

MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy

**Online Meeting 51
16 February 2023 at 14:00 UTC**

Summary Report

The 51st virtual meeting of the IGF MAG Working Group (WG) on IGF Strengthening and Strategy (WG-Strategy) was held on 16 February at 14:00 UTC. The meeting was moderated by Titti Cassa. The list of participants and the recording of the meeting is available upon request.

The co-chair opened the meeting by introducing the agenda:

Agenda

1. Activities of the WG Strategy for 2023
2. Open Consultations and MAG Meeting
3. WSIS +20 action plan
4. Update from the IGF Secretariat
5. AoB

Discussion

1. [Activities of the WG Strategy for 2023](#)

Titti shared the [document of the working group's proposed activities for 2023](#). These activities have been commented on and approved by the MAG.

Amrita Choudhury presented the activities and explained the general approach, particularly for the working group to serve as a bridge to other UN activities, including those related to 'Our Common Agenda', the Global Digital Compact, and the WSIS+20 review. She also noted some comments received from Anriette Esterhuysen.

Raul Echeberria asked whether it was still possible to add activities to the list. He suggested that we are currently missing a point on providing general strategic input to the MAG and the Secretariat; however, Titti noted that this had been included in the discussion.

Anriette suggested that the MAG and the WG need to build an understanding of the mandates and the processes related to WSIS+20, but the place to start is to ensure that people know about it - both stakeholders and those in the Member States and UN agencies. Finding where the IGF community can add value is a priority. Additionally, she noted that the MAG will approve the intersessional work in the near future (Amrita clarified that it was planned to already have been approved), and that where IGF 2022 produced a very strong set of messages, it would make sense for the IGF's 2023 intersessional work to build on the outputs of IGF 2022. This can help make the "multi-year approach" a reality.

Wout de Natris asked, if the MAG doesn't report to anyone in the UN system, how does the MAG work reach the UN stakeholders? Who do the Dynamic Coalitions and other IGF bodies report to. Anriette noted that the Secretariat reports annually to the CSTD. Jorge Cancio also noted that the IGF can also advise the Leadership Panel to take an active role in the Global Digital Compact process.

Adam Peake noted that this is a timely discussion, as there are currently discussions of expectations and roles between the MAG and the Leadership Panel.

2. Open Consultations and MAG Meeting

Adam noted that there has been discussion of making the MAG/Leadership Panel open (virtually) to observers. Anriette also suggested that a report from the 2022 Expert Group Meeting (EGM) would be a useful way to create common ground between the MAG and LP. There was broad agreement that this would be useful.

Titti noted that the WG could include these suggestions for the agenda of the meetings in Vienna in March.

Mark Carvell noted that a status update on implementing EGM recommendations for strengthening "IGF+" is long overdue. Anriette also urged that the Secretariat should update the EGM page on the site with the background doc and the long and short report. Mark also noted that now is the moment to urge for the meaningful involvement of stakeholders in the GDC process throughout, and that it was disappointing not to see IGF leadership actively engaging in the GDC consultations held thus far (and that those consultations with stakeholders were not recorded). Jorge (on a train) seconded these points, and also noted that the Leadership Panel have been very open to hearing what they can contribute, so it would be helpful if this Working Group could provide some of this guidance (via the MAG). It is important for IGF stakeholders to highlight and push the IGF and its outputs in the GDC process - the consultations so far have featured diverse

stakeholders, but have suffered for not having the more in-depth outputs of IGF discussions relayed into the consultations. Wout noted an open question about who should actually represent the IGF communities in the GDC consultation process, and that there should be discussion (an resolution) of this at the Vienna meeting. Jorge noted that the Leadership Panel's Terms of Reference are very clear on their role in message delivery.

3. [WSIS +20 action plan](#)

Chris Buckridge presented the document as it currently stands, and thanked Working Group members for their input in the last two weeks. He went through the eight objectives defined in the document.

Ben Wallis suggested that a report should be prepared listing all the developments since the WSIS+10, including developments related to recommendations coming from subsequent sources such as the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel, 'Our Common Agenda', and the 2022 EGM. It could help provide a useful starting point for discussions by demonstrating positive growth and change since the last review. He suggested that the IGF Secretariat might be the most appropriate body to lead in the compilation of such a report.

