

Ugandans to join online debate on internet standards

 By [Walter Wafula](#)

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Ugandans will be able to join the rest of Africa in an online session to discuss global internet standards in an effort aimed to obtain the continent's views on how the internet can be developed further.



The online session will take place at Hive Colab, in Kampala, parallel to the Africa Wide Internet Standards Forum which takes place in Serekunda, Gambia on 12 May 2012, but the main forum will be streamed live to Ugandans in Kampala on the online conferencing tool Webex.

At least 130 Ugandans have the opportunity to be part of the live online session discussing internet standards in the world, according to the Internet Society Uganda Chapter.

The Gambia conference has been organised by The Internet Society Africa Regional Bureau while the Internet Society Uganda Chapter is in charge of the Kampala forum. The meetings will be used to discuss internet standards and the role the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) plays in setting open internet standards.

The objective

"The objective of the forum is to create awareness and understanding of the IETF and its role in setting open standards and to encourage African University students, instructors, researchers and internet enthusiasts to participate in the development of open internet standards development," says a note from the Internet Society Uganda Chapter.

"The Internet Society also wants to use this opportunity to establish local communities that will participate in the development of IETF standards and use their participation to further their educational and research objectives."

The Uganda forum is mainly open to university students, researchers and internet enthusiasts who are interested in learning about open internet standards.

The internet and Africa

Africa's engagement comes 25 years after the IETF, which is in charge of setting internet standards, was handed the mandate. Today, Africa accounts for just 6.2% of global internet use, however, there's fast uptake according to statistics by Internet World Statistics. There about 2.3 billion internet users in the world but Africa accounts for an estimated 140 million out of a population of one billion. Nigeria, Egypt, Morocco, Kenya and South Africa, are ranked as Africa's top 5 internet countries.

The Smart Year 2012, a recent report by Frost & Sullivan says that Africa is witnessing significant growth in usage due to the information technology development on the continent including, improved means of connectivity through global fibre-optic cables like; SEACOM, and EASSy, declining prices of computers as well as increasing access to mobile phone internet enabled handsets, *The Citizen* reported earlier this year.

The report says internet use in Africa grew by a record 2,000% compared to the global average of 480% in the last decade.

For more, go to internetsocietyuganda-aisf.eventbrite.com.

ABOUT WALTER WAFULA

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