

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

     @ParadigmHQ

APRIL- JUNE 2021



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- PIN hosts Multi-cultural Festival
- LIFE in Senegal
- Stakeholders seek passage of Data Protection Bill to strengthen NDPR
- Regional Updates on the State of Digital Rights
- Zambia and Tanzania Stakeholders Convening on Digital Rights Legislation

Expanding into new regions

In Nigeria, we covered more milestones in extending our digital inclusion work into new states and regions in the country.



Data protection Workshops

PIN hosted 2 data protection workshops.

DRIF21 (Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum 2021)

Despite ongoing restrictions across PIN locations due to the pandemic, the second quarter of the year was packed with impactful activities kick-started with DRIF (Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum). April at PIN is called the DRIF month and this year it lived up to its billing with month-long activities. Making up for last year's cancellation, the flagship event witnessed a new facelift to an even more pan-African event hosted over 18 days and within 10 African countries, by far the most challenging, exciting, and innovative DRIF.

Twitter ban Engagement

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This Quarter at PIN



Community Management:

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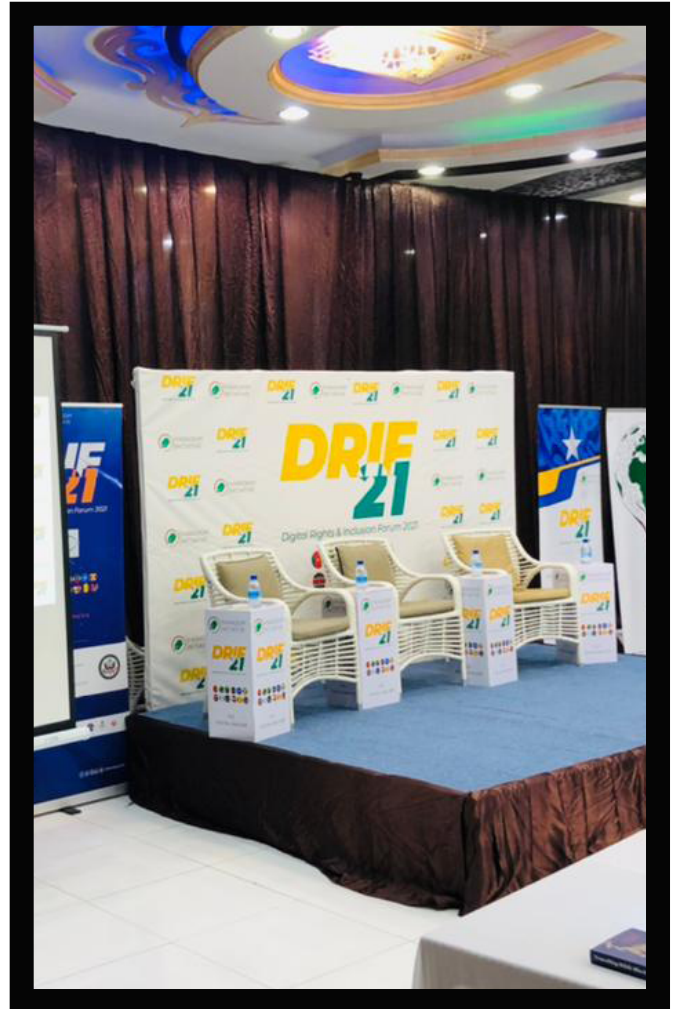


Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum 2021 (DRIF21) a Complete Success Amidst Covid - 19

The 8th edition of the Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum held from April 12 - 30, 2021 and was hosted virtually, and physically in 10 countries - Cameroon, Chad, Namibia, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. 445 attendees across 42 countries engaged in robust conversations on digital rights and inclusion in Africa. The forum commenced with a keynote address delivered by PIN's Executive Director who welcomed the attendees to the hybrid multi-country digital festival.

