

## **South Sudan School of Internet Governance (SS-SIG) 2026**

- ❖ **Theme:** Shaping the Future of the Internet in South Sudan
- ❖ **Organized by:** ISOC South Sudan Chapter in collaboration with the SS-IGF Secretariat
- ❖ **Policy brief topic:** Promoting inclusive digital rights and online freedoms in South Sudan
- ❖ **Session facilitator:** Joseph Abuni Gama
- ❖ **SIG Training dates:** 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026
- ❖ **Venue :** Scinius Hub

### ➤ **Executive Summary:**

Digital rights are fundamental human rights that must be protected both offline and online. They include freedom of expression, privacy and data protection, access to information, digital inclusion, online safety, and meaningful participation in the digital ecosystem. As South Sudan experiences increasing Internet access and social media use, protecting these rights has become essential for democratic participation, economic development, education, and innovation.

Despite growing digital opportunities, many South Sudanese continue to face challenges including limited Internet access, low digital literacy, online misinformation, cyber threats, privacy concerns, and unequal participation by women, youth, persons with disabilities, and rural communities.

This policy brief recommends strengthening digital literacy, promoting inclusive Internet access, developing robust cybersecurity and data protection frameworks, encouraging responsible online behavior, and fostering multistakeholder collaboration among government, civil society, academia, the private sector, the technical community, and citizens. Protecting digital rights while ensuring a safe and secure online environment will support South Sudan's digital transformation and contribute to a more inclusive, resilient, and rights-based Internet ecosystem.

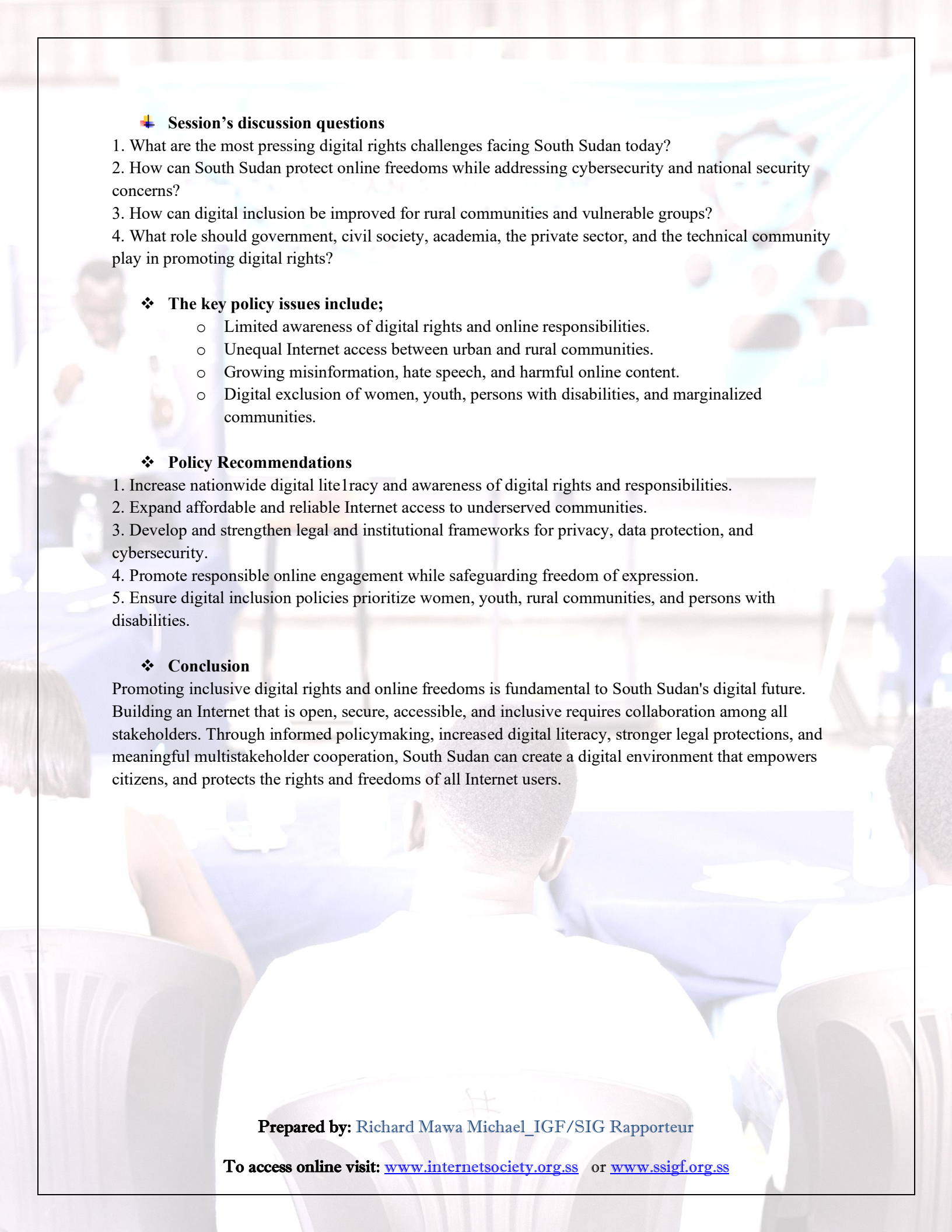
### ➤ **Background:**

Digital technologies are transforming how South Sudanese communicate, access services, conduct business, learn, and participate in public life. As more citizens rely on digital platforms, protecting digital rights becomes increasingly important for inclusive national development.

A rights-based Internet ensures that everyone can access information, express opinions responsibly, protect personal data, and participate safely in digital spaces regardless of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, or geographical location.

**Prepared by:** Richard Mawa Michael\_IGF/SIG Rapporteur

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### **Session's discussion questions**

1. What are the most pressing digital rights challenges facing South Sudan today?
2. How can South Sudan protect online freedoms while addressing cybersecurity and national security concerns?
3. How can digital inclusion be improved for rural communities and vulnerable groups?
4. What role should government, civil society, academia, the private sector, and the technical community play in promoting digital rights?

#### **The key policy issues include;**

- Limited awareness of digital rights and online responsibilities.
- Unequal Internet access between urban and rural communities.
- Growing misinformation, hate speech, and harmful online content.
- Digital exclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities.

#### **Policy Recommendations**

1. Increase nationwide digital literacy and awareness of digital rights and responsibilities.
2. Expand affordable and reliable Internet access to underserved communities.
3. Develop and strengthen legal and institutional frameworks for privacy, data protection, and cybersecurity.
4. Promote responsible online engagement while safeguarding freedom of expression.
5. Ensure digital inclusion policies prioritize women, youth, rural communities, and persons with disabilities.

#### **Conclusion**

Promoting inclusive digital rights and online freedoms is fundamental to South Sudan's digital future. Building an Internet that is open, secure, accessible, and inclusive requires collaboration among all stakeholders. Through informed policymaking, increased digital literacy, stronger legal protections, and meaningful multistakeholder cooperation, South Sudan can create a digital environment that empowers citizens, and protects the rights and freedoms of all Internet users.

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