

Taking Stock of IGF 2022 and Suggesting Improvements for IGF 2023

Contents

IGF 2022 preparatory process (timeline, call for issues and session proposals, session selection, MAG meetings, capacity development etc.).....	2
IGF 2022 overall programme: thematic focus, structure and flow	3
IGF 2022 Hybrid format design and experience	3
IGF 2022 logistics (website, mobile app, schedule, registration, access and use of online platform, bilateral meeting system, security etc.).....	3
Best Practice Forums and Policy Networks at IGF 2022: please comment on process, content, and in particular on how these intersessional activities were included in the igf 2022 programme.	4
Dynamic Coalitions at IGF 2022: please comment on process, content, and in particular on how these intersessional activities were included in the IGF 2022 programme.	4
National, Regional and Youth IGFs at IGF 2022: please comment on process, content, and in particular on how the NRIs were included in the IGF 2022 programme.....	4
IGF 2022 Sessions: What is your feedback regarding IGF 2022 sessions?	4
IGF 2022 High-level leaders track	5
IGF 2022 Parliamentary track	5
IGF 2022 Youth Track	5
How do you see the IGF 2022 programme content from a gender perspective?	5
IGF 2022 Village.....	6
IGF 2022 communications, outreach and outputs	6
Any other comments on the IGF 2022.....	6
IGF 2023 preparatory process (timeline, call for session proposals and session selection, MAG and Open Consultations meetings etc.)	6
IGF 2023 overall programme structure and flow	8
IGF 2023 programme content (thematic approach, session types, speakers profiles).....	9
Community intersessional activities and National, Regional and Youth IGFs: how these could best connect with the IGF 2023 process?.....	9
IGF 2023 participants: who to invite and how to inter-connect participants?.....	9
How could we improve the quality of participation at the IGF 2022?.....	10
Any other comments on the IGF 2023?.....	10

All IGF stakeholders are invited to submit inputs to the IGF Secretariat to assist with the planning for the IGF 2023 process and its 18th annual IGF meeting. Please note that this is a call for feedback on the organizational, logistical and structural aspects of IGF 2022. The call for thematic issues will be launched at a later stage.

Please be as concrete as possible, but also be creative. Express criticism if you feel it will help strengthen the IGF.

You can submit inputs through the [form online](#) or send a written contribution directly to the email address: takingstock [at] intgovforum [dot] org.

Deadline to submit inputs: 16 January 2023, 23:59 UTC.

All inputs will be posted on the IGF website, as received.

The IGF Secretariat will produce a synthesis paper of all contributions received by the deadline, which will serve as an input to the First Open Consultations and MAG Meeting of the 2023 IGF preparatory process.

Note: If you have an IGF Community account, you can load your profile data into the submission form and even keep a draft before submitting. (If you do not have an IGF Community account yet, you can create one now and re-access this page (and any other in the future) with your profile data).

IGF 2022 preparatory process (timeline, call for issues and session proposals, session selection, MAG meetings, capacity development etc.)

- Thanks to a timely announcement of the host country and MAG composition, sufficient time was allocated to the preparatory process, which started in good time early in the year. Unfortunately, serious domestic and international events made planning highly unpredictable, resulting in significant delays, gaps in communication, and poorer attendance. The significant turnover in the composition of the MAG also contributed to fragmentations and delays in the planning process.
- These challenges were to an extent surmounted by the hard work and dedication of the IGF Secretariat and consultants, the MAG and MAG Chair and supporters from the IGF community.
- The professionalism and support of the staff working at the IGF Secretariat was greatly appreciated both during as well as in the run-up to IGF 2022.
- However, taking and communicating decisions on the themes, event format, new session types and preparatory phase was slower than expected, significantly shortening the time for preparation of the event. Some crucial elements of the programme, especially those that required special attention to the hybrid format, were left to the last minute (e.g. bilateral meetings, booth organization) which fuelled some uncertainty at times and diminished effectiveness. Communication and outreach efforts throughout the year and in the immediate lead-up to the event were also negatively impacted. In particular following the session proposal submission phase, IGF participants and session organisers, potential high-level speakers and non-MAG member contributors to the main sessions received little to no communication on opportunities for engagement or insight into the planning process.
- Efforts should be made to communicate the planning process ahead of time with a clear timeline and guidelines so that prospective participants are aware of the topics, the planning process and engagement opportunities, and are well informed about the various opportunities to contribute. Decisions on the event and preparatory phase duration, structure and format should, ideally, be communicated ahead of the workshop submission phase, so that stakeholders can plan and propose sessions accordingly.

