Award: Now Accepting Nominations](#)
- [ICANN Request for Information: Internal Audit Services](#)
- [Participate in the next Strategic Plan Environmental Scan Webinar](#)
- [ICANN78 Governmental Advisory Committee Communiqué Now Available](#)
- [Margarita Valdés Cortés Honored with Dr. Tarek Kamel Award for Capacity Building](#)
- [ICANN Seeks Input: Draft Report of the Root Zone DNSSEC Algorithm Rollover Study](#)
- [ICANN Publishes Updated Domain Name Marketplace Indicators](#)
- [DESI to Be Placed in the Emergency Back-End Registry Operator Program](#)
- [NextGen@ICANN Applications for ICANN79 Extended to Early November 2023](#)
- [ICANN Appoints Vice President of Government and IGO Engagement for APAC](#)
- [Call for Nominations: ICANN Academy 2024 Leadership Program](#)
- [ICANN Request for Proposal: IMRS Cluster (Germany) Colocation](#)
- [ICANN Request for Proposal: IMRS Cluster (Germany) Connectivity](#)
- [ICANN Publishes FY23 Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements](#)

ALAC Meeting Updates

MONTHLY MEETINGS: ALAC holds a series of meetings including monthly for the membership, bi-monthly leadership team meeting and Face-to-face sessions at ICANN international meetings.

Helpful Meeting Tracks:

- ALAC Monthly Meetings: community.icann.org/x/_pQi
- ALAC Leadership Team Bi-Monthly Meetings: community.icann.org/x/noAi
- At-Large Face-To-Face Sessions in ICANN International Meetings: community.icann.org/x/KJIi

AFRALO Meeting Tracks:

- AFRALO Monthly Meetings: community.icann.org/x/JgUt

The agenda and call details are available at: https://community.icann.org/x/KwA5Dg

AFRALO Monthly Calls have been scheduled for **first Wednesdays** of every month, so look out for details.
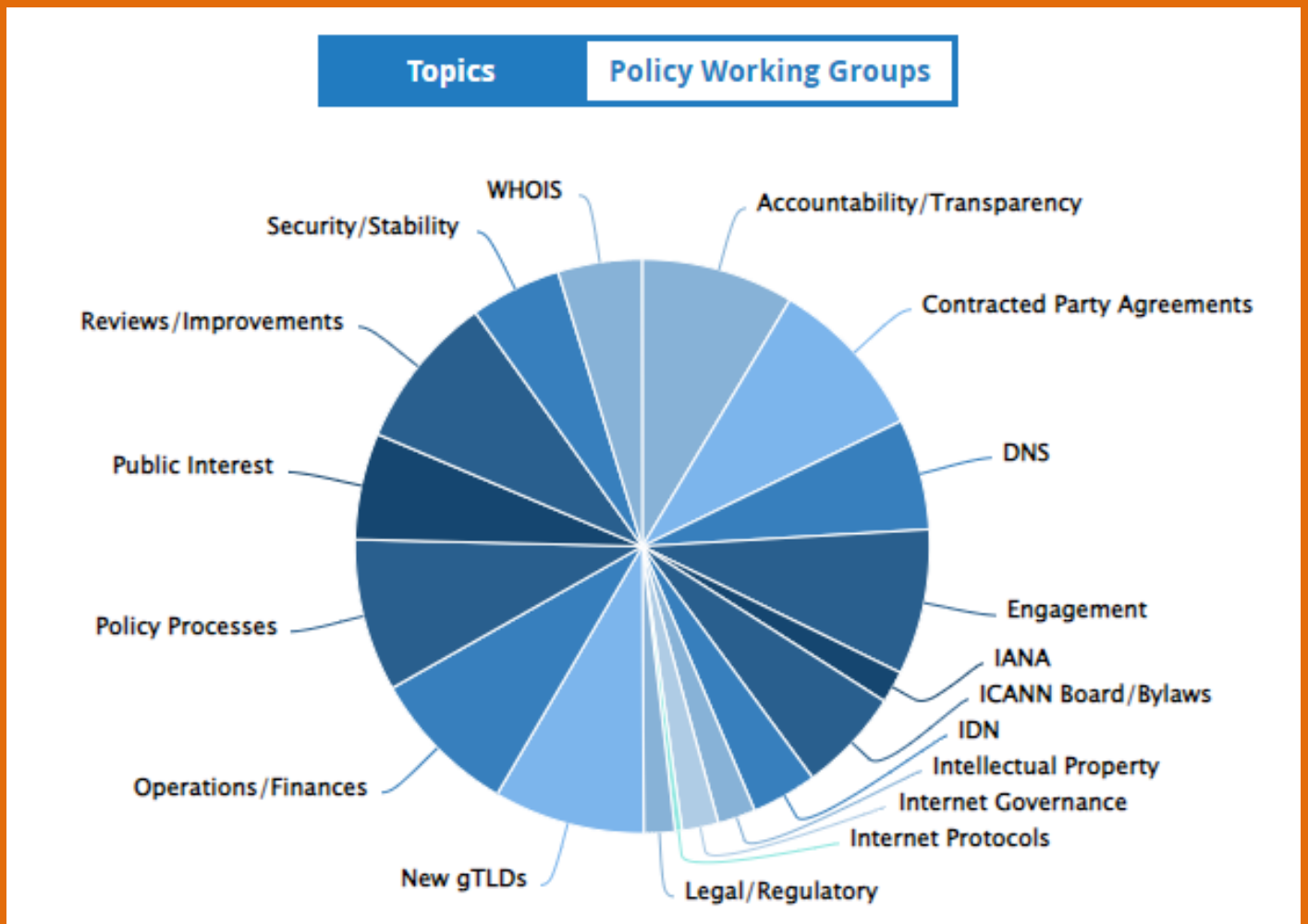
Do well to join!

