As an organization that values partnerships, we have also empowered other civil society organizations, and government institutions by conducting capacity-building and advocacy efforts which have contributed to positive development and changes in laws and policies in Africa.

Celebrating 15 years of impact, we honoured individuals, stakeholders and partner organisations that have contributed to the success of our mission.
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INTRODUCTION

The year 2022 had a very special meaning to us: It is the year that saw us mark a major achievement—15 years of impact across Africa, rewarding partnerships and offering creative solutions to some of the challenges facing our region.

Looking back at our journey, we have witnessed tremendous growth which we credit to our Board, Funders, Partners, Supporters, Volunteers and Staff. From humble beginnings in a cybercafe in Ajegunle, Lagos, we have extended our operations to cover Cameroon, Nigeria, Senegal, Zambia, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Kenya. We remain grateful to our partners: Ford Foundation, Internet Society (ISOC), Kingdom of Netherlands Embassy, Open Society Initiative for Western Africa (OSIWA), United States Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL), Internews GIF, Internews Adapt, Internews, Meta, Google, Global Partners Digital (GPD), Disney International Youth Foundation (IFY), Wikimedia, Disinformation Index Limited, Global Network Initiative (GNI), University of WITS, Web Foundation and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for walking with us on this journey this year.

This year also saw us expand our Life Legacy Program by co-opting eight partners across the region to replicate what we are doing in Nigeria to other parts of Africa. This is a move geared towards multiplying impact across Africa. The first set of partners to work with us in the LIFE Legacy program in their respective locations/countries include but are not limited to: Mentor an African Child Initiative (MACI) in southwest Nigeria, Startup Kebbi (Kebbi) in northwest Nigeria, SureAid Development Initiative in southeastern Nigeria, DigiCon Academy in Uganda, Koneta in South Sudan, and Asikana Network in Zambia. Our aim is to extend this collaboration to other organizations and countries on the continent.

We were also able to successfully hold our annual Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum (DRIF) virtually and in-person, in the process reaching 1,300 individuals. Our annual digital rights and inclusion report, Londa 2021 also expanded to cover findings from 22 countries with a focus on thematic areas such as privacy, freedom of expression, access to information, segmentation and exclusion, digital transformation, affordability, and gender, all critical areas in the digital space.

In 2022 we also had an opportunity to exclusively premiere our short film, Finding Diana on the sidelines of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF2022) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, a clear departure from the approach we have taken in our previous launches. The movie was well received, given the feedback we got from our audience comprising individuals from different parts of the world. That was not all, we also held an online launch of the short film and a playlist we put together for the project on our YouTube Channel has so far attracted a total of 181,400 views.

We wrapped up the year by holding our Annual retreat in Lagos, Nigeria, a session that enabled us to review our year, brainstorm, and lay out plans for 2023. As we set off for the year 2023, we remain hopeful that we shall impact many more lives, transform society, advocate for a rights-respecting Africa and influence the development of good policies in the digital rights and inclusion space.
Our 2022 Highlights

In July 2022, Paradigm Initiative (PIN) marked a major milestone which also saw us take stock of our impact in the areas we operate in. We held a series of events to mark this achievement.

Dinner and Awards Ceremony
Our celebrations commenced with a dinner and awards ceremony in Lagos, Nigeria on July 23rd, 2022. At the dinner event, we honored individuals, stakeholders and partner organizations that have contributed to the success of our mission. The event provided a platform through which we were able to hold open discussions about our journey. Alumni who have so far benefited from the organization also gave testimonials.

PIN Festival
We also held the PIN festival between October 10th and 14th, 2022 in Harare, Zimbabwe. The festival was a celebration of the collective effort that has gone on behind the scenes to advance digital rights and inclusion in Africa over the years. The event presented us with an opportunity to highlight our work and the impact the organization has achieved through collaborations.

Digital Rights Academy
In Harare, we held a two-day Digital Rights Academy (DRA), with sessions facilitated by Boye Adegoke, PIN’s Senior Program Manager, Thobekile Matimbe, Partnerships and Engagements Manager, Bulanda Nkhowani Senior Program Officer- Policy and Judith Ogutu, Communications Manager. Our team was joined by Peace Amuge, Executive Director, Women of Uganda Network (Wougnet), Arsene Tungai, Executive Director, Rudi International and Nompilo Smanje, Legal and ICT Policy Officer at Media Institute of Southern Africa Zimbabwe (MISA).

