Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA)

PRIDA IG Implementation Policy Brief

This policy brief is based on PRIDA's OUTPUT 3: African stakeholders' active participation in the global internet governance debate and their impact in shaping global policies and setting standards.

***PRIDA IG track envisions* a s**treamlined Internet public policy development processes at national, regional and continental levels culminating to influential and coordinated participation of the African Continent in Global Internet Governance debates.

To achieve this vision, PRIDA aims at streamlining National, Regional and Continental IG processes for a common progressive African position - supported by Capacity Building and Coaching Services. A Digital Platform being developed under PRIDA will host the Capacity Building and Coaching Services content. The following are the strategic objectives:

1. To increase the number of countries having multi-stakeholder processes on IG through the establishment of national IG Fora
2. To streamline and coordinate IG processes at national, regional and continental levels and improve synergies and feedback mechanism between them
3. To capacitate various Internet stakeholders' groups from governments, civil society, private sector and the technical community on IG matters
4. To improve the quality of decisions made by policy makers and Diplomats on IG issues through coaching services before and during International meetings where decisions are taken.

Despite IGF initiatives at the National (29), Regional (5) and Continental level (1), African participation at the IG space has been limited. As a result, there is no common voice or position from the continent at the global IGF and Internet related discussions. Consequently, the impact of African participation from agenda setting to effective resolutions from the fora has not been felt. Worth noting is that organizations working on IG issues in African from the national, regional and continental level lack the necessary skills and capacity to carry out important governance functions, such as providing valuable technical and policy information, training and capacity development; and evidence based research on Internet policy.

That being the case, PRIDA will focus on two pillars:

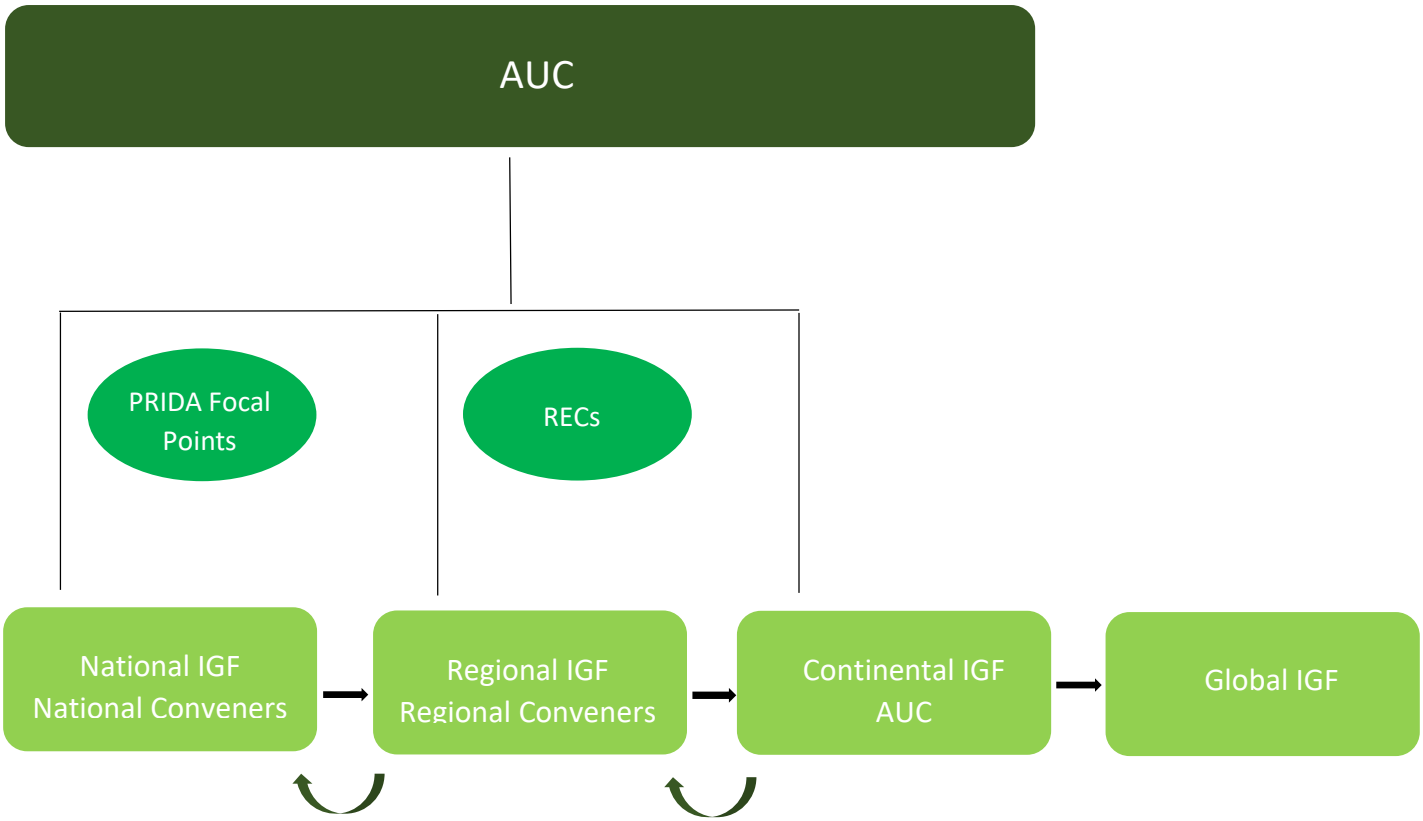
The first Pillar is on Strengthening and Streamlining the Internet Governance Structures: ***The IG structures at the national, regional and continental level are not harmonized and coordinated to create synergies that would facilitate a strong Africans' participation at the Global level.*** PRIDA will:

1. Strengthen and harmonize the IG structures and processes from a national, regional and continental perspective;
2. Schedule IGFs logically with synergies that ensures a top down and bottom up feeding mechanism to streamline the structures;

3. From the national perspective, different activities and outcomes shall be expected between those countries that have already established IGF initiatives from those countries that have not yet established.

The implementation of this strategy will take a multi-stakeholder approach from the national, regional and continental level with the various stakeholders in the IG value chain taking responsibility of various activities and being accountable for the outcomes. Figure 1 shows the implementation structure.

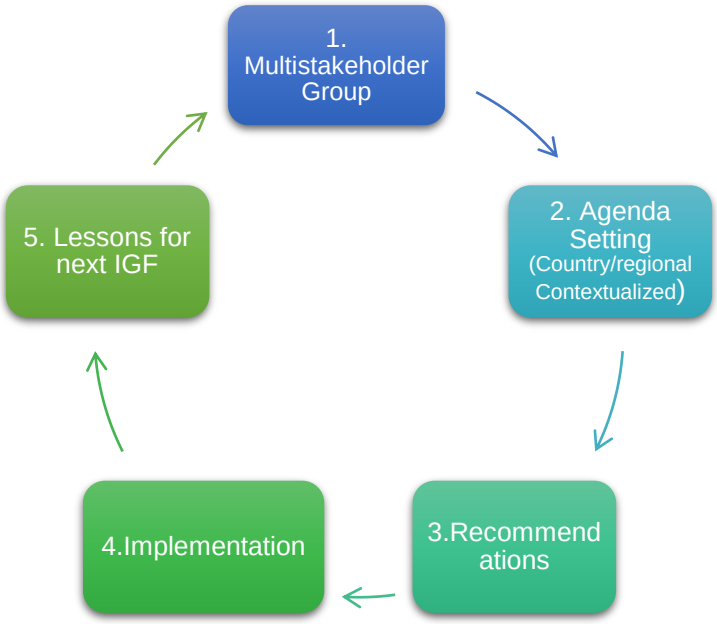
Figure 1: PRIDA IG Strategy Actors, Workflow and Implementation Structure



Source: Authors

There are five main steps to be followed in setting structures and processes of national, regional and continental IG fora: Figure 2 demonstrates the flow of the activities.

Figure 2: IGF Process Cycle



Source: Authors

The second pillar is on Capacity Building and Coaching Services: ***Currently there are no sustainable structures to support capacity building and coaching activities for the IG community, diplomats and policy makers at the National, Regional and Continental level in preparation for meetings, to ensure a common progressive continental position. At the same time, the complicated nature of the IG issues requires adequate preparation before International meetings.*** To address this challenge, PRIDA is:

- Working on online IG content for the African Internet Community
- Working on online IG content for the Diplomats
- Conducting a study on the sustainability of the IG schools at the national, regional and continental level.
- Working on modalities to support national institutions to provide continuous training on IG in the five African regions

Coaching services shall be provided to policy officers and diplomats from AU member states to facilitate negotiations before and during International meetings where decisions specific to Internet governance would be made. In addition to other avenues, PRIDA shall leverage on the expertise from the African Union Cyber Security Expert Group (AUCSEG) whose mandate is to advise the AUC in matters related to Cyber security; Cyber-legislations and regulations; online privacy and data protection; and related digital policy issues.

- The methodology of work will be based on a flexible approach that ensures production of customized trainings on negotiations which fits the context and needs of AU member states.
- Digital policy clinic shall be established with an on demand support to respond to policy related questions and provide customized advice on specific issues to member states