ALAC Policy Comments & Advice

Some members of AFRALO and the At-Large Community were invited to contribute to ICANN Public Comment proceedings. For more information, please visit the [At-Large Policy Advice Development Page](#) or contact At-Large Staff.

This enabled them to have their say. To contribute to ALAC policy activities, always look out for such calls and comments on the At-Large workspace or **volunteer** as **penholder** and join the weekly At-Large Consolidated Policy Working Group (CPWG) meetings.

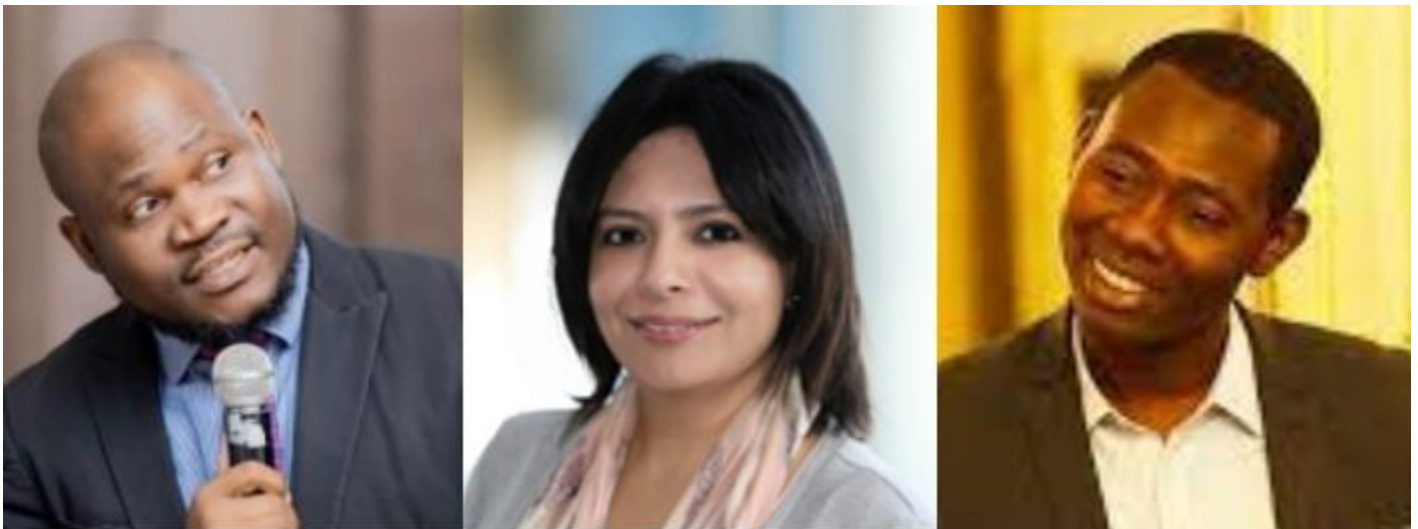For more information, please contact At-Large Staff or visit At-Large Policy Advice Development Page

Mapping At-Large Policy Issues

ALS' Activities

AFRALO new leadership assumes office with Hadia Elminiawi presiding
By Remmy Nweke

With the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN78) in the city of Hamburg, Germany in October 2023, the new leadership of the Africa Regional At-Large Organisation (AFRALO) has assumed office with Hadia Elminiawi as chairperson.