DRIF21 attracted diverse members of civil society, the technical community, academia, government, and the private sector for shared engagements. In-country sessions were hosted in partnership with the Consortium of Ethiopian Human Rights Organisations (CEHRO), Conseil des Panafricanistes du Tchad, Digital Foundation of Namibia, Digital Human Rights Lab, Digital Shelter, Internet Society Chad Chapter, Koneta Initiative, and Zaina Foundation.

On the [agenda](#) were sessions unpacking digital inclusion for marginalised communities, innovations in assistive technologies for persons with disabilities, strategies for tackling internet disruptions in Africa, and promotion of media freedom through litigation and advocacy. Rich discussions on digital health for children, artificial intelligence, digital identity, digital security,



building networks, and communities of practice in digital rights work kept the DRIF21 community engaged throughout the forum.

Impactful sessions were hosted by new DRIF hosts such as Digital Age Conversations and Africa Internet Rights Alliance while regular partners like Facebook and CIPESA engaged participants on diverse issues such as content moderation and advancing digital rights advocacy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The forum provided a platform for networking and formulation of solutions for improving the digital ecosystem. Some key delegates who made opening remarks at DRIF21 were the European Ambassador to Namibia and the Minister of Communications and Technology in Somalia, H.E Abdi Sheikh Ahmed.

DRIF21 in Pictures



RIPOTI



Report Digital Violations Through Ripoti

(30 April 2021) – RIPOTI, a groundbreaking new platform for the protection of the digital rights of all African citizens was launched during the closing session of the Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum 2021. Ripoti allows citizens across Africa to report violations of their digital rights, then connects them with experts who can help them seek justice.]

"Digital rights are just as fundamental as all other human rights," said 'Gbenga Sesan, Paradigm Initiative's Executive Director, "We have seen a worrying increase in digital rights violations across Africa. Until now, citizens have had no easy way to protect their rights by tracking and reporting these violations. Ripoti empowers them to do that."

Despite the internet being a critical space for economic activity, access to emergency services, the exercise of freedom of speech and freedom of the press, there are growing instances of cyberbullying, online gender violence, internet censorship, and the illegal accessing of internet users' information, a trend emboldened by health surveillance during the pandemic.

"For many years, Paradigm Initiative has actively documented cases of digital rights violations and offered litigation support to victims," said Boye Adegoke, PIN's Senior Program Manager, "Eventually, we started to get overwhelmed by the number of violations we had to monitor. It became clear that we needed to create a communal, strategic, and systemic response to these many incidents of digital rights violations. RIPOTI is the answer, and we're excited to share it with the rest of Africa."

RIPOTI is a Swahili word that means "report." The platform was conceived as an easy way for individuals, organizations, and others to report cases of digital rights violations that they experience, witness, or that are reported to them. RIPOTI allows for a community response to these cases. It is available in both English and French. RIPOTI was developed in partnership with the Omidyar Network and the Netherlands Embassy.

Visit ripoti.africa to make a report or learn more.



Londa



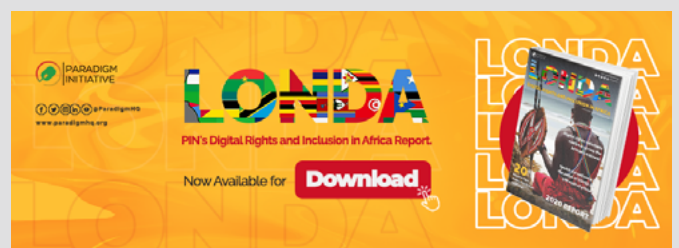
PIN launches LONDA to Secure Digital Rights and Inclusion in Africa

During the Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum 2021, there was a continuing call to secure the digital space and delegates were urged to harness expertise across and defend digital rights. Londa, Paradigm Initiative's annual report on the state of digital rights and inclusion in Africa echoes this call for the collective work of stakeholders to protect the digital rights environment in Africa.

With reports from 20 countries, this edition captures among other issues, the digital divide worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic and unearths infractions on different thematic areas such as privacy, access to information, and freedom of expression with the legislative and policy background well enunciated. In addition to a series of individual country reports, Londa is available in English, French, and Swahili.

