

MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy
Online Meeting 65
2 November 2023 at 14:00 UTC

Summary Report

The 65th virtual meeting of the IGF MAG Working Group on IGF Strengthening and Strategy (WG-Strategy) was held on 2 November at 14:00 UTC. The meeting was moderated by Concettina Cassa (Titti) and a recording of the meeting is available upon request.

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

Agenda

1. Taking stock of IGF 2023
2. [AI HLAB](#)
3. [WSIS+20 questionnaire by CSTD](#)
4. Update on the GDC
5. Update from the IGF Secretariat
6. Call timing
7. AoB

Discussion

1. Taking stock of IGF 2023

On the IGF 2023 agenda: There were concerns raised about the full agenda by Adam and Timea. Timea added that many of the sessions felt the same, there was lack of in-depth discussion and that sometimes resulted in lack of attendance in the room. Amrita also shared that few online participants had pointed to empty rooms. Raquel added that for onsite attendees, it was really difficult to pick and choose sessions.

However many (Chris, Avri and Christine, Anriette) supported a full, bottom-up developed agenda. Anriette shared the need for more focus and in depth agenda, and suggested that perhaps MAG can take inputs from the IGF Messages.

The concern of repeated speakers was raised by Amrita and Chris.

Several members (Desiree, Jorge) appreciated the increased onsite participation in IGF 2023, and especially noted the increase in attendance from the government, parliamentarians, from the private sector and people of Global South.

Jorge shared his satisfaction that the Leadership Panel was well represented in Kyoto.

On improvement of main sessions, Desiree stressed the need to have more speakers from Global South in main panels, while Jorge shared a question to ponder is how to integrate host country programs with main sessions of the MAG.

Several members expressed satisfaction in the services provided by the host. Flavio shared that the facilities, and technical support was great, and food was very good. Christine Arida shared that it was easy to participate in the meetings. Dino expressed great satisfaction with the arrangement of the DC session.

Avri and Jim shared concern on the difficulty in navigating the online agenda.

2. [AI HLAB](#)

Titti suggested the group consider how the IGF could support the newly-announced UN AI High-Level Advisory Body (HLAB).

Amrita shared that the Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence (PNAI) was planning to propose to the MAG to write to the AI HLAB, to share the 2023 report of the PNAI and extend support to the HLAB.

Carol emphasised the importance of IGF connecting and staying connected with the HLAB.

Chris stressed the need for the IGF and PNAI to interface with that HLAB, particularly given the prominence of AI in the Global Digital Compact and discussions of which bodies or institutions will provide follow-up on GDC commitments. He noted that having open and formal engagement of IGF bodies and HLAB would be useful.

Jorge shared that the mandate of HLAB was still not completely clear. He opined that from the point of substance the PNAI report can be shared with the HLAB, and also share with the HLAB how the IGF works. However, better clarity on its function and mandate would facilitate the IGF to share more relevant information.

Anriette shared that the HLAB would be drafting a report. She suggested that the PNAI could respond to the gaps identified in the HLAB report and suggest what works and what does not. She further suggested that perhaps the PNAI can offer to do a briefing to the panel at its next meeting or invite them to its meeting.

Jorge shared that [Carme Artigas](#) of Spain and [James Manyika](#) of Zimbabwe are serving as Co-Chairs of the HLAB.

3. WSIS+20 questionnaire by CSTD

Titti stressed the importance of contributing to this questionnaire.

Ana Neves shared that on 6 & 7 Nov the CSTD intersessional will be organised and on 7th there would be a discussion on WSIS+20 and GDC. She also shared about the questionnaire which is a way to gather feedback. CSTD is holding open consultations to get feedback. The first was held during IGF2023, the second one will be during the eCommerce week on 8 December in Geneva. These would be physical meetings without any remote participation.

Carol questioned if there is any action item on the questionnaire. Chris responded suggesting that if the group feels the WG can formulate a response to the questionnaire, then the group can prepare a response and share with the MAG. Titti supported the suggestion.

