



The African Union Commission Selects the Internet Society for the Regional Internet Exchange Points and Regional Internet Carrier Workshops of the African Internet Exchange System (AXIS) Project

Capacity building workshops to support the establishment of national and regional Internet Exchange Points

[Gaborone, Botswana – 6 February 2014] The Internet Society today announced that it has been selected by the African Union Commission (AUC) for the Regional Internet Exchange Points and Regional Internet Carrier Workshops of the African Internet Exchange System (AXIS) project. The AXIS project is focused on keeping Africa’s Internet traffic local to the continent by providing capacity building and technical assistance to facilitate the establishment of National Internet Exchange Points and Regional Internet Exchange Points in Africa.

Under the new AXIS contract, the Internet Society will conduct Capacity Building workshops focused on best practices and benefits of setting up Regional Internet Exchange Points and Regional Internet Carriers. The Internet Society will partner with AFRINIC and other organizations in Africa and around the world to conduct workshops in each of the five AUC geographical regions over the next 18 months.

As part of this agreement, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in partnership with the AUC and the Internet Society are currently undertaking the first Regional workshop on best practices and benefits of setting up Regional Exchange Points and Regional Internet Carriers from 3-7 February 2014 in Gaborone, Botswana. Attendees at the workshop include more than one hundred experts from Ministries, regulatory agencies, IXPs, and the private sector from the following countries of the SADC region: Angola, Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Zambia.

In August 2012, the Internet Society announced that it had been selected by the AUC for the first contract under the AXIS project to conduct 60 Community Mobilization and Technical Aspects workshops in 30 African countries. To date, more than 30 workshops have been completed and a number of the countries where these workshops took place are expected to launch their IXPs in the first half of 2014, thus highlighting the sustainable efforts made by AXIS towards significantly changing the interconnection landscape of the entire African continent. As countries establish their own IXPs, Internet traffic will be routed locally, creating cost and performance benefits and stimulating growth in and distribution of local Internet content.

In spite of this progress, much of Africa's regional Internet traffic is still routed through Internet Exchange Points external to the African continent, which is costly and an inefficient way to handle the inter-country exchange of Internet traffic. The regional exchange points that will be developed will help keep intra-African traffic within the continent.

"The award of this contract reflects the success of the Internet Society's work to date on AXIS, and we are very thankful to the African Union for this recognition and trust," said Dr. Dawit Bekele, Internet Society Regional Bureau Director for Africa. "The AXIS project is instrumental in developing a reliable and sustainable Internet infrastructure in Africa. The Internet Society has provided technical training in Africa for nearly 20 years, and we are very pleased to continue this important work."

For more information on AXIS, visit <http://pages.au.int/axis>

About the Internet Society

The Internet Society is the trusted independent source for Internet information and thought leadership from around the world. With its principled vision and substantial technological foundation, the Internet Society promotes open dialogue on Internet policy, technology, and future development among users, companies, governments, and other organizations. Working with its members and Chapters around the world, the Internet Society enables the continued evolution and growth of the Internet for everyone. For more information, visit www.internetsociety.org.

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