IGF
INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM
North Africa

Royaume du Maroc

Chef du Gouvernement
Ministère de la Transition Numérique
et de la Réforme de l'Administration

9th Annual Meeting of the North Africa Internet Governance Forum
الاجتماع السنوي التاسع لمنتدى شمال أفريقيا لحوكمة الإنترنت

Rabat, Morocco
24-26 November 2025

NAIGE
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26-24 نوفمبر 2025

الوكالة الرقمية للدولة
Agence Numérique de l'État

Internet Society Foundation

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IGF Internet Governance Forum

Report

NAIGF Overview:

[The North Africa Internet Governance Forum (NAIGF)](#) was established as a regional initiative in September 2012, following the model of the global Internet Governance Forum (IGF), and in accordance with principles outlined in the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva, December 2003, as well as the principles, values, and commitments of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society 2005. NAIGF was officially launched in 2016, bringing together all stakeholders in internet policy from governments, the private sector, civil society, technical community, and other relevant stakeholders from seven North African countries (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan & Tunisia). It serves as an open dialogue platform on public policy issues related to the internet and its governance. The forum represents an opportunity for all parties to meet within a framework conducive to addressing important issues and discussing practical solutions aimed at enhancing the sustainability, strength, security, stability, and development of the internet.

NAIGF is committed to incorporating the interests and perspectives of North African countries into the activities of the global Internet Governance Forum (IGF). The forum aims to involve all stakeholders concerned with internet affairs and governance. Additionally, the forum seeks to raise awareness and build capacity in internet governance for North African users. Among its annual activities, the forum organizes a capacity-building program called the North Africa Internet Governance School. This program aims to enhance knowledge and develop skills related to internet governance, preparing participants for active involvement in various regional and international internet governance processes, particularly due to its impact on the sustainable development plans of Arab and African countries.

NAIGF Objectives and Principles:

Main Objectives of the NAIGF:
NAIGF aims to provide an open discussion platform among various stakeholders on internet-related issues in the North African region. The forum seeks to:

- Address internet-related topics and emerging trends in internet technology.
- Raise awareness and build capacity in internet governance for North African users.
- Ensure of North African countries views are considered in the global Internet Governance Forum.
- Ensure the representation of diverse stakeholders in the internet community.
- Promote the engagement of all North African countries in internet governance processes.

Principles of the Forum:

1. **Openness:** NAIGF is based on the principle of openness, allowing all interested citizens from the seven North African countries to participate.
2. **Multi-Stakeholder Participation:** Ensuring the equal participation of all stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, civil society, and the technical and academic communities, in the activities of the forum.
3. **Diversity:** Maintaining cultural, linguistic, geographic, and gender diversity in the forum's activities and operational mechanisms.
4. **Transparency:** Upholding transparency in all activities and processes of the NAIGF

North Africa IGF's ninth Annual Meeting (NAIGF-25)

The Ninth Annual Meeting of the North Africa Internet Governance Forum (NAIGF-25) was held under the theme "*Building a Digital Future by All, For All*", generously hosted by **Ministry of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform of the Kingdom of Morocco**, under esteemed patronage of **HE. Minister Amal El Fallah Seghrouchni**. The meeting took place from 24–26 November 2025 at the National Library in Rabat.

This year's meeting addressed key Internet governance issues at the global and regional levels, including updates from the global IGF process and discussions on the future of the Internet in the age of virtual and immersive technologies. The meeting also explored the opportunities and challenges brought by these technologies and their social and economic implications, as well as their impact on privacy, data protection, cybersecurity, and other related areas.

The program featured a comprehensive set of main sessions covered Internet governance from both global and regional perspectives. Topics included the global developments in Internet governance, key actors, and ways for North African countries to strengthen their role in shaping global digital policies and advocating for regional interests. Discussions also highlighted how to build a trustworthy and resilient digital environment in the region by exploring digital preparedness, cybersecurity, risk management, and ways to strengthen national institutions' capacities to face accelerating technological challenges.

A legislative perspective also was included, addressing digital governance from the viewpoint of parliaments, and exploring their evolving roles in developing regulatory frameworks for digital transformation. Additional program components focused on promoting digital entrepreneurship and startup ecosystems as engines for economic growth in North Africa, highlighted the best practices that support innovation and create enabling environments for emerging technologies. The Forum also examined the legal and ethical challenges of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, responsible AI governance, and compliance with international standards.

Other thematic priorities were included such as empowering women's participation in Internet governance, gender-related barriers in the digital sphere, cross-border digital trade and regional economic integration, and identifying regulatory barriers hindering digital integration in North Africa.

The Forum discussed the digital inclusion, bridging digital and social divides, analyzing disparities in access to technology, identifying affected groups, and proposing practical solutions to advance digital inclusion. It also explored the greening of the digital future, the role of technology in sustainability, climate innovation, and reducing the environmental impact of the ICT sector. Moreover, the program addressed the social and behavioral dimensions of the digital age, including the influence of digital platforms on societal behavior, interaction patterns, and digital identity. Privacy and personal data protection was also discussed, highlighted key regulations, best practices, and compliance mechanisms, in addition to emphasizing the role of youth in the digital ecosystem and equipping them to contribute to shaping future digital policies.

