

8th Annual Gambia **National Internet** **Governance Forum** **(14th June and 15th** **June 2022)**

**Digital Sustainability: Data Innovation
for Post Covid-19 Recovery, the Gambia
Context**

(Report by: Therese Keita, Madeline Ileleji and Miniratou Jobe)

Main Theme: Digital Sustainability, Data Innovation for Post Covid Recovery, Gambia Context

The IGF began with an opening remark from Mr. Poncelet Ileleji (National Resource Person IGF) and Haddija Jawara (Acting Chair Steering Committee National IGF) who thanked partners whose contribution made this event a success. A cross section of attendees came from different sectors within the multistakeholder framework of the Gambia National Internet Governance Forum as captured in the final communique.

First Session Panelist

- Amadou A Bah- President Cyber Security Alliance
- Beran Dondeh Gillen- ITAG
- Adama Jallow- UNDP Accelerator Lab

Adama Jallow a representative from the UNDP (Accelerator Lab) was the first to speak on the topic of discussion , “Digital Sustainability, Data Innovations for Post Covid Recovery, the Gambia context. She noted that the UNDP has supported several initiatives all geared towards digital sustainability across the country. The Rapid Finance facilities for digital inclusion across Rural Gambia is one of them. The UNDP project on Mailumo is another example. The project was created to help women in the lumo areas interact better through digital technology with marketing. The initiative serves as an e-commerce platform where market women and business owners can market their products online. This was done to bridge the access gap between communities by ensuring that people everywhere have digital tools available to them for transactions to better their lives. In the height of the global pandemic with its impact on education, the UNDP initiated the G-Quiz project to help students practice for the WAEC exams online while schools were shut down.

She also noted that the UNDP has been very supportive when it comes to digital literacy, inclusion and connectivity. In line with these, The Last Mile project was introduced to provide internet connection to the remote areas. The idea is to create community networks where indigenes can go and have access to the internet. Recently the Smart City project was launched in Banjul City Council to help with Tax Collections using their QRO codes so that business owners and stall owners can pay their taxes online.

Amadou A. Bah representing the Cyber Security Alliance began his discussion with a thankyou note to partners for the organization of the Gambia National Internet Governance Forum. Speaking on what his organization has done in line with the theme of the National IGF, he noted that The Gambia Cyber Security has done a lot of awareness on information security, governance, fraud, cyber espionage etc. To which he added that sustainability cannot be achieved if the tools are not available. Even if systems are built the concern is protection and security. People need to feel safe that their information is secured and safe. To tackle this, the Cyber Security Alliance advocates for change security protocols to ensure that citizens data is protected, and that their privacy is respected and protected. All of these things are interconnected when it comes to achieving digital transformation in building a digital economy. With the e-governance initiative put in place in government ministries and agencies,

the question still remains how do we harmonize the government systems to ensure they are properly secured? We deploy systems but don't focus on the security part. Mr. Amadou Bah emphasized that Digital Sustainability cannot be achieved if the right processes and measures are not in place to protect the structure. The Gambia Cyber Security Alliance celebrates the data protection and privacy day to ensure that Gambia has a protection log. He commended the stakeholders involved in passing the Access to Information Act on data protection and privacy. What needs to be done now is ensure that they also scrutinize the ministries and agencies on how they digitize platforms in the Gambia.

Citing an example regarding Parallel migration of digital systems you can't put a system down because you are migrating to another system this was what NAWEC did with their old system which was wrong.

He also noted that the Cyber Security Alliance, is concerned with the rapid growth of digital information systems in the military forces. The WAPIS system developed by the African Union helps the police to track crime in the African continent. Cyber security systems need to be strengthened. Criminal information needs to be protected too. The Arm Forces is the first line of defense in security in the country, it could also be the first point of contact for digital security. He also noted that we don't have a digital radar in the country to detect any activity of aircrafts entering our air space. They are all huge security deficiencies that countries need to prioritize. The military can help with this by providing the radar to detect aviation activities in our air space.

