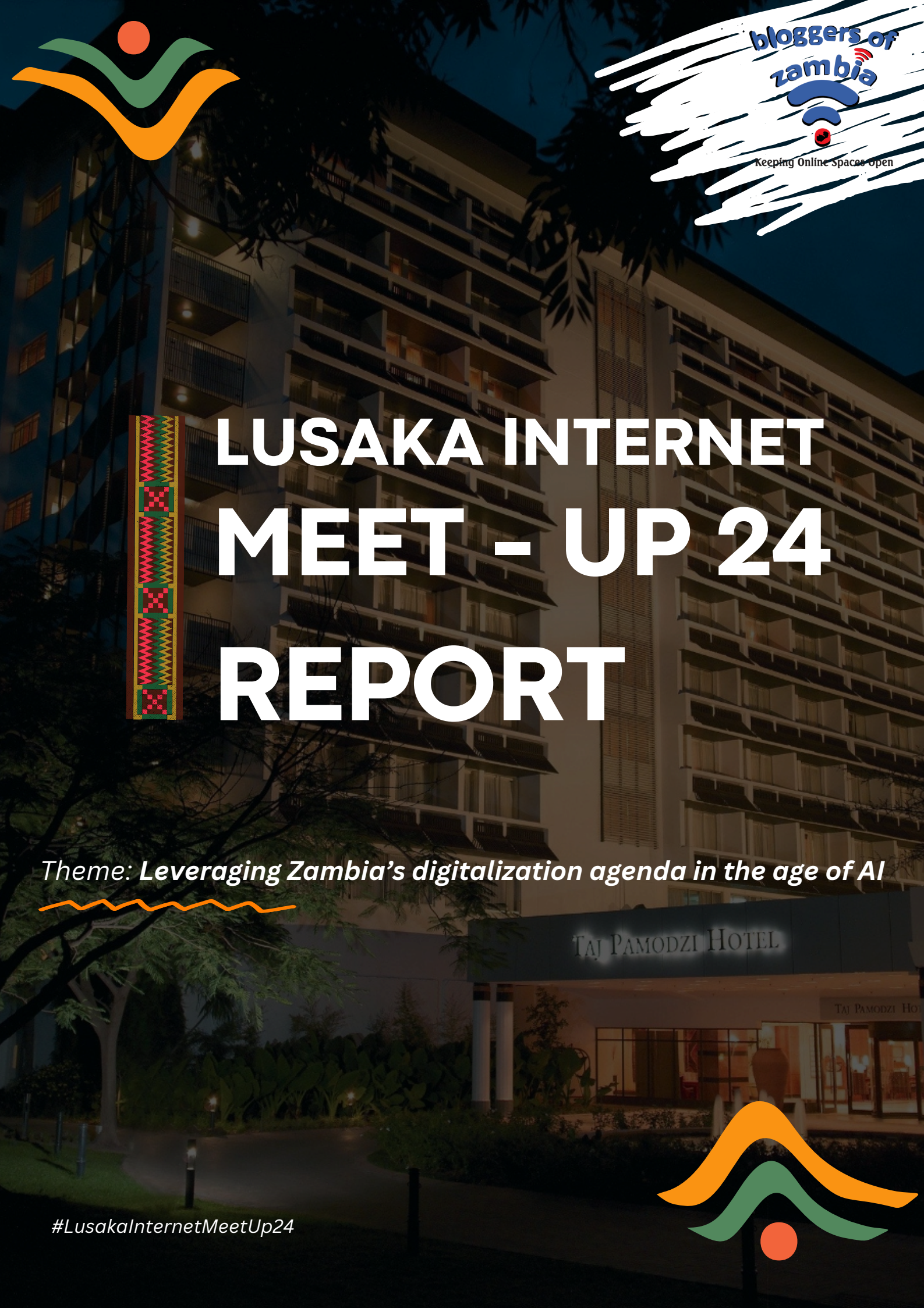
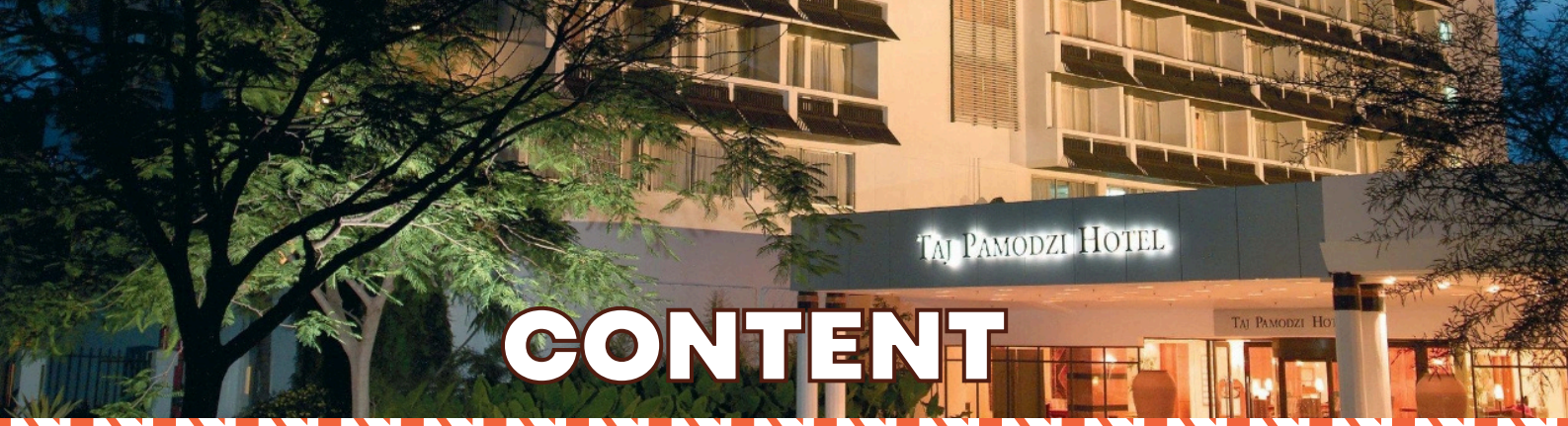


LUSAKA INTERNET MEET - UP 24 REPORT

Theme: ***Leveraging Zambia's digitalization agenda in the age of AI***

#LusakaInternetMeetUp24



CONTENT

ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AR	Augmented Reality
ATI	Access to Information
AfIGF	African Union Internet Governance Forum
BloggersZM	Bloggers of Zambia
BVR	Biometric Voter Registration
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
DRIF	Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum
ECZ	Electoral Commission of Zambia
EU	European Union
Fintech	Financial Technology
GIS	Geographical Information System
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HRC	Human Rights Commission
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ICTAZ	ICT Association of Zambia
IoT	Internet of Things
ISOC	Internet Society
IGF	Internet Governance Forum
LLM	Large Language Module
MiSA	Media Institute for Southern Africa
MoT	Ministry of Technology and Science
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
OMR	Optical Mark Recognition
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
PAAGZ	People's Action for Accountability and Good Governance
PIN	Paradigm Initiative
USSD	Unstructured Supplementary Service Data
ZCTU	Zambia Congress of Trade Unions
ZICTA	Zambia Information Technology Authority

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Bloggers of Zambia acknowledges the profound support towards the successful hosting of the Lusaka Internet Meet-Up 2024. The success journey of Lusaka Internet Meet-Up was pivotal in sustaining the momentum of the convening which began in 2019 creating a platform for engagement for stakeholders and where issues n digitalization are debated and shaped in Zambia.

We extend our gratitude to our partners and stakeholders for their technical and financial support and whose invaluable support enabled us deliver a successful event.

- European Union
- Internet Society (Zambia Chapter)
- Ministry of Technology and Science
- National Endowment for Democracy
- Paradigm Initiative
- Swedish Embassy in Zambia
- USAID, through FHI360 and Internews Zambia Network

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to improving the digital landscape and well being of our communities in Zambia. Your collective efforts have been instrumental in driving our shared agenda and commitments.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 Lusaka Internet Meet-Up, held on July 18 and 19 brought together various key stakeholders, including civil society organizations, digital rights advocates, technology experts, diplomats, journalists, government representatives, college and university students, lawyers, researchers and consumers to discuss the current landscape of internet governance, digital rights, and the future of online freedom in Zambia andthe broader African region.

The event, organized by Bloggers of Zambia aimed to foster dialogue on discussing and shaping digitalisation issues such as internet accessibility, privacy and data protection, freedom of expression, cybersecurity and the implications of emerging technologies on human rights. It also sought to strengthen collaborations among stakeholders advocating for a free, open, and inclusive internet for all. Key Highlights and Achievements:

Participation

The Lusaka Internet Meet-Up hosted 366 attendees from diverse sectors, including local and international organizations. These participants engaged in interactive panel discussions, breakout sessions, exhibition, demonstrations and networking opportunities, enhancing cross-sector collaboration.

Key themes/ topics discussed

There were five sub-themes and these are;

a). Digital Inclusion and Access: Strategies for improving internet access in underserved and rural areas, addressing the digital divide, and promoting affordable connectivity solutions.

b). Internet Freedom and Cybersecurity: A focus on balancing cybersecurity measures with the protection of human rights, particularly freedom of expression and privacy in the digital age.

c). Impact of Cyber Laws: Examining Zambia's Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Act and other related legislation and policies and their implications for digital rights with a call for reforms to align with international human rights standards.

d). Data Privacy and Protection: Discussions on safeguarding citizens' data in the face of increasing digitization, ensuring accountability for data misuse and the importance of enacting robust data protection frameworks.

e). Emerging Technologies: Exploring the impact of technologies such as AI, blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT) on digital rights, privacy, and internet governance.

Collaborative Outcomes:

The Lusaka Internet Meet-Up created a platform for partnerships among various stakeholders such as between civil society organizations and technology experts to advocate for policy changes around internet governance. Key collaborations were established for future projects aimed at expanding digital literacy, improving cybersecurity practices, and promoting open internet policies and open data practices.

Recommendations:

a). Policy Reform: A call for the revision of national cybersecurity laws to prioritize human rights protection with an emphasis on public participation and inclusion in policy formulation.

b). Capacity Building: Strengthening digital literacy and cybersecurity skills across communities with a focus on youth and marginalized groups to ensure wider inclusion in the digital economy.

c). Public-Private Partnerships: Encouraging collaboration between governments, private technology companies and civil society to improve internet access and promote accountable use of emerging technologies.

Challenges Identified

a). Limited awareness of digital rights and the potential negative impact of internet governance policies on personal freedoms.

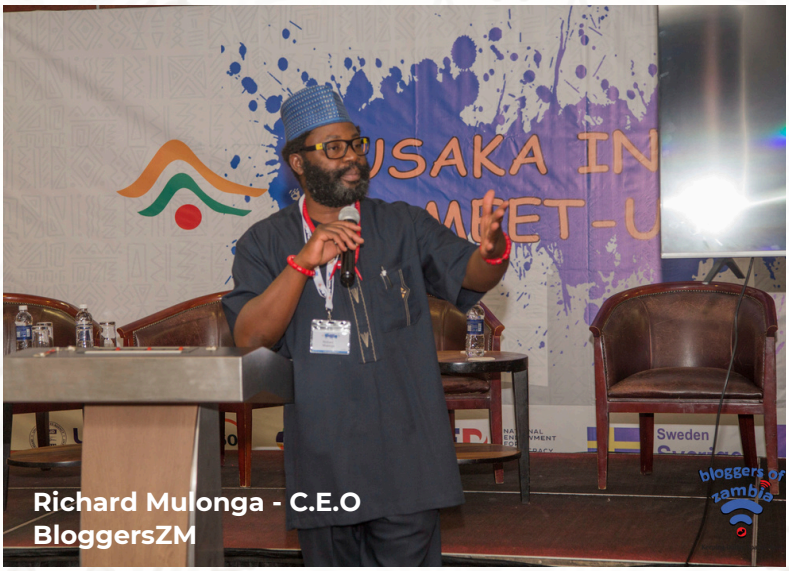
b). Gapping digital divide between urban and rural areas, which is exacerbated by lowliteracy, high internet costs and inadequate infrastructure to facilitate access.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents an overview of the deliberations of the 2024 Lusaka Internet Meet-Up which was held under the theme ***"Leveraging Zambia's digitalization agenda in the age of AI"***. Bloggers of Zambia convened the Meet-up. A total of 366 delegates attended the two-day event. Additionally, there were 61 organisations that participated with 32 sessions hosted on the agenda. Delegates were drawn from Zambia, Nigeria, Kenya, Finland and Zimbabwe.

CONTEXT SETTING

The Bloggers of Zambia CEO, Richard Mulonga provided background on the Lusaka Internet Meet-Up, noting that Bloggers of Zambia established the eventin 2019 as an annual, in-country, multi-stakeholder event focused on digitalization in Zambia. The event aims to promote an affordable, free, open, resilient, and inclusive Internet aligned with global best practices.



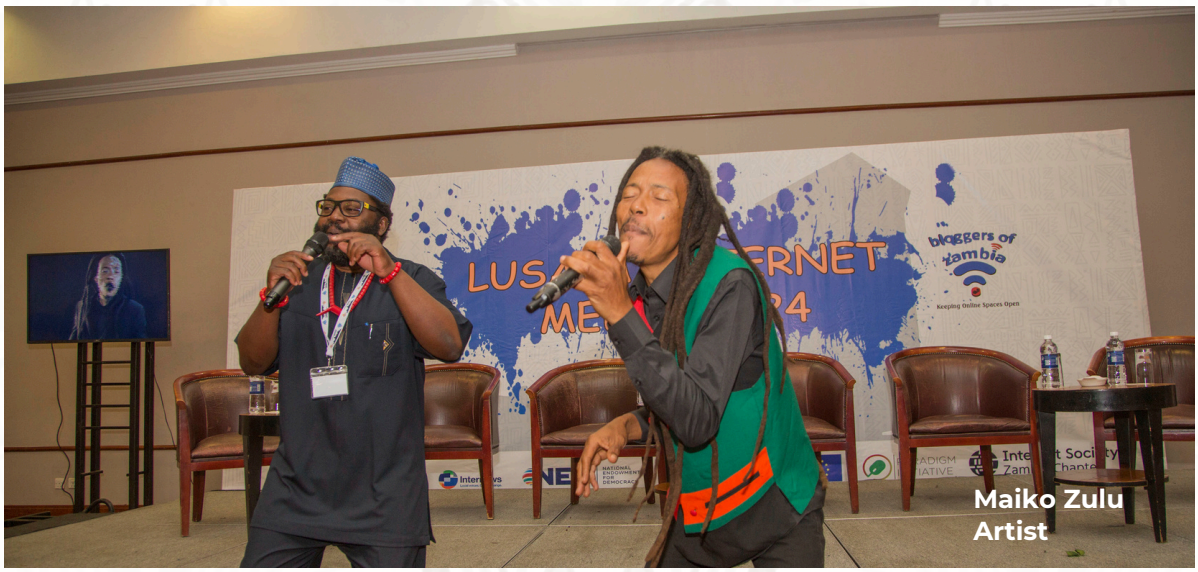
Richard Mulonga - C.E.O BloggersZM

The Lusaka Internet Meet Up draws various stakeholders including civil society, academia, regulators, media, law enforcement, lawyers, policymakers, legislators, service providers, technologists and government agencies and ministries. These stakeholders gather to exchange experiences, discuss and debate policy directions and legislative processes, and network on digitalization issues.

Mr. Mulonga emphasized that the event is open to interested international groups and partners supporting local efforts. It fosters idea exchanges, knowledge sharing and collaborations to harness digital transformation in law, policy, regulations, education, and awareness. Mr. Mulonga highlighted the Lusaka Internet Meet-Up as crucial for advancing discussions and collaborations on Zambia's digital transformation challenges and opportunities. Serving as a platform for capacity building and formulating legal and policy recommendations on Digital Rights and Internet Governance for policymakers, legislators, regulators, and law enforcement.

He noted Zambia's increasing Internet penetration alongside government efforts to digitalize services, urging policymakers to prioritize digitalization issues. He called for a national self-assessment on Internet accessibility and urged all stakeholders to synergize efforts during the 4th Lusaka Internet Meet-Up to advance AI-related initiatives. The CEO welcomed attendees and stressed the importance of proactive engagement throughout the proceedings.

