



The Internet Society Pledges Support to African Research and Education Networks

Project support will improve Internet infrastructure and technical skills in Africa

[Washington, DC and Geneva, Switzerland— 14 January 2016] As part of a new agreement with the West and Central African Research and Education Network (WACREN), the Internet Society has announced today that it will contribute USD 120,000 to support activities targeting African Research and Education Networks (NREN), under the AfREN capacity building project.

The AfREN capacity building project is dedicated to increasing technical skills and improving Internet infrastructure for regional research and education institutions. The Internet Society's support for this project will focus on three major areas:

- Working with WACREN to expand existing programs using e-learning tools to provide training to more African NREN members;
- Increasing participation of African NRENs in Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) activities, offering regional hubs for IETF meetings at various African universities, and organizing training conferences, webinars and hackathons; and
- Supporting the participation of African universities in Internet development conferences to become catalysts in building the African Internet economy and encouraging Internet entrepreneurship and innovation.

Commenting on the agreement, Dawit Bekele, Director of the Internet Society's African Regional Bureau, declared that, "The Internet Society is proud to make this contribution to WACREN to support African Research and Education Networks. This agreement demonstrates the Internet Society's strong belief that the Internet can be a significant tool in transforming education and research in Africa, which will in turn serve as major pillars of building the Internet economy in Africa."

Dr. Boubakar Barry, CEO of the West and Central African Research and Education Network and AfREN Convener also pointed out that, "Research and education networks use more and more advanced technologies that require specialized skills for their design and operation. The ISOC-AfREN initiative will greatly contribute to building the needed capacity in African academic and research institutions, while promoting and supporting African participation in IETF activities."

About the Internet Society

The Internet Society, www.internetsociety.org, is the trusted independent source for Internet information and thought leadership from around the world. It is also the organizational home for the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). 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.

About WACREN

WACREN, <http://www.wacren.net> is the West and Central African Research and Education Network promoting and establishing interconnections between national research and education networks in West and Central Africa to form a regional research and education network with links to other regional and continental networks. These e-Infrastructure services are geared towards fostering collaboration between research and education institutions in the region as well as between them and peer institutions at continental and international levels.

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