All ministries are operating on their own. Services are not harmonized across ministries and all this affects digital growth and sustainability. We have to prioritize digital security in the country. Our passports are made by a separate company, and the ID cards is also made by a separate company. It is difficult to harmonize these systems since different companies provide these services. Regarding Border security, border surveillance as it regards to National Security, We do not have platforms to reference finger prints when crime has been committed.

To conclude, Mr. Amadou A Bah cited that the Cyber Security Alliance developed the incident reporting platform which used to report incidents of cybercrimes, frauds or scams. They have conducted trainings and awareness campaigns on hate speech and security. They also engage partners like NEPAD, AU etc. to see how best we can have the general data regulation for Africa. To also understand the role of AU Cyber security expatriate group.

He advised we should focus more on how we can protect the systems we are building and deploying in the Gambia not just building them.

The National Youth Council Representative (Kutubo Khan): He applauded the IGF initiative on data sustainability stating that it gives him the opportunity to learn more on data protection so that the Youth Council can incorporate it into their work dynamics.

Questions: Was there a prior training for women in the markets where community networks were built for women groups?

To which Adama Jallow answered they are in the process of implementation, it has not been set up in the market. It will be done in the 36 vulnerable places across the six regions. In terms on training, women were on the Mailumo project and how to use the platform to market their products.

Q2: What are some of the vulnerability issues Gambians can face in terms of internet backup being done through Senegal? What effort is the cyber security alliance doing to ensure that government ministries can secure their networks and systems?

To these questions Amadou Bah responded that we do not rely on Senegal 100% for our internet backup. We are connected through the ACE Cable through Lisbon. Senegal only serves as a backup. The question thus remains is our backup connected through Leap Fiber or dark fiber. To which he claimed he does not have answers to that. If we are on the dark fiber the communications are encrypted and Senegal does not have access to our communications, however this question has not been answered.

He also noted that we get radar surveillance from Senegal in terms of aviation. Cyber Security Alliance creates room for awareness so that the government can intervene using the recommendations they have presented.

Q3. Is our data base secured that foreign countries or individual cannot have access to our data base in terms of leaked information concerning confidential data?

Mr. Amadou responded that there are series of concerns regarding where our data is stored. Gambia immigration department should tell us where our data is been stored. Our previous fiber ID Cards we do not know where the data base is stored ?Does the government even do audits on the companies they hand over our biometric passports to? Are there data centers in the Gambia? We need these answers from the Gambian government.

A representative from GMSAT commented that GMSAT is a new entity set up by MOICI, under the IT Directorate at PURA. There are a lot of vulnerability gaps in the cyber space in the Gambia. At the moment, their work focuses on bank and telecoms and key government ministries which are monitored on a daily basis. With time they will expand their scope to cover more government ministries and agencies.

SUB THEME 1: Digital Inclusion and Access to Information Act

Moderator: Haddija Jawara

Panelists:

- Ya Amie Njie, Bar Association
- Mbahyick Joof, Insist Global
- Madiba Sillah, Department of Information Security

The second session of the Gambia National Internet Governance Forum was moderated by Haddija Jawara who threw the question of Digital Inclusion and Access to Information Act. The first Panelists on this session, Mr. Madiba Sillah from the Department of Information Service began with citing the difficulty we have encountered in previous governments regarding access to information. The Access to Information Act was enacted last year and that has brought a lot of change in the Gambia. The Ministry of Information have been working to ensure that mechanisms have been put in place by reaching out to other partners like Ghana to see how they have implemented the Right to Information Act and how it is been tested to gain

experience for the Gambian context. He noted that a roadmap has been created to guide us to put structures in place for the implementation of the law. The information Department is creating communities and sub communities with stakeholders to ensure its success. Access to information defines the maturity of our democracy defined by article 19 of the UN. And article 9 of the African Union Declaration on Human Rights. All these initiatives show we are on track with implementing the Access to Information ACT.