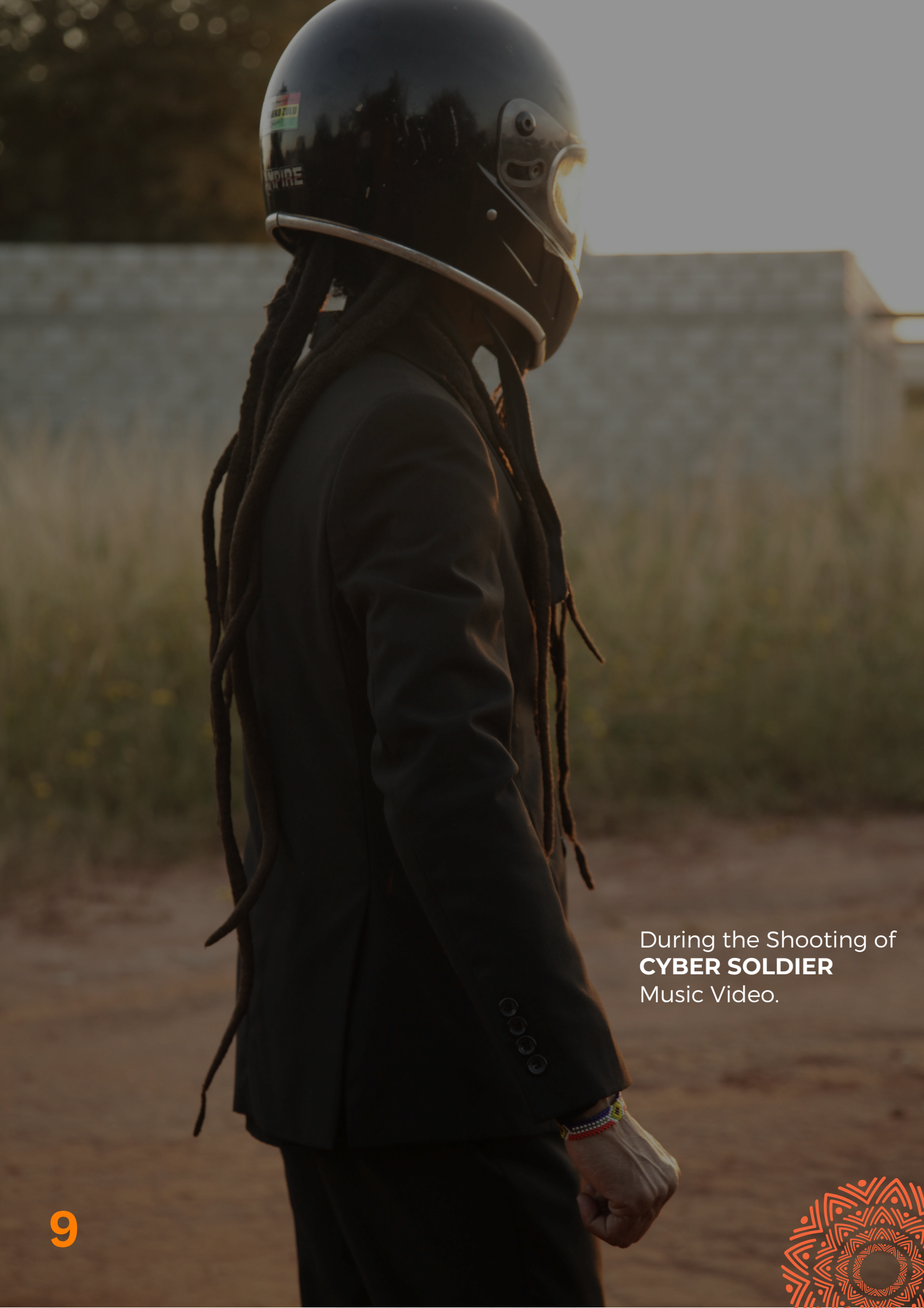
Launch of Digital Rights song – Cyber Soldier



Maiko Zulu
Artist

Once the meeting context has been set, Bloggers of Zambia launched a Digital Rights Song entitled ***Cyber Soldier***. The reggae hit song was written and Produced by Richard Mulonga and Maiko Zulu. It would serve as a tool for education, awareness and advocacy purposes.

Mr. Mulonga expressed gratitude to the German Development Agency GIZ through the EnAct Program for supporting the production of the song. Maiko Zulu performed the song to the delight and appreciation of meeting delegates who were informed, educated and entertained by the message and lyrics of the song.



During the Shooting of
CYBER SOLDIER
Music Video.

OPENING CEREMONY

Misozi Tembo, Vice Chairperson of Bloggers of Zambia Board, delivered the Opening remarks. She highlighted the crucial role that Bloggers of Zambia played in ensuring the Lusaka Meet Up was convened. The goal of the event was to engage everyone in digital conversations. Given that Zambia has entered the digital era, the theme of the Lusaka Meet-Up 2024 —***"Leveraging Zambia's Digital Transformation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence"***— could not be more timely.

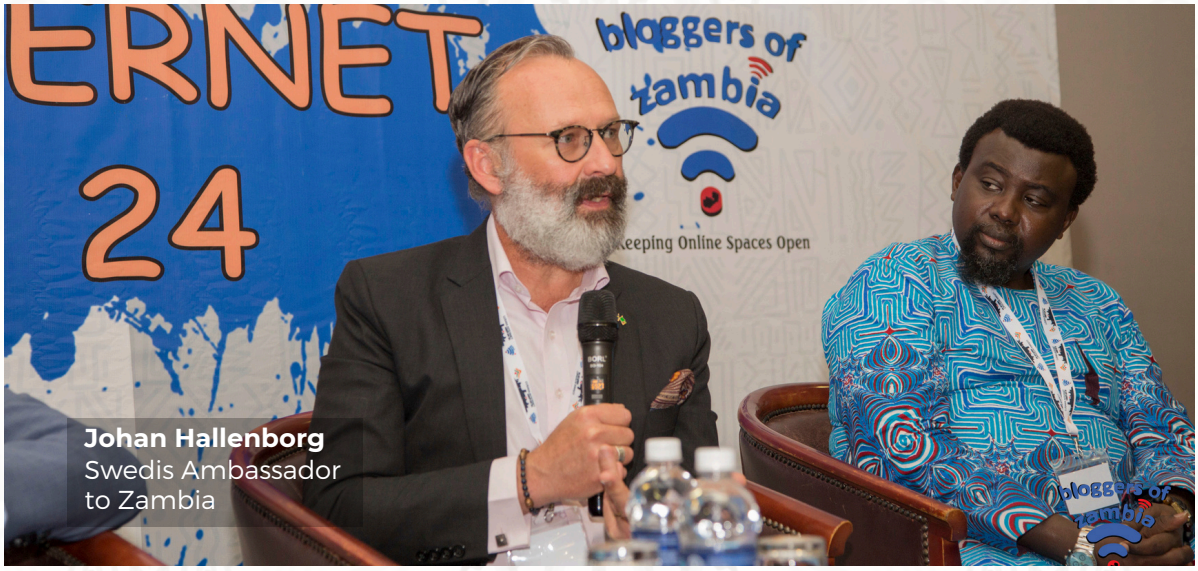
Ms. Tembo further noted that the digital landscape is evolving at an unprecedented pace, bringing with it numerous opportunities, challenges, insights, and lessons. Rapid digital transformations have become the backbone of society, impacting sectors such as education, healthcare, commerce, and governance. These changes are also reshaping individual and community relationships.

However, she pointed out that Zambia has made remarkable progress in Internet penetration, now standing at 64%. The country has seen the rise of innovative technology startups and a growing, diverse online community. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is at the forefront of this transformation, shifting industries, creating job opportunities, increasing value for customers and citizens, and addressing pressing challenges such as financial transactions and communication.

She concluded by emphasizing that great power comes with great responsibility. As citizens harness the potential of AI, it is essential to ensure that the internet is used ethically and inclusively to protect the freedoms of all individuals. Recognizing that data is the new currency,

it is crucial to protect privacy, safeguard online systems, and foster a digital environment where freedom of expression and access to information are upheld. It is also important to address the issue of digital literacy, particularly in rural areas and among women and girls. Everyone is called upon to be active participants in this digital age, not just users but contributors to meaningful change.

Remarks by Swedish Ambassador to Zambia - Johan Hallenborg



The Swedish Embassy, represented by the Ambassador, expressed its pride in supporting the Lusaka Internet Meet-Up. This support reflects the Embassy's commitment to promoting freedom of expression, including online, and its interest in fostering innovation through new technologies. The Ambassador also extended an invitation to the audience to look out for the Stockholm Internet Forum, which will be held next year, and encouraged everyone to participate.

The Ambassador noted that digitalization impacts all aspects of society, highlighting the need for a broad and comprehensive agenda. He emphasized that AI is developing rapidly and fundamentally affecting society, bringing both opportunities and challenges in this new era. Society must strive to evolve alongside digital transformation.

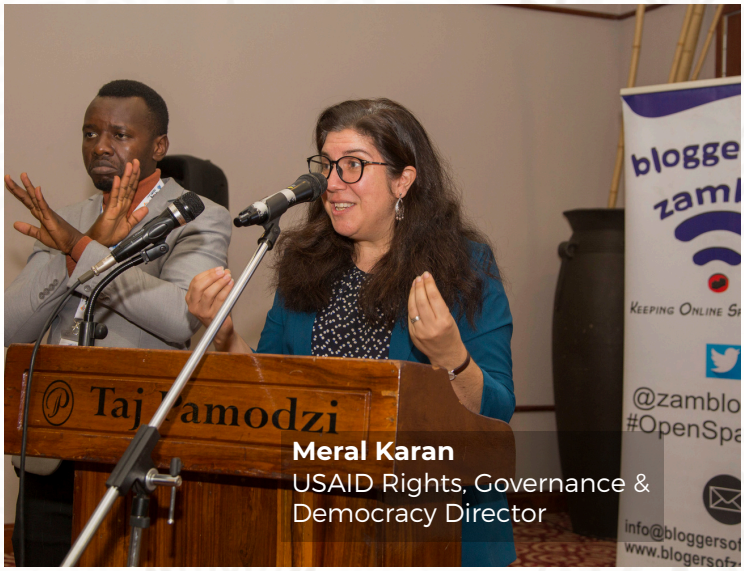
Additionally, the Ambassador stressed the importance of a free, open, and secure internet where human rights are respected. He pointed out that the same human rights applied offline also apply online, and that governments have the same responsibilities and obligations in the digital world as in the physical world. He said that human rights, democracy, and the rule of law must be upheld and secured by states, as they form the foundation for all standards and regulations in cyberspace.

The Ambassador also highlighted the need for international collaboration to achieve the goals of a free and secure internet and to maximize the benefits of AI. He mentioned that UN Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed Sweden's and Zambia's Ambassadors at the UN in New York as facilitators for the Global Digital Compact (GDC) process. He noted that in Zambia, the Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Act, adopted in 2021, is under review to better align with human rights standards, and there is also a new draft bill. However, he indicated that the Embassy is not aware of the current status of this draft and would welcome information from the Zambian Government on the draft's status, the timeline for its presentation to Parliament, and the extent to which stakeholder input has been incorporated.

The Ambassador further mentioned that Sweden supports various interventions and innovations related to digitalization in Zambia, including cybersecurity and Access to Information (ATI) legislation, and expressed satisfaction that the ATI is now law. He noted that to increase internet access for rural women and girls, the joint UN GBV programme with the Zambian Government has established three ICT hubs in Itezhi Tezhi, Chisamba, and Chongwe. These hubs aim to help womenrealize the benefits of digital technology.

The Ambassador concluded by reiterating that international collaboration is essential for securing and maximizing the benefits of new technologies while managing their challenges. Such collaboration should include all stakeholders in a multi-stakeholder system to develop the framework, content, and common standards for the internet.

USAID Democracy Rights and Governance Director – Meral Karan



Meral Karan
USAID Rights, Governance & Democracy Director

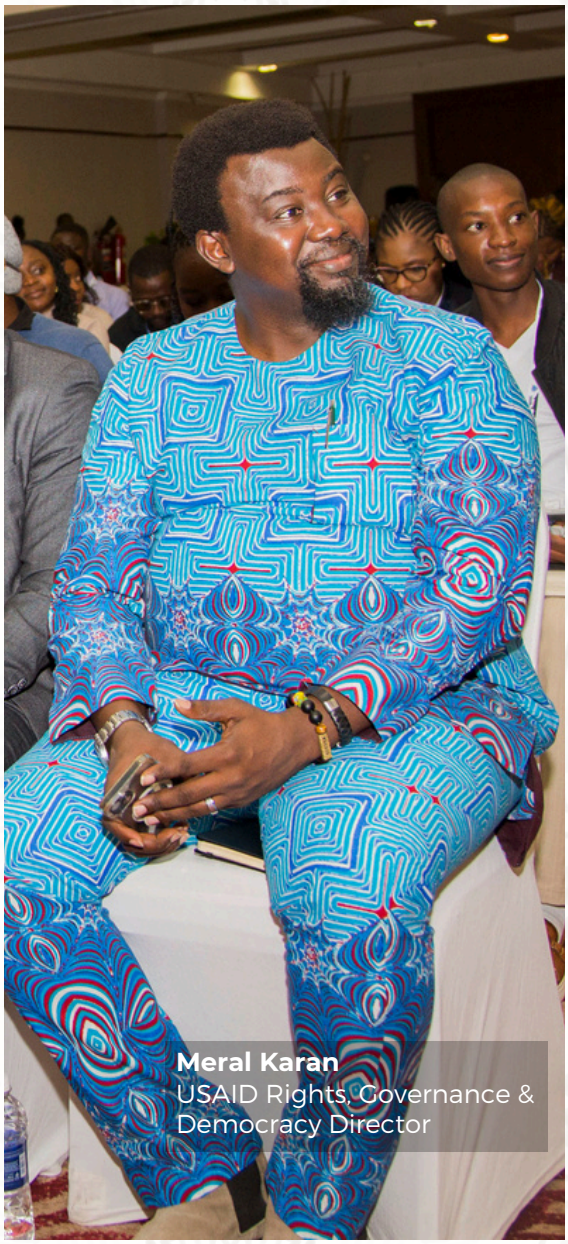
The USAID Director Rights, Governance and Democracy, Meral Karan explained that the agency's program and sponsorship supports Open Spaces Zambia project which focuses on media and digital initiatives. This support extends to the Government of Zambia, civil society, media, and digital activists throughout the country, reinforcing freedom of

expression in both online and physical spaces.

Ms. Karan emphasized that, from USAID's perspective, these are critical conversations and the USAID supports them by contributing to policy frameworks and advocating for the adoption of digital access and digitalization systems. All individuals and citizens have the right to advocate for systems that protect data privacy and secure financial transactions.

She expressed confidence that the Lusaka Internet Meet-Up would contribute to these efforts.

Director Paradigm Initiative Nigeria (PIN) - Gbenga Sesan



Meral Karan
USAID Rights, Governance & Democracy Director

In his remarks, Paradigm Initiative Director Gbenga Sesan expressed his enthusiasm for collaborating with BloggersZM at the Lusaka Meet-Up, believing it holds great potential for the future. He acknowledged that many African countries, including various governments, have spent years developing comprehensive digital inclusion mechanisms, with the most valuable investment being in the people.

He noted that without connectivity, it is impossible to attend school, work, or even stay in touch with family. Unfortunately, this has resulted in the segregation of two distinct groups:

i) Those who are connected and continue to gain opportunities.

ii) Those who are disconnected and have lost significant opportunities.

Mr. Sesan further observed that what benefits Zambia can also benefit Nigeria, and if a country's actions do not advance the continent, there is a need to address this openly. He emphasized that African

countries should learn to complement each other in progressive initiatives, such as establishing independent data protection commissions free from government interference.

