TANZANIA SCHOOL OF INTERNET GOVERNANCE (TzSIG2025) SUMMARY REPORT

TANZANIA SCHOOL OF INTERNET GOVERNANCE 2025 ORGANISED BY ZAINA FOUNDATION IN COLLABORATION WITH INTERNET SOCIETY TANZANIA CHAPTER

Introduction

On 15 May 2025, the city of Dar es Salaam played host to a truly dynamic gathering at the Tanzania School of Internet Governance (TzSIG) 2025. Organized by [Zaina Foundation](#) in close partnership with ISOC Tanzania, this landmark one-day forum was designed to ignite fresh thinking around our country's digital future. Bringing together a diverse mix of government officials, technology experts, civil society advocates, academic researchers, and eager students, the event provided a rare space for collaborative learning. Under the unifying theme **"Strengthening Digital Inclusion and Resilience in Tanzania,"** participants explored both the promises and the pitfalls of connecting communities across our nation. Throughout the day, lively presentations, hands-on case studies, and open discussions underscored how policy decisions, technological innovations, and grassroots initiatives can work hand-in-hand to bridge gaps, safeguard data, and build a more resilient, inclusive digital landscape for all Tanzanians. Proceeding of the event:

Opening Remarks, Objectives, and What to Expect

The day began with a warm welcome from the Zaina Foundation team, who set out three clear objectives:

1. Introduce core concepts and importance of Internet governance

2. Explore strategies for bridging Tanzania's digital divide and deepening inclusion

3. Examine emerging challenges from data protection ahead of the general election to ethical AI

Participants were encouraged to ask questions freely, share personal experiences, and leave with concrete ideas to apply in their communities.

Internet Governance (Presented by ISOC Tanzania)

ISOC Tanzania unpacked what "Internet governance" means and why it matters to every Tanzanian. Through relatable examples such as how content-filtering decisions can affect small businesses and free speech attendees learned that governance is a multistakeholder effort involving governments, the private sector, civil society, technical communities, and academia. We discussed local relevance, how the Ministry of ICT, TCRA, ISPs, and tech hubs all play a part and explored scenarios like potential Internet shutdowns during elections.

Bridging the Digital Divide and Promoting Inclusion (Presented by Zaina Foundation)

Zaina Foundation then led us through a detailed portrait of Tanzania's connectivity landscape, revealing that only about half of our population enjoys reliable Internet access and that stark disparities persist between urban centers and remote regions. Yet, the challenge extends beyond mere infrastructure: women, low-income households, and isolated communities frequently lack the devices, affordable data plans, and foundational digital literacy needed to participate fully in an online world.

To bridge these gaps, pioneering efforts such as the Universal Communications Service Access Fund (UCSAF) are deploying new mobile towers, establishing ICT laboratories in schools, and creating community digital centers across underserved districts. Throughout the session, participants brought these statistics to life by sharing inspiring stories of local trailblazers from teachers integrating e-learning into rural classrooms and entrepreneurs launching online businesses, to youth-led workshops equipping their peers with essential digital skills demonstrating both the formidable challenges we face and the innovative solutions already taking root.

Data Protection Ahead of the 2025 General Election (Presented by Zaina Foundation)

In this timely session, Zaina Foundation examined data protection at a critical juncture for Tanzania, with the general election on the horizon. Speakers underscored the urgent need to safeguard voters' personal data—whether held by electoral bodies or on digital platforms—against breaches, misinformation campaigns, and unauthorized sharing that could undermine electoral integrity. They outlined best practices such as robust encryption, consent-based data collection methods, and transparent data-handling policies to ensure accountability. Equally important was the role of civil society organizations and regulatory bodies in monitoring compliance, advocating for stronger safeguards, and raising public awareness about data rights. To turn these principles into action, participants collaborated to draft a comprehensive checklist of minimum standards—from securing voter registration databases to issuing clear privacy notices—that they can champion within their own communities.

AI Governance and Ethics (Presented by Tech & Media Convergence)

Tech & Media Convergence explored the ethical dimensions of artificial intelligence in Tanzania. While AI offers great promise enhancing healthcare diagnostics, boosting financial inclusion, and more it also raises concerns around bias, transparency, privacy, and legal readiness. Through an exercise on facial recognition in public spaces, attendees probed which rights are at stake and who must be involved in oversight. The session closed with recommendations to embed ethics into the national AI strategy, form a multi stakeholder ethics council, and scale up digital-rights literacy programs.

Recommendations

Drawing on insights from every session, we recommend that Tanzania adopt a holistic approach led by all stakeholders. First, invest in affordable connectivity and digital literacy programs that target women and rural communities. Second, strengthen data-protection laws now well ahead of future elections to safeguard personal information and maintain public trust. Third, ensure AI initiatives include ethical safeguards by establishing a permanent AI Ethics Council that brings together government, industry, academia, and civil society. The government should fast-track the development and adoption of a national AI policy/National Strategy/Regulation/Law recognizing that AI use is already widespread across Tanzania to protect human rights, embed ethics into every stage of AI deployment, and uphold public trust in emerging technologies. Finally, continue hosting multi stakeholder forums like TzSIG to sustain dialogue, share best practices, and track progress in digital inclusion and resilience.

Conclusion

TzSIG 2025 was more than a series of presentations; it was a living forum where personal stories, practical insights, and shared commitments came together to shape Tanzania's digital future. By strengthening governance, bridging divides, protecting data, and guiding AI ethically, we can build a more inclusive and resilient digital ecosystem. Thank you to all participants for your energy and curiosity, and to Zaina Foundation team, Ramada Resort, Giraffe Beach Hotel, Tanzania CSOs Forum, Tanzania Digital Rights Coalition, Internet Society Tanzania Chapter and Tech & Media Convergence for their support and expert facilitation. Together, we are charting a path toward a truly digital-ready Tanzania.