Ya Amie Touray a representative from the Bar Association began with asking how many of the participants know there is an access to information act. She noted that we enact laws but ensuring that the population knows that these laws are in place is not properly conducted. These laws enable the public to ask our elected representatives about what they have done. The draft bill was created and sent to parliament and still a response has not been through forward to the bar association. She emphasized that If the bill is not used by citizens, then it has no meaning. We are all entitled to walk into public offices and ask questions regarding where funds have been used and the progress of projects carried out so far. It is important that this information is shared so that the public is informed. All ministries have to appoint an information officer so that they know that information in the public interest is provided before people begin to ask. She applauded the strides taken so far.

At this point the Moderator Haddija Jawara asked the question of inclusion regarding the implementation of the bill to which Madiba responded that the implementation process has not started. They have however taken steps to ensure that the public is involved once the roadmap is completed which is at a standstill due to the division of the ministry of Information, communication and Infrastructure (MOICI) into the two-line ministries of Information and Digital Economy. He added that it is important that everyone knows they are all included in the process and everyone has the right to enter any government office and ask questions regarding projects been carried out in the country like the Hakalang Road Project.

Bintou Jaiteh from Article 19 upon joining the panel discussion was asked the question by the moderator, What are some of the things done in the protection of the rights of persons, what measures have been put in place to ensure citizens rights are been guaranteed?

To which Bintou replied that in terms of inclusion, Article 19 is looking at equitable access. The access to information law to a large extent has been very inclusive looking at the successes registered in the past five years. The flagship was civil society led by which they had a say at the table with other stakeholders. In order for it to continue to be inclusive there needs to be continuity with the involvement of civil society and other actors in the stages of implementation from consultation, drafting of strategies to the end factors. It has to be a collective responsibility. Bintou emphasized that For people's right to be protected it needs to be included right from the implementation stage. Taking the Truth Reconciliation and Reparation Commission TRRC (TRRC) as an example she highlighted that one key recommendation from the victim center is that the model used for the reconciliation progress should also be used for the reparation process.

From here the Moderator opened the floor for the question-and-answer session.

Q1 (Sanusi Bah): Do we have information that we can be given access to? What steps have been done to generate information that people will need access to? Have you identified the kind of information people can request access to in the bill?

Q2. As journalists do you go to ministries and they tell you the information is classified is this factored in the process?

What are the mechanisms put in place to ensure the bill is implemented as soon as possible?

Mr. Amadou responded that The access to information Act is no longer a Bill. It's an Act now and it refers to public institutions. Which means all citizens have the right to request information and they are obligated to provide the information to the public. The Act required us to have an information manual from the information commission which will provide information that have not been given by the public offices from which they were requested from. There is information that can be disclosed and some that cannot be disclosed and they have been identified like in the issue of national security and the public office involved has the right to withhold that information. You can however write an appeal for it.

To which Bintou added that Contextualizing it to our realities goes a long way in ensuring that inclusion is achieved. We have to begin with user needs. What information does the public need from the student researcher to the health official etc. It is only when we conduct need assessment to gauge what the public needs can we find what strategies we can use in the implementation process. Which needs we have to cater for the population by ensuring that information is disseminated in all local languages to ensure inclusion of all. These recommendation's need to be considered so that people get the information in the languages they understand them. There is need to simplify these laws in the way the ordinary Gambian can understand it.

She added to improve access we have to stop making things difficult. People need to be able to generate the information they need. The process does not need to be complicated. The procedures need to be simplified without the cumbersome processes put in place. With Online access for example, there is a responsibility placed on state institutions to provide information to proactively disclose information whether or not it is requested by the public. There is a provision for it in the Access to Information Act. We also have to focus on the outcomes by measuring performance. To do this there needs to be proper implementation strategies that ensures we assess whether these implementation strategies are effective. This is where the civil society comes into play. With advocacy work we put the government in check by ensuring that the government delivers its promises.