Youth Debate
The DRA was followed by a Youth Debate whose topic was, “Should state digital surveillance take priority over personal privacy?” From a total of 321 participants who threw their hats in the ring, two emerged winners while two others were runners-up. In the English category, the winner was Goska Matala from Eswatini while Grace Appolos from Nigeria was runners-up. Appolos argued in the affirmative while Matala opposed the motion. In the French category, Fadilath Moudachirou from Benin emerged tops while Damase Donald Onana from Cameroon was runners-up. Onana supported the motion while Moudachirou opposed it. Each of the winners took home a laptop and USD 750 while each of the runners-up received a tablet and USD 500. The winners were feted at the award dinner ceremony on 14th October.

PIN Anniversary Documentary
Another highlight at the festival was screening of PIN’s 15th Anniversary Documentary highlighting the organization’s milestones, lessons learnt and future outlook. Among those featured in the documentary are PIN Board Chair, Prof Pat Utomi, Board members, Dr. Aida Opoku-Mensah (PhD), Dr. Jummai Zainab Umar-Ajijola (PhD), Ms. Moussoukoro Diop and Dr. Oluseyi Adebayo-Olubi. The PIN team, led by ‘Gbenga Sesan, the Executive Director also speak about what we have been able to achieve while working together with our partners.

Short Film Behind-The-Scenes
Every year, for the last three years, we have produced short films based on our Digital Rights and Inclusion Report-Londa. In 2019, we produced Training Day while in 2020, we produced Focus. This year, we have produced Finding Diana. The thriller movie contains themes included in the 2021 report such as privacy, freedom of expression and access to information. At the festival in October 2022, we had the opportunity to screen the Behind-The-Scenes in anticipation of the movie launch in November, 2022.
Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum (DRIF22)

Every year, for the last nine years, we have successfully convened DRIF, a signature event where conversations on digital policy in Africa are shaped, policy directions debated, and partnerships forged for action. The forum has been instrumental in setting the tone as an arena for interrogating the digital environment in Africa, discussing global trends, and presenting solutions for tackling challenges faced in the region. Together with our partners, we hosted 511 participants at 13 virtual sessions and in-person sessions in 17 African countries.

The country conferences brought together over 600 participants in engaging sessions dissecting the state of digital rights and inclusion in Namibia, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Angola, and The Gambia, Malawi, Cameroon, South Sudan, Tanzania, Senegal, Central Africa Republic (CAR), Ethiopia, Kenya.

Box Set

In addition to the Behind-The-Scenes, we also unveiled our Box Set containing documents we had produced in the course of the year. This allowed us to in a nutshell showcase our policy briefs, reports, toolkits and bulletin.

Media Parley

To crown it all, we held a media parley calling on governments across Africa to expand digital rights and inclusion on the continent by formulating favorable laws and policies. During the media parley, it was noted that citizens on the continent are currently using Information Communications Technology (ICT) on a regular basis, creating need for rights on how to use ICT.

Finding Diana Launch

Our Short Film, Finding Diana has been produced from the Londa 2021 Report which focuses on digital rights and inclusion in 22 countries. The film tells a story which captures key themes, instances and elements in a creative way. Targeted at diverse members of African societies and lovers of cinema, the movie, which is an audio-visual representation of the report, is a riveting and fascinating story which is worth watching. It is currently live on our YouTube channel, ParadigmHQ.

Life Legacy Program

This is a flagship project for the organization. The program focuses on youth who do not have the financial capacity to acquire relevant Information Communication Technology (ICT), Entrepreneurial and Life skills that can make them compete in the workplace. The three major components of the program are: The Life Project, Life@ Schools Club and Digital Readiness Workshop. This year, PIN signed up eight Legacy partners in Nigeria, South Sudan, and Senegal.

Awards and Recognition

PIN emerged as one of the winners of the 2022 Africa Legal Tech and Innovation Awards organised by Lawyers Hub Kenya. The organization won the Digital Policy Innovation Award for its contribution to Legal Tech and Artificial Intelligence Shaping the future of Justice and the Legal Industry.
Our Purpose

About PIN

Paradigm Initiative (PIN) is a leading Pan African Digital Rights and Inclusion organization with operations across Nigeria, Cameroon, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Kenya.

Through regional offices in seven countries, we work to connect underserved young Africans with digital opportunities and ensure the protection of their rights. Under our LIFE (Life skills, ICT skills, Financial literacy, and Entrepreneurship) Legacy program, we reach under-served youth across Africa through implementing partners in Nigeria, Senegal and South Sudan.