He highlighted three key actions that need to be taken by the continent as follows:

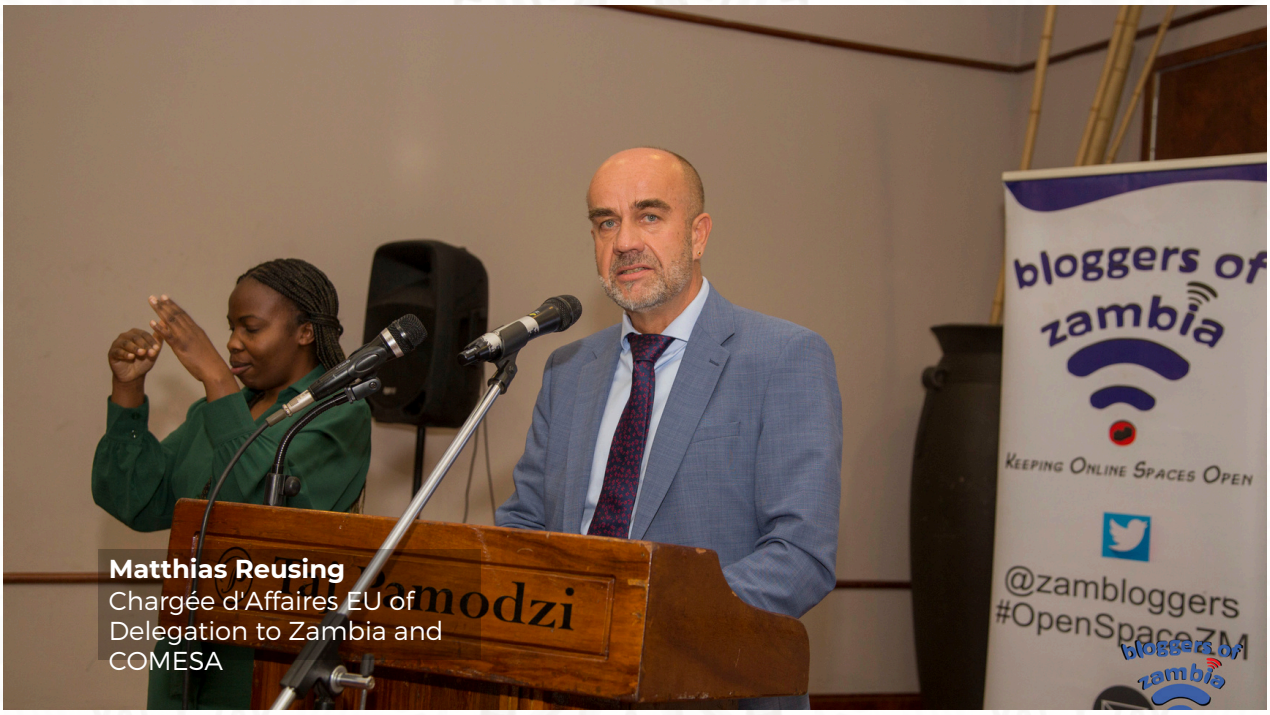
i) Focus on investing in and preparing people for the future. The content should not just serve as a market but as a hub of innovation.

ii) Work with policymakers and increase engagement in policy-making. Government and civil society organizations (CSOs) must collaborate closely.

iii) Ensure that all efforts are people-centred, ensuring that everyone benefits.

Chargée d'Affaires EU of Delegation to Zambia and COMESA - Matthias Reusing

Ambassador Mathias stated that the EU has long supported digital governance by setting standards and regulations that prioritize individual rights while fostering innovation and economic growth. He cited the UN E-Governance Survey 2022, which ranked Denmark and Finland highest for online services and telecommunications infrastructure.



Matthias Reusing
Chargée d'Affaires EU of Delegation to Zambia and COMESA

Ambassador Mathias stated that the EU has long supported digital governance by setting standards and regulations that prioritize individual rights while fostering innovation and economic growth. He cited the UN E-Governance Survey 2022, which ranked Denmark and Finland highest for online services and telecommunications infrastructure.

He also noted that the US has recently developed a comprehensive regulatory framework for Artificial Intelligence. This framework aims to ensure that AI systems are developed ethically and respect fundamental rights.

Ambassador Mathias expressed his satisfaction with Zambia's progress towards digitalization, particularly its digitalization agenda in 2023. He encouraged COMESA member states and Europe to support Zambia in achieving its goals. This support should leverage European expertise and resources to promote infrastructure development, digital literacy, and a digital economy while ensuring that no one is left behind.

Additionally, he mentioned that, through the African Union's (AU) support programs, experts from GIZ visited Zambia in May to advance efforts in promoting robust data protection policies. These efforts are crucial for establishing a free trade area and enhancing the governance of ICT policy frameworks. Comprehensive policies will foster competitive digital markets and facilitate cross-border digital connectivity.

Ambassador Mathias also noted that the US has recently adopted an upcoming E-Commerce program at COMESA, aimed at boosting digital payments. This program is expected to improve infrastructure and make digital payments more accessible regionally.

KEYNOTESPEECH

Minister of Technology and Science Key Note Address delivered by Dr. Brilliant Habeenzu, Permanent Secretary

Prior to delivering the keynote address, Dr Brilliant Habeenzu Permanent Secretary begun by highlighting some of the interventions undertaken by the government of the Republic of Zambia through the Ministry Technology and Science including:

Prior to delivering the keynote address, Dr. Brilliant Habeenzu Permanent Secretary begun by highlighted some of the interventions undertaken by the government of the Republic of Zambia through the Ministry Technology and Science including:

- Acquisition of Starlink satellite kits which are 100 percent available in the country;
- Policy directives to upgrade Towers from 3 G to 4G and 5G networks;
- Connectivity to Zambia's neighboring countries; to bring about internet connectivity across the country;
- Rolling out a number of towers and ensuring tower connectivity in order for the internet to be accessible;
- Policy Level interventions including the ICT policy which was launched;
- The Government is Still working on the cyber security and cybercrimes bill to ensure online transactions in cyberspace are safe and clean;
- The Data Commissioner to operationalize the Data Protection Act is in place and is also addressing issues pertaining to the startup bill;
- Interventions to optimize agriculture and ensure power output in the mines through the internet
- Working in the development of the AI policy for Zambia;
- The Creation of the PPDF– Private Public Development Forum as a platform for engagement with stakeholders

Dr Brilliant Habeenzu
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Tech & Science

Keynote Address by Dr. Brilliant Habeenzu, Permanent Secretary

The keynote address was delivered on behalf of Honourable Felix Mutati Minister of Science and Technology, by the Permanent Secretary, Dr. Brilliant Habeenzu. In his speech, the Minister highlighted the importance of the Internet Meet-Up Gathering as a crucial platform for advancing digital transformation through information sharing, networking, and forging partnerships. He emphasized the need to build and sustain this initiative for the future.

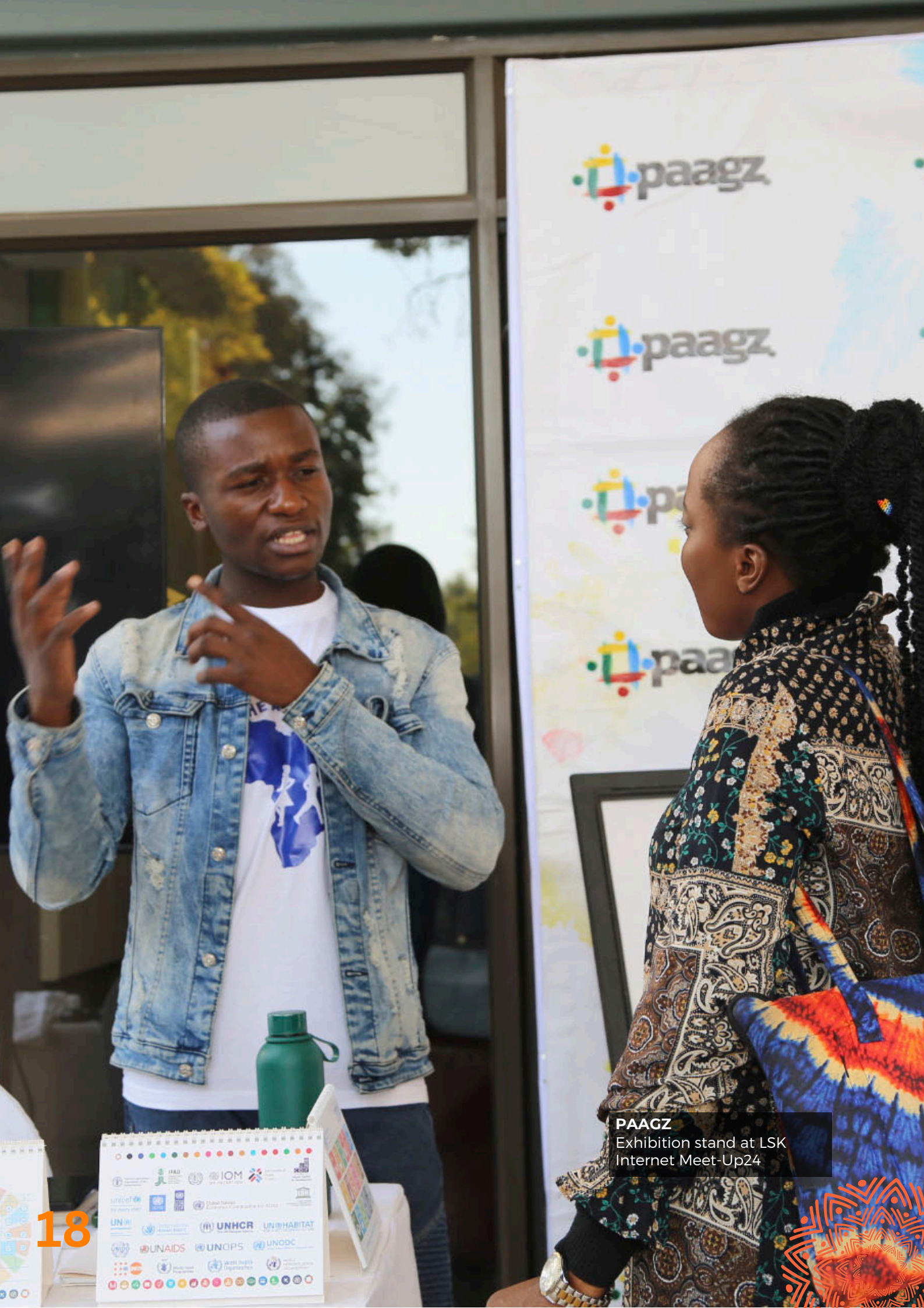
He commended the organizers of the meet-up, including Bloggers of Zambia and their partners, for their dedicated efforts to fostering a vibrant and inclusive digital community. He noted that the government is equally committed to creating a digitally inclusive society and acknowledged the presence of all stakeholders, whose participation underscored the importance of a collaborative approach to shaping the digital future.

The Minister stated that, as partners in the ICT sector, there is a collective determination to be as inclusive as possible regarding increased access to internet freedom. He observed that we live in an era where digital technology and Artificial Intelligence are transforming every aspect of life—from communication and business to education and healthcare—and that Zambia should be an active participant in this transformation.

He highlighted that the theme ***"Leveraging Zambia's Digital Transformation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence"*** aligns well with the government's digitalization agenda as outlined in the Eighth National Development Plan, which aims to create a digital economy. He emphasized that digital transformation is a crucial catalyst for job creation, digital entrepreneurship, economic transformation, and social development, leading to improved livelihoods.

The Minister recognized the remarkable talent and innovation among the youth, stressing that they must play a central role and benefit from the digital revolution, ensuring inclusivity for all Zambians. He noted that one of the emerging technologies related to digital transformation is Artificial Intelligence, which offers unprecedented opportunities to enhance efficiency in service delivery, drive innovation, and address complex challenges—from predictive analytics in agriculture to personalized learning in education. He emphasized that AI holds the promise of transforming Zambia's key sectors.

The Minister also stressed the importance of protecting fundamental rights in the digital space, including the right to privacy, freedom of expression, and access to information.



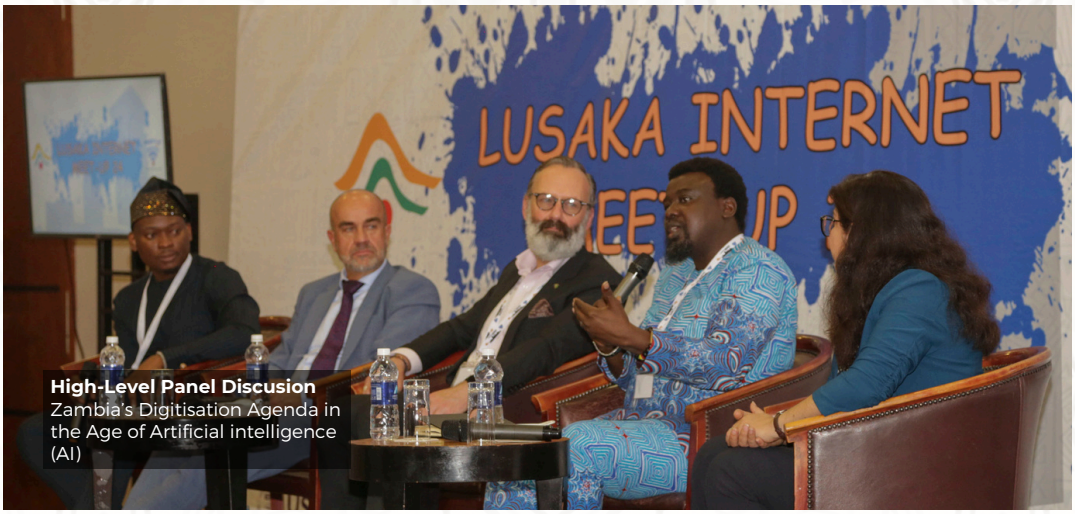
PAAGZ
Exhibition stand at LSK Internet Meet-Up24

He highlighted that AI must be developed and deployed ethically, upholding values and protecting human rights. He urged vigilance against biases in AI algorithms, safeguarding privacy, and ensuring transparency and accountability in AI systems. He called for robust policies, regulatory frameworks, and continuous dialogue among all stakeholders.

However, the Minister acknowledged that while achievements are being celebrated, the challenges associated with digital transformation must not be overlooked. He pointed out pressing issues such as cybersecurity threats, the digital divide, and the need for digital literacy. He suggested that fostering public-private partnerships, investing in digital infrastructure, and promoting digital education are key to creating a resilient and inclusive digital ecosystem.

In conclusion, the Minister reaffirmed the government's support for engagements like the 2024 Lusaka Meet-Up, which facilitates the cross-pollination of ideas to create a digital space that is inclusive and responsive to citizens' daily needs. He emphasized that meaningful discussions and insights harness the power of technology to drive sustainable development and improve the lives of all Zambians.

High-Level Panel on Zambia's Digitisation Agenda in the Age of Artificial intelligence (AI)



High-Level Panel Discusion
Zambia's Digitisation Agenda in the Age of Artificial intelligence (AI)

The Panelist Included:

i) *Dr. Brilliant Habeenzu– Permanent Secretary Ministry of Technology and Science*
ii) *Johan Hallenborg- Swedish Ambassador to Zambia*
iii) *Meral Karan- USAID Democracy, Rights and Governance*
iv) *Matthias Reusing- Chargée d'Affaires EU of Delegation to Zambia and COMESA*
v) *GbengaSesan- Director Paradigm Initiative Nigeria*

The discussion began with the PS highlighting the interventions that the government of the Republic of Zambia is undertaking in addressing issues around cyber security and cybercrime. He said cyber security must be enhanced and cybercrimes avoided, thus the Law on cyber security and cyber-crime is aimed at ensuring sanity in the cyber space and the government is ensuring that there is enforcement of the Law. He also mentioned that the government had created a free space for people to engage in online transactions which is bringing economic development in the country.

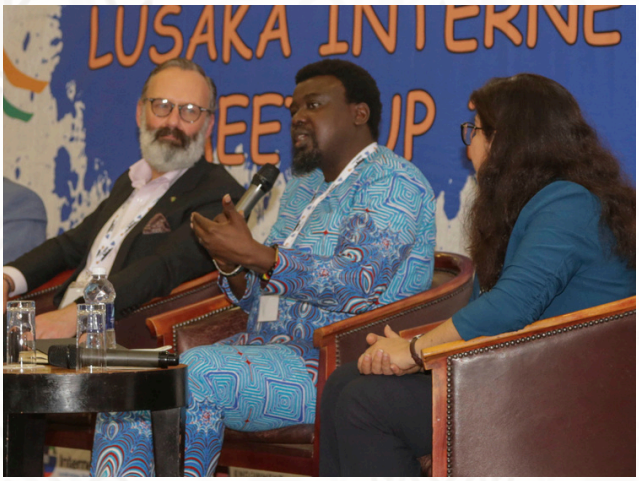
High-Level Panel
Group Photo

Dr. Habeenzu pointed out that the Start-Ups bill is being sponsored by the government and urged the Youth to be more innovative and develop the programs as a way of encouragement.

The Swedish Ambassador said they were motivated to support the Lusaka Internet Meet Up. He mentioned that Sweden is at the heart of promoting digital rights and such gatherings provide a great opportunity to collaborate with other countries and learn from one another. Also realizing that the gathering brought in the government was indeed a great opportunity as the government plays a major role in promoting the country's digitalization agenda. He further mentioned that Sweden draws its motivation from the fact that the Lusaka Internet Meet Up had valuable context which are accessibility and affordability for all which is very cardinal.

Similarly, the USAID stated its strategies that contribute to digital democracy in Zambia.

Ms Karan highlighted that there is need to revolutionize the industry in Zambia, so as to ensure that the future and the future jobs are green. She further mentioned that there is the need to leverage the market and regulate the market as it is about profit and shareholder value. She also noted the need for data protection regulation and further mentioned that USAID has continued to work with many other CSOs on the program of digital rights and through engagement with universities and colleges on the USAID sponsored Open Spaces Zambia project.