- Q4 (Adama Marong, Gambia Tourism Board): With regards to access to information has the Act captured the provision of mandatory websites by government institutions where information is disseminated to public online? Has the ministry of information put in place structures that ensure they provide the programmers who will develop government websites so that it is not contracted to individual groups?
- Q5 Are there provisions in the act that captures open data provision so that people can fill in data they have access to?
- Q6. (Mbanyick Joof – Insist Global Software Solution provider): Does the Act have a provision in it where information can be digitally accessed and transmitted in the languages that citizens can understand?
- Q7. Where the does the Act stand on copy right related issues?

Haddija advised the panelists should answer what is Access to information act and why is it a human right?

To answer the questions asked Ya Amie Touray responded that The law makes exceptions in terms of what information people can access. However, an individual can't just walk in a bank and ask for Madiba's account details. The law emphasizes on public bodies using public funds to fund projects, that is what the access to information act is all about. Proactive disclosure says that public bodies need to publish annual reports on their own that the public can generate without it being requested. They have to share access to information regarding their travel expenses and salary bands. You cannot however walk in and access the information of a third party just as it is in lawyer client relationship because that information is privileged.

Madiba contributed to the line of questions by providing answers regarding open data and online platforms. Open data has to deal with proactive disclosure. It is up to the public to create those. The law mandates all public institutions to give out information, it does not say it has to be disclosed in a particular way. Online platforms allow us to disseminate information easily. The form to which information is disseminated by institutions is not explicitly given by the law. However, it is expected of government institutions to have online platforms since it is the easiest way to provide information to the public.

Bintou Jaiteh Speaking of Access to information as a fundamental human right stated that It is determined that every person is entitled to access to information from public bodies. It is the responsibility of the state to ensure that it is provided. As civil society it is our responsibility to put the government in check. We have to be informed in every stage of the implementation process. Access to information prevents corruption taking the previous regime as a point of context where information was not given to the people thereby propelling many of the gross human rights atrocities committed. Access to information helps us hold our government accountable. Access to information enables us to be part of the governance process. She concluded by saying Access to information is the oxygen of life.

Q6 from the online audience: What is the status of the .gm top level domain?

To which Amie Njie from the ministry stated that the project has been given to Serrekunda Internet Exchange Point (SIXP) for which the implementation process will be concluded within a year.

Comments:

In terms of open data most reports in place are in hard copy we need people to transcribe those into soft copy. GBOSS has a platform sponsored by the world bank, the ministry should utilize these to provide information to the public by collaborating with them.

Dawda Jatta a representative from the Gambia Computer Security and Incident Response Team (gmCSIRT) disagreed to this fact stating that if the copies are in hardcopy, they have a digital format already in place. The question is where are those files saved so that we can get the electronic copies of all those hard copies.

Ya Amie added that Government ministries need to work together to ensure they harmonize their systems so that we can achieve digital inclusion. If systems like those could be built in Nigeria, then they can also be built in the Gambia by recruiting Gambians to build these systems.

To Close the Panel Discussion: Bintou noted that we have to look at digital innovation. She noted that Article 19 will continue to boldly push the Government of the Gambia to adopt digital inclusion in carrying out its functions. She highlighted that we have to contextualize so that the realities in the Gambia can be taken into consideration for inclusion to be properly achieved like age, income, demographics, geographic location etc. because inclusion comes with innovation. We have to come down to the level of the people who cannot read or write so that they too can be part of the process of governance. Solutions need to be created for these that are digitally inclusive so that the differently abled and those without formal education can have access to it.

Madiba from the department of Information highlighted his appreciation to the committee tasked with the responsibility of implementing the Access to Information Law. He commended the ministry of Information's effort in ensuring that there is an information officer in all government ministries that ensures that information is readily available to the public. It is now left to the various institution to ensure that they adopt the Access to Information Act.

Ya Amie noted that we also have to make sure that the conversation goes beyond this room (IGF Forum). We also have to ensure that in the implementation process we do not make it impossible by putting barriers in place that prevents everyone from having access to information the general public is entitled to. She also advised that citizens should know they have the right to ask questions and obtain answers to those questions. We have to make use of the Act so that it does not sit in public offices gathering dust.