Ana shared that she would share the correct questionnaire of CSTD: <https://unctad.org/topic/commission-on-science-and-technology-for-development/wsis-20-year-review>

Jorge shared need for CSTD to clarify on the two questionnaire from ITU and CSTD

4. Update on the GDC

Chris shared that the letter from the Chairs of MAG and LP has been received by the co-facilitators and Secy General's office. Jorge stressed on the need for the letter to be circulated with the diplomatic missions of countries in New York.

Jorge shared news of the new co-facilitator from Zambia.

5. Update from the IGF Secretariat

Chengetai shared that the secretariat was collecting inputs, compiling proceedings of IGF 2023 and working on the schedule of the next meetings for 2024. He shared that the first MAG consultation will be in the first week of Feb, either in Geneva or Riyadh, where both the LP and MAG can meet.

He shared that the original dates for IGF 2024 have moved so that the meeting does not clash with the G20 meeting in Brazil. The new dates will probably be in mid-December.

Anja Gengo invited the community to share inputs on IGF 2023 stock taking by 19 November ([link](#)).

Jorge emphasized the issues related to Riyadh would have to be addressed, especially civil society issues and that is important.

Bruna expressed the concern that many in civil society have to attend IGF in Riyadh. She asked if the 1st Open Consultation (OC) meeting - if confirmed in Riyadh - could be moved given the concerns expressed and that CSOs still plan to make statements about the decision. She also stressed for better hybrid facilities for the meeting and for a restart to the MAG WG on Hybrid meetings.

Chengetai noted that from the UN's point of view, Saudi Arabia is a full UN member state in good standing and with no sanctions, and as such has the same right as any other Member State to host a UN event. He shared that there is a need for all to work together to see how concerns of some participants can be addressed. He also noted that the IGF annual meeting is not the only UN meeting taking place in Riyadh next year.

Persons noted in the chat that they felt a boycott was not the solution. They also encouraged planning to include special attention to online participation.

6. Call Timing

Chris suggested that the WG consider rotating the time of the call. Christine asked if the group could consider changing the call day from Thursday.

7. AoB

Amrita suggested that the group deliberate on the need for the WG to have another MAG co-chair. For the need of continuity she shared the co-chairs felt a first or second year interested MAG member should be invited.

Bruna expressed interest to be one of the co-chairs in the WG, and found support both during the call and per email. subsequently.

The next meeting will be on 16 November 2024 at 14 UTC

List of participants

1. Chris Buckridge, Group's Co-Chair, IGF MAG member
2. Amrita Choudhury, Group's Co-Chair, Former IGF MAG Member
3. Concettina Cassa, Group's Co-Chair, Former IGF MAG Member, Italian Government
4. Chengetai Masango, Head of the IGF Secretariat
5. Anja Gengo, IGF Secretariat
6. Carol Roach, IGF MAG Chair
7. Anriette Esterhuysen, former IGF MAG Chair
8. Lynn St Amour, former IGF MAG chair
9. Evelyne Tauchnitz , MAG Member
10. Adam Peake, Former IGF MAG member, ICANN
11. Vera Major, ICANN
12. Avri Doria, Former IGF MAG Member
13. Ola Bregstrom, Independent Expert
14. Dino Dell'Accio, UNJSPF
15. Desiree Miloshevic, Independent Expert
16. Bruna Martins dos Santos, Bruna, IGF MAG member
17. Ana Neves, Chair CSTD
18. Raquel Gatto, Former IGF MAG Member
19. Cristina Arida, Egypt Government
20. Philippe Schulte, BMDV , German Government
21. Markus Kummer, IGF former MAG Chair
22. Flavio Wagner, CGI.br and Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil
23. Jim Prendergast, Independent Expert
24. Jorge Cancio, Government of Switzerland
25. Timea Suto, (ICC Basis), former MAG member