Paradigm Initiative Chief Gbenga Sesan identified the opportunities that Zambia has in the Agenda of digital transformation. Mr. Sesan pointed out that progressive citizen engagement by CSOs is very cardinal in the program of transformation. Additionally, the highest-level participation of the government is requisite in CSOs programs. Mr. Sesan encouraged CSOs to take note as speeches and statements were being given by high level officials as they serve as stepping stones and can enable citizens to hold them accountable. Mr. Sesan noted that Zambia has also been consistent in collaborations with other countries African countries to exchange notes and learn from each other.

He encouraged all well-meaning citizens not to wait on telecommunication companies to provide Internet but that the government must be responsible for it and be held accountable for the money they invest in the telecommunications sector.

Plenary

In response to the question of how the program intends to cater for youths, women andthevulnerable in the rural areas bearing in mind the low levels of literacy; The panel highlighted the need to deliberate decentralized programming to promote digital inclusion with support from other partners. This would ensure everyone in society is engaged and takes part in awareness raising. Those with the ability to educate the less privileged need to take up the mantle and be influencers of digital usage.

On the other hand, it was realized that there is a need to capitalize on the aspect of digital inclusion by including the three major network service providers in the program to enhance efficiency in service delivery.

Acknowledging the universality of the internet and the collection of citizens' data from various entities and purposes, there is a need to assure citizens about how their data is protected on a global level. It was emphasized that AI and data protection are everyone's responsibility, which involves being vigilant about the data one shares online.

To address the balance between security and privacy, it was advised that involving leaders, holding them accountable, and establishing clear regulations are among the most effective measures.

Regarding best practices in cyber laws, it was noted that the laws applicable offline are the same as those applicable online. Thus, the same rights and limitations apply in both contexts.

Additionally, it was highlighted that there is a need to engage in fact-checking programs and raise awareness about such initiatives. In the agriculture sector, farmers are encouraged to leverage internet market information and certification resources for consumers.

DAYONE(1)-BREAK AWAYSESSIONSANDDELIBERATIONS

Navigating the Digital Shift: Evaluating the Role of Technology in Zambia's Elections

Presented by Alinani Simuchimba (Information Systems Manager- Electoral Commission of Zambia)

In his presentation he highlighted the integration of technology in Zambia's electoral process, examining the various digital tools and systems implemented to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and security of elections and every stage in the electoral process. Thus the presentation outline consisted of;

- Electoral Services Support;
- Delimitation & Voter Registration;
- Candidate Nominations and
- Results Management

Delimitation

Mr. Simuchimba explained that in order for ECZ to do a delimitation, it puts into consideration a few things among which include Geographical Information Systems (GIS) which is a provision of electronic systems to map polling stations. Relocate and re-align polling station and printing of PDFmapsfor sale to stakeholders.

Evolution of Voter Registration Technology in Zambia

It was stated that before the advancement of technology ECZ used manual form capture to register voters. In 2005 it moved to Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) Forms by using ink to capture fingerprints. But after the advancement of technology, in 2010 ECZ migrated to Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) kits which only managed to capture one finger print, while in 2020 there was an introduction of enhanced Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Kit which is able to capture all the ten finger prints. Mr.Simuchimba explained that this evolution was due to the coming in of the AI.

ADVANTAGES OF TECHNOLOGY AND AI ON THE USE BVR IN VOTER REGISTRATION

- It supports the registration and issuing of voter cards on the spot and provides for the ability to vote from anywhere
- ItDetects duplication
- During register inspection, it provides electronic platforms such as SMS, USSD, and Website to conduct Register Inspection
- Compile and publish accurate voters register for certification
- The De-duplication processes identify and remove duplicate voters
- It provides for online pre-voter registration
- New applicants access the Online Voter Registration Portal
- It helps Create an Account using a unique NRC
- Logs into account with username and OTP
- The Data Centers store information for all registered voters

CANDIDATE NOMINATION

During the candidate nomination, an electronic version of the register was used to process voters using the BVR Kit. CNC Software is used to capture candidate details and documentation after which the candidate details are validated.

The CNCSoftware generates Ballot templates, validates the candidate nomination details uploaded instantly to Cloud Storage after which the ballot templates are sent to print.

Evolution of Election Results Management Technology in Zambia

The presenter took time explaining the evolution of the election results management technology from 2006 when Fax Machines were used and Result forms were faxed and data manually inputted at ECZ Headquarters (HQ). In 2008 the Optical Mark Recognition & Fax Machines; Results forms were scanned and faxed to HQ for manual input.

In 2011 the SMS system was introduced where digital results were sent from BVR Kit via SMS Service Hardware & Forms Scanned. In 2016 SMS & Internet was used which brought about Digital Results sent via the Internet in addition to a scanned copy of the results forms.

In 2021 Web Services (APIs) were used to send the results in near real-time.

Election Support Centre Online App

The election support center online app can be accessed on any device on the URL: esc.eczovr.org. It is used to keep track of activities such as the deployment of materials and poll staff, opening and closing times of polling stations, incidents during, before and after poll day and re-deployed polling stations and totalling of results.

CHALLENGES

The main challenge that the Commission faces is equipment failure for instance failure to detect fingerprints The systems that the ECZ uses on poll day include:

- Early Warning System
- Election Support Center
- Conflict Management

Plenary Session

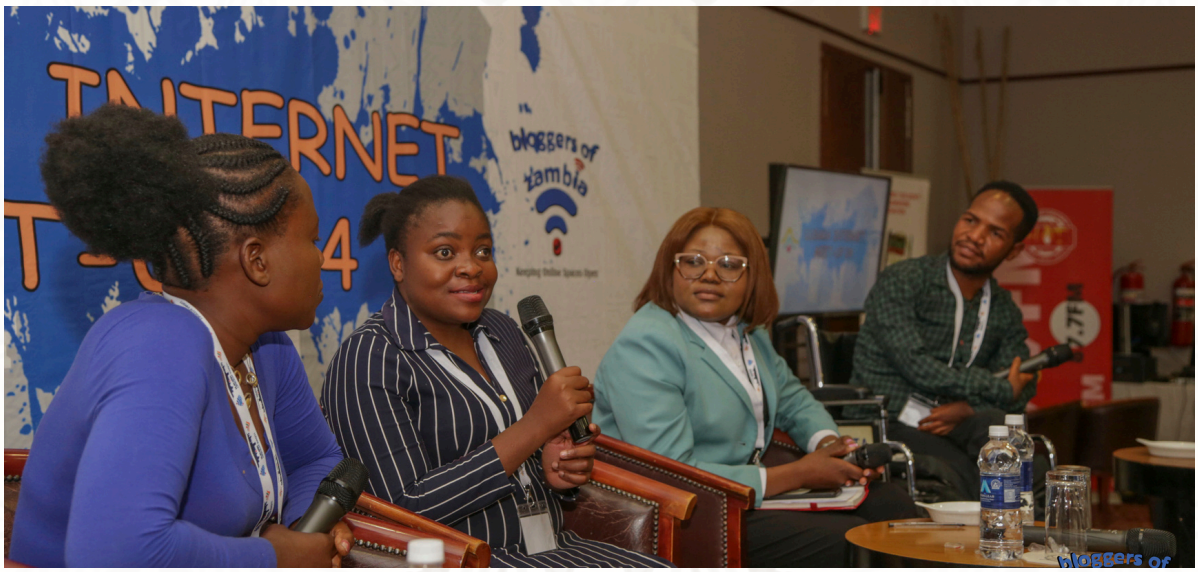
1. Are there any opportunities in Zambia to go digital voting?
   - There are opportunities for Zambia to use AI, in the electoral voting system but it requires a lot of analysis on how it works.

- E-voting is good– needs to authenticate the identity which is very critical.
- The public infrastructure used as voting centres would also need to be upgraded if Zambia was to go E-Voting.

2. Are there any discrepancies from the evolution as highlighted?
- Zambia has 2000 kits in total and results are transmitted electronically thus taking less days to conduct elections as compared to old years, thus the internet plays a key role in furring results to central location. Approximately 4– 5 days with technology.

Ensuring Digital Rights and Inclusion in Zambia's AI Era

Moderator Grace Musigwa



The session focused on the topic of ensuring digital rights and inclusion in Zambia's AI era. Ms. Grace Musigwa moderated the panel. The panellists included:

- Andries Habeba — Rising Above Disability
- Helen Shakale — Deaf-Blind Movement in Zambia
- Nsofwa Sampa — Positive Movement Organisation

The panellists emphasized the importance of bringing all stakeholders on board to address the sensitization gap on issues of digital rights and inclusion. The panellists highlighted the need to raise awareness about AI for persons with disabilities due to communication barriers and to find ways to overcome language barriers, especially given the high rate of illiteracy among people with disabilities (PWDs).

PWDs face challenges in using smartphones as they are not disability-friendly. The panellists recommended engaging children with disabilities and advocated for specialized schools to accommodate Deaf-Blind individuals, noting the absence of such schools in the country. They also stressed the need to include children with disabilities in the digitalization process.

During the plenary, participants noted the inadequacies of the Zambian landscape for persons with disabilities, citing a lack of supportive policies. They recommended that the Ministry of Education improve the education sector for PWDs by providing computers and training teachers to better support children with disabilities.

Cybersecurity and Migrating AI

Presenter Elisha Gerrad- Easy Tech

The presentation delved into the dual-faced nature of artificial intelligence: Its transformative potential and the inherent risks it poses, particularly in terms of data privacy, algorithmic bias, and security vulnerabilities.

The presentation focused on the intersection of AI and cyber security. The speaker emphasized the importance of understanding AI, its evolution, and its implications for cyber security. The presentation also covered the history of AI developments, applications, potential risks and the importance of protecting virtual privacy. The speaker also touched on the availability of uncensored AI models that can pose significant security threats if misused.

Overview of Cyber Security

The presentation began with an overview of cyber security and the importance of understanding AI and cyber security. The present shared some of the history and evolution of AI from its early development in 1957 to its modern capabilities and applications.

Challenges and Risks of AI

Among the risks highlighted during the presentation was the issue of bias in AI models. The verification of AI training data and its potential to provide misleading or dangerous information were cited as significant challenges. Additionally, cybersecurity threats related to AI remain a double-edged sword.

For example, deepfake technology and the risks associated with sharing personal data online increase the potential for misuse of uncensored AI models.

Technical aspects of cyber security were discussed, including an introduction to Hugging Face and its available models. The training process, costs, and resources involved in developing Meta's large language model (LLM) were also covered.

Mr. Gerrad reminded the audience that we are currently in the 4th Industrial Revolution. In 1959, Frank Rosenblatt made significant strides in AI by developing a technology using a single layer of neurons. This early model evolved into more complex AI systems with multiple layers of neurons, leading to advancements such as image recognition and the development of the first AI models. The evolution continued with the advent of the internet and search engines like Google, which allowed companies to advance AI technology further.

In contrast, the introduction of GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) to the world was met with limited understanding, despite its capabilities. People trusted the model to provide answers to their questions, yet it also raised concerns about the digital footprint and manipulation of images and data shared online. All models can be accessed through the Hugging Face website. OpenAI has opted not to release the code for GPT, emphasizing the need for careful handling of training data.

The presentation was concluded with a Call to Action on:

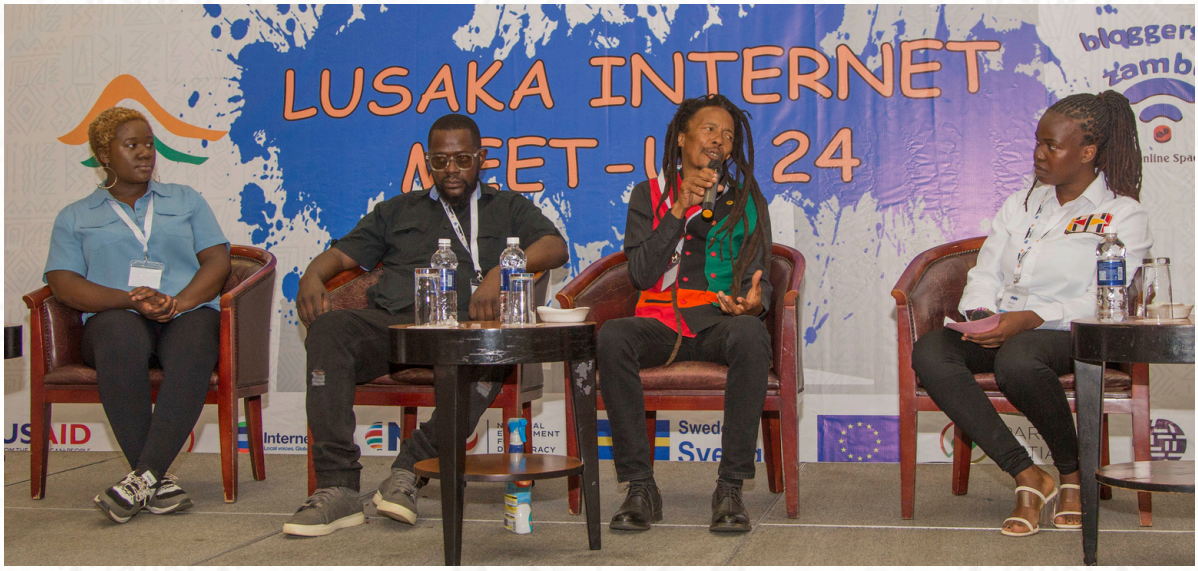
- Importanceofmindful data sharing
- Need for robust cybersecurity measures and infrastructure
- Awarenessthathackers can exploit uncensored AI models
- Recognition of how hackers use AImodels to create self-replicating viruses

Artistic Rights and Expression Online

Moderator: Mwiza Zulu- Artist/ Activist

The panel discussion on artistic rights and expression online was moderated by Mwiza Zulu. The panellists were:

- Vanessa Chisakula — Spoken Words Artist
- Roy Kazembe a.k.a *Chocolate* — Cartoonist
- Maiko Zulu — Musician



The panellists affirmed that the internet has revolutionized the arts and is an efficient tool for speed. However, a significant challenge is that the internet has caused many artists to lose their creative edge, thereby eroding the authenticity of their art. It was noted that, due to internet freedom, artists can easily express themselves online and post their works in real time.

The panellists highlighted the challenges of online harassment faced by artists and how law enforcement might detain artists who are not politically aligned with the ruling government if their work conflicts with the ruling party's views. They also pointed out that every ruling government tends to suppress artists and activists, and it is the duty of every citizen to protect their rights.

They emphasized the need for balanced laws that do not stifle artistic freedom of expression. Artists often find their social media accounts reported and blocked, and in some cases, they may lose their accounts permanently. It was noted that laws should be applied equally and not favor specific individuals or groups.

Plenary

During the plenary, participants emphasized the importance for artists to stay true to their vision, principles, and work, despite the difficulties, especially if their work opposes injustices perpetrated by the government

Data Extractivism and Social Pollution: Raising awareness in Support of a Healthy and Inclusive Tech Ecosystem

Presented by Chrisopher Chagon

Christopher Chagon, a PhD researcher at the University of Helsinki and an affiliate of the University of Zambia was the session presenter. The presentation focused on raising awareness in support of a healthy and inclusive tech ecosystem and highlighted how the modalities used by big tech companies to harvest personal data lead to social damages around the world, including manifestations of social pollution in Zambia.

Mr. Chagon explained data as information that flows from human life in all its forms to various forms of infrastructure. He noted that data collection has historically been expensive and difficult, which is why governments have traditionally collected it through censuses. He highlighted that it was only in the 20th century that the private sector began to catch up with the government. Due to computerization, the private sector eventually surpassed governments in data collection, leading to a shift from data collection to data harvesting by the 2000s.

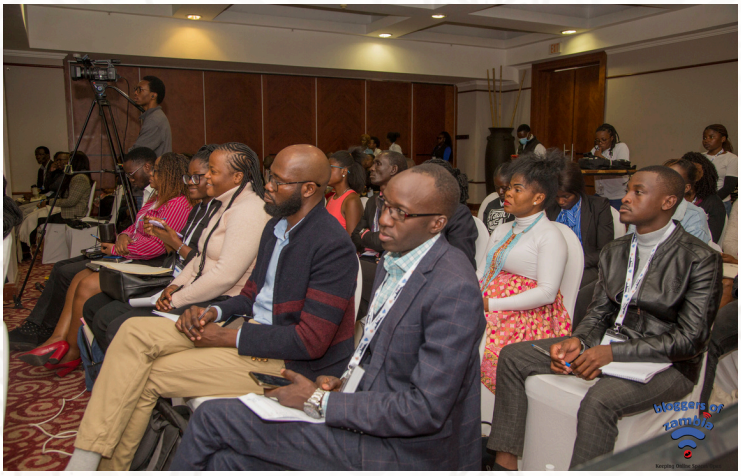
He noted that with the penetration of smart devices and the internet, data harvesting operates 24/7 through mass automated processes. While the biggest companies in the world were once oil companies, tech companies have now taken over.