The moderator, Mr. Poncelet Ileleji to close the panel discussion noted that all submissions of the national IGF's need to be done online.

Subtheme 2: Data Innovation and Privacy

Moderator - Anna Anet Sambou – Founder SHOAW Gambia
Panelists:

- Insist Global - Mbanyick Joof
- Give 1 Project - Mariama Jobe
- Gambia bar association - Ya Amie Touray
- National Cyber Security Alliance - Amadou Bah

The moderator Anna Anet Sambou, brought up the new Draft Data Protection Bill and the selling of personal data. It was noted that it is an offense to sell personal data, she mentioned how harsh the repercussions are for businesses and individuals.

Amadou said that he is part of the committee reviewing the bill. He revealed that the repercussions are harsh for businesses to take the bill seriously. There are financial institutions in the country that use peoples data for marketing purposes.

They reach out to investors and try to gain them by offering to link them up with people with substantial savings in their banks.

He also mentioned that within the GG, you sometimes find social security documents and payslips in dustbins, the fines are very necessary, the high fines ensure people respect people's personal information.

He also said that it is only in the Gambia that the doctors have no medical records of patients, and every time people go to hospitals, they have to provide their information all over again.

GSM companies keep on sending unsolicited messages to people and calls to PURA remain futile.

He finished by saying that The Gambia cyber security alliance will do all they can to defend the bill and fines.

Anet - mentioned that people do not really have knowledge of these laws and asked Ya Amie her perspective as lawyer.

Ya Amie said that in terms of the draft Data Privacy Bill, we have a misconception that there are no data protection laws. In the IC act of 2009, there is a provision that makes it a criminal offense for some of these acts, but it is mainly targeted to GSM companies.

She emphasized that we need to raise awareness of the laws, as digital rights enthusiasts. We need the right regulations, infrastructure and legislations in place. She added too that our data is being used by institutions to make money, which is a violation of our privacy. The law makes it wrong for unsolicited information, we cannot have sustainable digital economies or transformation without the Access to Information Bill and its proper enforcement.

Question to Amadou- What are the security implications for an unregulated market in terms of privacy?

Anet revealed that she recently went to Soma to conduct a digital security training, and heard of an instance where a young woman was being blackmailed by someone who had accessed her nudes. The man could not be charged by the police because there was no law.

What is the Cybersecurity Alliance take in such instance?

Amadou answered that the police failed the victim, the man should have been convicted of rape, if data protection laws could not have been used. Recently they had a case where an ex-beauty pageant, requested her content to be taken down, she engaged the pageant organisers who refused to take the content down. They then checked if the event was sponsored, they found other footage that was compromising and used that as the girl was underage. When the guy was approached again, he claimed to not have access to the YouTube that was sponsored. He assured that the case is still being followed and justice will be granted to the girl.

Ya Amie stressed that Consent is very important when it comes to sharing nudes the victims are not to be blamed. Because the content of such was not for public viewing. The IC act makes provision for that, for having indecent images of children, the police should be trained so they know the provision on the law as there is already some form of protection in the law but the awareness is lacking.

She added that we are exposing ourselves more as technology advances, and we as humans evolve.

Mbanyick- was asked his take on putting legal safeguards on consumer privacy in the private sector

He responded that there is a fine line between privacy and protection and stifling innovation. It is good to have laws to protect consumers but we have to make sure it does not stifle innovation. It is important to allow room for the consumers to, we have to be given a choice to choose what information to guide innovators, if laws are too strict innovators will be afraid to innovate.

He was asked how they are protecting the consumer data as a private sector company. He answered that they are not using the data for adverts or marketing, all the data they collect is for the consumer. He gave an example of how teachers they worked with on their Jangalma (e-education project) project that were not so conversant with technology would ask students to log into the platform for them. He said they had to do constant training and awareness raising on data protection and privacy. They also have challenges with people over sharing their data and asked how we as a community can help uneducated people navigate the platform, to help protect their information, using colour coding or audio for example.

