



Rwanda Internet Governance Forum 2026

“Advancing Inclusive, Trusted, and Multi-Stakeholder Internet Governance for Rwanda’s Digital Future”

1. Background and Context

The Internet has become a critical driver of socio-economic development, innovation, and governance, making inclusive, secure, and forward-looking Internet governance frameworks increasingly essential. As a global platform, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) brings together governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical community, academia, and users to collaboratively address Internet-related public policy issues through a multi-stakeholder approach.

The Rwanda Internet Governance Forum (Rwanda IGF) is a national multi-stakeholder platform aligned with the mandate of the United Nations Secretary-General and the global IGF. It provides an open and inclusive space for dialogue on Internet governance issues, ensuring that Rwanda's digital development agenda is shaped through broad participation and shared responsibility. Rwanda's commitment to digital transformation is clearly reflected in the second National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), which positions digital transformation as a cross-cutting enabler for inclusive growth, improved governance, and sustainable development.

In parallel with global IGF priorities such as digital inclusion, trust and security, emerging technologies, human rights online, and sustainable development, Rwanda continues to strengthen a resilient and people-centred digital ecosystem. Against this backdrop, the Rwanda IGF 2026, under the theme ***“Advancing Inclusive, Trusted, and Multi-Stakeholder Internet Governance for Rwanda’s Digital Future,”*** provides a national platform to assess progress, address emerging challenges, and reinforce multi-stakeholder cooperation, while ensuring that Rwanda's perspectives contribute meaningfully to regional, continental, and global Internet governance processes.

2. Objectives of Rwanda IGF2026

The overall objective of Rwanda IGF 2026 is to provide a national, inclusive, and multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue on Internet governance issues that support Rwanda's digital transformation agenda.

The specific objectives of the forum are to:

- Facilitate informed and inclusive dialogue on key Internet governance issues affecting Rwanda's digital ecosystem.
- Discuss progress and challenges in implementing NST2 digital transformation priorities from an Internet governance perspective.
- Strengthen trust, security, and resilience of Rwanda's Internet infrastructure and digital services.
- Recommendation for creation of a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism in form of a Secretariat)
- Generate policy-relevant recommendations that contribute to national, regional, and global Internet governance processes.

3. Theme: ***“Advancing Inclusive, Trusted, and Multi-Stakeholder Internet Governance for Rwanda’s Digital Future”***

This overarching theme underlines the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach to internet governance. It reflects Rwanda's commitment to leveraging the Internet as a catalyst for national development while ensuring that digital transformation is inclusive, resilient, and anchored in sound governance principles. It underscores the importance of trust, security, and sustainability as foundational elements for a thriving digital economy and an empowered digital society.

4. Proposed Thematic Tracks

The forum will be structured around three key general thematic tracks, each addressing key aspects of internet governance. In addition to the general thematic tracks, Rwanda IGF 2026 will feature a **Special High-Level Parliamentary Policy Dialogue**, recognizing the important role of Parliament in shaping Rwanda's digital governance landscape.

4.1 Special High-Level Session: Parliamentary Policy Dialogue

Theme: Strengthening Legislative and Policy Frameworks for an Inclusive, Secure, and Trusted Digital Rwanda

This high-level session, integrated into the Rwanda IGF program, will provide Parliamentarians with a focused platform to engage other stakeholders on key Internet governance and digital policy issues. It will highlight Parliament's role in law-making, oversight, and representation within Rwanda's digital transformation agenda under NST2 and Vision 2050, with outcomes contributing directly to Rwanda IGF 2026 policy messages and recommendations.

4.2 General Thematic Tracks

The Rwanda IGF 2026 discussions will be organized around the following thematic tracks:

1. Digital Public Infrastructure and Virtual Assets Regulation: Building a Trusted Digital Economy for Rwanda

Digital transformation is reshaping economic and governance systems globally. Digital Public Infrastructure comprising core digital building blocks such as digital identity, payment systems, and data exchange platforms is increasingly recognized as the backbone of modern digital economies.

At the same time, virtual assets and blockchain technologies are creating new opportunities for financial innovation, investment, and digital entrepreneurship. Rwanda has recently taken an important step by adopting a legal framework regulating virtual assets, positioning the country to both encourage innovation and mitigate financial and cybersecurity risks.