Mr. Chagon cited that the problem is not how data is collected but how cheaply it is harvested. He compared the environmental damage caused by extractivism to the social damage caused by treating data as a social resource. Social pollution, he argued, is harmful and destructive, impacting both the social and natural environments and contributing to societal inequalities.

He noted that polarization and echo chambers have negative psychological impacts on people engaging with online communities, similar to those in physical communities. Extractivist approaches have created an environment where these issues proliferate, claiming that such problems would not exist without tech.

During his research, conducted between August 2022 and April 2024, Mr. Chagon interviewed and surveyed 70 individuals from the technology sector, public sector, and civil society. The research explored both the positive and negative impacts of technology and what aspects of Zambian culture should inform the development and relationships of tech.

Every respondent noted that technological changes have negatively impacted physical communication and interaction. However, they also highlighted benefits, such as the ease of connecting with family and friends globally and improvements in education, economic opportunities, and services.



Mr. Chagon cited the negative impacts of technology, including forced cultural changes. He gave the example of the N'cwala Ceremony in the Eastern Province, where traditional practices were affected by social media's automated content moderation, flagging videos as pornography. This led to changes in the ceremony's symbolic aspects to avoid having their content removed. This issue was discussed informally during the 2024 N'cwala Ceremony.

In conclusion, Mr. Chagon emphasized that AI content moderation should not force people to change their culture to share it with the world. He stressed the need for collective action before it is too late, noting that while the journey is challenging, a homogeneous approach is often more cost-effective. He pointed out that tech companies profit through polarization, misinformation, and hate speech, but there are highly skilled Zambians capable of addressing these issues.

Plenary

Participants highlighted the need to balance human interaction and technology, striving to make the digital community more like the physical space. They also noted that tech companies should not use data that was not intended for them. Additionally, participants emphasized the importance of parents openly discussing the pros and cons of social media with their children to help them protect themselves, as technology is here to stay.

Preparing Zambia for the Future: Integrating Block chain and AI

Moderated byLiseli Akayombokwa

Ms. Mwinga moderated the session on exploring the evolution of the internet from Web 1.0 to Web 3.0. The Panelists included:

- Ms. Liseli Akayombokwa, a Music NFT and AI artist
- Mr. Loyd, the CEO and Co-Founder ofETHZambezi &AlphaTester of AI products.

The panellists explained the different stages of web development since 2000 and how they have evolved over the years. They highlighted that the first webpage introduced to the market was known as Web 1.0. This was a static page where users could only read content and could not post or interact. As technology improved, Web 2.0 was introduced, allowing users to create content, unlike Web 1.0, where only companies created content.

The panellists reported that a few years ago, Web 3.0 was introduced as the third generation of the Internet. However, not many people were aware of this development. Unlike Web 2.0, where companies owned the data, Web 3.0 is decentralized, with no single authority owning the data. Web 3.0 aims to address issues of data privacy and protection because it is not easily accessible to central authorities.

The panellists explained that Web 3.0 is open to everyone, allowing users to monetize their data personally without going through a third party. They noted that Web 3.0 empowers users and is powered by blockchain technology.

They highlighted that Blockchain is a decentralized ledger used for financial transactions and information storage, such as time stamps or transaction records. Blockchain enables transparency, allowing anyone to monitor transactions because the data cannot be altered or deleted once uploaded. They provided an example of how governments could use Blockchain for financial transactions, enabling citizens to track how finances are used.

The panellists also discussed the challenges of implementing AI locally, noting misconceptions that AI is just a machine, while in reality, AI is the intelligence behind the machine. They pointed out the need to change the public's perception and address resistance from Zambians who fear AI might take their jobs. They emphasized the need to train AI in local languages to bridge digital barriers, especially in rural areas, to make AI more effective and accessible.

They highlighted that AI is a tool that could bring significant changes and should be embraced. The panellists shared success stories of AI applications, such as a Kenyan app used to conduct free and transparent elections, which other countries are now adopting.

Plenary

Participants noted the need to find ways to mitigate the impact of AI and navigate between rural and urban settings. They recommended that everyone should be involved in building the country's infrastructure. The panelists noted that infrastructure development has traditionally been the government's responsibility, and no citizen has voluntarily contributed to this effort. They suggested that the government should establish internet centers in central locations like post offices in rural areas so that those without smartphones can access services. They also recommended partnering with Starlink to provide internet access, supplying devices to schools in rural areas, and using AI as a teaching tool to bridge the educational gap.

Generative AI: A Threat to People's Jobs

Presenter- Mutinta Masowe – M-cover Solutions

The session focused on generative AI and the future of jobs, highlighting how generative AI can both contribute to development and pose a threat to traditional employment. Mutinta Masowe, the founder of M-Cover Solution, discussed the impact of generative AI on jobs, exploring its dual nature as both a potential threat and a tool for creating new opportunities. The presentation emphasized the importance of adapting and acquiring new skills to stay relevant in the evolving job market.

The presenter defined and explained generative AI, citing examples of tools like ChatGPT and Athena. She discussed the capabilities and applications of generative AI, including its use in various domains such as:

AI in Counseling: She shared a personal anecdote about using Athena for counselling and discussed the potential displacement of human counsellors by AI.

Impact on Jobs: The inevitability of AI's presence in the future job market was addressed, along with the need for individuals to adapt and acquire new skills. Examples were provided of how AI can both replace and enhance jobs.

Robots and Automation: The definition and roles of bots and robots were explained, including the potential for robots to perform tasks traditionally done by humans. Ethical considerations and risks associated with AI and robots were also discussed.

AI in Art and Creativity: Generative AI tools like Mid-Journey were highlighted for their role in art creation. The impact of AI on artists and the creative industry was explored.

AI in Business and Education: The potential for AI to handle business tasks and educational assignments was examined.

Recommendations for the Future of Work

Mutinta said there is the need for humans to upskill and adapt to advancements in AI. She said balancing AI integration with job preservation and economic growth is crucial. Encouraging innovation and resilience in the workforce was also recommended.

Plenary Session

The audience engaged in a discussion about whether AI poses a threat to jobs and shared diverse perspectives on AI's impact on employment. The benefits and challenges of integrating AI into business operations were also discussed.

It was noted that even a programmed system cannot think beyond human intelligence. It was noted that over 7,000 models are being developed, highlighting the need to understand the aspects of African culture and values. Considering that AI is programmed by humans, who retain control over it, not the other way around. The need to find solutions is paramount as the future will be competitive, especially for new creations.

The Zambian curriculum should move away from theoretical approaches and incorporate practical elements into the academic process.

Leveraging technology involves implementing systems that are easy and manageable for the country. More time should be invested in research to predict Africa's future over the next 50 years, as past revolutions have shown Africa to be the youngest continent.

The education system needs to change to prepare for the future. Data protection and cultural issues should be addressed, as these aspects can sometimes be used to manipulate people. It is important to know who created an app and to have a manuscript to guide users, as the availability of free apps can be concerning.

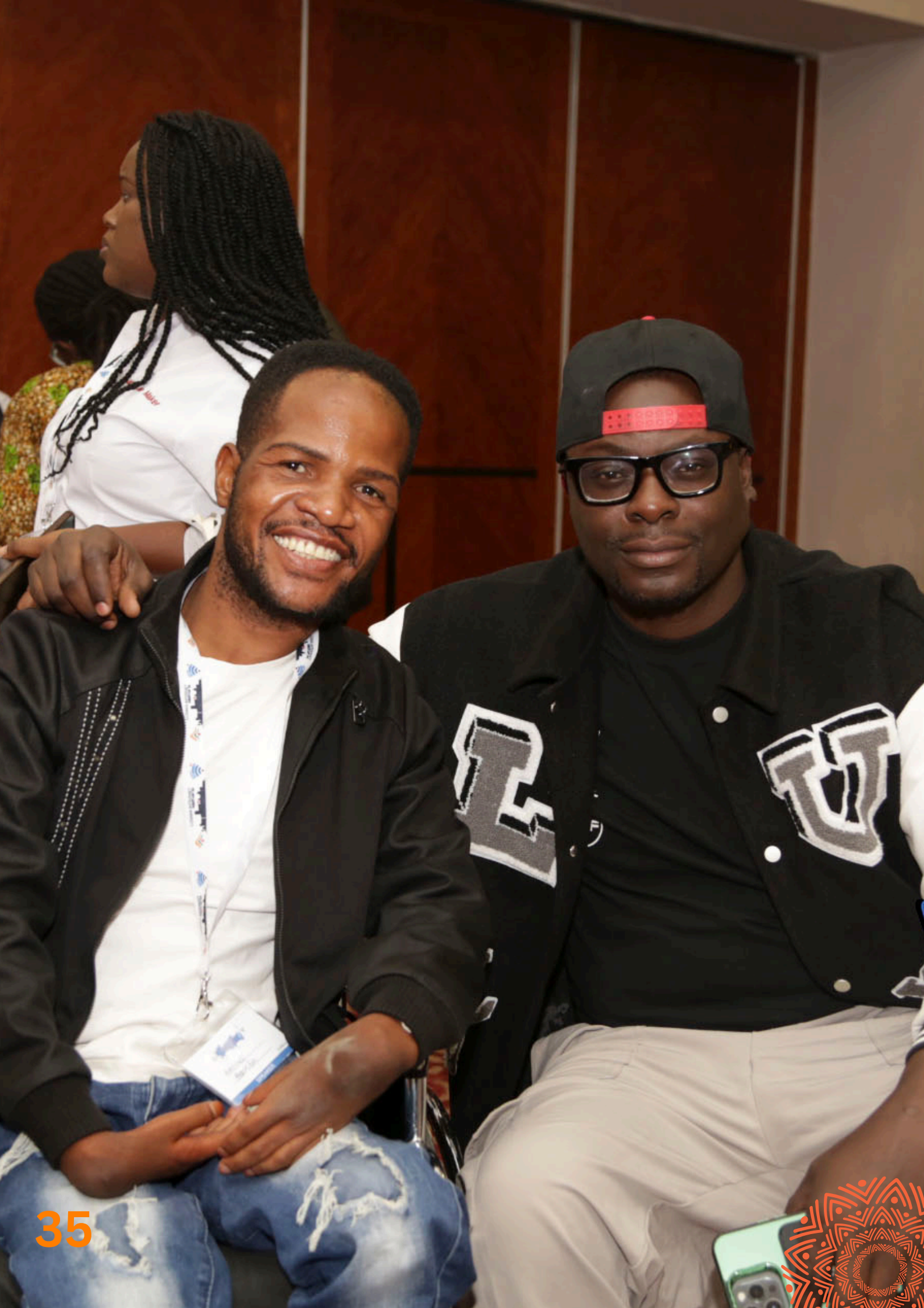
Children in schools should use internet gadgets from a young age, starting at the primary level. The enhancement of ICT in the education sector is necessary, with a focus on inclusive education and competent teachers.

Local materials should be used to encourage innovation among children, who need support. Educated parents lead to better-informed children, which in turn benefits teachers. Policy reforms are critical to guiding the curriculum and ensuring it meets all needs.

Conclusion

The session concluded by emphasizing the importance of embracing AI and preparing for the future. A call to action was made for individuals to adapt and innovate.

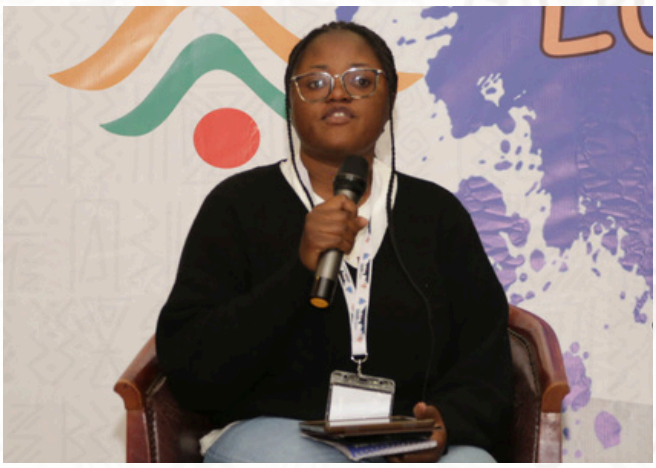
Radio Interview during the Meet-Up



DAYTWO(2)BREAKAWAYSESSIONSANDDELIBERATIONS

Content Monetisation and Digital Platform

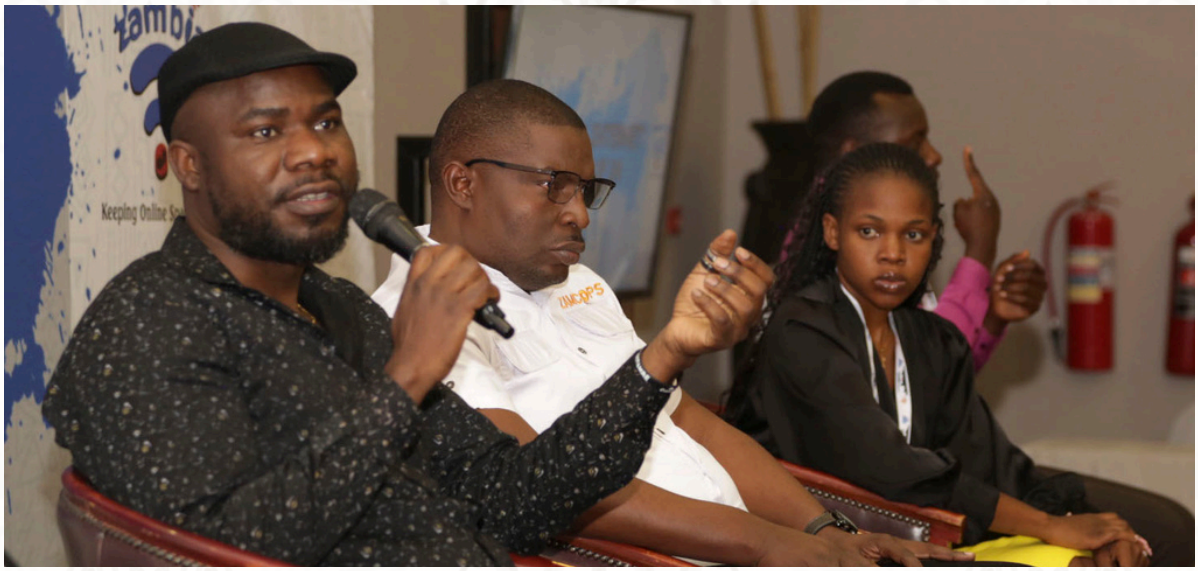
Moderator Tabita Lilungwe



The session on content monetisation for digital content creators, especially those in the creative sector was moderated by Tabita Lilungwe. from People's Action for Accountability and Good Governance (PAAGZ), the panellists were:

- Mr FumbaChama — P.S (Ministry of Youth, Sport & Arts)
- Mr Willam Samsondo — Zamcops
- Ms Theresa Lyainga — Content Creator.

The Permanent Secretary highlighted that social media entities that wished to collaborate with the government, had specific expectations from the countries they operate in. They wanted to understand the country's internet access, population size, and data rights framework. Additionally, they sought information on how much of the population was purchasing advertising space from corporate companies or businesses advertising on platforms like Facebook.



He also emphasized that these entities operate in countries with stringent tax regulations, such as the USA. They expect that wherever they are active, the country should be tax-compliant, as failure to pay taxes has implications.

AI-Powered Software Development

Presenter Joseph Chizongo- Pybot Tech Consultancy Services

The presentation delved into the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on software development.– By bot Tech Consultancy Services.

The presenter looked at AI-powered innovations; software development, streamlining processes and building better products.
It was highlighted that the Zambian government has spent over $41 billion in software for different services like the X-ray system, the ride system and all those things. But none of those systems had money remaining in Zambia.
All of the software developers were outside Zambia. The reason was that there are very few software developers who have the capacity to build products that can actually be invested in. The other reason was that there is a mistrust of products that are produced by locals. The coming of AI is a game changer.

Software development was defined as a process by which developers come up with systems and or mobile systems, computer systems that people use to make their work easier. Whereas, Artificial intelligence is basically assistants that have got an element of human intelligence.