Questions -

Seedy Janneh from PURA.- Regarding the case with child in room, what action is taken against the child. Children that are underage should be punished by the law ,and the blame should not only be on the perpetrator.

Amadou answered that . Children are children and need parental consent to participate in all activities.

Beran Dondeh Gillen - said that the data protection and privacy draft, the topic is very important because it stresses on how our data is used, we did not sign up for telecom providers to send us messages , she said we do not want to stifle innovation but we want to ensure our data is used for only what we signed up for.

We need to ensure that there is provision for that in the draft bill, we should all read the bill and. Consent should be sought because the data is ours.

Yaamie - People underage cannot give consent on any situation. She mentioned that your personal data is yours, your data given is only shared with the person you give it to. If it is going to be shared your consent is needed. We need to know what our data is being used for.

Anu Badjie – Ministry of Higher Education and Research- asked Mbanyick from Insist Global what they do in terms of data privacy when they are Done working on govt. Contracts. He answered that the govt. always insists on hosting their own data, and all data used in the testing phase are destroyed. They work with a legal team to ensure they are in terms with the law.

Ministry of finance policy unit - Mohamed Lamin Samateh said we need to have correct data, data should be available, we should be able to get proper data to analyse and. There is a lack of proper data collection, people should be educated, when they try to collect data people

aren't forthcoming and tend to hoard data, but it is important because it is through the data collected that the government will know what is happening in different parts of the country, to be able to properly assess gaps and needs.

MOICI should work with Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS) to have a proper and standard data collection system . Beran Dondéh Gillen did the closing- Stepping in on behalf of Haddija Jawara. She gave a recap of the days events and said that IGF is not only about talking about our issues but also following through with implementation. How do we ensure the things we come up with are followed through? We should challenge ourselves before IGF 2023 , to at least contribute to one of the items in the communique.

Day 2 of The Gambia National Internet Governance Forum

Day 2 of the Gambia National IGF began with a recap of Day 1. Which was followed by the UN Global Digital Compact Submission done as a joint effort between the audience physically present and those online. The submission was coordinated by Omar Jagne from the UNDP Accelerator Lab who opened the submission discussion with the questions required by the survey form . The form was projected on the screen in which the information needed were filled by all present based on a consensus agreement voted by the group for each question category. The questions presented on the UN Global Compact form ranged from Human Rights Online, Data Protection, Artificial Intelligence Regulation etc. At the end of the survey, the form was submitted under the Gambia National Internet Governance Forum with details of the acting chair, Miss Haddija Jawara.

Sub theme 3: Cyber Security and Trust

Moderator- Mr. Poncelet Ileleji

Panelist:

- Amadou A Bah- President of the Cyber Security Alliance
- Ya Amie Touray- Bar Association
- Baboucarr Ceesay-SHAOW Gambia
- Sanusi Drammeh-Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy, Principal ICT officer

The session on Cyber Security and Trust began with the issue of data security and data handling regarding the Gambia ferry system operated by the Gambia Ports Authority. The Moderator Mr. Poncelet asked Mr. Sanusi from the Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy how Gambians are protected from the government level in terms of Cyber Security?

Mr. Sanusi to answer the question posed to him began with a thankyou note to Poncelet Ileleji. He went out to further mention there are issues regarding Cyber Security in the country liked data privacy and security especially regarding assets online. The Government of the Gambia through the ministry of Information and Digital Economy over the years has been relentlessly putting up efforts to strengthen Cyber Security. In the national development plan which has phased out, the government has created the recovery plan. In the previous plan, ICT was a critical enabler amongst the seven critical enablers. This time the government wants to ensure that ICT is a priority and not a crucial enabler, currently work is being done to ensure it. Cyber security is one of the measures to achieve the critical enablers Mr. Sanusi noted. It is divided into 3 components:

He also added the Government is strengthening its effort in the Protection of people and businesses by building the capacity of law enforcement to fight against cyber threats by

establishing a Cybersecurity incident response team. He also noted that the formulation of a Cybersecurity National Strategy to intervene in areas that are lacking is at the implementation stage which addresses the Cybercrime Bill been drafted to be submitted to the National Assembly. This will help the Government to enforce some of its commitments and hold accountable perpetrators who attack government structures and information entities. The Cybercrime bill does not address compliance of information entities however.