Other members of the new leadership include Bram Fudzulani as vice chairperson and Secretariat is manned by Abdeldjalili Bachar Bong.

Whereas the newly elected chairperson, Hadia Elminiawi is of the Shaarawy Foundation for Development (SFD) in Egypt and Fudzulani of ICT Association of Malawi are on their first term, respectively, Bong from House of Africa is on his second term till 2024 AGM.

Just as Elminiawi and Bong were elected, Bram Fudzulani emergence was by acclamation, even as both Elminiawi and Fudzulani are expected to remain in office till 2025 AGM.

Recall that the new chairperson, Hadia Elminiawi prides herself as an active member of the At-large community where she contributes to At-Large policy discussions and public comments. Notable among other was her contribution as a member to the new AFRALO Rule of Procedure (ROP in 2021.

Also, she has been penholder of several AFRALO statements as well as ALAC public comments and served as one of ALAC representatives to the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on EPDP Internationalized Domain Names (IDN) on generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs) having previously served as ALAC representative to the EPDP on gTLD registration data.

Additionally, Hadia participated in several ICANN PDPs and working groups, thus a regular contributor to At-Large Talking Points and At-Large ICANN meetings planning committees.

Professionally, Hadia is an Engineer by training, and holds a B.Sc. in Electronics and Communications from the Faculty of Engineering, Cairo University, a M.Sc. in Management and Leadership from Szent Istvan University in Hungary and a Diploma in Engineering Management from the Faculty of Engineering, Cairo University.

Lately, she successfully completed the artificial intelligence: technology governance and policy frameworks 1905 course with the Diplo Foundation, as well as courses on Internet technology and policy; Internet Governance in the MENA region with Hivos and Diplo foundation.

She has credit for proposing, organizing and participating as panelist in a couple of Internet Governance Forums (IGFs). Hadia, a Rotarian is equally a board member of a non profit organization and has worked for over 14 years at Egypt's top level domain managers alongside other organizations that help empower women.

Putting the 'WIG' on

Female fellows at the 2023 Ghana School of Internet Governance (GhanaSIG) have called for participation of more Women in Internet Governance (WIG).

In a communique released at the end of this year session, and signed by the Yentumi Persis Akosua Konamah, Okunor Nellie, Dr. Ampofo Henrietta Maame Abena Gyamfua and Deborah Mensah Bennor, they admonished women to put on their WIG on, and wondered why there are few women in the IG space.

They pointed out that the immediate past chairperson of At Large Advisory Committee (ALAC), Madam Maureen Hilyard, during her engagement with the fellows while speaking on "Gender Balance in IG- Focus on Female Engagement" had underscored the importance of having more females in the IG space.

She also applauded the organisers. the E-Governance and Internet Governance Foundation for Africa (EGIGFA) for putting up the Ghana School on Internet Governance (GhanaSIG) with a specific interest for female representation in the room.

She admonished that it was important for women to be informed about the impact of IG on their daily lives.

In addition, she believes their participation will propel more women to join the space.

She stressed on the fact that the ideologies of men and women differ "hence we cannot leave the space to just the men to make decisions that affect us on a daily basis. The IG space is a great opportunity for the voices of women to be heard."

As said by her, women are interested in IG and sensitization is needed to get them on.

The presence of women like Madam Maureen Hilyard in leadership positions is a great motivation for women to join the space.

"When ideas and leaders are needed on global platforms like ICANN, women need to be chosen because we can," she said.

The communique further declared that "I am Special, I am Woman, I am Internet Governance. I am a Woman in Internet Governance (WIG), I can, You can, We can, in ICANN."

GhanaSIG showcases exceptional 41 fellows across Africa

By Godsway Kubi

The Ghana School on Internet Governance (GhanaSIG), organized by EGIGFA, has showcased 41 exceptional individuals from a pool of over 300 applicants.

Among these standout fellows are Persis Yentumi and Levy Syanseke, ISOC Zambia President and Coordinator for ZambiaSIG, the distinguished GhanaSIG 2023 Fellowship representatives.

The 2023 GhanaSIG Fellowship, a transformative experience, spanned both online and face-to-face sessions. Commencing on April 24 and concluding on May 26, the online phase unfolded on the ICANN Learning platform. Subsequently, from June 27 to June 30, in-person sessions fostered deeper connections and understanding among participants.

This year marked a significant milestone, as for the first time in the history of the fellowship, two representatives from AFRALO, Abdeldjalil Bachar Bong (AFRALO Secretariat) and Abdulkarim Ayopo Oloyede (UA Ambassador), joined us in person.