Types of artificial intelligence

- Simple calculators,
- Thermostat measures and things
- Limited memory machines react to the environment based on pre-programmed activities.
- Theory of mind AI, this is where you know where AI is thought to have the ability to read another person's mind.
- Then the next part of AI is the self-aware; this is AI with a conscience. This is the human being AI.

He concluded with a reminder to the audience that Software development with or without AI is very difficult.

Media Freedom and Access to Information in the Age of AI: A closer Look at the Emerging Issues and Opportunities

Moderated by Kamufisa Manchishi- Journalism Lecturer

The session focused on the emerging issues around media freedom and access to information in the era of advanced technology such as machine learning (AI). These include new ethical challenges not typically encountered in the conventional space. The panelists were:

- Erastus Mambwe- University of Zambia
- Richard Mulonga- CEO Bloggers of Zambia
- Mwazipeza Sakala- Digital rights enthusiast (A Journalist and Digital Rights Advocate

During the panel discussions, the panellists focused on the integration of artificial intelligence in the media industry, specifically in Zambia. The conversation involves several panellists from various sectors, including journalism, academia, and digital rights advocacy. They address the challenges and opportunities presented by AI and other emerging technologies in the media landscape.

Key among the issues highlighted by the panellists was :

- Theethical implications of AI in journalism,
- The need for social literacy among journalists,
- The financial struggles of traditional media outlets.

- Ethical Journalism and the Competition with Citizen Journalists. The panellists emphasized the importance of leveraging AI for media sustainability
- Improving content creation, and ensuring accurate and ethical reporting.
- Ethical considerations and the role of social media and the impact of AI on journalism practices
- The need for innovation in media- Moving from passive observation to active participation in technology
- Opportunities for leveraging digital tools in journalism- The role of AI in media sustainability and revenue generation- Digital literacy and access to technology
- Access to tools and internet software - There has been a lack of interest also from the journalist

In addressing the issue of whether journalists are still relevant with the coming of AI and whether they still hold on to Access to Information, the panellists highlighted that the media and journalists are still relevant in that they play a major role in providing spaces for citizen engagement, speaking truth to power, covering events and giving feedback to members of the general public. Further, it was also noted that there was a demand for fact-checked and verified information. Thus it requires professionalism in journalism.

It was also emphasized the digital literacy and meaningful access to the internet for journalists was critical. There was the need for Media to explore more ways on howoneuses other software in journalism work.

It was also highlighted that the media must be vigilant and give context to issues that strengthen democracy. The need to realize that also online media plays a major role.

The following challenges were noted:

- Media in Zambia are facing a crisis with a lot of individual journalism because of digitalisation
- Emerging technologies that can be explored and the need to guarantee and protect sources of information with the coming of AI
- Journalists must explore and take advantage of AI Tools like chatGPT for processing and efficiency in editing
- Need to leverage the opportunities of the policymakers and engage with them
- Challenges with compliances and regulatory issues in the rapidly changing digital environment

Ms. Mwinga moderated the session on exploring the evolution of the internet from Web 1.0 to Web 3.0. The Panelists included:

Conclusion

The relevance of traditional media and journalists in the AI age- The potential of AI to enhance media practices and ensure ethical reporting. There is the need to encourage journalists to embrace and innovate with new technologies. The media/ journalists has been observers of technology developments and risks being left out if they are investing into the digital space.

Plenary

The relevance of traditional media and journalists in the AI age- The potential of AI to enhance media practices and ensure ethical reporting. There is the need to encourage journalists to embrace and innovate with new technologies. The media/ journalists has been observers of technology developments and risks being left out if they are investing into the digital space.

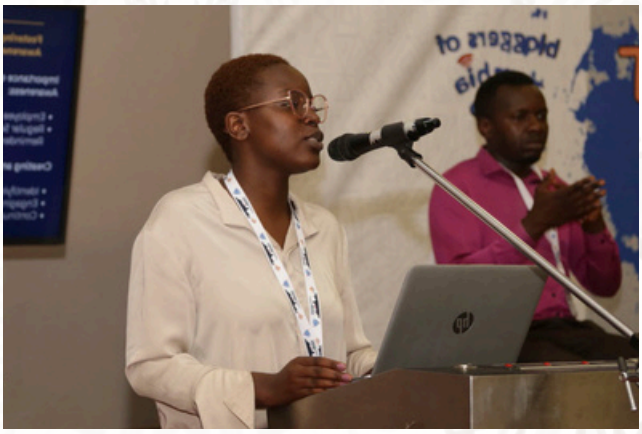
During the plenary, it was noted that there is a lot of fear of the unknown even from journalists themselves when it comes to technology use. The issues of ethics, privacy violations and how to promote ethics in AI journalism.

It was noted that there is a lot of legislation needed that will be guiding AI for journalists. It was noted that there are many misconceptions of AI and the media needs to raise awareness on it.

Strengthening Cybersecurity and Data Protection in the Digital Age

Chilufya Theresa Mulenga- Vice president Internet Society Zambia Chapter

The presentation addressed cyber security and data protection, focusing on strategies and best practices to safeguard sensitive information in an increasingly digital world. The presentation was delivered by Chilufya Theresa Mulenga of the Internet Society Zambia.



Ms. Mulenga highlighted the need to understand cybersecurity threats and their mechanisms. She provided an example of fraudulent messages sent via Airtel and MTN, such as those related to CDF and changing TPINs. These messages often contain links that, when clicked, can compromise your account by stealing personal details. She advised the audience not to share their identity card numbers, as they are valuable and can be used for identity theft.

She discussed the most common threats used by hackers, including ransomware, phishing, and advanced persistent threats. Ms. Mulenga stressed the importance of developing comprehensive security policies to protect an organization's assets, both physical and digital.

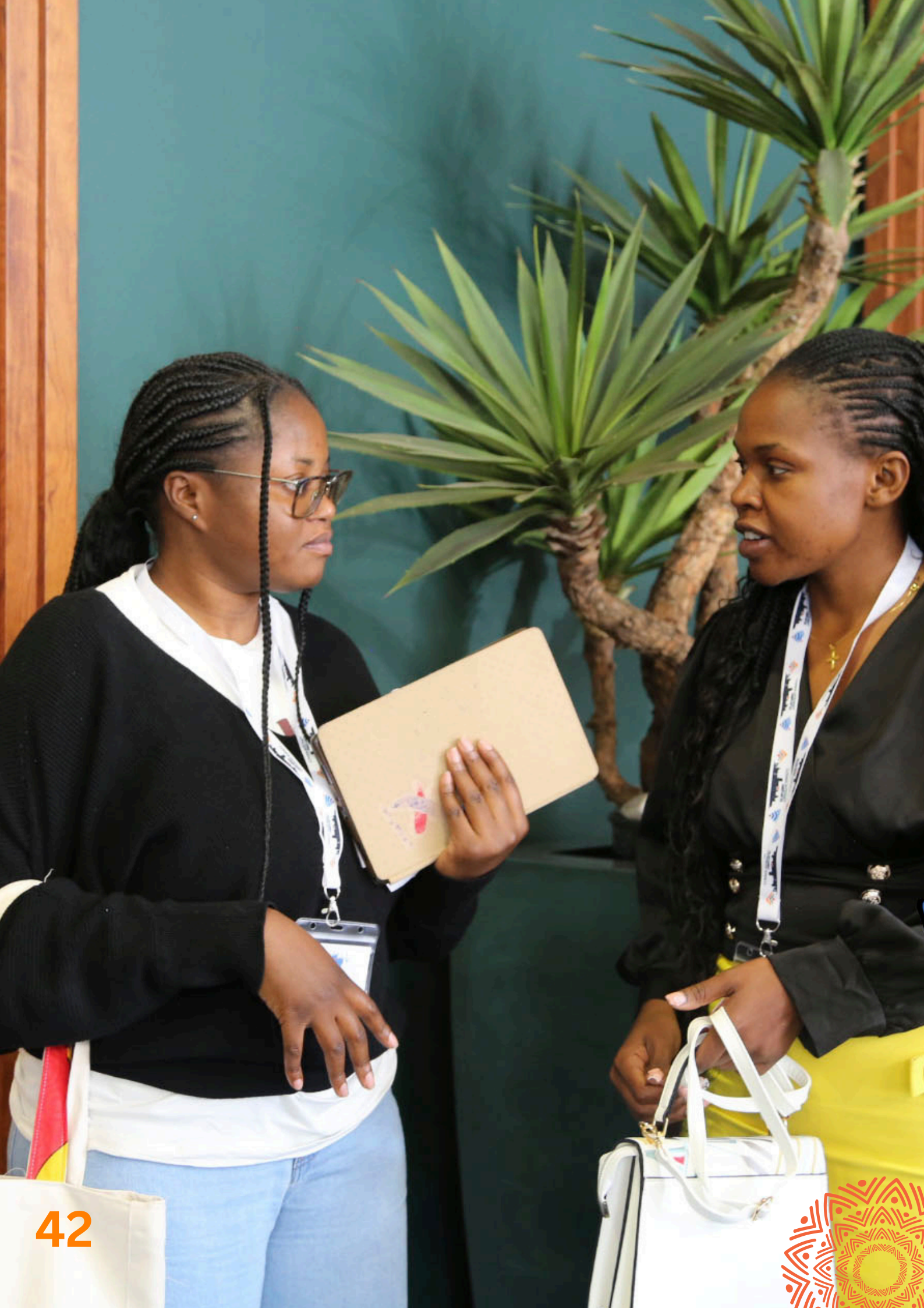
To establish a strong policy, she recommended encrypting data, regularly updating software, and implementing patch management. Regular security assessments, such as vulnerability scanning, are crucial to identify and address potential threats like spyware.

Ms. Mulenga emphasized the importance of cybersecurity awareness within an organization by implementing employee training programs, providing regular security updates and reminders, and maintaining an ongoing awareness program.

She highlighted the need for organizations to adhere to data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and to ensure local compliance requirements align with organizational practices. This includes data mapping, privacy impact assessments, and compliance audits.

Ms. Mulenga advised maintaining effective data protection measures on every device, including data encryption, backups for data recovery, and obtaining consent if anyone needs to use your device.

In conclusion, she noted the importance of preparing a quick and effective mitigation plan to minimize losses and impacts from breaches.



Digital Rights: A Drive for inclusion to promote Accountability

Naomi

The discussion highlighted the need to recognize digital rights as human rights and their integration into constitutional frameworks. Various experts from different backgrounds address challenges and strategies to improve digital rights, focusing on marginalized communities, policy frameworks, public interest litigation, and the risks and benefits of digital activism. The panelists included:

- Honorable Jawara — Ward Councilor from Chawama 30
- Musenge Chocha — Digital Activist
- Josiah Kalala — Executive Director- Chapter One Foundation

Overview of Digital Rights and Inclusion in Zambia.

It was highlighted that it was Important to recognize digital rights as human rights. The need to enhance digital equity for marginalized communities. Whereas Public Interest Litigation and Constitutional Protections were highlighted as the role of local governments in promoting digital rights. Enshrining digital rights in the Zambian constitution was emphasized, including the use of public interest litigation to advance digital rights.

Promoting human rights and giving a platform for citizens is crucial. The need for Constitutional Amendments and Advocacy; Importance of advocacy for constitutional reforms to include digital rights. The Importance of privacy and freedom of expression online; Specific issues in the digital context, such as data privacy and online expression.

The identified challenges in rural, peri-urban and marginalized areas include:

- Network challenges and low digital literacy
- Lack of funding support
- Lowdisposable income
- Critical community issues being left out
- Lackofinclusivity and people are left out in remote communities

Emphasis was made on the need for inclusive policies and advocacy to ensure digital rights for all. The panelists called for cooperative efforts to achieve these goals. It was highlighted that vulnerable communities are living in poverty and cannot manage to afford smart gadgets to facilitate the internet activities. Thus it was recommended that the local government enhance and facilitate the use of AI and Promoting transparency and accountability.

It was also encouraged that CSOs should play a major in ensuring that digital rights are guaranteed and protected in various legislation.

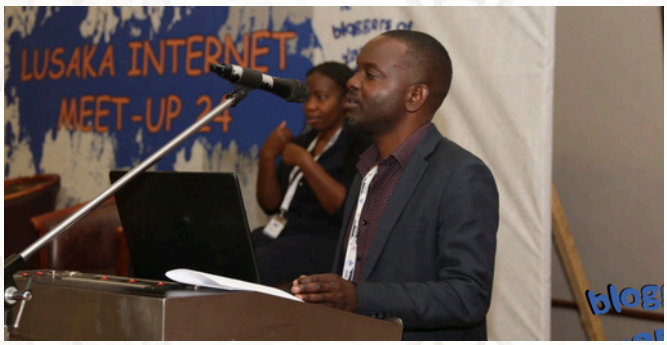
Plenary

During plenary the attendees made the following recommendations:

- Increase advocacy, education and awareness
- Ensure adequate resources are put in place– resource allocation from government
- Policy formulation– digital rights that favor every Zambian
- The Need to enjoy your rights digitally through expression, peaceful assembly and association
- Ability to amplify citizen voices through the use of AI
- Promote digital rights in schools– CDF need to tap into this, and we need to tap into CDF and procure the smart gadgets that require AI for communities
- Need to interact with the community and government officials on digitalisation issues

Information Integrity using Technology-Based Initiatives

Brian Simpande- Panos Institute Southern Africa



This session explored the nature of digital platforms and AI technologies, highlighting their potential to both empower and be exploited for misinformation and hate speech. Brian Simpande from Panos Institute Southern Africa delivered the presentation.

Mr. Simpande emphasized that a healthy democracy thrives on open information, which empowers citizens to make informed decisions, hold leaders accountable, and engage freely. He discussed how these platforms are being misused for misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech, leading to erosion of trust in government institutions.

He explained that while emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), have positive uses, they are also weaponized for spreading misinformation. He defined AI as algorithms given specific instructions and noted that generative AI tools—despite their potential for good—can be manipulated for harmful purposes. For example, ChatGPT, originally designed for content generation, and deepfake technology, used for generating realistic images, can be misused to deceive.

He highlighted the impact of misinformation on public trust in government and its effect on women's participation in politics. He stressed the importance of understanding the risks of misinformation and the need to verify news before sharing it. He also introduced a newly launched fact-checking tool known as IVS.

Plenary:

Participants noted that both state and non-state actors contribute to information polarization, making it difficult to differentiate between fake and verified news. Therefore, it is crucial to verify news before commenting or sharing it. The discussion also addressed concerns about AI, with some participants feeling that the technology may be causing more harm than good. They recommended encouraging and training journalists on how to use AI effectively and responsibly.

Integration of Emerging Technologies and AI

Nyambe Jere & Emsie Erastus- Internews Network Zambia

The presentation began with an introduction on the concept of harvesting and storage in African culture through the example of the Okaanda, a traditional barn in the Aawambo culture used to store maize and millet. The Okaanda prevents the grain from falling out and being exposed. She suggested that we think of maize as data and Okaanda as data infrastructure.

Ms. Erastus emphasized that, in most African cultures, one could not harvest without first building an Okaanda. Similarly, Africa needs to build its own data infrastructure to securely store and manage data. Proper data infrastructure prevents data from being exposed and ensures its safety.

She explained that data, especially facts or numbers, is collected to be examined and considered for decision-making. Data comes in various forms: structured data, which is organized into specific formats such as rows and columns in databases or spreadsheets, like customer names and purchase amounts in e-commerce; unstructured data, which lacks a predefined format and includes text, images, audio, and video files, such as social media posts and emails;

and big data, which refers to extremely large datasets that cannot be easily managed or analyzed using traditional methods due to their high volume, velocity (rapid data generation), and variety (different data types).

In 2023, Zambia announced a ZMW 7 billion ICT roadmap to boost its digital economy. This plan includes upgrading ICT infrastructure with ZMW 2.4 billion earmarked for data centers and other infrastructure. The goal is to achieve 4G network coverage for 90% of the country over the next five years. The establishment of 10 regional data centers at a cost of ZMW 500 million is planned between 2022 and 2027. The aim is to increase international fiber optic links and connect districts to fiber optic networks. Additionally, the formulation of an ICT Infrastructure Development and Maintenance Master Plan is necessary, advocating for the adoption of alternative energy sources to support ICT infrastructure.

She noted that with great power comes great responsibility. Technology has the power to benefit the world but must be developed and deployed in an ethical, explainable, and equitable manner to realize its potential. She questioned whether we truly own the data, given that all the platforms in use are Zambian.

She highlighted that personal data, whether in the form of letters, numbers, or biometric information, should be processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently.

Data audits are essential to ensure data is collected for explicit, specified, and legitimate purposes and not further processed in ways that are incompatible with those purposes. For example, in smart cities, data collected through CCTV cameras raises questions about how that data is stored and disposed of.