Londa is an advocacy tool for engaging with different stakeholders in the reported countries, serves as a yardstick for measuring performance, and provides critical recommendations for improving the digital space.

Visit londa.africa to make a report or learn more.



AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH - FRENCH - SWAHILI





Your Digital Rights Toolkit



Developed as a 2020 Stanford Digital Civil Society Fellowship project, with additional support from the Netherlands Human Rights Fund, Ayeta toolkit is designed with the overarching aim of addressing the growing need to safeguard digital rights defenders, journalists, whistleblowers, and others working with sensitive information in the global South.

The toolkit provides digital security tips, measures to be taken against potential threats, and includes detailed information about digital security actors. Ayeta features a calendar of relevant digital rights events in Africa, links to resources such as digital security case studies from selected African countries, model policy briefs, media releases, and model coalition statements. Additionally, Ayeta has incorporated the element of gamification as an opportunity to lower the learning curve.

Visit ayeta.africa to download the toolkit, play games and more.

Policy Brief: Women's Rights Online

Paradigm Initiative concluded activities on the Women's Rights Online project undertaken in partnership with Web Foundation. Through this partnership, PIN authored a policy brief on '[Online Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria during COVID-19](#)', convened two stakeholder engagements with key policymakers, civil society and media. In addition, the project hosted a session at #DRIF21 titled "Putting Gender and Human rights first in the digital age" and participated in a workshop on Gender Research Methodology organised by Web Foundation.



PIN's Project on Artificial Intelligence

We launched a flagship project on Artificial Intelligence which seeks to shape conversations with stakeholders and influence the consideration of human rights in Artificial Intelligence (AI) processes and policy formulation in Africa - at both national and regional levels. The project which focuses on Kenya, Nigeria, and Senegal will target stakeholders from civil society organisations, technical communities, business entities rolling out the technology, and policymakers in the relevant government ministries responsible for Information and Communication Technologies.

Digital Inclusion:

We are now in Senegal

PIN has a brand new location in Senegal! As part of ongoing efforts to expand our operations in the digital inclusion sector, we welcomed a new Senior Program Officer to oversee our interventions in Senegal and Francophone West Africa. In partnership with ISOC (Internet Society), activities for the implementation of the LIFE program in Thies, Senegal are underway. A second baseline study is ongoing to identify the digital literacy level of young people in the community, relevant stakeholders and post-engagement opportunities for participants.

Dufuna

Dufuna maintained its partnerships with Swahilipot Hub in Kenya, BongoHive Consult in Zambia, Makerere Innovation and Incubation Centre (MIIC) in Uganda, and Mzuzu E-Hub in Malawi while a partnership with the National Financial Literacy Association in South Africa is being explored.

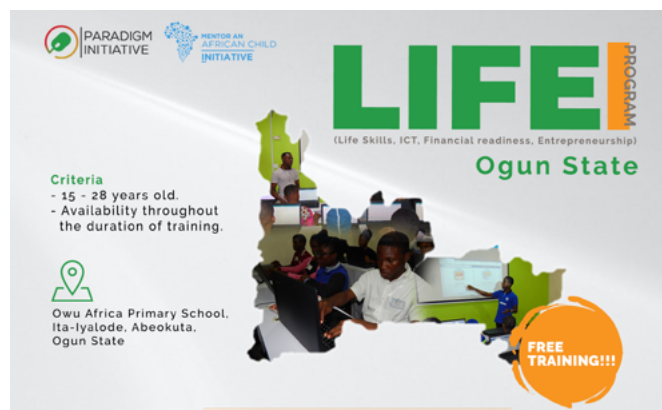
For the second quarter, 16 Dufuna scholars secured internships, contract roles, and full-time employment. We had contract placements for Product Design and Code Camp students with 4 Small Medium-Sized companies and successfully trained 39 students in the Dufuna Design School in June. From our Codecamps, we graduated 36 students from Dufuna-Fem, a female-focused program that encourages and trains women who want to pursue a career in tech. The Codecamp by UK-Nigeria Tech Hub graduated 15 students, and the Dufuna Codecamp program graduated 1 student.