Digital Rights and Inclusion

PIN’s digital rights advocacy program is focused on the development of public policy for internet freedom in Africa. Our digital rights advocacy efforts include media campaigns, coalition building, capacity building, research, report writing, hosting the annual bi-lingual pan-African Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum, and promotion of Digital Rights and Freedom legislation.

For more than 10 years, we have worked to advance Internet freedom in Africa, implemented large multi-country programs, and managed funding from our partners.

NetRights Coalition

In 2014, PIN started the NetRights Nigeria coalition to work on a Digital Rights and Freedom Bill for Nigeria. The coalition has grown into an Africa-wide group, NetRights Africa, that works together to respond to challenges, co-author statements on incidents, and work together on emerging issues. NetRights hosts monthly calls and has physical meetings on the sidelines of the Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum (DRIF), and any other major event where many members are present. Through this platform, we have shared our ongoing coalition-building experience with organizations across Africa.

DRIMF Fellowship

Our Digital Rights Inclusion Media Fellowship (DRIMF) is a four-month program designed to immerse selected journalists in digital rights and digital inclusion advocacy intervention efforts in Africa. Selected journalists work with Paradigm Initiative on various projects and contribute to improving media coverage of relevant issues. Under this program, PIN selects a competitive applicants pool to partake in the fellowship program. So far, eight journalists from Benin/France, Ghana/Togo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Nigeria and Tanzania have benefited from this robust and transformative experience.

DRILL Fellowship

Our Digital Rights and Inclusion Learning Lab (DRILL) has a mission to host innovative learning around digital rights and inclusion in Africa and serve as a space for both practice and reflection with a focus of involving and connecting different stakeholders and creating dialogue amongst researchers, social innovators, policymakers and actors, the private sector, as well as civil society. As a lighthouse for digital rights and inclusion advocacy in Africa, learning activities take place at the lab to evolve new thinking on digital rights and inclusion strategy for Africa. DRILL offers space for big thinking, evaluation of digital rights and digital inclusion programs, and future-proofing ecosystem activities.

Mission

Paradigm Initiative works to connect under-served young Africans with digital opportunities and ensures the protection of their rights.
2022
Expansion in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

2021
- Launch of office in Thies, Senegal
- Expansion in Nairobi, Kenya

2017/2018
Setting up offices in Cameroon and Zambia

2016
- Third office in Kano
- Expansion across Africa

2014
- Second office in Aba
- Setting up Abuja office
- Establishing new headquarters in Yaba, Lagos

2012
First office in Ajegunle

2007
- The year PIN started operating
- Teams were then working from cybercafes with the main office being the living room of Gbenga Sesan, the Executive Director.

MILESTONES

2018: The transition from Internet Freedom Forum to Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum (DRIF).
- Digital Inclusion Programs
- Dufuna
- LIFE & transitioning to LIFE Legacy, currently working with partners
- Life@ Schools Club
- Digital Readiness Workshop for Girls

Pinnovators
22

Partners/Funders
20

LIFE Legacy Training Workshops
457

3

Programs
LIFE Legacy
L.I.F.E Legacy Training Workshops
L.I.F.E. Legacy

Countries
9

Regional Hubs
66

Volunteers

PIN At a Glance

PIN At a Glance

PIN At a Glance

PIN At a Glance

LIFE Legacy
As an organisation, we are keen on making PIN the best place to work. We continuously incorporate favourable work policies and conditions and also hire the best talent from across Africa. In 2022 we expanded our workforce by recruiting additional team members into the organization. Our team remains an important resource as it continues to deliver exceptional results, impact lives and transform society.
Projects Highlights

In 2022, the Programs Unit undertook projects incorporating the Life Legacy Program, capacity building, policy development, strategic litigation, fundraising, research and drafting policy briefs, developing digital tools, working with partners to implement projects, and participating in various events across the year. The unit also held stakeholder and partnership engagements.

The unit was part of the team that organised and conducted the new media citizens governance conference which was held in Abuja, Nigeria. The program’s team was also instrumental in rolling out the radio drama series (crime and prejudice and wetin dey trend) to raise awareness and advocate for digital rights in Nigeria in partnership with our partners, Luminate and Internews.

This was in addition to the digital rights academy and litigation clinics in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR) and Nigeria, digital literacy café in Francophone Africa, DRL policy setting workshop on internet law and policy in Zambia and Tanzania as well as high-level digital rights, data protection and privacy meetings in Nigeria. The team also conducted DRL Advocacy workshops in DRC.