She emphasized that data should be adequate, relevant, and limited to what is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed. It should be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date, with every reasonable step taken to ensure that any inaccurate personal data is erased or rectified without delay to maintain data accuracy.

Data should be stored in a form that permits identification of data subjects for no longer than necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed, as it is a human right. The processing of personal data should ensure appropriate security, including protection against unauthorized or unlawful processing and accidental loss. The data controller must be held accountable, and there is a need to push for stronger legal frameworks.

Plenary

Participants recommended discussing with relevant stakeholders and launching a large-scale sensitization program to teach people how to protect their data. They raised concerns about how mobile networks, particularly MTN, share people's data, with instances of receiving texts for services they did not sign up for. The question was how individuals could protect themselves in such situations. It was noted that strong policy frameworks are needed to hold mobile networks accountable.

Understanding the potential Pros and Cons of Cybersecurity and Data Protection in Digitisation

Moderated by James Watson Zulu- Cyber Security Consultant

The presentation was designed to educate participants on the dangers and techniques of hacking in spaces such as emails. Through interactive simulations, attendees were able to identify and protect themselves against malicious hyperlinks and emails that could compromise personal or organizational security.

Panellists

- Kampamba Nkole- Data Center Manager- Infratel Corporation Zambia Limited.
- Martin Mwila-ABSA Bank Zambia, Head of Cyber-security and Governance

Infratel is a technology company that deals in data centers and tower services which is 100% owned by the government. Further it mentioned that it has more than 1,250 towers across the country and it's in the process of getting Zambians into digital transformation even in rural areas. Its clientele spans from both private and the public sector.

Hehighlighted the importance of data localization as follows:

- Zambia has the capacity to host data within its jurisdiction and that the data centers which are very expensive to construct, have come in to speak and assure that the people's data that is housed within the country is easily accessed locally, even without the internet.
- Cross-connect within the nation, he cited the Lusaka Internet Exchange Point which allows different institutions, private sector, to exchange traffic or systems to speak to each other in one localized environment with local servicers work without the internet.
- Localization of data saves jobs, meaning that jobs will be in-house. Thus local people handle all the jobs.
- Keeping data outside the nation causes the nation to lose a lot of billions financial benefits.

Regulations are accurate in how entities should manage data at every point under the Data Protection Act 2021. Thus from the point of collection to the point of use and the point of destruction of data. Both from the government side in terms of regulation (data protection laws, the consumer protection law, the cybercrimes act) and as well as users are required to comply with in terms of qualification etc. Also from the regulator point, ZICTA is involved in the conversation on data governance, as well as the Bank of Zambia Act, which is very descriptive and ensures that the whole data life cycle is managed accordingly and adhering to the regulations.

Tools to use data to get to AI and how they work:

- Most states are aligned with the Malabo Convention (African Union Convention of Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection), therefore even the Data Protection Act 2021 is aligned to the Malabo Convention.
- These tools are intelligent and adequate enough to classify all the documentation and they monitor each and every bit of information that goes out and depending on the classification
- The use of indicators that the AI deployed is able to flash, obtain, and avoid things that are potentially serious, thus the tools are very intelligent in that they make decisions on their own.
- They analyze, they look at what type of data is about to leave, who is about to say that, to where, and they will make instant decisions based on this.
- They use proactive measures and AI in this case is coming in as a tool that will allow one to concentrate on other things as they update their workflow.

- They are very effective and make sure that the leakage in terms of data does not happen, it is very helpful to have a public data leakage. As you might know, certain jurisdictions are quite steep to get their data leaked or their data being used more than they are allocated for.

Use of AI in its infrastructure

- Co-location service
- Cloud platform.

The panelists further highlighted the kind of data that the data center houses, for example were private data and public and customers walk data center and get inquiries. There was the need for the data centers or infrastructure to be in a place where it's reliable, however it was mentioned that data centers are very expensive to deal with or construct. In appreciating the works of the government in bringing some of the digital services closer to the people. It was mentioned that People are able to now make payments to the government service bus and make online tax payments.

Transcribe AI risk management and ethical context

The use of AI in banks is a direction in the process of cyber security and data linkage.

- Subpar risk is a risk which inherits from the very beginning. Thus, as much as one relies on AI for cyber security, most of the AI empowered solutions are usually from the third party.
- Use of endpoint detection and response which is an AI version of software, which is more than an advanced IT virus. It's a tool that one can put to their computer, used to detect and respond.
- As well as the use of Crowdstrike and many of them.

Cost benefits of integrating AI and skills

- Creates more time to do alot of things, though on the other hand it makes people lazy and not efficient and creative/ innovative.
- Dataage–crossing over into an intelligent age need to adapt
- Techskills are important and institution need to ride upon them.
- Budgetfor training of stuff Decisions made faster.
- Ontheotherhandit creates a lose talent among the young stars

Plenary

However, the participants raised concerns and encouraged all to conduct research on the Use of AI, who the investors are and that people must not heavily rely on it and do their own thing.

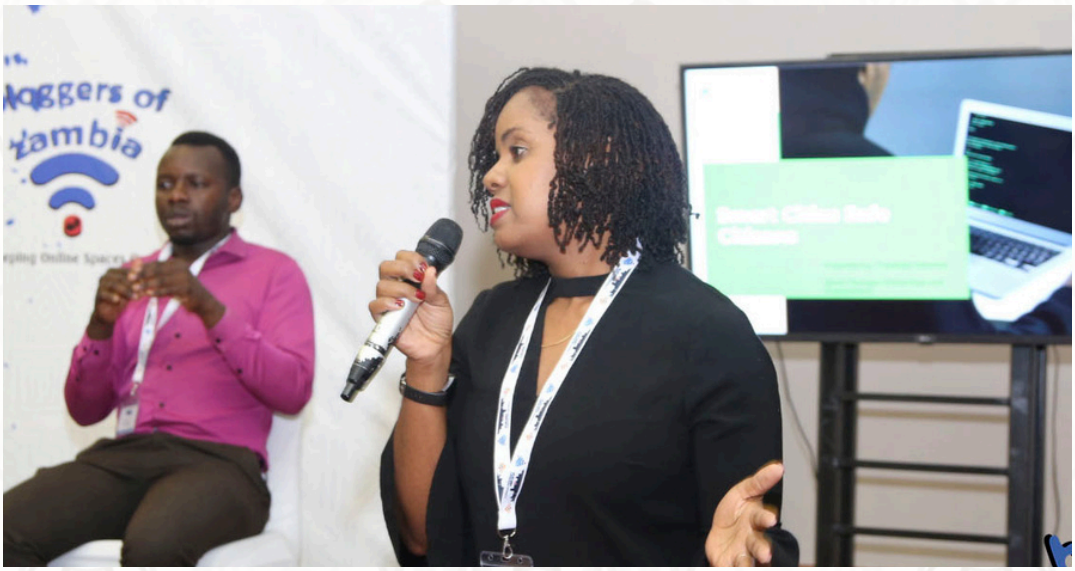
There was need to clearly define what data is, and was then highlighted that any sensitive and personal information is data and it was encouraged that Individuals have to protect their data and there are laws that prescribe the data critical information.

There was need for government to work on the storage capacity (expanding the data centers) in the data centers, with the growing client on the market

SAFE CITIES PRESENTATION

Exploring the citizen perceptions on CCTV Camera projects and potential digital rights issues. Research findings from Zimbabwe as a case study.

Thobekile Matimbe- Partnerships Manager ParadigmInitiative



This session explored the citizen perceptions on CCTV Camera (Safe City) projects and potential digital rights issues. The session used research findings from Zimbabwe as a case study. Thobekile Matimbe from Paradigm Initiative delivered the presentation:

Ms Matimbe highlighted the methodology that was used during the desk research. They reviewed national policies and used online perception surveys which reflected the views of individuals drawn from Zimbabwe's urban society.

An online perception survey was deployed through convenience sampling and out of 203 responses, 200 were from individuals in major

cities in Zimbabwe and three responses were submitted by individuals based in Johannesburg, South Africa, who presented their views on the systems in Zimbabwean cities. Views from 7 key informants from civil society and the private sector were collected through an online survey from Harare and Bulawayo, all digitally literate with access to the internet and digital technologies, cutting across a range of stakeholders. The report was launched in February 2024, and it can be accessed on the Paradigm Initiative website.

She highlighted that was done Smart city initiatives in Zimbabwe UAE Company Mulk Investments, the streetlights were installed Satewave Technologies and Bulawayo city parking system was done by a South African Company (TTI).

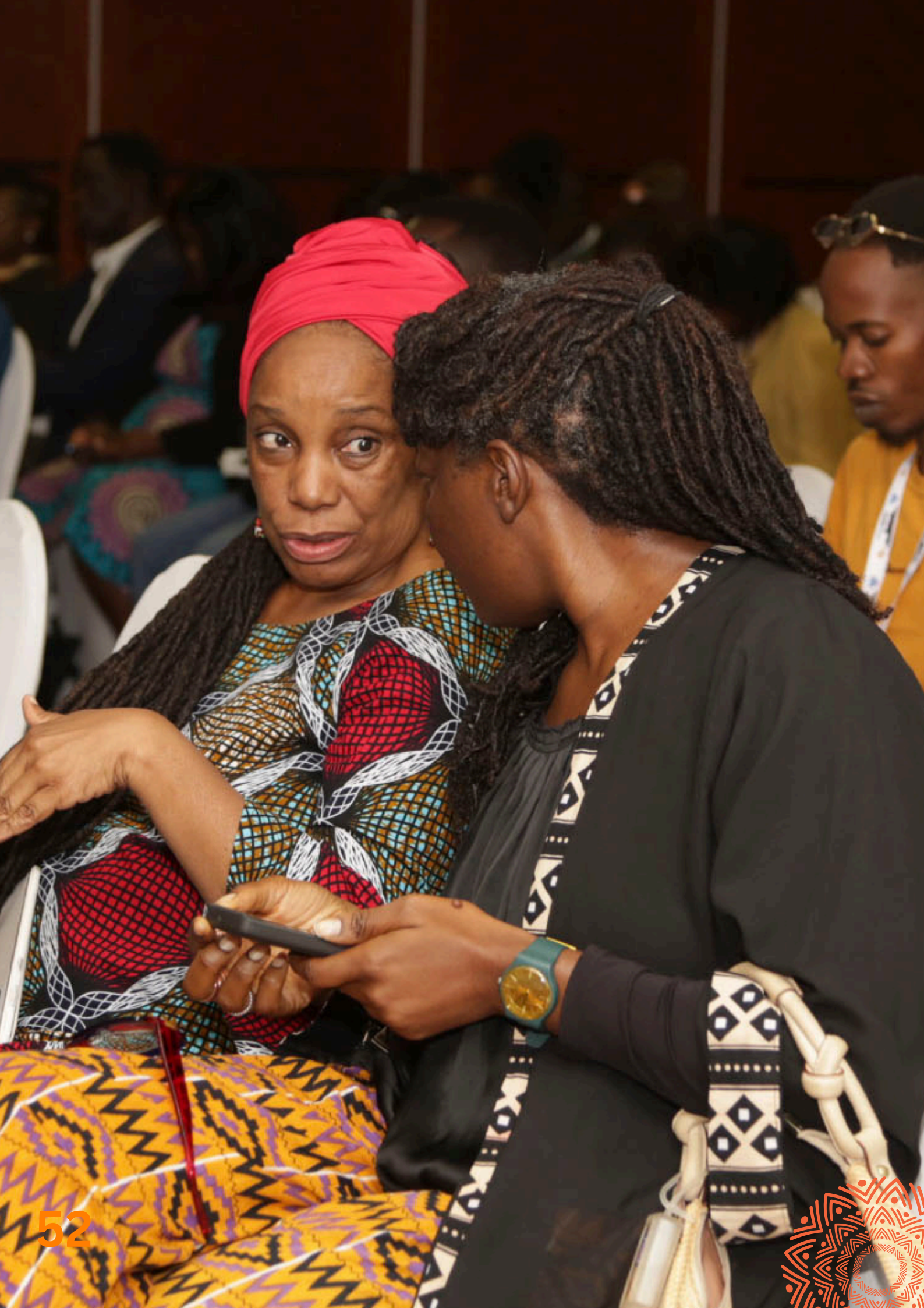
She noted individuals raised a lot of concerns on surveillance they noted when it came to car registration when state security requested from holders of the data, they would give out so the question was how were they using and storing the data that was being collected.

She highlighted that procurement was not done transparently and lacked clarity. The cameras were not being used to monitor crime, but it was aimed at weaponizing surveillance, data invasion monitoring and violating rights for journalists, human rights defenders and activists.

It was noted that the Cyber and Data Protection Act, of 2021 was still not fully operationalized, the legal framework has not been seen by anyone and no one knows what has been happening from the time the project started.

They trusted the project would work to make cities safer and record incidents that went unnoticed like the bad driving by combi drivers. It would be a welcome initiative. I believe it can help put on record incidents that go unnoticed and the public struggle, which has become a norm because there is often no one watching, like the bad driving in the city by combi drivers. (*combi– local commuter transport).

The Respondents were concerned that there were no clear boundaries on the invasion of privacy, The main thing that needed to be addressed was the source or root cause rather than just installing cameras. There were power outages. There were no coordinated systems in Zimbabwe. Local authorities were independent from each other or the government. There was a lot that needed to be done before such technologies were applied. Most people and local organizations, including local authorities and government, don't understand the meaning of a smart city. There was also so much distrust for the government and they did not trust them to use that technology for the public good.



Instead, they believed it would be used to monitor and punish people who do not conform to their political views.

Some respondents emphasised that a digital application would expedite reporting and responses to local city councils, especially in urgent situations requiring speedy action. One respondent commented: “it would help alert the City Council on time for the collection of refuse and also to alert them whenever there are water burst pipes or sewage or dysfunctional robots.

Respondents expressed a need to gain seamless access to their local councils and perceived technology as an enabler of that access, allowing them to engage conveniently. A respondent stated, “Communication can be done in the comfort of their homes, which was very convenient for the residents."

On the other hand, 27.1% expressed concerns over city councils’ ability to sustain any engagements on automated systems, considering they are still operating manually across their service delivery processes.

Building Resilient Internet Infrastructure for Enhanced Connectivity.

Presented by: Levy Syanseke President Internet Society Zambia Chapter

This session focused on the development and maintenance of robust internet infrastructure to improve connectivity and support digital transformation in both urban and rural areas. The president of ISOC Zambia Chapter Mr. Levy Syanseke was the presenter.

MrSyanseke highlighted that the Zambian population was around 20 million people and almost 12 million were living in poverty, raising the question; how would these people sacrifice their money for data bundles to access the internet? He noted how the Covid-19 pandemic had affected everyone and the majority of people needed to use the internet and with the power outages in Zambia

which have caused slow speeds and glitchy networks calling for a more resilient internet so that there would be a backup system that would be used during internet disruptions.

He highlighted the statistics of the 4G network coverage was estimated at 0.46% which was not a good coverage for the population, the average broadband speed was estimated at 5 kilobytes per second. The 3G was okay but due to the challenges, the internet had even degenerated to the 2G zone.

He noted that an affordable bundle costs about 13 US dollars, and if converted into Zambian kwacha, it is about 26 kwacha for 1GB, which is inadequate for many consumers. According to ZICTA, internet penetration was recorded at 43.44%, but it is now at 53%.

He highlighted that out of the whole population 6.5 million were actively using the internet. He noted that when looking at such numbers you must ask yourself how many people need to use this for E-learning and Covid hitting up this was very disheartening.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the decision to introduce E-learning completely was not a wise decision because many learners, homes and communities were not connected to power and this was not beneficial.

Building internet-resilient infrastructure meant having access to the internet with high speeds and connectivity allowing users to do online activities seamlessly. There was need to invest deliberately in infrastructure in order to improve on this aspect.

According to the Internet Society Pulse, a platform used to monitor and track internet performance, from internet shutdowns to connectivity, Zambia's resilience was 35% and infrastructure at 25% with regards to connectivity against the population this was still below par. Performance was at 26% and security which was above average and market readiness was at 31%.

According to Mr Syanseke, Paratus Limited launched a new web internet connectivity that works at radio frequency. noting that that cable connectivity was fairly acceptable for usage, and it was mainly linked to the fact that most of those who are using cable majority were in the business sector, and the reasons why there was that type of infrastructure at that level is because the majority of users were unable to afford that type of internet connectivity.

Plenary

Session attendees recommended digital education should start at an early age adding that focus should also be on teaching the children about the rapid digitalisation going on. The ICT curriculum was not sustainable enough to help the children adapt in the growing digital environment.