LIFE Program Extends to New Regions in Nigeria

The LIFE program (Life Skills, ICTs, Financial literacy, and Entrepreneurship) also extended to Ogun state, in Southwest Nigeria where we partnered with Mentor an African Child Initiative (MACI) to train the first set of participants. We are working to implement the program with other interested organizations in Delta, Gombe, Kebbi,

and Rivers states.

Paradigm Initiative joined the [World Benchmarking Alliance](#), a movement representing organizations working at global, regional, and local levels to shape the private sector's contributions to achieving the SDGs - Partnerships for the Goals. We will be working with other [organizations](#) to tackle issues around digital inclusion.



Digital Rights

Anglophone West Africa



Request for transparency reports

Paradigm Initiative requested transparency reports from Telecommunications companies such as MTN, GLOBACOM, AIRTEL, ETISALAT following the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) under Pillar II and III for businesses to make a public commitment to respect human rights, carry out human rights due diligence, and provide the necessary and proportionate remedy when human rights are at stake. Although our letters were received and acknowledged, no further communication or commitment has been received from the telcos. We will continue to pursue these engagements to ensure that business and human rights are respected in the tech sector.

Twitter ban Engagement

In June, the Nigerian government announced a suspension of Twitter operations in Nigeria. This suspension can be viewed as a partial internet shutdown that has led to the abuse of many rights including freedom of expression and access to information. Following the ban, Paradigm Initiative in collaboration with 7 other individuals and organizations instituted an

action in the ECOWAS court opposing the legality of the ban. We also filed a fundamental Rights Action in the Federal High Court in Abuja on the Nigerian Twitter ban as a brazen abuse of the rights to freedom of expression, freedom to associate and assemble, and access to information.

Additionally, we educated the public on ways to access the internet during a shutdown using circumvention tools such as VPN and this has allowed more people to access Twitter. We also put out a statement, and in collaboration with other organizations, wrote an open letter to the government. We continue to have educational media engagements and debates on the matter.

Digital Identity Stakeholder Roundtables

Paradigm Initiative held a two-day round table workshop in Kano and Lagos on June 2nd and 9th with government authorities to discuss the stakes of digital Identity in the country, allowing them to explain their processes and safeguards for more accurate public accountability. With the internet and technology being increasingly integrated

into our everyday lives, more governments seek to create unique digital identities for their citizenry. The two-day event brought together experts within the digital ecosystem in an interactive exchange session and ended with the socialization of the hashtag #PassDataProtectionBill.

IMEI policy engagement.

Paradigm Initiative engaged with a policy directive requiring mobile IMEI numbers from telecom providers which has serious privacy and security implications. We sent freedom of information requests to the National Communications Commission (NCC) and the Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy on the legality of the policy and the impact assessment taken on the potential human rights breaches of these policies. We also held a Twitter spaces conversation on the policy, educating the public on its possible effects.