The program’s team was also instrumental in drafting Nigeria’s Digital Rights and Freedom Bill and held a strategic meeting to chart a roadmap for development of Digital Rights and Freedom Bill for Malawi. The team also held an Artificial Intelligence roundtable meeting in Kenya which brought together 20 stakeholders. This was in addition to holding a South Sudan Data Protection roundtable. The 35 stakeholders who attended the meeting discussed the country’s Data Protection Bill 2022.

The program’s team also participated in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) virtual court sitting to challenge the decision of the Nigeria government to ban Twitter in the country. The court declared the ban illegal. The team also hosted Digitalks with events in nine countries across Africa to promote Londa country reports. The team also drafted open letters to the governments of Kenya and Angola urging them not to shut down the internet during elections.

Our Programs

Projects At a Glance

- More than 750 applications for the LIFE Legacy Training.
- 106 young girls underwent training through five Digital Readiness Workshops.
- 50% of the graduates in Senegal reported they would be interested in coming back as facilitators or supporting PIN in various ways.
- Sixty-six (66) volunteers were involved in dispensing the curriculum.
- A town hall meeting was convened in Senegal with 126 attendees amongst them alumni of the LIFE program, partners, government officials as well as youth associations in the process increasing the reach of the LIFE Training in Thiès.
- At least 29 alumni started internships or training programs through PIN’s partners in the course of the year.
- Published our 2022 Echoes from Life Bulletin
- 351 beneficiaries aged 15-28 completed a 10-week training program focusing on Life skills, ICT, Financial literacy, and Entrepreneurship in 12 cohorts.
- 75% of the cohort started new endeavors as an outcome of the training. This includes the following: Opening a cosmetics shop, starting a graphics design business, doing a training course in baking, helping former ICT teachers in dispensing classes in school, opening own website (sports page), creating a youth association to teach ICT and work against drug abuse and using their home garage to open a serigraphy shop.
- 50% of the graduates in Senegal reported they would be interested in coming back as facilitators or supporting PIN in various ways.
- Eight partnerships were established to support the recruitment process and the follow up with 20 more partnerships in discussion.
- Representatives of PF2E (Programme de Formation Ecole-Entreprise) in Senegal expressed interest in investing in the 3 projects for a start. The total amount requested is 7,660,000 FCFA (about $11,700).
- Drafted a case study on Online Gender-based violence under women’s rights online, in the process highlighting PIN’s advocacy on women’s online rights.
PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENTS

Partnerships and Engagements

Project Highlights

Increased the Net Rights Coalition members. The mailing list now has 288 Members

Engagements at the African Commission

Digi-talks with focus on advocacy engagements in nine countries.

Convened 4 learning calls.

Convened a Webinar on Artificial Intelligence under the GIF Project.

DRIF22 reaching over 1300 people, held in 17 countries.

Publication of Londa 2021 Report covering 22 African countries.

Launch of Greater Internet Freedom (GIF) toolkit on Internet Intermediaries

Implementation of the Collaborative Policy Coalitions in three Countries

Produced a Blog Post on Privacy

Projects At a Glance

During the period under review, the Partnerships & Engagements Unit collaborated with various organizations to support digital rights and inclusion efforts. In delivering on their mandate, the unit was able to engage further with various stakeholders, form new partnerships, midwife the annual digital rights and inclusion forum, and oversee annual research on the state of digital rights and inclusion in Africa while making inroads in advocacy efforts.
The 9th Edition of DRIF themed Towards a Digitally Inclusive Africa was a hybrid event that featured virtual events from the 12th - 14th of April 2022 and in-person sessions from April 20th to May 20th. In-person sessions featured organisations, activists, representatives from academia, legislature, and policymakers within the digital ecosystem. During DRIF22, discussions, and debates were focused on issues plaguing the digital sphere in Africa including data privacy, affordable internet, gender and ICTs, disability rights, children’s rights in the digital age, Internet access, media freedom, ICT health surveillance during COVID-19 times and Internet shutdowns.

Among partners that collaborated with PIN to host DRIF include; Uhuru Tech Solution, Youth Hub Africa, Human Rights Journalists Network, BONews Service, Media Defence, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Community Voices Zimbabwe, Africa Media and Information Technology Initiative (AfriMITI), Mozilla Foundation, Uzalendo Africa Initiative, DRIF22.