Our fellows immersed themselves in diverse Internet Governance topics, from Universal Acceptability to Digital Rights, empowering them to contribute significantly to the digital ecosystem.

Benefits reaped from this program are manifold: a profound understanding of Internet Governance, networking opportunities with like-minded professionals and experts, honed advocacy skills, and a global perspective on digital issues.

Our heartfelt appreciation extends to our accomplished speakers for sharing their wisdom and knowledge, illuminating the path for our fellows.

As we celebrate the success of the GhanaSIG Fellowship 2023, we anticipate the continued positive impact of our fellows in the world of Internet Governance and beyond. Together, we shape a brighter digital future for Africa and the world.

O B I T U A R Y: Kenyan Njeri Rionge is dead

Remmy Nweke

In the early days of October 2023, on the third to be precise, the sad news filtered in of the death of Njeri Rionge.

She served on the ICANN Board during the early times of ICANN from 2003.

According to the immediate past chair of AFRALO, Seun Ojedeji, Africa has lost a strong contributor to the growth of the Internet within Kenya, East Africa, Africa and globally.

"On behalf of the AFRALO leadership, I like to extend my condolences to the immediate family, and our friends in Kenya.

"May the Lord grant them grace during this trying period and may her soul rest in peace!" he said.

Recall that Njeri Rionge was a multi-passionate social entrepreneur with a vision to have a Green Africa Free from Poverty. Founder and CEO, EcoPost. Cartier Women's Initiative impact awardee.
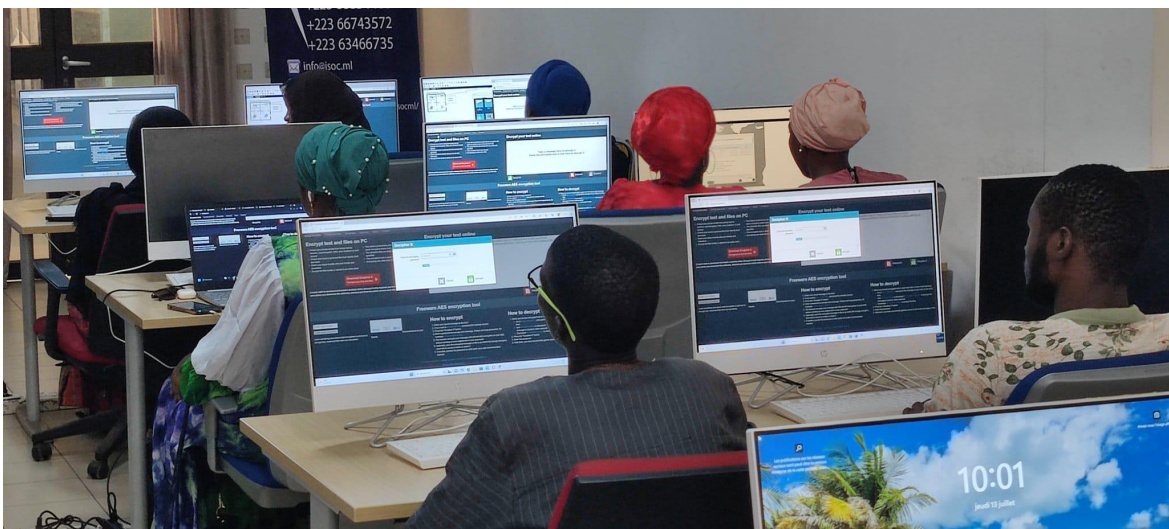
Njeri Rionge, a celebrated techpreneur was co-founder of Kenyan-based Internet Service Provider, Wananchi Online who died on October 3, 2023. A pioneer of note, Njeri co-founded Wananchi Online in 1999 with former ICT Cabinet Secretary Joseph Mucheru, who also was her brother.

Cybersecurity for future Internet leaders @Mali

KOUYATE Bakary

The Internet Society chapter in Mali has organized a practical training session on the basics of cybersecurity for some thirty young people., touted as future leaders.

The training was part of the second cohort of the "Mali Internet Next Generation leaders" training program, with the aim to build the capacity of future Internet leaders in the country.

The three-day face-to-face training took place from July 12 to 14, 2023 at the Agence des Technologies de l'Information et la Communication, with participants learning a great deal about cybersecurity accompanied with practical labs exercises.

Participants were given the opportunity to create a cyberworld, using file and data integrity checks, exploring file and data encryption and finally implementing KALI Linux with its various commands and options were among the skills acquired.

In interviews, most of the participants expressed their satisfaction with the organization of this cybersecurity training course, and even called for such initiatives to be multiplied in Mali.

Stay Connected