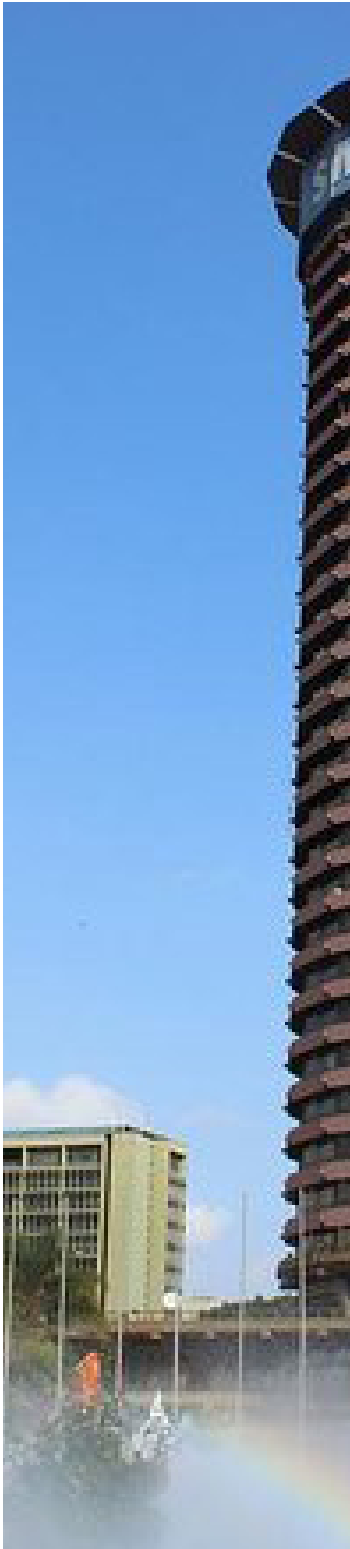


Data protection Workshops

PIN hosted 2 data protection workshops in Kano and Lagos, Nigeria, for Civil Society, individuals, the press, and members of academia. Paradigm Initiative highlighted the need for data protection in the era of digitization, how much data is constantly being collected and the high risk it poses without a requisite data protection law. Paradigm Initiative and its partner organizations called for the passing of the long-overdue legislation on Data protection.



East Africa



PIN Website Now Available in Kiswahili

We are pleased to announce that our website can now be accessed in Kiswahili. With these new language options, individuals from Kiswahili-speaking countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo can now access information in a language that they are more familiar with. You can check the PIN Kiswahili website version simply by clicking on this [link](#). It's important to note that you can now navigate PIN's website in English, French, and Swahili.

Data Protection Regulations for Kenya

The Ministry of ICT and the Office of the Data Commissioner published a Draft Data Protection Regulations, and Paradigm Initiative made comments in these public consultation forums on Data Protection Regulations together with our partners at Lawyers Hub. Attended by the Cabinet Secretary for ICT and the Data Commissioner, the public participation forums dissected the following sets of regulations:

- i) Data Protection (Enforcement and Compliance) Regulations, 2021.
- ii) Data Protection (Registration of Data Controllers and Data Processors) Regulations, 2021.
- iii) Data Protection General Regulations, 2021.

The 2021 Tanzania Stakeholders Convening on Digital Rights Legislation in Dar es Salaam,

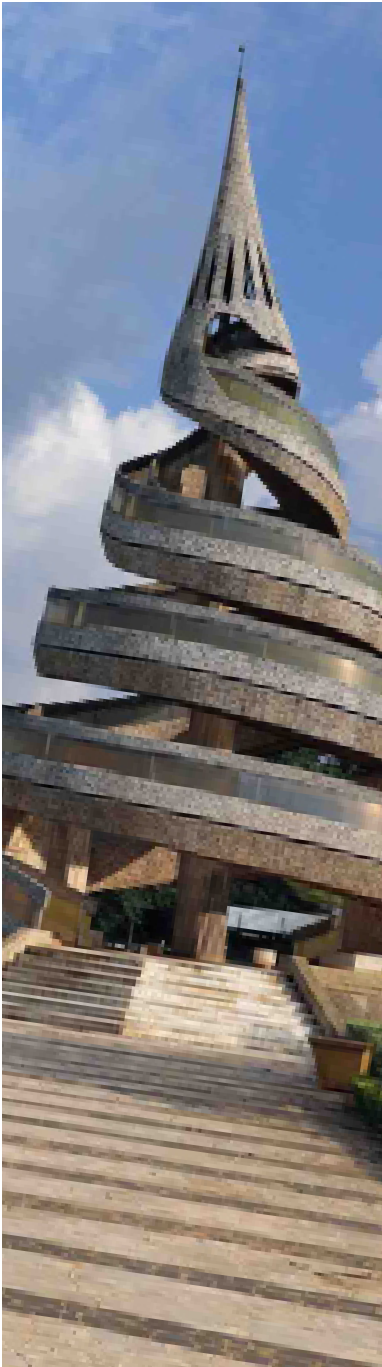
Tanzania was held from June 29th - June 30th, 2021. As you may already be aware, Paradigm Initiative is leading efforts to champion a Digital Rights and Freedoms Bill in Tanzania. These efforts began in 2020 and we hope that with the new political administration in the country and with the support of stakeholders like you, this Bill is going to see the light of day in the near future.