NAIGF-25 Opening Ceremony

The opening Ceremony was attended by more than 200 Participants came from all stakeholders, governments, policy makers, experts and technicians from ministries of communications, private sector, university academics, civil society, international and regional organizations, and independent experts interested in the fields of Internet governance.

HE. Amal El Fallah Seghrouchni, Minister of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform of the Kingdom of Morocco, emphasized that the Forum presents an opportunity for North African countries to unify their positions within international discussions concerning the future of the internet and emerging technologies. She stressed the importance of exchanging experiences and strengthening institutional capacities, in line with the global dynamics of internet governance, particularly in the context of preparing the Global Digital Compact and the WSIS+20 process. Highlighted that Morocco's vision for digital transformation, under the wise leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, is based on making digitalization a lever for improving the quality of public services and enhancing the competitiveness of the national economy. Within this framework, the "Digital Morocco 2030". Also called for strengthening cooperation among the countries of the region and for the inclusion of youth and women in shaping the future of the digital space, emphasizing the need to make the Forum an active platform for activating

regional cooperation and developing a unified internet governance framework in North Africa. The Minister also stressed that addressing the challenges related to cybersecurity, unequal access to digital services, and the imbalances in the global market requires coordinated approaches and a coherent regional vision capable of guaranteeing digital rights, consolidating data sovereignty, and developing digital skills. In closing, expressed Morocco's pride in hosting this round of the NAIGF annual meeting and wished the forum every success in formulating practical messages that contribute to building a unified regional position and strengthen North Africa's presence in global discussions on internet governance and digital transformation.

Mr. Ahmed Farag, President of the North Africa Internet Governance Forum, commended the significant efforts made by the Kingdom of Morocco to ensure the success of the NAIGF-25. Emphasized that the global digital environment is experiencing an unprecedented boom, making the internet a central infrastructure for economic and social life. He noted that the NAIGF-25 provides an open platform for dialogue among various stakeholders to formulate a shared vision for the future of the internet in the region, addressing issues such as artificial intelligence, data protection, cybersecurity, the digital divide, and the role of youth in leading the digital transformation.

Mr. Farag also stressed that the diversity of participants reflects the importance of this event, which will discuss pivotal issues in digital governance over three days, adopting a multi-stakeholder approach is the optimal way to build fair and balanced digital policies. In closing, he presented his appreciation to the Moroccan Kingdom's role in hosting the NAIGF-25 and the organizational efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform to ensure the success of its ninth edition. Underscored the significance role of the NAIGF's MAG for preparing the NAIGF-25 agenda, which includes critical topics such as digital resource management, reinforcing regulatory and legislative frameworks, safeguarding human rights in the digital sphere, advancing cybersecurity, and fostering cooperation between all stakeholders. He further emphasized that since its inception, NAIGF has been committed to creating a participatory environment to ensure the initiative's success and achieve its objectives in advancing digital governance across the region.

Mr. Chengetai Masango, Head of the United Nations IGF Secretariat (IGF-UN), pointed out that the effective use of digital technologies depends on openness, cooperation, and the firm engagement of the various stakeholders. He stressed that regional Internet Governance Forums constitute essential platforms that bring together governments, the private sector, civil society, and technical communities. These regional forums not only facilitate constructive dialogue among diverse actors, but also play a pivotal role in mobilizing local and regional

communities to meaningfully contribute to shaping the digital transition. Mr. Masango underlined that such collaborative spaces are fundamental to ensuring that digital transformation processes remain inclusive, sustainable, and aligned with global priorities.
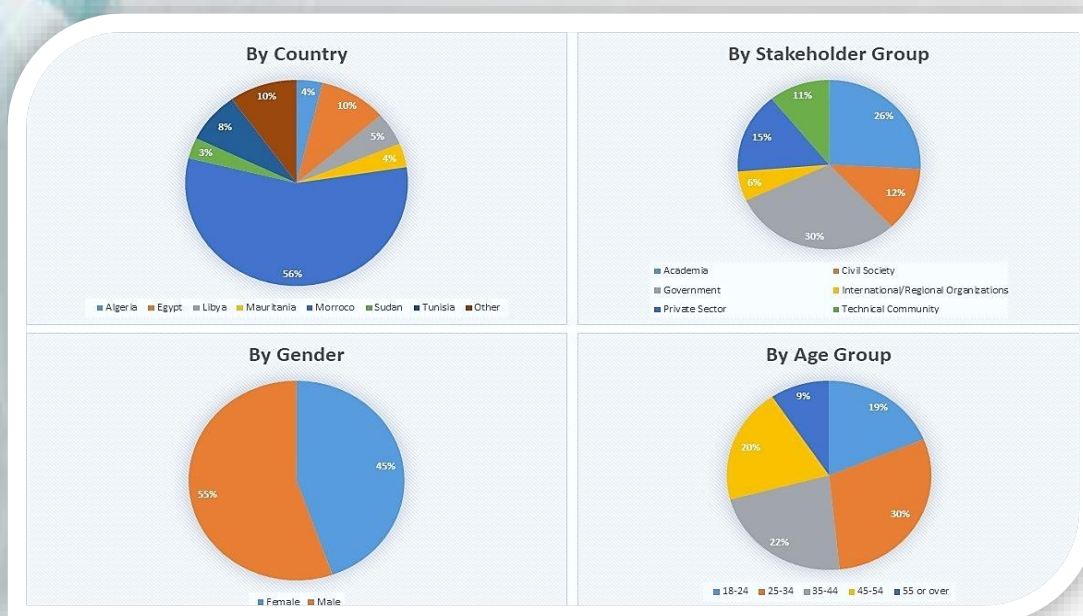