Anriette agreed with Ben's suggestion, and also reiterated that the IGF Secretariat reports annually to the CSTD on the IGF, including improvements. She also noted that the background document compiled for the EGM would also be useful in this regard. She suggested starting a conversation with the Secretariat on how to begin this reporting. Anriette noted that the WSIS+20 plan may be overly ambitious. Channeling more information on IGF into the WSIS+20 process, and informing stakeholders about the importance of the WSIS+20 are both important, and also useful to understand what is realistic and consistent with the established procedures. Finally, she noted that the WG-Strategy can add value through activities such as facilitating online discussion with action line facilitators on how they are conducting their action line reviews.

Nigel Hickson agreed that the document is ambitious. However, he noted that there is a distinction between thinking on the GDC and WSIS+20 between Geneva and New York (New York delegations seem much less inclined towards multistakeholder processes). On WSIS+20, it is vital that the IGF make clear that the WSIS+20 is not simply taking place in the UNGA in 2025 - the review process has already started, it has been discussed at CSTD, it will be discussed at the WSIS Forum and other venues - these are opportunities to engage as the IGF communities and the NRIs.

Chris noted that there are a small number of important tasks that could be considered in the short term: in terms of raising awareness with stakeholders, the MAG can consider a session at IGF 2023; beginning discussion to develop a report as suggested by Ben Wallis; and finally, looking at how best to encourage broad stakeholder engagement in the consultation processes already underway.

Wout noted that the initial thinking in this was to highlight the achievements and positive aspects of the IGF and the multistakeholder approach. We need to look at how we can convince those Member States especially that are still not convinced about this model for Internet governance - highlighting the outputs and achievements of the IGF and the many NRIs can help us to do this.

Mark noted that the opportunities for engagement are coming very quickly, and we need to remember that many NRIs are already developing their event agendas, so the thinking about engagement has to start now.

4. Update from the IGF Secretariat

Anja Gengo noted that the IGF 2022 Messages have been translated into six languages and have been sent to all Permanent Missions in New York and Geneva, as well as shared with a wide network of stakeholders. The NRIs have also offered to act as ambassadors of the Messages to local levels. All of the intersessional work outputs were also sent along with the Messages. Additionally, the IGF Secretariat participated in the G7 Meeting recently, and that group also received all of this content.

Regarding the upcoming meeting between the MAG and Leadership Panel, Anja noted that it is closed because the goal is to create synergies between the two groups; she noted that sessions later in the week with the MAG and LP will be open to full participation by observers. She noted that this was a balance struck by the organisers in Vienna.

Timea Suto noted that it is very important to have strategic discussions in the IGF community about where the IGF should be represented and by who. She noted that there has been confusion in the past about who has spoken on behalf of the IGF, and this suggests that some agreements should be reached about this, especially by the MAG and the Leadership Panel.

Adam noted that the Leadership Panel seem to understand that they are not editors (i.e. they will not be editing the outputs from the IGF, simply conveying them); however, he noted that there is still ambiguity about what outputs are produced and how (and how

they should be used and further communicated). Outputs need to be produced and delivered to the Leadership Panel in a way that they can be used effectively.

Finally, Anja noted that the agenda for the Vienna meetings have been finalised, and all participants (in-person or online) will need to register. There are already 200 registrations.

5. AoB

Titti closed the meeting, and noted that the next meeting will be on 2 March.

List of participants

1. Anja Gengo, IGF Secretariat
2. Anriette Esterhuysen, former IGF MAG Chair
3. Chris Buckridge, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member
4. Amrita Choudhury, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member
5. Concettina Cassa, Group's Co-Chair, Government of Italy
6. Ben Wallis, Microsoft, former MAG member
7. Chris Disspain, Independent Expert
8. David Souter, Independent Expert
9. Flavio Wagner, CGI.br and University of Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil
10. Jim Prendergast, Independent Expert
11. Jorge Cancio, Government of Switzerland
12. Adam Peake, IGF MAG member
13. Carol Roach, IGF MAG member
14. Lucien Castex, Mission Publiques
15. Mark Carvell, Independent Expert
16. Mafi Mish, Independent Expert
17. Nigel Hickson, Independent Expert
18. Timea Suto, ICC Basis, former MAG member
19. Peace Olivier, IGF MAG member
20. Raúl Echeberría, Independent Expert
21. Roberto Zambrana, former MAG member
22. Rosalind Kenny Birch, UK Government
23. Roman Chukov, Russian Government, former MAG member
24. Tereza Horejsova, IGF MAG member
25. Vera Major, ICANN
26. Wout de Natris, Independent Expert