Bringing these two topics together enables a broader conversation on how strong digital infrastructure, sound governance frameworks, and multi-stakeholder collaboration can support secure digital financial ecosystems while protecting citizens and maintaining trust online. This discussion also aligns with global dialogue within the Internet Governance Forum community on trusted and inclusive digital ecosystems.

To examine these developments holistically, the panel discussion is structured into **two complementary sessions**. The first session focuses on the **foundational role of Digital Public Infrastructure**, addressing trust, interoperability, security, and governance mechanisms needed to support digital financial ecosystems. The second session explores **Rwanda's Virtual Assets regulatory framework and innovation landscape**, examining how the country can enable fintech growth, encourage responsible blockchain innovation, and ensure consumer protection and financial integrity.

2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance and Accountability in Rwanda

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly being deployed across Rwanda's digital ecosystem, with applications in healthcare, education, agriculture, fintech, and public administration. AI systems are already supporting decision-making, enhancing service delivery, and driving innovation. For example, AI in Irembo services helps with citizen verification and improves efficiency in government service delivery. In healthcare, AI assists with patient triage, early diagnosis, and supports community health workers. Within the fintech sector, AI tools monitor mobile money transactions, prevent fraud, and enhance financial inclusion. In education, AI is being piloted to analyse student performance and provide personalized learning insights.

While the National AI Policy (2023) provides a strong and forward-looking foundation for responsible AI adoption in Rwanda, the rapid evolution of AI highlights the importance of progressively strengthening implementation and regulatory frameworks.

In this context, key considerations include the need to further clarify accountability across actors, enhance mechanisms for consistent application of policy principles, promote coordination across institutions, and reinforce safeguards in high-impact sectors such as healthcare, finance, and public services to sustain public trust and maximize benefits.

This panel will explore how Rwanda can translate the National AI Policy into practice, address governance gaps, and ensure that AI is deployed ethically, responsibly, and inclusively.

5. Expected Outcomes

Rwanda IGF 2026 is expected to achieve the following outcomes: Institutionalization of a Parliamentary Track within Rwanda's Internet Governance ecosystem. - informed policymaking, and sustained multi-stakeholder collaboration for an inclusive, secure, and rights-based digital transformation. - Practical and policy-oriented recommendations aligned with NST2 priorities. - Increased participation of youth in Internet governance processes. - Consolidated national inputs to regional and global IGF discussions.

6. Target Audience

The forum will bring together a diverse range of stakeholders, including: - Government institutions and policymakers - Private sector (ISPs, MNOs, tech companies, startups) - Civil society organizations - Academia and research institutions - Technical and Internet community - Youth, and women groups - Development partners and international organizations

7. Pre-Forum Activities

To build capacity and engage key stakeholders, the following pre-forum activities will be organized:

7.1 Rwanda School on Internet Governance (RWSIG) 2026

Before the main forum, the **Rwanda School on Internet Governance (2026)** will be hosted to build capacity and awareness among stakeholders. The school will target **100 participants** from diverse stakeholder groups, including government, civil society, academia, the private sector, and technical communities. The curriculum will cover foundational topics in internet governance, emerging trends, and Rwanda's digital transformation agenda.

7.2 Rwanda Youth IGF 2026.

The **Rwanda Youth IGF** is a platform dedicated to engaging young people in internet governance discussions. Before the main forum, the youth IGF will be hosted and will bring together **200 participants** from universities in Kigali, fostering youth-led initiatives and ensuring that the voices of the next generation are integrated into national and global internet governance processes.

7.3 Launch of the Rwanda Parliamentarian IGF Track.

The forum will also witness the official launch of the **Rwanda Parliamentarian IGF Track**, a dedicated platform that brings legislators into the heart of national dialogue on digital transformation, internet governance, and public policy. This track underscores the important role of Parliament in shaping inclusive, secure, and future-ready digital laws that advance Rwanda's development agenda.

8. Rationale

This year's forum will convene 300 participants and will attract a large number of online participants. Moderators will provide equal engagement opportunities to remote participants.