As a Pan-African digital rights organization, we have been at the forefront of promoting collaborations between governments and civil society in Africa. Such collaboration resulted in the Digital Rights and Freedoms Bill in Nigeria, which was enacted into law by the Nigerian parliament in 2019. It is of our firm belief that so much is possible when citizens, civil society, and government work together in shaping the future, through policy interventions that support innovation and protect the people—such as the Tanzania Digital Rights and Freedoms Bill, 2021.

PIN forges new Partnership with Zaina Foundation in Tanzania

Paradigm Initiative partnered with the Zaina Foundation to implement the SIFCA (Strengthening Internet Freedom Capacity in Africa) Project in Tanzania. Through this partnership, Zaina Foundation, as a local country partner, will conduct stakeholder engagements and policy discussions as we forge ahead with the implementation of the SIFCA Project.

Francophone Africa



We witnessed a relatively low violation of digital rights within francophone Africa, thanks to the advocacy of civil society. Our core activities in the region were media campaigns, training, and workshops in focus countries.

The Democratic Republic of Congo is a strategic country for PIN projects as a country with a hard record of internet shutdowns. The country is monitored through two projects, the SIFCA (Strengthening Internet Freedom Capacity in Africa) project and the Greater Internet Freedom (GIF) project. For the SIFCA project, preparations are underway for upcoming workshops in the third quarter of the year while for GIF, activities for the upcoming Digital Rights Academy are ongoing in collaboration with our country partner.

We also monitored Chad through the SIFCA project, and in April 2021, hosted a country session for DRIF21. The country session was organized by a local partner COPAT and ISOC. Upcoming activities in the country are being prepared with the support of local partners. In the Central African Republic, we worked within the framework of the GIF project. Our country partner, Association des Blogueurs de la Centrafrique,

continues to coordinate locally in the lead up to planned activities. Activities in Côte d'Ivoire were carried out within the OSIWA 2 project with in-country activities to kickstart in the coming quarter.

As part of DRIF21, a country session was organized in Cameroon on April 23, 2021. The session benefited from the participation of several stakeholders in the country with discussions on the regulation of the internet in times of crisis. Recommendations were formulated by the participants in the work-in session.

Southern Africa



Paradigm Initiative hosted a diverse group of civil society and media organizations to explore the introduction of an alternative civil society-led Digital Rights and Freedom Bill. The convening highlighted the status of digital rights in Zambia, the importance of pro-rights ICT policy, the status of internet freedoms and ICT laws and culminated into charting a way forward for Zambia's Digital Rights and Freedom Bill agenda including a scoping of key local digital rights issues for consideration for the bill and mapping of digital rights and media organizations that will champion the initiative.

We participated in the annual Lusaka Internet Meet-up organized by Bloggers of Zambia joining other stakeholders in conversations on the impact of online content regulation, combating cybercrime in Zambia, digital financial inclusion in Zambia, and the status of Zambian women's voices online amongst other topics. The Lusaka Internet Meet-Up has become a key multi-stakeholder policy forum for discussions on internet governance, digital rights, cybersecurity, and digital inclusion

amongst other thematic areas.

Rounding up for the region, a policy brief titled "Advancing Digital Rights in Angola" that sheds light on the digital rights landscape in Angola and proposes reforms to enhance internet freedoms in the country will be launched in July 2021 in both English and Portuguese.