IGF 2022 overall programme: thematic focus, structure and flow

- The overarching theme of IGF 2022 (Resilient Internet for a Shared Sustainable and Common Future), while pertinent for the current context and broad enough to include dialogue on major global Internet governance issues, remained largely unused by the community.
- Concentrating the IGF programme into a few concrete thematic tracks worked very well in past years (especially in 2019 and 2020) and the same approach was retained in 2022. Aligning the themes of the IGF with the issue areas under consideration for the Global Digital Compact was particularly welcome.
- However, going forward, attention must be paid to avoid adding further themes and topics to the annual IGF in order not to overcrowd the programme and maintain a lean and manageable agenda. For the future, we recommend no more than four tracks with clear, concise and easily understandable themes.
- Aligning workshop and main sessions under the thematic tracks continues to work well and is helpful to the MAG in choosing workshops, defining sub-themes and organise main sessions. However, attention must be paid that the number and focus of sub-themes remain manageable.
- Efforts should be strengthened to align other sessions that are part of the official IGF programme (Open Forums, DCs, BPFs, NRI collaborative sessions, etc.) as well as pre-events under the thematic tracks, from the start of the submission and evaluation process.

IGF 2022 Hybrid format design and experience

- We commend the work of the MAG working group on the hybrid format, who devoted a lot of time and effort to advise on the particularities of organising such an event. The host country's efforts and investment in providing technical equipment and staff to support the engagement of both onsite and online participants were also greatly appreciated.
- While the 3D venue and virtual booth was a very much appreciated idea, many participants were not aware of it, or had difficulty finding the link on the IGF website. Booth organisers had very little information on what was expected of them for the virtual booth, and how their booth would look like. Should the idea of virtual booth be retained for future IGFs, the planning process needs to start a lot earlier, with the close and active involvement of booth organisers.

IGF 2022 logistics (website, mobile app, schedule, registration, access and use of online platform, bilateral meeting system, security etc.)

- While the IGF 2022 website contained comprehensive information on the event, finding the relevant information required extensive browsing.
- Registration to the individual sessions seemed laborious and confusing to many, at least in the initial stages of the event. Many did not realise that after registering to the overall event, individual registrations for individual sessions were also required by adding sessions to one's personal schedule. It was also confusing to many how to find the participation link, once the session was added to a participant's calendar. While it is very commendable that the highest level of precaution was taken to ensure only registered participants have access to the individual sessions, the process should be simplified and considered from a first-time participant's perspective, especially as these measures were not successful in keeping unwanted visitors away from the sessions.
- The website, unfortunately not for the first time, also experienced serious difficulties (especially in the first days of the event), possibly due to server overload, making it impossible for organisers, speakers and participants to find dial-in links to their sessions. This significantly limited real-time engagement with the audience and was the cause of

frustration and negative feedback from speakers (especially those attending the IGF for the first time).

- The ability to follow sessions live-streamed on the IGF's YouTube channel helped in increasing access and flexibility for participants to follow discussions.
- It was very welcome that recordings of individual sessions were made available following the session. This practice should be maintained for upcoming IGFs as well, whether held in-person or remotely, but more attention should be paid to editing the recordings of the sessions for a more polished final result, that can be later disseminated to wider audiences from the session organisers and participants.
- Communication activities between the IGF Secretariat, past and future host countries and the UN DESA Secretariat require better coordination, especially on social media, so that individual efforts can be reinforced and a wider audience can be reached.

