



Final Report

Theme: Building South Sudan's Digital Governance Together

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Glossary

AFIGF – African Internet Governance Forum
AFRINIC – African Network Information Centre
AI – Artificial Intelligence
APNIC – Asia Pacific Network Information Centre
AU – African Union
CII – Critical Information Infrastructure
CIRT – Cybersecurity Incident Response Team
CN – Community Network
CSO – Civil Society Organization
DG – Director General
DNS – Domain Name System
DRF – Digital Rights Frontlines
ET – Emerging Technologies
FinTech – Financial Technology
FIU – Financial Intelligence Unit
GOSS – Government of South Sudan
ICANN – Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
ICT – Information and Communication Technology
IETF – Internet Engineering Task Force
IG – Internet Governance
IGF – Internet Governance Forum
IoT – Internet of Things
IP – Internet Protocol
IPv4 – Internet Protocol Version 4
IPv6 – Internet Protocol Version 6
ISOC – Internet Society
ISOC SS Chapter – Internet Society South Sudan Chapter
ITU – International Telecommunication Union
IXP – Internet Exchange Point
MoICT&PS – Ministry of ICT and Postal Services
MoMo – Mobile Money
NCA – National Communications Authority
PWD – Persons with Disabilities
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
SIG – School on Internet Governance
SS-DTS – South Sudan Digital Transformation Strategy
SS-IGF – South Sudan Internet Governance Forum
SS-IXP – South Sudan Internet Exchange Point

SS-SIG – South Sudan School on Internet Governance

TNLA – Transitional National Legislative Assembly

UN – United Nations

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USAF – Universal Service Access Fund

WGIG – Working Group on Internet Governance

WSIS – World Summit on the Information Society

Executive Summary

The 2025 South Sudan Internet Governance Forum (SS-IGF) convened a diverse range of stakeholders from government institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations, the technical community, academia, youth groups, women-led initiatives, media actors, and international partners. Held in a hybrid format at the University Innovation Pod, University of Juba, the forum provided an open, non-commercial, and participatory platform for dialogue on how South Sudan can collectively shape an inclusive, secure, and resilient digital future under the theme “Building South Sudan’s Digital Governance Together.”

Discussions highlighted that internet governance in South Sudan must remain people-centred, development-oriented, and grounded in multistakeholder collaboration. Participants acknowledged progress in areas such as the development of the South Sudan Digital Transformation Strategy, the establishment of the national CIRT, improvements in connectivity through new technologies, and renewed capacity-building efforts through the SS-SIG. However, they also identified persistent gaps in legal frameworks, infrastructure investment, digital literacy, affordability, and institutional coordination.

Across plenary and panel sessions, stakeholders emphasized the urgency of adopting enabling laws on cybersecurity, data protection, and computer misuse; strengthening trust and safety online; expanding inclusive access to underserved communities; and ensuring that emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence are governed ethically and responsibly. The forum reaffirmed the SS-IGF as a critical national mechanism for translating dialogue into sustained engagement, policy input, and practical action.

Background

The Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG), established during the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), defined Internet Governance as the development and application by governments, the private sector, and civil society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programmes that shape the evolution and use of the Internet.

Internet Governance processes at national, regional, continental, and global levels involve multiple stakeholder groups, including governments, civil society, private sector actors, academia, technical communities, intergovernmental organizations, and international development partners.

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was formally established by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2006 following WSIS (Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005). The IGF provides an open and inclusive platform for dialogue on public policy issues related to the internet. The IGF is non-commercial and does not produce negotiated outcomes, but its discussions support the development of shared understanding, informed policymaking, and stakeholder cooperation.

The African IGF (AfIGF) has grown as a key continental platform, and several African countries have hosted the global IGF, including Egypt (2009), Kenya (2011), and Ethiopia (2022).

The South Sudan IGF supports national dialogue aimed at maximizing the opportunities offered by the internet, addressing challenges in a bottom-up and inclusive manner, and strengthening the country's participation in regional and global internet governance processes.

The purpose of this report is to capture the key deliberations and outcomes of the 2025 SS-IGF and to provide a reference for future stakeholder engagement, policy development, and implementation of proposed actions.

Welcome Remarks by the Chair, South Sudan Internet Governance Forum (SS-IGF)



Eng. Unguec Stephen Kang

Chair, South Sudan Internet Governance Forum (SS-IGF)

Distinguished guests, respected representatives from government institutions, the private sector, civil society, the technical community, academia, development partners, and dear participants—both joining us physically and online—good morning and welcome.