Question addressed Ya Amie: Looking at Cybercrime from a gender perspective what would you want to see in the Cybercrime bill, what should the government take note of?

Ya Amie responded that the question asked is very relevant. She noted that from an African perspective we generalize issues that bring barriers to women. To bridge the digital divide, we have to address the gender divide. We have to look at issues that constitute barriers and prevent women from participating in the Cyber space. It would be important that the government in drafting the bill ensures that policies are incorporated to address these issues. We have to know that there is tech cyber base violence. She emphasized that the issues that affect women and girls are very unique. It is the responsibility of the Government to address violence, threats and intimidation that women and girls face when participating in the cyber space. They have to engage women groups working on women related issues to get perspective regarding issues affecting women and girls. They also have to recognize online gender-based violence so that provision can be included to remedy the acts committed against women and girls online.

How does SHAOW Gambia's intervention ensure they are included in the process of drafting the cyber crime bill by the government?

Baboucarr Ceesay highlighted that Stop Harassment and Online Abuse of Women and Girls (SHOAW Gambia's) work focuses on women and girls. He noted that laws are present in the Gambia that ensures criminals guilty of harassing women and girls online are charged. They should however be acted upon in order to provide justice to victims. He added that Women and girls face issues that affect their mental health, some are traumatized and need therapy. What can be done for them to address their issues still remains a challenge. In a survey conducted by SHOAW Gambia, it was revealed that women are marginalized in the cyber space. In their survey they found out that people do not know that there is a term that addresses Cyberbullying, once an example has been given that's when they realize it is a crime. To conclude he stated that we need more advocacy work to educate the public. SHAOW plans to work with the Legislative Arm of Government to generate constructive laws that ensure that policies are passed that are inclusive to bring justice to women and girls affected by Cyber bullying.

Question to Sanusi: Which stakeholders is the government working in the capacity of consultative bodies to address the issues of Cybersecurity and Cybercrime?

Mr. Sanusi noted that this was the first time he has heard of SHOAW Gambia. He encouraged them to continue their work. He noted that for any policy or regulation, the Government of the Gambia through the Ministry of Information always ensures that the process is inclusive. They involve civil society based on their area of expertise like the Bar association and the Cyber Security Alliance and other private sector stakeholders when formulating policies. They cannot however involve every individual. He added that he will take note of SHAOW Gambia's work and ensure he recommends their participation moving forward. To strengthen his argument, he

revealed that on their website they share policies for public comments and they are filtered and included in the strategies before validation.

Furthermore, the Cybercrime Bill to some extent had international partners like the EU, NEPAD and the Common Wealth who looked at it to ensure they are in line with best practices and in the interest of the Gambian people.

Question to Mr. Amadou Bah: What is the Gambia Cybersecurity Alliance doing about security and trust, do they know what all the players are doing in the country regarding Cyber Security and Trust?

To which Mr. Amadou responded that the Gambia Cyber Security Alliance is an alliance with seven clusters like the **Data Protection**, they also have **Women in Cyber** which will be launched soon as a chapter, it is also a cluster. **Incident Response Management** is another cluster, **Cybersecurity Alliance and Education** is another, **Cybersecurity Education and Capacity Building** is another, **Digital Forensics and Cybercrime** is another cluster which does not work with any civil society. It works with law enforcement like the police, military, navy etc.

He added that the Cybersecurity Alliance has started doing some work with SHOAW Gambia, they have an MOU in place. They work with Kids in Technology, Gambia Information communication technology whose work is more or less like ITAG which he advised shouldn't have competition in the Gambia. He noted that most people don't know what ITAG does, and they have promised to change their intervention areas. The Cybersecurity Alliance is open to collaboration with partners to bring in more membership in the Gambia.