Mr. Brian Horlick-Cruz, Associate Program Officer at the ISOC Foundation, highlighted the Foundation's central role in supporting regional and national IGF initiatives. He emphasized its vital contribution to advancing the global internet governance track and strengthening the resilience and openness of the Internet. Mr. Horlick-Cruz reaffirmed the ISOC Foundation's long-standing commitment to supporting the activities, programs, and capacity-building initiatives of the Internet Governance Forum. He praised the Foundation's efforts to empower local communities, promote meaningful connectivity, and sustain multistakeholder engagement. He also commended the remarkable growth and institutional development of the North Africa IGF in recent years, noting that it has become a strong model for regional collaboration and a key contributor to the broader IGF ecosystem.

NAIGF-25 Participation Analysis:

The North Africa Internet Governance Forum (NAIGF-25) was attended by more than 210 participants physically and remotely from all stakeholders from governments, private sector, Academic, technicians, civil society international & regional organizations experts from bodies concerned about internet governance and information and digital policies. They contributed through their positive participation, engagement in discussions, and presenting diverse perspectives and point of views, enriching the NAIGF-25 sessions.

NAIGF-25 Agenda:

DAY 1: 24 November 2025

Time	Session
08:30 - 09:00	Registration and Badges
09:00 - 10:30	Opening Ceremony
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 - 12:30	Session-1 Global and Regional Internet Governance Processes
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 - 15:00	Session-2 Building a Trusted and Resilient Digital Environment
15:00 - 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 - 17:00	Session-3 Digital Governance in North Africa: A Parliamentarian Perspective

DAY 2: 25 November 2025

Time	Session
09:00 - 10:15	Session-4 Strengthening Digital Entrepreneurship and Startup Ecosystems
10:15 - 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 - 11:45	Session-5 Legal and Ethical Challenges of AI and Emerging Technologies
11:45 - 13:00	Session-6 Empowering Women Inclusion in Internet Governance
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 15:45	Session-7 Cross-Border Digital Trade and Economic Integration in North Africa
15:45 - 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 - 17:15	Session-8 Inclusion in the Digital Age: Bridging Social and Digital Gaps

DAY 3: 26 November 2025

Time	Session
09:00 - 10:15	Session-9 Greening the Digital Future: ICT Sustainability and Climate Innovation
10:15 - 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 - 11:45	Session-10 Social and Behavioral Dimensions of the Digital Reality
11:45 - 13:00	Session-11 Personal Data Protection in the Digital Age
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 15:15	Session-12 North Africa Youth IGF Track
15:15 - 15:45	Closing Remarks
15:45 - 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 - 17:00	NAIGF General Assembly

NAIGF-25 Messages:

The 9th Annual Meeting of the North Africa Internet Governance Forum, over three intensive days of work that included 12 rich sessions covering a wide range of Internet governance topics, with particular focus on the challenges and opportunities in the North African region. The NAIGF concluded its activities with a series of in-depth dialogues and constructive discussions that enriched knowledge and broadened avenues for cooperation.

Through the participation of distinguished panelists, experts, and policymakers, the NAIGF-25 provided a valuable platform for exchanging experiences and shedding light on pressing issues related to artificial intelligence, digital transformation, digital inclusion, data protection, cybersecurity, innovation, digital skills, and the role of women and youth in the Internet governance ecosystem. After the substantive and interactive discussions, we are pleased to share the key messages that emerged considered among the most important outcomes of the NAIGF-25, and serving as a roadmap supporting our vision for a more inclusive and sustainable digital future in North Africa.

1. **Enhancing regional cooperation** among North African countries to exchange best practices and coordinate efforts in digital policy and Internet sector regulation. With emphasis on the important and pivotal role of the NRIs IGFs.

2. **Advancing digital inclusion** through targeted initiatives for women, youth, and underserved groups, and working to close the digital gap in skills, access, and safe use of technology.

3. **Strengthening cybersecurity policies** and building national capacities to confront digital threats through legislative development, expanded training programs, and fostering innovation in cybersecurity solutions.

4. **Promoting an enabling environment** for digital innovation by supporting tech entrepreneurship, encouraging start-ups, and facilitating access to resources and knowledge.

5. **Developing policies and adopting mechanisms** that uphold user rights, safeguard personal data, and ensure the ethical and responsible use of technology.

6. **Reinforcing the multistakeholder approach** and enhancing collaboration among all stakeholders as a fundamental basis for effective, transparent, and accountable Internet governance.

7. **Empowering youth and strengthening their participation** in decision-making processes related to Internet governance, by supporting youth initiatives, ensuring sustainable spaces for dialogue and engagement, and building platforms that enable them to express their ideas and innovations as key drivers of the region's digital future.