There was also a recommendation the government should support local innovations in colleges and universities. There is the need for enhanced digital literacy and it is role of the government to build infrastructure close the rural-urban digital divide.

There is also the recommendation for the government on regulation and licensing on community networks,

Understanding AI

Presented by Chawezi Gift M'hango- Yako Foundation

The represents gave unique opportunity to bridge the knowledge gap in AI and the skills to leverage AI tools like ChatGPT. The presenter defined AI;

- Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems capable of performing complex tasks that historically only a human could do. These tasks include reasoning, making decisions, or solving problems. In essence, AI enables machines to simulate human intelligence and problem-solving capabilities. It's a fascinating field that has evolved significantly over time.
- The tools used include Chat GPT, Scribes, AlphaCode, Github Copilot, Duet AI, Sythesia, Claude, Dall- E2, Cohera Generate, Bard and GPT- 4 etc.
- The most effective ways to leverage AI are to automate processes, personalize experiences and analyze data,

Skills to leverage AI

1. Promotion

- Askthe right questions. Consider the message or feeling you want to convey.
- Study examples. Analyze effective prompts and the results they produce.
- Explore variations. Take a prompt that works and modify or expand on it.

- Practice!.
- Bepatient and have fun with it

2. AI personal branding
In today's fast-paced and competitive world, it's critical for individuals to establish themselves as experts, thought leaders and influential figures in their respective fields. Personal branding is the key to achieving this, and thanks to AI technology it’s easier to do.

3. Data visualization and story telling
Data visualization is a tool used to present data in a visual format, while Data storytelling is a process of using data to tell a compelling story. Data visualization is a key component of data storytelling, but it is just one part of the larger process. The ultimate goal of data storytelling is to inspire action and drive positive change based on the insights provided by the data. (Dijkstra algorithm/infographics)

4. AI and business strategy
In order to understand business goals and challenges, evaluate current processes, and explore industry trends it’s very important to integrate only innovative technologies

5. AI project management
AI is mostly incorporated into project management through tools designed to assist with existing tasks, such as the following
- Prioritization and scheduling
- Costestimation
- Resource allocation
- Modeling
- Adjusting projects to different delivery methodologies
- Predictive analytics
- Riskmanagement
- Automation

6. Natural language processing
The ability of a computer program to understand human language as it's spoken and written

7. Curiosity and continuous learning
Curiosity and continuous learning are fundamental drivers of success in the dynamic and evolving field of AI. Cultivate these qualities, stay curious, and commit to lifelong learning to excel in AI research, development, and application.

8. Intuitive understanding of AI
While AI brings in data-driven decision-making, human intuition adds the emotional and ethical dimensions that machines can't replicate.

Intuition is our innate ability to understand something without the need for conscious reasoning

Conclusion

Addressing the digital literacy divide in Zambia is essential for promoting social inclusion, economic opportunities, and equal access to information and resources for all. The need for collaborative efforts in this journey is therefore critical.

CSO Position Paper on cyber legislation in Zambia

Presented by Richard Mulonga- CEO Bloggers of Zambia

Digital rights are essential for the enjoyment of the right to free expression, peaceful assembly and association, emphasizing that everyone has the right to privacy in the face of technological influence. Freedom of expression as one of the biggest challenges, noting that

suppression of digital rights is not unique to Zambia but is a global concern, particularly regarding internet legislation, data protection and cybersecurity. Zambia has several pieces of legislation, including the Cybersecurity Act, the Data Protection Act, the ICT Act, and the Electronic Commerce and Transactions Act. While these acts were reviewed and other enacted in 2021, that the implementation of the Data Protection Act is being operationalised by the government.

There have been some notable challenges and threats to enjoyment of digital rights, such as internet throttling, social media blockage, website jamming etc. Additionally, some certain parts such as section 54 of the cyber legislation are vague, broad and unconstitutional and these can weaponize the ICT regulator and grant excessive power to the Ministry of Technology and Science to virtually close the cyber space in Zambia.

The CSO position paper was updated over the years to reflect recent developments in the digitalisation agenda, particularly with development of cyber legislation. A comparative analysis of Zambia's Cyber security

and Cybercrimes Act to Kenya's Computer Misuse and Cyber Crimes Act, notes many similarities in the provisions. The Zambia Cybersecurity and Cyber Crimes Act was petitioned in the High Court in 2021 by Bloggers of Zambia, the Gears Initiative, and Chapter One Foundation, People's Action for Accountability and Good Governance in Zambia. The Kenyan Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act was also petitioned earlier in 2018, citing several parts that are deemed to be unconstitutional.

The Public Order Act has vague provisions regarding internet use, which affect the right to assemble and associate via social media.

The law was enacted between March and August 2021 before the highly contested election, passed by the president and ministers without parliamentary debate since parliamentary standing orders were suspended. The cyber law must be reviewed urgently since it allows service providers to switch off the internet by orders from the Minister of Technology and Science. Additionally, ZICTA has not disclosed any technical details and explanation of the social media blockage between August 12 and 14, 2021.

Plenary

The participants emphasized the need to actively use the CSO position paper to to give input and influence cyber law and policy formulation processes in Zambia. The CSOs must also focus on concerns regarding surveillance and privacy invasion in Zambia, noting that the country is listed among those with significant surveillance practices such as the deployment and use of Pegasus software and that some data centres were identified as a high-risk companies for surveillance, and there was a call for greater transparency and disclosure of information from such entities.

There was also concern regarding whether issues raised in the court petition on the Cyber Security and Cybercrimes Act had been adequately addressed. It was noted that the Ministry of Technology and Science had responded to some of the CSO concerns but there was the need to continue engaging and opening the space for more collaboration. Advocacy approaches with various stakeholders, including government should not be confrontational but engaging and dialogue in nature.

Closing Session

Moderator: Thobekile Matimbe- Partnerships Manager Paradigm Initiative

The closing session panel comprised of:

- Mr Daniel Sikazwe BoardChairperson Bloggers of Zambia,
- Mr Richard Mulonga CEOBloggersofZambia
- Mr Gbenga Sesan ExecutiveDirector Paradigm Initiative

The Lusaka Internet Meetup was a culmination of hopes and dreams which requires bravery navigate the future. Many people fear the unknown and are concerned about what lies ahead. We are faced with technology that offers greater control over our lives and the potential to create a more egalitarian society abides.

The internet is reshaping our world, becoming its new "brain" and expanding in countless directions. Nothing can diminish its power or shut it down. It is up to us to determine our path and decide the kind of world we wish to inhabit.

Gratitude in the fact that the outcomes of the 202 Lusaka Internet Meet-Up and that the goal was to surpass the previous event, which had attracted 80 people. The 2024 edition has succeeded with a record of 366 attendees. While the numbers are promising, the most significant outcome for Blogger of Zambia is the impact of our work on people's lives, behaviors in the digital age, perceptions, and freedoms. We need to determine how to measure success effectively. Various categories have been left out and suffer consequences of exclusion. People with disabilities (PWDs) have been excluded from the internet and the Lusaka

Internet Meet-Up has provided opportunities for PWDs to engage, participate and demand for their rights in the digital age.

The success of the Lusaka Internet Meet-Up is not measured from numbers but by how the convening impacts other people and that change was the driving factor of the Lusaka Internet Meet and the work of Bloggers of Zambia.

We must acknowledge that exclusion means we are incomplete. Inclusion in this space was about taking action such that if you are not acting in your area of interest, you are part of the problem. Students should strive to excel, while the private sector should undertake projects, and CSOs need to take action on these issues of digitalisation.

The Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum (DRIF) will be held in Zambia in April 2025, providing an opportunity to discuss the progress made and how, over the next five years, we can reflect on the changes we have achieved in Africa's digital transformation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below were drawn from the various speeches and sessions. They collectively aim to foster a robust, inclusive, and secure digital environment, ensuring that digital transformation benefits all sectors and communities Key among the recommendations during the conference were the following:

General Recommendations for Digital Transformation

1. Digital Literacy and Inclusion

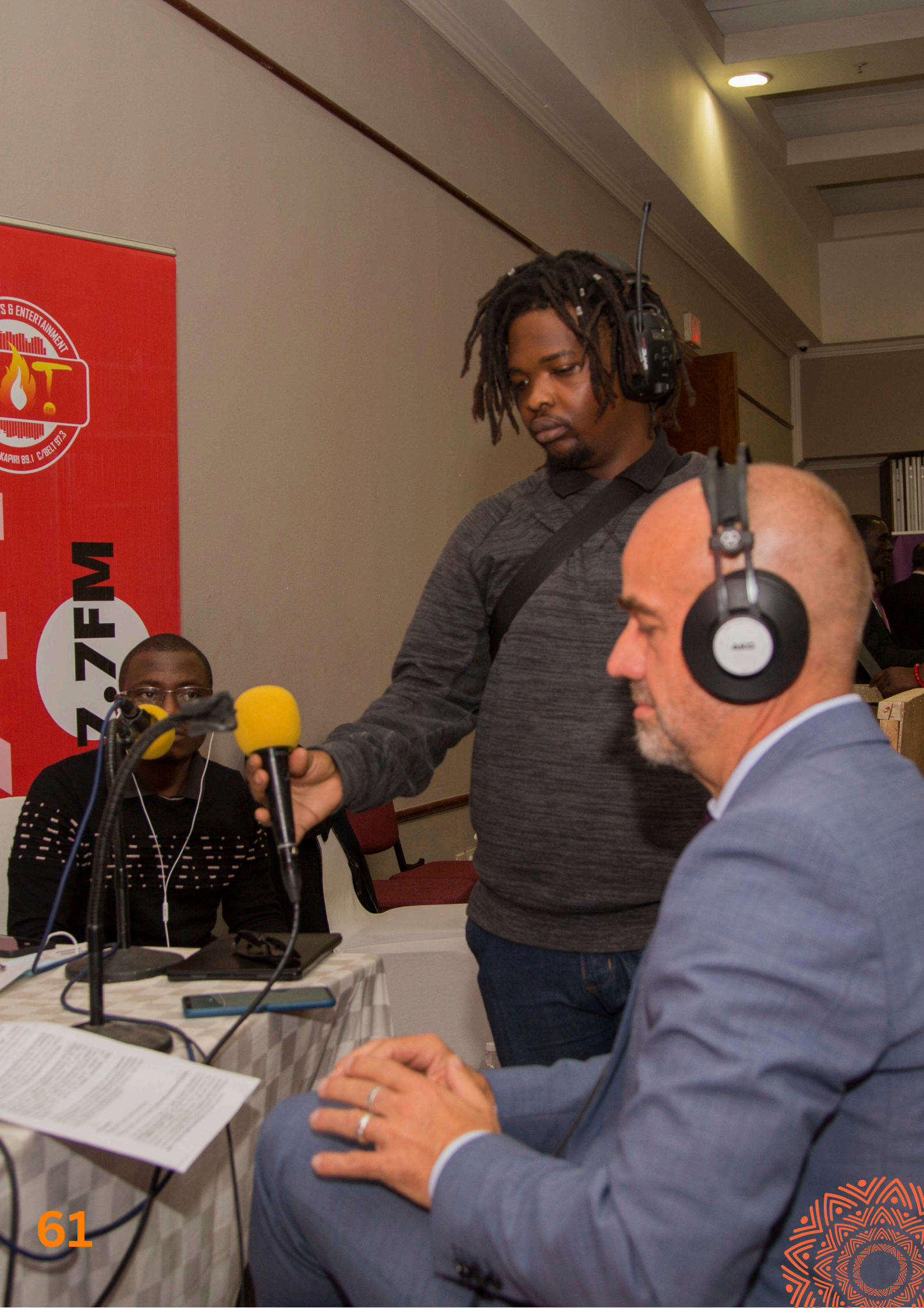
- **Encourage active participation and not just usage:** Promote digital literacy, especially in peri-urban and rural areas and among women and girls.
- **Decentralize digital programs:** Support and engage in digital inclusion efforts across all societal segments, with a focus on the less privileged and rural areas.
- **Enhancetraining for domestic technologists:** Develop and support domestic technologists to drive digital transformation effectively.
- **Addressthedigital divide:** Ensure equitable and meaningful access to digital resources and infrastructure, emphasizing the importance of including the disadvantaged and rural populations.

2. Ethical Use of AI and Internet

- **Ensureethical AI policy development:** AI policy should be developed to ensure its deployed ethically, with a focus on upholding human rights, privacy, and avoiding biases and this should be in tandem with international best practices.
- **Safeguard privacy:** Protect online privacy and ensure transparency and accountability in digital systems and AI algorithms.
- **Promoteresponsible internet use:** Use the internet ethically and inclusively, respecting the freedoms and rights of all citizens.

3. International Collaboration and Policy Development

- **Promoteinternational collaboration:** Work together and within international best practices to secure and maximize the benefits of new technologies, including AI and develop best minimum standards.
- **Enhancelegal policy frameworks:** Establish comprehensive regulations and policies that ensure a secure and inclusive digital space for all Zambians.


7.7FM

Sector-Specific Recommendations

1. Education and Workforce Development

- **Invest in future-oriented education:** Prepare people for future digital and technological advancements through education and training.
- **Supportyouth andinnovation**: Leverage the talents of youths and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in digital spaces.

2. Healthcare and Agriculture

- **Leverage digital tools in healthcare:** Utilize digital transformation to enhance healthcare delivery and access, while protecting and safeguarding personal data and privacy. Building resilient systems for personal data protection in health care.
- Implementdigital mechanisms for focusing, marketing and selling agricultural products and improve agricultural sustainability, placing agriculture and a priority economic sector.

3. Commerce and Economic Development

- **Supportstartup growth:** Invest in startups to create job opportunities and drive economic development.
- **Enhancedigital payments infrastructure:** Improve regional digital payment systems to boost and enhance economic activity.

4. Cybersecurity and Data Protection

- **Strengthen Cybersecurity:** Develop and enforce laws on Cybersecurity and cybercrimes to ensure safe online transactions.
- **Implementrobust data protection measures:** Focus on creating strong data protection policies and regulations to safeguard user information.

5. Policy and Regulation

- **Regulate the digital space:** Ensure that digital and AI systems are regulated to protect users' rights and promote innovation. These regulators must not be overarching, they must be constitutional and protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens.
- **Developcomprehensive frameworks:** Create and enforce policies that address the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation.

Specific Recommendations by Stakeholders

1. Swedish Ambassador to Zambia

- **Encourage international collaboration:** Support and participate in international forums and collaborations to advance digital rights and innovation.
- **Supportcomprehensive regulations:** Ensure digital regulations align with human rights standards and promote secure, open, and free internet.

2. USAID

- **Promotedigital democracy:** Support programs that enhance freedom of expression and digital access and ensure data protection and financial transaction security.

3. Paradigm Initiative Nigeria

- **Focusoncitizen engagement and policy:** Engage citizens and policymakers in the digital transformation agenda, ensuring their active participation and inclusion.
- **Encourage cross-country learning and collaboration:** Learn from and collaborate with other countries to advance digital inclusion and protection.

4. EU Delegation to Zambia and COMESA

- **Invest in digital infrastructure:** Support the development of digital infrastructure and literacy programs.
- **Promoteagricultural digitalization:** Encourage the use of digital strategies in agriculture for enhanced sustainability and market access.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 Lusaka Internet Meet-Up successfully created a platform for stakeholders to debate and contribute to shaping digitalisation issues in Zambia.

The convening was crucial in discussions on the future of internet governance and digital rights in Zambia. The event's outcomes underscore the need for sustained advocacy, cross-sector collaboration, and policy reforms to ensure that Zambia's digital landscape remains inclusive, accessible, and protective of human rights. Going forward, the Lusaka Internet Meet-Up serves as a foundation for future dialogue and initiatives to promote a free and open internet in Zambia and the wider African region.

The Lusaka Internet Meet-Up demonstrated its relevance, effectiveness and adaptability in improving the internet landscape outcomes across the various autonomous sessions leveraging the sessions such as presentations, exhibitions and panels' unique views, characteristics and experiences.

The conference's success demonstrates its potential for further growth and up-scaling. This report highlights these successes and highlights the impact and opportunities for further growth.

APPENDICES

NO	Item	Available on the link below
1	Event website	https://bloggersofzambia.org/lusaka-internet-meet-up/#Home
2	Conference Programme	https://bloggersofzambia.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/THIS-LSK-Internet-Meet-Up24-Agenda.pdf
3	Session Presentations/ livestream	https://bloggersofzambia.org/lusaka-internet-meet-up/#WatchLive
4	Speakers	https://bloggersofzambia.org/lusaka-internet-meet-up/#Speakers
5	Photographs	https://drive.google.com/drive/u/3/folders/1tnmWjur4CJeq7FdmaCtg3Zg_-c2pgUS6