*It is my great honour, on behalf of the South Sudan Internet Governance Forum Secretariat and the broader multistakeholder community, to welcome you all to the **2025 South Sudan Internet Governance Forum (SS-IGF)**, convened under the theme: **“Building South Sudan’s Digital Governance Together.”***

This theme reflects an important reality: that the future of South Sudan’s digital development cannot be shaped by one institution alone. It requires collective commitment, shared responsibility, and inclusive collaboration across all stakeholder groups. As the internet continues to transform our societies, it is increasingly essential that we work together to ensure that our digital space remains open, secure, inclusive, and supportive of national development.

The Internet Governance Forum process offers a unique platform for such engagement. It is non-commercial, inclusive, and built on dialogue. It enables stakeholders to exchange

perspectives, identify challenges, propose solutions, and strengthen cooperation in areas such as connectivity, cybersecurity, digital rights, emerging technologies, and digital transformation.

As South Sudan continues its journey toward a digitally enabled economy and society, we must also recognize that new opportunities come with new responsibilities. Issues such as cybersecurity, misinformation, data protection, and digital inclusion must be addressed through coordinated national efforts, supported by policy development, capacity building, and sustained stakeholder engagement.

I would like to sincerely appreciate all partners and stakeholders who have contributed to making this forum possible. I also acknowledge the continued efforts of the Internet Society South Sudan Chapter and the SS-IGF Secretariat in strengthening national participation in internet governance processes.

I encourage all participants to contribute freely and constructively throughout today's discussions. Your ideas, experiences, and perspectives are vital to shaping policies and actions that will strengthen South Sudan's digital governance ecosystem.

Once again, I warmly welcome you all and wish us productive deliberations and meaningful outcomes.

Thank you.

Opening Remarks and High-Level Reflections



Dr. Margret Labanya

Director Cooperate Affairs, National Commynication Authority (NCA)

Guest of Honour

The opening session of the 2025 South Sudan Internet Governance Forum (SS-IGF) set a clear and inclusive tone for the day’s deliberations, emphasizing the internet as a critical enabler of social development, economic opportunity, education, and innovation in South Sudan.

Speakers underscored that effective internet governance is not the responsibility of any single institution, but a shared endeavour requiring sustained collaboration among government entities, the private sector, civil society, the technical community, academia, and international partners. Participants were reminded that the IGF process provides a unique, non-commercial and non-hierarchical platform where all stakeholder voices engage on equal footing.

Strong emphasis was placed on the importance of aligning national digital priorities with inclusive governance principles, particularly in a context where digital transformation is accelerating amid evolving risks and inequalities. The need to balance innovation with trust, safety, and accountability featured prominently in the reflections.

Participants were encouraged to engage openly, critically, and constructively throughout the forum, reinforcing the IGF’s bottom-up ethos and its focus on dialogue as a foundation for informed policy and collective action.

Capacity Building and Community Engagement: SS-SIG Reflections



The session on the 2025 South Sudan School on Internet Governance (SS-SIG) highlighted the role of capacity-building initiatives in strengthening national participation in internet governance. Stakeholders emphasized that training programmes are essential for building awareness, equipping participants with practical knowledge, and expanding meaningful engagement across stakeholder groups.

Discussions recognized that inclusive curricula aligned with global IGF processes and UN Dynamic Coalition frameworks can strengthen national ownership of internet governance dialogue. Participants also acknowledged the SS-SIG as an important pipeline for nurturing emerging leaders in digital policy and governance.

The session further reaffirmed that sustained community engagement and awareness programmes remain necessary to ensure that internet governance becomes accessible beyond institutional stakeholders, particularly among youth, women, and underserved communities.

Panel and Plenary Discussions

Cybersecurity, National Resilience, and Child Online Protection



Deliberations on cybersecurity underscored the growing dependence on digital technologies alongside escalating cyber risks. Participants expressed concern that South Sudan's digital adoption is advancing faster than its protective frameworks, exposing institutions, businesses, and citizens to evolving threats.

Key issues identified included the absence of comprehensive cyber-related legislation, limited public awareness, and insufficient cross-sector coordination. Stakeholders emphasized that cybersecurity should be approached as a shared responsibility, requiring collaboration among government entities, service providers, civil society, and end users.

Participants broadly agreed on the need for an integrated national cybersecurity framework, a functional and well-resourced national CIRT, and alignment with regional and international instruments. Child online protection emerged as a cross-cutting priority requiring policy attention, awareness programmes, and stakeholder cooperation.

Emerging Technologies and Ethical Governance



Discussions on emerging technologies highlighted the transformative potential of artificial intelligence, blockchain, and the Internet of Things across sectors such as agriculture, health, education, and public administration. Participants recognized these technologies as tools for improving efficiency, transparency, and service delivery.

At the same time, stakeholders stressed the importance of developing ethical, legal, and governance frameworks to guide responsible adoption. Concerns were raised regarding limited technical capacity, the absence of enabling policies, and the risk of widening inequalities if emerging technologies are deployed without safeguards.