Intersessional activities and NRIs at IGF 2022

Best Practice Forums and Policy Networks at IGF 2022: please comment on process, content, and in particular on how these intersessional activities were included in the igf 2022 programme.

- The intersessional work of the BPFs and Policy Networks are strong examples of how the IGF can gather, catalogue, and share valuable tangible outputs without being prescriptive.
- Efforts to archive the outputs of the intersessional work streams and BPF documents and publish them on the IGF website are appreciated. They should continue to be promoted in a manner that is accessible and searchable to the lay user who may not be familiar with the IGF and its structure (or indeed with the terminology of “BPFs” and “PNs”).
- Continued efforts should be made to better target communication and promotion efforts of these outputs.

Dynamic Coalitions at IGF 2022: please comment on process, content, and in particular on how these intersessional activities were included in the IGF 2022 programme.

N/A

National, Regional and Youth IGFs at IGF 2022: please comment on process, content, and in particular on how the NRIs were included in the IGF 2022 programme.

N/A

IGF 2022 programme: please comment on the content, speakers and quality of discussions

IGF 2022 Sessions: What is your feedback regarding IGF 2022 sessions?

Workshops

- Once the IGF 2022 themes were established, the workshop proposal and selection process was well organised.
- Some IGF attendees noted they were unaware of the possibility of organising workshops or the speaking opportunities this provides. Efforts to communicate about session proposal possibilities needs to be strengthened, especially outside the pool of habitual IGF attendees.
- The thematic approach helped to somewhat reduce the number of workshops on the same topics, albeit some overlap between workshops could still be observed, especially among themes that were very similar.
- Some sessions worked well because they combined people able to give global, policy perspectives with others able to share more operational perspectives as they are deployed on the ground.

- A number of workshops and other sessions were lacking in balance and diversity in terms of speakers, with one or more stakeholder groups not represented at all in the discussion.

Main sessions

- The Main Sessions play a useful role in the programme of providing a space for a potentially different and broader level of discussion and bringing in more high-level speakers. In this way, they help extend appeal beyond participants who regularly attend IGF meetings, and in particular among government and business constituencies who have historically had lower attendance levels. For this reason, it is imperative that enough time and careful attention is devoted to their planning.
- It worked well that Main Sessions were coupled with the IGF 2022 themes.
- Two hours / session seemed to be the right amount of time to allow for a deeper dive into discussions and allow for audience input, while still maintaining the interest of participants throughout the session. In the past there were occasions where no other sessions were running in parallel with Main Sessions, thus allowing for wider participation as well as elevating the status of these sessions on the IGF program – this should be an example to follow going forward.
- Providing synergies between main sessions and the IGF intersessional work, as well as the work of NRIs gives an extra opportunity to raise the visibility and impact of their work. This opportunity should be further explored in upcoming IGFs.

IGF 2022 High-level leaders track

- The efforts of the host country, the IGF Secretariat and UN DESA to attract government officials, legislators and business participants, especially for the high-level sessions was well received by the community. It was unfortunate that many high-level participants were unable to attend the IGF in person, due to the unpredictability of the planning process and lack of follow-up beyond a generic invitation shared with prospective high-level participants. In the future, efforts should be strengthened to encourage high-level participants to engage with other IGF sessions and events aside from the panel they speak on.
- Efforts could be made to communicate the participation of HL attendees ahead of time to drive the interest and participation of both IGF attendees and the media. We regret that this year the invitations to HL attendees were sent with a delay, while no clear information was provided timely following the RSVPs of the attendees, thus not permitting the engagement of the participants, due to the unclear engagement proposal, and already very packed end-of-year schedules.

IGF 2022 Parliamentary track

- Continuing the tradition of the Parliamentary track started in 2019 was welcomed. Efforts should be made to better integrate this track with the other IGF activities and ensure the participation of parliamentarians in other IGF sessions and interaction with IGF participants from all stakeholder groups.