8. **Increasing investment in digital capacity building** through specialized training programs and skills development that enable the people of North Africa to integrate into the global digital economy.

Session 1
Global and Regional Internet Governance Processes

Ahmed Farag · Anriette Esterhuysen · Afaf El Maayati · Christine Arida · Anja Gengo · Hossam El Gamal · Faycal Bayouli

The session examined global and regional Internet governance pathways at a time of rapid digital transformation and increasing challenges related to managing the digital space, ensuring security, and promoting equitable access. Discussions highlighted the relevance of the upcoming WSIS+20 review and the ongoing development of the Global Digital Compact, both of which hold particular importance for developing countries and the North Africa–Arab region.

Panelists reflected on progress achieved since the World Summit on the Information Society 2005, while acknowledging persistent gaps in digital infrastructure, capacity development, and inclusive participation in global policy processes. The need for stronger regional engagement was emphasized, especially to ensure that the region's priorities are effectively represented in international fora.

Key challenges identified included the widening digital divide, limited technical and institutional readiness in several countries, imbalanced global representation, and divergent national priorities that hinder unified regional positions. The strategic role of the NRI IGFs was underscored, stressed on the importance of enhancing the regional and global cooperation, developing interoperable national policies, strengthening regional coordination, and promoting a multi-stakeholder approach as the foundation of effective digital governance. Participants also highlighted the need for clearer mechanisms to ensure coherent dialogue within the IGF process, and include complementary, distinct governance tracks for AI and data.

Overall, discussions reaffirmed that while significant challenges remain, the opportunities for inclusive and sustainable digital development are substantial. Advancing a secure, open, and equitable digital environment will require continued collaboration among all stakeholders and sustained regional commitment to shaping global digital policy.

Session 2
Building a Trusted and Resilient Digital Environment

Mohamed Farahat — Lawyer, Legal, Egypt, Al Consultant

Fahd Batayneh — Stakeholder Engagement Director, Middle East, ICANN

Nour Eddine Lasfar — Head of Digital Transformation Department, ANRT

Mohamed Hegazy — Senior Legal Consultant

Tatevik Grigoryan — Associate Digital Programme, UNESCO

Abdurraouf Elbibas — Advisor, General Authority for Information

The session provided a comprehensive overview of the key elements required to build a trusted and resilient digital environment in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. Participants highlighted that emerging technologies are accelerating digital transformation but simultaneously creating complex challenges that require updated legal frameworks, strong governance structures, and sustained capacity building.

Discussions emphasized the importance of developing coherent national strategies that reinforce digital resilience through effective IT governance, cybersecurity readiness, public awareness, and cross-border cooperation. The role of political commitment was underscored as essential for ensuring a safe digital space, fostering stakeholder trust, and enabling long-term digital policies supported by regulatory mechanisms capable of testing and evaluating new technologies.

International and technical organizations stressed the need for collaborative, multistakeholder approaches to support countries in strengthening their digital ecosystems. The session also recognized the critical role of civil society in promoting transparency, reducing the digital divide, and ensuring inclusive participation in the digital transformation process.

Key considerations included the growing impact of artificial intelligence, the need for structured data governance, and the importance of investing in human resources. While global harmonization of digital policies remains unrealistic, participants agreed that each country must develop its own model based on its infrastructure, resources, and cybersecurity posture.

The session concluded that achieving digital trust and resilience requires coordinated action across all stakeholders—governments, technical bodies, international organizations, and communities—to address legal, technical, and societal challenges and ensure a secure, inclusive, and future-ready digital environment.

Session 3
Digital Governance in North Africa: A Parliamentarian Perspective

Sana Haddad
Head of Division for Digitalisation of the Administrative Support

Maha Abdel Naser
Member of Parliament, Egypt

Anouar Sabri
Member of Parliament, Morocco

Asma Mahmoud
Member of Parliament, Libya

Anja Gengo
Digital Policy & Regulation, UN Secretariat IGF

The session examined the essential role of parliaments in shaping digital governance across North Africa. Discussions highlighted that parliamentarians are key actors in establishing legal and regulatory frameworks that support secure, inclusive, and innovation-friendly digital transformation. Their responsibilities include legislating, overseeing implementation, safeguarding citizens' rights, and ensuring that national strategies reflect societal needs and cultural contexts.

Panelists emphasized that parliaments play a decisive role in establishing the legal and regulatory foundations needed for secure, inclusive, and innovation-friendly digital ecosystems. Their responsibilities extend to policymaking, oversight, budget allocation, and ensuring that digital transformation aligns with human rights principles—particularly privacy, data protection, and access to information. The session noted that legislators act as intermediaries between citizens and institutions, ensuring that national strategies are both relevant and socially grounded. In addition to the need for modern, technology-neutral legislative frameworks capable of addressing data protection, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, digital identity, and e-commerce. Although laws exist in many countries, their implementation often faces operational, technical, or procedural challenges. Participants stressed the need to update such laws, adapt them to local realities, and consider vulnerable groups who may face online risks such as harassment or exclusion.

The session also highlighted challenges such as limited technical expertise within parliaments and lengthy law-making procedures. Strengthening capacity building, improving access to expert advice. A proposal to establish a North African Parliamentarians Network for Digital Governance was welcomed to ensure that parliamentary perspectives are integrated into broader digital governance discussions and foster sustained cooperation with the NAIGF community.

