



First National Study of Internet Governance Arrangements in Kenya Detailed in New Internet Society Report

Accompanying report provides framework for national Internet governance assessments

Representatives from ict Development Associates, Kenyan Government, and the Internet Society to discuss implementation at Internet Governance Forum

[Baku, Azerbaijan, 05 November 2012] – In response to the growing complexity and significance of the Internet governance environment, the Internet Society has released two new reports on national Internet governance arrangements. The reports provide findings from the first national study of Internet governance in Kenya, along with a framework for national Internet governance assessments.

The first report, now available at www.internetsociety.org/ig_kenya, assesses the national Internet governance environment in Kenya using the new Internet Society framework detailed in the second report. Kenya was chosen for this first study because it is widely recognized to have one of the most dynamic ICT sectors in Africa and has played a significant part in international Internet governance. Co-written by David Souter and Monica Kerretts-Makau of ict Development Associates, the study was based on research and interviews with a wide range of stakeholders during the first half of 2012.

The latest figures suggest that there are 7.75 million Internet subscribers in Kenya, and around 14 million Internet users, equivalent to about 18% and 34% of the total population. The report looks at three main elements of the national Internet governance environment:

- 1) The issues with which Internet governance is concerned;
- 2) The stakeholders that participate in discussion of those issues and in governance entities, and/or are affected by their outcomes; and
- 3) The decision-making processes and fora whose outcomes affect the ways in which the Internet works and develops in the country.

There is a significant community of Internet governance participants in Kenya, and a higher level of understanding of Internet governance issues than in most comparable countries. The report suggests a number of ways in which the Internet governance environment in Kenya could improve or should adapt to meet changing needs. There are still substantial gaps in participation, among business users of the Internet, mainstream civil society groups, users in rural areas and, importantly, some businesses that are dependent on the Internet such as ICT SMEs and cyber cafes. Issues that people identify as important, such as cyber security, need to be better understood, and more could be done to prepare for developments such as IPv6. A major

challenge for Internet governance, in Kenya as elsewhere, is to involve all of those affected by the Internet in ways that add real value from their point of view.

"The study found that Kenya has one of the more successful and inclusive Internet governance environments in Africa," said David Souter, Managing Director of ict Development Associates. "A significant number of people from different stakeholder groups participate, including many experts in Africa. The Government has taken a positive interest and encouraged participation by the private sector and civil society. There is a worthwhile national Internet Governance Forum and there are other opportunities for dialogue. "

"IGF continues to gain momentum in Kenya. What this study reveals is that Internet governance requires several interested champions from the various stakeholders," said Dr. Monica Kerretts-Makau, Independent Board Director, Communications Commission of Kenya. "What remains in Kenya is to move Internet governance to a discourse of the youth as the next generation; it is no doubt that it is they that use the Internet and engage in the various platforms it provides."

Accompanying the Kenyan study is a second report, www.internet-society.org/assessing-national-ig, that assesses national Internet governance arrangements, and proposes a framework for comparative purposes between countries and over time. The Internet Society believes that it is important to build a better understanding of national Internet governance environments and the ways in which these interact with Internet governance at national and regional levels. This framework will allow national stakeholders to identify priorities as the growth and continual change in the Internet itself and its economic, social, and political significance continue to affect issues of Internet governance.

The assessment framework described in the report, which was developed by David Souter of ict Development Associates, is intended for use by the Internet Society and other organizations in their efforts to build a more systematic understanding of Internet governance arrangements and experience. The Internet Society hopes to undertake a series of further national assessments along the lines set out in its framework.

Markus Kummer, Internet Society Vice President for Public Policy, commented, "Discussions on Internet governance often focus on global policy matters. However, experience shows that national policy matters as much, if not more. By producing country case studies we can learn from best practices, look at what worked well in one country and the lessons learned. While there is no one size fits all solution, the successful Kenyan example shows that good Internet policy is always based on multi-stakeholder cooperation. With over two billion connections worldwide, it's more important now than ever to assess national Internet government strategies. This methodology launched in Kenya will serve as a guide for developing future requirements at both national and international levels."

At the IGF in Baku, Azerbaijan, representatives from the Kenyan government, ict Development Associates, and the Internet Society will discuss findings from the national Internet governance assessments. The media briefing will be held on Tuesday, 06 November at 2:30 pm in the Media Conference Room in the Baku Expo Center.

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.

About ict Development Associates

ict Development Associates provides expertise on ICT and Internet policy and regulation and at the interface between ICTs and development, environment, governance and rights. It was formed in 2003 by David Souter, who is also visiting professor in communications management at Strathclyde University and visiting senior fellow in media and communications at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Monica Kerretts-Makau, who co-authored this report with Dr Souter, is a senior lecturer at Strathmore Business School, Nairobi and an independent board member of the Communications Commission of Kenya.

Media Contact:

Wende Cover, Internet Society, cover@isoc.org, +1-703-439-2773