Concerning trust and security in the Gambia, the Alliance looks at the accurate view of our Cybersecurity profile. It is important for the government of the Gambia to have a tech profile of the Gambia Cyber Space. The last maturity assessment for the Gambia Cyber space was conducted in 2019. A recent one needs to be conducted to understand how vulnerable we are in the country. There are limited plans with Cyber tech intelligence. What is the gmCSIRT doing with issues like platforms not hosted in the Gambia? How does government intervene in supporting us tackle issues happening in these platforms. We have a lot of third-party suppliers within the internet ecosystem in the Gambia. There is no control of it in the country. Suppliers can buy any technology and deploy it because government does not audit these technologies. He advised that it is time the government have a digital forensic lab that audits all these systems before they are deployed. Trust needs to be assured to the general public from the government.

To which Poncelet commented that the ministry of information has set up an Information Department currently handling the issue of systems brought into the country to be deployed.

Question to Sanusi Drammeh: Concerning Mapping of stakeholders in the Cybersecurity ecosystem, what players are acting in it and what do they do? Is the ministry of justice aware of the players in the Cybersecurity ecosystem?

In the process of ensuring inclusivity to address certain critical areas we need to make sure we know the stakeholders Mr. Sanusi stated. The Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy writes to the Ministry of Justice to make a list of potential stakeholders that will be vetted and a response is given to the Ministry of Information. That has been done for Cybersecurity and Data Protection. The government relies on other stakeholders to ensure there

are multiple fronts of protection through collaborative cooperation. He gave an assignment to Mr. Amadou to identify all the players in the Cybersecurity ecosystem. He noted that government operates on a budget and sometimes they are limited. However, they give incentives to organizations they work with. Processes in government are slow because they are expected to be more accountable. Like in the issue of procurement they have to go through tendered documents before they made a bid. They consult with the Ministry of Justice to give their recommendation on the players they can work with when it comes to the Cybersecurity ecosystem.

He added that a committee has been set up to look at the Malibu convention and the areas that Gambia cannot apply. Then it will be signed and ratified before presented. They have a committee of 20 members in the Cybersecurity ecosystem coordination working on it. He revealed that Cyberbullying is a crime in the Cybersecurity policy 2021-2025. To ensure the continued protection of information systems with critical information structures that ensures the protection of vulnerable groups like children and women. There are specific actions to be taken.

Develop guidelines on how vulnerable groups can protect themselves online. (child online protection)- Mr. Sanusi stated that 275 school children from thirteen schools were covered and educated on child pornography using the ITU guidelines. The Gambia Computer Security and Incident Response Team has been delegated with this task. GmCSIRT receives reports of cyber incidents and threats out there. They also hold responsible critical infrastructure owners whether they compile with guidelines presented. He however advised that gmCSIRT need to be a member of other cyber incident response intelligence outside the continent not just the Africa CSIRT. He noted that the private sector is more equipped to participate in Cybersecurity threats that is why there are being empowered by the ministry. The Ministry has a standard on purchasing equipment, the standard has been adopted by the Gambia, but it has not been implemented. A body has to conduct conformity assessment and compliance to look at equipment in the conformity assessment lab to see what embedded programs are in the devices and if it meets standards presented by the compliance bureau. The gmCSIRT mandate based on best practices however does not include these. The government is implementing by creating a digital forensics and implementation lab for the police.

At this point the floor was opened for questions which came from participants as comments to strengthen the discussion presented on Cybersecurity and Trust in the Gambia. After which a short break followed which was proceeded by the drafting of the communique for approval and vetting by all.

At the end of the program, Mr. Sanusi Drammeh from the Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy together with Mr. Amadou Bah, President of the Gambia Cybersecurity Alliance gave the closing remarks to bring the 8th annual Gambia National Internet Governance Forum to a completion,