Country partners who also supported PIN in hosting DRIF were Digital Foundation of Namibia (Namibia) Institut Congolais des Droits de l’Homme (The Democratic Republic of Congo), Inclusive Tech and Internet Society Ghana (Ghana), Mwana Pwo (Angola), GiveProject (Gambia), Koneta Hub (South Sudan), Zaina Foundation (Tanzania), Digital Shelters (Somalia), Association des Blogueurs Centrafricains (Central African Republic), Consortium of Ethiopian Human Rights Organizations (Ethiopia), Media Alliance of Zimbabwe, Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zimbabwe and Digital Age.

The country in-person sessions commenced on 20th of April in Namibia hosted by our country partner, Digital Foundation of Namibia. The session assembled stakeholders in the digital space to engage in matters relating to digital rights and inclusion, seek common solutions, map strategies, and educate the public. PIN was honored to have the event officiated by Emma Inamutila Theofelus, The Deputy Minister of Information and Communication Technology Namibia. Malawi held a high-level panel discussion, public lectures and a digital exhibition attended by Gospel Kazoko, the Honorable Minister of Information, who emphasized the need for equal access so that those marginalized including the youth and women are not left behind.

Advocacy Efforts

During the period under review, the unit undertook the following advocacy efforts:

- Developed three Universal Periodic Review Shadow Reports on Ghana, Gabon and Benin collaborating with Small Media.
- Drafted statements to the 71st and 73rd Ordinary Sessions of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (African Commission).
- Signed on KeepItOn Coalition letter to US Government Re: Russia Sanctions and internet.
- Drafted a response to the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion under the GIF consortium.
- Responded to the UN on Human Rights Due Diligence Guidelines.
- Made OHCHR Submission on Internet Shutdowns.
- Advocacy Briefing Capacity Building Meeting in Banjul with nine attending members to encourage advocacy at the African Commission.
- Convened a panel on Internet Shutdowns in Africa at the Forum for NGOs at the 73rd Ordinary Session of the African Commission.
- Signed on to the African Union petition to act in reconnecting the Internet in Tigray, Ethiopia.

Engagements

The unit’s engagements can be summarized as indicated below:

- Made more than 20 new contacts relevant to our work in 2022.
- Participated in four African Internet Rights Alliance (AIRA) convenings and other committee meetings.
- Participated in the launch of the report on Online Gender-Based Violence. PIN drafted Zambia and Zimbabwe reports.
- Participated in the launch of the Collective Impact Coalition.
- Participated in Action Coalition on Responsible Technology meetings and World Benchmarking Alliance events.
- Participating in the UNESCO Forum on Artificial Intelligence in Southern Africa.
- Participating in the Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa (FIFAfrica).
Communications

The Communications unit was instrumental in providing support by amplifying projects, programs, partnerships and events that PIN was involved in. During the period under review, the organization was mentioned in more than 600 websites across the continent. Our consolidated reach and impressions on social media was 4,390,901.

Among the major events we amplified were DRIF, Digi-talks, LIFE Legacy Program, our 15th Anniversary celebrations, partnerships and support by our key funders, our collaboration efforts across the world and the launch of our short film, Finding Diana, among others. The communications unit also publicised open letters to governments ahead of elections, PIN’s participation in key events including Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa (FIFAfrica), Internet Governance Forum (IGF2022) and RightsCon hosted by Access Now.
Every year, PIN publishes policy briefs, reports, and research documents, key among them Londa. In 2022, some of the key documents we published were, An Analysis of Data Practices of Digital Lending Applications in Africa which looks into data protection laws in 19 countries including details on the personal data collected by lending app corporations. Ranking Telcos and Tech Businesses Compliance with Human Rights Standards examines the themes of digital transformation in Angola, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Nigeria using the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGP) for business and human rights. Another document we churned out is the Advocacy Toolkit on Internet Freedom and Internet Intermediaries which emphasises the need to assess, remedy, and provide a platform for dialogue with businesses on potential human rights violations. We also published another document, Assessing The United Nations Cyber Treaty Process: An African Perspective which highlights existing legislative frameworks against a widening digital divide while spotlighting the significance of a broader engagement of key stakeholders currently grappling with the effects of problematic cybercrime legislation.
As an organization, we are humbled and excited about our impact over the years across Africa and beyond. This has been made possible by the collective effort of our key stakeholders such as funders/sponsors, partners, board, volunteers and staff. The affirmations we get in the form of renewed funding, extended partnerships and engagements are a continuous endorsement to our work. All these have kept us going and for this, we remain forever grateful.

The challenge before us is therefore to use our existing blocks to build better, launch deeper and spread our wings wider. With this, our eyes remain fixed on our mission as we work towards building our next frontier, using our 2024-2028 strategic plan as a road map.