IGF 2022 Youth Track

N/A

How do you see the IGF 2022 programme content from a gender perspective?

Many sessions on the IGF programme have reported to have addressed gender issues as part of their discussion. Most, although unfortunately not all, session organisers have demonstrated efforts

to strive for gender balance on their panels. Efforts must be sustained in this regard to ensure there are no sessions on the IGF agenda with a disproportionate underrepresentation of women.

IGF 2022 Village

- The IGF village is an integral part of the in-person IGF experience, providing opportunities for networking, information sharing and discovery. The efforts of the host country team to accommodate requests, set up and service the village were very much appreciated. Based on past experience, booths have a higher success rate when the village is part of the same building where sessions are taking place.
- Unfortunately, while significant efforts were made to provide a virtual space for booth organisers to showcase their work, little was done to promote the virtual booths or enable them to add some networking or interactive activities to the agenda.
- Looking ahead to 2023, if another hybrid event is considered, the virtual IGF village must be adequately advertised to allow for meaningful and interactive participation of attendees. The planning process for virtual booths needs to start early with the close and active involvement of booth organisers.

IGF 2022 communications, outreach and outputs

Overview of the IGF 2022 Outputs is available at <https://www.intgovforum.org/content/igf-2022-outputs>

- Showcasing the various IGF outputs promptly on the IGF website was very welcome and useful to demonstrate the value IGF discussions bring to the community. Capturing and promoting them successfully helps increase the reach of these conversations beyond the IGF session participants.
- Commendable efforts to attract journalists were made, especially on the side of the host country inviting national and local media. These efforts could be amplified through a systematic outreach and media strategy to identify relevant news outlets (especially on the international level) ahead of time and sharing information on topics expected to be covered at the IGF, as well as high-level participants in attendance.
- The IGF messages report has an important role in bridging consecutive IGF cycles and highlighting the various IGF outputs, and ensure consistency between them, therefore credibility of the IGF for the future. Efforts should be made to better inform participants on the process of drafting of the messages and how their session summaries contribute to the final IGF messages. Session participants should also be made aware of the possibility to comment on the draft messages. Sharing such information with session participants helps improve the balance in participation, which in turn increases the legitimacy of messages.

Any other comments on the IGF 2022

N/A

What are your suggestions for improvements for IGF 2023?

IGF 2023 preparatory process (timeline, call for session proposals and session selection, MAG and Open Consultations meetings etc.)

- As the hybrid format has notable benefits for accessibility and participation, organisers should consider retaining (elements of) this format. Session organisers should be encouraged to include remote participants where that helps provide a geographic or policy perspective not necessarily possible because some relevant experts do not have the time and / or necessary funds to travel to an overseas meeting. Before COVID-19, remote

participants were largely secondary in practice, even if organisers were encouraged to make time and use tools to provide space for questions from remote participants, the 2022 IGF proved once more that it is possible to host successful sessions and fruitful discussions with many (or all) speakers spread across the globe. Benefitting from the experiences of the last three years, we should increasingly think in terms of hybrid events that will allow for a broader range of people to participate.

- To support the profile of the IGF and to recognise the considerable investment by host countries, a high-level leaders' event (or similar) should continue to be on the agenda.

Agenda

- A more focused set of topics and policy questions would be preferred to support a more streamlined agenda, with session formats that allow for greater participation from non-panel members. The IGF should not have more than four tracks with clear, concise and easily understandable themes that do not overlap. The agenda and themes should be informed by the agendas of major international events and policy discussions to enhance the relevance of IGF outputs.