Overall, the session reaffirmed that effective digital governance requires proactive, informed, and collaborative parliamentary engagement. Legislators must anticipate technological developments, uphold democratic values, and work closely with experts and stakeholders to develop coherent, context-appropriate digital policies that protect citizens and support inclusive digital transformation throughout the region.

Session 4
Strengthening Digital Entrepreneurship and Startup Ecosystems

Ahlal Hadea
Vice chair, Libyan Internet Society

Shahir Boushra
Board member and Secretary General, EITESAL

Wafa Dahmani
Stakeholder Manager, Afrinic

Khadijetou El Hoda
Director of Modernization of administration of PTdani

Driss Lemjaouri
Director of Ecosystems and Digital Entrepreneurship, MTISM

The session examined how to develop vibrant, inclusive, and resilient digital entrepreneurship ecosystems capable of driving innovation and job creation across emerging markets, particularly in North Africa. The panelists highlighted the key enablers of strong ecosystems, including robust digital infrastructure, accessible financing mechanisms, and predictable, innovation-friendly regulatory frameworks. They also discussed major barriers limiting startup growth, such as scarce early-stage funding, limited access to regional and global markets, and persistent digital skills gaps within the workforce.

Panelists shared number of best practices from regional and international experiences, showing how policies such as startup acts, regulatory sandboxes, and public–private partnerships can support innovation and strengthen competitiveness. They emphasized the crucial role of incubators, accelerators, and innovation hubs in providing mentorship, capacity building, and investor networks that help early-stage ventures scale. The discussion also stressed the importance of empowering youth and women entrepreneurs by offering targeted financing, skills development programs, and inclusive digital spaces.

Another key theme was the need for stronger regional collaboration. Harmonizing regulations, promoting digital trade, and facilitating cross-border cooperation were identified as essential steps to help startups expand beyond domestic markets. Audience contributions further highlighted the value of improving education systems to align with digital economy needs and strengthening cooperation among governments, academia, private sector actors, and development partners.

Overall, the session underscored that building sustainable digital entrepreneurship ecosystems requires a coordinated multistakeholder effort, combining supportive policies, investment in people and infrastructure, and regional collaboration to unlock the full potential of digital innovation in North Africa and beyond.

Session 5
Legal and Ethical Challenges of AI and Emerging Technologies

Khaled Gulam
Director of Media Department

Mohamed Farahat
Lawyer, Legal, IG and IG Consultant

Aroua Hdhili
PhD-Senior Software Engineering & AI Consultant

Hatim Mouradi
MTN SA

Armin Ibrisimovic
UNSCO

The session explored the growing legal and ethical challenges surrounding the deployment of artificial intelligence as it becomes increasingly embedded in decision-making across governments, businesses, and essential public services. Panelists emphasized that while AI offers significant opportunities for efficiency and innovation, current legal frameworks remain insufficient to address questions of accountability, liability, and the protection of fundamental rights. Key gaps exist in clarifying who is responsible when AI systems make harmful or incorrect decisions, how data used to train algorithms is governed, and how citizens can access remedies when affected by automated processes.

The discussion was the persistence of algorithmic bias and discrimination, especially when AI systems are trained on incomplete or non-representative data. Panelists stressed the need for organizations to adopt rigorous testing, auditing, and transparency practices to ensure fairness and detect harmful outcomes early. They also highlighted the importance of ensuring that both users and regulators understand how AI reaches certain decisions—as a cornerstone of ethical and trustworthy AI systems. The session included national regulatory updates, regional harmonization efforts, and the potential for global principles that encourage safe innovation while protecting rights. Panelists pointed to regulatory sandboxes, risk-based frameworks, and cross-border cooperation as promising approaches to balance flexibility with oversight.

The session also underscored the broader societal implications of AI, including its impact on labor markets, democratic participation, human autonomy, and access to essential services such as healthcare and justice. The meaningful public engagement, digital literacy, and raising awareness are essential to ensure that AI development aligns with societal values. Strengthening the importance of collaboration among all stakeholders for fostering responsible innovation and ensuring that ethical guidelines translate into practical action.

Overall, the session highlighted the urgent need for coherent legal frameworks, ethical safeguards, and inclusive dialogue to guide AI deployment. It concluded that responsible AI governance requires a multistakeholder, coordinated effort that promotes innovation while protecting people, rights, and public trust.

Session 6
Empowering Women Inclusion in Internet Governance

Amira Zakaria — Senior Specialist, International Cooperation, NTRA

Salma Tazi — Director of Cloud Infrastructure and Outsourcing, MTDS

Christine Arida — Strategic advisor to the NTRA executive president

Anja Gengo — Digital Policy & Regulation, UN Secretariat IGF

Maha Abdel Naser — Member of Parliament, Egypt

The session addressed the persistent digital gender gap and explored practical pathways to promote the meaningful inclusion of women in Internet governance and the digital economy. Discussions focused on access to technology, digital skills, participation in digital markets, policy frameworks, and the creation of safe and inclusive online environments, with attention to regional and national contexts.

