COMMUNIQUE AT THE

YOUTH INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM, GHANA, 10 JULY 2019

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PREAMABLE

At this maiden edition of Ghana's Youth Internet Governance Forum held on Wednesday, July 10, 2019 at the Kofi Annan IT Centre for Excellence on the theme, the ***Future of Work; Digital Jobs, Youth Inclusion***, about 128 participants who were present set the following objectives for their discussions:

1. To raise awareness among young people and new entrants about Internet Governance issues and to promote their participation in the discussion with a focus on Ghana.

2. To groom the next generation of internet users who can create digital jobs.

3. To bring together people from government, civil society, business and other stakeholder groups to interact and explore common ground around a public interest-oriented approach to Internet Governance.
4. To build a new cadre of Internet leaders who are motivated to learn, engage and act in Ghana, the West African region and beyond.

5. To mobilise Ghanaian youth to participate in ICT development and policy beyond Internet Governance specific topics.

6. To partner with more organizations to improve the participation of youths in Internet Governance discussions.

Having succeeded in realizing these objectives in the vibrant deliberations that took place and recognizing the invaluable contributions from diverse participants. We, the youth note the importance of organizing more forums for the youth to build communities for sharing of knowledge and networking. We also recognize the need to create a balance between education and skills, and the importance of engaging in mentorship programmes to sharpen our skills in all our career endeavours. The following are the issues and decisions that participants wish to communicate to the government, other stakeholders and people of Ghana:

THE FUTURE OF WORK

- Concerning the fear of job losses due to emerging new technologies and robots taking over jobs, we the participants note that redundancy in the workforce is not new to our generation, and is inevitable, it is therefore important for us to develop additional skills to become versatile and remain relevant wherever we find ourselves.

- We the participants also recognize the importance of harnessing our skills to take advantage of the job opportunities that will emerge due to the growth of economies of Africa and Ghana in particular, where we can create our own jobs and offer employment to our own people and create our own wealth.

CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION

We the Participants note the following:

- That children and young people are championing the cause of technology with the use of the Internet, and are vulnerable due to the 'bad guys,' who are using the Internet for antisocial purposes.
- The importance to ensure the safety of children in the ecosystem and the need for all to put their hands on deck to ensure the protection of children against online abuse and harassment.
- The need to understand online issues and educate the children on them, using the SMART approach so that they do not fall prey to perpetrators of child abuse.
- That parents and caregivers should teach their children to accept friendship request from only people whom they know in real life.

PANEL DISCUSSION

During the session, we, the participants took cognizance of the following:

- The importance on the use of adopting digital technology to enhance their jobs.
- Policies to guide and protect individuals involved in digital jobs by government and the necessary regulatory bodies was noted.
- The importance of youth joining communities and engaging in volunteerism in these communities to increase their knowledge and sharpen their skills.
- The need for youth to brand themselves in their area of expertise to gain recognition and credibility.
- The importance of investing in technology to become relevant.

YOUTH INCLUSION

On the issue on youth inclusion, we, the participants advocate the following:

- The introduction of Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) by the Ghana Education Service (GES) to all school pupils and students in Ghana, especially in the

less privileged areas to prepare them for the future, as well as the incorporation of STEM into the basic curriculum, to gain the requisite technological knowledge and skills.

- Awareness creation and education of parents and grooming children to prepare for STEM.
- Youth putting themselves as volunteers to enhance their skills.
- Youth giving back to society by training and mentoring the younger generation.
- Change in our educational system to have more contact hours for ICT
- Change in mindset and culture to embrace and positive sides of the Internet

DIGITAL JOBS

With regards to Digital Jobs, the following were the recommendations:

- Digitizing the work we do by using tools such as research, advertising, ecommerce, e-learning.
- Youth to be innovative in using technology in their field of work.
- The need to create local content.
- Network with other people in the digital work.
- Develop specific in-demand skills.

CONCLUSION

We the participants Urge the Ministry of Communications to continue supporting the Ghana youth IGF and associated follow-up processes;

Thank the Ghana IGF Planning Committee, the Ghana Domain Name Registry and the Internet Society Ghana Chapter for convening this forum;

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