9. Forum Agenda

Time	Session	Panellist/Speakers	Duration
09:00-09:30	Registration of Participants	Protocol	30 Min
09:30-09:35	Opening remarks	Mr. Robert N. Ford Chairman-RwIGF	5 Min
09:35-09:45	Keynote Speech	UN Resident Coordinator to Rwanda.	10 Min
09:45- 09:55	Guest of Honor Remarks	Hon. Min. Paula INGABIRE MINICT	10 Min
09:55-10:55	<p>Track 1: Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and Virtual Assets Regulation: Building a Trusted Digital Economy for Rwanda.</p> <p>Digital transformation is reshaping economic and governance systems globally. Digital Public Infrastructure comprising core digital building blocks such as digital identity, payment systems, and data exchange platforms is increasingly recognized as the backbone of modern digital economies.</p> <p>At the same time, virtual assets and blockchain technologies are creating new opportunities for financial innovation, investment, and digital entrepreneurship. Rwanda has recently taken an important step by adopting a legal framework regulating virtual assets, positioning the country to both encourage innovation and mitigate financial and cybersecurity risks.</p> <p>Bringing these two topics together enables a broader conversation on how strong digital infrastructure, sound governance frameworks, and multi-stakeholder collaboration can support secure digital financial ecosystems while protecting citizens and maintaining trust online. This discussion also aligns with global dialogue within the Internet Governance Forum community on trusted and inclusive digital ecosystems.</p> <p>Session 1: Foundations of Trusted Digital Financial Ecosystems. Moderator: Olivier Manzi</p> <p>The session will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Public Infrastructure as a Foundation for Digital Finance exploring how digital identity systems, interoperable payment platforms, and secure data exchange enable innovation in digital financial services. Trust, Security, and Data Governance by ensuring cybersecurity, privacy protection, and reliable digital infrastructure in emerging financial ecosystems. 	<p>MINECOFIN/BNR</p> <p>NIDA</p> <p>Bank of Kigali</p> <p>MTN Rwanda</p>	60 Min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Digital Ecosystem Governance looking at the role of government, regulators, private sector innovators, the technical community, academia, and civil society in shaping responsible digital innovation. 		
10:55- 11:10	Coffee break	Hotel	15 Min
11:10- 12:10	<p>Session 2: Regulation, Innovation, and Digital Asset Opportunities. Moderator: Alex Ntale The session will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rwanda’s Virtual Assets Regulatory Framework: Overview of the key principles and objectives of the new Virtual Assets Law and its implications for market development and governance. Financial Innovation and Economic Opportunities by looking at how blockchain technologies, fintech startups, and digital entrepreneurs can leverage Rwanda’s digital infrastructure to develop new services and investment opportunities. Consumer Protection and Financial Integrity by addressing risks such as fraud, scams, money laundering, and market instability through responsible regulation and oversight. 	Rwanda Development Board (RDB) Capital Market Authority- CMA Rwanda Yellow Card-Rwanda Rwanda Law Reform Commission	60 Min
12:10- 13:00	<p>Track 2: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance and Accountability in Rwanda Moderator: Alain Ndayishimiye</p> <p>Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly being deployed across Rwanda’s digital ecosystem, with applications in healthcare, education, agriculture, fintech, and public administration. AI systems are already supporting decision-making, enhancing service delivery, and driving innovation. For example, AI in Irembo services helps with citizen verification and improves efficiency in government service delivery. In healthcare, AI assists with patient triage, early diagnosis, and supports community health workers. Within the fintech sector, AI tools monitor mobile money transactions, prevent fraud, and enhance financial inclusion. In education, AI is being piloted to analyse student performance and provide personalised learning insights.</p>	MINICT/RISA CMU Africa ISOC Global Smart Africa Alliance	50 Min

	<p>While the National AI Policy (2023) guides responsible AI adoption, Rwanda currently lacks a binding AI law. This situation creates several important challenges:</p> <p>First, there are liability gaps, as it is unclear who is legally responsible when AI systems produce harmful or incorrect outcomes, whether government agencies, public officials, or AI developers. Second, there is limited enforceability, since the ethical and operational standards set out in the policy are voluntary and cannot be legally enforced.</p> <p>Third, there is a risk of fragmentation, as different institutions may adopt AI in ways that are incompatible, creating uneven protections and potential risks for users.</p> <p>Finally, the potential for misuse exists, as sensitive AI applications in healthcare, finance, or public services may harm citizens if there is no legal accountability or oversight.</p> <p>This panel will explore how Rwanda can translate the National AI Policy into practice, address governance gaps, and ensure that AI is deployed ethically, responsibly, and inclusively.</p>		
13:00- 13:20	RW School on IG Certificate Awarding Ceremony	Chairman- RwIGF	20 Min
13:20- 14:30	Lunch	Hotel	70 Min