At the global level, participants noted that the digital gender gap remains a major challenge. Despite improved connectivity, women continue to face lower access to the Internet and digital devices, fewer opportunities to acquire advanced digital skills, and limited participation in the digital economy. The session emphasized that sustainable inclusion depends on strong, long-term multi-stakeholder partnerships to align policies, mobilize resources, expand digital infrastructure, and deliver effective capacity-building initiatives for women and girls. From a regional perspective, discussions examined key contributing factors, including affordability constraints, unequal access to quality education, limited digital literacy programs, and structural labor market barriers. These challenges limit women's ability to access digital tools and convert skills into economic opportunities. Public policies and national initiatives—such as broadband expansion, digital skills development, support for women's entrepreneurship, and gender-responsive digital strategies were highlighted as essential enablers of inclusion.

The session further explored how inclusive policy reforms and gender-responsive governance can enhance women's digital inclusion and equitable access to digital tools. The relevance of the WSIS+20 process was underscored as a global framework for advancing inclusive, people-centered information societies and reinforcing commitments to gender equality. Participants also addressed the growing challenge of digital violence against women and girls, emphasizing the need for comprehensive, rights-based approaches to ensure safe and ethical online environments. The session concluded by highlighting successful initiatives that promote girls' engagement in technology and ICT fields, and by stressing the importance of strengthening women's digital leadership and participation in Internet governance at all levels as a foundation for inclusive and sustainable digital transformation.

Session 7
Cross-Border Digital Trade and Economic Integration in North Africa

Karl U. Stanzick
CEO, AWPN

Belaid Nouar
HEAD OF THE Regional station
Division, INTERG

Shahir Boushra
General contact and secretary General
INTERG

Hossam El Gamal
Former CHAIRMAN, APCTA
Member IGF MAG

The session examined the growing importance of digital trade as a catalyst for regional economic integration and sustainable economic development. Participants highlighted that the acceleration of digital transformation across North African countries presents significant opportunities to strengthen intra-regional trade, enhance competitiveness, and improve the region's positioning within the global digital economy. Discussions focused on the key enablers of cross-border digital trade, including reliable digital infrastructure, interoperable digital systems, trusted digital payment solutions, and coherent regulatory frameworks. At the same time, participants identified persistent challenges such as fragmented regulatory environments, data localization requirements, limited interoperability, regulatory uncertainty, and obstacles related to cross-border digital payments. These challenges continue to increase transaction costs and limit the effective participation of businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, in regional digital markets.

The session emphasized the importance of harmonizing digital trade-related policies across North Africa to build trust, reduce regulatory complexity, and facilitate seamless cross-border transactions. Greater alignment of e-commerce regulations, data protection frameworks, consumer protection measures, and digital taxation policies was considered essential for creating a predictable and enabling environment for digital trade. Participants also underscored the role of regional and continental trade agreements in advancing digital economic integration and supporting coordinated policy approaches.

Fintech innovation and interoperable digital payment systems were identified as critical drivers of cross-border commerce. Expanding access to secure, affordable, and efficient digital financial services was highlighted as a priority for supporting SMEs, startups, and informal businesses. In parallel, sustained investment in cross-border digital infrastructure, including broadband connectivity, data centers, and cloud services, was recognized as fundamental to scaling digital trade and strengthening regional innovation ecosystems. Ensuring inclusive participation in digital trade was a central theme of the discussion. Participants stressed the need for targeted capacity-building initiatives and supportive policies to empower SMEs, youth, and women entrepreneurs to engage effectively in cross-border digital markets. The session concluded that advancing cross-border digital trade in North Africa will require coordinated policy action, regulatory harmonization, strategic infrastructure investment, and strong multi-stakeholder collaboration among all stakeholders, with the goal of advancing toward a more integrated and inclusive regional digital market.

Session 8
Inclusion in the Digital Age: Bridging Social and Digital Gaps

The session examined how digital transformation can advance social inclusion and empower all segments of society. Participants highlighted that, despite rapid technological progress, persistent digital divides continue to exclude many individuals and communities from the benefits of digitalization. These divides are driven by unequal access to affordable and reliable connectivity, limited digital literacy and skills, socioeconomic disparities, gender inequalities, and geographic differences, particularly between urban and rural areas.

The discussion emphasized that achieving meaningful digital inclusion requires both policy and investment interventions. Expanding affordable broadband access, ensuring universal connectivity, and developing inclusive digital infrastructure were identified as key priorities. Participants also stressed that digital skills development is a fundamental enabler of inclusion, empowering women, youth, rural communities, and other marginalized groups to participate effectively in the digital economy. Targeted capacity-building initiatives, tailored to local contexts and specific population needs, were seen as essential for reducing social and digital gaps simultaneously. Gender and rural–urban disparities were a recurrent theme in the session. Panelists discussed strategies for closing these gaps through inclusive policy design, community-based programs, and gender-responsive approaches. Addressing these inequalities not only promotes equitable access to digital opportunities but also enhances social cohesion and economic participation at the regional and national levels.