There was strong consensus that digitization efforts should be accompanied by investment in skills development, public awareness, and regulatory preparedness to ensure that technological innovation contributes positively to national development.

Universal Access and Digital Rights



This session examined how South Sudan can advance universal access to affordable and meaningful connectivity while safeguarding digital rights and inclusion. Participants emphasized that universal access is not solely about network expansion, but also about affordability, quality of service, and equitable participation across communities.

Key issues discussed included the need for improved infrastructure investment, expansion of fibre optic networks, and stronger advocacy for affordable internet services. Stakeholders also emphasized the importance of developing frameworks that support privacy, data protection, and responsible use of digital platforms.

Participants highlighted the role of community networks and local innovation as potential solutions for reaching underserved communities. The discussion further noted that high taxation and regulatory burdens may constrain local entrepreneurship and the expansion of connectivity services.

Cybersecurity, Digital Trust, and Misinformation



This plenary session explored the importance of trust and safety in strengthening the digital ecosystem in South Sudan. Participants examined the growing challenge of misinformation, online harm, and cyber threats, and discussed how institutions and stakeholders can collaborate to strengthen national cyber resilience.

Stakeholders emphasized the need for stronger legal frameworks to address cybercrime, hate speech, misinformation, and harmful online content. The role of public awareness and cyber hygiene education was highlighted as essential for building safer online behaviour among citizens.

Participants also stressed the importance of institutional strengthening, including closer collaboration with technology platforms and service providers. The session reaffirmed that digital trust requires both regulatory measures and public engagement, and that stakeholders must work collectively to reduce online vulnerabilities.

Digital Cooperation and Multistakeholder Engagement



The discussion on multistakeholder engagement reaffirmed the IGF principle that inclusive participation strengthens policy outcomes and public trust. Participants noted that collaboration between government, civil society, private sector actors, academia, and technical communities is necessary to advance digital governance and national digital transformation.

Stakeholders reflected on the importance of building coordination mechanisms that ensure shared ownership of national digital strategies and policies. Participants also referenced national processes such as town halls and strategy consultations as practical examples of multistakeholder participation.

The session concluded with calls for sustained dialogue, transparency, and stakeholder engagement beyond annual forums to ensure implementation of shared priorities and to strengthen South Sudan's internet governance ecosystem.

Digital Economy and E-Governance Transformation



This session focused on the opportunities presented by digital economy development and e-governance reforms. Participants discussed how digital public services, financial technology, and inclusive digital infrastructure can improve service delivery and strengthen economic inclusion.

Stakeholders noted that South Sudan’s transition toward a digital economy requires improved digital literacy, enhanced institutional readiness, and regulatory frameworks that promote innovation while protecting consumers and national interests.

The discussion highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships and the need for coordinated strategies to build secure and accessible digital services. Participants further emphasized that digital transformation should be approached in a way that supports national development goals, transparency, and citizen empowerment.

Cross-Cutting Themes from Deliberations

- 1. Inclusivity and Access – Universal access was framed as a multidimensional issue encompassing affordability, quality of service, local relevance, gender equity, disability inclusion, and rural connectivity.*
- 2. Trust, Safety, and Rights – Cybersecurity, data protection, child online protection, and countering misinformation were identified as essential to building confidence in the digital ecosystem.*
- 3. Capacity and Awareness – Digital skills, cyber hygiene, and public awareness were recognized as prerequisites for effective participation in the digital economy and governance processes.*
- 4. Emerging Technologies and Ethics – AI, IoT, and blockchain were viewed as development enablers, provided that ethical, legal, and governance frameworks evolve alongside adoption.*
- 5. Multistakeholder Cooperation – Sustainable digital governance was seen to depend on continuous collaboration among government, private sector, civil society, academia, and international partners.*

Key Takeaways and Trends

- Internet governance challenges in South Sudan are interconnected and require coordinated, whole-of-society responses.*
- Legal and policy gaps remain a major constraint to digital trust, innovation, and investment.*
- Community networks, IXPs, and regional cooperation present practical opportunities to improve affordability and resilience.*
- Youth- and women-led initiatives play a critical role in driving digital inclusion and innovation.*
- National IGF processes are effective platforms for contextualizing global internet governance principles to local realities.*

Recommendations

Government and Regulators

- *Fast-track the enactment of cybersecurity, data protection, and computer misuse legislation.*
- *Strengthen coordination among ICT, cybersecurity, media, justice, and financial sector institutions.*
- *Integrate SS-IGF outcomes into national digital transformation and development planning processes.*