Planning process

- There is an increasing need for a clear and easily understandable process, through which the community can contribute to the IGF agenda in a bottom-up fashion. A calendar and a visual representation of the process should be made public to outline the planning cycle for the IGF in a simple, yet comprehensive format, to illustrate the agenda and programme-setting process and mark deadlines and engagement points for the community. This could also form the back-bone of a communication and outreach strategy, creating a year-long calendar for outreach messages and social media content where relevant updates can be shared on the preparatory process and track narratives and input from the community can be invited at each milestone.
- The 2022 interactive programme was greatly appreciated, however, we would propose that one time zone (preferably the hosting country time zone), is used across all calendars (in the excel and online formats as well as on the individual session pages), regardless the geographical location of each user, which causes an automatic conversion. Such an approach will take away confusion in the planning process especially keeping in mind that session organisers are strongly encouraged to select speakers across regions. A prompt action to convert to the local time of the user could be suggested as an option to the interactive programme, for attendees who may plan to follow the event fully virtually, and thus wish to opt for such a conversion. It would be greatly appreciated if the different updates on the programme of the IGF appear in a clearer way, in order for each user to know when the calendar was last updated.
- The IGF planning schedule should be further strengthened by setting clear measures of success, standards of work, and a critical number of people committed to lead/support the activity across all stakeholder groups. This would require an analysis of required resources and responsibilities, including those of the Secretariat and any consultants, to ensure that any initiated work (traditionally part of the IGF or newly proposed) will be successful. There should also be clear mandates of authorisation for each intersessional work stream.

Communication

- There is an ever increasing need to raise wider awareness of existing IGF outputs and support their better dissemination.
- Further discussion should be encouraged on what defines success for the IGF, what is meant by tangible outputs and what problem the outputs are intended to address. The IGF

Secretariat should develop a work plan to identify, gather and better market existing outputs of the IGF. This would roughly follow the steps below:

- Identify existing outputs and outcomes, both written products and success stories of collaboration / impact
- Organise and cross-reference these by topic, and possibly with tags, so that these can be easily searched
- Identify potential audiences
- Targeted outreach and communication to better market the outputs
- This work plan should be supported by a timeline, an analysis of required resources and responsibilities, and indicators and measures of success. The Secretariat should be equipped with resources to be able to execute this plan.
- Members of the IGF Leadership Panel could be counted on to further disseminate the messages across their networks.
- To improve the marketing of IGF outputs, the following should be considered:
 - Pare down intersessional work streams to allow for more concentrated effort and better support for selected work.
 - Task the IGF Secretariat (not a recurring MAG Working Group on Outreach and Communication) with outreach efforts and dissemination of existing outputs (policy material, reports, and case studies of successful cooperation/projects that rooted in IGF meetings and discussions). Guest blogs or interviews about IGF success stories.
 - Equip IGF participants with a communications / social media toolbox or guidance on how they can help disseminate messages. This would help increase outreach and enable participants to act as multipliers to official IGF communication.
 - Ensure close coordination on communication activities between the IGF Secretariat, the UN DESA communications team and the host country communications team to avoid duplication of efforts and mutually reinforce messages.
- The legitimacy, accountability and balance of IGF outputs must be held to the highest standards:
 - The balance of stakeholders needs to be maintained in every work stream of the IGF in order not to undermine their legitimacy, and to implement the multistakeholder approach which is intrinsic to the IGF.
 - Outputs of any intersessional work must ensure accurate reflection of all opinions.
 - The MAG should consider ways to raise profile of the IGF and strengthen the participation of underrepresented groups and regions and enhance the credibility of IGF work streams by addressing their balance and ensuring representation of regions and stakeholders. Capacity building programs aimed at underrepresented groups can help ensure meaningful participation.

IGF 2023 overall programme structure and flow

- Concentrating the IGF programme into a small number of thematic tracks in 2019 and 2020 was a very welcome idea and translated well into the final programme of the IGF. The 2021 and 2022 editions seemed to move away from this precedent. The idea of three-four (but not more) thematic tracks should be maintained going forward to help streamline the agenda.
- It is important to continue the practice of consulting the broader IGF community on issues to be discussed at the IGF, that will inform the MAG's decision on the topics for thematic tracks.
- Aligning workshop proposals under thematic tracks works well. Efforts should be strengthened to align other sessions that are part of the official IGF programme (Open

Forums, DCs, BPFs, NRI collaborative sessions, etc.) as well as pre-events, under the thematic tracks, from the start of the submission and evaluation process.