The session also highlighted the importance of fostering cross-sector and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Governments, private sector actors, civil society, academia, and local communities were all identified as critical partners in creating equitable digital ecosystems. Collaborative efforts were seen as necessary for developing inclusive infrastructure, promoting meaningful connectivity, implementing equitable digital policies, and supporting innovation that benefits all societal groups. Participants shared examples of both regional and global initiatives that successfully combined digital inclusion with broader social development agendas. Concluding the discussion, participants emphasized that embedding inclusion at the center of digital transformation is crucial to ensuring that no one is left behind, with coordinated policy action, sustained investment in connectivity and digital skills, gender-sensitive strategies, and strong multi-stakeholder partnerships are essential to achieve a digitally inclusive society.

Session 9
Greening the Digital Future: ICT Sustainability and Climate Innovation

Amged Shwehdy
Houda CHIHI
Abdessamad Moutel
Raied gheblawi
Rhita Benotmane

The session on Greening the Digital Future: ICT Sustainability and Climate Innovation explored the intersection of digital technologies and environmental sustainability, focusing on how ICT can contribute to climate action and the transition to a low-carbon economy. Participants emphasized the dual challenge of reducing the environmental footprint of digital infrastructure while leveraging digital innovation to drive sustainability across key sectors, including energy, agriculture, transportation, and urban planning. Discussions highlighted the environmental impacts of ICT, such as energy consumption, carbon emissions, and electronic waste, and examined strategies to mitigate these effects. Participants stressed the importance of energy-efficient ICT infrastructure, sustainable data management, and the adoption of circular economy approaches in the production, consumption, and disposal of electronic equipment. Best practices for e-waste management, recycling, and reuse were shared as effective measures to reduce the ecological impact of digital technologies.

The session also focused on the potential of digital innovation—such as artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, and big data analytics—to support climate monitoring, mitigation, and adaptation efforts. Examples included using ICT for environmental monitoring, predictive modeling, resource optimization, and resilience building, highlighting the transformative role of technology in achieving sustainability goals. Policy frameworks, regulatory measures, and multi-stakeholder collaboration were identified as critical enablers for green digital transformation. Participants emphasized the need for coordinated efforts among governments, industry, civil society, and regional organizations to develop standards, incentives, and partnerships that promote sustainable ICT practices. Sustainable financing was also highlighted as a key mechanism to accelerate investment in low-carbon technologies, energy-efficient infrastructure, and innovative climate solutions.

The session concluded that greening the digital future requires a holistic approach that integrates environmental objectives into digital strategies, fosters innovation for sustainability, and encourages inclusive collaboration. By prioritizing eco-friendly ICT practices and leveraging digital tools for climate action, stakeholders can ensure that digital transformation contributes not only to economic growth but also to environmental resilience and sustainable development.

Session 10
Social and Behavioral Dimensions of the Digital Reality

Wafa Dahmani · Ahmed Farag · Leila Mnekbi · Mourad Bial · Salma Karim

The session on Social and Behavioral Dimensions of Digital Reality addressed the complex impacts of digital technologies on mental health and social behavior, focusing on both positive and negative aspects. Discussions highlighted the psychological effects of excessive digital use, including anxiety, depression, social isolation, and sleep disruption. The session clarified how to distinguish heavy usage from digital addiction through indicators such as loss of control, impact on daily life, and escapism.

Strategies for supporting mental health in digital environments were explored, including awareness programs, time management, psychological interventions, and the use of educational and constructive online platforms. The session examined youth behavioral patterns online, emphasizing positive behaviors such as collaboration, learning, self-expression, and civic engagement, alongside negative patterns like social withdrawal, cyberbullying, and excessive gaming or social media use. The discussion also considered how online interactions influence real-life social skills and interpersonal communication.

Digital identity was another key topic, discussed as a tool for positive self-expression and privacy protection. Risks such as impersonation and misuse were addressed, and the role of digital platforms in promoting responsible online behavior was highlighted. The session also defined cyberbullying, reviewed its prevalent forms, and explored technical, legal, and community-based measures to combat it, emphasizing the involvement of families and schools.

Finally, participants stressed the importance of digital literacy in shaping responsible online behavior and explored challenges in legislation to address addiction and cyberbullying while maintaining freedom of expression. The session concluded with recommendations to implement integrated programs combining awareness, psychological support, legal frameworks, and stakeholder engagement, and to incorporate digital well-being into national policies and educational initiatives to ensure a safe and balanced digital environment for all users.

Session 11
Personal Data Protection in the Digital Age

Mohamed Farahat
Rachid Moutaraiji
Mohamed Hegazy
Martin Koyabe
Abdurraouf Elbibas

The session provided a comprehensive overview of the current state of data governance and protection laws across the MENA region, addressing both the opportunities and challenges in safeguarding personal information. Speakers highlighted the concerns of internet users including individuals, institutions, companies, and states regarding illegitimate collection, storage, transfer, and processing of personal data. Emphasis the importance of protecting users' rights and interests while promoting digital sovereignty, which has become a critical topic in regional and global Internet governance discussions.

