

STRENGTHENING ENGAGEMENT OF YOUTH IN INTERNET GOVERNANCE

- Strategy for the IGF 2020/25 IGF processes –

(Draft document. Latest update: 18 March 2024)

Note: This is a living document, subject to updates as its implementation is further developed.

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ABOUT

In efforts to fulfil the IGF's mandate and building on the recommendations of the IGF's retreats in 2016¹ and 2022², the IGF Secretariat conducts systematic efforts on engaging youth in Internet governance, including in the IGF, its intersessional work and the annual meeting.

In order to achieve the long-term sustainable mechanisms for this capacity development effort and impact the youth worldwide, the IGF Secretariat will cooperate with the initiatives that also work, in their respective areas, on equipping youth with skills and knowledge on Internet governance.

For an efficient integration of youth into the IGF annual meetings, cooperative mechanisms are established with the past and future IGF's host Governments, to bridge processes and outcomes on the matter, develop a continuous engagement strategy and foster a culture of active youth participation.

The IGF Secretariat intends to cooperate with the *IGF Host Country, as well as with other youth-focused initiatives in line with its mandate (e.g. [UN DESA](#) (through its Division for Inclusive Social Development and youth programmes, e.g. youth envoys); [The Internet Society](#); [Youth Coalition on Internet Governance \(YCIG\)](#); [Youth IGF initiatives](#); [Youth IGF Movement](#); Youth Observatory etc.)*. Approached for cooperation will also be interested [schools on Internet governance](#), as well as the networks of IGF's intersessional work such as its Policy Networks, Best Practice Forums and Dynamic Coalitions.

The following content outlines the concept of possible activities, subject to further planning by the involved parties in the implementation process.

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

The overall engagement structure could develop around:

1. *Global outreach toward youth*
2. *Capacity development in Internet governance*
3. *IGF newsletter for youth*
4. *Publication to capture good practices on youth engagement in Internet governance*
5. *Networking opportunities at the annual IGF meeting*

¹ https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/3367/711

² <https://www.intgovforum.org/en/content/report-from-expert-group-meeting>



6. Capacity development workshops and IGF Global Youth Summit

1. Global outreach toward youth

Public consultations with youth will be carried out, for the sake of understanding their expectations regarding participation in the IG(F) processes, as well as to brainstorm on creative and efficient ideas on how to support these expectations and develop capacity.

The consultations will be conducted through a dedicated survey, webinars and open mailing list: igfyouth@intgovforum.org³.

All above mentioned parties will be approached to support outreach efforts in bringing the survey and webinars to the attention of as many young people as possible.

It will consult youth on their Internet governance priorities building on the outcomes of the previous Youth Summit and its outputs. The identified priorities will be a foundation for developing capacity on the Internet governance topics and processes.

There will be **webinars** in preparations for the upcoming annual IGF meeting to: (i) introduce the concept of the IGF, capture ideas and expectations from youth regarding the IGF processes, as well as the thematic interest, (ii) explore youth's integration in Internet governance discussions, as well as the IGF framework. Also, (iii) capacity development activities on emerging Internet issues will be carried out.

In all outreach activities, it is strongly recommended to work with the Youth IGF coordinators as the key drivers of the IGF processes for youth in many countries and regions. Further, these should be empowered through giving more visibility and public recognition of their work and achievements.

2. Capacity development in Internet governance

Through the IGF framework, in an open, bottom-up consultative process, young people will have several opportunities to mark their interest in Internet governance substantive matters. Based on these, and as per the demand, capacity development activities could be implemented through:

- networking opportunities with key stakeholders in Internet governance ecosystem
- capacity development workshops
- substantive guidance training on the issues of interest

³Subscribe via https://intgovforum.org/mailman/listinfo/igfyouth_intgovforum.org

- collaborative online space and repository of useful materials in different forms

Advised is to also explore opportunities for supporting youth to participate in person at the annual IGF meeting to foster peer-to-peer cooperation, collaboration with other stakeholders and the overall integration in the IGF.

It is recommended to collaborate closely with the national, regional and youth IGFs, to ensure these activities reach everyone.

Concrete way of implementation of this objective is the design of the IGF Youth Track introduced in 2020 and particularly enhanced in 2022. The Track's implementation and design is done through a bottom-up consultative process with the Youth IGF coordinators and focal points from interested international youth-focused organizations. It focuses on a particular umbrella topic selected through public consultations. Its main aspects are then unpacked and discussed through four capacity development workshops hosted in conjunction with the regional IGFs in a hybrid format, to make them more accessible. Outputs from these workshops then inform the preparations for the IGF Global Youth Summit hosted at the annual IGF meeting.

