

Final press release

Second Edition of the National Youth Forum on Internet Governance in Benin (Benin YOUTH IGF 2024)

Theme: "*The impact of Artificial Intelligence on training and employment prospects for young people: Challenges and Opportunities*".

Date: Saturday, July 27, 2024 / Locations (Cities): Cotonou and Parakou

Reminder :

- ✓ That Youth FGI Benin is a Beninese non-commercial association made up of people (young people) from a variety of backgrounds,
- ✓ That the association is open, inclusive, multi-stakeholder, n o n - p r o f i t , bottom-up in decision-making,
- ✓ That the views and outcomes of our sessions, including recommendations, are the result of debates leading to consensus.
- ✓ The second edition of the National Youth Forum on Internet Governance in Benin (Benin Youth IGF 2024) was held on July 27, 2024 in two cities,

Parakou and Cotonou, under the theme "Impact de l'Intelligence Artificielle sur la formation et les perspectives d'emploi des jeunes : Défis et Opportunités".

The Youth Forum, based on the interventions of the panelists, explored the applications of AI in the fields of health education, agriculture and in public services, makes the following recommendations:

- Use AI to solve problems specific to Benin's specific context in the vital sectors of agriculture, health, and education, and bring the benefits to young people
- The digital code already exists, but does not take AI into account. A revision of this code is important to integrate this issue.
- Invest in training Benin's youth to use and develop AI technologies.

- Ensuring that AI technologies are accessible to all (urban and rural youth and marginalized youth) by leveraging cell phone solutions that are more widely available than other technologies.
- Establish partnerships with local organizations, government and local businesses to provide the necessary resources, such as funding, technical expertise and infrastructure.
- Improve access to the Internet and basic technologies for young people, to enable them to use AI solutions. Infrastructure such as electricity and communication networks are prerequisites.
- Start with pilot projects to test AI solutions and assess their impact before deploying them on a larger scale, to determine what works and what needs to be adjusted.
- Ensure that AI applications respect ethical principles, including data protection, transparency, and fairness , and that technologies do not exacerbate existing inequalities, particularly to the disadvantage of young people.
- Initiate a policy of local data collection, storage and management, and train AI models to be adapted to local contexts and realities.
- Encourage the government to adopt AI-friendly policies, such as appropriate regulations and incentives for local and national youth entrepreneurship.
- Involve people with special needs to a greater extent and take their specific needs into account.
- Ensure that existing platforms are reviewed to integrate accessibility features
- National advocacy for the inclusion of people with special needs.

Cotonou, July 27, 2024