Panelists examined how existing data protection frameworks in North Africa and the broader MENA region align with global standards such as the GDPR, noting legislative gaps, enforcement challenges, and limitations in institutional capacity. The discussion included strategies for strengthening compliance and accountability in data processing, supported by lessons from successful regional and international case studies that demonstrate effective data governance practices. Speakers also explored the role of public–private partnerships in enhancing the implementation of robust data protection frameworks, emphasizing collaboration between governments, the private sector, and civil society to ensure broader adoption of best practices. The session further explored the contribution of innovative technologies, including artificial intelligence and blockchain, in enabling safer, more transparent, and efficient data management systems. The potential for regional collaboration among MENA countries to harmonize policies and standards was highlighted, along with the need to anticipate emerging trends that will shape the future of data governance, privacy frameworks, and regulatory oversight in the region. Civil society's role was underscored as vital for raising awareness, advocating for stronger data protection measures, and educating users about their rights and the safe use of digital services.

Concluding discussions focused on achieving a balance between promoting data-driven innovations and protecting individual privacy, emphasizing the necessity of comprehensive legal, technical, and institutional measures. Recommendations included enhancing regulatory frameworks, building institutional capacity, encouraging cross-sector collaboration, and integrating privacy-by-design principles into organizational practices. The session underscored that effective data protection is not only a legal obligation but also a cornerstone of trust, digital sovereignty, and sustainable development in the digital age.

Session 12
North Africa Youth IGF Track

Zahra Kodia — MAN.E.J.E

Karim Tazi — Minister Minister's Cabinet, MTNRA

Amira Zakaria — Senior Specialist, International Organization, RTRA

Souad Abidi — MAN.E.J5

Shady Hamed — NAIGF MAG Member, ISOC ITU/Amalgel, Fintech

The North Africa Youth IGF Track focused on the pivotal role of youth in shaping internet governance (IG) policies and practices within the region. It provided a platform for young leaders to present their initiatives, projects, and contributions while discussing the challenges they face in participating effectively in decision-making processes. The session aimed to empower, educate, and mobilize North African youth, ensuring their perspectives are central to shaping the digital future of the region.

Discussions highlighted current youth-led initiatives in internet governance, including advocacy efforts, policy contributions, and community engagement projects. Successful examples of youth influence on policy changes and digital inclusion programs were presented, showcasing the tangible impact of young leaders in advancing

regional digital agendas. Participants examined structural, institutional, and educational barriers limiting youth participation, such as limited access to resources, underrepresentation in policymaking forums, and gaps in training and capacity-building opportunities. Strategies to bridge the gap between youth and policymakers were explored, focusing on enhancing dialogue, creating more inclusive IG spaces, and ensuring that young voices are meaningfully considered in policy formulation.

The session also emphasized the importance of regional collaboration and networking among youth. Participants discussed opportunities for mentorship, resource-sharing, and joint projects to foster cooperation and collective action in addressing IG challenges. The discussion highlighted the role of partnerships between youth, civil society, and the private sector in nurturing innovation, advocacy, and sustainable engagement in digital policy spaces.

Concluding discussions focused on future directions and empowerment, identifying strategies to strengthen youth leadership and representation in internet governance. Recommendations included expanding platforms for youth participation, investing in education and capacity-building initiatives, and promoting regional networks to ensure long-term engagement. The session underscored that the active involvement of youth is essential for inclusive, innovative, and sustainable internet governance in North Africa.

NAIGF-25 Closing Session:

Ms. Salma Tazi, Director of Cloud Infrastructures and Outsourcing at the Ministry of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform of the Kingdom of Morocco, expressed her profound satisfaction with the overwhelming success of the North Africa Internet Governance Forum (NAIGF-25). She extended heartfelt gratitude to all stakeholders, partners, and participants whose dedication and collaborative efforts contributed to the realization of this landmark event. Ms. Tazi emphasized that NAIGF-25 exemplifies the power of collective collaboration, innovation, and knowledge sharing in shaping the digital future of the region. She further highlighted the Ministry's eagerness to host future editions of the Forum, reaffirming its unwavering commitment to fostering an inclusive, responsible, and sustainable digital transformation across North Africa.

Echoing these sentiments, **Mr. Ahmed Farag**, Chair of the North Africa Internet Governance Forum, expressed deep appreciation to the Ministry of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform for their gracious hosting, leadership, and pivotal role in preparing and organizing the event. He commended the North Africa IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) and the Digital Agency of the State in Mauritania (NAIGF Secretariat) for their tireless dedication, meticulous planning, and exceptional efforts in ensuring the Forum's smooth execution. Mr. Farag also extended special recognition to the Forum's sponsors, whose invaluable support was instrumental in bringing NAIGF-25 to fruition.

Furthermore, Mr. Farag acknowledged the significant contributions of all participating experts, both onsite and online, whose insights, expertise, and engagement enriched the discussions, stimulated critical thinking, and fostered dynamic, inclusive exchanges among attendees. Their active participation and knowledge sharing helped address key regional challenges in digital governance, including policy harmonization, digital inclusion, cybersecurity, and emerging technologies.

NAIGF-25 stands as a milestone in regional digital governance, reflecting a shared vision for a digitally empowered North Africa. NAIGF not only facilitated meaningful dialogue and networking among all stakeholders, but also strengthened regional cooperation, capacity building, and the collective commitment to an inclusive, transparent, and sustainable digital ecosystem.

North Africa Internet Governance Forum (NAIGF-25)

Royaume du Maroc

Chef du Gouvernement
Ministère de la Transition Numérique
et de la Réforme de l'Administration

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