3. Publication on youth engagement in IG(F) globally



Publication from 2021

Online consultations and bilateral meetings will be carried throughout the IGF ecosystem, to capture the good practices on youth engagement done by the recognized youth IGF initiatives, as well as the national and regional IGFs, and other forms of international capacity development initiatives, such as schools on Internet governance or the IGF's Dynamic Coalitions. The publication will also consult with the leaders of the Best Practice Forums to gather advice for meaningful youth participation in these initiatives' work.

The publication will build on the existing publication the IGF Secretariat has produced in consultations with the NRIs in 2020/21⁴.

For the other forms of capacity development initiatives, the Secretariat will gather good practices from the initiatives in compliance with the following criteria:

- *Existing website with clearly defined scope of work on matters related to youth and Internet governance*
- *Transparent documentation of work*

⁴ The publication will be subject to continuous updating on every two IGF-cycles. The current version is available at https://www.intgovforum.org/en/filedepot_download/4874/2454.

- *International/regional or national impact (*in order of priority)*

Consultations will be carried out with all listed partners in the 'About' section of this document.

4. IGF newsletter for youth

In order to have youth continuously informed and up-to-date on all IGF activities of relevance, a monthly newsletter will continue to be communicated through the igfyouth@intgovforum.org mailing list.

The newsletter will allow for visibility of some capacity development initiatives as opportunities for youth. These will be signing-up with the IGF Secretariat and IGF Host Country every month. Based on the following criteria, and respecting the regional diversity, one good practice will be selected and explained in the newsletter:

- *Existing website with clearly defined scope of work on matters related to youth and Internet governance*
- *Transparent documentation of work*
- *International/regional or national impact (* in order of priority)*

All selected practices/initiatives will be gathered and displayed at a dedicated space on the IGF website.

5. Youth at the annual IGF meeting

One of the core objectives of this initiative is a meaningful integration and participation of youth into the IGF processes, namely in the intersessional work and annual meeting, and through that framework in global Internet governance ecosystem.

Concretely, to achieve meaningful integration of youth in the upcoming annual meeting, all IGF session organizers will be approached to either **engage youth as speakers or resource persons**, that would be recognized during the sessions to communicate specific youth perspectives on the discussion subject matter (*this could be done either for all sessions or just for the sessions focused on thematic priorities the youth will identify beforehand through public consultations as explained further below under 'Youth Thematic Priorities'*).

The collaborators will also help to organize the **Global Youth Summit** during the upcoming annual IGF meeting as a 90-120 min long interactive session, that would build on the previous Global Youth Summit outputs. The agenda for the Summit will develop through an open, bottom-up and consultative process with youth (*thematic interests identified through survey*). Therefore, the Summit could focus on the (1) IGF process at local and regional levels, and on (2) specific themes came out of the mentioned consultations. The structure and agenda of the summit will be a subject for public feedback at the third webinar before it is finalized. The

Summit will produce tangible outputs in the form of messages the youth has on Internet governance.

Networking opportunities in a form of **thematic (flash) sessions** could be organized with key discussant(s) as the representative(s) of a particular organization/initiative focused on unpacking of the overall topic endorsed by youth. As these flash sessions could be around 30-45 min long, the preparatory process will be done beforehand. Namely, participants will be presented key information about the initiative's work and interested participants would ask questions through a dedicated form a few days before the flash session. The discussant(s) would respond to the summary of all received questions/comments and additional Q&A section would develop. It is advised to host this in cooperation with the regional IGFs.

TIMELINE

A detailed timeline will be developed at the beginning of each planning cycle. It is recommended to start planning of the youth activities at the beginning of each new IGF cycle building on the outputs and outcomes of the previous one.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Possible design of the activities could be:

- **Thematic networking webinars (every eight to twelve weeks) and capacity development workshops hosted in conjunctions with the regional IGFs.** *The thematic focus will build on set priorities during the Global Youth Summit and results of open consultations. Youth will have an opportunity to meet international experts on the subject matters of their interest;*
- **Monthly newsletter;**
- **Up to three outreach webinars on Internet governance topics and processes of priority;**
- **IGF Global Youth Summit** that will result in messages on global Internet governance priorities for youth.