Civil Society and Academia

- *Expand community-based digital literacy, digital rights awareness, and inclusion programmes.*
- *Support research, data collection, and evidence-based contributions to national digital policy discussions.*

Private Sector and Technical Community

- *Invest in affordable connectivity solutions, community networks, and local content ecosystems.*
- *Collaborate with regulators and civil society to promote secure-by-design and rights-respecting digital services.*

SS-IGF Secretariat

- *Systematically document and track outcomes from each SS-IGF cycle.*
- *Strengthen linkages with regional (EAIGF, AfIGF) and global IGF processes.*
- *Ensure sustained and meaningful participation of women, youth, and marginalized communities.*

IGF Outcome Messages

South Sudan requires urgent adoption of enabling digital laws to build trust and resilience online.

- 1. Multistakeholder collaboration is essential for inclusive and sustainable digital governance.*
- 2. Cybersecurity and digital rights are foundational to national development.*
- 3. Digital inclusion must prioritize affordability, skills development, and marginalized communities.*
- 4. Ethical governance of emerging technologies is critical for long-term societal benefit.*
- 5. Community networks and IXPs can significantly reduce costs and improve internet resilience.*
- 6. Youth and women are key drivers of innovation and digital transformation.*
- 7. National IGF processes strengthen South Sudan's voice in regional and global internet governance.*

Conclusion

The 2025 South Sudan Internet Governance Forum reaffirmed the value of inclusive, bottom-up, and collaborative dialogue in shaping the country's digital governance landscape. While significant challenges remain, the forum demonstrated strong national commitment, growing institutional capacity, and a shared vision for a secure, inclusive, and development-oriented internet. Sustained engagement beyond the annual forum will be essential to translate dialogue into tangible policy, institutional, and societal outcomes.

Chair's Foreword

On behalf of the South Sudan Internet Governance Forum (SS-IGF), I am pleased to present this report capturing the deliberations and outcomes of the 2025 SS-IGF. The forum continues to serve as South Sudan's primary multistakeholder platform for dialogue on internet governance, digital transformation, and the responsible use of emerging technologies.

The discussions reflected a shared recognition that South Sudan's digital future depends on trust, inclusion, collaboration, and sustained investment in both people and infrastructure. Participants engaged openly on challenges related to access, cybersecurity, digital rights, emerging technologies, and institutional coordination, while also identifying practical pathways for progress.

This report is intended not only as a record of discussions, but as a reference document to inform policy development, institutional collaboration, and future SS-IGF cycles. I extend my appreciation to all stakeholders whose contributions continue to strengthen South Sudan's digital governance ecosystem.

Eng. Unguec Stephen Kang

Chair, South Sudan Internet Governance Forum (SS-IGF)

Policy Brief: Key Messages from SS-IGF 2025

Why This Matters

South Sudan's digital transformation is accelerating, yet governance, legal, and capacity frameworks remain under development. The 2025 SS-IGF provided a national platform to assess progress, identify gaps, and align stakeholders around shared priorities.

Priority Issues Identified

- *Absence of comprehensive cybersecurity, data protection, and computer misuse legislation.*
- *Limited digital literacy and uneven access, particularly in rural and marginalized communities.*
- *Growing cyber risks, misinformation, and digital trust challenges.*
- *Rapid adoption of emerging technologies without corresponding governance frameworks.*

Key Policy Messages

1. *Enabling digital laws are foundational to trust, investment, and resilience.*
2. *Cybersecurity and digital rights must be integrated into national development planning.*
3. *Inclusive access requires affordability, skills development, and community-based solutions.*
4. *Ethical governance of emerging technologies is critical to avoid deepening inequalities.*
5. *Sustained multistakeholder collaboration strengthens policy coherence and implementation.*

Recommended Actions

- *Accelerate passage of digital-related legislation and regulatory instruments.*
- *Strengthen institutional coordination across ICT, cybersecurity, media, and justice sectors.*
- *Invest in nationwide digital literacy, awareness, and capacity-building initiatives.*
- *Support community networks, IXPs, and affordable connectivity models.*
- *Institutionalize SS-IGF outcomes within national policy and planning processes.*

Acknowledgement

The SS-IGF Organizing Committee expresses appreciation to all partners, sponsors, institutions, and individuals who contributed to the successful delivery of the 2025 South Sudan Internet Governance Forum. The forum was made possible through the commitment and collaboration of stakeholders who provided technical support, financial contributions, logistical assistance, and active participation.

Special recognition is extended to the SS-IGF Secretariat, moderators, panelists, speakers, and participants whose engagement ensured meaningful deliberations and strengthened the multistakeholder spirit of the forum.

The organizers also acknowledge the continued support of national institutions and development partners committed to strengthening South Sudan's digital governance ecosystem.

End of Report