

IGF BPF CYBERSECURITY QUESTIONNAIRE

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The growth in the number of internet users continues to increase tremendously, since the commercialization of the internet in the late 1960,s. This growth continues to have a lot of positive impact on the lives of individuals and nations. Despite the security challenges posed by the internet, many people remain faithful to the internet for most of their transactions and there are many others who earn their living from the existence of the internet. The Government of most countries has thus realized the social, economical and political importance of the internet, and is working towards connecting more people through favorable policies. Some policy options can be really effective in creating an enabling environment for the provision and usage of internet services.

The internet which impacts the social, political and economic lives of users touches all aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), either directly or indirectly [\[1\]](#) .There is therefore no doubt that connecting and Enabling the Next Billion Generation (CENB) contributes to reaching the SDGs in many ways.

Free internet access in schools can greatly increase the number of internet users. Most of our schools in developing countries do not even have computers, not to talk of internet access. A good educational policy that educates the youths on how to use the internet for their benefit and also avoid the risks online can be useful. The government can proceed by equipping all schools with computers and giving them free internet access. This will enable them to discover how to use the internet to empower themselves with knowledge, at an early stage in their life, before they move to the university. These kids are those who will shape the future of the internet tomorrow.

Most remote villages especially in Cameroon do not have the necessary infrastructure for the provision of internet services, and even in areas where there are mobile telecommunications services, the villagers may not be able to acquire SMART phones and pay for internet services. These villagers who are mostly farmers need internet services for the marketing of their crops, communications and getting information about fertilizers, pests and their health. In Cameroon Telecenters, centers equipped with computers and communications services including internet, have been created. The centers get internet access by satellite and use solar panels for energy. This has been very effective in increasing the number of internet users.

A policy that increases the number of free wifi hot spots in areas like motor parks, airports, hospitals, and public offices in general etc. will increase the number of internet users. Very few of these free hot spots exist in developing countries.

A policy that encourages competition among Internet Services Providers (ISPs) will lead to a reduction in the cost of internet access, and hence increase the number of users. This can be done by issuing licenses to as many service providers as possible.

Finally the regulatory authority has a big role to play in making sure that the ISPs offer good Quality of Services (QoS) to customers, and that people are satisfied and secured with the services. A good cyber security policy is very necessary. Also a policy that encourages interconnection among ISPs either at Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) or by private peering will greatly improve on users experience by reducing latency. This gives more people satisfaction in using the internet.

An assessment by the WSIS+10 demonstrated the value of ICT and the internet to development, by providing infrastructure for economic and social progress. It provides services in sectors such as health, finance and education. Increase in connectivity greatly increases the value of these services. Report [\[2\]](#) raises a number of challenges to overcome if the internet must support the Sustainable Development Agenda. They include:

- **Connectivity and access for all**-*Serious problem in developing countries.*
- **Affordability**- *Access cost should be within the reach of the average citizens.*
- **Reliability and resilience**- *Uninterrupted access to broadband required for full services.*
- **An enabling legal and regulatory environment**- *Internet services need regulations.*
- **Enhanced human capabilities** – *People need ICT skills to use internet for development.*

The Internet Society also identified three governance features of the internet that can contribute substantially to the SDGs. They include:

- Multistakeholder participation
- Open universal, interoperable standards
- A collaborative security approach.

An open collaborative internet will therefore be a critical component in achieving the SDGs. Any disruption or malfunction of the internet be it technical or policy wise, will affect the overall development agenda. CENB will empower people economically and socially and this will greatly contribute to alleviating poverty, hence achieving the SDGs.

References:

1. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/08/what-can-the-internet-do-for-sustainable-developme>
2. http://www.circleid.com/posts/20150608_role_of_the_internet_in_the_un_sustainable
3. <https://www.internetsociety.org/doc/internet-and-sustainable-development>

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