- To ensure that the preparatory phase and Day 0 event as well as the high-level portion of the IGF programme continue to fulfil their potential going forward, efforts should be made that these also support the tracks and themes of the annual event.
- An exchange between past and future host countries and MAG members on potential improvements and ideas for preparatory, Day 0 and high-level events and the overall IGF programme would be welcome.

IGF 2023 programme content (thematic approach, session types, speakers profiles)

- IGF communities and intersessional work should continue to be included and featured in main sessions on topics of interest and relevance to them, to contribute to a more cohesive and issue-focused agenda, as well as overall a more collegial atmosphere.
- Clear guidelines and timelines are useful both for session proposers and evaluators on the process of how session proposals finally make it onto the programme of the annual meeting (tracks, sub-themes, etc.). Clearer guidelines are also needed on how other sessions (open forums, DC and NRI sessions) fit into the thematic programme, as well as on their evaluation.
- A reinforced communication campaign would be helpful ahead of the workshop proposal process to ensure those new to the IGF are aware of the various possibilities to be actively involved in the upcoming IGF well in advance of the annual meeting. This should also include information on the possibility of proposing other types of activities for the IGF programme that are not suitable for a workshop format (networking, publication launch, hackathon, etc.)
- Such a communication campaign should be supported by a rigorous timetable, guidelines and toolkits and build on the network of NRIs as well as that of MAG members to act as multipliers.

Community intersessional activities and National, Regional and Youth IGFs: how these could best connect with the IGF 2023 process?

- IGF resources are not as unlimited as the appetite for groups to come together to work on new issues. The MAG should discuss and consider a mechanism to anticipate how to deal with the increased interest in DCs, BPFs, PNs, NRIs as well as MAG working groups. These activities all compete for the same limited IGF staff support, and at times stakeholder representatives' support, all of which only stretch so thin.
- A turnover policy should be considered, activities that have reached their goals or have lost the support of the community should be sunset to allow resources for new ones. There is value in exploring new and innovative ideas, but this should be about quality over quantity – there needs to be a clear focus on the quality and strategic goals of such activities. In addition, efforts should be made to ensure that any new activity has not just the interest, but the active support and foreseeable engagement of a critical mass of people from the wider IGF community, and particular attention is paid to stakeholder, regional and gender balance.

IGF 2023 participants: who to invite and how to inter-connect participants?

Efforts need to continue to attract government and business stakeholders to the IGF. Participation of high-level policymakers drives interest from their counterparts from other regions and stakeholder groups. Efforts should be made to continue the trend for the involvement of top-level actors.

How could we improve the quality of participation at the IGF 2022?

- With regards to HL participation, outreach to attendees and their proxies should occur at least three to two months ahead of the event. This will allow for a more timely invitation, that brings more possibility to the specific attendee(s) having an opening in their already very busy schedules. Ensuring clarity in the engagement proposal towards the HL attendees is also key, allowing for a transparent assessment of the responsibilities, and opportunities before deciding to commit and attend.
- In order to further improve the quality of participation, a dynamic and year-long campaign should be taking place after the previous IGF concludes, with a clear connection to key milestones and / or other significant dates within the UN calendar (and beyond where relevant), as well as an overarching link to the next IGF meeting. This will allow for a better dissemination of the outputs from the event, without losing momentum of the important work and proceedings that took place.
- As mentioned above, maintaining the external communication activities around IGF, while forging strategic partnerships with last-year's and / or incoming session organisers, will leverage their outreach and different networks, drive more attention around the event, and thus bring better participation, either online, or onsite to the next IGF.

Any other comments on the IGF 2023?

You are welcome to comment on possible improvements of the IGF as it pertains to the IGF mandate, United Nations Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and Our Common Agenda.